



CHICAGO HOUSE BULLETIN



Volume XXVIII

Privately Circulated

October 2017



THE 2016–2017 FIELD SEASON





Chicago House Professional Staff Photo 2017. Photo by Sue Lezon

Last Row (left to right): Jen Kimpton, Brett McClain, Jonathan Winnerman, Hilary McDonald, Krisztián Vértés, Hany Diab

Third Row: Fatma Ahmed, Doaa Sadek, Johannes Weningen, Samwell Maher, Martina Roshdy, Anait and Frank Helmholtz, Boyo Ockinga, Susanne Binder, Keli Alberts

Second Row: Samar Ibrahim, Doaa Abdel Aty, Manar Hagag, Gina Salama, Jay Heidel, Ray Johnson, Marjorie Fisher, Essam el Sayed, Alazab Ahmed

Front Row: Nema Ahmed, Anhar Hassaan, Safaa El Nuby, Sami and Samir Guindy, Owen Murray

Steps: Lotfi Hassan, Dominique Navarro, Hiroko Kariya, Sue Osgood, Ellie Smith, Yarko Kobylecky

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Cover photo (top): Medinet Habu Domitian Gate stone and conservation teams. January 13, 2017. Photo by Frank Helmholtz

Cover photo (bottom): Chicago House from the Luxor Corniche, March 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson



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The Chicago House Field Season October 2016 to April 2017

By W. Raymond Johnson, Field Director

I am pleased to report that the Epigraphic Survey finished a successful 2016–2017 archaeological field season in Luxor, Egypt — our 93rd — on April 15, 2017, in collaboration with the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities. Chicago House's preservation projects focused on the sites of Luxor Temple, Medinet Habu, and the tomb of the noble Nefersekheru Theban Tomb 107, and included epigraphic documentation, conservation, restoration, and training programs. What follows are some of the highlights of the work that took place during the six months between October 15 and April 15.

LUXOR TEMPLE

At Luxor Temple, Chicago House launched an exciting new digital documentation initiative in the blockyard open-air museum and storage areas supervised by blockyard site manager Jay Heidel. Because most of the 50,000 blocks and fragments in the Luxor Temple blockyard have

never been documented in any form, photographer Hilary McDonald, assisted by Owen Murray, worked with Jay to develop a program that utilizes digital photography and Agisoft Photoscan software to create photogrammetric "maps" of stacked block rows for reference, as well as individual block faces for drawing and publication. This technique allows precise photography of the blocks without dismantling the rows, saves a tremendous amount of time, and allows many more blocks and fragments to be documented. We began the project with the inscribed Akhenaten Karnak *talatat* blocks stored in the blockyard. This discrete group of blocks was quarried from Horemheb's pylons at Karnak where he had reused them after Akhenaten's death; the blocks were brought to the Luxor Temple settlement in the Middle Ages for house construction. Since none of them originated at Luxor Temple, they will eventually go back to Karnak for integration with the thousands of other Akhenaten blocks stored there.



Jay Heidel working on blockyard database entries. Luxor Temple. March 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson



Hilary McDonald putting photographic targets on Karnak *talatat*. Luxor Temple blockyard. January 2017. Photo by Sue Lezon

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Hilary photographing blocks. Luxor Temple blockyard. Photo by Sue Lezon

Once the *talatat* are fully documented, we will systematically record all the rest of the blockyard holdings, section by section, category by category. Hilary did most of the on-site digital photography and was assisted by Gina Salama and Ellie Smith, who helped tag the blocks with numbers and place small targets on each block for squareness. The end result is a TIFF image that can be used for Jay's blockyard database, archiving, drawing, and publication. This season 2,600 Akhenaten Karnak *talatat* blocks were recorded using this new process; since some are decorated on more than one face, 2,720 inscribed surfaces were registered. The digital archive will be invaluable for referencing the data within and outside of Egypt, and will be augmented by film photography as groups of blocks and fragments are analyzed and joined. Jay continued to develop the blockyard database and update the records for fragments, including photos and location data from our records at Chicago House; so far he has created 3,742 records in the database, excluding *talatat*. In the blockyard itself, his work consists of verifying the location of each fragment based



Hilary and Gina photographing at Luxor Temple. February 1, 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson

on the recorded data, locating fragments whose data has been lost, figuring out the numbers assigned to fragments we have studied in the past whose numbers have fallen off or become illegible, and adding new fragments to the database based on what is found — especially, at the moment, the Akhenaten Karnak *talatat*. He has also been systematically tagging all of the blocks with numbered aluminum tags for identification; this season he was assisted by Gina, and together they glued 1,533 tags, making a total of 2,592 tagged blocks. The process of checking in the field proceeds *mastaba* by *mastaba* and will continue until all 50,000 relevant fragments have been accounted for and all new, relevant fragments have been added to the database. This season 1,064 fragments were field-checked and verified, and 2,602 were entered with confirmed location data. This documentation and management initiative is partly funded by two friends who wish to remain anonymous. You know who you are; bless you.

