

ASOR Committee on Publications
Preliminary Report to the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees
November 21-22, 2003, Atlanta, GA
Larry G. Herr, Chair
Billie Jean Collins, Director of Publications

Activities of the Chair

The Chair has taken advantage of the slow summer months to edit the ASOR Centennial volume (edited by Doug Clark and Vic Matthews) for ASOR Publications. He has also completed the editing of an issue of *NEA* on houses, which is now in preparation at the Atlanta office. He also completed another issue on Petra (edited by Martha Joukowsky). This is also in preparation at the Atlanta office. Martha is working on a few updates before it will be sent to Atlanta in the very near future (most likely before these meetings). The third issue on dance is being edited now by the new Editor of *NEA*, Sandra Scham.

New NEA Editor

Sandra Scham was chosen as the new editor of *NEA* last May. This has been widely announced in other venues and is included here only as a formal announcement to the Board.

New NEA Department

As we have announced elsewhere, Rami Khouri has requested our membership to submit reports of their fieldwork to the *Daily Star*, the English language daily newspaper he edits based in Beirut but distributed throughout the Middle East. We further suggested that the reports be published together by the *Daily Star* and *NEA*. We thus suggested that our new *NEA* editor, Sandra Scham, in consultation with the COP Chair, appoint an ASOR liaison to solicit contributions, edit them into journalese, and to ensure that any submissions are written by ASOR members and concern CAP approved projects. Upon the recommendation of the COP Chair, Scham, who serendipitously happens to be a family friend of the Khouris, has appointed Benjamin Porter, a senior graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania, as ASOR's liaison. Porter formerly worked for the *Daily Star* as a journalist and was a fellow at ACOR last year. The position may also include work on other newsworthy spots in *NEA*.

New Book Editor

As of September 1 Brian Schmidt has taken over as Editor of ASOR Books. Thanks go to Stuart Swiny for filling in as Interim Editor until Brian returned to North America from leave.

Agreement with Emory

Rudy Dornemann is finalizing negotiations with Emory University concerning the job descriptions and pay scale for Director of Publications in the Atlanta office. Although most of the work has been done, a few glitches need to be overcome (primarily on the Emory side of things), before we can bring closure. We are also working on raising the role of the DP within ASOR publications. Specific recommendations from COP will be presented at the meeting.

Renewal of At-large Members

Jonathan Tubb and Andrew Vaughn have accepted the Chair's invitation to a second term as at-large members of COP. We expect COP to confirm their renewals.

COP Discussions

Discussions will take place at COP on several topics, including in-house typesetting, the Opportunity Fund, the textbook series, the travel tours, the role of the Director of Publications, and a change to the guidelines. Some of these may come to the Executive Committee and the Board as recommendations for implementation.

Journal Status

Near Eastern Archaeology. Two issues will have been published in FY04 by this meeting. Catching the journal up will depend on the efforts of many people. Sandra Scham has appointed Ben Porter as arti-facts and News editor and Justin Lev-Tov as the new book review editor. Materials are now actively being solicited for these features.

Manuscript queue:

June 2002 (65/2): The Archaeology of Death (Ted Lewis, pub date 10/28/03)

Sep 2002 (65/3): assorted articles on Çatal Höyük, Troy, etc. (Ted Lewis, pub date 11/18/03)

Dec 2002 (65/4): Gender issue and assorted articles (Ted Lewis; mss are being edited)

Mar 2003 (66/1): Petra issue (Larry Herr; mss are being copyedited)

Jun-Sep 2003 (66/2-3): Houses double issue (Larry Herr; mss are being copyedited)

Dec 2003 (66/4): Dance issue (Larry Herr/Sandra Scham; mss are being edited)

Mar 2004 (67/1): Church, Synagogue, Mosque and Temple: Sacred Spaces of the Late Antique and Early Islamic Near East (Sandra Scham)

Jun 2004 (67/2): Persian period Levant (Sandra Scham; ms. is being peer reviewed)

Sep 2004 (67/3): Food & Wine (Sandra Scham)

Dec 2004 (67/4): assorted articles (Sandra Scham)

Bulletin of ASOR. Eisenbrauns has raised its rates for typesetting BASOR. The base rate has gone up 10% to \$35.85 per page and the author alterations rate has gone up by 27% (to \$45.25 per hour). The price for scans has also gone up by 17%. We estimate that the new rates will cost ASOR an additional \$2700 per year for BASOR production.

Reported by JMW:

BASOR 331 (August, 2003) – Appeared on October 7.

BASOR 332 (November, 2003) - This issue should go to the printer in early November with first copies distributed by the end of December.

BASOR 333 (February, 2004) - Several manuscripts are out for review or revision for this issue; book reviews are already in copyediting.

