

OI NEWSLETTER - FIRST MONDAY - JUNE 2002

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COMPUTER LAB / John Sanders

My biggest concern in May was the change in the university's authentication methods for accessing the NSIT unix cluster computers (harper, midway, home, etc.). It was a rocky transition because of some unforeseen issues that caused major disruptions in NSIT email service for almost 2 weeks. And email was not supposed to be a part of this spring's alterations (NSIT email changes are scheduled for next fall). University email is stable now, but one part of the planned May switch in authentication, that dealing with FTP access, will not start until June 15th.

Computer Lab assistant Katherine Strange Burke finished processing and markup for 34 News&Notes articles, going back to Issue 122 (Jan.-Feb. 1990), and I will be placing them on the website during the first week of June. Check the What's New page for links to these old gems! Eight or ten more are in the text processing and scanning stages, as well, and will go up on the website over the summer.

I set up the first Macintosh System X computer in the building the last week of May. It is for the APIS Project (Advanced Papyrological Information System), and will temporarily be set up in the Computer Lab for Hratch Papazian use. Over the summer I will become very familiar with this newest, unix-based, Macintosh operating system - as it is the future for all Macintosh computers. Getting old System 9 fonts to work with System X is a critical issue we must resolve, but I plan to load System X on two of the three Mac's in the Lab over the summer so that people can come down and take a test drive.

I plan on purchasing updated versions of several widely used software programs for the Lab after July 1, for both the Macintosh and Windows platforms: Photoshop 7, Illustrator 10, OmniPage OCR software, as well as the Microsoft Office suite of programs, Netscape, and Internet Explorer. A new flatbed scanner and at least one new computer are also being considered. The Lab will have more productivity potential next fall when everyone returns. See you then...

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DEVELOPMENT / Tim Cashion

Romancing the Past 2002, the Oriental Institute's benefit, was held at the Drake Hotel on May 10. The evening's speaker was Israel Finkelstein of Tel Aviv University, and the James Henry Breasted Medallion was awarded by President Randel to Albert F. (Bud) Haas, in recognition of his service to and support of the Institute over many decades.

As of June 1, net proceeds from the dinner itself are \$78,000.00, which will be directed to reinstallation of the galleries. This figure will rise once the live and silent auction totals are calculated. The live auction consisted of two items: a dinner with incoming Director Gil J. Stein (won by Roger and Midge Nelson) and a week at Hamoukar in Syria (won by Anthony and Lawrie Dean).

Anyone wishing a copy or copies of the program can contact me and I will be happy to provide them. Additionally, the commemorative coaster seems to have been a big hit this year, and I will be happy to supply those for any who wish them.

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MUSEUM - STATISTICS / Carla Hosein

Museum attendance for May (as of Wednesday, May 29th) totaled 2,775 visitors. Breasted Hall was fairly quiet this past month, but McGuire Gibson's Member Lecture on May 22nd brought in 44 avid listeners.

Also, there will be a new Projectionist working with us in Breasted Hall this summer. His name is Robert Gilmor and he'll be starting on June 5th. If you see him around please say hello.

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PUBLICATIONS / Tom Urban

OIP 119, John Darnell's first volume of rock inscriptions from the Theban Desert Roads, is in Chicago. A delivery attempt was made Friday 31 May, but the truck was too big and we sent it away and asked for a smaller truck with a lift gate. The next attempt at delivery could occur at any time.

OIP 118, Emily Teeter's book on scarab's from Medinet Habu, is in the final stages of layout. We had hoped to have it ready for press before 1 July, but it now looks as though 1 August would have been a better guess.

OIP 120, Abbas Alizadeh's book on the excavations at Chogha Bonut, is well on its way. All of the artwork has been scanned and the figures and plates are being put together in PageMaker. Since Abbas will be away for a year, we'll send him page proofs via email in the form of PDF files.

OIP 121, Markus Hilgert's second book on Ur III economic texts, is also well on its way. The artwork is being scanned by our student help, who will then create the plate section. The text, long ago converted from Tex (or whatever that application is called) into Microsoft Word and all in one font (Lloyd Anderson's AssyrianTrAbc, which works on both Mac and Windows computers), was sent to Markus via email and he cleaned up some of the very few conversion problems, slightly revised a portion of it, and returned it. Since Markus uses a Windows computer and we use Macs, it was pretty neat to see the cross platform font actually work. The font, however, is not easy to use on a Mac; on a Windows computer it's easy.

OIP 122, David Weisberg's book on Neo-Babylonian texts, is in the early stages of production. Some of the artwork has been scanned. The first task to undertake is the conversion of the Windows fonts to Mac fonts. We hope to do this during the next month and to send the author a proof for him to check.

Over the summer we hope to have two or three student helpers.

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RESEARCH ARCHIVES / Chuck Jones

#### ON-LINE CATALOGUE -

The Research Archives catalogue currently includes just under 111,000 records. The cataloguing of both current acquisitions and retrospective materials proceeds.

