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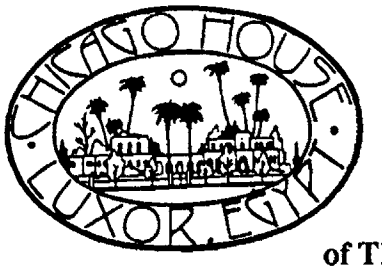

CHICAGO HOUSE BULLETIN

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THE 1990-1991 SEASON AT CHICAGO HOUSE

By Peter Dorman, Field Director

While the last two issues of the *Bulletin* contained articles which have described the unexpected ways in which this winter's Gulf crisis impinged on our lives and work in Luxor, the present article relates the progress of the Epigraphic Survey this last season, giving a thorough account of our professional activities. On March 31, 1991, after six months in the field, the Epigraphic Survey completed its sixty-seventh season, during which time the focus of work was, once again, the Colonnade Hall at Luxor Temple. The season was memorable in several ways, not only for the outbreak of hostilities in the Gulf, but for the formal commencement of our next project of documentation: the small temple of Amun at Medinet Habu, located in the Survey's original concession of 1924.

As in past years, the reliefs of the Opet festival, carved on the long side walls of the Colonnade Hall, were our primary target. While artists tended to concentrate on specific areas of the Hall, in order to achieve consistency in adjacent drawings, the Survey epigraphers (Richard Jasnow, John and Debbie Darnell, and I) ranged more freely over all portions of the monument during the task of collation, so that each could become more accustomed to the full range of epigraphic challenges, including exposure to carved and sunk relief, Ramesside and Ptolemaic styles of carving and pigmentation, the iconography of divine barks, compositional parallels for bark processions and "crowd scenes", and a variety of textual material.

Carol Meyer and Susan Osgood concentrated on the yet-undocumented scenes of the Opet procession located on the west wall: the portable barks of the Theban triad (Amun, Mut, and Khonsu) at rest in Karnak Temple; the ceremonial emergence of the barks from Karnak, carried on the shoulders of priests; and their triumphant arrival on the quay at Luxor. All the drawings for the last two scenes, executed at a scale of 1:6, were approved for publication, and the completion of the west wall is assured next year.

The reliefs that represent the homeward journey of the divine barks from Luxor back to Karnak are located on the east wall of the Colonnade. Portions of the waterborne procession, in which the portable barks are shown sailing downstream on riverine barges, are in the process of recollation, to ensure adherence to artists' conventions and to add information that can be gleaned from early photographs of the Hall, in particular those of Georges Daressy, taken after the Colonnade was first excavated in 1892, and Friedrich Koch, taken in 1913. This task of the final correction of old drawings is being undertaken by Tina Di Cerbo and Jay Heidel. The final two scenes of the

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WHERE CULTURES COLLIDE: THE CHICAGO HOUSE KITCHENS

By Kathy Dorman

Throughout the nearly seventy years that Chicago House has been functioning, it has been the custom for the director's wife to assume the duties of house manager. In that respect, Peter and I are traditional. Managing the household, with necessary emphasis on the kitchen, comes naturally to me, in that we've always entertained a good deal. There are some significant differences, however, between being a homemaker in the States and running the kitchen at Chicago House. Instead of cooking meals by myself, there are six kitchen men who will do the work—provided I can extend my limited Arabic to making my needs clear. The available equipment and supplies are a real departure from America as well. Although the management of kitchen routine is not especially time consuming under normal circumstances, 'normal circumstances' is rarely the prevailing condition. The kitchen at Chicago House guarantees an unpredictable mix of frustration and hilarity.

Blessedly, breakfast is a standard meal. At such an early hour the kitchen staff, like many of the Americans in the dining room at 6:45 AM, are on a kind of automatic pilot. The butlers can predict with a high degree of accuracy what each of us wants for breakfast, and respond with an indulgent glare when we request something out of the ordinary.

My work really begins when the breakfast dishes are being cleared away. Each morning at 7:30 I stride through the swinging doors at the end of the dining room into the kitchen. The cooks and kitchen helpers exchange hearty 'good mornings' with me. These salutations are necessarily noisy, because the kitchen is probably eighty feet long, and one of the cooks is fairly deaf. Before I discuss the daily menus, I rifle through the butler's refrigerator and shift supplies from the nearby freezer, stirring about in stockpiles of soda bottles, butter, and eggs, taking note of what remains and what has been consumed. After a satisfactory show has been made (it is helpful if everyone knows I know what's on hand!), I proceed to inspect leftovers with our cooks, and tell them what to prepare for lunch and dinner.

There is a moment of tension when meal orders begin. The nervousness is in anticipation of how many people will be at lunch and dinner. If the number is low, due to staff members being away, there is a nod of relief from the elderly heads at the counter. If we're having guests, the inflated number is heard with sad shrugs of resignation and thanks for Allah's favor. The cooks are well past retirement age, and they're also pretty good actors.

