

J.
OISN
Mar 99

OI NEWSLETTER - FIRST MONDAY [second Monday] - MARCH 1999

UNITS

- COMPUTER LAB / John Sanders
- MEMBERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT / Tim Cashion
- MUSEUM / Karen Wilson
- PUBLICATIONS / Tom Urban

PROJECTS

- EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY / W. Raymond Johnson
- TABLET ROOM / John A. Brinkman
- TECHNOLOGY DISCUSSION GROUP / Chuck Jones

INDIVIDUALS

- JANET JOHNSON
- ROBERT RITNER

OI AT AOS 1999

+++++

UNITS

+++++

COMPUTER LAB / John Sanders

February was a busy month in the Computer Lab, very busy and very crowded.

In an effort to place the 999 photographs contained in the 1976 University of Chicago press fiche publication entitled "Persepolis and Ancient Iran", photographs scanned by Prof. Matthew W. Stolper and Michael Kozuh in the summer and fall of 1998, we advertised for Docent volunteers and had five takers. Almost daily, either Peggy Grant, Irene Glasner, Nancy Gould, Lyla Bradley, or Karen Terras were in the Lab using the Photoshop program to prepare version of the scanned images for use on the OI web site or using a text editor program to create the caption pages for each photograph. Between February 9 and 25, 175 of the 999 photos were added to the original 13 images posted last October, for a total of 188 Perspolis photographs on-line. Only an odd 800 to go.

The placement of just this first wave of Persepolis photographs has increased activity on the web site considerably. We've now had days of 30,000 to 43,000 "hits" per day, when previously our high was 26,000. And the number of network locations from which users are connecting to the OI web site has increased, meaning we are reaching a wider audience when content such as these photographs are made available on-line.

It seems like an eon ago at this point, but the Institute's old but not forgotten QuickMail mail server was turned off for good on February 10. The world doesn't seem to have come to an end, and the new unix-based server that everyone now uses the Eudora program to communicate with is working trouble free. Please everyone, keep your fingers crossed.

+++++
MEMBERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT / Tim Cashion

In January and February 1999, the Institute received two significant contributions: \$10,000 from the John Nuveen Company for unrestricted purposes, and a \$50,000 pledge from the LaSalle Banks to support reinstallation.

Tim accompanied John Larson on the Women's Board Tour of Egypt. Though almost everyone got sick at least once, a splendid time was had by all (judging by the response since we have returned). Chicago House is humming along, and everyone sends their best.

There will be a meeting of the OI Visiting Committee downtown on March 11.

NOTE: Would any faculty, research associates or department heads who have inaugurated or completed a major project this academic year please drop a few words to Tim via email; these developments will be included in the summary presented to the Visiting Committee.

+++++
MUSEUM / Karen Wilson

Construction in the new Egyptian Gallery continues at a good pace. The wood framing for all the new display cases is almost complete, and the granite and limestone facing for two of them has been

finished. We are awaiting arrival of the glass doors and walnut cabinetry which will give them their finished look - we hope by the end of this month.

All members of the Institute community are welcome (even encouraged) to go down to the gallery and take a look. The gallery is not a hard hat nor a restricted access area. It is a little crowded and noisy between the hours of 7:30am and 3pm, however, so if you want tranquility, time your visit(s) accordingly. On the other hand, it's most interesting when it's in full tilt. We ask that you sign in in the log book on the guard desk, largely because it is easier for us to enforce the sign-in policy with the workmen if they see all of us doing it, and sign out again when you leave. And please feel free to ask any of us any questions you might have

+++++
PUBLICATIONS / Tom Urban

We completed the galley stage of the forty-two contributions to the *Wente Festschrift* (SAOC 58) and prepared first page proofs for the first two; we estimate it'll take about two months for us to get through all of them and then the articles will be returned to their authors for final checking.

The spring issue of *News & Notes* was completed and sent to the printer, again in electronic format.

