Magnus Widell continued to make progress on his edition of the unpublished Ur III tablets kept at the University of Notre Dame (The Cuneiform Texts from the Ur III Period in the University of Notre Dame Theodore M. Hesburgh Library). He also completed and submitted one scholarly article and two book reviews this year. The article, “Schiff, sumerisch,” is currently being reviewed for publication in Reallexikon der Assyriologie.

The past year has seen the appearance of three articles, two of them, “Urbanization within a Dynamic Environment: Modeling Bronze Age Communities in Upper Mesopotamia” and “Modeling Settlement Systems in a Dynamic Environment: Case Studies from Mesopotamia” were co-authored with members of the Modeling Ancient Settlement Systems’ project. The third article, “Historical Evidence for Climate Instability and Environmental Catastrophes in Northern Syria and the Jazira: The Chronicle of Michael the Syrian,” appeared earlier this year in Environment and History 13/1, pages 47–70.

Widell gave two talks this year. In March, he presented a paper on the Sumerian expression igi-kar¤ at the 217th Annual Meeting of the American Oriental Society, which was held in San Antonio. In May, he was invited by the Department of Oriental Studies at Peking University to present a talk on cuneiform texts and administrative procedures in the late third millennium. Earlier this summer, Widell accepted a position in the School of Archaeology, Classics and Egyptology at the University of Liverpool. After four and a half years at the Oriental Institute, it was a difficult decision to leave Chicago. He will start teaching at Liverpool in September 2007.

Karen L. Wilson

Karen L. Wilson is putting the finishing touches on her manuscript of the final publication of the University of Chicago’s 1903–05 excavations at Bismaya (ancient Adab) thanks to the generous grant she received from the Shelby White-Leon Levy Program for Archaeological Publications. She plans to submit the completed manuscript by the end of the summer. Karen was delighted to participate in the March 26 symposium “Excavating in Museum Basements: A Conference in Honor of Raymond D. Tindel” at which she presented a paper titled “Recovering the Lost City of Adab: Edgar J. Banks and the University of Chicago Expedition to Bismaya 1903–05.” Her work on Bismaya would not have been possible without Ray Tindel’s generosity: he provided her with both a space to work and unrestricted access to the collections in storage, as well as moral support as the project progressed.

In May Karen submitted a completed manuscript for the Mesopotamian Gallery Guide to Museum Director Geoff Emberling. In addition, she continued to serve as Kish Project Coordinator at The Field Museum. There she worked with other museum staff to design and implement an interactive Kish Web site. The site, which is in both English and Arabic, documents archival and artifactual material that resulted from the joint excavations of The Field Museum and Oxford University at Kish from 1923 to 1933. And thanks to a recent grant from the Department of Defense, Karen is continuing as a staff member at The Field Museum for the next several years to coordinate the production of a final site report for Kish.