

THE SUQ

Denise Browning

This year has been a year of major changes and adjustments for the *Suq*. We began the year in July by moving of all of our storage in the basement during record heat of over 100° to make way for enlarging the public rest rooms. Needless to say it was a major undertaking.

In August we regretfully had to say good-bye to Kate Sarther and Siobhan Ritchie. In October with the beginning of the school year we instituted two new programs: (1) giving students registered in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations a 10% discount in the store; and (2) instituting a book special order fulfillment service to expand our sales of titles we normally do not carry. December brought a record amount of sales during our Holiday Sale, a full 6% ahead of last year but also brought the loss of Natalia Uribe who had worked diligently for us for four and a half years in almost every department of the *Suq*. She will be greatly missed.

With the new calendar year have come many changes and new challenges. January brought an end to scheduled tours to the museum. In February the Egyptian Gallery closed and the entire museum closed in April. The closing of the museum has affected the *Suq* in several significant ways. While many Chicago residents assumed we were closed six months before the actual closing, many out-of-town visitors have come and still do come expecting the galleries to be open. Though our May Inventory Sales were down for the very first time, the *Suq* still managed to finish the year with total sales down less than 14%. Given these circumstances, sales were significantly better than had been initially anticipated.

We participated in several off-site activities: The Newberry Very Merry Bazaar in November, The Printer's Row Book Fair, and an autographing of Norman Golb's new paperback edition of his book *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?* We have also expanded and updated our presence on the Internet, with a complete list of our book titles available for downloading, as well as several of our own noteworthy reproductions available for viewing. With the necessity of adjusting to a closed museum, we have sought new outlets and new opportunities to augment our regular, loyal customers. Through these events and new media we have sought not only to increase our sales but also to disseminate the name of the Oriental Institute to a new and wider audience.

The docents have weathered all of these changes and difficulties with the best of grace. They are always able to help and inform our customers with the best options for them to learn about the Oriental Institute.

One of our docents, Barbara Watson, has moved to West Virginia, after twenty years of service to the *Suq*. She was a great source of information about the history of beads and we sold her designs in the store, but most of all we still miss her laugh floating up the lobby. Barbara Baird, who kept us neat and organized, also is leaving us to make a home for her new family in Plainfield. They both will be greatly missed.

Thanks should go to our office staff for all of their wonderful contributions. Paul Spruhan, our book buyer, found us many great new titles for the store, handled all of those special orders, and updated our World-Wide Web site. Aysha Haq continued to fulfill all of our mail orders. Florence Ovadia does all of our wonderful displays. We also had two new office assistants this year, Christine Chen and Tasha Vorderstrasse.

MUSEUM

Docents-Loyal Regulars

Barbara Baird	Loraine Kubiak	Jane Thain
Muriel Brauer	Agnethe Rattenborg	Norma van der Meulen
Patty Dunkel	Rochelle Rossin	Barbara Watson
Barbara Frey	Mary Schulman	
Ruth Hyman	Anne Schumacher	

Docents-Loyal Extras

Peggy Grant Janet Helman Jo Jackson Mardi Trossman

Docents Behind-the-Scenes

Barbara Baird Georgie Maynard

Jewelry Designer

Norma van der Meulen
