

OI NEWSLETTER - FIRST MONDAY - FEBRUARY 2003

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- SANDY SCHLOEN
- EMILY TEETER
- JASON UR

AS OTHERS SEE US

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FROM THE DIRECTOR / Gil Stein

I am delighted to welcome Stephen P. Harvey to the Faculty of the Oriental Institute and the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Steve joined us at the beginning of the Winter Quarter, gave the January Members Lecture, and is teaching a full complement of courses on Egyptian Archaeology. A report on his recent and continuing research activities appears below. If you haven't already done so, please stop by his office (OI 225) and welcome him in person!

Memorial Service for the Braidwoods

A memorial service for Robert and Linda Braidwood will be held in Rockefeller Chapel on Sunday April 13 at 3:30 PM. The service is open to all who wish to attend.

January Staff Meeting

A persistent issue one hears voiced is that of poor communication within the Oriental Institute. In order to start addressing this issue, a meeting of all OI staff and faculty was held in the La Salle Banks room on January 9th. We discussed the administrative structure of the OI, plans and future directions, and ways to improve communication within the OI. This was also an opportunity for people to raise issues of concern and questions for me as the new OI

director. We agreed that these meetings were useful for all concerned, and decided to have an open meeting in this format once per quarter.

Landscape Archaeology Workshop at the Oriental Institute

Focused conferences devoted to key theoretical and methodological issues are one of the best ways for the Oriental Institute to define its role as the premier world center for research and innovation in studies of ancient civilizations. We saw an ideal example of this process last weekend (Jan. 31-Feb. 2), when Tony Wilkinson and Nick Kouchoukos organized and convened a workshop on "Landscape Archaeology in Greater Mesopotamia: Achievements, Prospects, and Directions". In what I hope will be the beginning of many similar collaborations, the workshop was co-sponsored by The Oriental Institute, the University of Chicago Anthropology Department, and the Interdisciplinary Archaeology Workshop.

The workshop was intended to define new standards for conducting archaeological survey in the Near East, so as to maximize comparability between projects in the collection and analysis of data relating to human settlements and land-use within their shifting environmental contexts. The problem of comparability involves the need to integrate the data from older surveys with the information being collected by more recent surveys in Syria, Iraq, Iran, and southeast Turkey. At the same time, ongoing surveys in these regions need to coordinate the procedures by which they collect data on the ground and use satellite imagery from CORONA, LANDSAT, and SPOT in order to produce comparable data from each area. This two track effort at integration is especially important now, because we finally have conducted enough surveys in contiguous (or nearly contiguous) area of Syria and North Iraq to make it possible for us to develop a regional synthesis of landscape development and change across the central portion of Upper Mesopotamia from the western Khabur across to Mosul in Northern Iraq. Similar broad regional syntheses can now also be envisioned for both southern Mesopotamia and southwest Iran.

Tony and Nick convened researchers in landscape archaeology and regional survey in the Near East for informal presentations and discussion. We were particularly fortunate to have had Henry Wright discuss his ongoing survey around Tell Brak, while Robert McC. Adams and Jennifer Pournelle presented interim results from their ongoing analyses of settlement, hydrology, and geomorphology in southern Mesopotamia. Key presenters from the OI included workshop co-organizer Tony Wilkinson, Mac Gibson, Matt Stolper, David Schloen, Don Whitcomb, Jason Ur, Carrie Hritz, Jesse Casana, and Mark Altaweel.

One of the most exciting aspects of the workshop was the first presentation of results from Nick Kouchoukos' and Tony Wilkinson's new survey of the Susiana plain in southwest Iran. This last project forms part of the OI's resumption of fieldwork in Iran, and owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to Abbas Alizadeh for his behind-the-

concerned with internal and external communications met on Tuesday, January 28 to discuss matters of shared concern. Among the issues were the distribution of public relations duties within the Institute, and the general responsibilities of Membership, Development, Education and Museum public relations in connection with the opening of the Mesopotamian gallery. We also discussed "branding" -the overall look of publications and communications of the OI- especially in reference to a style sheet recently issued by the University's Publications Department. This led to a discussion of the look of the web page and its redesign. We also discussed whether the opening of the Mesopotamian gallery would be a good time to redefine, and unify, the look of OI materials.

