

Archives Initiative Progress Update April, 2010

The archives project, headed by the professional leadership of Cynthia Rufo, is proceeding on track. Overseeing two interns from Simmons College library school the pace of work is actually ahead of schedule, though as it proceeds we are finding all sorts of new materials. The rich collection of artifacts belonging to ASOR from two excavations directed by Nelson Glueck, many of which are at Harvard, have been noted to be dispersed also to the Cincinnati Art Museum with Glenn Markoe as curator, and the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles. ASOR is clarifying its ownership rights to this material, which was acquired by Glueck during his decades of work for ASOR in the mid-20th century. Much work still needs to be done on the Glueck artifact material and it will spill over into the NEH renewal period for certain.

Since January, the Nelson Glueck Papers, the Edmund Gordon Papers, the Carl Kraeling Papers, and the Ernest Wright Papers, the Shechem Excavation Records, the Khirbet et Tannur Excavation documents, and the Diban Excavation Records have been fully processed. The Clarence Fisher Papers are nearly processed, and the Nippur cyanotype photographs recently transferred from Jerusalem are in the process of being scanned. Michael Dante of BU will help to identify these old photos since no descriptive index currently exists. Materials in the AIA archives concerning the founding and early years of ASOR have been surveyed, and a guide to these materials is being written. There is one more shipment of papers from Jerusalem that will include the original glass negatives from Beth Zur that are already scanned. Collection descriptions and finding aids have been posted on the ASOR website.

Archon, a digital content management software system specific to archival work, has been installed. The software will attach standardized metadata to collection finding aids to make them more searchable. To increase the visibility and accessibility of the archives, partnerships have been formed with Dr. Jack Ammerman, assistant director of BU libraries, Dr. Vika Zafrin, digital librarian at the BU School of Theology, and Kara Jackman, archivist at the School of Theology archives.

The Tancrede Dumas photos scanned last fall will be sent out for additional conservation at the Northeast Document Conservation Center in May. Archives and CAP are working closely together to make the history of ASOR's important work on all approved sites better known and the files from years past are full of unpublished materials and photos. Sten LaBianca and Cynthia are coordinating efforts to create a synergy between the two units of ASOR. Efforts in the future will focus on renewing the NEH grant and applying for additional funding so that this important work can continue.