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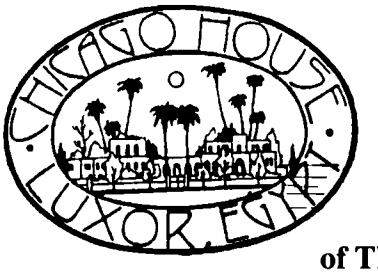

CHICAGO HOUSE BULLETIN

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THE 1993-1994 SEASON AT CHICAGO HOUSE

By Peter Dorman, Field Director

The 1993-1994 field season, which marked the seventieth year of the Epigraphic Survey, opened on October 15th and ended on April 1st of the following year. The major achievements this year were the completion of epigraphic work on all remaining areas of the Colonnade Hall in Luxor Temple, bringing to a close many years of field work at that monument, as well as continued progress on the documentation of the small temple of Amun at Medinet Habu.

The Renovation

The summer of 1993 proved to be one of the most eventful periods for the Chicago House renovation, involving in part the expansion and partial conversion of the library building, which is the nerve center of our research and our scholarly resources. To assist in overseeing the work, James Riley and Sue Lezon returned to Luxor for the two brutally hot months of July and August, and I joined them there for ten days for a first-hand look at the ongoing construction. The roof of the new library hall was poured on July 14th, and the remainder of the construction and finishing work took just three months. During this time, new floors were laid throughout the ground floor of the residence as well; the exterior walls of all buildings were stripped of their old plaster and resurfaced with a more durable finish; the walkways and driveways were repaved; and the darkroom was fitted with custom-built stainless sinks, improved lighting and ventilation, and double-wired outlets that supply both 110v and 220v power for equipment brought from home or purchased locally. The logistics of making the buildings completely accessible to the contractors, of protecting our furniture and equipment over the summer, and of preparing the new facilities for a returning staff were again left to the incomparable organizing talents of Tina Di Cerbo and Richard Jasnow, and it is largely due to their hard work and coordination that the Survey was able to begin field work in October as scheduled.

The library at Chicago House is now housed in two broad halls, with almost double the floor space and shelving of the old. The original hall, built in 1930, has been returned to its original appearance, with only the addition of badly needed fluorescent lights along the perimeter: the hall is again lined with its gray-green metal bookcases that reach up to meet a long-concealed curved molding, and its French ceramic arabesque plaques are clearly visible on the walls. The new hall imitates the architecture of the old, with a ten-meter ceiling (a passive air conditioning measure), towering false arches, and high windows for natural light. Filled with beige metal bookcases to maximize shelf space, the new room also holds seven readers' tables and is adorned by the original art-deco alcove rescued from the demolition of the old building and carefully reconstructed in its new position. Grading and landscaping of the grounds added the final touch to the renovation, and within a year or two the gardens and climbing vines of Chicago House should look well established. Eighteen months of construction came to an end in mid-December, remarkably on target for a project with extremely tight scheduling stipulations. The success of the project owes much to the daily supervision of the work by Engineer Ahmed el-Refaei, the site supervisor from Bechtel Egypt who rendered such dedicated service to us, as well the great personal interest taken in the construction by Mr. Ashraf Ghonima, General Manager of Bechtel Egypt, and Mr. Sami Saad, president of the general contracting company. We are grateful to them all.

The Field Work

Field work at Luxor Temple revealed one or two interesting surprises as the last checks were made to the drawings that will be published in a second volume on the Colonnade Hall, which will include the decoration of the facade of the hall, the great northern portal, the upper registers, the colossal columns, their architraves, and the graffiti and marginal inscriptions.

Epigraphers Richard Jasnow and John Darnell worked in particular with artist Ray Johnson on the wooden scaffolding erected against the Colonnade Hall facade, finalizing decisions concerning the traces of the original 18th Dynasty relief still visible there, beneath the later recarving by Ramesses II. Together with Ray, artists Tina Di Cerbo and Margaret De Jong pencilled and inked the sixty-five facade fragments, which will be fitted into a proposed reconstruction of the original decorative scheme. It was of considerable interest to discover that the western side of the facade, demolished almost to ground level during the medieval period for the reuse of its stone, displays the same kind of Greek graffiti that is to be found on the better preserved eastern side, and in the same respective place: above the roof line of the Ramesside court, but within convenient reach of early visitors whiling away their time by scratching inscriptions into the stone. Perhaps the most intriguing of these Greek graffiti, preserved now only on a fragment of carved relief, reads "a proskynema to the king of the world (kosmos)"; incised across the huge double plumes of Amun-Re, these words probably refer to the god's common epithet, *nb pt*, "lord of heaven," and represent an homage to him.