The next communications meeting is tentatively schedule for Wednesday, February 19 at 10:30. Any and all staff or faculty members with concerns about communications are very welcome to join the group. Among the agenda items for the next meeting are compiling a "wish list" of budget items in conjunction with the opening of the Mesopotamian gallery, and a list of deadlines for magazines, newspapers and other media.

The following were present. All of us are happy to respond to any issues anyone may have: Debora Donato, Wendy Ennes, Chuck Jones, Maria Krasinski, Carole Krucoff, Rebecca Laharia, John Sanders, Emily Teeter, Tom Urban

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MUSEUM - CONSERVATION / Alison Whyte

Laura, Vanessa and Alison are busy in the conservation lab treating objects slated for display in the new Mesopotamian Gallery. The conservators are also working on preparing a small number of objects to go on short term loan to the Metropolitan Museum of Art for the upcoming exhibition: "Art of the First Cities: The Third Millenium B.C. from the Mediterranean to the Indus". The objects will be returning to the O.I. Museum in time for the opening of the Mesopotamian Gallery.

Alison is continuing her study of the glazed bricks from the Sin Temple at Khorsabad. Analyses to date have succeeded in identifying the major elemental components of both the brick fabric and glaze. The next step in the project will involve the use of electron microprobe analysis to detect any elements present in trace amounts in the glaze.

The December issue of the University of Chicago Alumni magazine highlighted research conducted by Vanessa in its "Original Source" section. The alumni magazine piece (available on-line at: <http://magazine.uchicago.edu/0212/research/source.html>) stemmed from the conservation lab's article in the "News & Notes" and discusses the analysis of pigments on a wall painting fragment from Khorsabad which will be on display in the new Mesopotamian Gallery.

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MUSEUM EDUCATION / Carole Krucoff

Special programs designed to attract three different audiences brought more than 500 new visitors to the Oriental Institute in January.

"MUMMIES, MUMMIES, MUMMIES!", a special event for families that took place on Sunday, January 5th, attracted 200 children and their parents to the museum for an afternoon of gallery tours, film showings, hands-on activities, and museum treasure hunts. This event was offered in conjunction with the Chicago Office of Tourism's "Winter Delights" program, which gave us free publicity citywide.

"DECIPHERING THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS" a free film showing that took place on Sunday, January 12, brought more than 150 people to Breasted Hall to learn about the discovery and disputes surrounding the Scrolls. Special thanks to Norman Golb, featured in the film, who appeared following the showing to answer questions from the audience.

"A TASTE OF ANCIENT EGYPT," a free open house for University of Chicago students, took place on Wednesday evening, January 22. This event brought more than 150 students to us for a program that was a real team effort.

Emily Teeter presented a lecture on ancient Egyptian art. Museum Docents Kathy Mineck and Karen Terras led tours in the Egyptian Gallery. Three graduate students- Francois Gaudard, Jackie Jay, and Josh Trampier-took center stage with demonstrations and informal lectures on their research on ancient Egypt. Volunteer David Covill served as host at a free reception featuring samples of Middle Eastern-style food.

Many of the students told us it was the eye-catching flyers (designed and posted all over campus by Maria Krasinski) that attracted them to attend "A Taste of Ancient Egypt." Most said they had never before considered visiting the Oriental Institute! A large number stayed for the members' lecture presented by Stephen Harvey, rounding out the evening with this presentation that introduced them to the Institute's new specialist in Egyptian archaeology

Our thanks to everyone who helped make "A Taste of Ancient Egypt" such a success!

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MUSEUM - REGISTRATION / Raymond Tindel

Kathleen Birney from Harvard spent three weeks going through the Judaidah sherds looking for Aegean imports, perhaps for her dissertation.

Min Yong Cho from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, went through pottery plaques and figurines from the first eight seasons' excavations at Nippur.

John Landgraf from St. Paul, MN, spent a week studying Megiddo and Egyptian pottery investigating a particular pot forming technique.

Justine Way (and Elijah) had a look Mentuhotep relief fragments for comparison with some McCormick Seminary pieces. Justine saw definite resemblances; Elijah was a bit doubtful.

We are expecting Hatice Pamir the first week in February who will be looking through the Tayinat material for Mediterranean influences.

Meanwhile, we continue with routine functions. Joey Corbett, in particular, is busy taking digital images of objects for eventual inclusion in the database.

