

McGuire Gibson

This has been a very busy year for **McGuire Gibson**. Besides his research on Nippur, he has continued to direct the Diyala Objects Project. He has also begun planning for a new excavation in Syria, scheduled to begin in fall 1999. A prelimi-

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nary visit to Syria in September 1998 allowed a side trip to Beirut, which he had not seen since 1975. The destruction caused by the civil war was visible on many buildings, as well as in the acres of empty space where damaged buildings have been demolished to prepare for new construction. The atmosphere in the city is optimistic, and construction that has already been done is most impressive. Six months later, in March, he returned to Damascus as a guest speaker for the United States Information Service. He delivered lectures at the Directorate General of Antiquities, the University of Damascus, and the USIS. He also visited potential excavation sites and held discussions with the Director of Antiquities and the Minister of Culture.

During the past year, Gibson participated in three international conferences. In one at Rutgers on *Art, Antiquity, and the Law: Preserving our Global Cultural Heritage*, he reported on the state of antiquities and cultural heritage in the Near East in general and Iraq in particular. At another conference on *Iraq: Its History, People, and Politics* at Villanova University, he spoke on the ancient history and archaeology of Mesopotamia. In a symposium on ancient palaces, held in Copenhagen, he discussed "Paper Trails" (or rather, "clay trails") in Mesopotamian palaces. During the year, he also gave lectures at the McClung Museum in Knoxville, Tennessee, at the University of Pennsylvania, and he also addressed several audiences in Chicago.

Gibson was recently re-elected to the Executive Committee of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers and serves on the board of the American Institute for Yemeni Studies.
