

OI NEWSLETTER - FIRST MONDAY (delayed until Tuesday) - DECEMBER 2003

FROM THE EDITOR

THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

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IN THE NEWS

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FROM THE EDITOR
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This issue of the Newsletter appears a day late due to the electrical maintenance in the Oriental Institute on Monday December 1st.

This is the third OI Newsletter to appear by way of the automated mailing list:
<https://listhost.uchicago.edu/mailman/listinfo/oi-newsletter>
The archive of all fifty-three issues of the newsletter dating back to early 1998 is accessible only to members of the list. If you wish to have access to the archive, please request your password from:
oinews@babylon-orinst.uchicago.edu
Please send any other inquiries about the newsletter to the same address.

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THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE
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Annual Budget Meeting:
The OI submitted its year end budget to the Provost on November 13th. The Provost was generally pleased with the OI's current financial situation. Particular attention was paid to the ongoing museum gallery reinstallations and the availability of funds to ensure completion of the project. Another aspect of this meeting focused on the OI's capital projects request for 2004/2005. This included funding requests for upgrading the loading dock/parking area on the

east side of the building with an expansion to include ten additional parking spaces. The other significant request was for capital funding to upgrade the infrastructure and programming support for the OI's website.

Performance Evaluations:

Over the past few months at our monthly Unit Head Meetings, we've been discussing the need for a performance evaluation system for all OI staff. We intend on finalizing these evaluation forms by the end of December and all staff will receive a copy of the evaluation form by early January. This year's evaluation period will be for a half year, from Jan 1, 2004 through June 30, 2004, so that everyone has the opportunity to review the form prior to the evaluation period start date. Beginning next year, evaluation periods will be for the full year, July 1st through June 30th. It is intended that the performance evaluation process will be closely tied to the annual salary program. We hope that this process will help to provide better feedback on performance, to help set individual goals that are tied to the Director's strategic objectives for the OI, and to better be able to identify and reward those that make significant contributions to the ongoing success of the OI.

Museum Director Search:

The Museum Director Search is well underway. Chuck Jones has sent the job ad far and wide across the internet. Many individuals and institutions have been emailed directly with a request to disseminate the ad to any interested candidates. There will be a web ad in AVISO in the middle of December. The job posting requests applications by December 31st, 2003. At this point, the search committee, chaired by David Schloen, is waiting for all of the applications to come in for review.

Rental Policy:

Many of you may have seen the Maroon article (November 21st, 2003) regarding the OI's policy on the rental of Breasted Hall. If you haven't, the article attempted to represent the OI as being arbitrary in its selection of the types of events held in Breasted Hall. It went even a step further with a law professor, Lisa Bernstein being quoted as saying "a sentiment among some members of the University community is that the Institute has a record of bias against Israel, foreign policy interests, and conservatives." Gil rebuts these claims in the article. We want to let you know that we take these accusations seriously and continue to look at the rental policy of Breasted Hall and other rental areas within the OI. These new policies are being reviewed by a committee within the OI as well as the general counsel of the University of Chicago. From conversations with the general counsel's office, the OI is not the only institute on campus that has had their rental policies come under scrutiny. In fact, the Provost has convened a committee to determine if there needs to be a University wide policy on facility rentals. We will continue

to keep you updated on any issues arising from this as we continue to review and modify the rental policies of the OI.

OI Audio/Visual Equipment:

We've discovered a severe flaw in the capabilities of the "drop down" projector in Breasted Hall. It seems that newer laptops are unable to effectively communicate with the system which is now about 7 years old. We're currently contacting a number of vendors to give us a bid on upgrading the system. This upgrade is a part of our overall review of the technical capabilities in Breasted Hall and the LaSalle Room. Our goal is to ensure that these facilities are capable of handling the audio visual needs of guest speakers and internal staff. If you have any concerns or comments regarding this issue, don't hesitate to contact John Sanders or Steve Camp.

Holiday Party:

Don't forget the OI's annual Holiday Party on Friday, December 5th at 3:30pm in the Director's study. All faculty, students, staff and their family members are invited. Santa will be on hand to hand out gifts to the children and food and drinks will be aplenty. We hope all of you are able to attend and Happy Holidays!

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COMPUTER LAB / John Sanders

Several hardware related issues to report on during November. The OI's new File Transfer Protocol (FTP) server is now up and running. Because of an issue with some FTP applications used in the building, which do not yet connect to the new server, I have not turned off our former babylon-orinst FTP server. I hope to solve the newer connections problems just after Thanksgiving, then the older server will be retired. The new FTP server has 16 GB of disk space available for file transfers - about 15 times the disk space of babylon-orinst.

