

THE MYSTERY OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL

A strange fad emerged in the early 20th century: Life-size facsimiles of human skulls carved from clear quartz crystal began showing up in the collections of museums and wealthy treasure hunters. Purported to have magical powers, these crystal skulls came with action-packed accounts of their discoveries and otherworldly tales of their origins. But who made them? When, where, and how were they made? And for what purpose? That's the mystery. Here's the story of the most fascinating of them all—the Mitchell-Hedges skull.

THE PLACE OF THE FALLEN STONES

British Honduras, 1924: Intrepid British adventurer F. A. Mitchell-Hedges is exploring the ruins of the lost Mayan city of Lubaantun, which means “Place of Fallen Stones.” Joining him on the expedition is his adopted daughter Anna. It's her 17th birthday. While the rest of Mitchell-Hedges's team is taking a siesta, Anna climbs to the top of a pyramid to get a view of the ocean. But something at her feet catches her eye—there's a light emanating from a hole in the stones. She crouches down and peers into the dark room, and there, under a crumbled altar, is a glowing human skull made of clear quartz crystal. Anna runs back down the pyramid as fast as she can, yelling for her father to come see what she found. Later, they lower Anna—the smallest member of the team—via a rope into the room. She picks up the heavy artifact and can immediately feel its power.

The local Mayans later tell Mitchell-Hedges that if the government finds out about their discovery, the crystal skull will be confiscated, so they give the father and daughter permission to take it out of the country.

THE SKULL OF DOOM

That's one story of where this particular crystal skull came from. There are other stories, and other skulls: one is on display in the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris; another lives in the archives of the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C. Since the late 19th century, the true nature of these Mesoamerican artifacts has been a source of heated debate—and the most controversial is the Mitchell-Hedges skull. The first big question: Who made it? Theories range from the ancient Mayans to cultures that predate them (such as people who traveled to Central America from the lost city of Atlantis). There are even claims that the crystal skulls were deposited on Earth by aliens.

F. A. Mitchell-Hedges first referred to his as the “Skull of Doom,” the power of which he said could “kill a man.” And even though he said he wanted to be buried with

it, when he died in 1959 it became the property of his daughter, Anna, and she wasn't sure what to do with it. "It is a thing of evil in the wrong hands," she said at the time.

AXIS OF POWER

In 1964 Anna Mitchell-Hedges lent the crystal skull to a San Francisco art conservator named Frank Dorland in the hopes of finding out where it came from. "The first time I kept the skull in my home overnight," Dorland told author Richard Garvin in his book *The Crystal Skull*, "I was awakened by unusual noises. It sounded like a large jungle cat was prowling through the house, accompanied by the sound of chimes and bells. When we got up the next morning, our possessions were strewn all about the house. Yet, all the doors and windows were still closed and locked from the inside."

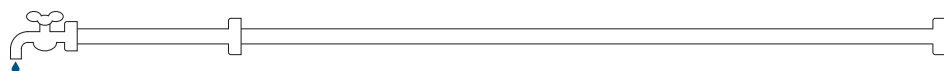
The skull spent six years in the care of Dorland, who, like others who have owned it, became obsessed with it. After studying the artifact in his lab, Dorland theorized that it was carved not from one but from three crystals. But he needed better equipment to prove it, so he took the skull to Hewlett-Packard's crystal labs in Santa Clara, California. Initial tests determined that it is comprised of a *single* crystal, but that's about the only conclusive thing they were able to find.

- It appeared that whoever made the thing did it in "total disregard to the natural crystal axis," said Dorland. If you carve against the axis, the crystal should shatter, or, as one crystallographer put it, "The damn thing shouldn't even be."
- The HP techs could find no microscopic indications of cut marks made by metal instruments, so exactly how it was made remained a mystery.
- Further tests determined that the skull was probably polished by hand with sand over a period of time using "300 man-years of effort."

By that point (around 1970), Anna Mitchell-Hedges had had enough of scientific studies. She took a Greyhound bus to California, retrieved her crystal skull from Dorland, and never let scientists near it for the rest of her life.

GOOD VIBRATIONS

Mitchell-Hedges settled in Kitchener, Ontario, where she opened a motel and made the crystal skull available for viewing—for a nominal fee—to curiosity-seekers and spiritualists. She'd tell her visitors that the skull was once the property of the High Priest of the Maya, that it had the power to "cause visions and cure cancer," and could even "be used to transfer the knowledge of an elder to a younger person." Right before President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, she said, the skull turned cloudy. She would invite her customers to touch the object, explaining that it always has a surface temperature of 70° Fahrenheit, no matter how cold or warm the room was. A visiting reporter once wrote that the skull is "strangely luminous, reflecting a piercing blue-white light from its eye sockets."



