

THE MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

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LA S T Y E A R , I noted the remarkable increase in the number of memberships resulting from the Tut-ankhamun Exhibit. In June 1976, total memberships stood at 1550, then advanced during the next 12 months to 1850, and finally jumped to 2775 by August 15, 1977, when the exhibit closed. Now the total is 2825, which reflects a slight gain. Interestingly, one third of our members live outside the Chicago area and about 70 are outside the United States. For these friends, new and old, 1977/78 has been a full and active year.

News & Notes has returned to a full publication schedule under the energetic direction of Peter Piccione, a graduate student in Egyptology. Not only has Pete given a variety of offerings in the newsletter and pursued his studies, but he has also co-edited *Serapis* (a journal of Egyptology) and developed his ideas about the ancient Egyptian game of *senet*. His analysis of the Book of the Dead texts resulted in the re-discovery of the rules of this game, which has since been marketed as "King Tut's Game."

We also returned to a full lecture schedule this year. The series opened with a field report by Lawrence Stager entitled "Carthage in the Age of Hannibal" followed by "A Provincial Artist and the Coming of the Hyksos to Egypt," a chronological study of a largely undocumented period by Klaus Baer. Peter Parr returned from London for a visit and described some of his previous work in the rock city of Petra. The new year began with our first lecture from our new Curator, John Carswell, who spoke on "Architecture and Environment in the Near East." McGuire Gibson reported on his new excavations in Iraq, and Harry A. Hoffner presented the results of his research on the Hittite ruler Hattushili I. Another English visitor, T. G. H. James from the

British Museum, intrigued us with "The Shrine That Never Was: An Egyptological Mystery." Lanny Bell of Chicago House closed on a more popular note in "Mummies and Magic."

Once again we cosponsored with Field Museum of Natural History a program of four tours to Egypt during the winter of 1978. Each tour was an intensive archeological survey of the remains of ancient Egypt under the direction of one of the Egyptologists trained at the Oriental Institute. Lasting nineteen days and including a short cruise on the Nile between Luxor and Aswan, each tour visited the major sites from Cairo to Abu Simbel, and included a two-day excursion to Middle Egypt as well, to see Beni Hassan, Amarna, Tuna el-Gebel, and Ashmunein.

As we have done over the past several years, we offered members a number of special courses. There were Egyptological courses held in conjunction with the Field Museum. These included introductory and advanced courses in reading hieroglyphs and courses on Egyptian religion. The Institute also offered only to its members the "Lands of the Bible" course during the winter and spring sessions.

The year closed with a special fund-raising dinner for the Museum, "Discoveries in the Underworld." The very pleasant and successful evening featured a special one-night exhibit of artifacts culled from the storage areas of the Museum. The good weather also allowed us to use the courtyard—a delightful stroll ending a very good year.