A Coptic graffito, located on the eastern side of the great northern portal and first recorded by the Survey several years ago, has now been recognized to contain an indiction number, a type of chronological reckoning based on fifteen-year cycles beginning in the early 4th century A.D. Its location is of extreme interest: the inner thickness of the portal in a place where stone has been stripped away for reuse, but very close to the level at which the gradually rising ground level halted the stone robbing. If this inscription can be dated by internal evidence, we will have a very good idea of the time at which the Colonnade Hall ceased to be used as a quarry for local building, possibly during the period between the 8th and the 10th centuries A.D. *(continued on p. 2)*

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1993-1994 Season *(continued from p. 1)*

With Richard and John, artist Tina Di Cerbo also examined the long western exterior wall of the Colonnade Hall and identified sixteen hitherto unnoticed graffiti of different periods. Likewise, a fragment of one of the enormous roofing blocks from the hall was found to contain fifteen graffiti left by various temple priests, several of whom carved the outlines of their feet or sandals into the sandstone as they stood on the roof, perhaps waiting for the appearance of the processional barks from Karnak during the festival of Opet. A good number of these sandal outlines are filled with personal names, and one provides the names of the two second priests of Amun-of-Opet, Padihorpakhered and his father, Horsiese, two members of a family known from other inscriptions in the Theban area.

The primary efforts of the artists were centered at the small temple of Amun at Medinet Habu, where documentation progressed in five of the painted chapels of Hatshepsut and Thutmosis III and on many of the square pillars that surround the bark sanctuary. Despite the inconvenience of frequent electrical outages, twenty-six drawings were inked this last year and collations begun by the epigraphers on many of them; likewise, an additional twenty-seven were penciled at the wall or set aside as summer work for the transfer of corrections. All the epigraphers, including student epigrapher Drew Baumann, managed to spend a good amount of time at the small temple, and even the field director managed to wrest a few hours at the wall from an otherwise busy schedule.

In the course of last year, a team of conservators of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization, led by the very able Raîs Farouk, has been trenching around the foundations of the small temple in an effort to expose the buried stones and dry them out, subsequently filling the trenches with gravel that will assist in the drying process and minimize the activation of salts caused by contact with fresh ground water. To our surprise, the foundation courses of the Ptolemaic hall directly to the east of the 18th-Dynasty temple consist largely of reused blocks, many of which display carved and painted relief of the Kushite 25th Dynasty or from the Ptolemaic period itself. The archaeological reports published in the 1930s by Dr. Uvo Hölscher on the small temple make definite but fleeting reference to decorated blocks; the possibilities of full documentation, however, are most suggestive. These newly uncovered stones consist of both raised and sunk relief, that is, they represent both interior and exterior walls, and with photography and careful epigraphy it may well be possible to reconstruct on paper the decoration of the vanished Kushite monument that once stood on the present site of the Ptolemaic hall and that was presumably attached to the Kushite pylon, which still stands in situ. To this end, the Survey's new photographer, Jerry Kobylecky, was sent into the trenches for the unenviable task of taking precise photographs of underground blocks with very little space to maneuver. Among some seventy blocks are included at least three from a Ptolemaic kiosk gateway that once stood in the vicinity of the small temple, but whose exact location must remain a mystery for now.

Our colleagues Jean and Helen Jacquet, following their season at North Karnak for the French Institute, completed an elevation drawing of the western wall of the Colonnade Hall that will be used for plotting the new graffiti and, in conjunction with the (re)discovery of the Kushite blocks at Medinet Habu, they began a meticulous architectural survey of the Ptolemaic hall, searching in particular for traces of walls or doorways that may give a clue to the original configuration of the Kushite monument. Together with the reconstructed wall decoration, their new plan will eventually be used to reconsider the development of the small temple of Amun during the 25th Dynasty. Another special friend, Ann Russmann, spent two months at Chicago House and lent us her unique insights. As an art historian, Ann's expertise in the Kushite period proved invaluable to our deliberations about the small temple. She also spent a good deal of time examining the reliefs of the portico in front of the Kushite pylon, looking for signs of recarving and usurpation that may help to explain the architectural chronology of this later period, in preparation for the epigraphic work to come.