"Bergy bits" and "growlers" are scientific slang terms for small icebergs.

And it wasn't the "Skull of Doom" anymore. "That was one of my father's jokes," said Mitchell-Hedges. He'd said it was evil in the hopes of deterring would-be robbers. She called it the "Skull of Love." And it got a whole new lease on life thanks to the burgeoning New Age movement in the 1970s and '80s. "Peter O'Toole once sat with it for four hours," she told a reporter in 1996, "right over there on the carpet—he wanted to lie down." Mitchell-Hedges also bragged that Shirley MacLaine and William Shatner had made the trek to her motel to bask in its power. Science-fiction author Arthur C. Clarke called the Mitchell-Hedges crystal skull "the weirdest gem in the world."

RETURN TO LUBAANTUN

In 1981, when Mitchell-Hedges was 74 years old, she received a call from Bill Homann, a fellow adventurer and a huge admirer of her father. She and Homann became friends, and she later moved in with him in Indiana. In 1989 and again in 1996, they went back to British Honduras (now called Belize) to retrace the footsteps of the 1924 expedition. And in 2002, they were married. (She was 40 years older than him; he explained that they did it so she could be added to his health insurance plan.) For the last eight years of Anna's life, Homann was her primary caregiver and, as he told the *Illinois Times*, "She is my mentor and spiritual leader."

Anna died in 2007 at 100 years old. She attributed her long life to the skull, often telling people, "I take care of it, and it takes care of me." After a brief but contentious custody battle with the Mitchell-Hedges family, the skull was put in Homann's care.

SCREEN GEM

In 2008 Homann was the subject of the Sci-Fi Channel documentary *Mysteries of the Crystal Skull*. Here's how *TV Guide* described it: *Glimmers of ancient civilizations and lost worlds have forever intrigued and tantalized but few ancient mysteries generate quite the fervor of the Crystal Skulls: 13 quartz crystal human skulls, now scattered to the four winds, discovered amid ruins of Mayan and Aztec societies. Legend tells us that should they ever be united, they may unleash untold energy, revealing secrets vital to the survival of humankind.*

The documentary, presented by NBC newsmen Lester Holt, followed Homann through dense jungles to Mayan ruins, scuba diving and spelunking, searching for another crystal skull (to no avail). That was only one of several documentaries that aired that year, all trying to cash in on *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*. The movie follows Indiana Jones to the Amazon jungle in Peru as he looks for a crystal skull, described as "a mind weapon, a new frontier of psychic warfare." Despite lukewarm reviews, the movie grossed nearly \$800 million worldwide. All of a sudden, crystal skulls were all over the news. And then, a few months later when the hype died down, they were gone again.

Until December 2012—that was the month that the world was supposed to end,

Some guinea pigs sleep with their eyes open; others sleep with their eyes closed.

at least according to the ancient Mayan “Long Count” calendar. The only thing that would keep planet Earth from “falling off its axis,” claimed the true believers, was for all 13 crystal skulls to be reunited at a sacred Mayan site.

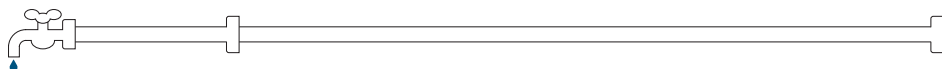
HEAD CASE

Of all the weird news stories related to that “prophecy” in 2012, one of the weirdest was the report of a lawsuit filed on behalf of Dr. Jaime Awe, director of the Institute of Archaeology of Belize. Awe was suing the Mitchell-Hedges estate, demanding they “return the artifact to the people of Belize.” Also being sued were Lucasfilm, Walt Disney Pictures, and Paramount for a cut of the “illegal profits” generated by the stolen skull. “Lucasfilm never sought, nor was given permission to utilize the Mitchell-Hedges Skull or its likeness in the Film,” wrote Adam Tracy, the lawyer who filed the suit. When asked by *LiveScience* if the skull is genuine, Tracy answered, “The government of Belize does not believe the skull is fake. As such, I do not foresee any further testing of the artifact.”