On the day before Thanksgiving the Institute was wired with two additional wireless base stations, making the LaSalle Room, the Archaeology Laboratory, and the Director's Office now wireless capable for network connections. The NSIT engineers told me that a guest account for wireless connectivity by non-university personnel will be available soon, so we'll be able to provide visiting scholars, etc. with internet access without having to use our own account information. Seeing is believing, but it just has to happen to make the university's public-space wireless accessibility initiative meaningful and logical. Keep your fingers crossed that the powers that be think logically.

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MUSEUM - EDUCATION / Carole Krucoff

More than 200 people came to the Oriental Institute on Saturday, November 15th to take part in "Cradle of Civilization: The Legacy of Ancient Mesopotamia," a day-long symposium for the public that was co-sponsored by the University's Graham School of General Studies and the Center for International Studies. The symposium received rave reviews from all who attended, and evaluation forms completed by the audience praised the lectures with comments that ranged from "wonderful" to "superb."

Special thanks and appreciation go to all the symposium's speakers, including: McGuire Gibson, Martha Roth, Gil Stein, Karen Wilson and Christopher Woods from the Oriental Institute; Elizabeth Stone from SUNY; and Irene Winter from Harvard.

A long lunch break and post-program reception gave everyone the opportunity to tour the new Mesopotamian Gallery, where docents Lucie Sandel, John Aldrin, and Claire Thomas were inundated with questions from symposium attendees, many of whom had never visited the Oriental Institute before.

Other events celebrating the opening of the Mesopotamian Gallery took place in November. On Wednesday evening, November 5th, the Education Office hosted a special open house for University of Chicago students, which featured gallery talks by graduate students Mark Altaweel, Stephanie Reed, and Jonathan Tenney. A screening of the Hercule Poirot film "Murder in Mesopotamia" was also part of the evening, preceded by a slide talk by Clemens Reichel who gave everyone the real story of the excavation that is basis for the movie—as well as the basis for the murder.

"Mosaic: A Concert of Middle Eastern Music" took place in Breasted Hall on November 19th. Co-sponsored by the Membership Office, as well as the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, this program was presented in conjunction with the City of Chicago's celebration of Arab Heritage Month. The ensemble was made up of ten professional musicians who performed on instruments that included the qanun, 'ud, buzuq, hand drums, violin, cello, flute and clarinet. Musical selections from the Arabic, Turkish, Armenian, and Sephardic traditions drew standing ovations from the large and enthusiastic audience, which once again included many people who had never visited the Oriental Institute.

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PUBLICATIONS / Tom Urban

David Weisberg's Neo-Babylonian Texts in the Oriental Institute Collection (OIP 122) was completed and we are just waiting for the purchase order and its off to press.

The corrected page proofs for Helen Jacquet-Gordon's Graffiti on Khonsu Temple Rooftop (OIP 123) arrived during the final week of November (giving us a bit of a scare that they had been lost in the mail) and I've alerted the printer that we intend to send it to press sometime between the third week of December and the last week of January. As you recall, the purchase order for the printing of this volume was issued back in the summer.

George Hughes's Catalog of Texts in the Brooklyn Museum (OIC 29) should be the next title to go to press after the Khonsu volume (OIP 123).

Work continued on all other volumes, as follows: We begin with the artwork, scanning and cleanup, and then we make the figures and plates. Next we turn to the bibliography, *hopefully* checking each citation against the actual title page. With the figures, plates, and bibliography in hand, we then make the first pass through the manuscript, checking to be sure that each of these is referred to correctly and consistently. So, Abbas Alizadeh's Tall-e Bakun, Tim Harrison's Megiddo 3, Augusta McMahon's Nippur 5, and Aslihan Yener's Tell Atchana Report are all in this early stage of processing.

Brian Muhs's Demotic Ostraca in the Oriental Institute Collection is a bit further along, with several additional passes through the manuscript having been made -- converting his fonts, applying house style, and some preliminary formatting of charts -- and this week we will send him preliminary page proofs.

The Wilkinson and Holland Sweihat volumes straddle the Muhs manuscript in the degree of completion, with the Wilkinson volume further ahead (in final editing) and the Holland volume just behind (still placing figures).

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RESEARCH ARCHIVES / Chuck Jones

It has been a quiet month of steady work in the Research Archives. We have made progress on a number of continuing projects.

