

OI NEWSLETTER - FIRST MONDAY - MAY 2004

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IN THE NEWS

AS OTHERS SEE US

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FROM THE EDITOR

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This is the eighth OI Newsletter to appear by way of the automated mailing list:
<https://listhost.uchicago.edu/mailman/listinfo/oi-newsletter>
 The archive of all fifty-eight 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:
 oi-newsletter-admin@listhost.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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Staff Changes

We're sorry to inform you that two of our administrative staff will be leaving the OI this summer. Rebecca Laharia, Membership Director, is moving this July to New York with her family, and Nicole Torres, Assistant to the Director, will be pursuing a new career and teaching this summer. Both Rebecca and Nicole will be leaving around the 2nd week of July with Nicole going to part time during the month of June. Please join us in thanking both Rebecca and Nicole for their wonderful service to the Oriental Institute and wishing them well in their future endeavors. A farewell party will be scheduled toward the end of June.

Upcoming Documentaries about the OI

Two new programs on the work of the Oriental Institute will be broadcast in late May on WTTW, Channel 11. They were written and produced by Emmy award winning

filmmaker Leonard Aronson based on extensive interviews with many members of the Oriental Institute faculty and staff. New footage was shot in the Amuq and in Luxor. The films were underwritten by generous grants from LaSalle Bank/ABN AMRO and ComEd, An Exelon Company. Editors at WTTW have been very enthusiastic about "Breaking Ground". We would like to thank former OI Development Director Tim Cashion, now at WTTW, for the many ways he assisted the project. We are all very excited about having this opportunity to make the work and mission of the Institute better known to the public.

--Thursday May 27, 9:00 pm (60 minutes)

"Breaking Ground: The Story of the Oriental Institute"

Emmy Award-winning producer Leonard Aronson provides an inside look at the work of Oriental Institute both in Chicago and in the Near East, featuring new footage of current field projects in Egypt and Turkey. This new WTTW documentary chronicles the 85-year history of the Oriental Institute and its mission to study the history, languages, and cultures of the ancient Near East.

--Friday, May 28, 8:30 pm (30 minutes)

"Pioneer to the Past: The Life and Times of James Henry Breasted"

Please Note: We are currently planning a pre-screening of the films for faculty and staff of the Institute in Breasted Hall before their television debut. In addition, a five minute clip of "Breaking Ground" will be shown at the Gala on May 20th.

Construction Update

Construction on the zooarchaeology lab is winding down. There are only a few minor additions within the lab that need to be completed. Thanks again to everyone for their patience as the major (loud) work was completed this month. By next week we should have the tables reassembled in the commons space area. Additionally, we are making plans for further improvements to the Archaeology labs which will include the addition of new tile for the floor. The Alizadeh/Harvey wall project is coming along as well and should be complete by the second week of May. A new permanent, pull down projector screen has been added to the LaSalle Banks room.

Breasted Hall A/V

We are pleased to announce that we've a signed tentative agreement with United Visual to upgrade the audiovisual equipment in Breasted Hall. The upgrades will include a new projector, DVD player and sound system. The projector and sound system will be fully compatible with existing A/V technology and include automated features that will greatly improve the quality of the video and sound without the need for an advanced degree in electronics.

Development Office

OI Gala

Work continues on our attempts to make this year's OI Gala a success. Many thanks to the visiting committee members and volunteers and staff who have been so helpful in planning and working on such a complex event; special kudos to Gretel Braidwood for helping guide a number of us newbies through the process and for helping to warn us about the little things that can be so important.

Development Director Search

The search continues for a new development director. We've had a number of candidates come through and we're in the final stages of putting together an offer for our candidate of choice.

Symposium in Honor of Gene Gragg

On Friday and Saturday, May 21 and 22, the OI will host a symposium to honor Gene upon his retirement. The symposiasts will include colleagues and former and current students in (comparative) semitics. The symposium is open to all. On Friday, May 21, the symposium will run from 1:00 to 4:00. At 4:00, there will be a reception in the West Gallery, to which everyone is invited. The symposium will continue on Saturday. Below is a list of the participants, in alphabetical order. The "real" program will be finalized and publicized the first week of May. The sessions will be chaired by Cynthia Miller and Bill Darden. And the proceedings will be published, under Cynthia's editorship.