Conservator Hiroko Kariya rejoined the team in January and condition-surveyed the blockyard holdings,



Jay and Ministry of Antiquities (MoA) inspector Dalia tagging blocks and fragments. Luxor Temple. November 17, 2016. Photo by Ray Johnson

plus did necessary cleaning and repairs on selected fragments and blocks in the open-air museum display and storage areas. She utilized the new blockyard database to record necessary conservation treatment, pending or accomplished, in coordination with Jay. During the month of February Chicago House lent Jay to the Italian Mission from Florence working at Sheikh Abada/Antinoupolis headed by Rosario Pintaudi. There Jay and the team uncovered major new material from the Osiris Antinous temple complex built by the Emperor Hadrian in the second century AD.

After his return, Jay coordinated the move of 124 Colonnade Hall block fragments from the sphinx road area north of the temple to the main blockyard east of the Amenhotep III court. These fragments were quarried from the Colonnade Hall 3rd register, west side, south end, an area whose carving was started by Tutankhamun and finished by Sety I. This section of the Colonnade Hall is entirely missing now, totally quarried away in the Middle Ages, but originally depicted an expansive Great Ennead offering scene, where the king makes offerings



Hiroko Kariya condition-monitoring blockyard fragments. Luxor Temple. Photo by Ray Johnson



Jay and team moving Sety I blocks. Luxor Temple. March 15, 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson

to and is recognized as king by all the gods of Egypt. Many of the blocks from this area that I had identified in years past were already in the blockyard; now all of the identified 3rd register blocks and fragments are in one place, which will facilitate their drawing and reconstruction. Jay also worked on the penciling and inking of the Bentresh/Ptolemy I corpus of fragments. Out of 103 fragments, 39 have been inked, 46 have been penciled, and 18 more await penciling next season. This group of fragments will be the focus of the Epigraphic Survey's first volume in the Luxor Temple blockyard series, with translation and analysis by faculty member Robert Ritner.

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Krisztián showing Keli the use of the iPad Pro in the Imperial Cult Chamber. Luxor Temple. February 2, 2017. Photo by Sue Lezon



Krisztián with laptop at the wall. Luxor Temple. January 2017. Photo by Sue Lezon



Krisztián digitally penciling Amenhotep III reliefs at Luxor Temple. Photo by Ray Johnson



Jay drawing Bentresh blocks. Luxor Temple. March 28, 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson

In the Luxor Temple King's Chamber/Roman Imperial Cult Chamber, Egyptologist and artist Krisztián Vértés continued his precise digital drawings of the Diocletianic frescos, southern and eastern walls. The frescos on the eastern wall that depict horses and cavalrymen are terribly abraded, but luckily a few nineteenth-century travelers did detailed paintings and sketches of what they saw when the frescos were better preserved. Krisztián has carefully documented the traces that survive and will digitally integrate them with the earlier documentation for the final publication in a wonderful fusion of hard-copy and digital documentation techniques.

Krisztián started drawing these extraordinary frescos by penciling manually on photographic drawing enlargements that were then scanned for digital inking. Now he is producing the penciling digitally on an iPad Pro. He has been greatly assisted of late by Owen, who provided the digital images stitched together with Agisoft Photoscan software for the photographic "layer" of Krisztián's drawings. Owen also produced the background digital photography for the sample digital drawing of a scene in the same chamber showing a kneeling Amenhotep III blessed by an enthroned Amun that Krisztián will be presenting in all stages of photography, drawing, and collation for the updated *Digital Epigraphy* e-book. The second edition of this invaluable reference work will be available for free download from the Oriental Institute Publications web page this fall. Krisztián has added 100 pages to the manual with two additional chapters that address on-site digital penciling techniques utilizing different portable drawing tablets, and another that illustrates some of the many challenges that the Chicago House epigrapher faces in the field (Case Study #1) with recarving, reuse of wall material, and painted surfaces, and the different ways they can be documented. It is a very exciting time to be doing this work, and Krisztián is leading the way.

Structural engineer Conor Power returned in February to review the structural stability of Luxor Temple and found that the temple is stable and secure, with no signs of change. This is totally the result of the successful dewatering initiative for Karnak and Luxor temples that was sponsored by USAID and activated in 2007. I should also mention here that during the course of the season our work in Luxor Temple was supervised by Ministry of Antiquities (MoA) Inspectors Miss Dalia Mohammed Bahaa, Miss Fatma Sayed, Mr. Hadir Abd el-Maggeed Aly Mohamed, Miss Moushira Ahmed Abd el-Wahab, Miss Marwa Nabil Rasheed Mohammed, Miss Lamia Gahlan Hussein, and Miss Esraa Ahmed el-Taher.

MEDINET HABU

The Medinet Habu documentation, conservation, and restoration programs were partly funded by grants from USAID Egypt (year two of a four-year grant) and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF, year two of a two-year grant) for which we are enormously grateful. These grants have allowed us to continue and expand our development of the southern and western sectors of the complex around the Ramesses III mortuary temple (USAID), to continue the Ramesses III southern well restoration project (RBF), to hire more workmen and conservators for both sets of projects, and to inaugurate training programs for Egyptian conservation students and Egyptian epigraphic artists.