We tested the Assyriological version of Lloyd Anderson's four new cross platform fonts (Semitic, Arabic, Hittite, and Akkadian). It works. Assyriological transliteration typed into a Macintosh computer in Microsoft Word using his Akkadian font transfers to Microsoft Word on a Windows computer without any loss or change in characters or formatting -- and vice versa. We haven't counted, but to give an idea of how much transfers, all but about twenty characters of the *AssyrianDictionary* font transfer automatically between platforms. Using the font on the Windows side is easier than on the Macintosh side because Word for Windows allows the user to assign keys for the diacritics, whereas on the Macintosh side one must use the predetermined key strokes. The next test is to put text up on the web in Lloyd's four fonts and then to access it from Macintosh and Windows computers. We are still quibbling about the omission of two characters.

+++++
PROJECTS
+++++

EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY / W. Raymond Johnson

February began in earnest with the arrival of Carol Meyer and her group en route to Bir Umm Fawakir in the Wadi Hammamat, the CH reception and dinner for the University of Chicago Women's Board, and the arrival of archival assistant and OI Visiting Committee member Nan Ray. Nan assisted Debbie in the library, Administrator Ahmed Harfoush in the office, and was joined by her husband David later in the month who assisted engineer Jamie Riley wherever needed around the house. On February 8th CH hosted a reception and library talk for the ARCE conservation school led by Brooklyn Museum conservator Ellen Pearlstein (two weeks in Cairo, two weeks in Luxor). The sixteen Egyptian conservators were shown the fragment conservation work at the Luxor temple blockyard by conservator Hiroko Kariya, the Colonnade Hall indurated limestone statue cleaning and restoration by Ellen herself, and the Medinet Habu small Amun temple relief cleaning by conservator Lotfi Hassan. On February 18th CH hosted a reception and talk for the ARCE NY tour, Ted gave the group a site tour of Medinet Habu featuring the work of the ES, and I gave them a tour of Luxor temple and the work of the ES there. On February 24th OI Visiting Committee member Mary Grimshaw joined the CH team for a month of much appreciated volunteer work in the library and Photo Archives, and at month's end our beloved Carlotta left us after two months of onsite development work and library talks to begin her trip home to Chicago.

In mid-month USAID Egypt Financial Director Shirley Hunter came down for a review of CH's financial management system, and also to run in the annual Luxor Marathon with 15 other USAID members (CH assisted with water along the west bank race course). She had an excellent run, and I am pleased to say that we had an excellent review as well. I am also pleased to announce at this time that our accountant friend, CPA Moataz Abo Shady, who for the last two years assisted us in putting together our FMS, has left Coopers and Lybrand and will be joining the CH team this month as CH Financial Director. He will take over all of the accounting duties, which have become formidable of late, thereby easing the burden of Administrator Ahmed Harfoush. Next season his wife Dahlia and new baby (due in

September) will join him here for the full season. We extend to Moataz and his family the warmest welcome, and are very pleased at our good fortune; he is a true master of his craft.

On February 13 conservator Hiroko Kariya finished her stone consolidation work at the Luxor temple blockyard for the season, but not before she and I had planned the blockyard storage and work area expansion, construction of which has just commenced with the aid of Engineer Mohsen Fahmy. At Medinet Habu stone cutter Dany Roy continued the cleaning of the bark sanctuary roof of the small Amun temple, and resumed the mortar and brick infilling of the gaps between the roof blocks. At the end of the month an arrangement was made with the Franco-Egyptian Center at Karnak to purchase some of their Silsila sandstone for use in restoring some of the missing Ptolemaic roofblocks at our site, and the first delivery of the cut stone was made a couple of days ago. Artist/Egyptologist Tina Di Cerbo continued to plan the eastern reaches of the bark sanctuary as each section was cleaned.

In the southern well of Ramesses III, photographer Yarko Kobylecky, assistant Ellie Smith, and senior epigrapher Ted Castle installed the last stage of a three-section 'wharf' designed by Ted and Yarko at the far end of the first corridor, and finished up the photography in that section. The platform now gives us access to a second long corridor which turns sharply to the left and is also inscribed but is largely submerged. At the end of the corridor deep below, glowing eerily in the black water, a totally submerged doorway can be seen leading into the well shaft itself; with its green glow it looks for all the world like the entrance to the underworld. Although it is impossible to get to without 'going in,' one can see that the inscribed walls are in an excellent state of preservation, unlike the upper corridor which is encrusted with corrosive salt and now extremely difficult to read. We are currently assessing the situation for future photography and conservation work. When conservator Lotfi Hassan returns to us in mid-March, he will examine the site and make his recommendations for possible treatment. (Anyone out there interested in a little underwater photography?).