Papers in Comparative Semitics - A Symposium in Honor of Gene B. Gragg
Friday and Saturday, May 21 and 22, 2004
Oriental Institute, University of Chicago

Marvin Lionel BENDER, "Afrasian Lexicon Reconsidered"
Stuart CREASON, "PQD Revisited"
Joseph DANIELS "(May) the gods preserve you!: The variability of injunctive *la in Epigraphic South Arabian and its relation to jussive forms within South Semitic"
Peter DANIELS, "Littera ex occidente: West Semitic Writing Wreathes the World"
Samuel Ethan FOX, "Innovation and Conservatism in Bohtan Neo-Aramaic"
Randy GARR, "Prenasalization in Aramaic"
Richard L. GOERWITZ, "A New Masoretic 'Spell Checker' or A Fast, Practical Method for Checking the Accentual Structure and Integrity of Tiberian-Pointed Biblical Texts"
Robert HOBERMAN "Semitic 'Triradicality' or Prosodic Word Minimality in Sound Change"
Alexandre MILITAREV "Akkadian and Afrasian, or Two Focuses: Afrasian/Afroasiatic parallels to Akkadian words devoid of convincing Semitic etymologies"
Cynthia L. MILLER, "Constraints on Ellipsis in Biblical Hebrew"
Dennis PARDEE, "The Ugaritic Alphabetic Cuneiform Writing System in the Context of Other Alphabetic Systems"
David TESTEN, "West Semitic Perspectives on the Akkadian Vetitive"
Maria YAKUBOVICH (TBA)

Martha Roth Appointed Deputy Provost

Richard Saller sent the following communication on Friday.

"Anne Robertson will complete her three-year term as Deputy Provost at the end of June. I want to thank her warmly for the superb judgment, high standards, and conscientious attention that she has brought to the position. Though I regret it, I understand Anne's wish to return to the higher calling of full-time research and teaching.

I am pleased to announce that Martha Roth has agreed to start as the new Deputy Provost on July 1, 2004. Martha is Professor at the Oriental Institute, the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, the College, and the

Committees on the Ancient Mediterranean World and Jewish Studies. She is now the Editor-in-Charge of the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary. We look forward to having Martha as a member of the Provost's Office."

Please join me in congratulating Martha on her acceptance of this important appointment"

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UNITS
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COMPUTER LAB / John Sanders

The big news, after a year-long transition, is that the Institute's web site is now operating solely on the university's NSIT cluster of web servers. In fact, on April 8th, I turned off our former web server, asmar.uchicago.edu, after eight years of loyal, trouble free service. Rest in peace, asmar!!! If you haven't heard yet, the address, or URL, for the Institute's web server has also officially changed, to: oi.uchicago.edu
In conjunction with Chuck Jones, we are now in talks with our NSIT handler regarding an updated "look and feel" for the entire OI web site, as well as changes to navigation through the large amount of information we make available on the web site. Changes are under way, and we'll keep everyone apprised as the process continues.

Throughout April I continued to move faculty and staff email accounts on our babylon-orinst email server over to their university email account (or any other email account they want to use). I have about 35 more individuals to get to by the end of June, so if I haven't gotten to you yet, I will soon. I'm learning just how individualized each person's circumstances are when it comes to email and their particular computer. I'll be glad when this chore is behind me.

Several additional segments were added to the Iraq Museum database by Clemens Reichel in April, and they are available at:
<http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/IRAQ/iraq.html>

The Computer Lab, how it operates, and for whom, are current topics under discussion, and certain procedural changes in the Lab will undoubtedly be instituted by next fall. It is too early now to speculate on particulars, I just thought I would mention the fact now in anticipation of future changes.

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MUSEUM EDUCATION / Carole Krucoff

Spring adult education courses for the general public began in April, and all three of these classes presented by graduate student instructors attracted the largest attendance we've seen in recent years. Instructors this quarter include:
--Aaron Burke, who is teaching an eight-session course on "Life in Ancient Israel"

--Dennis Campbell, who is teaching an eight-session course on "The Amarna Letters: Diplomatic Correspondence and Foreign Intrigue in the Ancient Near East"

--Ilya Yakubovich, who is teaching an eight-session course on "Cultures of the Silk Road."

