RESEARCH SUPPORT

COMPUTER LABORATORY

John C. Sanders

Two eventualities occurred this past year: (1) the first phase of the Institute's Integrated Database (IDB) was completed and made available via the Institute's website; and (2) I retired at the end of March, forty years after arriving at the Oriental Institute to be the surveyor, field architect, and cartographer for the Nippur Expedition!

I retire from my position with many memories and friendships, but with sadness because I will no longer be directly involved in future Institute endeavors. I pass the IT torch to Paul Ruffin, whose multiple talents in the realm of computing are more than capable of not only continuing what I started but, more importantly, Paul can shepherd the Institute through the next steps in its Information Technology (IT) growth.

Projects

Integrated Database

My work with McGuire Gibson at Nippur and other Mesopotamian archaeological sites continued until July of 1990, when my role changed to IT and computer support for the entire Institute. After one month in my new position, I convened a meeting of all faculty and staff. I suggested that the Institute needed to computerize and integrate the various paper-based recording systems that each separate unit of the Institute maintained on their own (for example, the Museum, Education, Conservation, Research Archives). The idea was well received at the time, but other Institute priorities and developments delayed this eventuality until this past February 1, 2013, when the Oriental Institute's Integrated Database came online, providing scholars, students, and the general public with access to the Institute's Museum Registration and Library catalog records.

I am proud to have played a part in the development of this vital research tool for ancient Near Eastern studies, along with a large list of dedicated Oriental Institute staff members and programmers from the University's Web Services division who, over the past decade, contributed to the launch of the IDB (I acknowledged by name many of these individuals in last year's Computer Laboratory *Annual Report*). At the present time only the earliest stage of the IDB has been completed. Several phases of development remain in order for the IDB to reach all of its intended goals, such as the addition of Museum Conservation records, Museum photographic archives, map collections from the CAMEL Laboratory, several specific archaeological field project records, and the Museum archives. These eventualities will come to pass over the next few years.

COMPUTER LABORATORY

Electronic Publications Initiative

The Institute's Electronic Publications Initiative has been virtually completed; the Initiative was our decade-long effort to electronically reproduce all the Institute's past print publications and newsletters. With this year's addition of 123 Oriental Institute publications, *News & Notes* volumes 1–159, along with the most recent additions for Fall 2012 and Winter 2013, and thirty-one Oriental Institute *Annual Reports* going back to the first issue in 1928, the backlog has been cleared and the entire Publications Office catalog is now available for free download in the Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) from the Institute's website. I congratulate Tom Urban, Leslie Schramer, and the entire Publications Office staff for their tremendous efforts to complete this monumental task. A job well done!

I encourage everyone to read that portion of the Publications Office section of this *Annual Report* regarding the status of the Institute's Electronic Publications Initiative, then visit the Catalog of Publications page on our website where you will be able to download these past and current titles of our publications in electronic form:

http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/pubs/catalog/

The Oriental Institute Website

The Epigraphic Survey added several updates to the project's homepage with notes, photographs, and a significant amount of information about the work from their latest field season that ended in April 2013. Additionally, the July 2012 edition of the *Chicago House Bulletin* is now available for download in PDF format. Information regarding another Egyptian research project, the new Mummy Label Database (MLD) project, is now available on the Institute's website.

Information regarding three Museum exhibits were added: Between Heaven & Earth: Birds In Ancient Egypt, on view from October 16, 2012, to July 28, 2013, was the first American exhibit devoted to birds in the Nile valley. The exhibit explored the impact that birds had on ancient Egyptian religion, design, and the conception of the state; Danh Vo's We the People, which juxtaposes ancient and contemporary art, was a special exhibit at the Oriental Institute Museum from September 11, 2012, to December 16, 2012; another Museum special exhibit, Catastrophe! Ten Years Later: The Looting and Destruction of Iraq's Past, revisited and updated a selection of the panels from the original show first displayed at the Oriental Institute in 2008. Additionally, the Mission Statement of the Oriental Institute Museum and the Department of Public Education and Outreach is now available on the Institute's website

Details about the 2013 Oriental Institute Seminar, Household Studies in Complex Societies, (Micro) Archaeological and Textual Approaches," which took place March 15–16, 2013, were added to the website, and a poster of the event is available for download as a PDF.

