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AMERICAN CENTER OF RESEARCH

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA | AMMAN, JORDAN

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Jennifer Gavito (Deputy Assistant Secretary of State), Henry T. Wooster (U.S. Ambassador to Jordan), Prof. Fadi Bala'awi (Director General of the Department of Antiquities), and Dr. Pearce Paul Creasman (Executive Director of the American Center of Research) viewing trafficked artifacts repatriated to Jordan from the United States. (Photo by D. Dabbas.)

The National Inventory Project Establishing a National Cultural Heritage Property Database in the Kingdom of Jordan

Matthew Vincent and Jehad Haron

One only has to mention “cultural heritage” and “Jordan” in the same sentence to elicit imagery of spectacular sites such as Petra or Jerash, or even a humble pot or fragment of a Roman fibula. Behind this visible cultural heritage, however, are the support systems that often go unnoticed. Thanks to a \$1.9 million grant from the U.S. State Department and in collaboration with the Department of Antiquities, the American Center of Research is leading the effort to create a centralized database for the country’s movable cultural heritage using the industry standards and best practices seen in other prominent cultural heritage institutes around the world. Known as the National Inventory, this will become the backbone for managing and protecting Jordan’s moveable cultural heritage, preserving it for generations to come.



Tombstone from Zoara, with an Aramaic inscription (mid-1st century CE), and basalt altar, dating to the Chalcolithic (c. 3000 BCE), two of the artifacts smuggled out of and returned to Jordan that were displayed during the project launch event, held at the center. (Photo by D. Dabbas.)

Before we jump forward and look toward the future, perhaps it is worth pausing to look at exactly what a collection management system (CMS) offers. We could summarize it simply by saying a CMS is concerned with documenting, tracking, and managing every step of the lifecycle of an object or artifact in the care and custody of the nation's cultural heritage stakeholders.

The beginning of the lifecycle is the entry of an artifact's data into the system itself. This could even be for something on temporary loan, but the moment it enters the collection, it should then be part of the CMS and be tracked every step of the way. However, most of the time we would be describing acquisition and accessioning of objects, and, in the case of Jordan, this would have a particular focus on the objects and artifacts deposited with the Department of Antiquities after the completion of a season of excavation.

Once an artifact is in the CMS, it is then possible to manage the day-to-day life of that object within the collection.

These might be regular tasks—condition assessments or conservation work, for example—or occasional tasks such as moving an item to a new location within the storage facilities, processing legal documentation, or checking it out for further documentation (such as photography, 3-D digitization, or material analysis).

The establishment of a legal relationship between an item and the Department of Antiquities, also known as accessioning, is considered a critical component of the project, as emphasized during its official launch in mid-October 2022. Pearce Paul Creasman, the executive director of the American Center, along with Ambassador Henry T. Wooster, Deputy Assistant Secretary Jennifer Gavito, and Fadi Bala'awi, the Director General of the Department of Antiquities, publicly announced this new initiative at the center's event. During the occasion, a display of nine repatriated artifacts that were illegally trafficked and recovered in the United States was also presented.

Only a few years previously, the United States and the Kingdom of Jordan signed the U.S.-Jordan Cultural Property Agreement, a memorandum of understanding that seeks to protect Jordanian cultural heritage property while also encouraging exchange of archaeological materials. A fundamental aspect of this MOU is to work toward implementing aspects consistent with the 1970 UNESCO Convention. Part of this convention is the creation of national inventories that demonstrate the ownership of cultural property for a country, making it easier to return property in cases of illegal trafficking.

The project intends to fulfill the recommendations of the 1970 UNESCO Convention regarding the creation of national inventories and to directly support implementation of the bilateral MOU. We believe that this will improve how moveable cultural heritage is managed, cared for, studied, and shared both nationally and internationally. There are, of course, many other added benefits to such a system. For example, it standardizes the way that data are recorded, managed, and stored throughout the entire country.



