



CHICAGO HOUSE BULLETIN



Volume XXIII

Privately Circulated

July 2012



Margaret De Jong drawing
Theban Tomb 107 doorway



THE 2011–2012 FIELD SEASON





Chicago House professional staff 2011–2012 group photo, by Sue Lezon and Yarko Kobylecky. Back row, left to right: Hiroko Kariya (conservator), Ellie Smith (photo archives registrar), Julia Schmied (epigrapher), Krisztián Vértés (Egyptologist/artist), Andrea Dudek (library volunteer), Keli Alberts (artist); 2nd row from top, left to right: Tina Di Cerbo (epigrapher/artist), Jen Kimpton (epigrapher), Marie Bryan (librarian), Anait Helmholtz (librarian), Frank Helmholtz (stonemason), Margaret De Jong (senior artist), Girgis Samwell (chief engineer); 3rd row from top, left to right: Brett McClain (senior epigrapher), Jay Heidel (architect/artist), Ray Johnson (director), Nidaa el Sayed, Samir Guindy (administrator); Bottom row, left to right: Lotfi Hassan (conservator), Joia Andraus, Nahed Samir Andraus (conservator), Bismalla el Sayed, Essam el Sayed (senior accountant) and son Abdel Rahman, Samwell Maher (assistant administrator), Sue Lezon (photo archivist/photographer), and Yarko Kobylecky (photographer)

©2012 by The University of Chicago

All rights reserved. Published 2012.

Printed in the United States of America.

The Oriental Institute

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, IL 60637

Telephone: (773) 702-9514; Facsimile: (773) 702-9853; E-mail: oi-administration@uchicago.edu

All inquiries, comments, and suggestions are welcome

All Epigraphic Survey titles are available for complimentary download at the Oriental Institute website

World-Wide Website: <http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/pubs/catalog/epigraphic.html>

Printed by United Graphics, Inc., Mattoon, Illinois



CHICAGO HOUSE BULLETIN



Issued by The Epigraphic Survey
The Oriental Institute, The University of Chicago

Volume XXIII

Privately Circulated

June 2012

THE CHICAGO HOUSE FIELD SEASON OCTOBER 2011 TO APRIL 2012: A SEASON DIARY

By W. Raymond Johnson, *Field Director*

OCTOBER

The Chicago House 2011–2012 field season was a time of transitions, passages, tremendous excitement, and hope as Egypt continued to adjust to its new circumstances and redefine itself. The season’s activity in Luxor started before we even arrived. On October 10th and 11th new US ambassador to Egypt Anne Patterson and recently appointed USAID Egypt director Walter North were in Luxor for the formal inauguration of the USAID Egypt-funded west-bank dewatering program (activated the previous year) with our colleagues at the Supreme Council of Antiquities Cairo and Luxor and American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE). Since this event occurred before the team’s and my arrival back in Luxor, Tina Di Cerbo — who with the Chicago House workmen was supervising the reopening the house for our return — kindly acted as Chicago House representative and accompanied the party, showing them our work at Luxor and Karnak temples.

A few days later, on October 15th, Chicago House officially opened its doors for the 2011–2012

archaeological field season, and the library reopened on the 24th. I had a good few days in Cairo beforehand signing the season contract with the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA), eventually meeting Ambassador Patterson, and touching base with our friends at the SCA, USAID Egypt, and ARCE Cairo. Luxor was peaceful and pleasantly busy. After I had distributed copies of the signed contract to SCA Luxor director Mansour Boraik, the Chicago House

epigraphic and conservation teams quickly resumed work at Medinet Habu and at Luxor Temple, and on October 31st we resumed our documentation work at Theban Tomb (TT) 107 (of the noble Nefersekheru, steward of Amenhotep III’s great palace complex at Malqata). On October 20th we had an impromptu “show and tell” session in the library, where the artists and epigraphers displayed their summer work — ink and digital drawings — on the library tables. It was amazing to see the enormous amount of work accomplished by the team, and it was a good opportunity for everyone to see what everyone else was doing. Senior artist Margaret De Jong, Egyptologist/



Frank Helmholz, Margaret De Jong, SCA Inspector Hekmat Araby Mahmoud, and Brett McClain opening Theban Tomb 107. October 31

THE 2011-2012 FIELD SEASON OF THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY



Drawing of Nefersekeru by Sue Osgood. Theban Tomb 107

artist Krisztián Vértés, and artist Keli Alberts showed their Medinet Habu and Khonsu Temple inked wall and block drawings; architect/artist Jay Heidel showed his digitally “inked” AutoCAD Thecla Church block drawings; Tina showed her digital Medinet Habu graffiti drawings, maps, and elevations (done with Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop); senior epigrapher Brett McClain and epigrapher Jen Kimpton showed Jen’s isometric drawings of the Khonsu Temple reused blocks and joined groups that she made with Adobe Illustrator; and Krisztián showed us drawings on which he is documenting the different color programs that survive in the small Amun temple ambulatory. We took this opportunity to bring in the Chicago House administrative/finance team — senior accountant Essam el Sayed, administrator Samir Guindy, and assistant administrator Samwell Maher — to show them what their work supported, and our local temple workmen as well, who see us doing the initial phases of our documentation at the temple walls but rarely see the finished product. The kitchen and house crews almost never see us doing the site work, so they were very interested indeed to see what we actually did at the temple sites!

The weather in October was glorious — hot during the day, but deliciously cool at night, with the temperatures slowly going down. The number of tourists steadily and noticeably grew as the month progressed. The temples were busy again, which was very good to see, and made everyone happy after the long, hot, quiet summer. Construction of the new Corniche in front of Chicago House had noticeably accelerated as well; trees were being planted, and new pedestrian walkways were put in along the lower terrace (allaying our fears that it might go back to being a highway). It was very good to be back in Luxor.



October 20, Library review: Krisztián Vértés explaining his drawings



Lotfi Hassan explaining Tina’s graffiti documentation program to the Chicago House workmen. October 20



Corniche construction outside of Chicago House. October 27

NOVEMBER

November was a particularly busy month as Egypt prepared for its first free parliamentary elections. Every wall in Luxor was plastered with bright campaign posters with smiling images of every type of person imaginable running for office: male and female, conservative, liberal, and everything in between. Each candidate was represented by a symbol in a corner of each poster (for those who might not be able to read), and over the course of the winter we witnessed an astonishing array of them: flowers (including the papyrus and lotus), scales of justice, Nefertiti's bust, lanterns, candles, fruit, an umbrella, a falcon, an ironing board, an *wedjat*-eye, a television, a house, and a washing machine, among at least a hundred others. Librarian Marie Bryan made quite a catalog of them. The whole phenomenon and use of modern hieroglyphs in the election process was wonderful to witness.

