

# INTRODUCTION

*William M. Sumner, Director*

**T***his has been an active year at the Institute: we have launched some important new initiatives and made significant progress on both research and administration. It has also been a year in which we were saddened by the devastation and loss of life caused by the Gulf War. Many of us have long-standing personal friendships or professional relationships with people in the region whose lives were disrupted by the war, and we are all deeply distressed by these events. Although far less serious, the adverse effect of the war on Oriental Institute field work was not insignificant, as noted elsewhere in this report.*

## RENOVATION AND EXPANSION

Late in March, our plans to introduce climate control and to expand storage and laboratory space at the Institute reached a milestone when Skidmore, Owings & Merrill submitted the final report of the architectural program study. In this report they recommended renovation and climate control for the basement and galleries in the present building and the construction of a new wing consisting of a basement and ground floor that will provide approximately 17,000 square feet of additional space. The estimated total project cost is \$7-7.4 million.

Functions requiring the highest levels of climate control, including organic and metal object storage, the photograph and document archives, an enlarged conservation laboratory, and a large proportion of general object storage will be concentrated in the new wing. The basement of the present building will contain object storage that cannot be accommodated in the new wing, as well as enlarged archaeological laboratories and offices and work space for registration, archives, exhibit preparation, the *Suq*, and photography.

High levels of climate control will be introduced in all galleries in the present building, and human comfort air conditioning will be introduced in the auditorium, lobby, and the present basement. The report also recommends the construction of a handicapped entrance, relocation and increase in the size of the *Suq*, and the dedication of some existing space to public educational and social functions.

At present we are engaged in the selection of an architectural firm for the design phase of the project. If we have an acceptable design and the next stage of the project is approved, it may be possible to break ground in the summer of 1992.

The next task is to raise the necessary funds. Your ideas, comments, and other contributions will be most welcome as we continue work on a long range development plan for the Institute.

### **NEW FACES: NEW DIRECTIONS**

I am pleased to welcome Mark Lehner, who accepted an appointment in The Oriental Institute and the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations in October of 1990. Mr. Lehner received the Horwitz Prize at Yale for his dissertation on the Sphinx, completed last spring. The Giza Plateau Project, under Mr. Lehner's direction, conducted excavations in the area south of the Sphinx in May and June and is now in the field for a second season.

The Oriental Institute Computer Laboratory, headed by John C. Sanders, was established in July 1990. The mission of the laboratory is to provide expert assistance and advice on all aspects of computer technology and its application to research, publication, and management at The Oriental Institute. The first phase in the introduction of computer applications at the Institute is now completed. Basic hardware, software, and network wiring have been procured and installed to facilitate communications, word processing, data management, computer assisted drafting, and three dimensional modeling. We are now working on proposals to fund an advanced workstation for analysis of satellite data and a centralized database application for the museum and archaeological field projects that will incorporate digital or analogue images.

Margaret Sears, Assistant Director of the Institute for Development, was joined this year by Melanie Jansen Marhefka as Membership Coordinator and Dionne Herron as Office Manager. Among their major accomplishments were the conversion of all membership records to the University's Alumni Development Database System (ADDS) and the analysis of the membership list to identify major prospects for the Centennial Campaign. The new membership structure, including The James Henry Breasted Society, is announced elsewhere in this report. I hope you will all help us with the membership drive that will soon be underway—perhaps by introducing a friend to the Institute, or by increasing the level of your own membership.

Mrs. Margaret Bell Cameron retired this year from the position of Chair of The Visiting Committee to The Oriental Institute, a position she filled with strong commitment and great distinction for twenty years. Margaret Bell first came to the Institute as Administrative Assistant to the Director, Carl Kraeling, in 1951

and continued in that capacity until 1956 when she married Professor George Cameron and moved to Ann Arbor. As Administrative Assistant she was not only responsible for routine administrative matters, public relations, and membership, but she also served as a source of down to earth advice and moral support for students, faculty, and staff. The fact that she was sent to the Near East several times to visit Institute field projects and report on their progress is a measure of the trust she inspired.

In 1971 Mrs. Cameron was appointed to the Board of Trustees of the University and at the same time accepted an appointment as Chair of The Visiting Committee to The Oriental Institute. She maintained a lively interest in all of the affairs of the Institute, offering perceptive comment on a variety of matters including research, membership, student support, and development. Practically every research project at the Institute has benefited from her generosity. She is especially interested in the dictionary projects and on several occasions her gifts made up a major proportion of matching funds for National Endowment for the Humanities grants. We salute Margaret Cameron as one of the most steadfast friends the Institute has ever had, and wish her well in her retirement.

Mr. Charles Marshall was appointed to succeed Mrs. Cameron as chair of the Visiting Committee, and Mrs. Millicent Marshall joined the Committee as a new member. Mr. Marshall, recently retired Vice President of AT&T, is a member of the Board of Trustees of The University of Chicago, and both he and Mrs. Marshall are active in a number of civic and charitable organizations. We are confident that Mr. Marshall will provide the leadership needed to assure that the Visiting Committee participates fully in planning and helping to realize the future of the Institute in the new century. In a less formal mode, we all welcome Chuck and Millicent Marshall to the Oriental Institute family. We are looking forward to the many events planned for the Centennial Celebration of the University of Chicago in 1991-92 and invite you to join us as often as you can.