

MEMBERSHIP

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The Membership Office took advantage of the closure of the Museum to reevaluate membership programming and activities for both local members and those far afield, a two-year process that will ultimately lead to a public membership drive after the reopening of the Museum. For 1996/97, in addition to our usual programming, we focused on recruiting lapsed members, expanding the travel program, and revamping our publications.

There were 1,191 Basic and Associate membership gifts in 1996/97 totaling \$70,677.50; these figures represent a 25% and 27% increase over the previous year's figures, respectively. We thank all of those members who have loyally supported us during renovation, including the almost 100 who chose to reactivate their lapsed memberships.

The Members Lectures series — one of the few free lecture series remaining among Chicago cultural institutions — continued through the year, despite the occasional bump in the road encountered during the construction process. The return of our lectures to 8:00 PM and the reintroduction of members dining privileges at the Quadrangle Club proved quite popular, as we usually drew around seventy-five guests to the lectures. Once again, the Oriental Institute was able to collaborate with the Chicago Society of the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) on several

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lectures; our thanks to Robert Biggs, Peter Kosiba, and David Reese for their assistance. The lecture series in detail:

9 October 1996 — Robert K. Ritner, Oriental Institute: “Seven Brides for Seven Stingers: The Scorpion Wives of Horus”

30 October 1996 — Andrew M. T. Moore: “Climatic Change and the Origin of Farming”*

2 December 1996 — Lana Troy, Uppsala University, Sweden: “Taming Hathor: Images of Power in the Ancient Egyptian Queenship”

19 February 1997 — Peter Ian Kuniholm, Cornell University: “Hard Dates and Soft Evidence: Tree-Rings and Ancient Chronology”

2 April 1997 — Richard A. Fazzini, Brooklyn Museum: “Egyptomania in American Architecture: From the Library of Congress to the Luxor Casino”

16 April 1996 — Dominic Montserrat, University of Warwick (UK): “Women and Death in Roman Egypt”

7 May 1997 — Robert Ousterhout, University of Illinois-Urbana/Champaign: “In the Footsteps of Gertrude Bell: Rediscovering Cappadocia”

* Co-sponsored by the AIA

The James Henry Breasted Society met twice this year. Our now-traditional October dinner, held in the Director’s Study, was held before Professor Ritner’s lecture on 9 October. On 2 April members of the Society and the Visiting Committee were joined by Richard Fazzini and his wife Mary before his lecture on Egyptian influence in American architecture.

The year was highlighted by *Romancing the Past*, a gala benefit held at the Drake Hotel on 19 May 1997, with a keynote address by Breasted Society member and author Barbara Mertz. Jill Carlotta Maher, also a Breasted Society member and a loyal supporter of many Institute activities, was honored as the first recipient of the James Henry Breasted Medallion. The dinner, attended by 353 people and generating \$100,000 in net income for the Legacy Campaign, featured a silent auction and dancing. The music of Stanley Paul proved as compelling as the auction items, as someone pulled away from the dance floor long enough to bid \$10,000 for a role as a minor character in the next Amelia Peabody mystery by Elizabeth Peters (aka Barbara Mertz). We look forward to the challenge of trying to match this unforgettable evening.

The Travel Program offered two departures during the year. Associate Curator Emily Teeter, who always gives willingly of her time and expertise, took a small group of members to New York in January for the Amarna exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In March, Research Associate (Associate Professor) Donald Whitcomb led a study tour through northern Egypt and Jordan, including his own site at Aqaba. Most of the year was devoted to a restructuring of the Travel Program, as we strive to develop a package of services that use the Institute’s resources and serve the needs of members. In addition to offering Institute-only departures to North American museums and popular destinations like Egypt, the Travel Program will also sponsor study tours — still led by Oriental Institute faculty or staff —

jointly with other units of the University, or with other institutions. By combining forces on less-frequented destinations like Iran and Syria, the Institute can offer the insights of its scholars to members at a reasonable cost.

This joint-sponsorship program has already resulted in the announcement of tours to Turkey in October 1997 (in cooperation with the Center for Middle Eastern Studies) and Iran in April 1998 (in cooperation with Geographic Expeditions). In addition, the Institute is making its travel services available to other groups on campus for special tours. The first such departure will occur in February 1998, when John Larson leads a group of University of Chicago Women's Board members to Egypt. Finally, the Travel Program offers consultation and advice to Associate and Breasted level members who wish to visit the Near East, free of charge.

There are three innovations to report on the Membership publications front. First, in October 1996, the Membership and Publications Offices collaborated on the inaugural Members Book Sale, during which most publications of the Oriental Institute were sold at 40% discount. The sale proved very popular, as 233 books were sold to members as near as the University of Chicago campus and as far as Australia. Second, after a hiatus of several years, institutional memberships in the Oriental Institute are now available. Libraries, universities, and research centers around the world may now join the Institute to receive copies of *News & Notes* and the *Annual Report*. In the first six months of the project, fourteen such institutions have subscribed. Lastly, the content and format of *News & Notes* was substantially overhauled at the end of the year. Each of the Institute's departments will have a section in every issue to inform members of new developments, research advancements, and special offers and resources. The calendar and registration forms will now be perforated for easy removal. The first issue incorporating these changes was *News & Notes* 155 (Fall 1997).

The Membership Office benefited from the cooperation of many members of faculty and staff, who volunteered time and expertise to various projects. I would in particular like to thank Tom Holland, Tom Urban, Christopher Kahl, Emily Teeter, John Larson, Denise Browning, John and Peggy Sanders, Chuck Jones, and Tony Wilkinson.