Engineer Jamie Riley supervised the sealing of the southern library roof, which is now finished, and the proper sealing of the expansion joint high up above between the two library halls which is in progress now. The new kitchen drain system was finished and the floor tiles relaid, the solar water heating unit over the back service

area was repaired, and another unit over the darkroom was connected for the first time. Jamie has also been coordinating the purchase and installation of Land Rover parts for our two Land Rovers, and is about to reapply all of the insulation on the hot water pipes connected to the solar heaters on the residence roof; the original insulation has been completely pecked to pieces by crows who have been using the shiny material for nests ever since it was first applied. It's great to have someone around who can deal with all of this (and actually likes to), and his presence is much appreciated by us all.

Finally, on February 18th a 'pre-advance team' of twenty individuals from Washington DC and the US Embassy in Cairo arrived for a review of possible sites to show the FLOTUS ("First Lady of the United States") who might be visiting Egypt in late March. The 'advance teams' are due to sweep through in the next couple of weeks. It is not certain that she will actually get here, but CH is on the books to give her a meal and a good tour of Luxor. I tried to convince them to give the lady a break, but it now appears that they are going to try to cram all of ancient Thebes into one hellish afternoon. We'll do our best to make the experience as pleasant as possible for her.

It's hard to believe that we are now in the final stretch of the season (affectionately referred to as 'panic time'), and will be back with you soon. In the meantime, best wishes from all of us out here for a pleasant, and early, Chicago spring.

++++
TABLET ROOM / John A. Brinkman

As of March 1, Jonathan Tenney assumed the position of assistant curator.

++++
TECHNOLOGY DISCUSSION GROUP / Chuck Jones

The techno-lunch (normally scheduled for the first Friday of each month) will meet on Friday 12th March at noon in Breasted Hall. Traianos Gagos will present an informal demonstration and discussion of the APIS [Advanced Papyrological Information System] project. All are welcome. Bring your lunch if you wish. As always,

the meeting will begin with an open forum for discussion of any matters relating to the use of technology in the scholarly work of the OI community. There is not normally a formal agenda, but if you wish to have an announcement read or a proposal considered, feel free to send the information to me at <cejo@midway.uchicago.edu> beforehand. Suggestions or volunteers for presentations at future sessions are particularly welcome.

+++++
INDIVIDUALS

+++++
JANET JOHNSON

I'll be giving the Albright lecture at Johns Hopkins in mid-April ("Women's Rights in Ancient Egypt").

+++++
ROBERT RITNER

On February 27, Robert Ritner participated in public symposium entitled "Africa's Egypt: New Perspectives on an Ancient Civilization," sponsored by the Institute of Egyptian Art and Archaeology of The University of Memphis. Ritner presented a lecture entitled "Never Quiet on the Western Front: Libya and Ancient Egypt" and joined a panel discussion with the other speakers: John Darnell ("Ancient Graffiti in the Theban Desert"), David O'Connor ("The Civilization of Ancient Nubia"), and Wilson Moses ("Land of the Frowning Pyramids: Egyptocentrism and the Issue of Popular History").

+++++
OI AT AOS 1999

Based on the published schedule the following papers by OI and NELC faculty, staff and students (not including alumnae) will be read at the AOS Annual Meeting in Baltimore in mid-March

Mary R. Bachvarova

Successful Birth, Unsuccessful Marriage: Applying Near Eastern birth texts to Aeschylus Suppliants

Timothy J. Collins

Theurgical Elements in Babylonian Medical Incantations

Daniel A. Nevez

Seal Ownership and Use in the Kassite Period

Anne Porter and Thomas L. McClellan
Funerary Practices and Pastoralism at Third Millennium Tell Banat

Clemens Daniel Reichel, University of Chicago
The 'Seal of the Ruler' at Eshnunna (Tell Asmar)

Martha Roth, University of Chicago
Crime and punishment (Ancient Near East)

Matthew W. Stolper
Lèse Majesté

David Testen
Conjugating the "Prefixed Stative" Verbs of Akkadian

Paul E. Walker,
The Relationship between Chief Judge and Chief Religious
Propagandist under the Fatimids

Joan Goodnick Westenholz
Heroes of Sumer and Akkad

+++++