There are several primary areas of focus for the USAID grant, the first being the sandstone pavement of Ramesses III bordered by a mudbrick enclosure wall that runs along the exterior southern wall of the mortuary temple. The restoration of this walkway is one of our immediate goals, since it will allow visitor access to the western sector of the complex, also part of the program. The mudbrick wall that ran parallel to the walkway is being restored up to a certain level to contain the sandstone paving slabs, to direct visitors to parts west, and to keep them from straying off the path into fragile, unrestored areas. This important restoration work is by necessity a collaboration between our conservation and restoration teams, headed by senior conservator Lotfi Hassan and master stone mason Frank Helmholz, respectively, who together have synchronized truly beautiful work.



Lotfi and conservation students. Medinet Habu. November 15, 2016.
Photo by Frank Helmholz

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Brickmaking. Medinet Habu. December 16, 2016. Photo by Ray Johnson



Butehamun House restoration work. Medinet Habu. Photo by Ray Johnson



Butehamun House brick restoration. Medinet Habu. Photo by Ray Johnson

This season, Frank, Johannes, and the Egyptian stone team laid over 60 m of interlocking sandstone pavement along the southern side (213 large paving stones, each 12 cm thick, totaling 150 sq. m) in the irregular style of Ramesses III's stone masonry. Where some of the original paving stones survive, Frank and the team very carefully laid new slabs around them, seamlessly integrating the old and the new stones.

Next season the western end of the southern area will be completed, and the western side at the back of the temple will be started. We are creating our own mudbricks for the restoration, stamping them with a "U" and "C" (for the University of Chicago). Lotfi is also carefully matching the size of the new bricks to those of the period of wall being capped. For instance, Ramesses III bricks are considerably larger than the bricks used in later Twenty-fifth Dynasty walls that intrude in places, which we are also restoring, and our new mudbricks match the dimensions of the originals exactly. I must here offer sincerest thanks to American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) Luxor director John Shearman for the donation of mudbrick material from ARCE's cleanup work in Dra Abu El-Naga that has greatly speeded up our mudbrick restoration work.

The second focus of the USAID grant is the famous House of Butehamun located in the southwestern back corner of Medinet Habu. Its four white-plastered pillars

from a central hall stand in stark contrast to the brown enclosure walls behind them and are clearly visible across the site. The Scribe of the Necropolis Butehamun supervised the rewrapping and reinterments of the royal dead from the Valley of the Kings in the Twenty-first Dynasty, after a period of civil unrest. His complex at Medinet Habu — part house, part office, and part chapel — was cleared by archaeologist Uvo Hölscher for the Oriental Institute in 1930 and 1931, but due to a lack of pertinent records the extent of his excavations was not clear. Oriental Institute archaeologist Gregory Marouard's cleaning and test excavations at the site last season determined that Hölscher had indeed completely excavated, cleaned out, and refilled the brick casemate platform upon which the hall columns were erected, and this new knowledge allowed us to proceed with our cleaning, conservation, consolidation, and restoration work this winter. This season Lotfi's conservation team carefully consolidated and remapped the area, and capped mudbrick walls from the original structure, as well as walls partly restored by Hölscher, clearly differentiating one phase from the other. The team also re-erected two fallen column sections in front of the four-pillared hall. Next season we will construct a walkway around the structure for public viewing, accompanied by appropriate educational signage that explains the site and its significance.

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Brick laying in southern sector. Medinet Habu. December 16, 2016. Photo by Ray Johnson



Frank using forklift to move stone slabs for restoration. Medinet Habu. February 7, 2017. Photo by Johannes Weninger



USAID-funded restoration work on southern area. Medinet Habu. February 22, 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson



Laying new paving at Medinet Habu. March 29, 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson



Restored mudbrick walls. Medinet Habu. March 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson

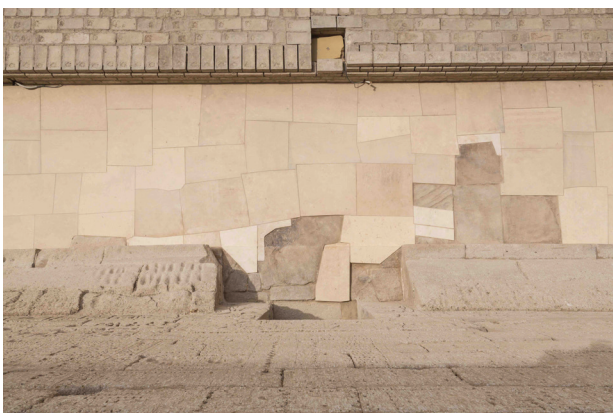
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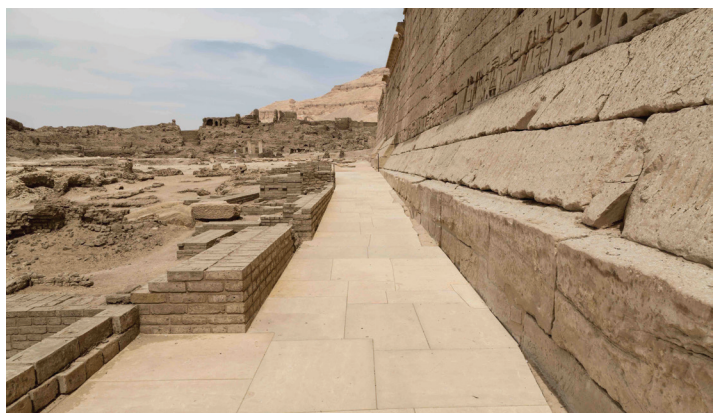
Conservation team group shot. Medinet Habu. March 24, 2017. Photo by Frank Helmholz



