

RESEARCH**RESEARCH ARCHIVES****Charles E. Jones**

As has been the case in many of the other units of the Oriental Institute, much of the energy and attention of the Research Archives and its staff has been focused this year on the building, expansion, and renovation project. This is particularly true as the year draws to a close. As I write this report in late July, I can look across the roof of the Palestinian gallery towards the “working end” of the climate control equipment in the new wing and watch the workers installing the last of the louvered facing surrounding the maze of ductwork and air-handling machinery overlooking the courtyard of the Institute. Once that work is done, they will complete the setting of the red tile roof, and the external appearance (at least) of the new wing from the Research Archives will be complete.

The interior of the library component of the new wing is essentially finished, all that remains is the installation of windows, the connection between the old fire escape stairway and the vestibule of the new wing, and a doorway at the back of the Reading Room. A host of other tasks will continue to occupy the energies of the builders, and the monumental job of moving the collections (yet again) into their new home awaits our colleagues in the Museum. For many of us on the staff of the Oriental Institute this seems to be the calm before the storm, or perhaps more appropriately, the calm in the eye of the hurricane.

The real labor of the renovation project for the staff of the Research Archives will occur in October. We expect to take delivery of our new book stack units by then, at which time we plan to close the library to the public and begin the move and reconfiguration. Our planned reconfiguration will restore all of the original seating for eighty in the Reading room, and will assemble several currently dispersed components of the collections into much more useful and productive features of the research environment. Details on the reconfiguration, however, will wait for future reports.

It has been five years now since engineers working on early phases of the design of the new building informed us that the Reading Room of the Research Archives (which then held the bulk of the collection on tall book stacks) was very severely overloaded. As a direct consequence of this impending disaster, the University approved the addition of second and third floors on the new wing early enough in the



Figure 1. The Reading Room as it appeared in the 1930s

design stage that they could be integrated into the project reasonably simply. From that time the Research Archives joined the Museum as a formal part of the Legacy Campaign. Its most conspicuous role (aside from hosting an early fundraising function in the Reading Room) was as a naming opportunity for donors wishing to support the funding of the Legacy Campaign. We have been extraordinarily fortunate this year to have secured generous pledges from the Elizabeth Morse and the Elizabeth Morse Genius Charitable Trusts. The gift supports the “bricks and mortar” of the new wing and climate control, and the Reading Room of the Research Archives will be named for the Trusts. But the generosity of these donors has not stopped

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there. They have pledged additional funds as a Challenge Grant towards the cost of replacing the lighting and electrical systems in the Research Archives, installing computer and electrical conduits to each of the tables in the Reading Room, and replacing its floor.

These are extraordinary gifts that support the building of the new wing, the installation of climate control in the new wing and in the Research Archives (and thereby the preservation and longevity of the collections, not to mention the comfort of the scholars who use it), the restoration to its original state (see photograph) of what James Henry Breasted called “the most beautiful room in the building,” and the fundamental integration of infrastructure that has already become essential for the conduct of modern scholarship. We salute the trustees of these Trusts for their commitment to both the past and the future.

On-Line Catalog and the Retrospective Cataloging Project

At the present time the on-line catalog of the holdings of the Research Archives includes nearly 76,000 records. During the past year we have added nearly 5,000 records to the database, most of these being main entries for materials recently acquired. In addition we have spent a great deal of time editing, culling, cleaning, and improving the existing records in the database to make searches more effective and useful. The on-line catalog continues to be the primary point of entry into the collections of the Research Archives.

We have made solid progress on the retrospective cataloging project. Already loaded into the on-line catalog are analytical records for each essay, article, and review in the following periodicals:

Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt — 806 records

Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur — 402 records

Total number of analytical records entered in 1996/97 — 1,208 records

Essentially complete, and in the final stages of editing preparatory to loading into the on-line catalog, are analytical records for each essay, article and review in the following periodicals:

Cahiers de la Délégation Archéologique Française en Iran — 26 records

Chronique d'Égypte — 1,400 records

Enchoria: Zeitschrift für Demotistik und Koptologie — 449 records

Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo — 728 records

Revue d'Égyptologie — 957 records

Sumer — 935 records

Oxford Encyclopedia of Near Eastern Archaeology — 1,121 records

Analytical records from recently acquired materials — 17,421 records

The total number of analytical records prepared for entry in 1996/97 is 23,037.