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MUSEUM - VOLUNTEERS / Terry Friedman and Cathy Duenas

We would like to let you all know that we are getting ready to do Docent and Volunteer Training for the upcoming opening of the NEW Assyrian and Mesopotamian galleries.

Training Sessions will be held on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The dates for these sessions are:

Saturday, April 26

Saturday, May 3

Saturday, May 10

Saturday, May 17

If you know of students or friends or acquaintances that might be interested in becoming a docent or a volunteer, please give them our names and telephone number: Terry Friedman and Catherine Duenas at 773-702-1845. If you would like to help us recruit, we will also have colorful flyers announcing these training sessions. Please stop by the office in room 221 and ask Maria Krasinski for a handful. We appreciate all of your support in this recruitment process. Thank you.

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PUBLICATIONS / Tom Urban

Work continued on Emily Teeter's OIP 118 and Markus Hilgert's OIP 121. I don't recall ever having two OIPs ready for press at the same time, and with a combined page count of over 1,200 pages and 1,500 scans, it's a lot of material to juggle. We also heard from Abbas Alizadeh regarding his OIP 120.

George Hughes's Catalog of Demotic texts and David Weisberg's Neo-Babylonian tablets are up next, with a great deal of work having already been done on both. Following these two volumes are Tony Wilkinson's land survey around Tell es-Sweyhat and Thomas Holland's archaeological report on Tell es-Sweyhat, the scanning of the artwork for both volumes has already begun.

Katherine Strange Burke has set about fifteen pages in PageMaker of Helen Jaquet-Gordon's book on graffiti on the rooftop of Khonsu temple. We will soon email these pages to Chicago House to get some feedback. As you recall, Katherine was hired by the Epigraphic Survey to begin work on this volume.

The spring issue of News & Notes was also prepared and sent to press.

From fellow staff members we often receive requests for scanned images that are used in our publications. Frowns usually accompany those requests when they see the images on our monitors or printed by a laser printer, which is followed by disbelief when they see the image they wanted printed very nicely in a book. Everyone should know that scanned photographs have to be altered for printing. On a printing press, halftones darken by about fifteen percent. To compensate for this darkening, we reduce the mid-tones by fifteen percent (at Curves) and black by ten percent (at Levels). Then just to confuse the issue, we darken the whites by two percent (again at Levels). The result is a halftone (= scanned photograph, you know, broken into dots) that looks washed out and un-sharp. To our eyes, a washed out halftone looks best because we know that on a printing press the depth of color and sharpness will return. Unfortunately, we do not know how to reverse this washed-out look.

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RESEARCH ARCHIVES / Chuck Jones

Users of the Research Archives collection are reminded of two things.

- 1) The Research Archives is a non-circulating collection. As a courtesy, we allow materials to be checked out for short periods to faculty and staff offices and classrooms in the Oriental Institute building. If you need a book for a longer term project, please check it out from Regenstein or Crerar.
- 2) Please do not allow large stacks of books to accumulate at your place in the reading room. This defeats the purpose of a non-circulating reference collection. If you return books you are not actually using at the moment to the shelf, you will know where they are and so will other users of the collection. Your careful attention to these "details" is appreciated!

Fourteen volumes from the collection of the Research Archives have joined those already available on-line in the Core Texts component of ETANA:

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

In all, 135 volumes are now available.

The new titles include (with apologies for the incomplete references [these titles having become available just before deadline] and warning about the wrapped URLs):

Brunton, Guy. Qua and Badari

http://www.cwru.edu/UL/preserve/Etana/qau_badari_I/qau_badari_I.htm

Brunton, Guy and Caton-Thompson, Gertrude. Badarian Civilization and Predynastic remains near Badari

http://www.cwru.edu/UL/preserve/Etana/badarian_civ/badarian_civ.htm

and making sure the overall drawing 'reads' properly, with all information accounted for and comprehensible. It is pure pleasure to get to this stage, and to check the drawings off one by one. Progress! Once I am finished, photographers Yarko Kobylecky and Sue Lezon, assisted by recently returned Ellie Smith, will do the final large-format photography - color transparency and black and white - for the publication, the first volume in the small Amun temple series. New epigrapher Jen Kimpton has been honing her penciling skills at the wall under the tutelage of Margaret DeJong, Sue Osgood, and Brett McClain. In January Epigrapher Harold Hays returned and resumed his work in the bark sanctuary ambulatory, and artist Will Schenck resumed his penciling of the 18th Dynasty temple façade.