There were a few problems with this lawsuit from the outset. For one, the crystal skull in the movie doesn’t have that much in common with the Mitchell-Hedges skull—it’s larger, milkier in color, and it was found in South America, not Central America. Indiana Jones himself even backs this up in this line of dialogue from the movie: “It isn’t anything like the Mitchell-Hedges skull. Look at the cranium—how it’s elongated at the back.” Another problem: the government of Belize was never in possession of the artifact in the first place, so it didn’t have much legal footing.

But the biggest problem with Dr. Awe’s lawsuit was that Dr. Awe himself didn’t know anything about it! After it was reported in nearly every major news outlet worldwide (that’s what first drew us to this story), Awe said he was approached by some people who told him they could get the skull back, but he told them he wasn’t interested. It turned out that the lawsuit wasn’t even filed in Belize, but in Chicago by Eyezzon Productions. It was a publicity stunt. The organizers—including Awe’s supposed lawyer—were planning to hold a concert on December 21, 2012, in Xunantunich, another Maya site in Belize. The newly returned Mitchell-Hedges crystal skull would be revealed at the end of the concert, and the world would be saved...or something like that. The event never happened. There was very little chance that Belize’s government would ever issue permits for a huge concert to be held at one of their most sensitive and culturally significant sites. As for Dr. Awe—he’s a respected archaeologist with a reputation to maintain. He said he wished to “disassociate” himself from the lawsuit. Besides, he said, he doesn’t even think the crystal skull comes from Belize.

The crystal skull mystery continues on page 329.



An acre of peanuts yields enough peanut butter for 30,000 peanut butter sandwiches.

THE MYSTERY OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL, PART II

Just like their on-screen counterpart, real-life crystal skulls are shrouded in mystery and controversy—none more so than the Mitchell-Hedges crystal skull. (Part I is on page 199.)

THE PLOT THICKENS

Anna Mitchell-Hedges maintained until her 100th year that it was she who found the crystal skull in Belize on her 17th birthday in 1924. Or maybe it was 1926. In most versions, it was “on top of a pyramid,” but other times it was “under a collapsed altar inside a temple.” Her accounts changed over the years—even contradicting her father, who once wrote that he found the skull “in the 1930s.” There’s a lot about Anna’s versions of events that haven’t added up over the years. That’s a habit she picked up from her father.

STORY TIME

Just who was this F. A. Mitchell-Hedges, anyway? His given name was Frederick Albert, but he went by Mike. Born in London in 1882, the self-described “adventurer, traveler, and writer” spoke in a thick British accent and always had a pipe in his mouth. He was rumored to be one of the inspirations for Indiana Jones, but George Lucas, who created the character, has never confirmed that. Mitchell-Hedges’s 1954 autobiography, *Danger My Ally*, doesn’t even mention the word “archaeologist.” In that book and others (with titles like *Battles with Giant Fish*), and on his popular New York–based radio show in the 1930s (with jungle drums beating in the background), Mitchell-Hedges would dramatically detail his harrowing “true stories” of fighting off scary savages, wrestling sea monsters, and discovering the “cradle of civilization” in Nicaragua. Listeners had no way of knowing whether his stories were real, but it was all very entertaining. And just as outlandish as his exploits were the famous friends he claimed he’d made along the way.

After leaving England at 18 (he didn’t want to be a banker like his father), Mitchell-Hedges ended up in New York, where he worked as a stockbroker by day and a high-stakes poker player at night. It was during this time that he may (or may not) have shared a room with noted Marxist Leon Trotsky. He later wrote that Britain’s MI6 wanted him to spy on the Russian revolutionary, but he declined (Trotsky always paid his rent on time, he said).

In 1913, when Mitchell-Hedges was in Mexico looking for work, he told of being captured by the revolutionary general Pancho Villa, who accused him of being a

spy. Standing in front of a firing squad, the adventurer claimed he was able to save himself by singing an “off-key rendition of ‘God Save the King.’” Villa took Mitchell-Hedges under his wing and made him a spy. That’s when the Englishman said he first developed an interest in archaeology. He came to believe that there must be some link between the lost city of Atlantis and the ancient Maya, and he started funding expeditions to discover that link.

It was a few years later, in 1917, when Mitchell-Hedges was in Canada, that a good friend of his died, leaving behind a 10-year-old orphan named Anna. He “informally” adopted her. (But even that story has been disputed; some suspect that F. A. Mitchell-Hedges was Anna’s biological father.)

