

EDITORIAL

The School has recently lost a faithful long-time member, Georges Roux, who has subscribed to our journal since 1952. His obituary appears on the preceding page and his regular attendance at our meetings will be much missed. Our thoughts are with his widow Christiane.

* * *

In view of the publication, twice a year since May 1998, of the BSAI's *Newsletter*, there is less of a need for an Editorial in the journal. However, since the *Newsletter* is available only to members of the BSAI, it has been decided to retain the Editorial, but in an abbreviated form.

* * *

Together with the Department of Art History and Archaeology at the University of Manchester, the BSAI held a successful international conference entitled "Artefacts of Complexity: Tracking the Uruk in the Near East". The conference was organised by Dr Stuart Campbell and ran from 6–8 November 1998. The papers will, in due course, be published. For further details see *BSAI Newsletter No. 2* (November 1998), pp. 3–4.

* * *

The exhibition on Agatha Christie announced in our previous Editorial, duly opened at the Ruhrlandmuseum in Essen on 19 October and will run until 5 March 2000 before moving to Vienna in April 2000, Basel in October 2000 and Berlin in May 2001. It is accompanied by a handsome book of essays (in German, edited by Dr Charlotte Trumpler, who also curated the exhibition); many of these essays were written by members of the BSAI. It is hoped that an English version of this publication will accompany the exhibition when it opens in the British Museum in November 2001. The School is planning a conference on Nimrud to coincide with this event.

* * *

As we are still, alas, unable to excavate in Iraq because of sanctions, we have sponsored a survey at as-Sabiyah in Kuwait. The Council of the School has also agreed in principle to continue its involvement at Tell Brak in Syria through co-sponsorship with the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. A Tell Brak Steering Committee has been established and excavation seasons are planned for Spring 2000, 2002 and 2004. The School has appointed Miss Helen McDonald to act as joint Field Director with Dr Geoff Emberling, representing the MMA. In the following pages there are reports on the Kuwait survey and on Dr Emberling's excavations at Brak last Spring. Furthermore, Dr Augusta McMahon, excavating for the BSAI, and Professor Önhan Tunca, of Liège University, had a successful first season at Chagar Bazar in the spring; a short report appears in *BSAI Newsletter No. 3* (May 1999), pp. 7–8.

* * *

Dr Muayyad Sa'id Damerji is now a consultant in the Ministry of Culture and has been succeeded as Director General of Antiquities in Baghdad by Dr Rabi' al-Qaisi. Dr Andrew George and Dr Lamia al-Gailani attended the Eleventh Babylon International Festival in Baghdad at the end of September. They report that there is now more funding available for archaeology, leading to renewed activity. Iraqi teams have recently begun excavating at Umma (under Dr Nawala al-Mutawalli) and Umm al-Aqarib (under Dr Donny George Youkana); there are also excavations near Marad and at Assur, work continues at Tell en-Neml, and there are plans to re-open the

Iraq Museum (see also the reports at the end of this journal and in *BSAI Newsletter No. 3*). After his visit to Baghdad, Dr Andrew George availed himself of a BSAI grant and went to Aleppo Museum where he worked on Gilgamesh fragments and was able to make some joins. He is to be congratulated on his new translation of the Epic of Gilgamesh, published by Penguin Books in the Spring and due out in paperback in January 2000. This and other publications of interest to readers of *Iraq* are discussed in *BSAI Newsletter No. 3*.

* * *

Individual Research Grants for 1999–2000 were awarded by Mr Mark Beech and Ms Emily Glover to study fish-bones and shells from as-Sabiyah in Kuwait; to Dr Andrew George to attend the Baghdad Symposium and work in the museums in Baghdad and Aleppo; to Mr Thomas Hulit to examine the scale armour from Nuzi, now in the Harvard Semitic Museum; to Dr Marie-Christine Ludwig to work on 414 Sumerian literary texts from Ur in the British Museum; and to Dr John MacGinnis for work on texts from the Sippar Collection in the British Museum dealing with wooden writing boards.

* * *

Our Annual General Meeting on 3 December 1998 took place in the School of Oriental and African Studies and was followed by a lecture by Dr Julian Henderson entitled “New light on Islamic industry: Investigation of an industrial complex at Raqqa, Syria.” Professor W. G. Lambert gave a lecture on “Oracle questions: Intimate glimpses into Babylonian life” after the Council Meeting on 4 March 1999. The Bonham Carter lecture, following the Council Meeting and the Third Summer Forum on 24 June 1999, was given by Professor Hartmut Kühne on his excavations at Tell Sheikh Hamad in Syria; he spoke on “The Neo-Assyrian centre at Dur-Katlimmu: The latest discoveries.”