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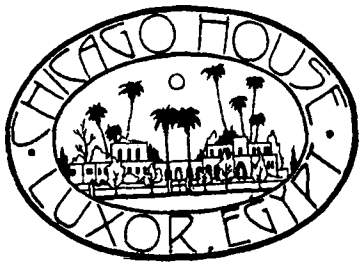

CHICAGO HOUSE BULLETIN

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FIFTH ANNUAL FOCH TOUR

From March 8th to the 11th of this year, the Epigraphic Survey played host to forty-eight guests who temporarily transplanted themselves from civilized Cairo to the hinterlands of the luxurious Jolie-Ville Hotel in Luxor. As in past years, the fifth annual Friends of Chicago House tour of Upper Egypt packed a full schedule of events into four days, with visits both to well-known monuments and to sites that are seldom visited by or accessible to tourists. (The following synopsis of the weekend events is punctuated by some specific reminiscences of staff members!)

This year's collection of Friends proved to be an especially lively group, who were not at all slowed down by a delayed flight from Cairo on the first day of the weekend festivities. After a buffet lunch at Chicago House, everyone toured through the library, artists' studios, and darkroom for a close look at the current projects of the Survey and personal chats with the staff members. Next, a tour of Luxor Temple familiarized the group with the present venue for our epigraphic work. While Peter Dorman took first-comers through the temple for a general introduction to the architecture, Ray Johnson held a seminar on the block fragments from the Colonnade Hall, showing how their reassembly on paper will permit the reconstruction of the decoration of the missing upper walls.

Dinner that evening at the Hilton was enlivened by the drawing of a special doorprize: a dawn ride in the Hilton's hot-air balloon over the ruins of ancient Thebes. The winners came from opposite ends of our "guest spectrum": Ron and Ann Wolfe, long-time residents of Cairo and charter members of the Cairo FOCH, and Celia von Bernuth, paying her very first trip to Egypt with her father, Rudy. (High winds unfortunately prevented the balloon from taking off as scheduled, and the von Bernuths donated their rides to the CH staff for use later!)

March 9th opened with a ferry ride to the west bank of the Nile and a tour through the royal tomb of Ramesses IV by John Darnell. A climb over the great cliffs above the Valley of the Kings brought the FOCH group down to the funerary temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el Bahri.

> Having listened to me go on about Netherworld Books, fire-spitting cobras, slamming doors, and screaming guardian-demons in the tomb of Ramesses IV, the FOCH tour members walked silently through the "Path of the Ways of Shu," out of the tomb and into the mid-morning light. We had descended through the caverns of the Netherworld, seen the ram-headed corpse of the sun god rejuvenated (described somewhat melodramatically by me), and were on our way to climb the Western horizon, the cliff above and behind Deir el Bahri.

(continued on page 2)

PHOTO ARCHIVE GRANT FROM THE GETTY

As visitors to Chicago House are often informed on their tours through the library, the photographic archives are one of the precious research tools housed in facilities of the Epigraphic Survey. At present the archive consists of a collection of over 15,000 negatives taken in the course of the last sixty-six seasons of work in the Luxor area, as well as some 20,000 prints, all of which are available to visiting scholars to consult in their search for information on the monuments of ancient Thebes.

The negatives have been made by a large number of photographers hired by the Survey, and come in a variety of materials: glass, nitrate film, early safety-base film, and (more recently) stable acetate film. Another important group of over 800 glass negatives was purchased in the spring of 1987, and these plates provide views of Egypt that date much earlier than our own presence in Luxor.

Because the house is sealed every summer during the hottest months of the year, these negatives have been subject to extreme storage conditions. For many years it has been recognized that the more fragile early films were deteriorating at an alarming rate—and some present a potential fire hazard. Because the tombs and temples around Luxor have suffered the inevitable ravages of an expanding population and a changing environment since 1924, the destruction of these images from the early decades of the Survey's work would mean a truly irreplaceable loss for scholarship.

