

OI NEWSLETTER – FIRST MONDAY (delayed until Tuesday) – NOVEMBER 2003

FROM THE DIRECTOR / Gil Stein

UNITS

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INDIVIDUALS

CHUCK JONES
WALTER KAEGI

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FROM THE DIRECTOR / Gil Stein
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I am sorry to report to you that Dr. Karen Wilson has resigned from her position as Director of the Museum of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago in order to pursue opportunities elsewhere. During the fifteen years of her affiliation with the museum Karen has made tremendous contributions as a curator, scholar, exhibit planner, administrator, and communicator with the public. During her tenure at the helm of the Oriental Institute Museum she planned and executed the extraordinarily complex tasks of building a new wing, renovating all of the existing museum space, and the critically important introduction of climate control. The beautiful, newly completed Mesopotamian Gallery is the most recent and spectacular of her contributions.

Karen will continue in her position through December 1, 2003. I think I speak for everyone in the Oriental Institute community in thanking Karen for all she has done and in wishing her every success in her next career step.

The Oriental Institute will soon announce a global search for her successor.

I'm pleased to announce to you that Emily Teeter has accepted the position of Special Projects Manager for the Oriental Institute. As you may already know, Emily's tenure as a Research Associate for Egyptian and Nubian Antiquities ended on October 30th, 2003. I'd like to thank Emily for her work over the past three years in this

capacity. With the posting of the Special Projects Manager position, Emily's combination of skills and academic background made her the ideal candidate and only qualified choice from the applications we received. In her role as Special Projects Manager, Emily will work on public relations for the Institute and its programs, assist Debora Donato in the preparation of development materials and grants for individuals and foundations and assist Rebecca Lahari with the travel program and the production of membership literature. Additionally, Emily will investigate the feasibility of temporary and traveling exhibits for the museum. She will continue to work closely with the Education department in programming and assist with courses and with securing funding for their operations. In addition to her role as Special Projects Manager, we will also request the appointment of Emily to an Uncompensated Research Associate position so that Emily can continue her research and publication of the small finds from Medinet Habu. Please join me in welcoming Emily to her new role at the Oriental Institute.

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ADMINISTRATION / Steve Camp

I'd like to explain the reason for inconvenient electrical shutdown this week and the one planned for Monday November 24th, and hopefully provide some guidance on the steps you may want to take during these two days.

Background on this electrical shutdown:

This action is one part of the overall electrical upgrade of the Oriental Institute building and facility. It was determined a few years ago that an upgrade of this aging system was necessary to allow the facility to handle the ever increasing electrical demands of new equipment and to bring the electrical system up to code with newer regulations. Unfortunately, as with many large projects, the timeline for specific steps in this process became behind schedule due to unforeseen difficulties in earlier steps of the process. The original plan called for these electrical shutdowns to be scheduled over the summer months, prior to the start of the academic year. However, due to the delays, they have been scheduled for these two Mondays in November and cannot be pushed back any further without incurring more delays in the overall project.

Why were Monday, November 3rd and Monday, November 24th chosen as the upgrade days:

The weekend was not an option for completing the upgrade because the

project manager for the upgrade process could not get all of the required personnel together to complete this activity on a Saturday and/or Sunday. From what the project director told me, this upgrade requires a number of different units on campus to coordinate their schedules and be available during the entire period of the upgrade. The attempt to get all these units and staff together on the weekend was not possible. Mondays were chosen as the days to do the upgrade simply because the museum is closed on Monday and therefore it would not require the turning away of visitors or communicating the closing information outside of the OI.

What will happen on Monday, November 3rd and Monday, November 24th:

University electrical personnel will be installing new electrical equipment in the basement of the OI. This activity will require the complete shutdown of electrical service to the building from 9:00am to 3:00pm on these two dates. During this time, there will be no lights, no electrical service to equipment such as computers, faxes, copiers, etc. Additionally, this means that all lighted exit signs and emergency instruments could be affected. To ensure everyone's safety, the project manager is providing additional staff to monitor the building for fire or other hazards. These staff will be here specifically to ensure the safety of any OI personnel in the facility during these times.