Three of the Neolithic cattle figures repatriated to Jordan. (Photo by D. Dabbas.)



The project is made possible by the generous support of the American People through the United States Department of State. The content of this article is the responsibility of the American Center of Research and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of State or the United States Government.



All manner of Jordanian movable cultural heritage—from the humble to the ornate—will be entered into and tracked by the National Inventory.

Above: Decorated copper-alloy pin, found at the Byzantine Petra Church. (Photo from the Petra Church Project collection.) Right: Mamluke bowl, 13–14th century CE, in the Amman Archaeological Museum. (Photo by Jane Taylor.)



Another benefit will be the standardization of what is asked of field projects when it comes time to turn in final reports. Rather than each project turning in PDFs, printed forms, or different types of Excel sheets, they can be given a standardized template that the department can then automatically ingest into its system, eliminating the need for later transcription and ensuring the accurate importation of data from the field into the inventory. Furthermore, this can facilitate the ability to easily manage loans for projects to take material back to their institutes for study, as the CMS will ease the burden of work that goes into managing loans.

The project will run for four and a half years and is co-directed by Jihad Haron, the American Center's associate director, and Matthew Vincent, who recently joined to work on this project. The co-directors will work with both national and international stakeholders to ensure the project's success. In some instances, this will mean setting up events to train department and museum personnel, to ensure the staff are able to easily work with the system, while at the same time working with international enforcement agencies to make sure the system is able to help with tracking down and identifying lost cultural property from the country.

The National Inventory is pushing the management and care of movable cultural heritage forward by establishing a new framework for this heritage. Already, the American Center will be able to leverage this new system to assist with its Prevention of Illicit Trafficking Project, headed by Dr. Ahmed Fatima Kzzo (p. 9). Leveraging such a national inventory will provide a central place to track and deal with lost cultural property. Likewise, the department can use such a database to monitor the growth of material in their care. Querying the database for accessioned objects from excavations year over year should help them manage current storage, both physical and virtual, and plan for increases in capacity as needed. Ultimately, the National Inventory allows us to make informed, data-driven decisions to facilitate the care and protection of Jordan's cultural heritage.

At the end of the day, it may not seem as glamorous as the postcard-perfect images of Petra or Jerash, but the behind-the-scenes work of cultural heritage management is crucial to preserving Jordan's rich heritage for generations to come.

Welcome to the National Inventory, and please join us as we seek to take important steps forward to improving our own systems here and—if we may be so bold as to say—set the standard for the region in how we manage and care for our collections.

For more information:

acorjordan.org/national-inventory-jo

WE ARE HIRING!

For the latest opportunities, visit:
acorjordan.org/jobs-and-employment

Injury Assessment, Basic First Aid, and CPR Course

Lina Shara'an

The Jordan Paramedic Society held a first-aid training course for staff in November 2022. This consisted of five hours of theory (30%) and practice (70%). American Center staff receive such training annually, gaining skills to address certain kinds of potentially resolvable medical emergencies (i.e., choking, allergic reaction, heart attack) that have easy-to-implement techniques of immediate care that can be applied before the arrival of advanced medical care. First aid helps a person recover fully or faster and may make the difference between life and death.



Improvements on the southern slope entrance to the Amman Citadel. (Photo by ChickMania Entertainment, courtesy of USAID SCHEP.)

USAID SCHEP Updates: July–December 2022

John Shearman



In August 2022, USAID awarded an additional eighteen-month extension to the Sustainable Cultural Heritage through Engagement of Local Communities Project, which had otherwise been scheduled to conclude that same month. This period will see a focus on efforts to develop the enabling environment of the interconnected tourism and heritage sectors in Jordan, with the goal of enhancing sustainability, long-term impact, and self-reliance of key partner institutions in the country.

