

SPECIAL EVENTS

Kaye Oberhausen

In November 2007 I had the pleasure of joining the Oriental Institute as Special Events Coordinator working with Monica Witczak and Sarah Sapperstein in the Development/Membership Office. I have already had a busy eight months here at the Oriental Institute and am looking forward to the year ahead as I plan our ninetieth Jubilee Gala (mark your calendars for May 6, 2009) and countless other academic and membership/development events.

Winter 2007–2008

In December 2007 we honored Professor Gregory Areshian for his generous donation to the Oriental Institute of books relating to the archaeology and ancient languages of the Caucasus. The newly dedicated Gregory Areshian Collection can be found in the Research Archives and will continue to educate and inform students, faculty, and researchers for years to come. Thanks to Gil Stein, Foy Scalf, and Adam Smith for speaking so eloquently at the dedication ceremony, and, of course, special thanks to Professor Areshian for his generous donation.

In January we partnered with the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut and the German Consul General to bring Dr. Felix Pirson, First Director of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Istanbul Section, to the Oriental Institute. His lecture entitled “The Hellenistic Capital Pergamon and its Harbour City Elaia” brought a new and interested crowd to Breasted Hall. Special thanks to the German Consul General for making this event a success.

We also celebrated Professors Robert Biggs and Gene Gragg in January to mark the publication of their festschriften. Over seventy-five guests attended to toast both Bob and Gene on this accomplishment in their academic careers. Special thanks to both Martha Roth and Cynthia Miller for giving toasts to the guests of honor, and congratulations to Professors Biggs and Gragg on this momentous occasion.

In March I had the opportunity to help plan the fourth annual Post-Doctoral Seminar with Mariana Perlinac, Assistant to the Director, and Jeffrey Szuchman, Post-Doctoral Scholar. Jeff brought an interesting and varied group of scholars from around the globe to the Oriental Institute for this two-day conference to discuss “Nomads, Tribes, and the State in the Ancient Near East.” The scholars and attendees enjoyed both lectures and discussion sessions that enabled the participants to delve deeper into the research of this conference. Special thanks to Mariana for her hard work and dedication when arranging travel and accommodations for all the scholars. I also cannot thank Jeff Szuchman enough for his patience and guidance when planning this conference. Jeff has been wonderful to work with and I wish him nothing but the best in his future endeavors!

Spring 2008

On Thursday, April 10, the Oriental Institute Museum opened its newest special exhibit, *Catastrophe! The Looting and Destruction of Iraq’s Past*, co-curated by Professor McGuire Gibson and graduate student Katharyn Hanson. The opening of the exhibit coincided with the five-year anniversary of the looting of the Iraq National Museum in Baghdad and was a poignant way to remember the destruction that has taken place — and is currently taking place — in Iraq. The

SPECIAL EVENTS



*Guests at the reception held in the Oriental Institute Research Archives for the opening of the special exhibit **Catastrophe! The Looting and Destruction of Iraq's Past.** Photo by Anna Ressman*

evening began with a members' reception in the Research Archives, where a record crowd came out for appetizers and wine before the lecture. Thanks again to Foy Scalf, Head of the Research Archives, for allowing us to host our members in this beautiful space. McGuire Gibson, Professor of Mesopotamian Archaeology, continued the evening's events with a lecture in Breasted Hall entitled "The Destruction of Iraq's Cultural Heritage: The View from Five Years On," with over 170 in attendance. Professor Gibson outlined the destruction of the Iraq Museum on those fateful days in 2003 and gave an update on the current condition and future of the Museum. He also spoke about the ongoing destruction of the archaeological sites located throughout the country and how the looting is causing significant damage to the contextual understanding of the past. Professor Gibson finished the lecture by inviting people to visit the special exhibit and outlining ways they can get involved to help make a difference in this matter. The audience then had a chance to have the first viewing of the exhibit before the night's events ended with a vigil in the Yelda Khorsabad Court. The moment of silence to pay respect to the destruction that has occurred in Iraq, organized in conjunction with SAFE/Saving Antiquities for Everyone, was a fitting way to end the evening. Donny George, former Director of the Iraq Museum, gave a very emotional account of the days following the looting and thanked everyone for their ongoing support. Thanks to Gil Stein, Geoff Emberling, McGuire Gibson, Katharyn Hanson, Emily Teeter, Erik Lindahl, Tom James, Sarah Sapperstein, Monica Witczak, Steve Camp, Donny George, Foy Scalf, Mariana Perlinac, and Cindy Ho and all the members of SAFE/Saving Antiquities for Everyone.

In late April we invited our Breasted Society Members and their guests to be the first to hear about the results of the 2007 Nubian Expedition and the latest discoveries in ancient Kush. Geoff Emberling, Museum Director and Co-Director of the Nubian Expedition, spoke about the work he and his team did earlier that winter near the Fourth Cataract of the Nile. They went to this region

of Sudan to rescue sites before the area is flooded due to the construction of a dam. The lecture focused on a large cemetery containing over 100 burials of the early Kingdom of Kush (2000–1500 B.C.). Many thanks to Geoff for his engaging lecture, and thanks to the many members of the Nubian Expedition team for attending this event and enhancing the conversation at the reception with our Breasted Society members.

During the first three days of May the Oriental Institute was a bustle of activity as we welcomed the conference on Eurasian Archaeology into Breasted Hall. The Department of Anthropology brought in many speakers to talk about Regimes and Revolutions: Power, Violence, and Labor in Eurasia Between the Ancient and the Modern. Many thanks to Adam Smith and Charles Hartley of the Department of Anthropology for working so easily with the Oriental Institute to make this event a success. Also, thanks to Mariana Perlinac, who always provides a wonderful helping hand.