Butehamun House restoration finished. Medinet Habu. April 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson



Finished southern pavement from the mortuary temple roof. Medinet Habu. Photo by Frank Helmholz



Stone paving and brickwork finished. Medinet Habu. April 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson

The third focus of the USAID grant is the destroyed western High Gate at the back center of the complex. This fortified stone and brick entryway served as the main administrative and supply entryway to Medinet Habu, and while similar to the intact eastern High Gate that fronts the Medinet Habu precinct, it was considerably bigger, and constructed mostly of mudbrick faced with stone blocks and slabs. Unlike its eastern counterpart, the western High Gate was completely destroyed at the end of the Twentieth Dynasty during a period of civil war. Like the eastern tower, it was inscribed with battle-related scenes on the exterior, and domestic scenes on the interior, and, like the eastern tower, it appears to have been used as a royal, “high-rise” residence. The blocks from the crenelated tower were thrown down in two phases: the top two stories of the tower in the first phase, and the rest of it in a second, final destruction phase. The passage was eventually completely bricked up, and the great sandstone blocks from the main body of the tower were quarried for reuse; some are to be seen in a Ptolemaic side gate leading to the small Amun temple. The quarrying debris covered the blocks thrown down from the upper two stories, and this is what we are working on now. Project supervisor Egyptologist Jen Kimpton is directing the team working on the documentation, analysis, and database entry of the blocks and fragments that remain; to date, they have recorded 1,068 total. Jen is assisted by Anait Helmholtz with the processing of the data, and Keli Alberts, who

is drawing the inscribed material. Keli finished penciling seventy-eight blocks this spring from the main exterior tower scenes, the exterior rebus frieze, and selected interior scenes; collation by Jen and Brett began on the forty-six block drawings Keli inked during the previous summer. Keli has also produced a very fine preliminary drawing of the completed gate with blocks floated into place. As you can see, almost all of our stone material comes from the upper two stories.

Anait was able to finalize isometric renderings of seven blocks begun last year and finished the preliminary recording for seventeen additional isometric drawings that Jen will process this summer using Adobe Illustrator; isometric drawings greatly assist in the joining and presentation of joined block groups. Staff photographer Yarko Kobylecky photographed in large-format film and digital format 373 inscribed blocks and fragments this season, making a total of 715 photographed so far in the project, with the goal of documenting them all. As we clean and organize the area, more fragments are constantly turning up. This season Jen organized the various types of blocks and fragments into ordered rows, making processing easier and more efficient. Photographer Owen has supervised the creation of a photogrammetric map of the entire area using Agisoft Photoscan software to stitch together thousands of digital images, taken by hand and with an aerial camera.

Feel free to access Owen’s blog post for more details of the Medinet Habu western High Gate Project preliminary results:

<http://owensark.com/2017/08/the-western-high-gate-of-medinet-habu/>

To access the western High Gate area 3D models on Sketchfab, check out this link:

<https://skfb.ly/QDCz>



Western High Gate panorama. Medinet Habu. Photo by Hilary McDonald



Yarko and Jen photographing western High Gate blocks. Medinet Habu. Photo by Dominique Navarro



Keli drawing western High Gate block. Medinet Habu. Photo by Dominique Navarro

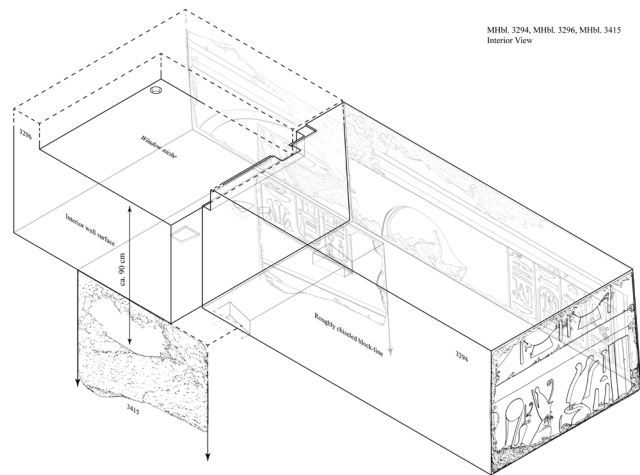
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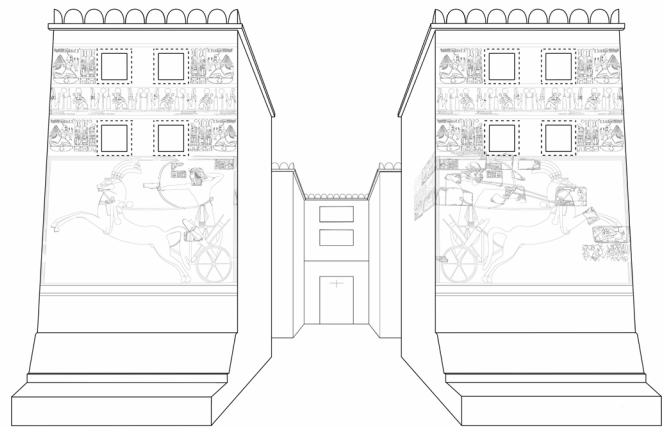
Owen Murray surveying at Medinet Habu. 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson

Owen is also keying the 3D plans into a topographic plan initially created by archaeologist Uvo Hölscher, with the help of topographers from ARCE and the Franco-Egyptian Center (sincerest thanks to John Shearman and Christophe Thiers for the “loans”!).

This season saw the completion of the Domitian Gate restoration project, with the final restoration floor blocks laid in place by Frank and assistant stone mason Johannes Weninger (who cut and shaped most of the sandstone floor blocks), and the infilling with mortar between the courses finished by the conservation team supervised by Lotfi (see cover photo). Frank and Lotfi are now designing a small open-air museum around the gate with displays on platforms of some of the completely salt-decayed lower-course blocks and educational signage that will explain the history of the site and the reasons for the project. We may decide to do some more work on the monument itself, initially put together by Georges Daressy in the nineteenth century from blocks he found reused in buildings of the Christian city of *Djeme* on the site, but for now the basic reassembly and restoration is finished. *Mabruk* to the stone and



Medinet Habu. Fragments (MHbl 3294, 3296, 3415) from Western High Gate. Isometric drawing by Jen Kimpton



Western High Gate. Medinet Habu. Digital reconstruction by Keli Alberts

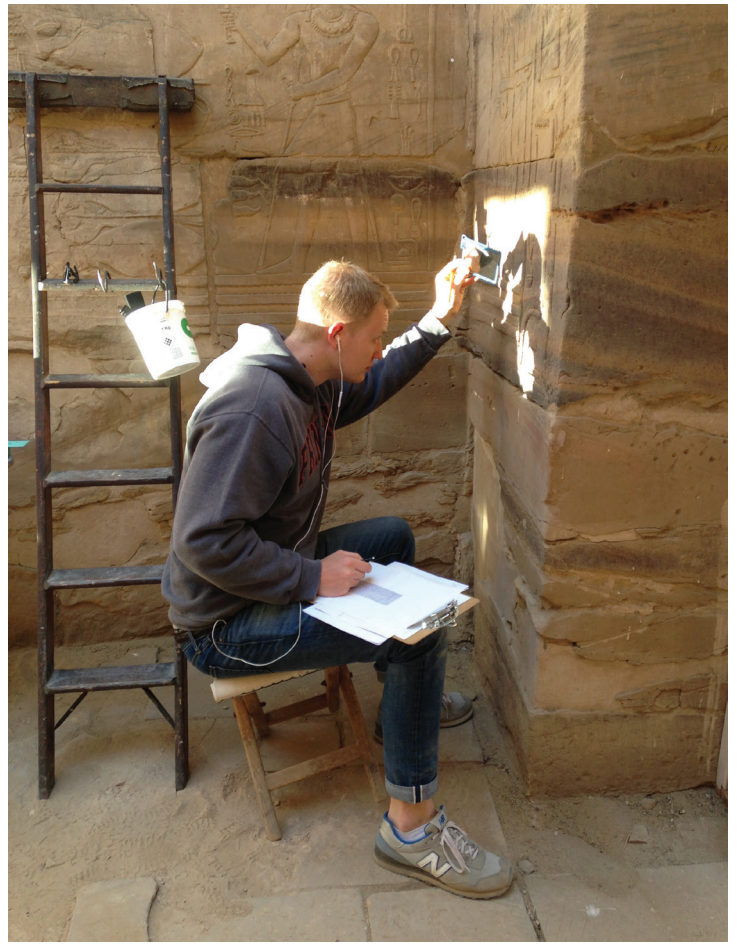
conservation teams for a magnificent collaboration, and a job well done!

The epigraphic documentation work in the small Amun temple, coordinated by senior epigrapher J. Brett McClain, focused on the drawings of *Medinet Habu Volumes XI* and *XII*. Brett also worked with Photo Archivist Sue Lezon this winter finalizing the photography for *Medinet Habu Volume X*, whose drawings are completely finished and awaiting publication production back in Chicago. This season we had the pleasure of training two new epigraphic team members: student epigrapher Jonathan Winnerman, and artist Dominique Navarro. We were joined in the training program by two Antiquities Ministry inspectors, Nadia Ahmed Abd El-Latef from Luxor Temple, and Al-Shimaa Mohamed Mahmoud Mohamed from Karnak. The ministry is encouraging the inclusion of interested inspectors in training programs sponsored by the archaeological missions, and we were very happy to include Nadia and Shimaa — both talented artists — in ours. Lotfi continued a student conservation training program at Medinet Habu this season as well, and ministry conservator Radwa Ibrahim Naeem from Karnak joined the conservation students for that.