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THE FRIENDS OF CHICAGO HOUSE TOUR 1994

November 23 - 26, 1994

Highlights of this years tour include:

- Thanksgiving Dinner at the Jolie Ville
- Greeting the Sunrise from the top of the First Pylon at Karnak
- Lunch Cruise to the Temple of Dendara
- Tours of Two Royal Tombs in the Valley of the Kings
- Tours of the Great and Small Temples of Medinet Habu
- Black-Tie Dinner and Dance, AND...
- TWO FREE AFTERNOONS!

To reserve your place or to request an itinerary, contact:

In Egypt: Mr. Ibrahim Sadek
American Research Center in Egypt
2, Midan Kasr al-Dubara
Garden City, Cairo
Tel. (20) (2) 354-8239; Fax (20 (2) 355-3052

In the U.S.: The Epigraphic Survey
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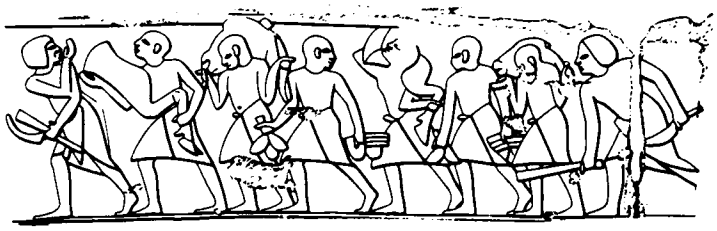
The Epigraphic Survey Announces the Publication of *The Festival Procession of Opet in the Colonnade Hall,* Reliefs and Inscriptions at Luxor Temple, Vol. 1

Oriental Institute Publications 112. Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1994. Pp. xxiii + 60; 128 plates, 2 plans.

In this volume the Epigraphic Survey publishes the famous scenes depicting the annual Opet Procession in which the portable barks of the gods, Amun, Mut, and Khonsu, were conveyed from Karnak Temple to Luxor Temple and back again. These reliefs, which are located on the side walls of the Colonnade Hall in Luxor Temple, date to the reigns of Tutankhamun and Sety I. The documentation consists of 130 plans, large-scale facsimile drawings, and photographs. A volume of translations, commentaries, and a glossary supplements the plates. Cost: $350+shipping ($11 domestic via UPS; $21 overseas). Illinois residents add 8% sales tax. **Orders received before September 30, 1994 will receive a 20% discount.**



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1993-1994 Season *(continued from p. 2)*

Photographers Sue Lezon and Jerry Kobylecky faced the pleasant task of setting up a completely renovated darkroom at the beginning of the season, with all support systems and sinks having been custom designed by Sue during the last two years; the new building indelibly bears her mark. Her departure in November marks ten years' dedicated service to the Survey, and her absence will be greatly felt at Chicago House, both personally and professionally. In the course of the season, Jerry kept up with the voracious demands of the artists and epigraphers, producing twenty-two new joined drawing enlargements for the work at Medinet Habu and blueprinting and bleaching as many more for collation. In addition to the field photography at the small temple of Amun, he made enlargements of the sixty-five facade fragments from the Colonnade Hall for drawing and collation, and undertook the huge task of final photography on all approved documentation from Luxor Temple: ninety-one negatives of 178 individual drawings.

Ellie Smith continued her invaluable work in the photographic archives, her first task being to move the Survey's entire holdings of 38,000 negatives and prints into their new storage facilities in the library building. Prints and negatives are now properly housed in separate rooms, with nitrate films kept apart from acetate films; for the first time in decades, photographic materials are filed in logical sequence and under archival conditions. Ellie completed the reorganization and renumbering of almost 800 of the glass plate negatives according to site information, and entered 646 records on our small-format films onto computer, most of it from the Habachi archive, which is still in the process of identification and registration.

