

RESEARCH ARCHIVES

FOY SCALF

INTRODUCTION

Following state, local, and university guidelines, the Research Archives remained closed to patrons over the course of the academic year 2020–21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to this ongoing situation, Research Archives staff pivoted to provide remote research support to the OI, University of Chicago, and community of scholars studying the ancient Middle East. Over the course of the year, we fielded 1,862 research requests for digital materials and provided researchers with more than 3,000 files in response. These services were crucial to ensuring that research and teaching continued to meet the highest expectations for which the University and OI are known. A substantial portion of staff time during the first six months of the pandemic was spent organizing and cataloging digital assets for research support.

Our facilities have once again benefited from the generous help of staff in the OI prep shop, particularly Rob Bain, who made replacement shelves for several deteriorating shelves in the reading room. These replacements helped create additional space for growth and supplement the reorganization of the serial volumes in the Elizabeth Morse Genius reading room completed by Research Archives staff. All books in the series stacks were shifted to the west, thus taking advantage of the space provided by shifting the series at the end of the alphabet into the monograph stacks several years ago. This reorganization has provided badly needed space at the beginning of the series alphabet (call number S/A), which lacked any room for growth. Research Archives staff shifted more than 12,300 volumes during the year to make growth space for the next five to ten years (see staff acknowledgment section below).

Onsite visitors were not hosted during the academic year, but orientation for graduate students and a workshop on using Zotero were held over Zoom in the autumn quarter. Hundreds of digital resources were shared with our global colleagues to aid in their ongoing research and teaching. While these remote services are by no means perfect substitutes for onsite access to the Research Archives library, we hope that we have enabled researchers, scholars, students, and teachers to stay on the cutting edge of their fields by providing them with the latest results and newest discoveries.

Acquisitions

Acquisitions for 2020–21 were on pace with previous years. But these numbers will not be accurately reflected in table 1 below due to a pandemic-related cataloging backlog. This backlog in cataloging, likewise reflected in the catalog records numbers shown in table 2, is reflective of the critical contributions made to the Research Archives by our volunteers. Volunteers could not be welcomed onsite, and typical volunteer tasks had to be converted and adjusted for remote access. As of June 2021, we had begun tackling this accessioning backlog in earnest and expect to be caught up by the end of autumn quarter. By an overwhelming margin, acquisitions continue to be through purchases (193), supplemented with very important additions through gifts (15) and exchanges (7), for which refer to the section on donations below. Over the course of the year, the Research Archives expen-

RESEARCH SUPPORT | RESEARCH ARCHIVES

ditures included more than \$43,000 on new acquisitions purchasing, a 16 percent increase over last year, and more than \$2,700 in shipping charges.

Table 1. Research Archives Acquisitions July 2020—June 2021

<i>Month</i>	<i>Number of Accession Lots</i>	<i>Monographs, Series, Pamphlets</i>	<i>Journals</i>	<i>Total Volumes</i>
July 2020	8	13	1	14
August 2020	16	31	4	35
September 2020	18	30	5	35
October 2020	16	33	11	44
November 2020	25	38	11	49
December 2020	17	15	21	36
January 2021	29	55	11	66
February 2021	15	32	6	38
March 2021	25	24	24	48
April 2021	15	19	9	28
May 2021	21	27	4	31
June 2021	11	16	9	25
Totals	216	333	116	
		Total Volumes		449

Online Catalog

Research Archives staff added approximately 5,000 new records to the library catalog in EMu this year (table 2). Like the acquisitions backlog, this number is down from our average over previous years, once again reflecting the important contributions our volunteers have made to all aspects of the library. Records are available online for searching, sorting, and downloading in a variety of formats (<https://oi-idb.uchicago.edu>).

Table 2. Catalog Records

<i>Year</i>	<i># of Catalog Records Added</i>	<i>Total # of Catalog Records</i>
2020–21	5,000	570,000
2019–20	10,000	565,000
2018–19	10,000	555,000
2017–18	10,000	545,000

By the time that cataloging of the acquisitions backlog is completed, the Research Archives library collection will exceed 70,000 volumes (table 3), an important milestone in the growth of the physical collections. In the next five to ten years, we will double the size of the collection from the roughly 40,000 volumes in the Oriental Institute library in 1969 prior to the founding of the Research Archives.

