

## EMILY AT CHICAGO: A TRIBUTE

I honestly don't remember when Emily Teeter and I first met, though it was surely a long time ago. She began her graduate study at the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago a couple of years before I did and was a Research Assistant in the Oriental Institute when I arrived in 1976. We certainly met that year, though I was young and thoroughly overwhelmed by study and by learning my way around a new city. Emily was one of a lucky cohort of Egyptologists to benefit from the curatorial and educational opportunities offered by the blockbuster tour of the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* exhibit which began that year, and she soon moved back to Seattle where she held a series of curatorial positions at the Seattle Art Museum and teaching at the University of Washington.

Emily re-joined the Oriental Institute in 1990 as Assistant Curator in the Museum. By this time, I had become the Librarian and Emily joined me and a cohort of mid-career scholars enthusiastically engaged in the day-to-day operation of the OI. The Museum was beginning a process of planning for a major expansion and renovation project which was to consume much of the time and effort of Emily and the rest of the Museum staff for the next decade. Nevertheless, Emily was able to research, plan, and mount a set of outstanding temporary exhibitions before the Museum closed in spring 1996. She was also charged with developing a plan to engage with the public during the time the Museum was closed. This period coincided with the appearance of new technological innovations. Our colleague John Sanders, Head of the OI Computer Laboratory and I were given free rein to plan and develop the presence of the OI on the World Wide Web. We were early adopters of this new form of publicity and outreach and by the time the Museum closed the OI was well established worldwide as a major voice in the presentation of the Ancient Near East online, and it became an important tool and venue for public engagement. In the meantime, Emily worked with Registrar Ray Tindell and other museum staff to carefully pack thousands of boxes of Egyptian antiquities so that they could be safely and compactly stored in closed exhibition spaces while the storage and research facilities of the OI Museum were vacated for construction and renovation.

In May 1999 the Museum re-opened with the inauguration of the Joseph and Mary Grimshaw Egyptian Gallery, curated by Emily. Its preparation had been a huge undertaking notably including the relocation of the monumental statue of Tutankhamun to its new, free-standing, location in the new Egyptian Gallery. Specially designed and custom-built cabinetry held entirely new displays of the OI's Egyptian collection, well lit and described. It is impossible to overemphasize how refreshing it was to see the collection re-imagined

and displayed so well. The opening of the gallery received outstanding press coverage thanks to Emily's skill at outreach and publicity. Shortly after the reopening Emily was named Curator of Egyptian and Nubian Antiquities and Research Associate at The Oriental Institute. In the years that followed, as the other museum galleries were opened to the public, Emily continued to play a central role in publicity and outreach, lecturing widely to audiences in Chicago and elsewhere, teaching in the adult education programme of the museum, leading tours within the United States and abroad. Her skill and popularity in these efforts brought great credit to her and to the OI Museum and other programmes. She continued to develop and curate special exhibits and programmes for the OI museum and as a curatorial consultant at museums across North America until her retirement in 2017.

Her status as Research Associate now also offered her the opportunity to devote more time to her ambitious research projects. Among her publications are volumes of small finds from OI excavations at Medinet Habu, guides to the OI Museum collections, catalogues of special exhibitions, and a popular introduction to Ancient Egypt which has been translated several times. Emily also continues to publish on facets of Egyptian religion, and to publish specialized articles on objects. She was naturally the author of choice to write the history of the OI Museum in *Discovering New Pasts: The OI at 100*.

Emily has been an active, engaged, and popular participant in the leadership of learned societies: not only ARCE and CIPEG, treated elsewhere, but also the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC). But it is in her role as a colleague and friend that Emily truly stands out in my mind. In all the years we worked closely together, she was always willing to listen and offer counsel. Her office was a refuge at times when the eccentricities of a complex organization seemed baffling or hilarious. Her generosity and hospitality were legendary both before and after her lucky marriage to Joe. She was – and remains – an ardent supporter of me and my successors in our efforts to build the OI Library and offer the best possible service to scholars, students, and members of the OI. I am delighted and humbled to have been given this opportunity to express my appreciation to her on the occasion of this well-deserved Festschrift. 🙏

**CHARLES E. JONES**