May also brought an event of mixed emotions when we wished Peter Dorman farewell from the Oriental Institute. Peter has accepted the role of President of the American University in Beirut, Lebanon. Peter has been an Associate Professor of Egyptology for twenty years and has been the head of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations since 2002. He is a wonderful colleague and friend and will be sadly missed around the halls of the Institute, but we wish him nothing but the best in his exciting future endeavors. Many thanks to NELC, the Humanities Department, and the Oriental Institute for making this a wonderful celebration for Peter. Also thanks to Paula Manzuk for all her help in making this event a success, along with all of the speakers who so beautifully wished Peter a fond farewell.

In June a brand new event was held on our off-gala year, entitled Passport to the Middle East: Desserts in the Desert. This wine-and-dessert tasting was held in the Oriental Institute Museum galleries and Research Archives and encouraged attendees to mingle with scholars, staff, and other Institute employees. Over 160 people attended the event and \$6,000 was raised that will go to directly support the mission of the Institute. Eighteen of our scholars graciously became our



Dr. Matt Stolper and Dr. Emily Teeter (in distance) pour wine to attendees of the wine-and-dessert event Passport to the Middle East: Desserts in the Desert, June 11, 2008. Photo by Kaye Oberhausen

SPECIAL EVENTS

sommeliers for the evening, and while pouring, talked at a personal level about specific projects they are working on and topics of the ancient Near East. Tours of the Institute, given by François Gaudard, Norman Golb, and Katharyn Hanson, were wildly successful. This event could not have been possible without the generous support from Treasure Island Foods, our sponsor for the evening. They provided beautiful spreads of cheeses, desserts, and fruit, as well as all the wine for the evening. Andrea Dudek, Visiting Committee and Events Committee Member, donated two David Roberts lithograph prints that were raffled to an excited crowd; thanks so much to Andrea for donating these prints to the event. I also cannot thank enough the members of the Visiting Committee Events Committee for their cheerful hard work and invaluable advice when planning my first large-scale event here at the Institute. Special thanks to Debby Halpern, Gretel Braidwood, Andrea Dudek, and Mari Terman for volunteering at the event. Also, many thanks to all those who poured wine at the event: Steve Camp, Geoff Emberling, François Gaudard, Petra Goedegebuure, Norman Golb, Katharyn Hanson, Tom James, Ray Johnson, Kathleen Mineck, Clemens Reichel, John Sanders, David Schloen, Gil Stein, Matthew Stolper, Emily Teeter, Ray Tindel, Theo van den Hout, and Christopher Woods. Many thanks are also due to the countless volunteers and staff who helped me immensely throughout the entire evening — this event would not have been possible without you. Lastly, I would like to thank Monica Witczak, Sarah Sapperstein, Gil Stein, Steve Camp, Mariana Perlinac, D’Ann Condes, and Carla Hosein for all their help and support as I planned this event. It is a group effort to make events like these possible; I am so fortunate to have such a wonderful group in the administrative offices to turn to.

The last event of the fiscal year was a very nice tribute and lunch for Jean Grant, former photographer of the Oriental Institute. Jean dedicated 34 years of service to the Oriental Institute. John Larson, Oriental Institute Museum Archivist, gave a wonderful slide presentation in Breasted Hall highlighting Jean’s work, followed by a lunch in the LaSalle Banks Room. Faculty, staff, volunteers, and friends all came to thank Jean for her many years of dedicated service to the Institute. Special thanks to Cathy Dueñas and Terry Friedman who helped make the event very special for Jean. Also, thanks to John Larson for providing such a special retrospective of Jean’s work. Lastly, a very large thank you to Mariana Perlinac for helping to secure the lunch with me, and Monica Witczak for going out of her way to get special requests fulfilled.

Along with special events I have also taken on a marketing role here at the Oriental Institute. In April we were fortunate to have the Graduate School of Business (GSB) choose us for their Social Entrepreneurship Lab. This brought a highly motivated team of six to the Institute to learn about all the facets of marketing taking place here at the Oriental Institute, and to determine how we can improve our current efforts to expand and reach out to more of the Chicagoland community and beyond. For ten weeks the dedicated team analyzed our current situation and at the end presented us with a detailed report of future steps we can take to help market the Oriental Institute and ways to consolidate our current efforts. Many thanks to Toni Sandor Smith, Visiting Committee member, for recommending the Oriental Institute for the GSB lab class, and Linda Darragh, Adjunct Professor of Entrepreneurship, for choosing the Institute to be a part of this valuable experience. Also, thanks to all the Institute staff who took time out to meet with the team to give them a well-rounded view of the Institute. A heartfelt thanks to the team — Armin Afshar, Jessica Bliesner, Althea Cruz, Helen Douvogiannis, Norbert Ng’ethe, and Lotika Pai — for being absolutely wonderful to work with and for presenting a detailed and comprehensive report to us so we can begin taking thoughtful steps toward marketing the Oriental Institute.

I cannot begin to thank everyone at the Oriental Institute for making my transition here as smooth as possible. Coming into a brand-new position is never easy, but I have received a massive amount of encouragement and support as I define my role here. Thanks to Mariana Perlinac,

who is consistently going above and beyond to help me in countless ways. Also thanks to Carla Hosein and D'Ann Condes who are both so patient and kind. A special thanks to Monica Witczak and Sarah Sapperstein, who have both provided wonderful guidance to me as I learn the ropes. Last, but certainly not least, thanks to Gil Stein and Steve Camp for supporting and encouraging me as I continue to take a more active role here at the Institute. I could not have asked for a better environment to work in, and I look forward to the year ahead as we continue to offer more exciting and educational opportunities for our members and the community.
