



# THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE NEWS & NOTES

NO. 203 FALL 2009

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## EXCAVATIONS AT TELL ZEIDAN, SYRIA



MISTY AND LEWIS GRUBER  
BRING ANCIENT EGYPT  
TO THE WORLD:  
THE ELECTRONIC  
PUBLICATIONS  
INITIATIVE

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## NEWS & NOTES

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### COVER ILLUSTRATIONS:

top left: Amon-Re, the King of the Gods. Medinet Habu VI, *The Temple Proper, Part 2: The Re Chapel, the Royal Mortuary Complex, and Adjacent Rooms, with Miscellaneous Material from the Pylons, the Forecourts, and the First Hypostyle Hall*, by the Epigraphic Survey. Oriental Institute Publications 84 (Chicago, 1963), plate 363

right: Abbas Alizadeh (right) excavating the Operation 1 step trench at Tell Zeidan, Syria. Photo by Gil Stein

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S STUDY

The upcoming special exhibit, *Pioneers to the Past*, to be held in the Marshall and Doris Holleb Family Special Exhibits Gallery, is scheduled to open January 12, 2010. It is true that much of the ongoing work of the researchers at the Oriental Institute derives from the early reconnaissance of James Henry Breasted and his colleagues in the Near East. Where Breasted led, many followed. New surveys and excavations continue today. In this issue of *News & Notes* I offer a report on the Oriental Institute's 2008 first season of fieldwork at Tell Zeidan, Syria, by a joint Syrian-American team. The site of Zeidan provides a complete stratigraphic sequence spanning the Halaf to Late Chalcolithic 2 periods (6000–4000 BC), which offers great potential for research focused on Ubaid society and economy.

If we broaden the meaning of pioneer, others are noted in this issue of *News & Notes*. Mary J. Grishaw's contributions to the Oriental Institute are many, and her call to pioneer lies in her family's gift toward the naming of the re-installed Joseph and Mary J. Grimshaw Egyptian Gallery. This gift would encourage others to follow, and today all the galleries have been named. We sadly announce Mary's passing. Mary was a longtime member, volunteer, and Visiting Committee member, and she will be deeply missed.

Most recently, the generous support of Misty and Lewis Gruber has made it possible to scan all 125 of the older Egyptological titles published by the Oriental Institute between the 1920s and the year 2000. The books are being uploaded to the Internet as Adobe Acrobat PDF files and distributed at no cost to everyone with access to the Internet, fulfilling a large part of the Institute's Electronic Publications Initiative. As Tom Urban, Managing Editor of Publications, explains, in October 2004 the faculty instructed that all titles be published as electronic files on the Internet, which is promptly done for new titles but only as time and funding permit for 351 of our older titles. The support of the Grubers for electronic publication has allowed the Institute to accomplish a large and important part of the initiative, to share the research of the Oriental Institute with the world and, we hope, to inspire many more generations of pioneers to the past.



Misty and Lewis Gruber at the foot of the Sphinx

## IN MEMORIAM

MARY J. GRIMSHAW  
1918–2009  
by Emily Teeter

IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS that we announce the death of Mary J. Grimshaw in June 2009. Mary was a very good friend of the Oriental Institute. She served as a Life Member on our Visiting Committee for twelve years and, in 2000, she made a pioneering gift to name the Joseph and Mary Grimshaw Egyptian Gallery, an act that encouraged the naming of other galleries. She loved Egypt, and she spent several seasons on the staff of the Epigraphic Survey. For twenty years she was a volunteer, for much of that time assisting Registrar Ray Tindel. We will miss her keen intellect, friendship, and her wonderful sense of humor.



Mary and Joseph Grimshaw, early to mid-1980s

# A FEAST OF KNOWLEDGE

## Libraries and Archives, Past and Present

❧ a james henry breasted society event ❧

by Foy Scalf, Head of Research Archives

On July 8, 2009, the Research Archives of the Oriental Institute was proud to host the event A Feast of Knowledge: Libraries and Archives, Past and Present in the beautiful Elizabeth Morse Genius Reading Room for forty-five members of the James Henry Breasted Society. Highlighting the world-renowned library collection of the Research Archives, attendants were treated to an exhibition of rarely displayed objects from the Oriental Institute Museum, in addition to a delightful selection of food, drinks, and conversation.

Oriental Institute scholars were on hand to discuss the importance of the displayed pieces, as well as their role in library traditions from the ancient past. Emily Teeter, research associate and curator of special exhibits, detailed the important religious aspects of Spell 125 from Papyrus Ryerson (OIM 9787), a Ptolemaic-period Book of the Dead manuscript written for a man named Estphenis (*Ns-šw-tfn.t*). The ancient Sumerian literary text known as the Fable of the Heron and the Turtle, as preserved in cuneiform on a clay tablet

(OIM A30209), was placed in the context of other ancient literary traditions such as Hesiod by Chris Woods, assistant professor of Sumerian. Fred Donner, professor of Near Eastern history at the University of Chicago, discussed OIM 17618, an early example of a ninth-century paper manuscript which contains a series of different texts, including the earliest copy of what is known as the stories of the Arabian Nights. The largest object on display was OIM A12008, a Syriac manuscript written on 628 pages made from gazelle skin. Abdul Massih Saadi, research associate at the Oriental Institute and a professor at Notre Dame University, explained that this wonderful manuscript is just a single example of an otherwise very large and extremely interesting corpus of early Christian literature.

The Research Archives would like to thank our participating scholars, Director Gil Stein, Registrar Helen McDonald, Head Conservator Laura D'Alessandro, Development Associate Kaye Oberhausen, Membership Assistant Brittany Luberdia, and all our Breasted Society Members for making the event such a success.



Chris Woods stands with cuneiform tablet OIM A30209



Fred Donner, left, discusses manuscript OIM 17618 with Breasted Society Member Stan Allan (this photo and that of Christopher Woods, above, by Demsin Lachin)

Donors of \$1,000 or more to the Oriental Institute are invited to be members of the James Henry Breasted Society and are invited to attend exclusive events like A Feast of Knowledge. If you would like more information on becoming a Breasted Society Member, please call Kaye Oberhausen, Development Associate, at (773) 702-5044, or e-mail [oberhausen@uchicago.edu](mailto:oberhausen@uchicago.edu)



Demsin Lachin (left) and Abdul Massih Saadi with Syriac manuscript OIM A12008 (photo by Foy Scalf)

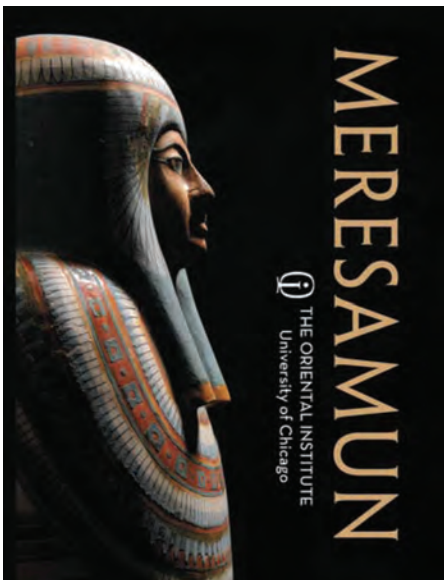
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A Nile Boat with Its Crew. Thebes, tomb of Pere (no. 139). *Ancient Egyptian Paintings 2*, by Nina Davies (Chicago, 1936), plate 56

## THE SUQ CORNER



### MAGNET

Photo: Dan Dry  
Design: Diane Hanau-Strain  
Size: approx. 2.5" × 3.0"  
Member's price: \$2.65