Strategy for the Management of Jordan's Archaeological Heritage

Activity continued in developing a program to implement the new heritage strategy in partnership with the Department of Antiquities (DoA) and stakeholders. The document has been finalized and will be printed next quarter. A two-day workshop is scheduled in February to plan the implementation phase of the project and to move forward with capacity-building efforts that focus on the needs of the DoA based upon surveys and discussions. With initial findings, SCHEP has already developed and supported training sessions that target specific needs.

Training sessions include a three-day gathering held at the American Center on state-of-conservation reports for World Heritage properties. This aimed to strengthen the

The works described here are made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of ACOR and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

capacity of professionals in Jordan to prepare such reports for cultural and natural heritage sites, using the guidelines of the World Heritage Convention. Sixteen participants from various governmental and non-governmental organizations attended the training. The Wadi Rum Protected Area (WRPA) was also supported as part of the training, for preparation of its state-of-conservation report, which was submitted to the World Heritage Center prior to November 30, 2022. The WRPA report included documentation of archaeological features, rock art and inscriptions, a program for women's leadership in World Heritage sites at Wadi Rum, environmental and heritage impact assessment reports, and drone documentation of the site, including tourism camps.

A two-day training session on content marketing was held for fifteen participants from various organizations, including the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA), the DoA, the Jordan Museum, the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM), ICOMOS-Jordan, the Petra National Trust, the American Center of Research, and fresh graduates from the Amman Citadel Project. The training covered topics such as the importance of content marketing, leveraging features and benefits of social media, creating a content-marketing calendar, creating short videos using smartphones, and basic knowledge of best practices for digital public relations.



Students in the archaeological field school receiving a presentation on the history of the Amman Citadel area by Hanadi Al Taher, USAID-SCHEP deputy chief of party.
(Photo by A. F. Ghareeb.)

In addition to these training sessions, the team has been working on development of a cultural heritage portal and improving communication with various stakeholders.

Amman Citadel Southern Slope Project and Tourist Trails

The Amman Citadel Southern Slope Project and Tourist Trails, a collaborative effort between SCHEP, the DoA, the MoTA, and GAM, aims to develop new tourist trails linking the Citadel with the downtown Roman Theater and other archaeological and heritage elements along the way. SCHEP developed and implemented an archaeology field school in cooperation with the DoA. Its program includes weekly lectures followed by fieldwork at the excavation location. The field school received official permission from the DoA and began on Sunday December 18, 2022. It is expected to complete the fieldwork at the end of February 2023.

The SCHEP Amman Citadel project team initiated a topographical, hydrological, and stabilization study of the site in order to ultimately assist in the preservation of the

historic remains on the southern slope. Completion of this study is expected in January 2023.

The tourism trail aims to improve tourism opportunities in the area by enhancing the connectivity between the Citadel and the Roman Theater and engaging the local community through collaboration, training, and job creation. Several meetings were held with GAM to obtain information on pending improvements to the trail and existing structures. Reem Halaseh, who has experience in the Amman paths, routes, and neighborhoods, was hired to conduct the required studies for the project, schedule workshops with the local community and stakeholders, and oversee the implementation of the local community opportunities.

International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS-Jordan)

SCHEP staff are working closely with ICOMOS-Jordan in its goal of sustainability and outreach, providing support with three grants that have targeted milestones to increase membership and to better enable it as a professional organization that works for the conservation and protection of Jordanian cultural heritage sites. The first was awarded in September 2022 for a five-month period ending January 31, 2023. Through this series of grants, ICOMOS-Jordan will be able to continue building and strengthening its institutional capacity, as well as increase its membership and establish long-term sustainability.

In October, ICOMOS-Jordan hosted a book launch and signing ceremony at their location in Jabal al Weibdeh for *Unique and Outstanding: Jordan's World Heritage Sites*. The event was held to showcase the diversity of Jordan's cultural heritage through this SCHEP-funded publication, which features bilingual Arabic and English text by HRH Princess Dana Firas and photographs by Bashar Al-Tabbaa. That same month, ICOMOS-Jordan signed contracts with a social media intern, a coordinator officer, and a project-assessment employee funded through the grant.