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Margaret penciling Ptolemaic door thickness in small Amun temple. Medinet Habu. Photo by Ray Johnson



Jonathan Winnerman collating in the small Amun temple. Medinet Habu. February 14, 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson



Medinet Habu teams 2016-2017. Photo by Frank Helmholz

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Dominique, Sue, and MoA inspector Nadia at the wall in small Amun temple. Medinet Habu. December 16, 2016. Photo by Ray Johnson



MoA inspector Shimaá documenting a pillar. Medinet Habu. Photo by Ray Johnson



Dominique penciling a pillar drawing. Medinet Habu. Photo by Ray Johnson



Epigraphy training program: Margaret, Sue, Dominique, Shimaá, Nadia, and Jonathan. Chicago House. December 10, 2016. Photo by Ray Johnson



Aleksandra Hallmann working in the Amenirdis Chapel. Medinet Habu. April 5, 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson



Epigraphy training program participants, front: Shimaa and Sue. (back) Jonathan, Nadia, Dominique, photographer assistant Gharib, and photographer Yarko. Chicago House. Photo by Sue Lezon



Tina explaining DStretch software in the small Amun temple northern Ptolemaic annex. Medinet Habu. Photo by Ray Johnson

Tina Di Cerbo, assisted during the first two weeks of January by husband Richard Jasnow, continued her painstaking documentation of Demotic and Christian graffiti in the small Amun temple north Ptolemaic annex, focusing on the west interior wall. Utilizing the software program ImageJ with the filter DStretch, which allows almost invisible ink traces to become visible, she has detected four distinct layers of text and images on the wall, including at least two Christian phases. This is true detective work, and it is critical that it be done now, with increasing humidity in the air causing much of this data to fade to invisibility. This season we were also pleased to host visiting epigrapher and friend Aleksandra Hallmann, 2016–2017 ARCE fellow, who worked on the decorative programs of the Medinet Habu divine wives of Amun

tomb chapels from the Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth Dynasties. Aleksandra did dissertation research at Medinet Habu with us in years past, and this winter will be back in Chicago as the new Post-Doctoral Fellow at the OI.

The breakdown of drawings and collation accomplished during the 2016–2017 season at Medinet Habu (including the western High Gate) is: penciling completed: eighty-one drawings; inking completed: forty-four drawings; transfer checked: six drawings. Our work at Medinet Habu this winter was supervised by MoA Inspectors Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Salim, Miss Fatma Ahmed Salim, Mr. Wagdy Ismail Mohammed Ismail, Mr. Mahmoud Hosny Mahmoud Abdallah, Mr. Yousri Mahmoud Abd el-Basset Ali, Mrs. Sabah Mahmoud Abd el-Galil, and Mrs. Shereen Montasser Hassan Ali.

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Theban Tomb 107 during cleaning, from above looking east. Photo by Ray Johnson



Theban Tomb 107 relief, detail. Drawing by Margaret De Jong



Theban Tomb 107 archaeological team. January 30, 2017. Photo by Boyo Ockinga

THEBAN TOMB 107

Boyo Ockinga and Susanne Binder continued clearing the debris in the portico of Theban Tomb 107 (TT 107) of the Steward of the palace of Nebmaat-re-is-the-Dazzling-Sun-Disk, the noble Nefersekheru, on January 19, 2017, for Chicago House, and finished on January 30. Most of the portico is now cleared down to bedrock, with the clearance extending out into the courtyard. More decorated inscribed limestone fragments from the wall and several large fragments of inscribed doorjambs were recovered from the debris, which tells us that the completely missing doorjambs were indeed inscribed. Another inscribed patchstone with hieroglyphic text was found in several pieces. Several of these substantial fragments were consolidated/rejoined by conservator Hiroko on site. Once that was accomplished, Yarko photographed each piece in both large-format film and digital format during the first week of March for integration with the wall-relief photography and drawing. When the blocked doorway is cleared next season for the installation of a steel gate we expect to recover more fragments that washed into the tomb entryway during repeated flooding of the sunken court over the millennia. Once the cleaning was finished for this season, Brett and I returned to the site in February to continue the collation of the beautiful wall-relief drawings done by Sue Osgood and Margaret De Jong. I finished the second collation of the inscribed faceted column of the façade, and after meeting with first epigrapher Brett, director-checked it with artist Sue Osgood at the wall (eight enlargements), and all corrections were added before Sue departed for home at the end of February. Our work at TT 107 this season was supervised by MoA inspector Miss Eman Haggag Yousef.