Our cooks have worked at Chicago House for decades, preparing fairly bland American-style dishes for succeeding

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west wall, depicting the entry of the barks at the monumental Third Pylon of Karnak Temple and Tutankhamun presenting offerings to the Theban triad in their sanctuaries, are being drawn by Carol, Sue, and Ray Johnson at reduced scales of 1:6 and 1:5. While a great deal of collation work was accomplished on the east wall, final approval of the results must await next season.

Recollations of the reliefs of the facade and the second register scenes of the Colonnade Hall were begun this year, as well as work on the north doorjamb thicknesses decorated by Seti II, with Tina assigned as artist. One happy result was the retrieval of the backside of a figure of Mut-Bastet, badly obscured by the masonry of the later doorway of Philip Arrhidaeus. Corrections were also made by Ray and Tina for three more of the offering scenes on the colossal columns of the Colonnade Hall, and a fourth was half-finished as well.

The registration of block fragments from the missing portions of the Colonnade continued as well. Three hundred forty-six new fragments were identified and registered, of which over one hundred sixty were photographed by Danny Lanka early in the season. Due to our unexpected shortage of photographers, Ray took extensive reference photography on 35mm film of the more important fragments, including many that are stored in the western antiquities magazine of Luxor Temple. The ever-increasing number of stones prompted the Survey to build two new mastabas behind the temple, both equipped with damp courses to keep the fragments isolated from high ground water. These stones continue to yield information on the decorative scheme of the vanished portions of the Colonnade, particularly the uppermost registers that contain a series of large offering scenes. This season, Ray pasted together the first joined fragment groups for drawing and collation, all of which belong to the Opet festival, and these groups were subsequently pencilled by Ray, Jay, and Tina. When approved for publication, the drawings will eventually be "floated" into their original positions over the appropriate sections of the standing walls of the temple, thus reconstructing on paper the context of Tutankhamun's Opet festival twelve centuries after its systematic destruction by local inhabitants hungry for building stone.

In a process that occurs relatively infrequently, the Survey formally initiated the epigraphic method on a new project: the small temple of Amun at Medinet Habu, located within the funerary complex of Ramesses III, the first concession of Chicago House. A few scenes from the temple of Amun were drawn by Survey artists in the 1930's and the early 1980's, and as preliminary materials these are supplemented by careful hand copies compiled during the last decade by the epigraphic staff. Much of the existing photography for the temple is inadequate for drawing purposes, however, and in the first weeks of the season Danny began the task of completing the planning photography at the temple, the crucial first step in the epigraphic process. Due to the intrusion of the Gulf war, planning photography was suspended before it was fairly begun, and this task will remain a priority for next season. During the winter in Chicago, however, Danny was able to complete all of the 1:10 planning photographs for the painted chapels, in preparation for artists' work next season, and he also printed negatives of certain historic albumin prints from the Chicago House archives.

Unluckily, with the loss of two photographers during the second half of the season, due to restrictions on overseas travel, Sue Lezon was forced to curtail her supervision of the conservation of the photo archives, which is being funded by a special grant from the J. Paul Getty Trust, and turn her attention entirely to the needs of the expedition. Sixteen artists' drawings were bleached and twenty-one others blueprinted during the season; numerous drawing enlargements were produced for the artists; and thirty-five approved drawings were given final photography and carried back to the Oriental Institute in April.

Despite a lack of professional photographers and certain materials that could not be shipped to Luxor, a great deal was

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Reminder:

THE FRIENDS OF CHICAGO HOUSE TOUR 1991

November 27-December 1, 1991

Highlights:

- **Thanksgiving Gala Dinner**
- **trek up Thoth Mountain**
- **visit to Gebel el-Silsila**
- **shopping in the suq**
- **black-tie ball**
- **the Great Annual Donkey Ride!**

For information or an itinerary, contact:

In Egypt: **Ellen and Tom Granger**
c/o American Research Center in Egypt
2 Midan Kasr al-Dubara
Garden City, Cairo
355-3052

In the U.S.: **The Epigraphic Survey**
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accomplished in the photo archives, thanks to the willing assistance of several visitors. Sue continued the cleaning and printing of negatives in the Habachi archives and in the special glass plate collection, and the images were later identified by Dr. Henri Riad and John Darnell. We were especially delighted to have our friends Jean and Helen Jacquet for two weeks as working guests in the archives, classifying prints and several thousand slides from the Habachi collection according to site location. Similarly, our colleague Eberhard Dziobek spent several days identifying Habachi slides of Theban tombs and discussing drawing conventions with the artists. Ellie Smith, assisted for three weeks by Charlie Secchia, and Di Grodzins provided invaluable assistance in completing the housing of the photo archives, numbering negatives, and inventorying the lantern slides and supplies. Ellie made a superb start on the computerization of the photo archive data base (an integral part of the Getty grant), which reached 5,071 entries before the end of the year, and we were also very fortunate to have Sarah Bevington as a working visitor for three weeks, who began computer entries on a separate registry of our 35mm film.