The Research Archives added the May 2012 through May 2013 Acquisitions Lists to the website, and the Oriental Institute's *2011-2012 Annual Report* was converted to PDF by the Publications Office and added to the website.

An itinerary for the Membership Office's fall 2013 travel program, to accompany Oriental Institute assistant professor of Egyptian archaeology Nadine Moeller on her tour to "Egypt's Oases: A Journey through the Western Desert," November 22–December 9, 2013, is on the Institute's website. A not-to-be-missed opportunity for all Egyptophiles!

And lastly, several Institute scholars added content to their sections of the Individual Scholarship component of the website: one article by François Gaudard; three articles by

Norman Golb; two articles by Robert Ritner; and two articles Foy Scalf. All these resources are now available as PDFs.

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For further information concerning the above-mentioned research projects and other electronic resources in general, refer to the "What's New" page on the Oriental Institute's website, at

http://oi.uchicago.edu/news/

Paul D. Ruffin

I am proud to have taken the position of IT support specialist for the Oriental Institute. John Sanders has done outstanding work for the Oriental Institute and can never be replaced. I originally started my IT career by working at the Apple Store as a mobile technician and a teacher. I use to provide workshops, classes, and repair sessions for multiple customers. Later in my career, I was offered a position at Innerworkings as a helpdesk technician. I have provided end-user support for over 800 users throughout the North American region and was in charge of handling IT support for the sales division. As the new IT support specialist for the Oriental Institute, I will continue to expand the technological growth that is needed for the organization. Throughout this year, I will meet with our faculty and staff to discuss what the needs and concerns are for the upcoming year and create solutions to fit those needs. I also look forward to learning more about the superb research that is done on ancient Near Eastern civilizations.

Windows 7 Migration

Recently, Microsoft announced it will no longer support Windows XP. Due to the high number of viruses, malware, and various other online threats, I have initiated a system upgrade to many of the Windows users. The goal is to have the Windows 7 system upgrade completed by the end of the summer. Windows 7 will provide enhanced security and performance.

Cisco VoIP Phone System Upgrade

The Oriental Institute will have a new phone system installed during the fall of 2013. We will convert our old PBX systems to Cisco VoIP. VoIP means Voice over Internet Protocol, which signifies a phone that is powered through the Internet. One of the major advantages to having a VoIP is lowered phone costs. Another great feature is the new voice to e-mail functionality. Oriental Institute faculty and staff will now be able to receive voicemails in their e-mail inbox. This feature also allows users to check voicemail outside of their office as long as there is access to e-mail.

Solarwinds Web Help Desk

The Oriental Institute will have its first ticketing system called Web Help Desk. This program is provided by Solarwinds, a renowned IT services company. Web Help Desk is an IT support and content-management solution. This new software will provide management for users'

requests throughout the Oriental Institute. With the system, users will see increased response times and productivity for IT support. I will be able to keep records of each computer's previous incidents and problems. This is important information because it allows me to track an ongoing problem and see if another solution will be required to fix the issue, such as hardware replacement.

Integrated Database

I am excited to work with the Oriental Institute using the KE EMu Integrated Database. For the past few months, I have been working with John Sanders, Scott Branting, and Foy Scalf on getting up to date. Our goal is to provide public access to information about our research and the object-based collections that are managed by the Oriental Institute. So far I have added new users to the registry, provided access to new assistants, and have worked extensively on learning how to manage permissions for users and new assistants. We are working on the multistage project implementing an image archive into the IDB. I will be working with the web development of the Integrated Database, checking the web statistics to see what can be done to increase the efficiency of IDB online. We will soon enter Phase 2 of the project, which involves setting up an image archive. We have agreed that Phase 2 will involve working with both IT services and KE staff to gain knowledge of a transfer session. I look forward to working with both Museum and Conservation for the upcoming projects.

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