The Research Archives maintain a number of mailing lists:

ANE: A Discussion List for the Study of the Ancient Near East:

<https://listhost.uchicago.edu/mailman/listinfo/ane>
[1894 subscribers]

Acquisitions Lists of The Oriental Institute Research Archives:
<https://listhost.uchicago.edu/mailman/listinfo/rabooks>
[463 subscribers]

IraqCrisis: A moderated list for communicating substantive information on cultural property damaged, destroyed or lost from Libraries and Museums in Iraq during and after the war in April 2003, and on the worldwide response to the crisis:
<https://listhost.uchicago.edu/mailman/listinfo/iraqcrisis>
[614 subscribers]

OI-Newsletter: Intended to provide regular information to the in-house community of the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, about the activities of its faculty, staff and projects
<https://listhost.uchicago.edu/mailman/listinfo/oi-newsletter>
[157 subscribers]

The Research Archives also maintains the web-presence of The Middle East Librarians Association: Committee on Iraqi Libraries:
<http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/IRAQ/mela/melairaq.html>
As this issue of the Newsletter goes to press, we have published the Library of Congress Mission To Baghdad Report on the National Library and the House of Manuscripts, October 27–November 3, 2003:
<http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/IRAQ/mela/LCIraqReport.html>

The University of Chicago calendar for 2004 shows the Research Archives Morse Genius reading room as its photo for October.

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PROJECTS
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CHD / Theo van den Hout

On Saturday, November 22, our guest Research Associate Alice Mouton defended her dissertation "Les rêves au Proche Orient au deuxième millenaire av. J.-C., étude des sources hittites mis en perspective avec le reste du Proche Orient ancien" at the Ecole pratique des hautes études in Paris. Her supervisor was Prof. Durand and she received the doctorate cum laude! We are extremely proud to have such a learned young doctor in our midst! And to make it even more special she received a second doctorate from Leiden University for the same dissertation at the same time: two for the price of one. Congratulations Alice!

On November 19–21 Theo van den Hout and Debora Donato travelled to

Washington D.C. for the (second) premiere of the movie "The Hittites" by Tolga Örnek. We brought a lot of material about the dictionary project as well as about the OI in general with us and many people stopped by our display after the movie. During the same visit we had interviews with the Ambassador of the Turkish Republic, Dr. O. Faruk Logoglu and Mr. Louis Kahn of the American-Turkish Council.

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INDIVIDUALS
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JASON UR

The Tell Brak Survey, run by Henry Wright and staffed by archaeologists from Michigan, Chicago, Cambridge and Edinburgh, conducted its second season over six weeks in late September and October. This season, in addition to the vehicular survey of the 20km radius study area overseen by Henry, Phil Karsgaard (Edinburgh) and I conducted a high intensity survey of the Brak settlement complex itself, using an elaborated version of the Hamoukar surface collection methodology. The tell at Brak, which has been the focus of almost all of the fieldwork since the 1930s, is actually a small portion of the total settlement area; the complex of mounds at Brak covers some 200 ha, only about 50 of which make up the high mound. Conclusions are preliminary pending a second and final season, but we can add some new information about settlement at Brak and lend some precision to earlier qualitative observations.

The mid-4th millennium "local" settlement distribution covers some 108 ha, making Brak the largest 4th millennium settlement in northern Mesopotamia. Large parts of this area have southern Uruk ceramics on them, but interestingly, there is a ca. 1 ha low mound with pure southern sherds, which we've taken to calling the "karum." We now suspect the presence of a classic late 3rd millennium lower town south of the main mound, which has been covered over by eroded material from the high tell. This lower town, if correctly interpreted, would make Brak roughly 80 ha in the ED III to Akkadian periods. At this time, a large linear feature south of this area was quite possibly a city wall; gaps in it can be connected with hollow ways (ancient roads) on CORONA satellite photographs. The Oates excavated a Mitanni period palace and temple complex covering 1 ha on top of the north ridge; this season Phil and I were surprised to find a 45 ha (at least) lower town settlement below it to the north. Small Neo-Assyrian, Hellenistic, and Parthian settlements (all ca. 1 ha) existed on individual small mounds. Finally, a Sasanian-to-Medieval town of ca. 14 ha caps parts of the lower town to the east, associated with tracks and quite possibly a canal from the Jaghjagh River as well. We will continue to document the sherd scatters and landscape features in the Brak settlement complex for at least one more planned season.