Brett and Sue collating pillar. Theban Tomb 107, February 3, 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson

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Southern wall raising. Chicago House. Photo by Tina Di Cerbo



Librarian assistant Martina working in the librarian's office. Chicago House. February 15, 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson



Installation of solar water heaters over Healey House. Chicago House. September 2016. Photo by Tina Di Cerbo



Gina working in the library. Chicago House. March 2, 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson



Librarian Anait Helmholz. Chicago House. April 3, 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson



Library. Chicago House. January 20, 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson

CHICAGO HOUSE

After the Chicago House staff departs for home in April and before we return in October, Tina and our intrepid workmen do maintenance and construction work throughout the Chicago House complex. This fall they raised the southern enclosure wall another two meters in response to increasing Luxor City activity in the vacant lot to the south of Chicago House. Additionally, just before our arrival in October, a new solar water-heating system was installed at Healey House, the Photo Lab, and the library wing, replacing energy-draining electric water heaters. These improvements were laboriously effected by Tina and our workmen while it was still quite hot (bless them), and were funded in part by a gift from our “Friend of Chicago House” Shafik Gabr, to whom we extend our sincerest thanks.

The Marjorie M. Fisher Chicago House Library opened on October 21, 2016, and closed for the season on April 7, 2017. We now have a new head librarian; Anait Helmholz took on the position this fall after the retirement of former librarian Marie Bryan. Anait has had years of experience as assistant librarian and now has her own assistants: Gina Salama and Martina Roshdy Maher. They

are a very dynamic trio, cheerfully and enthusiastically serving patrons, shelf-reading, repairing books, ordering new books, creating a digital catalog of the library holdings (700 titles added so far), and reorganizing the librarian’s office. They have brought some very good energy to the library. Acquisitions this season totaled 184 titles (59 journals and periodicals and 105 books) and 57 of them were gifts. Attendance was steady, with many Egyptian ministry colleagues working on advanced degrees. We were particularly pleased that former Luxor Museum director Sanaa Ahmed Ali, now Director of Museums in Upper Egypt, received her PhD this winter. Dr. Sanaa wrote both her MA thesis and PhD dissertation in our library, and we are enormously pleased at her great success.

The Tom and Linda Heagy Photo Archives has been filled with digital photographers downloading and processing images as well as Photo Archivist Sue Lezon, registrar Ellie Smith, Tina, and Alain and Emmanuelle Arnaudis (in March). In addition to the registering and housing of our own film images and processing/organizing of our archives, they have been working on the scanning, organizing, and archival housing of our colleague

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Yarko photographing the Domitian Gate, Medinet Habu. March 2017. Photo by Dominique Navarro



Emmanuelle and Alain Arnaudès in the Photo Archives. Chicago House. March 30, 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson

Ted Brock's photographic archives, partly funded by an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Museums for America grant to the Oriental Institute for digitizing records for inclusion into the University's Integrated DataBase (IDB). Sincerest thanks to Foy Scalf, Research Archives Head, and Anne Flannery, Head of the Museum Archives, for making this happen. IT and photo archives consultants Emmanuelle and Alain Arnaudès joined us in March and helped us formulate a plan for data management of our digital photographic archives, a major step forward. The Photo Archives is the heart and soul of our operation, and its importance is growing. In July Sue joined Brett in the Epigraphic Survey office at the OI and finished the photographic plates for *Medinet Habu Volume X: The Eighteenth Dynasty Temple Part II. The Façade, Pillars, and Architrave Inscriptions of the Thutmosid Peripteros*. The plates of this monumental publication of the peripteros of the Eighteenth Dynasty temple was submitted to the OI Publications Department at the end of the summer for review, the first step in our publication process. We are almost there!

It was an excellent season. Tourism noticeably increased during the winter and was quite brisk in Luxor. We had an amazing array of friends, colleagues, and visitors passing through, including the Oriental Institute November and March tours to Egypt led by former Chicago House director Lanny Bell and OI Development Director



Conservator Fatma Ahmed working on the north exterior wall of the small Amun temple, Medinet Habu. Photo by Ray Johnson

Brittany Mullins; US Ambassador Stephen Beecroft; USAID mission director Sherry Carlin; Stephen Heintz, Ana Heeren, and Marnie Pillsbury of the RBF; David and Susan Rockefeller, Jr., and friends; Margie Fisher; Wafaa El-Seddik; and a host of others. We were pleased to participate in the four-day Sekhmet Omnipresent Conference in Luxor from March 23 to 26 in which seventeen colleagues and I spoke about the powerful lion-headed goddess so beloved of Amenhotep III, an event organized by colleagues Betsy Bryan and Hourig Sourouzian. It was definitely a very full six months.

I am happy to report that Chicago House participated in the filming of two documentaries this fall. One was for the University of Chicago and featured all aspects of our work as well as the archaeological work of Nadine Moeller and Gregory Marouard at Edfu and Dendara, a preview of which was shown at the OI Gala in May, now accessible here:

http://mindonline.uchicago.edu/media2/ORI/FY17/ORI300017_GalaVideo_UPLOAD_v3-HD10_Short.mp4

We also took part in the filming of a BBC documentary on the career of the photographer Harry Burton, best known for his extraordinary photography of Tutankhamun's tomb and its contents. Both Sue Lezon, who is an authority on Burton and early photography, and Yarko were interviewed and filmed, and our on-site work was featured, since we still shoot large-format film