The library books, stored in the residence building during the summer, were transferred to their new home by Tina and Richard and their crew of Chicago House workmen in the course of just two weeks. Volumes that have long been held in dead storage for lack of space were reintegrated into the shelves, so that all books may now be found in sequential order. Debbie Darnell's efforts in the library were prodigious: 441 book titles were entered into the registry (more than any previous season), including virtually every new title that we received in Luxor. The total now stands at 16,756 items. Debbie also initiated a separate database for all the library serials, which total over 350, for the purposes of standardizing entry criteria, ensuring the completion of series' entries, minimizing accession time, and facilitating the ordering and tracking of new volumes. Since existing series databases have proved unsatisfactory, administrator Paul Bartko devised one using Double Helix that is adapted precisely to these purposes, and which can be converted to another program if desirable. Volunteer (and free-lance editor) Nan Ray typed in entries for no fewer than 185 series on this program, a deceptively small figure, since even the *Bibliotheque d'étude* series of the French Institute contains 105 titles alone.

Paul Bartko again supervised the administrative and logistical functions of the expedition and brought his special interests to bear in the setting up of the computer network that now links the administrative offices with the library, the public-access computers, the photo archives, the epigraphers' offices, and the artists' studios. The routine management of the house and kitchen was left largely in Paul's very efficient hands for much of the season, and he assisted greatly in coordinating the Friends of Chicago House (FOCH) tour in November, as well.

Carlotta Maher continued as our key person for development activities, and she truly graced our presence at Chicago House for much of the winter. The hundreds of postcards and personal notes that flow from her pen have kept many of our supporters in touch with the Survey's activities, and she was instrumental in the success of our November FOCH tour as well as in the organization of the exhibit of the thirty printed images from our *Lost Egypt* portfolios. The *Lost Egypt* exhibit opened in September at the Richard Gray Gallery in Chicago to a very large audience, and since then it has opened at the Sony Gallery at the American University of Cairo, the American Cultural Center in Alexandria, and the Central Exchange in Kansas City, Missouri.

One abiding concern throughout the season was the fact of continuing acts of random violence, most frequently aimed at the Egyptian security police this year, rather than tourists in particular. The number of foreign visitors in Luxor remained very low, and the Chicago House library welcomed only 373 guests (down from a usual high of over a thousand), and we held only three house receptions, including those for the November FOCH tour and for the trustees of the American

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University of Cairo. Only thirty-three library tours were given to groups and to individuals passing through Luxor. Life in town seemed otherwise normal, however, and those who did arrive in Egypt as tourists enjoyed the most spectacular winter weather in memory. In fact, we managed to entertain twenty-one overnight guests during the five-and-a-half-month season, for a total of 109 guest-nights. The most unexpected guest was surely Ambassador Madeleine Albright, U.S. Representative to the United Nations, who arrived with just twelve hours notice on the last day of the season for a brief and thoroughly enjoyable tour of Luxor Temple with fifteen of her personal staff.

During the winter and spring, the manuscript was completed for the inaugural volume on Luxor Temple, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Luxor Temple, Volume I: The Festival Procession of Opet in the Colonnade Hall.* The 130 plans and plates were printed in June by Hennegan Press of Cincinnati, and the accompanying booklet and portfolio box are now being produced. Another publication, *The Registry of the Photographic Archives of the Epigraphic Survey*, in production this summer, will mark the formal end of the conservation of the photographic archives at Chicago House, a project made possible thanks to a grant awarded to the Survey in 1989 by the Getty Grant Program of the J. Paul Getty Trust. This catalogue of the main photographic holdings maintained at Chicago House will appear as a printed volume, and the information in it will also be made accessible as a computer file to scholars internationally, to facilitate the kind of database searching that a book does not permit.

As always, we will be very pleased to welcome members of the Oriental Institute and other friends to Chicago House from October 1st to April 1st. Please write to us in advance, to let us know the dates of your visit, and call us as soon as you arrive in Luxor, so that we can confirm a time for a library tour that is mutually convenient. Our address in Egypt: Chicago House, Corniche el-Nil, Luxor, Arab Republic of Egypt; the phone number is 372525 (direct dial from the United States: 011-20-95-372525) and the fax number is 381620 (011-20-95-381620). **END**

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