On November 2nd I met new Luxor governor and former ambassador Dr. Ezzat Mohamed Saad, briefed him on the University of Chicago Oriental Institute's activities (and history) in Luxor, presented him with some of our publications, and invited him to come and see Chicago

House, which he and his wife did a few weeks later. On the 14th I had the pleasure of participating in a workshop on archaeological recording techniques sponsored by the American University in Cairo and the Dutch/Flemish Archaeological Institute. I gave a PowerPoint presentation of all the different "Chicago House method(s)" that we use



Jay Heidel collating a Thecla Church block drawing. Luxor Temple blockyard, November 4

THE 2011–2012 FIELD SEASON OF THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY

for our epigraphic recording: photography (film and digital), our classic photographic drawing method on photographs, tracing on plastic, aluminum-foil rubbings, digital graffiti recording (that Tina has been spearheading), and exciting new inroads with digitally inked scanned penciled drawings using Wacom drawing tablets and Adobe Photoshop software that artist Krisztián Vértés is developing and refining now. The workshop was timely in light of the Oriental Institute's current exhibition, *Picturing the Past: Imaging and Imagining the Ancient Middle East*, which celebrates the Oriental Institute's archaeological documentation programs throughout the Middle East. The exhibition and catalog feature sections on the activities — past, present, and future — of the Epigraphic Survey/Chicago House in Luxor (authored by me) and the Oriental Institute's Saqqara Expedition (by Ann Roth). The catalog can be downloaded in PDF format for free from the Oriental Institute Publications website:

<http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/pubs/catalog/oimp/oimp34.html>

It's an extraordinary reference work, and a real monument to the Oriental Institute's legacy of archaeological documentation in the Middle East, as is the exhibition itself.

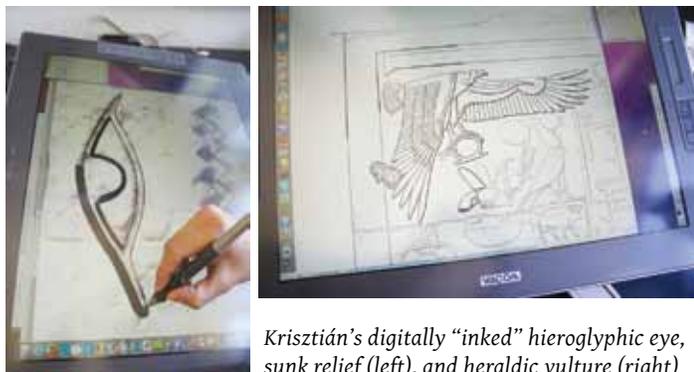


Andrea Dudek working in Chicago House Library. November 21 (photo by Marie Bryan)

On November 12th Oriental Institute Visiting Committee member Andrea Dudek arrived at Chicago House for three weeks' volunteer work assisting Marie in the Marjorie M. Fisher Chicago House Library. She was a huge help, particularly in our Library of Congress conversion process. Thanks to her, Marie, and library assistant Anait Helmholtz's efforts we're actually beginning to see the light at the end of that tunnel! Emily Teeter and the OI tour (including Lewis and Misty Gruber) came through mid-month; they visited Medinet Habu, where Brett and Medinet Habu conservator Lotfi Hassan showed them our documentation and conservation work; saw Luxor Temple, where architect Jay Heidel showed them his Thecla Church documentation work; and even had a pleasant briefing in the Chicago House library. On November 17th we celebrated the birthday of Chicago House, now in its 88th year; soon we'll be as old as the Assyrian Dictionary Project! On the 24th we hosted our annual Thanksgiving dinner, attended by Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations faculty member Nadine Moeller, Nadine's husband Gregory Marouard, Hratch Papazian, and the Tell Edfu crew, as well as a number of our ARCE Luxor, foreign, and Egyptian colleagues. The cranberry sauce was home-made by Margaret, with fresh berries kindly hand-carried by Andrea, a very special, very American treat. That same evening a second gathering was hosted by the Karnak Franco-Egyptian Center for all the archaeological missions and our Egyptian antiquities friends. There were a LOT of people present, indicative of the normal, busy state of affairs with the scientific work in Luxor for this time of year and the continued stability of the Supreme Council of Antiquities. In fact, Luxor was peaceful throughout the last few weeks of November, untouched by the political disturbances that were occurring in Cairo. And despite



Krisztián experimenting with digital "inking" using Tina's Wacom drawing tablet. November 8



Krisztián's digitally "inked" hieroglyphic eye, sunk relief (left), and heraldic vulture (right)

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



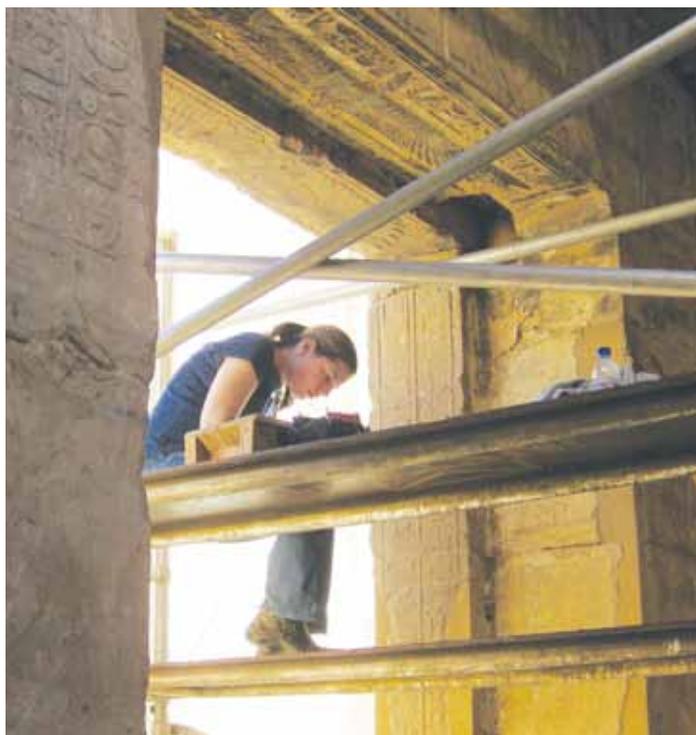
November parliamentary voting: Left to right: cook Tayib with ink-stained pinky, proof of voting; Lotfi and administrator Samir Guindy; and night guard Saber. November 28 and 29

everyone's concerns, the free parliamentary elections that began in November, in Luxor, in Cairo, in Alexandria, and everywhere, were noteworthy for their orderliness, peaceful nature, enthusiasm, and unprecedented turnout. It was a most encouraging beginning!

DECEMBER

On December 1st senior artist Sue Osgood returned to Luxor to join Margaret drawing in the tomb of Nefersekheru. On December 3rd conservator Hiroko Kariya arrived to resume conservation work in the Luxor Temple blockyards, where she desalinated several Thecla Church arch blocks currently being recorded by Jay. On the 3rd Andre Veldmeijer and a group of students from the Netherlands/Flemish Institute, who had participated in the epigraphy workshop the month before, visited Theban Tomb 107 and Medinet Habu to see our recording methodologies in person, guided by Brett and Margaret. The next day we continued the conversation in the Chicago House library. On December 4th the Chicago House staff headed south to see the current excavation work of Nadine Moeller and her team at Tell Edfu. This season we also had the special pleasure of seeing the work of Gregory Marouard and Hratch Papazian at the small step pyramid site in southern Edfu. After they swept the sand away, what had been a simple hill last season had suddenly become stone-built architecture, apparently to the great surprise of the locals!