Lotfi and his family. Chicago House. January 29, 2017. Photo by Ray Johnson

as well as digital photography. The documentary aired on Wednesday, March 8, 2017, and is available for viewing here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIMASD5io8E>

Finally, I was pleased to give an OI Members' Lecture on June 7, 2017, in Breasted Hall about the current work of Chicago House and the new technologies that are assisting our team in the field. This lecture is now available for viewing online:

<https://youtu.be/T-pDr7hGUKg>

THE CHICAGO HOUSE TEAM

The Epigraphic Survey professional staff this season, besides the director, Ray Johnson, consisted of J. Brett McClain as senior epigrapher; Jen Kimpton and Christina Di Cerbo as epigraphers; Jonathan Winnerman as student epigrapher; Boyo Ockinga and Susanne Binder as archaeologist/epigraphers; Margaret De Jong and Susan Osgood as senior artists; Krisztián Vértés and Keli Alberts as artists; Dominique Navarro as artist-in-training; Julia Schmied as blockyard supervisor; Jay Heidel as architect/artist/data manager; Yarko Kobylecky as chief staff photographer; Owen Murray and Hilary McDonald as photographers; Susan Lezon as photo archivist and photographer; Elinor Smith as photo archives registrar and photography assistant; Carlotta Maher as assistant to the director; Essam El Sayed as finance manager; Samir Guindy as administrator; Samwell Maher as assistant administrator; Anait Helmholtz as head librarian and Medinet Habu blockyard assistant; Gina Salama as librarian assistant and Luxor Temple blockyard assistant; Martina Roshdy Maher as librarian assistant; Frank Helmholtz as master mason; Johannes Weninger as mason; Lotfi K. Hassan as Medinet Habu conservation supervisor; Hany Diab, Safaa El Nuby, Al Azab Ahmed, Nehad Badry, Skina Oraby, Magda Hagag, Anhar Hassan, Doaa Abdel Aty, Fatma Ahmed, Neema Ahmed, Hala Handaka, Doaa Sadek, Samar Ibrahim, and Manar Hagag as Medinet Habu conservators; and Hiroko Kariya as Luxor Temple conservator. Alain and Emmanuelle Arnaudière worked on the Chicago House Digital Archives database. Special thanks must go to Nadine Moeller and Gregory Marouard for sharing their wisdom and assistance with our archaeological work. And sincerest thanks must go to our forty, year-round Egyptian workmen, the core of the house and temple staff, our family in Luxor.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is with sadness that I acknowledge the passing of our dear friend and colleague May Trad in Beirut, Lebanon, on December 8, 2016. May was Chicago House librarian when I started work in 1978, and she remained a close friend of Chicago House when she went on to serve as librarian at the American Research Center in Egypt, and from 1982 at the Egyptian Museum as assistant to the director. For all who knew her, May was larger than life, her enthusiasm for Egyptian history and art totally infectious, and her encouragement and support beyond measure. She was one in a billion, and we miss her immensely.

Sincerest thanks to the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities and the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA), Minister of Antiquities Dr. Khaled el-Enany and all of our friends and colleagues in Egypt for another productive collaboration this season. Sincerest thanks as well to the many friends of the Oriental Institute whose generous support allows Chicago House to maintain its documentation, conservation, and restoration programs in Luxor. We are enormously grateful to the OI Publications Office managing editor Tom Urban, editor Charissa Johnson, and assistant editor Alexandra Cornacchia for their magic touch with this *Bulletin*; you guys are the best. Special thanks must go to USAID Egypt for the four-year grant that now supports a major new restoration and site development effort at Medinet Habu. Sincerest thanks must also go the RBF for their support of the Ramesses III southern well conservation project during the last two years. Blessings and sincerest thanks to all!

— **Ray Johnson**, Director, Epigraphic Survey

If you are planning a trip to Luxor and would like to stop by and see our work and the Chicago House facility, please contact us in advance to determine the best time for a meeting. Chicago House is open from October 15 until April 15 each year and is closed Saturday afternoons and Sundays. To arrange a visit during the season, please contact the Oriental Institute Membership Office at 773.834.9777, or contact me, Epigraphic Survey director Ray Johnson, directly at: wr-johnson@uchicago.edu

Please see the facing page for our contact information in Egypt and Chicago.

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Chicago House local and professional staff, 2016-2017. Photo by Sue Lezon and Yarko Kobylecky

SUPPORT THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY AND CHICAGO HOUSE

The Epigraphic Survey relies heavily on tax-deductible private and corporate contributions and grants to support its continued efforts to preserve the cultural heritage of ancient Egypt through documentation and conservation.

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For further information on contributions to the Epigraphic Survey and the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, please contact the Oriental Institute Development Office at 773.702.5062 or visit oi-development@uchicago.edu

ADDRESSES OF THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY

October through March:

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Arab Republic of EGYPT
TEL: (011) (20) (95) 237-2525
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April through September:

The Oriental Institute
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The Epigraphic Survey home page is located at:

<http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/projects/epigraphic-survey>



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Mohamed and brother Mahmoud shaping sandstone slabs for the southern walkway. Medinet Habu. Photo by Ray Johnson