What should you and your staff do during 9:00am to 3:00pm on Monday, November 3rd and Monday, November 24th:

This is entirely up to the discretion of the individual faculty or staff supervisor. If it is sunny on these days, there should be enough light in most of the offices to meet students, have class, read or conduct meetings. However, as stated earlier, access to computers, overhead projectors, email, etc., will not be available. Because of this, it is entirely acceptable to reschedule these events to other days during the week or to a time prior to or after the 9:00am to 3:00pm electrical outage. Staff should discuss this with their supervisor to determine the appropriate steps to be taken in your particular area. This may include sending staff home for part or all of the day depending on the days conditions or one's own work schedule.

Next steps:

This will not be the last we've heard of the electrical upgrade. Next summer there will be a more intrusive activity affecting everyone in the OI. The electrical wiring in many of our offices will need to be rewired and upgraded. This will require groups of offices to be offline for a period of time as contractors open walls, rewire and add new lights and outlets. By completing the current step of the electrical upgrade on November 3rd and 24th, the contractor's schedule

will allow for them to do the individual office upgrades over next year's summer months so that faculty, students and staff will be less inconvenienced. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. If I don't know the answer, I'll be sure to get it and reply in a timely manner. Thanks for your patience as we work through this difficult but ultimately beneficial process.

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COMPUTER LAB / John Sanders

In the near future: the new Dell computer, which is not yet set up and available for use in the Lab, will take on its intended role as an ArcGIS workstation in November. I just received the OK to purchase the software license. When operational, this computer will pack a punch, with its 2 GHz processor speed, 2 GB RAM memory, two 120 GB harddrives, a CD/DVD-writer, and a 19" monitor.

We are on the verge of switching the OI website to its new home on an NSIT server. Only e-commerce security issues are holding up the switch, which should be performed BEFORE next month's newsletter. Commensurate with this switch will be the establishment of policies, standards, and procedures for updating the various types of information contained on the OI website, to insure we are publishing correct and current information to scholars and the public worldwide. This will require everyone's cooperation and involvement as we proceed.

Discussions are underway to start creating QuickTime VR panoramic movies for the various alcoves of the three currently open Museum galleries, similar to those presently on the OI website for the old Museum galleries. The software we will use now, however, will allow us to link directly from the panoramic movie file to individual pages for each object visible in the panorama as well as 3D object movies of any and all objects we choose to illustrate in that manner. This new level of image capture and display will truly produce a "Virtual Oriental Institute Museum", available worldwide with only a web browser needed for complete access.

See also in the Research Archives report below.

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MEMBERSHIP / Rebecca Laharia

Our new Membership Program Assistant will start on Tuesday, November 4th. Christina Abraham is a graduate student in the MAPS program and will be working primarily in the morning and early afternoon on a

PUBLICATIONS / Tom Urban

At the writing of this newsletter, the Publications Office has begun working on the last three manuscripts in the backlog -- all volumes both approved for publication and submitted to the Publications Office are in the early stages of preparation. Thanks go out to all of the student workers, whose good, hard, and steady work has made this remarkable time possible. Thank you Katherine Strange Burke, Dennis Campbell, Blane Conklin, Lindsay DeCarlo, Simrit Dhesi, Thomas Dousa, Harold Hays, Katie Johnson, Munira Khayyat, Adam Miglio, Leslie Schramer, and Alexandra Witsell. Francois Gaudard, Emily Napolitano, and Ilya Yakubovich also provided much needed assistance. Special thanks go to Prof. Gene Gragg and Michele Wong for implementing the student help.

Catalog of Demotic Texts in the Brooklyn Museum. George R. Hughes. OIC 29. At long last the final corrections will be entered beginning tomorrow (Wednesday 5 November).

Excavations at the Prehistoric Mound of Chogha Bonut, Khuzestan, Iran. Abbas Alizadeh. In association with the Iranian Cultural Heritage Organization. OIP 120. Sent to the printer. The third OIP sent to be printed in 2003.

