

# Membership Program

## 1978/79

*Bernard  
A. Lalor*

Ordinarily I present here a summation of the year's membership program, but before reviewing this year's events, I will survey our plans for the future: recently, we have been working to improve our program. In the beginning of this year, the membership subcommittee of the Visiting Committee met to discuss two major topics: increasing the total number of Oriental Institute members and improving the offerings of the membership program. Concurrently, Mr. Albert F. Haas, a member of the subcommittee, volunteered a portion of his time each week to coordinate and develop with me the suggestions raised by the subcommittee. Bud Haas has energetically helped to steer our efforts in these two separate areas. I am grateful for his assistance and am sure that the members will feel the benefits of his efforts in the near future.

Part of our orientation toward the future was launching a drive for new memberships. The drive will last for two years (1979–1980) in an effort to double the number of members, raising the total from two thousand to four thousand. We began with a request sent to the Volunteer Guides to suggest the names of prospective members. We also hosted an open house for residents of Hyde Park-Kenwood (the neighborhoods around the University) who were not members. At the same time, we have mailed to University alumni in the Chicago area invitations to join the Institute. The results are beginning to show; 275 new memberships have been received in the first half of 1979. To fulfill our goal we will have to double our efforts—thus we set a greater challenge for future months.

The second area of consideration is program development. For several months we have been analyzing all aspects of the membership program. To assist in this

task, John Brinkman has named an advisory committee for the membership program, which offers suggestions and discusses improvements in the program. Its many useful suggestions will, I believe, make membership in the Institute more exciting and rewarding in future years.

Now let us return to the past year. The lecture series opened with the return of King Tut; James E. Harris of the University of Michigan discussed the use of X-ray research to shed new light on the genealogical relationships within Tut's family. Next we toured Yemen via an illustrated report by Raymond Tindel and Dennis Collins of the Oriental Institute, who recently conducted a preliminary survey of the ancient sites in Yemen. Then followed a look at eastern Iraq with T. Cuyler Young, Jr., of the Royal Ontario Museum. Young discussed his work on one of the excavations conducted as part of the international salvage project in the Jebel Hamrin valley. In February, William Dever of the University of Arizona surveyed for us archeological work in Israel relating to Biblical studies. In March, Robert Anderson of London showed us Qasr Ibrim, a site on the southern border of pharaonic Egypt. Next we peered at very distant times, the earliest settlements of prehistoric man in southeastern Turkey as uncovered by Robert and Linda Braidwood of the Oriental Institute. We closed the lecture series in Palestine of the Early Bronze age at a town called Ai. Our guide to this site was Joseph A. Callaway of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville. Some members outside Chicago listened to these lectures from cassettes that they requested from our office.

Members' courses met again in the fall, winter, and spring. Through sun and rain, but this year mostly snow, Chicago area members came on consecutive Saturdays, some to study Egyptian hieroglyphs, some to learn more of Pharaoh Akhenaton's religious innovations or of the Hittite civilization, and others to follow the history of archeology in Egypt and in Mesopotamia. The course offerings were expanded this year and we plan to begin an interesting sequence in the fall of 1979.

*News & Notes* continued as our monthly newsletter to

all members throughout the world. This year, Ron Brown, a graduate student in the English Department of the University, took over the duties of editor and with the assistance of Shirley Fisher of our Publications Office sent out the "news" each month. Ron will be leaving the University this summer and will be replaced by Mrs. Robert W. Maynard. Elda Maynard comes to this post after launching and directing the "Docent Digest" for the Volunteer Guide Program. She will begin her new duties this fall.

Our travel program again offered the Egypt itinerary and also a weekend visit to New Orleans to view the Nubian Exhibit. We have exciting travel plans for 1980. Not only will there be another tour to Egypt in March, but also a specially designed journey to Syria in May with the knowledgeable guidance of our curator, John Carswell. In October, members may join an archeologically-oriented three-week tour of China.

As a last note, I wish to give acknowledgement and thanks to those students who have assisted with the routine, crises, and special projects of this office, Luanne Buchanan, Peter Lacovara, Ali Mostaghimi, Carol Meyer, and Dennis Collins.