On December 7th after increased protests in Tahrir Square and much negotiation, the National Rescue Government's (NRG) Prime Minister Kamal Ganzouri and his cabinet were sworn in, including a new Minister of State for Antiquities (MSA), Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim, who we knew in the past when he worked at Edfu and Saqqara. It is good for Egypt's antiquities to have the Ministry



Jen Kimpton at work in the small Amun temple facade doorway. November 29 (photo by Margaret De Jong)



The Chicago House team led by Gregory Marouard visiting the Edfu step pyramid, Hratch Papazian in the foreground. December 4

restored and another good man in the saddle. Despite the political uncertainties and expected bumps in the road, the parliamentary elections of the last month and a half have been a joy to witness; the Egyptian people are justifiably proud of their new freedom. We encouraged our Egyptian staff to vote, and each one proudly showed me his ink-stained finger (proof of voting) the day after. There have been other reasons to celebrate as well; I attended two engagement parties for offspring of our workers (who were babies the last time I looked, and are now getting married?). And in late November Medinet Habu conservator Nahed Samir Andraus gave birth to a baby boy, Jovan, her and former Chicago House conservator Adel's second child. Life is full!

Our Christmas in Luxor was quiet and peaceful. A number of the Chicago House staff returned home for the holidays as well as many of our colleagues, but the rest of us enjoyed

a warm and pleasant holiday. Lotfi's family, Dina and their little boys Karim and Hany, joined us for the holiday, which made senior accountant Essam and Nidaa's children Bismalla and Abdel Rahman — who are the same ages — very happy. Our Christmas dinner was celebrated with many friends — Egyptian, Japanese, Italian, Canadian, and even some Americans — and LOTS of kids. The residence courtyard after dinner was like a hippodrome, with eight very small children racing round and around led by a very energetic two-year-old! It was very sweet.

But our holiday joy was muted by the loss of a very dear friend and colleague. Conservator Luigi de Cesaris, who coordinated the ARCE/Chicago House Roman fresco-cleaning project at Luxor Temple from 2005 to 2008, was felled suddenly by a heart attack on December 19th as he was finishing up work at the Red Monastery in Sohag with his team. Luigi was well known for the quality of his

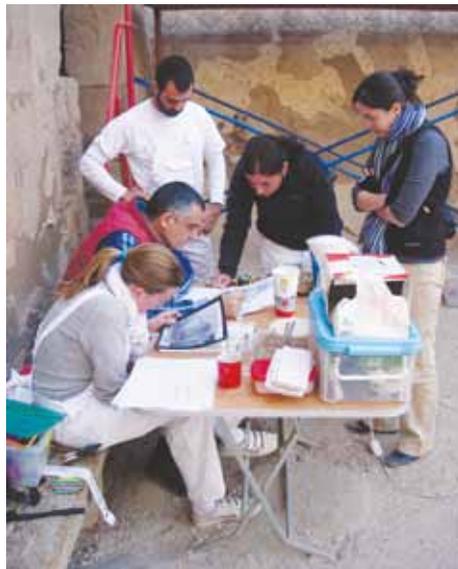


Lotfi, Hany, and Karim. December 29

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

conservation work, his extraordinary energy, and his richness of spirit, and he was a dear friend to us all at Chicago House. Luigi was a presence in Egypt since the 1980s when he worked with the Getty Conservation Institute team cleaning and consolidating Nefertary's famous tomb in the Valley of the Queens. This was followed by work sponsored by USAID and ARCE at the monasteries of St. Anthony and St. Paul on the Red Sea coast, Luxor Temple, and most recently at the Red Monastery. His friendship and overwhelming enthusiasm for the conservation and preservation of Egypt's cultural heritage will be terribly missed.

Our archaeological fieldwork continued through the holidays. In the latter part of the month we started expanding the protective roofing along



Luigi de Cesaris (middle left) and the Italian conservation team at Luxor Temple in 2007

the inside walls of the Medinet Habu blockyard under Lotfi's careful supervision. The roofing now protects fragments stored along the inside of the wall and will serve as additional, covered conservation areas. The Medinet Habu Domitian gate was dismantled down to its last course by stonemason Frank Helmholz and our intrepid stone crew, and we reviewed Frank's plans for the new foundation with MSA Luxor director Mansour Boraik and MSA Gurna director Mohamed Abdel Azziz in the middle of the month. By the end of the month Sue Osgood was on her last drawing enlargement of the beautifully carved, Amenhotep III-period reliefs in Theban Tomb 107. Jay continued

his documentation and collation of the Thecla Church blocks in the Luxor Temple blockyard, while Hiroko, our