DANGER HIS ALLY

Piecing together Mitchell-Hedges’s story doesn’t get any easier after reading *Danger My Ally*. The thing he’s most known for only gets one paragraph in the entire manuscript. Next to a page-size photo of the “sinister Skull of Doom” he writes that it...

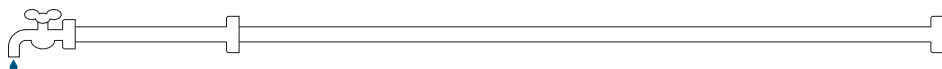
...is made of pure rock crystal and according to scientists it must have taken 150 years, generation after generation working all days of their lives, patiently rubbing down with sand an immense block of rock crystal until the perfect Skull emerged. It is at least 3,600 years old and according to legend was used by the High Priest of the Maya when performing esoteric rites. It is said that when he willed death with the help of the skull, death invariably followed. It has been described as the embodiment of all evil. I do not wish to try and explain this phenomena. How it came into my possession I have reason for not revealing.

Five years later, Mitchell-Hedges died, leaving no more clues behind. And in subsequent printings of *Danger My Ally*, all mentions of the crystal skull were removed. In fact, the only source for Anna’s version of events was Anna herself. Her father wrote a lot about his time in Central America, and he described the artifacts he found there in great detail...with the curious exception of the crystal skull. What was he hiding?

ITEM NO. 54

When actual scientists and historians attempt to trace the story of the crystal skull, the first verifiable account of the rock’s association with the Mitchell-Hedges family doesn’t come until October 15, 1943, when item no. 54 was put on the auction block at Sotheby’s in London. Here’s the listing:

A Superb Life-Size Crystal Carving of a Human Skull, the lower jaw separate, the details are correctly rendered and the carver has given the orbits, zygomatic arches and mastoid processes the similitude of their natural forms, glabellar-occipital.



Technical name for stomach rumbling: *borborygmus*.

A receipt reveals that F. A. Mitchell-Hedges purchased the skull at that auction for £400 (roughly \$5,000 in today's money) from a London antique dealer named Sydney Burney. That would explain why Mitchell-Hedges never mentioned finding the skull on his 1930s radio show—he hadn't even bought it yet.

Anna Mitchell-Hedges didn't deny that her father had purchased the skull at that auction, but she said he was buying it *back*. She claimed that years earlier, when her father needed funds to finance an expedition, he gave the skull to Burney, a childhood friend, as collateral for a loan. Instead of giving it back, however, Burney (or his son) tried to sell it to the highest bidder. When Mitchell-Hedges got wind of it, he “was so furious that for a while he was unable to speak.” He called the auction house and told them to call off the sale; they refused, so he went there and bought it back himself. That was Anna's story, and she stuck to it.

CASTING DOUBT

Of the numerous scholars, scientists, and skeptics who question the veracity of Mitchell-Hedges's claims about the skull, the most vocal is Joe Nickell, a senior research fellow with the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. “It's clear her father bought it off a collector,” he wrote in the 1988 book *Secrets of the Supernatural*. Nickell points to a letter that Sydney Burney had written a decade prior to that auction: “The rock-crystal skull was for several years in the possession of the collector from whom I bought it, and he in his turn had it from an Englishman in whose collection it had been also for several years.” The only actual “evidence” that F. A. Mitchell-Hedges had the skull prior to that auction was a 1999 report by a British inn owner who said the explorer and his daughter had the skull with them when they stayed there in the early 1930s.

After all the conflicting origin stories, it becomes more and more difficult to say for certain that the crystal skull is genuine, but that hasn't stopped true believers from saying it is. “While its history may be somewhat controversial,” says the website CrystalSkulls.com, “the fact remains that the Mitchell-Hedges Crystal Skull is a true so called ‘out-of-place-artifact’—meaning that despite the most evolved research, including extensive laboratory examination by Silicon Valley's Hewlett-Packard, no one has been able to prove it is a hoax.”

A TIP FROM UNCLE JOHN

According to the Archaeological Institute of America, if you find an artifact in your backyard, try not to move it. If you have to, take photos of it first, and then call your state's archaeology office (every state has one) and they will send someone to authenticate it.

The end? Not really. To hear what modern science has to say about the Mitchell-Hedges crystal skull—and what it's been up to in recent years—fund an expedition over to page 436.

THE MYSTERY OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL, PART III

When last we visited the convoluted capers of the crystalline cranium, the occultists continued to cling to the conclusion that this cheeky chunk of quartz is indeed a magical Mayan remnant. (Part II is on page 329.)