Note from the Editor: ASOR must soon begin to upgrade the physical appearance of BASOR if the flagship journal of our society is to remain one of the premier publications in its field. I am already seeing a few signs of authors (including ASOR members) submitting their papers elsewhere, specifically to journals that can publish color photographs and/or use higher-quality paper than BASOR. Such journals include *Levant*, *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, *Aegypten und Levante*, *Antiquity*, *American Journal of Archaeology*, etc. Until a few years ago, BASOR used the cheapest grade of paper that the printer had. Now we publish the journal using a somewhat better grade, but still less than that used in many other journals. BASOR has to upgrade in order to avoid obsolescence. If ASOR does some serious fund-raising for ASOR's

publication activities, helping BASOR maintain its standing in the field would be a most useful goal.

Journal of Cuneiform Studies. Volume 54 (2002) came out in October. Volume 55 (2003) is currently being edited.

Book Status

The final book list for FY04 is as follows. The first two volumes on this list will be published in December and presentation copies will be available at the November meeting.

100 Years of American Archaeology in the Levant: Proceedings of the American Schools of Oriental Research Centennial Celebration, Washington, DC, April 2000, edited by Douglas Clark and Victor Matthews

The volume is complete except for an index. Publication date is likely December or January.

AASOR vol. 58: *The Near East in the Southwest: Essays in Honor of William G. Dever*, edited by Beth Alpert Nakhai.

The volume is complete except for an index. Publication date is likely December or January.

The Tafila-Busayra Archaeological Survey 1999-2001, West-Central Jordan, Burton MacDonald.

The manuscript has been accepted and is being typeset by the author. We are projecting a publication date of May/June 2004 for this volume.

Archaeological Sources for the History of Palestine, edited by David C. Hopkins

We have decided to publish the entire series of articles in a single volume first, and to republish it in fascicles for the classroom only later. Because of the need to produce additional *NEA* issues, we will not be able to publish this volume in FY04 as hoped, but hope to have it out in time for the 2004 Annual Meeting in San Antonio.

Archaeological Reports Series: Joe Greene reports that he has currently 1 MS accepted for publication, 2 MS being reviewed, 3 MSS rejected, revisions requested, 1 MS received but incomplete, 2 accepted proposals but no MS yet, 2 proposal received, not yet accepted, and 5 inquiries (no proposals received yet).

ASOR Books: Brian Schmidt reports 1 MS proposal accepted but no MS yet, 1 inquiry (no proposal received yet).

Book Sales and Marketing

In FY03 we sold more than 3,000 books. Compare this with FY02 where we sold a little over 2000 and FY01 where we sold a little over 1100. How much we sell of course depends on how many new titles we publish, but these numbers are also a reflection of the strengthening of our marketing and distribution. It also testifies to the importance of sticking with the same distributor, since it takes time for customers to learn where to find your books.

Sales continue to be strong thanks to the efforts of our distributor, the David Brown Book Co. ASOR will be represented at SBL this year. SBL itself has offered to let ASOR display with them at their table. The ASOR book display is as strong as ever thanks to Chris.

Member/Subscriber Services Report

We mailed out three quarterly billings in October and are now caught up in the billing process. The next billing will go out on January 1 for the March 31 expires. Renewal payments are now pouring in and we expect our cash flow to be “back to normal” very quickly. The renewal forms ask for some demographic information, which will prove very helpful in future ASOR long-range planning discussions. We continue to “tweak” the iMIS database and hope to be able to provide circulation figures by the November meeting. We also hope to be able to send out membership cards shortly.

The process of moving a database like ASOR's from one system to another means losing the history of billings and payments. The same problem occurred when we moved to AS from SP. Going forward we will be able to produce reports of any description with the touch of a button. But generating AR reports and others over the past weeks has been a complicated procedure. We recommend that ASOR not plan to move its fulfillment services again for some time to come!

Budget Notes

FY03 Year End: Despite the deferred revenues on NEA and JCS, Publications remained relatively healthy at year end, with a modest deficit. With the exception of the late NEA and JCS issues, projected expenses and revenues were on target, and in fact institutional subscriptions were higher than projected. iMIS now allows us to calculate accurately the amount to defer on each late issue, and so we have adjusted this figure in the final year end numbers.

At the end of FY03 we had an outstanding AR of about \$75,000. This is similar to the figure from the previous year; much of it is due to people waiting before resubscribing to NEA. So we are likely still to receive this money. However, because this AR applies to the last billing sent out by AS, to be conservative, the auditor chose to create a "Reserve" on the balance sheet for this amount. This means it becomes a negative asset rather than an asset. But as the money is collected, this amount will go down.

FY04 First Quarter: We had no publications appear in the first quarter and therefore no revenue from subscriptions. The picture will change dramatically at the end of December with the release of revenue and expense for two issues of NEA, two of BASOR and one of JCS.

Clarification regarding NEA deferred revenues: We must produce four issues of NEA per year in order to meet our minimum budgetary requirements. Each issue beyond those four that we produce as we catch up will net us roughly another ~\$8,000-\$10,000 (that is roughly the difference between our revenue and our expenses related to a single issue).