In November, ICOMOS-Jordan organized a workshop in collaboration with the Queen Rania Faculty of Tourism and Heritage at the Hashemite University in Zarqa. The workshop aimed to raise awareness of the value of cultural heritage and to present ICOMOS-Jordan's mission and methods of membership to students.

ICOMOS-Jordan also launched a social media campaign to increase awareness of the organization's work and the



First day of the archaeological field school participants' field practice.
(Photo by A. F. Ghareeb.)

benefits of membership. An introductory video about ICOMOS-Jordan, featuring HRH Princess Dana Firas, was also produced with the assistance of SCHEP.

It also organized a panel discussion, held in December at Yarmouk University's Al-Hussein Bin Talal Library, for *Unique and Outstanding*. The discussion was attended by professors and students from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology.

ICOMOS-Jordan

connects archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, architects, geographers, engineers, town planners, and other experts committed to conserving and protecting Jordan's cultural heritage.

To join this vital network,
visit the ICOMOS-Jordan website:

icomosjordan.org



The Pottery of Jordan A MANUAL

Edited by Jehad Haron and Douglas R. Clark



Late Hellenistic hornshaped assemblage, Courtesy Hezad Plains Project - UNOVI

The Madaba Regional Archaeological Museum Project (MRAMP)

Funded by USAID via

The Sustainable Cultural Heritage through Community Engagement Project (SCHEP)

Implemented by the American Center of Research (ACOR)

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Publication of *The Pottery of Jordan: A Manual*

Jehad Haron

Many archaeologists believe that pottery is one of the most useful archaeological materials because of the wide range of characteristics it displays throughout time and space, including differences in color, technique, shape, and other

criteria. Numerous attempts have been made over the past decades to outline a classification system and analytical typologies for the pottery found in Jordan specifically; however, a difficulty has arisen in integrating the pottery found here with the pottery of the wider Levant.

Creation and publication of a manual doing exactly that was achieved with a grant from USAID-funded SCHEP (p. 4–6) in conjunction with the Madaba Regional Archaeological Museum (MRAMP). MRAMP's series of capacity-development courses on the pottery of Jordan was aligned with production of the volume.

The Pottery of Jordan: A Manual, which is available in both Arabic and English, is aimed at students, archaeologists, and museum curators, and it features contributions from a variety of well-known local and international archaeologists. Co-edited by Jehad Haron, the American Center of Research's associate director, and Dr. Douglas



Staff in the city of Salt, on the fall retreat. (Photo from the ACOR collection.)

Staff Retreat

On October 13, 2022, our autumn staff retreat went to As-Salt. Having left the center early in the morning, they had breakfast at a restaurant that is an amalgamation of art and tradition, overlooking an amazing view of the old town of Salt. They then went to one of the most picturesque resorts in As-Salt, nestled in the beautiful Gilead Mountains, where the staff enjoyed team-building activities and games, paintball battles, target shooting (also with paintballs!), and archery.

Intern

We are grateful for the assistance provided to the library by our intern, Tatiana Haddad, an undergraduate student at the University of Houston/AMIDEAST.

Clark, co-director of MRAMP, this reference work will help the reader learn more about pottery, its history, and its various shapes, styles, and production methods. It also has a long list of published materials on the pottery of each era and a glossary of terms specific to pottery study.

Visit the American Center's publications website to download the PDF without cost.

Online

The Pottery of Jordan: A Manual

publications.acorjordan.org/books/pottery-of-jordan-manual

Fellows in Residence July–December 2022

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP: **Yorke Rowan** (Oriental Institute, University of Chicago): Tracking the Small Things: Late Neolithic Material Culture of the Black Desert; **Arpan Roy** (Program in Islamic Studies, