

THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Jill A. Maher

S I N C E the Volunteer Program was started by Mrs. John Livingood in 1966, it has grown to include more than 80 volunteers who serve as a link between the scholarly work of the Institute and the public. The volunteers, who serve as museum guides and sales personnel in the Suq, are usually the only representatives of the Institute the visitor will meet. Museum docents give tours of the Museum to scheduled groups and welcome visitors to the Institute. Suq docents work in the Museum Shop which has flourished under the capable management of Ruth Marcanti.

It is not easy for a volunteer to become a docent. The trainees must attend a course of lectures and gallery talks, and prepare a written outline of the Museum collection. There were two training programs offered this year. Those faculty, staff members, and Ph.D. candidates who graciously gave their time to the program were: James Allen, Klaus Baer, John Brinkman, Irving Finkel, Judith Franke, McGuire Gibson, John Larson, Lee Marfoe, David Nasgowitz, Peter Piccione, Robert Ritner, Bruce Williams, and Frank Yurco. Docents Linn Buss and Calla Burhoe also gave talks.

There have been many special events for docents during the year. The Akkadian class continued to struggle through the Code of Hammurabi in cuneiform with Robert Whiting. Curator John Carswell gave a special talk to the docents on the exhibit "Artists in Egypt," and art historian Linda Seidel approached the collection from an artistic point of view with the docents. After his return from Umm al-Hafriyat, McGuire Gibson discussed the results of the dig with the docents, and I followed with slides showing less academic aspects of the work there.

A program of "Tut Revisited" slide talks was devised by

Albert Haas and David Silverman to maintain public interest after the show left Chicago. These talks were presented by docents on weekends and by appointment. Inspired by the success of the Tut lectures, docents Gerry Enck and Joan Barghusen have developed a slide lecture on Mesopotamia to be shown on Sundays and holidays and by appointment. It was a major task to select, duplicate and write a script for the slides, and they have done a superb job.

Last summer staff members who were dissatisfied with their unfamiliarity with the Museum had a series of Friday lunch hour tours by Calla Burhoe and myself.

Many docents have given far more than the required one-half day per week and they have our thanks. Agatha Elmes has acted as Chairman of Suq docents, Georgie Maynard and Mary Anne Wayne have given help in the Volunteer Office, and Peggy Grant has helped to organize every phase of the operation. Elda Maynard won a first prize from the Illinois Women's Press Association for her lively docent newsletter.

The captains of each day who have volunteered to take responsibility for their three hour shift are especially deserving of recognition: Joan Barghusen, Calla Burhoe, Milton Droege, Terry Friedman, Teresa Hintzke, Jane Imberman, Myrette Katz, Muriel Nerad, Barbara Sansone, and Hilde Zurne.

The volunteer corps now includes students, housewives, retired professionals, and many who work all week and guide on weekends. To Members who are not yet volunteers we extend a warm invitation to join us.

VOLUNTEERS OF THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE 1977/78

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