Neo-Babylonian Texts in the Oriental Institute Collection. David B. Weisberg. OIP 122. We are one phone call away from having the author's final corrections and permission to go to press. This phone call is expected at 10:00 AM this morning. This volume will be the fourth to be sent to press in 2003.

Temple of Karnak, Volume 3: Graffiti on the Khonsu Temple Rooftop. Helen Jacquet Gordon. OIP 123. The author has returned her corrections to the final page proofs. One repeating problem with this manuscript is that images turn 90 degrees and then distort when filling the place assigned to them on the page. As you recall, this happened to one image on a plate in OIP 119. We have to get a handle on this problem. It will be close, but this could be the fifth OIP sent to press in 2003.

Tell es-Sweyhat, Volume 1: Land Use Studies. Tony J. Wilkinson. Having been completely assembled, three items remain to be completed: Final editing, which has begun, work on Appendix 2 (by Clemens Reichel), and final page proofs need to be sent to the author, who will be here November 13-14.

Tell es-Sweyhat, Volume 2: Excavation Reports. Thomas A. Holland. The plate volume has been assembled and work is proceeding on the text volume: About 100 more figures need to be placed and then all of the charts and text. A preliminary bibliography has been returned to the author.

Megiddo, Volume 3: Report on Stratum 6. Timothy Harrison. The author transferred his 203 pieces of artwork via ftp. We are waiting for his updated text files to arrive and then these files will be inventoried. Work will then proceed on the artwork.

The Origins of State Organizations in Prehistoric Highland Fars, Iran: Excavations at Tal-e Bakun. Abbas Alizadeh. The artwork was inventoried, the oversize pieces separated out for reduction by camera, scanning has begun, and we await the submission of his updated files.

Nippur, Volume 5: The Early Dynastic to Akkadian Transition: The Area WF Sounding at Nippur. Augusta McMahon. The artwork was brought up from the archaeology lab, it will be inventoried, and oversized pieces will be separated out and sent with those of the above manuscript for camera reduction. The author was contacted and will review her files for updating and contact the authors of the appendices to get them to update and submit them.

Five volumes of the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary to be reprinted were cleaned and prepared for printing.

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RESEARCH ARCHIVES / Chuck Jones

Work is proceeding on a number of projects. For some time we have been compiling a comprehensive index of abbreviations encountered in Ancient Near Eastern Studies. This list incorporates and integrates the various standard lists and includes quite a lot of additional material. At the moment it includes just under ten thousand entries. I hope we will have a public version available online (and in a reference binder) before the end of the year.

The abbreviations list will appear next to the Research Archives Serials List: A unified listing of serials held by the Oriental Institute Research Archives. It includes serials identified in the Research Archives as 'Series'; 'Journals'; reference works (i.e. encyclopaedias, dictionaries, etc.); as well as serials in which the Research Archives has holdings, but which are not shelved together. It also includes cross references to alternate titles:
<http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/ResArchSerials.html>
which appeared late last year and which includes 1,887 entries.

In mid-October we published an additional bibliography in the suite of resources compiled in response to the cultural heritage crisis in Iraq: Preliminary Bibliography Of Publications Documenting The Cylinder And Stamp Seals And Seal Impressions In The Collections Of

The Iraq Museum Baghdad, and an index by museum number of objects published in the Preliminary Bibliography. Links to this and to the other bibliographies are now also gathered in a central page of Iraq Bibliographies:

<http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/IraqBibs.html>

In partnership with the Computer Laboratory, we developed a rudimentary web-presence for the Jannotta Mesopotamian Gallery.

Based primarily on the text from the recent News & Notes article, the page is at

http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/MUS/GALLERY/MESO/New_Meso_Gallery.html

It includes links to two categories of documents:

- 1) Mesopotamian materials on-line at the OI.
- 2) Media coverage of the new gallery

This page has had something over sixteen hundred viewers since it went on-line less than three weeks ago - a testament to the public interest in the Museum's new exhibition.