All of these courses are being presented in partnership with the University's Graham School of General Studies.

Education joined forces with a new on-campus partner this quarter. On Friday evening, April 30, we collaborated with the University's Department of Music to present a special Breasted Hall performance by the Middle Eastern Music Ensemble. Along with musicians from the University community, the Ensemble highlights artists from throughout the Chicago area who offer a repertoire ranging from traditional Middle Eastern folk melodies to contemporary instrumental and vocal works. We hope this concert, which featured music from Tunisia, Turkey, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Palestine, Bosnia, Iran and Iraq, will be the first of many such uniquely multi-cultural partnership programs.

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PUBLICATIONS / Tom Urban

News & Notes: Much the same as Leslie Schramer did for the spring issue of News & Notes, Katherine Strange Burke did for the summer issue; she created specifications, faxed them to the printer, received a printing quote, submitted it to Carla to have a purchase order issued, received and prepared all files for placing in PageMaker, placed the files and formatted the pages, printed proof pages for the editor, kept the process moving by contacting contributors, entered corrections, worked with the editor on final page layout, printed proof pages for the printer, burned the completed files onto a CD, filled out the FedEx form, and shipped the materials to the printer.

Work is drawing to a close on the manuscripts of Tony Wilkinson, Tim Harrison, and Brian Muhs -- very little remains to be done -- and final page proofs will soon be sent to the authors. If I had one quiet week I could finish George Hughes's manuscript, too.

Tom Holland's manuscript is the next most complete, with all but the text having been submitted to him and returned.

The manuscripts of Augusta McMahon, Abbas Alizadeh (2 of them), and Aslihan Yener are in the early to middle stages of preparation.

All manuscripts accepted for publication are being worked on.

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RESEARCH ARCHIVES / Chuck Jones

Michael Beetley is continuing with the retrospective conversion of records to the on-line catalogues for titles acquired before about 1990. He is diligently and carefully making his way through the alphabet. Through the retrospective

graduate student visit Chicago every few years. They also welcome Chicago students who wish to study or do research in Oman.

On February 24, I lectured on "Bible Stories in the Qur'an" to Stochastics, a faculty group that meets monthly in the Quadrangle Club.

On April 8, I lectured at Middlebury College in Vermont on "From Believers to Muslims: Religious Identity in the Early Islamic Community." The lecture was a popular version of an article by the same title that appeared in more academic form last summer in the journal "Al-Abhath".

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PETER DORMAN spent ten days at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo at the end of March, examining a number of objects from the burial group of Ramose and Hatnofer (the parents of Hatshepsut's "favorite" [favorite what?] Senenmut), for a forthcoming publication on the Metropolitan Museum excavations of the hillside of Sheikh Abd el Qurna, carried out in 1927 and 1935-36. He also attended the ARCE conference in Tucson (April 16-18), giving a paper that argued the unlikelihood of a long coregency between Amenhotep III and Akhenaton, based on the incomplete excavation, the decorative progress, and the iconography evident in the tomb of Kheruef at Thebes (TT 192).

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WALTER KAEGI has been awarded a Fulbright-Hays Fellowship (US Dept. of Education) for use in Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria, 1 October 2004 to 30 September 2005. His project: Dynamics of Muslim Conquest and Local Resistance in North Africa (Seventh Century). He attended the Dumbarton Oaks Symposium in Washington, D.C. on Byzantine Egypt 30 April to 2 May, where he participated in formal and informal discussions. There he heard two major presentations by University of Chicago PhD's: Terry Wilfong and Todd M. Hickey.

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IN THE NEWS

Links to The Oriental Institute in the news are collected at:
http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/INFO/OI_WWW_New.html

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AS OTHERS SEE US

The April 2002 issue (how could we have missed this?) of Professional Roofing: The Official Publication of the National Roofing Contractors Association, has an interesting article "A Chicago institute that focuses on the Near East protects its collections"
http://www.professionalroofing.net/article.aspx?A_ID=45