THE LAB CRUSADE

“[The skull] is not powerful, not scary, and not at all what it purports to be.” That’s the conclusion of Jane MacLaren Walsh, an anthropologist at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C. She’s been studying Mesoamerican cultures and artifacts since the early 1990s. In November 2007, after Anna Mitchell-Hedges died, Walsh was finally able to get a good look at the purported “pre-Columbian artifact” (thanks to a loan from skull-keeper Bill Homann). Working with the British Museum, Walsh and her fellow scientists threw everything they had at the Mitchell-Hedges skull: electron microscopy, X-ray crystallography, computerized tomography, ultraviolet light, and more—including poring through everything they could find that was said or written by F. A. and Anna Mitchell-Hedges. After all was said and done, the scientists determined that the Mitchell-Hedges crystal skull “was probably made in Europe in the 20th century.”

Walsh’s findings are similar to those made five years earlier by Professor Ian Freestone of Cardiff University in Wales, who studied another crystal skull, supposedly Aztec in origin, that was sold to the British Museum in 1897. His analysis concluded that that skull was “probably made in 19th century Europe from a lump of poor quality Brazilian crystal.”

MYTHS & FINDINGS

Now that the scientists, historians, and theists have had ample opportunity to study the skull, here’s some of what they’ve found out.

Myth: The Mitchell-Hedges crystal skull was polished by hand using sand.

Findings: It was made by modern jeweler’s equipment. The obsidian tools the Mayans used to make much of their artwork would have left marks in the quartz crystal that could be detected by a microscope, as virtually every other Mesoamerican artifact does. Tests have shown that the skull was made using a “wheeled instrument” that bore the “tell-tale signature of a metal tool augmented by diamond.”

Myth: The Mitchell-Hedges skull is unique.

Findings: According to Walsh, it's "a veritable copy of the British Museum skull, with stylistic and technical flourishes that only an accomplished faker would devise." The only difference between the two is that the eyes and teeth of the Mitchell-Hedges skull are more detailed.

Myth: The skull's ambient surface temperature is a constant 70° Fahrenheit, proving that it has some kind of internal power source.

Findings: It behaves no differently than any other chunk of quartz. Frank Dorland disproved that rumor at Hewlett-Packard back in 1970, but it still persists today.

Myth: The crystal skull is modeled after an ancient Mesoamerican person (or god).

Findings: A forensic artist named Gloria Nusse made a facial reconstruction based on the skull's features and concluded that the model was most likely a "young European woman."

Myth: The crystal skull is the product of "five generations of skilled craftsmen" and is "impossible to replicate, even with modern machinery."

Findings: *National Geographic* hired a crystal artist named Barry Liu to make an exact replica of the Mitchell-Hedges skull. He did it in eight days.

Myth: Ancient Mayans and Aztecs worshipped crystal skulls.

Findings: They didn't. In his book *Dream Catchers: How Mainstream America Discovered Native Spirituality*, historian Philip Jenkins writes that crystal skulls weren't really a thing until 19th-century Europe; they are merely "products of a generation of creative spiritual entrepreneurs." Skeptic Joe Nickell puts it even more bluntly: "The chief power of the skulls seems to be that of attracting the credulous, including some with fantasy-prone personalities, and transporting them to a mystical realm from which they return with addled senses. It seems likely that further revelations about the crystal skulls will best come, not from channeling sessions, but from science and scholarship."

WHAT HAPPENED AT LUBAANTUN

Perhaps the tallest tale of all is that Anna Mitchell-Hedges found the skull while on an expedition with her father to British Honduras (now Belize) in 1924. She said she could prove she was there because, when she returned to Lubaantun in 1989, some of the Mayans recognized her. What other proof does she have? None. "All my father's papers," she told a reporter in 1983, "were lost in Hatteras during a cyclone—photographs and all."

That doesn't explain why none of the other members of F. A. Mitchell-Hedges's Central American expeditions ever mentioned him finding the crystal skull, or why none of them could verify that Anna was ever there with him. The existing photographs (the ones that didn't get lost in a cyclone) don't show the skull or Anna.

According to the *Skeptical Inquirer*, an archaeologist named Dr. John Morris went to Belize to try and retrace Anna's steps, but he "couldn't find any of the tunnels or passages she described." So why make up such a fantastical account? Because the real origin of the crystal skull is a lot less glamorous.

