

The Membership Program

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In 1941, the outbreak of the Second World War forced the Friends of the Oriental Institute to disband as an organization. Several years after the close of that war, Director Carl H. Kraeling joined with friends and benefactors of the Institute to reorganize this group. In 1950, their efforts established a membership program that has continued for the past twenty-five years. As part of that program, newsletters from the expeditions in the field began in 1950 with an informal report of Robert J. Braidwood from Jarmo, Iraq. During the years, they poured in at random from all parts of the Near East and North Africa. Two years ago, archeological newsletters were incorporated as part of a monthly news bulletin, *News & Notes*. Following shortly after the first newsletters from the field, a series of lectures for members was begun to report on excavations and interesting discoveries concerning the ancient Near East. Lastly, in 1966, the first Institute-sponsored tour visited Turkey and its archeological sites as another aspect of the membership program.

Some of you will recall these developments in the membership program over the last twenty-five years. During this time a great many new friends of the Institute have joined, but sadly some familiar faces are gone. Last December, a special tie with the first Friends of the Oriental Institute, Mr. Chester D. Tripp, was gone. Mr. Tripp's lively interest in the Institute and its work began in the late 1930's and his generous patronage continued until his death. The Institute would like to pay homage to this man who had a long, vital, and rewarding life.

In this anniversary year, the total number of memberships has increased to over 1450. This increase, like that of the year before, resulted largely from the suggestions of present members. As Dr. Kraeling was indebted to those friends who helped add members during the early fifties, we are deeply grateful to the active friends who brought in new members throughout the year.

The lecture series this year highlighted two special events for the Institute. Mr. Kent R. Weeks, field director at Chicago House in Luxor, Egypt, commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the Epigraphic Survey in the opening lecture last fall. Messrs. John A. Brinkman

and McGuire Gibson heralded the arrival of the Assyrian reliefs with a lecture on their historical background and archeological significance. These reliefs, from the palace of Ashurnasirpal II at Nimrud in Iraq, arrived here as part of an exchange with the British Museum.

Other members of the Institute's staff spoke this year: Mr. Lawrence Stager described excavations at Idalion, Cyprus, and the expedition's precipitous evacuation during last summer's war; Mr. Harry A. Hoffner, Jr., analyzed historical perspective among the Hittites, describing the various kinds of history that were written at different stages in their civilization and the different points of view the histories represent; and Mr. Charles F. Nims, a former director of the Epigraphic Survey, contrasted the camera's lens and the artist's eye and analyzed the many different ways of seeing that have been communicated between the anonymous images of Lascaux and the remarkably similar canvases of Modigliani.

Mr. William W. Hallo of Yale University described his recent research into the royal correspondence of Larsa, prefacing his talk with reminiscences of his days as a student in the Oriental Institute. Shortly after, a most eminent archeologist, Dame Kathleen Kenyon, retired from Oxford University, lectured on prehistoric Jericho summarizing her discoveries during many seasons of field work there. Lastly, this year's series was supplemented by the film "Digging for Man's Past," which surveys the work of the German Archeological Institute in the Near East.

Tours have once again become a feature of the membership program, thanks to the tireless efforts of Mrs. Onno Buss. On April 27, a large group of members traveled to Kansas City to visit the exhibit of archeological treasures from the Peoples' Republic of China at the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum. Mr. Robert Loeschner, of the Art Institute of Chicago, superbly guided this group through the exhibit and through the other galleries of the museum. In May, Mr. Paul Zimansky guided a members' tour through central, southern, and western Turkey during a three-week visit of the archeological sites of that historic land, sites that range from Hittite and Phrygian periods to Greek, Roman, and even Ottoman eras. Plans have been made for a similar visit to the archeological wonders of ancient Egypt in February, 1976.

Twenty-five years have brought many changes in the membership program, and hopefully some have improved its interest and variety for our members. Once again, the warm, strong support and interest of friends here and throughout the world have made this another worthwhile year for the membership program.