The weather provided us with the most unwelcome shock of the year. Unusual torrential rains on New Year's Eve and on March 21 soaked the Luxor area for several hours, leaving standing pools of water, washed-out roads in desert areas, and flooded homes in town. Chicago House suffered very little damage from the downpour, but within hours of the two storms vast expanses of salt crystals began to form at the tops of exposed temple walls. For future reference, Sue Lezon and I documented the damage in Luxor Temple on film and videotape. The damage to the Luxor blockyard, where the stone fragments are stored on mastabas, was especially frightening. Protected from groundwater but not from the freakish assault from above, the blocks began oozing black waste water and some started to dissolve into powder under the impact of raindrops. Conservation of the fragments—and the construction of some sort of shelter over the mastabas—will be a major priority for next season.

Richard and Debbie ran the library operations this season, with 219 new accessions made this year; total holdings reached 15,978. In order to accommodate an ever-increasing influx of scholarly publications—especially in the areas of journals, series, museum catalogues, and archaeology—new shelving was added throughout the library and the books were shifted on a grand scale to take advantage of the extra space. The classification of journals, periodicals, and monographs was reconsidered, and these volumes were reorganized and relabeled. Once again, our colleague, May Trad, kindly came to Chicago House at the end of the season to organize the volumes that required binding and prepare them for shipment to Cairo.

For much of the season, the affairs of the kitchen and household were in Kathy Dorman's hands, including the elaborate preparations or the FOCH tour that was cancelled at the last minute. Peter Piccione, managing the house in her

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Cultures Collide *(continued from p. 1)*

generations of staffers. Although the list of dishes they can prepare tastes pretty repetitious after several months have gone by, the absence of prepared or imported ingredients guarantees that our food is fresh. The passing of the seasons imposes its own variety—a mixed blessing when beets or strawberries appear in the suq, depending on your preferences. We tend to make an embarrassing show of deprivation when a visitor graces us with a box of Grapenuts or a jar of stateside peanut butter.

I give the meal requests in Arabic. Our senior cook translates to his partner, who stands at his side, but whose hearing is poor. On days when the head cook is off, we've had occasional gaffes. Like the day I asked for chicken and he made eggplant. It is at this time that our senior butler, Shafei (who has been with Chicago House so long he's almost clairvoyant), may or may not step in the clarify things. He carefully protects the well-known secret that he understands a lot of English. He usually orbits just out of conversation's distance, stashing tea pots and enjoying any communication breakdown we're having. He loves it when my "sixteen" sounds like "60,"or I say "egg" for "cold."

Always of interest is the extrication of frozen meat from one of several freezers. This is usually undertaken by at least two, often three of us, involving random hacking with ice picks and butcher knives. I freeze the meat from the suq in one kilo lumps, even though it often arrives in huge hunks from the butcher. While this was an unpopular change, it foils the previously favored practice of thawing a four-kilo filet to make spaghetti sauce for twelve people.

Next I lead a procession to a locked closet where we store staples. I monitor supplies needed for the day, coffee, tea, flour, sugar, oil, using all my brain and acting skills to allow an appropriate amount to be taken. Experience is teaching me slowly how to supply our kitchen sufficiently without also stocking the cooks' private larders and still maintain a friendly, professional relationship. I find a lot of excuses during the day to visit the kitchen, ostensibly just to shout hello or try to locate our kids.

American staff members often bake or prepare special dishes to offer some variety. I make bread often, but have learned from experience to let the cooks do the actual baking. The range they bake on is old, temperamental, and quaint to the point of being dangerous. Having the wicks too high on a kerosene stove is a sooty lesson I'm unwilling to risk a second time. Given the primitive nature of most of the equipment, it's quite a tribute to our cooks that birthday cakes come in three perfect layers, the French fries are unsurpassed and there are no pits in our orange juice.

I've had a few qualified successes getting our cooks to make new foods. Just halving the oil in the moussaka was a major, and probably temporary, coup. Less ephemeral was the introduction of garlic into almost all the soup we eat. Suggesting garlic clearly struck a chord with them. They'll cook young zucchini 'al dente,' instead of the traditional 'boiled to obliv-

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absence, coordinated the considerable financial, personnel and supply activities for the Survey with efficiency and skill, and designed and initiated the new database for the photo archive.

Jill Carlotta Maher once again led our development efforts, a number of which were canceled this winter in Egypt due to the effects of war. The highlight was certainly the gala reception thrown in honor of Chicago House in February by Ambassador and Mrs. Wisner at their Zamalek residence, to which many of the Survey's Cairo supporters came.

In just a few weeks we will be heading out once again for a new season in Luxor, anticipating both the field work ahead and the unexpected events that invariably enliven our year overseas. In view of the dearth of tourism in Egypt last winter, we especially look forward to a normal flow of visitors through our library this year, and to meeting some new friends who will again carry our mail back to the United States! **END**

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ion'—if I stand by them the whole time, that is. So much for nouvelle cuisine.

As long as patience and humor remain intact, running the kitchen at Chicago House is pretty entertaining. But I'll admit to relishing our return to the States, where we have almost no fires in the kitchen, no kerosene in tins under each table leg (to keep out the ants), and no bleach requirement on the spinach. **END**

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