THE REAL ORIGIN

In late 19th-century Europe, Mesoamerican artifacts were all the rage. Wealthy adventurers—the same types who went on African safaris to bring home big game treasures—funded expensive expeditions, where they basically pilfered sacred sites for trinkets and artifacts that they sold for a tidy profit to museums and collectors. It was such a booming business that Mexican—and later European—jewelers started making and selling fake ancient artifacts. Even then, these fakes riled science-minded archaeologists such as the Smithsonian's William Henry Holmes, who wrote as early as 1886 that it is easy for "a native artisan to imitate any of the older forms of ware [ceramics]; and there is no doubt that in many cases he has done so for the purpose of deceiving."

Despite archaeologists' warnings, newly made crystal skulls were readily passed off as ancient Mayan and Aztec in origin, even though they bore little resemblance to real artifacts made by those cultures. But most collectors didn't know that. As far as they were concerned, they had in their possession an impressive conversation piece that "the natives believe hold magical powers." According to anthropologist Jane MacLaren Walsh, "The first generation of fakes were made in Mexico...between 1856 and 1880. This 24-year period may represent the output of a single artisan, or perhaps a single workshop." Then European fakers got in on the act. One of these skulls was put on display at the British Museum in 1898. Sometime in the 1920s or '30s, a German jeweler—most likely in the town of Idar-Oberstein, which is known for its stunning quartz artworks—made a copy of that skull. The forged artifact then changed hands a few times before F. A. Mitchell-Hedges purchased it in London in 1943.

CRYSTAL CLEAR

Just because the crystal skull isn't a magical object brought to Atlantis by aliens doesn't mean it's not an amazing piece of craftsmanship. Even skeptics marvel at it. Here are some of its stats:

- **Material:** The Mitchell-Hedges crystal skull was made from a single block of clear quartz "rock crystal." The lower jaw, which is detached, was made from the same block.
- **Age:** It's most likely less than a century old. Unfortunately, as the British Museum explains, "Contrary to popular belief, there are no satisfactory scientific techniques which can be used to accurately establish when a stone object was carved."



High-definition TV has a higher frame rate than old TVs, which means dogs can tell what's happening on-screen now.

- **Weight:** 11 pounds, 7 ounces. (A real human skull weighs about two pounds.)
- **Dimensions:** 7 inches long, 5 inches wide, and 5 inches high. The skull is anatomically accurate, but smaller than that of an adult.
- **Value:** It's difficult to come up with a dollar amount—there isn't really a going price for, as Joe Nickell described it, “an ancient artifact that's not really ancient but still has some interesting history.” F. A. Mitchell-Hedges paid about the equivalent of \$5,000 in today's money for it. An appraisal in the 1970s—when it was still thought to be a genuine ancient Mayan artifact—valued it at \$500,000. But after Anna Mitchell-Hedges died in 2007, the skull was appraised for a paltry \$3,000. If it were to actually go on the auction block, its status as the most famous crystal skull in the world *could* spark a competitive bidding war, but another auction doesn't seem to be the fate of this crystal skull.

DON'T STOP BELIEVING

Those who truly believe in the “mystical properties” of crystal skulls are unlikely to be dissuaded by scientific evidence. The going argument among the faithful is that the reason the Mitchell-Hedges crystal skull doesn't look like anything else the Mayans or Aztecs made is because it was made by even more ancient peoples, using alien technology too advanced for modern scientists to understand. According to author and “Crystal Skull Explorer” Joshua Shapiro, who claims to have searched Central and South America for the rest of the fabled 13, “The crystal skulls, in my opinion, are the ancient computers which have stored special and important wisdom and knowledge that humanity can access to help us create a peaceful world.”

And even though Bill Homann made the skull available for scientific study, he says he still believes in its power, and he still honors the woman who entrusted it to him. According to Crystalskulls.com, Homann is “carrying out the wishes of Anna Mitchell-Hedges as he travels around the world making the famous crystal skull available directly to the public, instead of having it reside behind glass in a museum.” There hasn't been much news about the skull in the last few years, but we did find this October 2017 Facebook announcement for a one-day event in Bellingham, Washington:

NEWS FLASH: This is your special opportunity to have one of the most amazing experiences you may ever know, to encounter the most famous skull in the world, known as the Mitchell-Hedges Crystal Skull and the guardian Bill Homann. Could this skull be the lost skull of Atlantis?

PRIVATE VIEWING SESSIONS: 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. — \$25 for 15 minutes.