Last summer Carlotta Maher and field director Peter Dorman paid a visit to the headquarters of the Getty Grant Program in Santa Monica, one of the six major branches of the J. Paul Getty Trust, and there met with Dr. Deborah Marrow, director of the program. We were given a very cordial reception and were encouraged to submit a proposal for funding. Only six months later, in November of last year, the Getty Grant Program announced its award of $139,000 to the Epigraphic Survey to conserve the photo archives at Chicago House by duplicating the deteriorating negatives and improving their archival storage. In the next three years, the funds from Getty will enable the Survey to salvage these endangered images and store them properly for future generations of scholars. Duplicates of endangered negatives will also be brought back to the Oriental Institute for separate housing in Chicago. Eventually, a computerized catalogue of the Chicago House archival holdings will be produced and disseminated to universities and libraries of Egyptological studies.

Photographer Susan Lezon has already begun the task of duplicating discolored or crumbling films, and Di Grodzins (a docent at the Oriental Institute in Chicago) and Ellie Smith (a volunteer at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New

(continued on page 4)

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FOCH Tour 1990 *(continued from p. 1)*

We started up the winding path just beyond the tomb of Sety I, passed numerous tourists haggling for and falling off indifferent donkeys, and were soon at the rim of the cliff. Below, Hatshepsut's terraced temple emerged from the cliff face, like the cow of Hathor emerging from the western hills. While taking in this panorama, this vista, looking off from the heights of the desert chaos into the black earth of Egypt and order, and trying to continue in our reverie—shouts of "ANTIKA" roared through the hills. Fast-walking, fast-talking purveyors of horrific tourist incunabula were soon talking turkey everywhere. Tom Granger, cut off from the bulk of the group, enjoyed the constant attention of a particularly persistent child. Tom kept walking, jovially saying "la" and "imshi"--correct words, wrong tone of voice. Soon Tom's companion peeled off to join another squadron forming up and turning back to set upon the next wave of kitsch-needy tourists. (—John Darnell)

The two highlights at Deir el Bahri were the open-air upper terrace of the temple, closed for years to tourists, and the subterranean tomb of Hatshepsut's favorite official, Senenmut, a chamber incised with gem-like vignettes and funerary texts. After lunch at the Ramesseum rest house (packed by Kathy Dorman, Carol Meyer, Sue Osgood, Tina Di Cerbo, and Myrna Piccione), a jovial donkey ride carried FOCH and staff through the ancient village of Deir el Medina, home of the workmen who carved and decorated the royal tombs, then over to Medinet Habu, the mortuary temple of Ramesses III. Richard explained the layout of the great temple (the first monument ever recorded by the Epigraphic Survey) and Peter toured the group through the chapels and grounds of the nearby small temple of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III (where Chicago House will next shift its operations).

Saturday, March 10th, was reserved for a day trip to the Ptolemaic temple of Hathor at Dendera, beginning with a bus ride through the Egyptian landscape, past vibrant green fields and *shaduf* irrigation devices that can be traced to pharaonic times. John and Richard guided the Friends through the exterior grounds and beautifully carved interior rooms of the temple, and the windblown view from the roof was a favorite spot for shutterbugs. Another picnic lunch was consumed at a nearby cafeteria (grandiosely but appropriately named for the Ptolemaic queen Cleopatra), while bargain hunters bartered for the colored cotton scarves for which Dendera is famous. In the late afternoon on the way back to the hotel, the group wended their way along narrow roads to see the ruined temple of Medamud, several kilometers north of Luxor and seldom seen by tourists.

Not all Egyptian temples are as magnificent as Karnak, and our last stop on the FOCH tour was a modest, but picturesque, ruin: the remains of the temple of Montu

(continued on page 3)

AMENHOTEP SLEPT HERE!

In the 1989-90 field season, more than 1,066 visitors passed thru the gates of Chicago House. Most of these individuals were tourists who had arranged to view the library and hear about the work of the Epigraphic Survey. The remainder were Egyptologists engaged in fieldwork in the area who needed to consult the library and the photo archives. In addition to these visitors, over the course of the six-month season, 27 guests remained overnight at the house for a total of 246 "guest-nights." Traditionally, professional Egyptologists working on projects approved by the Egyptian Antiquities Organization are eligible to stay for short durations at Chicago House, if space is available.

This past season, due to a large staff, only a few rooms were available, and even those on an irregular basis. For those who are curious about the quality of the accommodation, it can be rated as "basic hotel." Still, the water is hot (usually!) and the dinner conversation lively.

Among the guests that Chicago House played host to this season was the Cambridge Tomb Project, led by Drs. Nigel and Helen Strudwick, who were excavating and documenting four private tombs in Western Thebes. For two days, Dr. and Mrs. Richard Fazzini of the Brooklyn Museum Mut Temple Project visited while their own dig house was made ready at East Karnak (their Land Rover, however, remained longer to be repaired by Chicago House's mechanic).

In February, the staff of Chicago House enjoyed the visit of Dr. and Mrs. Daniel Boorstin, Librarian of Congress Emeritus. Before arriving in Luxor, Dr. Boorstin represented the United States in Aswan at the international commission for the re-establishment of the Alexandria Library. Hence, he was full of informative stories about the dignitaries and the goals and ideals of the commission. At the same time, Dr. Jason Thompson of the American University in Cairo stayed at Chicago House while tracing the life and movements of Sir Gardiner Wilkinson, an Egyptologist who lived in Luxor in the eighteenth century. Dr. Thompson's enviable project had him literally tracing Wilkinson's footsteps through Western Thebes, where the remains of the latter's house still stand.

Dr. Eugene Cruz-Uribe spent one week at the house while examining unpublished texts and architectural details in nearby temples of the Greek and Roman Periods, as part of his Hibis Temple Project. Some of our staff found time to accompany him on inspections of the Temples of Edfu, El-Kab and Armant.

The highlight of the guest season was the two-week visit of the newly appointed Director of the Oriental Institute, Dr. William Sumner and his wife, Kit, who came to learn more about the methods of the Survey. As it turned out, Dr. Sumner was no stranger to Chicago House, having previously stayed overnight three years ago while on business for the NEH. The climax of the Sumners' visit was a lively and well-attended reception in Cairo at the residence of the American Ambassador, H.E. Frank G. Wisner, and his wife, Christine. END

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FOCH TOUR 1991

The sixth annual Friends of Chicago House (FOCH) Archaeological Tour to Upper Egypt is scheduled for February 14-18, 1991. A new twist will be added to the itinerary, as the group will travel to Luxor by train, in a specially reserved first-class overnight car, departing on the evening of Valentine's Day and arriving the next morning for an early head-start to the touring. Because many past FOCH travelers have wished some free time to enjoy the luxurious recreational facilities at the Jolie-Ville, there will be **nothing** scheduled for the first afternoon, to permit some relaxation around the pool for those who desire.

The itinerary in Luxor itself is not yet cast in cement, but will provide, as in past years, visits to the major monuments of ancient Thebes with sites that are less often seen by tourists, or otherwise inaccessible. One day will also be reserved for a bus trip outside of town—both for variety and for a chance to enjoy the local countryside. The ever-popular donkey ride on the West Bank has become *de rigueur*, so next year's participants should expect a repeat; and the black-tie gala in the courtyard of the residence, with hors d'oeuvres catered by the Hilton and dancing under the stars, may become an annual tradition as well. A more detailed schedule of events will be published in a forthcoming issue of the *Bulletin*, with instructions as to how to reserve places for the Presidents' Weekend excursion. END

FOCH Tour 1990 *(continued from p. 2)*

at Medamud. This site, located a few kilometers north of Luxor, showed us how important it is to make "dry runs." Peter, John, and I visited Medamud two days before the tour and realized, to our chagrin, that there was no way a large tourist bus coud make the corners along the narrow country lanes. A quick change in plans, and three minivans were substituted for our mammoth bus. While there is little preserved in situ, the temple, situated between a modern village and the green cultivation, nevertheless communicates, to an usual degree, a sense of the distant past. Unlike at Karnak or Luxor, one can walk about without having to fight mobs of disheartened or exhausted tourists. This is not to say a trip to the temple is a lonely affair. Our arrival attracted a large flock of children, but they were not unfriendly, being rather amused by this sudden invasion of "khawagas." Throughout our visit we were also accompanied by the village donkeys, goats, and dogs, all carrying on their daily business. As we wandered past the ruins, the late afternoon light cast shadows through the standing columns and fallen blocks. (—Richard Jasnow)

The evening witnessed what must be considered a first in the history of the Epigraphic Survey: a black-tie gala, with dancing and hot hors-d'oeuvres catered by the Hilton. As a full moon beamed from above, the crowd of party-goers thronged the dining room for shrimp and meatballs—and later the residence courtyard for elbow room to dance. The final event of the night: a group picture, choreographed by Sue Lezon, of the entire gang in their finery.

