

Janet H. Johnson

Janet H. Johnson was elected President of the American Research Center in Egypt at their Annual Meeting held in Baltimore in late April. In anticipation of this appointment, she and the preceding American Research Center in Egypt President, Afaf Marsot (University of California-Los Angeles), spent a week in Cairo in December. While they were there, they talked with the staff of the center about the plans for the renovation of the extensive new office space which had just been purchased. In addition, they met and talked with as many as possible of the people in Cairo with whom the center, its Fellows, and expeditions interact. These included many members of the Antiquities Organization, the Ministry of Higher Education, and the faculties of Cairo University and the American University in Cairo as well as a number of Egyptian and American businessmen, journalists, and the American Ambassador and several of his staff. She had hoped to get to Chicago House while in Egypt, but her schedule was so tight that the

only archaeological site she was able to visit was Giza, where she saw the new “Queen’s Pyramid” found near the pyramid of Khufu. She hopes to make more time for travel during next year’s visit!

During the year, Johnson also served as a member of the James Henry Breasted Prize Committee of the American Historical Association, as a member of the University of Chicago’s Humanities Institute Faculty Governing Board, and as a member of the Board of Directors of the Institute for Semitic Studies. She remained the American representative on the International Committee for the Publication of the Carlsberg Papyri (a large collection of mostly Roman period Demotic literary texts, often very fragmentary, housed in the Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Ancient Near Eastern Studies of the University of Copenhagen).

During the year she finished the entries on “Late Period History” and “Text Sources: Late Period” for the new *Encyclopedia of Egyptian Archaeology* which will appear through Garland Press. “Late Period” in this case includes Saite, Persian, and Ptolemaic Egypt (approximately 650–30 B.C.), a fascinating period during which Egypt became an integral part of the larger world of the Eastern Mediterranean. Egyptian culture was “updated” and reaffirmed during the Saite period and remained strong throughout the Late period despite Egypt’s temporary incorporation into the Persian Empire and her later rule by the Greek-speaking (but Egyptian based) Ptolemies. She also taught a new course, on Women in Ancient Egypt, for which she translated about fifty ancient texts illustrating aspects of their social, cultural, legal, and economic roles. For the work of the Demotic Dictionary Project, see the separate report, pp. 77–81.
