

## EDITORIAL

This year has seen a number of changes in our Council. Professor Nicholas Postgate resigned as Chairman and was replaced by Dr Harriet Crawford, but continues to serve on the Council. Professor Alan Millard succeeded Dr Crawford as Vice-Chairman. Professor D. J. Wiseman stepped down as President of the School; Professor David Oates and Mrs Rachel Maxwell-Hyslop were elected, respectively, President and Vice-President. Mr Christopher Walker resigned after twenty years on the Council, during which time he also served as Hon. Secretary. We are most grateful to them all for their faithful service to the School.

Miss Anna Lethbridge resigned as Publications Secretary in November 2000 in order to pursue her own publishing interests, but will continue to help the School in an editorial capacity. Our Secretary, Mrs Joan Porter MacIver, has kindly (and very efficiently) taken over the publication of our bi-annual Newsletter.

The School is sad to announce the loss of two long-time members, whose obituaries appear in the following pages: Professor Oliver Gurney was one of our Vice-Presidents and Miss Geraldine Talbot was Secretary of the School for a number of years. We send our condolences to their families.

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We wish to congratulate Professor David Hawkins, who was Editor of this journal for a quarter of a century, on the publication of his monumental *Corpus of Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions I* (in three parts), Berlin (de Gruyter), 2001.

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Although it is still not possible for the British Archaeological Expedition to undertake fieldwork in Iraq, several members of the School attended a conference on "The Fifth Millennium of the Invention of Writing" in Baghdad this Spring. Accounts by Professor and Dr Oates and by Professor George have appeared in the May Newsletter. It has also been possible to send books to Iraq through the United Nations Development Programme in Iraq, PO Box 941631, Amman 11194, Jordan. These are urgently needed as our Iraqi colleagues have received very few books since 1990. Members of the School are encouraged to send copies of their publications, and further information can be obtained from our Secretary, Mrs Joan Porter MacIver.

Three of the articles in this volume of *Iraq* are reports on excavations which the School has sponsored in countries bordering on Iraq: at Tell Brak and Chagar Bazar in Syria and at as-Sabiyah and H3 in Kuwait. These excavations have continued to be supported in 2001. The following individuals have also benefited from grants from the BSAI: Dr Georgina Herrmann for a visit to Baghdad to study ivories from Nimrud (carried over from 2000); Dr John MacGinnis for his participation in excavations in Neo-Assyrian levels at Ziyaret in south-eastern Turkey; Dr Derek Kennet for travel to Dubai to work on a catalogue of glass excavated at Kush (UAE); Mr Jonathan Taylor for a visit to the University Museum, Philadelphia, to work on Sumerian lexical texts belonging to the series "Proto-Lu"; Professor Andrew George for work on the Gilgamesh tablets in the National Museum in Baghdad and for presenting a paper to the Baghdad conference on writing; Dr Shereen Ratnagar to support research for a radical revision of her 1981 book, *Encounter — The Westerly Trade of the Harappan Civilization*; Dr Peter Magee for a geophysical survey of the Muweilah area, UAE; Dr Rafal Kolinski for work on the finds in the British Museum from Sir Max Mallowan's excavations at Tell Arbid in Syria in 1936. Dr Robert Carter was awarded a grant to study pottery and small finds in the Dharan Museum, but was unable to use it. A further round of grant applications will be considered after this editorial has gone to press. Reports from the recipients of grants appear in the BSAI Newsletters.

The School is also sponsoring a series of Research Projects. The "Nimrud Ivories Project" is headed by Dr Georgina Herrmann and will record a corpus of unphotographed ivories from Nimrud of enormous importance, in the National Museum in Baghdad. The "Nimrud Database

Project”, headed by Dr John Curtis, aims to computerise and rationalise the records from the School’s activities at Nimrud. The “Mesopotamian Environmental Database Survey” was initiated by Dr Michael Charles and Dr Keith Dobney and is supported by Sheffield University. The “Umma Project” is being overseen by Mr C. B. F. Walker, with Professor Farouk Al-Rawi transcribing and cataloguing the Umma tablets in the British Museum, so that they can be integrated with new archaeological and textual material from recent Iraqi excavations at Umma.

The School is one of the sponsors of a conference on “The Fifth Millennium BC in the Near East” in Liverpool from 15th to 18th November 2001. A further conference on “Nimrud”, also sponsored by the School, was due to take place in the British Museum from 21st to 23rd November 2001 but recent political events would have made it impossible for our Iraqi colleagues to attend and it has had to be postponed.

The School is also funding a post of Senior Research Fellow, which enables Miss Helen McDonald to work half-time as Joint Field Director of the excavations at Tell Brak and to continue preparing the publication of the School’s excavations at the site. *Tell Brak 2, Nagar in the Third Millennium BC* (in two parts), by Joan Oates, David Oates and Helen McDonald, together with contributions by many other authors, will be going to press shortly.

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The School is pleased to announce the publication of *The Nimrud Letters, 1952* (Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud V), by H. W. F. Saggs. The School has also sponsored a volume by J. and D. Oates on *Nimrud — An Assyrian Imperial City Revealed*, a book aimed at the general reader, but containing a wealth of previously unpublished information, plans and photographs, many of them in colour. We are grateful to the Al-Sulayman Fadhi Charity Foundation for an extremely generous grant towards the cost of this volume, of which the publication coincides with an exhibition at the British Museum entitled “Agatha Christie and Archaeology — Mystery in Mesopotamia”, from the 7th November 2001 to 24th March 2002. *Artefacts of Complexity — Tracing the Uruk in the Near East* (Proceedings of the Manchester Uruk Conference), edited by J. N. Postgate, has gone to press and will appear in the Iraq Archaeological Reports series.

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A Forum, at which members of the School could ask questions of officers and members of Council, accompanied the 67th Annual General Meeting of the British School of Archaeology in Iraq. It was held on 7th December 2000, and was followed by a lecture by Miss Helen McDonald on “Recent Excavations at Tell Brak”. After the Council meeting on 15th March 2001, there was a lecture by Dr Stuart Campbell on “Umm Dabaghiyah in a Contemporary Context”. The Bonham Carter Memorial Lecture took place on 21st June this year. It was in the form of a seminar on an Islamic theme, with Dr Alastair Northedge speaking on “The Abbasid Palaces of Samarra” and Professor Robert Hillenbrand on “The Medieval Islamic Architecture of Mosul”.