Mohamed and Saoud moving Ptolemy I blocks at Luxor Temple. December 9

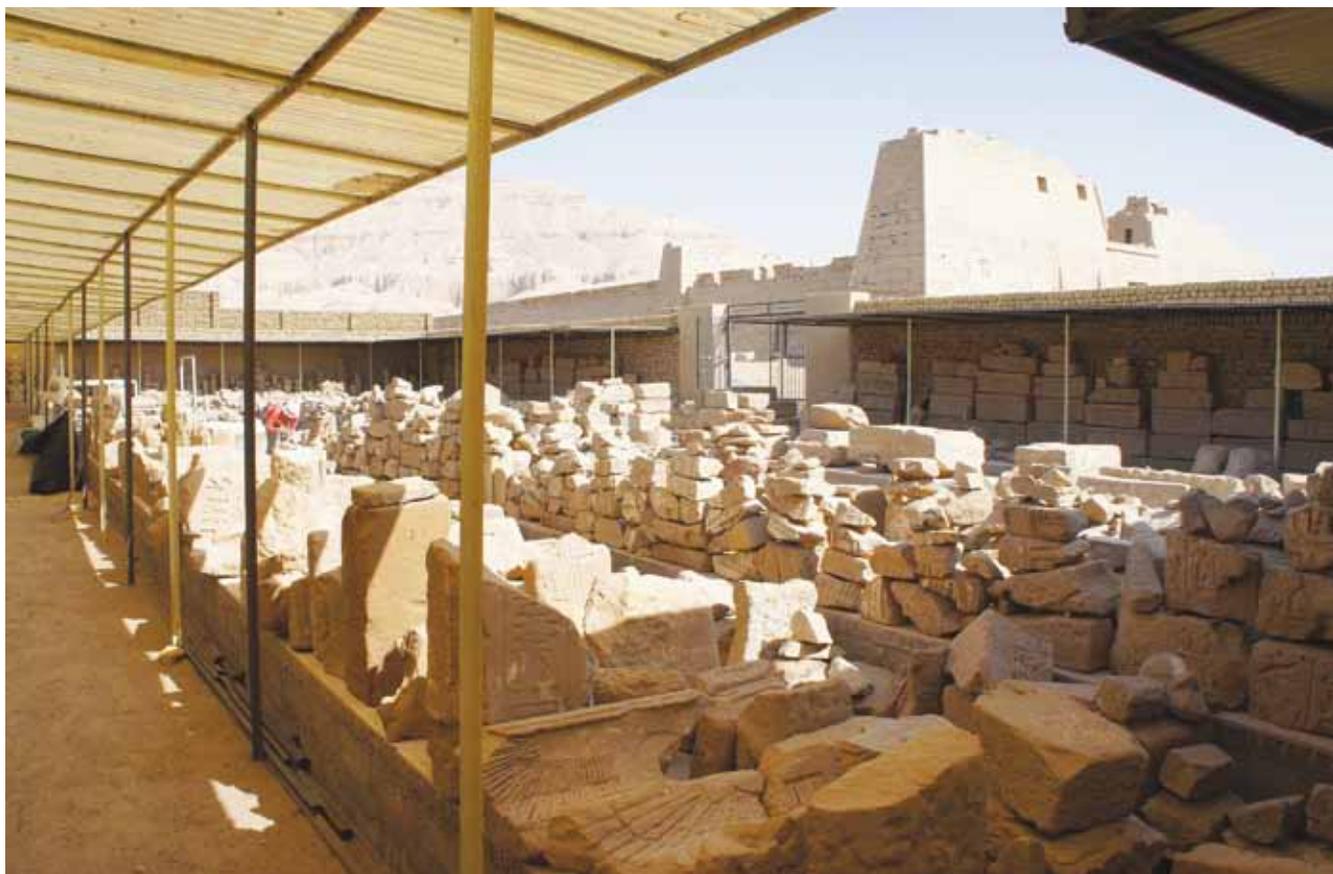


Julia Schmieid registering fragments. Medinet Habu blockyard, December 13



Hiroko Kariya desalinating Luxor Temple Thecla blocks. December 9

THE 2011–2012 FIELD SEASON OF THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY



Julia Schmied (in red, left middle) numbering blocks. Medinet Habu blockyard with new roofing



Ali, Saber, Tayib, and Mustafa moving blocks at the Domitian gate. Medinet Habu, December 16

workmen, and I moved over 120 Ptolemy I and miscellaneous blocks and block fragments to separate mastaba platforms for photography and analysis.

The second round of parliamentary elections in December proceeded fairly smoothly, which made it harder to understand the continued violence in Tahrir Square. That hit a tragic low on December 17th when the Institute d’Egypte near the American University in Cairo, established by Napoleon in 1798 and Egypt’s oldest scientific institution (also the oldest functioning academy of sciences and arts outside Europe), caught fire in the chaos and was gutted. It is reported that at least half of its library of 200,000 rare volumes and manuscripts was destroyed. Very few people knew what the institute was or what it represented, but everyone knows now. It is one of the saddest casualties of post-revolution Egypt.

And so Egypt continues with its growing pains. What was happening in Tahrir Square seemed very far from here in peaceful Luxor, but the burning of that Institute and its library/archives hit our community hard. There has been a huge collaborative effort to salvage what is left and to restore the building — including USAID Egypt and ARCE — but the loss is incalculable.



Luxor Temple open-air museum (foreground) and storage area (background)

JANUARY

Our New Year's Eve was a quiet, in-house affair this year. That day we learned that our old friend Donald Oster had passed away in London a few days before. Donald was our first official Chicago House donor more than thirty years ago when former director Lanny Bell and Oriental Institute Visiting Committee member Carlotta Maher started our individual donor program; Donald was a dear friend, and we will miss him. Richard Jasnow was back with us at the beginning of the month for a couple of weeks' work with Tina at Medinet Habu recording graffiti, and work on two graffiti found by the ARCE conservators high up in the Khonsu Temple court on a pillar and the west wall. On January 3rd former Egyptian Museum Cairo director Wafaa el Saddik and her husband Azmy el Rabbat joined us for some research in the library. It is always a pleasure to have them with us.

Some of you may have noticed in my chapter of the *Picturing the Past* exhibition catalog, "The Epigraphic Survey and the 'Chicago Method,'" the reference to experiments that we have been conducting with digital inking techniques of our facsimile drawings. Tina and Richard have been doing digital drawings of the graffiti throughout the Medinet Habu complex for years, and Jay has

been using AutoCAD for his Thecla Church block drawings, but we are learning that the technology now exists to do many of our inked facsimile drawings digitally as well. After consultation with our drawing wizard Krisztián, senior epigrapher Brett, and the epigraphic team, we decided that the time to make the leap is now. Krisztián showed us that with Photoshop and Wacom digital drawing tablets we can do the inked lines of our facsimile drawings digitally with the same control and precision



Richard Jasnow and Tina Di Cerbo working on Khonsu Temple graffiti, Chicago House Library. January 11

THE 2011-2012 FIELD SEASON OF THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY

that is the bottom line for our hard-copy pen and ink drawings. Brett and the team put together a list of the necessary equipment and a procurement schedule that we then submitted to the Oriental Institute. The Institute suggested that we submit a proposal to the Women's Board of the University of Chicago for funding. The proposal was submitted in January, with lots of prayers and crossed fingers.

As the anniversary of the Egyptian revolution, January 25th, came closer, unusual fuel shortages throughout Egypt and fuel-shortage protests made travel increasingly difficult. The lines at the gas stations were longer than we have ever seen them, and it was a bit of a mystery as to why it should be happening at all. Chicago House ended up procuring gasoline for vehicles and natural gas canisters for cooking (butagas) piecemeal here and there, but availability varied from day to day. We



Tina recording graffiti in the southern Ptolemaic Annex. Small Amun temple, Medinet Habu

rationed the heat in the library, turning it off in mid-afternoon to conserve the fuel oil. Sadly, petty theft was also up, as certain people took advantage of the light police presence all over the country. On January 22nd our telephone and Internet lines went dead when the cable was stolen from under the road behind Chicago House(!), presumably for the copper wire. The better part of the Karnak area was affected, and while our phone service was restored within a few days, for weeks we were obliged to use mobile phone Internet "sticks" to access the Internet.

Chicago House made progress on all work fronts in the new year. The last course of the Domitian gate at Medinet Habu was successfully dismantled by Frank and the stone team, and the rubble foundation of the gate, constructed by Georges Daressy in the late nineteenth century, was photographed by Yarko Kobylecky assisted by Ellie Smith.



Sue Osgood (center) working at Theban Tomb 107. January 12



Sue Osgood drawing a column inscription. February 9



Sue Osgood, MSA Inspector Mahmoud Abdel Wahab Mohamed, and Margaret De Jong penciling. Theban Tomb 107, February 9

The sandstone rubble Daressy used included many inscribed fragments and architectural elements that were transferred to the new blockyard for processing and recording. Frank and the guys prepared the area for a new, damp-coursed, reinforced-concrete footing half a meter thick on which we will re-erect the gate next season after the footing has cured over the summer. The epigraphic team supervised by Brett continued documenting reliefs in the small Amun temple ambulatory for the next volume in that series. In addition to the normal drawing, artist Keli did aluminum-foil rubbings of Thutmose III and Ramesses III inscribed wall surfaces that are now covered by later walls — a technique we perfected at Khonsu Temple — that she then traced. The tracings will later be scanned and reduced for inking.

