

Membership Program

Gretel Braidwood

The research of the Oriental Institute is focussed on the rise of civilization in the ancient Near East. Our active membership program helps our members keep current with this research. To this end, members receive a bimonthly newsletter and an *Annual Report*, and they also have the opportunity to take archaeological tours to the Near East. They may attend our evening lecture series, which includes both outside lecturers and speakers from the Oriental Institute. The Education Office offers Saturday classes for members each quarter, and every Sunday afternoon it presents a free film dealing with the archaeology, history, or philology of the Near East. Behind-the-scenes tours of the projects, workrooms, and basement of the Oriental Institute are given on Members' Day, which occurs every year and a half.

The opening lecture for the 1988-89 membership series was presented in October by William Peck, Detroit Institute of Art, on "Napoleon in Egypt: The Birth of Egyptology and the Egyptian Revival in the 19th Century" and was followed by a gala reception in the Museum. In November we heard from Alan Millard, the University of Liverpool, on "Biblical



Members' photography exhibit, "Travelers in Ancient Lands" (Photograph by Herb Barghusen).

Archaeology at Work: The Case of King Solomon's Gold," followed later in the month by Stuart Swiny, Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute, on "Pygmy Hippos, Dwarf Elephants, and Early Mediterranean Seafarers" (jointly sponsored by the Chicago Society of the A.I.A.). In December, the Oriental Institute's Erica Reiner presented "Hallowed Herbs: How to Get the Most Out of Your Babylonian Pharmacy." February lectures were Harvey Weiss, Yale University, talking on "North Versus South at Tell Leilan, Syria" and Nanno Marinatos, Swedish Institute in Athens, on "New Minoan Frescoes from Thera: a Puberty Rite for Girls" (another joint lecture with the Chicago Society of the A.I.A.). March brought John Baines, the Oriental Institute at Oxford, speaking on "The Origins of Kingship in Egypt." In April we heard from the Institute's Norman Golb, on "The Autograph Memoirs of Obadiah the Proselyte: A Chapter in the History of the First Crusade," and Karen Rubinson from the Metropolitan Museum of Art ended the series with "Pazyrk: Frozen Portrait of Exchange and Influence" (another joint lecture with the Chicago Society of the A.I.A.). There were also two summer lectures. The Institute's James A. Armstrong told us about "Nippur After the Kassites: The Fragility of Urban Life on the Babylonian Plain" and Peter F. Dorman, the new Director of the Epigraphic Survey, presented "The Work of the Epigraphic Survey at Chicago House." Each of the lectures was followed by a reception in the Museum halls or the Institute's garden, allowing the speakers and audience a chance to chat informally.

News & Notes, the bimonthly newsletter, has articles about the current work of the Oriental Institute, both in the field and here in

Chicago, and also lists the various upcoming programs, events, exhibitions, lectures, and the members' courses offered every quarter by the Institute's Education Office.

In November the Membership and Education Offices joined forces to present their second day-long symposium, "Sacred Places: Sacred Rites." The capacity audience heard six speakers talk on temples and temple rituals in the ancient Near East.

◆ Also in November, the Membership Office sponsored an exhibition of photographs, "Travelers in Ancient Lands: Members' Photographs of the Middle East." Fifty-two people participated, sending in over a hundred and twenty-five photographs. The Museum's exhibit designer Jim Richerson and preparator Phil Petrie created a wonderful display space for the photographs in the Assyrian gallery, and volunteer Herb Barghusen spent countless hours working with Phil to hang the show, which opened on November 13th with a special preview to benefit the Museum.

The annual tour to Egypt in March, which I accompanied, was again led by Institute Egyptologist Robert Ritner. A new feature was a visit to Alexandria in the Delta area. The tour sold out, so we are adding a tour in October to the schedule.

The Visiting Committee to the Oriental Institute presented its annual dinner this year on the 15th of May. Honoring the Institute's Chicago Hittite Dictionary (CHD), it featured a special exhibition on the history of Hittitology and on the founding of a dictionary of Hittite here at the Oriental Institute. Again Jim Richerson and Phil Petrie created

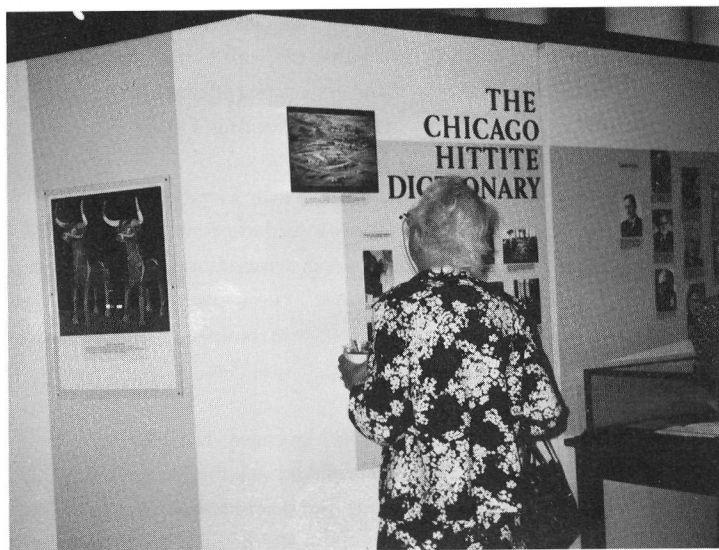


Exhibit in conjunction with dinner for the Chicago Hittite Dictionary (Photograph by Joan Barghusen).

and mounted the exhibition, working with the CHD editors Hans Güterbock and Harry Hoffner. Margaret Schröder worked long hours to make Hittite sealings as dinner favors and ceramicist Eileen Hamer made “Hittite” bowls to contain the centerpieces. Docents Kathryn Kimball, Kay Matsumoto, Kitty Picken, and Rita Picken arranged the centerpiece flowers for the thirty tables. Those attending the dinner enjoyed cocktails in the Persian hall and the courtyard garden and dinner overlooked by Tut and Assyrian reliefs in the Museum.

The membership program couldn't function without the help of a number of people. Volunteer Helen Glennon continues to prepare and send out the endless cycle of monthly renewal notices. Jill Carlotta Maher, the head of the Institute's Visiting Committee's Subcommittee on Development, has great success in raising money for the Institute and its projects. Many other volunteers also help with various phases of our programs and, last but not least, our new membership associate, Karen Kao, helps keep everything running smoothly.