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PROJECTS

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EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY / Ray Johnson

On October 15th the Epigraphic Survey inaugurated its 2003-2004 field season in Luxor and its 80th year of operation, and although it is still in the upper 90s F even now, it is great to be back. On October 13th I completed the paperwork with the Egyptian government in Cairo, signed the contract for the season at SCA headquarters in Abbasiya, and had a pleasant meeting with Chairman Zahi Hawass in his office there. We discussed our work schedule for this year, and his trip (the next day) to Atlanta, where Emory University and the Michael Carlos Museum were preparing to present him with a royal mummy, possibly Ramesses I, to escort back to Egypt. I found out from the US Consul General later that Zahi took a whole band of Nubian musicians and dancers to Atlanta with him to celebrate the occasion in proper style. The mummy is now on display for the next two months in the exhibition foyer of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, and will eventually be transferred back to Thebes, where it will put on permanent display in the Luxor Museum extension, currently under construction. I am pleased to report that another object chosen for display in the museum extension is a magnificent greywacke head of Thutmosis III wearing the white crown, which was excavated by Jan Johnson and Don Whitcomb at Luxor Temple during the winter of 1985/86.

Thanks to Tina Di Cerbo and our workmen, the Chicago House facility

was sparkling clean and ready for action when the crew arrived on the 14th and 15th. On the 16th I met with local director Dr. Holeil Ghaly and delivered his copy of the season contract. We resumed our work at the Medinet Habu small Amun temple on Saturday morning, October 18; transferring ladders and equipment to the temple site; meeting our new inspector Mr. Abdel Nasser; and opening and cleaning the sanctuary which was locked and sealed during our absence. There were no scorpions (or snakes) this year, and everything was dry as a bone, just the way we like it. Epigraphy and conservation work resumed the following Monday; epigraphers Brett McClain, Harold Hays, Randy Shonkwiler, and Jen Kimpton, and artist Margaret De Jong are all back at the wall in full force. Tina Di Cerbo is continuing her documentation of the small Amun temple sanctuary graffiti, via tracing, drawing on photographic enlargements, and even digitally. Last week photographer Yarko Kobylecky did complete 'before' photography of the 'naos room' sanctuary walls, assisted by Emily Napolitano, in preparation for the cleaning by conservators Lotfi Hassan, Adel Azziz, and Nahed Samir. This week Yarko started the 'King's Chamber' photography as well.

On Sunday October 19th WTTW/PBS's Len Aronson and cameraman Greg arrived fresh from filming Aslihan Yener's work in Turkey for the upcoming documentary on the work of the Oriental Institute. I spent all Sunday with them meeting officials at Karnak and briefing them on the past projects of the Oriental Institute in Egypt and specifically Luxor. Monday the duo filmed our operation at Luxor Temple; all day Tuesday was spent filming our documentation and conservation work at Medinet Habu and interviewing the professional staff; Wednesday was devoted to filming past projects at Karnak; and Thursday and Friday were spent filming at Chicago House itself. I will admit to feeling a bit sucked dry by the end of their stay, but they seemed very happy with the footage they got, al'humdoolillah.

On Thursday, October 23, we reopened the CH library, capably supervised by Egyptologist Jen Kimpton, who divides her time between epigraphy in the mornings and library work in the afternoons. Once the WTTW guys had departed, on October 27 we resumed our Luxor Temple operation. I delivered the paperwork to the Director of Luxor Temple, Mme. Nawal, and met our LT inspector Mme. Sanaa. Mme. Nawal, Mme. Sanaa, and I have been working together for over twenty years at Luxor Temple, and this is the first time that Mme. Sanaa has been assigned to us as inspector, so this is a happy occasion. Our first order of business at Luxor was to begin the process of moving the large intact blocks on the ground south and west of the temple, and we started in the south, immediately east of the sanctuary. Dany Roy erected his I-beam scaffolding and winch setup, and with his four workmen this past week raised a dozen half-ton blocks up onto a damp-coursed, mastaba platform we constructed for their storage and display last season. Dany left this morning for NYC for a small construction project at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, but will return at the beginning of