Krisztián has been doing a groundbreaking study of the different paint phases in the long history of the small Amun temple proper. He has painstakingly documented the original painted phase of Thutmose III, a

post-Amarna restoration phase, a Twenty-first Dynasty renewal phase, and a final Ptolemaic phase. In each of these phases the color scheme of the scenes changed, sometimes quite dramatically. At the Medinet Habu blockyard conservator Lotfi tested the joints of five sections of a five-and-a-half-meter tall, inscribed palm column from the first-phase Ramesses III palace on the southern side of the mortuary temple. This column and its mates were taken down and replaced with bigger ones when Ramesses III increased the height of the hall later in his reign. The original column sections were reused elsewhere in the precinct, where they were

excavated and recovered by the Oriental Institute back in the 1920s. Lotfi and the stone team temporarily re-erected the entire column outside the blockyard, quite a sight, and we discussed with our MSA Luxor colleagues the possibility of erecting it and a second, partial column within the palace area for public view sometime in the future. Yarko and Ellie did large-format film and digital photography of 138



Margaret and MSA Inspector Zeinab Mohamed el Sayid Mohamed checking details at Theban Tomb 107. March 16



Ellie Smith and Yarko Kobylecky photographing Medinet Habu fragments

fragments in the blockyard, many from Third Intermediate Period houses in the Medinet Habu complex, that Egyptologist Julia Schmied is identifying and analyzing as part of her PhD research and that will be the first monograph in our Medinet Habu blockyard publication series.

There were many comings and goings in the new year. Conservator Hiroko split her time between the Luxor Temple blockyard, the Abydos mission of the New York University Institute of Fine Arts, and the UNESCO/Waseda University Amenhotep III tomb project, where she reassembled numerous pieces of the granite lid of Amenhotep III's royal sarcophagus. Architect Jay Heidel spent part of the month in Middle Egypt at Shiekh Abada/Antinopolis assisting the Istituto Papirologico of the University of Florence, Italy, with their survey of the Hadrianic Roman city. He also helped them plan a multi-year geophysical

survey of the site, increasingly threatened by encroaching agriculture and cemeteries.

FEBRUARY

At the beginning of February we were very pleased to welcome back the Malqata Palace expedition: Diana Craig Patch and Catharine Roehrig of the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Peter Lacovara of Emory University; and surveyor Joel Paulson and his wife Pam, who stayed with us for a month as they resumed their archaeological work at Amenhotep III's sprawling palace site. One of our incentives for recording the reliefs and inscriptions on the northern wall of the sunken court of Amenhotep III's steward of the Malqata palace, Nefersekeru (TT 107), is the renewed archaeological activity at the palace itself.

February proved to be the busiest month of our Luxor archaeological field season thus far, with streams of visitors (including my sister Carolyn Johnson on her first visit to Egypt), numerous tour groups (including two led by our old friend Ken Ostrand), site and library briefings, MSA site meetings, colleagues passing through, lots of work milestones, and even a film festival. Luxor hosted an African-Egyptian film festival from February 21 to 28, and the local authorities hustled to finish out the new Corniche beforehand with newly planted gardens and beautifully lit walkways for the event; during the festival the waterfront was alive with events, music, Nubian dancers, and security. The water sculpture down the road with its faux rocks and waterfalls was activated briefly, and films were shown all over Luxor, many at the convention



Corniche in front of Chicago House (on left), ornamental rock fountain on right



Re-erected column and Medinet Habu conservation team. January 27



Brett checking collation sheets at the small Amun temple. Medinet Habu, February 13

THE 2011-2012 FIELD SEASON OF THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY



Keli making a foil rubbing of hidden reliefs



Keli and her stitched-together foil rubbings and tracings of a hidden Ramesses III relief. Small Amun temple, Medinet Habu



USAID Egypt visit to Medinet Habu: Keli Alberts showing her foil and tracing work to Brett, USAID Egypt grant manager Sylvia Atalla, USAID engineer Mohamed Abdel Rahman, and ARCE associate director John Shearman. Small Amun temple ambulatory, February 13

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

center next door, with police, soldiers, black limousines, ministers, celebrities, sirens, and everything. It was just like old times!

Despite these distractions, our work proceeded on schedule. Frank and his team poured the new, half-meter-thick, reinforced-concrete foundations of the dismantled Domitian gate, which will now cure over the summer. We lent Frank to the American Research Center in Egypt for a few days' emergency work in the Luxor Temple Ramesses II court in mid-month, where he successfully coordinated the repair of a broken abacus block high atop one of the papyrus-bud columns on the eastern side of the court. By month's end Sue Osgood finished her Theban Tomb 107 and Medinet Habu small Amun temple (*Medinet Habu* Volume 10) work and departed for home. Architect Jay returned from Sheikh Abada/Antinoupolis in Middle Egypt

and resumed his documentation work with the Thecla Church blocks, as well as Luxor Temple signage design. Hiroko finished condition-monitoring and studying a group of buried Akhenaten talatat blocks along the eastern exterior of the Colonnade Hall, too fragile to move but protected from further decay by their burial.

On February 21st I gave a workshop for Karnak inspectors about Chicago House's numerous epigraphic recording techniques at the ARCE conservation lab classroom next to Khonsu Temple. On February 23rd Malqata surveyor Joel Paulson very kindly showed a group of us what his Leica 3-D scanner (that he has been using to record Malqata palace mudbrick walls) could do with inscribed stone walls at Medinet Habu. The results reinforced our desire to add 3-D digital imaging to our Luxor documentation program in the near future.



Poured, reinforced-concrete foundation for the Domitian gate. Medinet Habu (photo by Frank Helmholz)



MSA meeting at Medinet Habu: MSA Gurna director Mohamed Abdel Azziz, Lotfi, MSA Karnak Director Ibrahim Suleiman, MSA Luxor director Mansour Boraik, Chief Inspector Abdel Nasser, Chief Inspector Tayib

MARCH

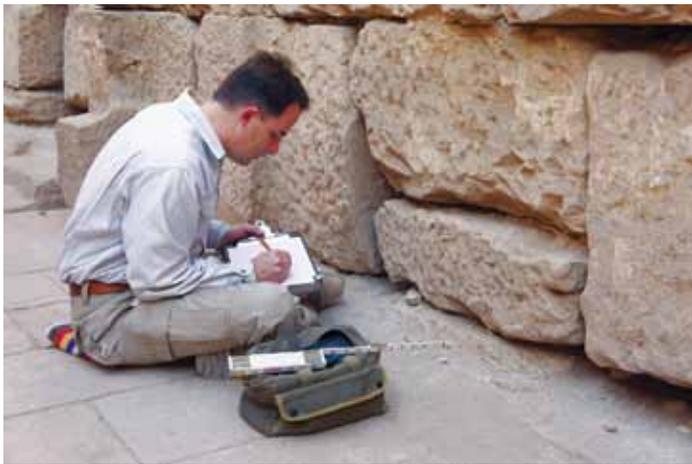
At the beginning of March the epigraphic team — epigraphers Jen Kimpton and Brett McClain, Krisztián, Keli, and me — resumed work at Khonsu Temple, Karnak, recording reused blocks in the flooring of Chamber 2 and a lower wall of Chamber 7 in coordination with the American Research Center in Egypt, ARCE Luxor associate director John Shearman, and the ARCE conservators, who are in the final stages of floor and wall restoration in those areas. The new material we recorded during this short season relates very well with the reused material we previously recorded elsewhere in the temple from dismantled walls of Thutmose IV and Ramesses II.