The conservation team headed by Lotfi Hassan is now cleaning and infilling the back central sanctuary. Conservator Lamia Hadidy finished her work with us on January 25 and headed south to work with our friend and colleague Vivian Davies in Edfu. Dany Roy laid sandstone patch stones at the base of the north interior wall of the front central sanctuary where the wall had decayed at floor level. He also continued the grouting of the roof blocks and placed two new rainspouts on the south and north sides of the bark sanctuary ambulatory. He and I planned the new skylight in the central sanctuary, and the new door leading into the sanctuary, both of which will be constructed of scratchproof, one centimeter-thick plexiglass in aluminum and steel framing. Dany has also been preparing the new sandstone base for the granite false door of Thutmose III now propped against the west interior wall of the Roman court. Originally from Thutmose III's mortuary temple, this huge slab of red granite was reused by the Ptolemies as the threshold for their great pylon, and was found there face-down, and intact. It was placed in the Roman court on a brick platform, where the porous bricks have acted as a conduit for salt-laden groundwater which has percolated up into the base of the granite slab and stained it. Our new damp-coursed base will put a stop to that, and poulticing of the slab will remove the salts already in the stone.

This month friend and colleague Hourig Sourouzian and her assistant Christian Perzlmair started an inventory of one of the Medinet Habu main temple storerooms which is under our jurisdiction. This particular storeroom appears to have been utilized by the SCA as a storage magazine for miscellaneous items from excavations all over the west bank, from at least the 1960s. The bottom layer of the material turned out to be primarily large, hard-stone sculpture fragments (Sekhmet and miscellaneous deities) excavated at Amenhotep III's mortuary temple by the SCA and the Swiss Institute in 1965 and partly published by the Swiss in BABA 11 (1981). This material is of great interest to Hourig, as she and husband Rainer Stadelmann have recently resumed excavating that great complex, and have built a magazine for the storage and analysis of all of the material excavated at that site, past and present; when I notified her about the material last season she was thrilled. Next season we hope to transfer the Amenhotep III fragments to her magazine, which will free up space and allow us to finish the inventory of remains there.

At Luxor Temple Yarko, now assisted by Ellie, continued the large-format photography of the newly joined Ptolemaic fragment groups. Carpenter Shayib finished the construction of a special reinforced table and sandbox setup for the photography of individual, unjoined blocks. Yarko will utilize the table this month when he begins the photography of the Thutmose III wall and portal fragments we have identified and stored on mastaba 73. Jamie Riley and I continued to supervise the moving of wall fragments and blocks off the wet

ground east of the Colonnade Hall (mostly Akhenaten talatat) and west of the Ramesses II sun court by the Roman gateway onto newly constructed, damp-coursed brick platforms. Forty more meters of platforms are presently being built in the west area. I am pleased to report that the mastaba construction of the area east of the Colonnade Hall is now finished. This month all of the material currently on the ground in both areas will be moved up onto the new platforms, with two 7-meter, covered 'hospital' mastabas in the east designated for decaying fragments which require treatment.

There is much activity at Luxor temple these days as the area east of the precinct is cleaned in preparation for extending the Luxor Temple precinct into the garden area. The narrow road running along the outside of the eastern enclosure wall has been removed and the southern end is currently being excavated by the SCA. The idea is to excavate now before any groundwater lowering measures are implemented in that area. Stone foundations have already been uncovered with reused material that appears to have been quarried from the southern wall of the Luxor Temple sanctuary. Once the foundations have been documented, mapped, and conserved by the SCA, they will be removed, and any reused wall fragments will be turned over to the ES for proper storage by category in the blockyard. As I write this the SCA has begun the dismantling of the eastern precinct wall, starting at the south end, the rationale being that it is ugly (which it is) to those looking at the temple from Second (Karnak) Street. However, this morning I found the beautiful gridded wall along Second Street being bricked up 'for security reasons,' which means that anyone walking along the sidewalk won't be able to see the temple at all now. Hmmm. I'll keep you posted.

