

INTRODUCTION

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This report offers a retrospective of the Oriental Institute's seventy-fifth year. On October 7, 1994 we marked that seventy-fifth anniversary with a gala benefit dinner. Robert McCormick Adams, former Director of the Oriental Institute and Secretary Emeritus of the Smithsonian Institution, was the keynote speaker for the occasion, and we are pleased to reprint his remarks following this introduction. Some three hundred members and friends of the Institute attended the anniversary celebration, a truly memorable occasion. This past year, however, was memorable in many other respects as well.

Research at the Oriental Institute continued to flourish. Archaeological field expeditions conducted excavations and surveys in Yemen, a study season at Göltepe in Turkey, and surveys in Syria, Iran, and Egypt. Meanwhile, here in Chicago, plans were made for expeditions in the coming year to the Amuq Plain, Aqaba, and Yaqush. Work continued on the publication of excavations at Nippur, Chogha Mish, and Sweyhat, and of the objects from Medinet Habu. A new project, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, was launched to publish the important assemblage of small finds from excavations in the Diyala Valley, Iraq. The Epigraphic Survey was in Luxor for its seventy-first season, reinvigorated by the publication of the first great portfolio on Luxor Temple, *The Festival Procession of Opet in the Colonnade Hall*. Both the Assyrian Dictionary and the Hittite Dictionary Projects received two-year renewals of their grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and along with the Demotic Dictionary, continue to make good progress on these fundamental resources for scholarship. As you can judge from the individual reports in this volume, faculty and staff scholarship also continues to be a rich and stimulating part of research at the Institute.

I know that some of you are concerned about the status of funding for research and research support units such as the Research Archives and the Computer Laboratory. I wish to assure everyone that the research mission of the Oriental Institute has not changed. Although the Legacy Campaign for our building project is our top, and only, capital improvement priority, we continue to seek funding for research from a variety of sources. Normally this task falls most heavily on the shoulders of research project directors, who submit proposals to federal agencies and private foundations that support research. However, in the future, after the Legacy Campaign is brought to a successful conclusion, the Institute's Development Office will turn its full attention to project funding. With the likely demise of federal agencies such as the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Institute of Museum Services, we must seek other sources of fund-

ing. The relationships we are now forging with corporate and private foundations will serve us well in the future as we demonstrate to them not only the value of the Oriental Institute Museum and its outreach programs within the Chicago community, but also the compelling logical reasons to support the research effort that lies behind and sustains all of our cultural and educational programs.

One of the more exciting developments this year has been the astonishing response to the Oriental Institute's new World-Wide Web (WWW) home page; in just over a year it has been visited many thousands of times by hundreds of individuals from all over the world. Our home page on the Internet joins Abzu, our index of electronic resources; our Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) electronic mailing list for discussion of ancient Near Eastern topics, with 1,100 subscribers; and our File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site which makes documents available to anyone on the Internet. These innovations are entirely due to the initiative of Charles E. Jones and John Sanders with the active assistance of many members of the staff. They are all to be congratulated. You will find the address of our WWW home page—and much more—in the article in this volume on electronic resources at the Institute.

This past year we welcomed David Schloen to the faculty. David combines a specialty in the archaeology and early history of the Levantine coastal region with qualifications in quantitative analysis, which is a welcome methodological addition that will strengthen our teaching program. In June 1995 Mark Lehner resigned his faculty position to devote full time to research and publication. Other departures this year include Richard Jasnow (Assistant Director of the Epigraphic Survey), who has accepted an appointment as Assistant Professor at Johns Hopkins University, and Billie Jean Collins (Research Associate with the Hittite Dictionary Project), who will become Director of Publications for the American Schools of Oriental Research. I am also pleased to report that Augusta McMahon (recent Ph.D. graduate in Mesopotamian Archaeology) has just accepted a faculty appointment at Cambridge University. We all wish Mark, Richard, Billie Jean, and Augusta the very best.

The design development phase of our climate control, renovation, and expansion project started in February. The delay between completion of schematic plans in the autumn of 1993 and the beginning of design development made it necessary to cover additional escalation costs by reducing construction costs. The first step in this process was taken by the University of Chicago, which agreed to cover the costs of the new entrance ramp and renovations in the basement public rest rooms and the passenger elevator to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The second step, taken early in March, was to reduce the size of the new wing. Preliminary cost estimates indicate this step brought us back within the \$10.1 million budget. Meanwhile, in early summer, we faced new design problems. The Chicago Fire Safety Bureau informed us, first, that the conservation laboratory, and then later, that the exhibit preparation shop could not remain below grade. The University's architect's office and Hammond Beeby & Babka responded quickly to these challenges. We now have a basic plan that complies with city code and meets all of our essential functional needs. Copies of the revised floor plans are posted in the lobby and I would be happy to discuss them with anyone who is interested. We expect to complete design development by late September and final construction documentation early in 1996, followed by bidding and ground breaking in the summer of 1996. If we adhere to this schedule, the Museum will be closed early in 1996.

The Legacy Campaign has raised \$5 million—the halfway mark! We will go to the Kresge Foundation in November with a six-figure proposal and we hope to have 80% of the funds needed in hand or pledged by the summer of 1996 so that we can break ground. Now is the time for members of the Oriental Institute to step forward and make the most substantial pledge possible. We need your help now.

And now I invite you to reflect on Bob Adams' remarks delivered at a celebration of the Oriental Institute's seventy-fifth anniversary and to sample some of the achievements of the Institute in 1994/95.