On March 2nd Frank, Lotfi, Hiroko, and I hosted Gaetano Palumbo (World Monuments Fund program director for North Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia) to site briefings at Medinet Habu and Luxor Temple. At Luxor Temple Frank briefed Gaetano on the methodology we used for restoring 111 inscribed wall fragments back onto the original northeastern wall of the Amenhotep III court wall, finished in the spring of 2010. At Medinet Habu we discussed our ongoing conservation and restoration programs (the Ramesses III southern well; the Domitian gate; the blockyard and open-air museum; small Amun temple conservation, all funded by a

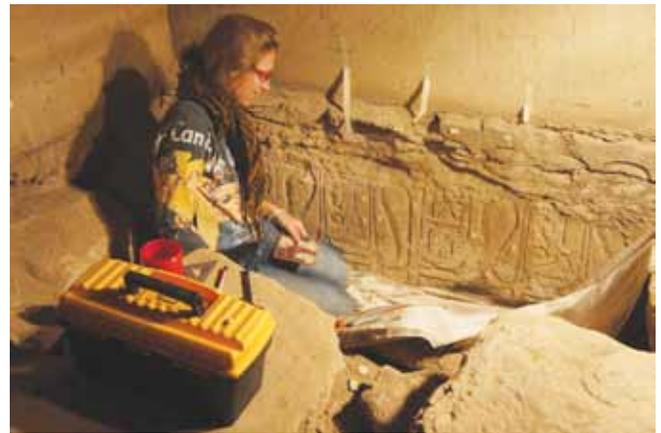
grant from USAID Egypt), the continuation of which has been greatly facilitated by the USAID-funded dewatering program activated a little more than a year ago. Sue Lezon arrived for two weeks of work with Ellie and Tina with the Chicago House photo archives and consultations with the epigraphic team about technical upgrading. It is always a joy to have Sue with us for even a short time, and when she and Ellie departed on March 15th, it was like the sun went behind a cloud. Ellie has very kindly



Ellie repackaging MMA photos (left) and standing at the MMA archives section (right). Tom and Linda Heagy Chicago House Photo Archives



Brett collating a reused block. Khonsu Temple, March 7



Keli drawing a reused foundation block. Khonsu Temple, March 7



Krisztián discussing exterior reused block. Khonsu Temple, March 31



Left: Reused Thutmose IV name-frieze block. Room 7, Khonsu Temple. Right: Keli's drawing of the Thutmose IV name-frieze block

donated archival boxes for the storage of the Chicago House photo archives copies of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Theban Tomb photographs, and spent part of this season transferring the mounted photographs to their new home. (Thank you, Ellie!)

The Malqata team from the Metropolitan Museum finished their work at the palace of Amenhotep III for the season and departed Luxor at the beginning of the month; Peter Lacovara left a week later. I accompanied the group on a review of the five-kilometer-long palace complex concession and was overjoyed to see that the eleven-kilometer protective wall around the site is intact and working. There have been no major illegal incursions into the site since the wall was finished by the MSA just before the Egyptian revolution more than a year ago; it's a miracle. Peter and I were among the invited speakers at the international research conference



Librarian Marie Bryan at work

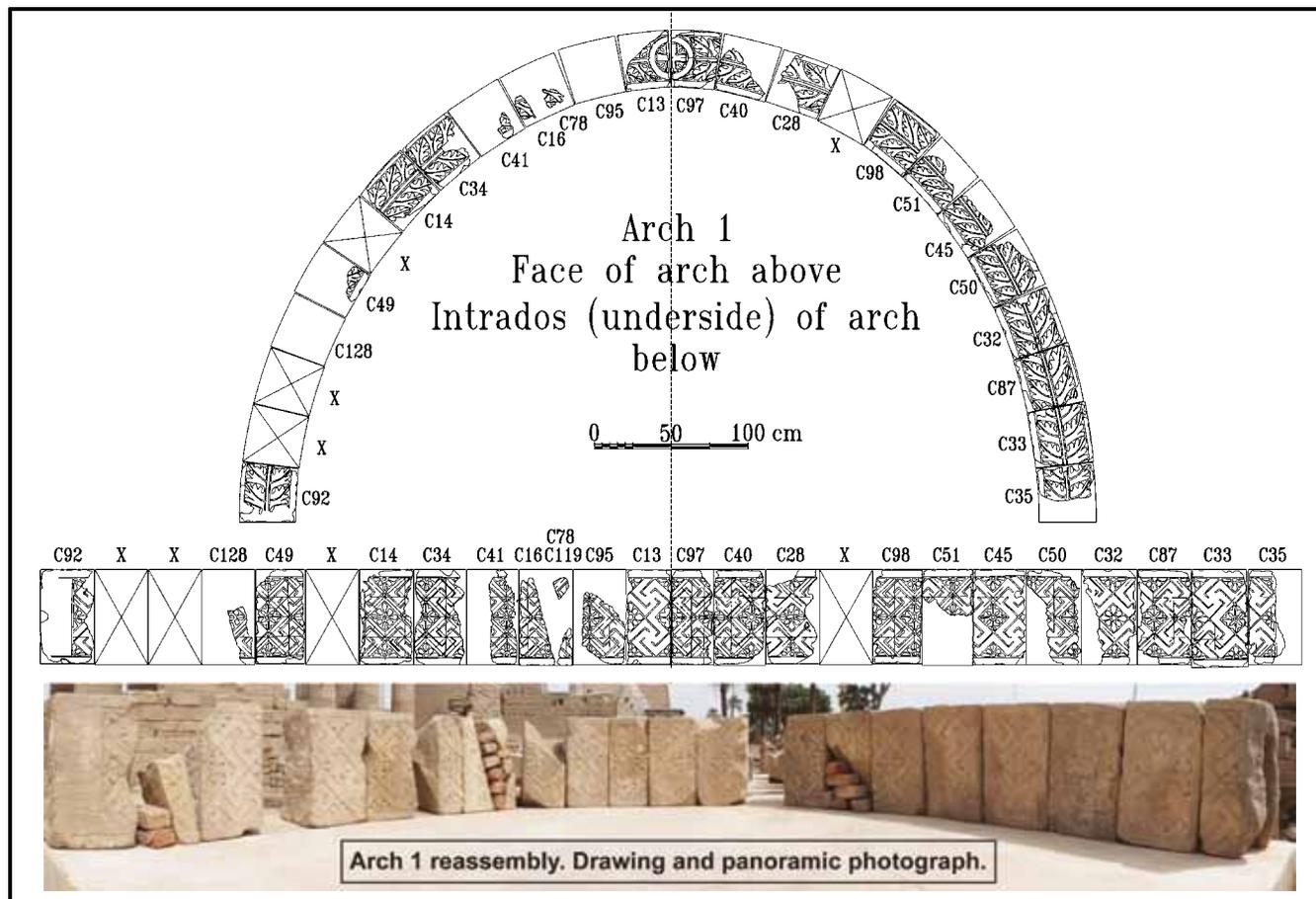
In Search of New Concepts and Technologies for Conservation and Preservation of the Colossi of Memnon and the Mortuary Temple of Amenhotep III, held at the Luxor Museum and on site in western Thebes from March 3rd to 5th. The conference celebrated Hourig Sourouzian's re-erection of the first of two fallen quartzite colossi of Amenhotep III behind the famous Colossi of Memnon last month and her many other astonishing achievements in Amenhotep III's shattered mortuary temple. I presented the history and results of Chicago House's Amenhotep III wall reconstruction work at Luxor Temple.