Table 3. Research Archives Analytics

<i>Type</i>	<i>Total # of Records</i>
Total Volumes	69,268
Monographs	17,270
Monograph Sections	72,174
Series	1,806
Series Volumes	21,911
Series Volume Sections	98,528
Journals	1,028
Journal Volumes	29,026
Journal Volume Articles	323,960
Thesis	1,061
Pamphlets	3000
Reviews	122,717
Festschriften (Volumes)	692
Digital Invoice Records	2173
Digital Cover Art Records	11,342
Adobe PDF	41,446

Catalog records with links pointing to online content continued to grow, reaching more than 122,000 records. In addition to the labor required for entering these links, they needed maintenance, since websites often change the structure of their URL addresses, thus requiring updates to the links' records in our catalog. When Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) are available, we include them in our metadata to help ensure long-term viability of links in the catalog, and we encourage publishers of online content to employ a registered permalink or DOI system from the beginning for sustainable access to these online materials. In many cases, our records include multiple links, one directly to publishers' online options and others directing users to aggregating databases such as JSTOR. A continuing desideratum to incorporate into the catalog over the coming years consists in links to general online web resources such as online dictionaries, grammars, and text editions.

DONATIONS

The Research Archives continues to benefit greatly from generous donations of both funds and books. For their thoughtful gifts, we would like to thank the following (in alphabetical order): Susan Allison and OI image permissions; Bob Biggs and Clarence Anderson; Gretel Braidwood and Ray Tindel; Anne Flannery; McGuire Gibson and the estate of Robert McCormick Adams; Kathryn Girten and the estate of Eugene Cruz-Uribe; Shirlee Hoffman, Wally Verdooren, and the OI volunteers in honor of Roberto Cepeda; James Holland; Charissa Johnson; Janet Johnson and Don Whitcomb; the family and estate of Shelley Marie Luppert-Barnard; Malcolm Mosher Jr.; Pavel Onderka; Bridget Ragnarsson in honor of James L. Phillips; Peter Raulwing; Seth Richardson and JNES; Martha Roth and the estate of Miguel Civil; Roberta Schaffner; Malcolm Stebbins; Emily Teeter; Tasha Vorderstrasse; Barbara Breasted Whitesides; and Bruce Williams.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank Sue Geshwender and all the Research Archives volunteers, some of whom have continued contributing to OI projects by working remotely throughout the pandemic. Their efforts are essential to our mission, and we owe them immense gratitude. Everything we do will be greatly improved when we can welcome them back on-site. Many thanks to Betty Bush, Gabriella Cigarroa, Kym Crawford, Irene Glasner, Dannica Hannah, Jane Clinkert-White, Roberta Schaffner, Gabriele Correa da Silva, and Eric Whitacre.

We also welcomed two students to the Research Archives this year. Rachel Madden participated in an internship for Loyola University focused on public history, during which she has completely redesigned a virtual version of the OI's Visible Language exhibition for the Google Arts & Culture platform. We are looking forward to releasing the results of her work to the public in the fall. Claire Mokrauer-Madden began a practicum through Dominican University for an archives certificate. She has been working to digitize, catalog, and transcribe materials from the directors' correspondence files of John A. Wilson between 1936 and 1945. Claire's work is part of a larger project in collaboration with Dr. Anne Flannery and the Museum Archives to study more closely the history of the institute in the immediate aftermath of Breasted's untimely death, the Great Depression, and World War II. We hope to incorporate Claire's extremely useful contributions into a future grant-funded project to produce a published volume on this period.

As I mention each year, the operation of the Research Archives is no solo task. Between the pandemic and our volunteers' being off-site, it was especially important that this year I had a reliable, trustworthy, and flexible team of staff to help ensure that everyone had what was needed in a timely fashion and that our facilities were well cared for. To Clay Catlin, Sunwoo Lee, Tanya Olsen, Rebecca Wang, and Amy Zillman, I thank you for all the hard work, cooperation, teamwork, flexibility, and collegiality over the past, stressful year.