The on-line version of the catalogue attracts about four thousand visitors per month, and serves about seven hundred queries each day. In the nine hundred days it has been in operation it has had 31,714 discreet visitors, of whom 5,798 are regular users.

#### ELECTRONIC WORKS IN PROGRESS -

I am working towards the publication on-line of two new tools for local users. Comments and suggestions on either or both of them will be gratefully received.

1) Ancient Near Eastern Desk Reference: This will include links to all the networked resources focusing on ancient Near Eastern studies and available to University of Chicago users because of licensing agreements. This will include all the appropriate periodicals on-line as well as useful bibliographies, databases and other publications. A preliminary (and developing) version is accessible, for the time being at: <http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/deskref.html>

2) Dissertations in Ancient Near Eastern Studies in the collection of the Research Archives: I am experimenting with ways to make the .pdf dissertation collection accessible to Research Archives users more effectively. At the URL

below, I give full bibliographical references and links to .pdf copies of fifty recently acquired electronic dissertations. I think this is a better solution than burning them on to CD-ROMS and making them available on a single workstation in the reading room. It is also slightly simpler than going by way of Reg./UMI/ProQuest. As most of you presumably already know, the Research Archives no longer acquires (except in unusual circumstances, such as those from our own NELC) North American dissertations on paper. These 50 titles represent a saving of nearly ten feet of shelf space, and of about \$2000 from the budget: <http://oilib.uchicago.edu/diss.html>

ETANA-

The new version of Abzu is nearly ready for public launch.

<http://www.etana.org/abzu/>

It is now a fully searchable index of more than fourteen thousand links to free on-line ancient Near Eastern resources, documents, web-sites, and publications. I'd appreciate comments.

This week we expect to ship more than sixty volumes from the Research Archives collections to ETANA for processing into the Core Texts component of the project. For more information on ETANA Core Texts see:

<http://www.etana.org/coretexts.shtml>

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PROJECTS

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CHD / Theo van den Hout

In May the first installment of the S-volume of the Chicago Hittite Dictionary came out: thanks to the great work done by our Publications Office it looks wonderful. Meanwhile work on the second fascicle continues which should have roughly the same size as S/1 (208pp.).

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INDIVIDUALS

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ABBAS ALIZADEH

As you may know, the Oriental Institute Iranian Prehistoric Project, with cooperation of the Department of Anthropology (Nick Kouchoukos), will begin its first season of excavations in the province of Ilam, southwestern Iran, in September 2002. We plan to excavate two sites and conduct a regional survey in this archaeologically terra incognita. One of the sites (Chogha Golan) is aceramic, dating to the very early Neolithic period. We hope to find evidence for the transition from hunting-gathering way of life to domestication of animals and plants. The other site (Chogha Ahovan) dates from the early Neolithic to the end of the Late Uruk period. This site will complement the material from the older site in that we can trace the cultural development in the region for several millennia.

Since this is our first season, I am leaving early to build our dig house, or renovate an old military hotel in the town of Mehran. In the third week of June 2002, I am also participating in a meeting in Tehran of international scholars

(6 from U of C) to organize a conference on Iranian studies in the summer of 2003 in Tehran.

At the request of the Iranian National Museum, and with the kind permission of Oriental Institute Director Gene Gragg, I have taken 6 months leave-of-absence to classify and organize the museum's collections from various surveys and excavations that they have accumulated for more than 50 years. I will be back in June 2003. While I am gone, I can be contacted through my regular E-mail address: alizadeh@babylon-orinst.uchicago.edu

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FRED DONNER

I just returned from five weeks (April 15-May 20) in the Near East, where I touched base with numerous colleagues and tried to do a bit of writing in relative isolation, away from the constant intrusion of the telephone and e-mail (I had 730 e-mails awaiting me on my return!). I spent about one week in Amman, Jordan, at the American Center for Oriental Research (ACOR), where I had spent part of last year writing, and found it as ever a comfortable place to work and very conducive to writing. I then moved to Beirut for three weeks, where I took a furnished flat near the American University of Beirut and used AUB's fine library. A final week was spent in Damascus.

I did manage to get some writing done--I am attempting to rough out the remaining chapter of a relatively short book on Islam's beginnings, intended for the general reader and undergraduate student. But my visit was most interesting because of the current political situation. I never experienced any hostility against myself as an American, everyone was always unfailingly polite (and I was certainly not inclined to defend America's foreign policy in the region!), but it was obvious that resentment against our government's policies (rather than against Americans as such) was very deep. The news footage that played on TV stations--not just local stations, but also BBC and European stations--of what was happening in Palestine was ghastly, but since I was away I could not tell whether Americans in the US were seeing the same footage--if so, why was there not more outrage expressed here? In view of the images of destruction in places like Jenin and Nablus that were widespread there, however, it is easy to imagine why, to take one example, President Bush's comment that Prime Minister Sharon is "a man of peace" was met in the Arab countries with disbelief, and taken as evidence that our President is utterly clueless (most people there assume in light of such comments that Bush is simply kept in the dark by a clique of Zionist advisers). Traveling about the region, I increasingly got the impression that our government's current policies (or lack of them) undermine any hope of restoring America's official image in the region as a champion of fairness and peace. It will remain up to people like us--scholars who work on the region and have good relations with our counterparts there--to keep lines of communication open and preserve at least a modicum of goodwill. But, in the aftermath of Mr. Sharon's reckless military tantrum in the West Bank, I am--despite my usual optimism-- now personally doubtful that a real peace can be attained any time soon between Israelis and Palestinians; instead, I fear that we may be facing many, many decades of continued hostility, political instability (including, possibly, the fall of governments), destruction of property and historical monuments, and grievous loss of life on all sides.