Andrea Dudek was back with us in March helping librarian Marie. If all goes according to plan, we will be finished with the Library of Congress conversion next season. While Andrea was with us, the Oriental Institute tour led by former Chicago House director

THE 2011-2012 FIELD SEASON OF THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY



Thecla Arch 1 apex with cross (photo by Jay Heidel)

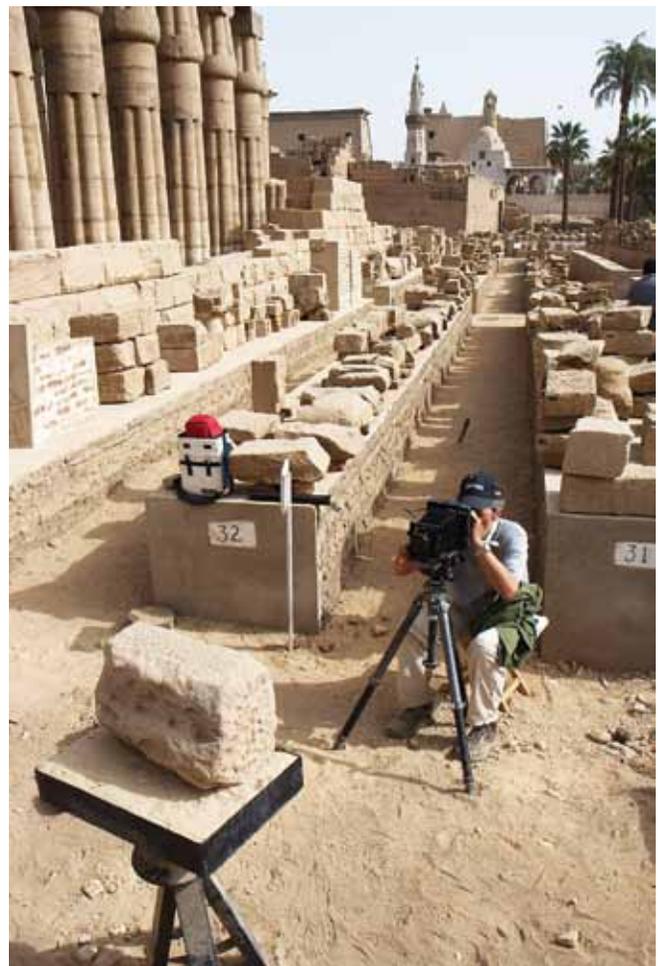


Thecla Church Arch 1 reconstruction drawing (AutoCAD) and photo montage by Jay Heidel

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



Sayid, Mohamed, MSA Inspector Marwa Abdel-Naby, Saoud, and Jay joining Thecla Church arch blocks. March 14



*Yarko photographing Ptolemy I blocks at Luxor Temple. March 13
(photo by Sue Lezon)*



Alain Arnaudès and Louis Elia Louis working on Photo Archives database maps. March 24

and emeritus faculty member Lanny Bell and Oriental Institute Membership Coordinator Amy Weber arrived in town. We gave them a reception and library briefing at Chicago House on March 15th, and site visits a few days later (with Jen at Medinet Habu and Brett at Luxor Temple). Brett accompanied the group to Aswan and Cairo, where he took Lanny's place as "talking head" when Lanny left for the United States.

During the last two weeks of the month Chicago House database consultant Alain Arnaudès and Egyptologist wife Emmanuelle were back with us tweaking our master Chicago House Photo Archives database, entering more Medinet Habu and Luxor Temple documentation, refining the Helen and Jean Jacquet database, and working the bugs out of the Chicago House internal wireless network system. Tina filled gaps in the data noted by Emmanuelle, and corrected incorrectly labeled photo numbers where necessary. Architect Louis Elia Louis finished the redrawing of the Nelson key plans in AutoCAD of all the temple sites in Luxor for easier reference.

THE 2011–2012 FIELD SEASON OF THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY

APRIL

During the first two weeks of April, as temperatures slowly began to rise, we tied up loose ends at Medinet Habu, Khonsu Temple, Luxor Temple, and Theban Tomb 107; prepared our reports; and closed our site work and

the Chicago House Library for the season on April 10. The last few weeks were full — of work, visitors, events, and more work. Conservators Lotfi, Nahed, Mohamed Abu Makarem, and the conservation team finished organizing, treating, and mounting sculpture and relief fragments in



Ray and the Luxor Syndicate of Guides Group at Luxor Temple. April 5 (photo by Mostafa Abdallah)



Keli and Jen checking Keli's drawing of the reused block from Room 2. Khonsu Temple, April 6



Christian Greco working on a fragmentary gateway of Nectanebo I. Medinet Habu blockyard, April 9



Blockyard columns and Ramesses III mortuary temple. Medinet Habu, April 10



Medinet Habu sacred lake with reduced water levels. April 10

THE 2011-2012 FIELD SEASON OF THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY

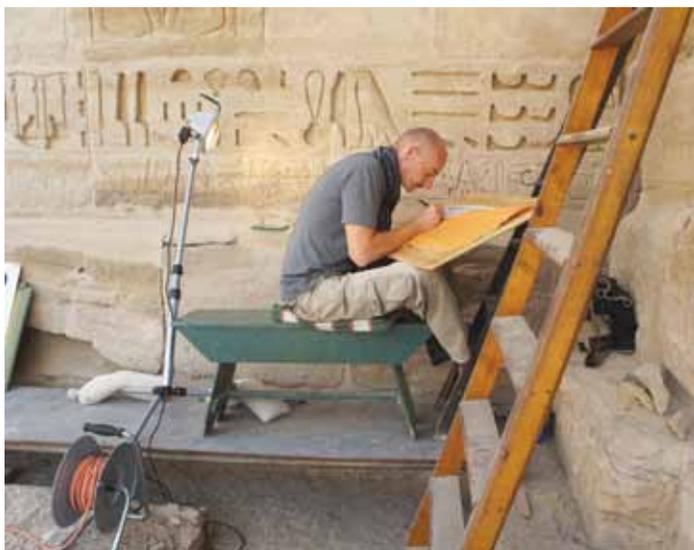


Mortuary Temple of Ramesses III from the Medinet Habu blockyard open-air museum. April 9