December to finish the block raising at Luxor Temple. In the meantime photographer Yarko Kobylecky will be doing final large-format photography of the big blocks already moved, and I will analyze the material. It turns out that some of the big blocks actually join, something I didn't realize until we started moving them and had access to some of their hidden surfaces. Today Yarko continued our photography of the Colonnade Hall column bases, to establish an annual record of their physical condition (and slow deterioration) for future reference. Jamie Riley will be arriving in a month to supervise the blockyard work, but in the meantime, to give me more time at Medinet Habu, Emily Napolitano has agreed to help supervise our workmen in the blockyard, and started yesterday. It's terrific to have such a versatile staff!

Because the Islamic holy month of Ramadan began on October 26, there are fewer expeditions working in Luxor than is usual for this time of year; many groups are waiting until after Ramadan to begin work. But we still had a good attendance at our opening season Halloween party on Thursday, October 30: about seventy people, among them Daniel Polz's German mission working at Dra Abu El Naga, the Polish mission of Andreij Niwinski working in the cliffs over Deir El Bahri, the Franco-Egyptian Center at Karnak, Kent and Susan Weeks, Ted and Lyla Brock, and Chuck Van Siclen. Lanny Bell passed through town last week with a tour and joined us for dinner one night, and Micah McClain, Brett's brother, was in town week before last, and spent some time seeing what his brother was up to out here. Renée Friedman and some of her crew, including conservator Fran Cole, who had been working with Aslihan in Turkey (small world, eh?) passed through Luxor this morning en route to begin work at their site of Hierakonpolis.

So, despite the heat, all is very well out here, and we are back to business. Best wishes to you all back home!

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INDIVIDUALS
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CHUCK JONES

Later in the month I will be chairing the third annual session of the collaboration between the Society of Biblical Literature and the Oriental Institute Chicago at the Annual meeting of the SBL in Atlanta.

This year's session is entitled "Massive Scholarly Data Projects: Perspectives and Experiences". Principal researchers describe their experiences with some of the largest humanities projects to date dealing with textual resources.

and features reports on:

- *The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon
- *The Pennsylvania Sumerian Dictionary
- *The Perseus Digital Library
- *APIS: Advanced Papyrological Information System
- * Lost in a Data Sea? Navigating with Topic Maps

Monday, November 24th

4:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Theme: Massive Scholarly Data Projects: Perspectives and Experiences
Charles E. Jones, The Oriental Institute, Univ Of Chicago, Presiding

Stephen Kaufman, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati

Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon (20 min)

[The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon will include all ancient Aramaic, is based on a compilation of all Aramaic literature and will include all modern scholarly discussion of the Aramaic language. It represents a departure from prior partial approaches to the construction of lexicons and offers the potential for data sets and approaches not previously possible]

Steve Tinney, University Of Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Sumerian Dictionary (20 min)

[The Pennsylvania Sumerian Dictionary will result in an exhaustive dictionary of the Sumerian language that will be useful for Sumerologists and non-specialists. In addition to the dictionary, the project is developing tools and datasets for the Sumerian language]

Gregory Crane, Tufts University

The Perseus Digital Library (20 min)

[The Perseus Digital Library is in part a text collection but also offers a broad range of other relevant resources. It is evolving to offer complex interactions with a variety of source materials to a variety of audiences]

Traianos Gagos, University Of Michigan

APIS (Advanced Papyrological Information System) (20 min)

[APIS is a collaborative effort to bring images of papyrological source materials directly to scholars. It currently has approximately 2,500 records with images for use by scholars]

Patrick Durusau, Society Of Biblical Literature

Lost in a Data Sea? Navigating with Topic Maps (20 min)

[One common feature of the projects in this session is massive amounts of data and complex navigational requirements. Topic maps are demonstrated to illustrate one possible means of answering navigational needs]