The last morning, March 11th, dawned early for those who wished to watch the sunrise over the First Pylon of Karnak.

Now that it is over, we can admit that we were expecting only eight diehard photographers to appear at 5:15 AM for the early morning light—and we were hoping to take them to Chicago House for breakfast afterward. Plans changed quickly when thirty-two FOCH people streamed out of the hotel, and to accommodate the mob Carlotta Maher was forced to hijack a nearby minivan that strayed a little too close to her. In the meantime, I was at the temple, waking up Dr. Sayed el-Hegazy, the chief inspector of Karnak, who quite happily located the key for us and let us into the dark stairways leading to the top of the pylon. After mounting the stairs, we all clung to the top of the pylon doorway like cliff birds finding a place to roost, and the air began to brighten around us. Coffee was passed out in cups to fend off the cool air, and the red-orange sun finally rose in the east, with the colossal ruins spread below at our feet. Only a few murmurs and the clashing of camera shutters broke the silence. (—Peter Dorman)

The morning tour of Karnak Temple was led by Peter Piccione, whose energetic description of the site did much to put the temple into historical perspective. Then, after a quick check-out at the Jolie-Ville, our visitors were driven downtown to enjoy the noise and color of the annual festival of Abu'l Haggag, the Moslem saint whose mosque still stands in the first court of Luxor temple.

For weeks Luxor had been gearing up for the festival. Appliqueéd fabric tents went up over the stalls in the suq. Vendors set up around town to sell handmade hats, noise-makers, and horns, as well as special sweets, nuts, and lots of neon plastic toys. While we worked in the temple, music and announcements played over loudspeakers, as midways of colorful handcrafted carousel horses, boat swings, and popcorn gun targets were assembled in the nearby park. Each day before sunset, horsemanship tournaments were held on the outskirts of town, as crowds gathered to watch riders handle their mounts at breakneck speed. In the evenings we could hear Koranic singers in the distance.

On the final day of the festival, people lined the streets to watch the procession wend its way through town. Although we weren't sure of the route the parade would take, the FOCH bus arrived at the Winter Palace Hotel just in time to see the head of the procession pass by. There were elements of both modern and ancient: Toyota trucks filled with men dancing and singing; camels decorated with

(continued on page 4)

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FOCH Tour 1990 *(continued from p. 3)*

flowers and scarves and laden with swaying, appliqueéd tents (representing sheikhs' tombs); and at last came the horse-drawn chariot of the pharaoh and the famous boats. Two rows of men hauled the bark of Abu'l Haggag, leaning and pulling on the ropes almost as if they had emerged from the scenes of the Opet Festival in Luxor Temple. The energy and excitement gradually waned as the procession wound its way back to the mosque, and the crowds dispersed for yet another year. (—Susan Osgood)

The afternoon ended with a special viewing of the statues found last year in the Luxor Temple cachette, courtesy of the director of the Luxor Museum, Mrs. Madeleine Yassa. As people drifted back to Chicago House from the museum, the festival, and the local suqs, a final buffet was offered; and at last, the bus pulled away from our gates, carrying the FOCH group off to the airport for a late flight home. END

Getty Grant *(continued from p. 1)*

York) have spent many weeks this season monitoring the condition of the remaining negatives and beginning the methodical process of rehousing them in archival sleeves and boxes. Thanks are also due to two other "volunteers of opportunity," who not only pitched in to the archival work but brightened our hours of leisure as well: Susan Johnson of Cairo and Charlie Secchia of Rome. To them we owe a special debt of gratitude, and look forward to the successful completion of this vital project. END

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