The opinions expressed above are, of course, strictly my own and not those of the Oriental Institute or anyone else affiliated with it.

During the coming summer, I will be joining Prof. Kenneth R. Hall of Ball State University, a specialist in the history of Southeast Asia, in leading an NEH Summer Institute for college and university faculty on the subject of "Legitimation of Early Islamic States: Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa." This six-week Institute will run from June 24 until August 2, and will bring to the University of Chicago campus about 25 colleagues from diverse institutions around the country to look into this subject. So I will be busy! The end of my term as chairman of NELC on June 30 will, I hope, help me to concentrate on the reading, research, and writing--and teaching--that I have found it difficult to pursue to my satisfaction over the past five years.

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GENE GRAGG

Gene Gragg is pleased to announce that he will be on leave of absence for the academic year 2002-03, will be working on the Cushitic-Afroasiatic Index project (and various OI digital text and reference tool projects) in Chicago and Paris. He will be back in regular residence in fall 2003.

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HARRY HOFFNER

I'll make this short and sweet. On Sunday, June 2nd, I'll fly to Turkey to be interviewed on camera at Boghazköy for the production of a film on the Hittites. I will return on June 12th. The producer of the film, Tolga Örnek, is a bright young Turkish movie maker. Theo van den Hout will also be part of the filming, but several weeks later in the summer than I. Other CHD-related people taking part are Gary Beckman and Billie Jean Collins. Other Hittitologists taking part are Trevor Bryce and David Hawkins. While in Turkey I plan to use my new digital still camera to take home shots of interesting new parts of the excavations.

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WALTER KAEGI

Walter Kaegi contributed a paper entitled "The Earliest Muslim Penetrations of Anatolia" to the forthcoming Nicolas Oikonomides Memorial Volume, Athens, Greece.

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EMILY TEETER

In early June, Emily will attend the annual meeting of the International Committee for Egyptology, a subgroup of ICOM/UNESCO for curators of Egyptian collections. The meeting, which is hosted by the National Museum in Warsaw, will

be preceded by a program in Moscow with a special viewing of the reserve collections of the Pushkin Museum.

Last month, Emily travelled to Chapel Hill to give a lecture on popular religion in ancient Egypt for the University of Chicago Alumni Society.

A catalogue for the exhibit "The Quest for Immortality" was recently published with several entries by Emily. There is much speculation whether this exhibit of objects from the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, will actually materialize. It was scheduled to open at the National Gallery on May 17, 2002 but the final contracts have yet to be signed. The publication could become another collectors' item in the tradition of the catalogues for "shows that did not show" prepared by Edward Terrace in 1970 and Bob Bianchi in 1996.

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JASON UR

I've spent the last month preparing three articles for publication. The first is a section of an article on the differences in survey methodologies and site recovery rates between intensive surveys in the Middle East and the Mediterranean, written by Tony Wilkinson and including a section by Jesse Casana as well. The second is a short article on the use of CORONA satellite imagery in mapping ancient road networks, to be sent to Antiquity. The final one is the preliminary report on the 2000-2001 seasons of the Tell Hamoukar Survey, which will be included in the blockbuster All-Hamoukar issue of Akkadica.

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THEO VAN DEN HOUT

Last quarter has been an extremely busy quarter with the Ancient Near Eastern History sequence which I co-taught with David Schloen. The first 5 weeks were devoted to Anatolia. After a one-class introduction by Aslihan Yener on Anatolian prehistory we covered the history of Anatolia from roughly 2000 BC up to Alexander. Kathleen Mineck, besides helping me in many other ways, gave a great lecture on Hittite art and religion.

Great fun also was the Hurrian class (with Gene Gragg) with some 8 students among whom one undergraduate; after having gone over the grammar we read portions of the Mittani Letter, the Tis-atal inscription, parts of the Hurrian(-Hittite) bilingual from Bogazköy, a Hurrian hymn from Bogazköy, a fragment from the Kumarbi cycle, also from Bogazköy, and an incantation against red boils from Tuttul, recently published (brought to my attention by Chuck Jones). The students also presented texts: Jake Lauinger an Akkadian-Hurrian bilingual found in Ugarit, Ed Stratford an offering list to Astarte likewise from Ugarit and Dennis Campbell another Bogazköy-Hurrian hymn. All these texts, especially the more difficult ones, gave rise to lively discussions on grammatical and textual interpretations.

Apart from two short stays in Turkey, each a week long, in June and September I will be around for most of the summer.