On January 18 SCA Chairman Zahi Hawass came to Luxor to preside over the first meeting of the Valley of the Kings Committee, and most of the mission directors who were in town at that time participated. Attendees included General Director of Antiquities in Upper and Lower Egypt Sabry Abdel Aziz; Luxor General Director Mohamed Bialy; Gurna Director Ali Asfar; Luc Gabolde; Christian LeBlanc; Kent Weeks; Andreij Niwinski; Ted Brock; Betsy Bryan; Otto Schaden; Hourig Sourouzian; Rainer Stadelmann; Ray Johnson; Brett McClain; Elina Paulin-Grothe; Mr. Mabruk; General Director of Excavations Mr. Attiya; Mr. Mansour (Giza Plateau); etc. At that time we discussed future work, flood control, and site management of the KV area, and a sub-committee was set up made up solely of expedition heads working in the Valley, to make further recommendations. The meeting evolved into a round table discussion of plans for all of Luxor, including the Luxor Temple work. There are plans afoot to open a new entrance to Luxor Temple from the north, so that visitors will approach the temple along the sacred sphinx avenue. The eastern gate will be the official exit for everyone, and the present Corniche entrance on the west will be closed. When I asked how the stone road would be protected, Zahi explained that it was to be covered with a wooden walkway for its entire length.

Visitors to Chicago House this past month included two US Congressional Staff Delegations, whom I squired around Luxor, and showed our work and facility. We had several visitors from Chicago House past: Beatrice Parker, daughter of former ES epigrapher and Director Richard Parker, brought her son Tom to Luxor and had a good visit and 'catching up' session with us. She is one of those individuals who remembers everything that ever happened to her, and was a delight to talk to (especially keen were her reminiscences of 'Doc' Nelson, our first director, who used to entertain the staff children with limericks he made up on the spot). Former ES artist Clara Semple also paid us a visit, as well as

available we have solved the technical problems related to the following: 1) converting legacy data (e.g., everything from word processing files to existing database tables); 2) representing the data in the Tamino database in a rigorous "normalized" format; 3) displaying ancient texts as they would be represented in printed publications; and 4) indexing and searching any aspect of the information.

As of this week I have successfully imported the first thirty Fortification texts from Matt's Persepolis corpus, and the first nine, reasonably representative, entries of Volume P of the CHD. While I was at it, I created a handy import tool, currently dubbed InStar, which will simplify further importing of more of the same, or additional kinds of data. The Egyptian texts currently in Jan's Meteor application are being massaged and won't be too far behind (they are both more complex due to the nature of the data, but simpler because they were originally captured in XML format).

All of these different kinds of texts are in XML format in the Tamino database hosted by Charles Blair at the Digital Library Development Center at Regenstein. These texts provide a testing ground for us for development of the front-end tools, and for creation of necessary post-processing utilities. They are adequate for demo and testing purposes but should not be construed as "final-form" data. We are getting help from Charles and his group with issues like security restrictions, backup procedures, etc. I have been pleased with the Tamino environment from a development standpoint and it seems that it will be sufficient for all that we'll need it to do.

What makes this interesting is that all of this data is in the flexible, generic, normalized data model on which XSTAR is based. That is, texts from Persepolis and those from Egypt are in the same underlying format. Glossaries built for all three projects will share a common data model. The idea behind the model is that it is sufficiently generic to accommodate a wide variety of data, yet flexible enough to meet the specific needs of a project. Down the road archaeological data will be added as well. Over the past year we have been continually refining the specific XML "schemas" that instantiate the data model as we have worked with Tamino and Java, and we have arrived at a relatively stable database structure which, I expect, will not change significantly in the future.

As we move into the more visual stage of the project -- that is, retrieving and displaying the data in ways that are useful to scholars -- I will be working on two fronts: 1) I am developing a set of front-end, interface tools (written in Java) to query and format the data for analysis and presentation. As these tools are built for one project they will be useful for all, due to the common underlying data format. I will be actively soliciting your feedback as we develop the user interface. 2) I will be writing back-end utilities as necessary to clean-up or improve access to the legacy data imported from our Word documents.

Please feel free to contact me by email or phone (708-799-7452) at any time to discuss the project. In a few months I hope to give a public demo at the OI for anyone who is interested, to illustrate how the user interface will work and to discuss future possibilities for the system.

For more information and documentation on XSTAR, see:
<http://www.oi.uchicago.edu/OI/PROJ/XSTAR/XSTAR.html>