Publications on the World-Wide Web

The Research Archives published seven items during the year.

1. Abzu: Guide to Resources for the Study of the Ancient Near East Available on the Internet, by Charles E. Jones. Oriental Institute Research Archives Bibliographical and Informational Documents, Supplements to Oriental Institute Research Archives Acquisitions List, vol. 3. Chicago: The Oriental Institute Research Archives, 1994–1997.

<http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/ABZU/ABZU.HTML>

This evolving publication continues to grow and to command respect. During the past year, links to more than twelve hundred documents relating to the ancient Near East have been added to the Abzu indexes, including a new subject index for Maps and Atlases:

http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/ABZU/ABZU_SUBINDX_MAPS.HTML

2. Dissertation Proposals in Ancient Near Eastern Studies Approved by the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, the University of Chicago:

a. Egyptian Women in Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt: The Economic and Legal Activities of Women in Demotic Texts, by Alexandra A. O'Brien

http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/OBRIEN_DISSPROP_TEXT.HTML

b. Political Change and Cultural Continuity in Eshnunna from the Ur III to the Old Babylonian Period, by Clemens Reichel

http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/DISSPROP/Reichel_diss.html

3. Death in Ancient Egypt, by Alexandra A. O'Brien

<http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/ABZU/DEATH.HTML>

4. Egypt and the Ancient Near East: Web Resources for Young People and Teachers, by Alexandra A. O'Brien

http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/ABZU/YOUTH_RESOURCES.HTML

5. Demotic Texts published on the World-Wide Web, by Alexandra A. O'Brien

http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/ABZU/DEMOTIC_WWW.HTML

6. Disjecta Membra in Araneo — Scattered Remains on the Web, by Alexandra A. O'Brien

<http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/ABZU/ARCETALK.HTML>

7. The Directory of North American Egyptologists, edited by Charles E. Jones and Richard Wilkinson

http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/ABZU/EGDIR_INTRO.HTML

The directory is available exclusively on-line and is the central place for Egyptological addresses. We have also recently begun to include institutional addresses in the directory.

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Current Acquisitions

Following are the acquisitions statistics for the past year

	<u>April 1996–March 1997</u>	<u>Total</u>
Monographs and Series	761	21,955
Journals	<u>190</u>	<u>9,262</u>
Total Books	951	31,217
Pamphlets	5	

Those readers who follow the progress and growth of the Research Archives as reflected in the statistics presented here in the *Annual Reports* will note that there has now been an upturn in the volume of material acquired. We continue to examine and analyze the material we acquire and ensure that we are serving the research needs of the faculty, staff, and students who use the collection and develop and build on our very considerable collections. The increase in volume of material acquired reflects a trend towards normalization of ordering following the retrenchment over the past couple of years necessitated by drastic budget cuts. I trust this trend will continue in the future.

I am particularly fortunate to have retained the services of two employees from previous years as my assistants: Alexandra O'Brien, Ph.D. candidate in Egyptology, and Justine Way, graduate student in Egyptian and Near Eastern Archaeology. In addition, I now have the services of a third graduate student (Egyptology) assistant, Hratch Papazian. All three of these staff members play an extremely important role in the day to day functioning of the Research Archives, and each of them individually has assumed responsibility for projects of fundamental importance for the development of the collections, catalog, and electronic resources. I only hope that I am as good a supervisor as each of them is an employee.

The Research Archives has many friends and supporters. Many of you remain anonymous to me, many others are familiar faces. Robert Biggs is, as always, one of the staunchest supporters of the Research Archives. He gives freely of books, time, information, advice, and help. Many others have given gifts of books. Among them are the children and grandchildren of T. George Allen, Martha Roth, Hans G. Güterbock, Robert and Linda Braidwood, Georgie Maynard, William Sumner, and the Library of the Art Institute. Generous financial support of the Research Archives has been made this year by many friends, notably Ellis O. Jones, Erica Reiner, Juliet Roberts, and Nellie R. Stickley. To all of them, and to all of the rest of you who support us in many ways, I offer my thanks.