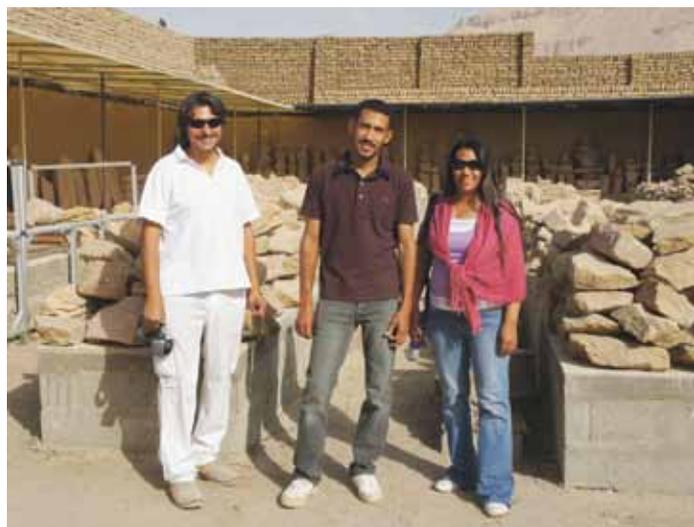


Display of prisoners' heads. Medinet Habu blockyard, April 9

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



Krisztián penciling at the small Amun temple. Medinet Habu



Medinet Habu conservation team: Lotfi, Mohamed Abu Makarem, and Nahed Samir Andraus. April 10

the small open-air museum of the Medinet Habu blockyard. Egyptologist Julia Schmied finished her sorting and documentation of material inside the blockyard, helped by epigrapher Christian Greco in April. Frank cut and shaped the first of the new sandstone blocks that will replace the lower-course blocks of the Domitian gateway. Artist Keli finished up her documentation of Ramesses III reliefs hidden by later Ptolemaic additions to the small Amun temple using aluminum-foil rubbings and tracings, and Margaret finished her work with Brett and Jen on material for *Medinet Habu* volumes 10 and 11.

In the last weeks of the season Jay successfully reassembled decorated blocks from Thecla Church Arch 1 on one of our large mastaba platforms in the Luxor Temple blockyard with our workmen Sayid, Mohamed, Saoud, and MSA Inspector Marwa — a real milestone, and very sweet to see. Belonging to this arch emplacement we also have two freestanding granite columns, one well-preserved and one partly preserved sandstone capitals, and one in situ column base. This summer Jay will prepare AutoCAD elevations of the church sanctuary surviving lower walls, and will assemble scale drawings of the scattered architectural elements within it, including the arch. This will give us the original height of the church sanctuary and will allow us to determine if — and how — we might physically restore parts of the sanctuary for public view in a future season.

Throughout the winter we have been moving blocks that were reused in the foundations of the church (dismantled by the Government of Egypt in 1960) that were quarried from a monument of Ptolemy I at Karnak. After



Krisztián recording color. Small Amun temple ambulatory

THE 2011-2012 FIELD SEASON OF THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY

Hiroko very kindly painted numbers on them, Yarko and assistant Gharib photographed all 135 of them so that we can analyze them over the summer. At the beginning of the month structural engineer Conor Power arrived for a few days of his annual structural condition study of Luxor Temple and the other monuments in our concessions. His prognosis continued to be good; the dewatering programs appear to have had the desired effect, and the temple structures are stable. While Conor was with us, I lectured to the Luxor Syndicate of Guides about our work and various antiquities issues, and the next day took a contingent of them through Luxor Temple, focusing on the work of Chicago House there, groundwater issues, documentation, and conservation maintenance. This kind of dialogue between the scientific community and the Egyptian guides is increasingly important, as they are our bridge to the public, both foreign and Egyptian, who visit the archaeological sites.

POSTSCRIPT: MAY

I am pleased to announce that, after I presented our proposal to them in late April, the Women's Board is awarding Chicago House a grant that will fund the beginning stages of our new digital epigraphy project. Dear friend and Oriental Institute Visiting Committee member Margie Fisher has generously agreed to help fund the rest. We are greatly indebted to the kindness of our friends and look forward to this exciting new chapter in our documentation program. You will hear more about our progress in future newsletters.

And as I write this, after much anticipation, Egypt is holding its first, free presidential elections. The two days of voting went smoothly, with record numbers of voter attendance and tremendous enthusiasm. It was reported that during the first-ever presidential debates the whole country came to a complete standstill with the population glued to their televisions and radios (something that

usually only happens during soccer matches!). That level of engagement is hard to find even in our own country.

Before I left Egypt, I had a good meeting with Minister of State for Antiquities Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim, and gave him copies of some of our latest publications, the 2010-2011 *Oriental Institute Annual Report* and the *Picturing the Past* catalog. I told him that whatever the future holds, Chicago House is committed to continue assisting Egypt and the Ministry in any way we can with all the resources at our disposal: with our library, and our archaeological documentation and conservation work, for the long term. We are proud to be representing the Oriental Institute, the University of Chicago, and the USA in Luxor at this historic time.

Let me extend my sincerest thanks here to the Egyptian Minister of State for Antiquities Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim, and all our friends and colleagues in Egypt for another productive collaboration this season. Sincerest thanks as well to USAID Egypt, the World Monuments Fund, ARCE, Coca-Cola/Atlantic Industries Cairo, Nassef Sawiris, the Oriental Institute, the University of Chicago Women's Board, and all of you out there who continue to generously support our preservation work in Luxor. Bless you all! If you are going to be in Luxor and would like to see our work and facility, please contact us in advance to determine a time for a meeting. Chicago House is open from October 15th until April 15th each year, and is closed Saturday afternoons and Sundays. To arrange a visit during the season, please contact the Oriental Institute Membership Office at (773) 834-9777, or contact me, Epigraphic Survey Director Ray Johnson, directly at:

wr-johnson@uchicago.edu

Please see our contact information in Egypt and Chicago below. Best wishes, and thanks again, to you all.

All photographs, except where otherwise noted, are digital images taken by Ray Johnson

ADDRESSES OF THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY

October through March:

Chicago House
Luxor
Arab Republic of EGYPT
TEL: (001) (20) (95) 237-2525
FAX: (001) (20) (95) 238-1620

April through September:

The Oriental Institute
1155 East 58th Street
Chicago, IL 60637
TEL: (773) 702-9524
FAX: (773) 702-9853

The Epigraphic Survey home page is located at:
<http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/projects/epi/>



Full staff of Chicago House, 2011-2012. Photo by Yarko Kobylecky and Sue Lezon

SUPPORT THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY AND CHICAGO HOUSE

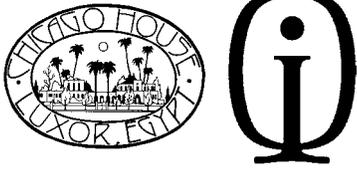
Partly funded by the University of Chicago, the Epigraphic Survey relies heavily on tax-deductible private and corporate contributions and grants to support its continued efforts to preserve the cultural heritage of ancient Egypt through documentation and conservation.

Contributions may now be made online! Go to:

<https://oi.uchicago.edu/getinvolved/donate/>

and check the “Epigraphic Survey” box, or any of the other Oriental Institute projects listed there.

For further information on contributions to the Epigraphic Survey and the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, please contact the Oriental Institute Development Office at (773) 702-5062 or visit oi-development@uchicago.edu



THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE
1155 East 58th Street
Chicago, IL 60637
Telephone: (773) 702-9514



Corniche in front of Chicago House today