

SUQ

Denise Browning

This year we finally saw the implementation of our new POS System which arrived just in time to help us with our holiday sale. It has been long awaited and greatly appreciated. It might not be very romantic, but it is so important to the management of the Suq. It is our backbone and helps us keep track of our thousands of items that filter through the Suq in any given year. Since almost all of our merchandise is one-of-a-kind or limited editions, it cannot be mass ordered and their records are vitally important. Even though this is what keeps us unique, the sheer numbers are mind boggling! It is a database system so these thousands of items must be entered individually into the system, which has kept us very busy this year. The POS system has been fairly user friendly and works on an iPad which uses far less space and gives us some mobility and off-site access.

We had the good fortune to welcome a new volunteer this year: Andy Austin. She has adapted quickly, and has been attending the New Docent training classes to increase her knowledge of the ancient Near East. What a great addition to the Suq!

Unfortunately, Jane Meloy has left us for a full-time paid position. She will be greatly missed. Her positive attitude and willingness to chip in and help are irreplaceable. Plus, her great knowledge of Egypt, having grown up there, was a huge advantage.

We also lost Megaera Lorenz. She has been very helpful as she has worked on and off for the Suq for a number of years while she was working on her PhD in Egyptology, which she now completed. Congratulations! We wish her great luck in her endeavors!

We branched out this year and had a booth at four different neighborhood festivals: Green Music Fest June 18–19; Logan Square Fest June 25–26; Wicker Park Fest July 23–24; and the Hyde Park Book Fair September 11. Sales were not spectacular, but we handed out hundreds of brochures about the Oriental Institute. So hopefully that translated into many new visitors.

On October 10 we had our first trunk show for the volunteers. We were so very fortunate to have Peg Meyers donate some of her mother Mary Wilson's extensive collection of jewelry to the Suq. These were pieces that Mary purchased when her husband John A. Wilson, former professor of Egyptology and director of the Oriental Institute, succeeding James Henry Breasted, was working at Luxor. Many of these were ethnic pieces from the Siwa Oasis and many were beautifully hand-granulated pieces of jewelry.

Another accomplishment this year was the massive reorganization of the Jewelry Room in the basement.

We also got great donations from Jane Meloy, Sara Johnson, Holly Rap, Carlotta Maher, and Roberto Cepeda.

We were very sad at the passing of Jane Hildebrand who worked at the Suq for many years and was a dear friend.

Of course, the Suq would be nothing without our great volunteers, Ray Broms, Alice Mulberry, Louise DesPres, and Norma van der Meulen, who designs our beautiful jewelry.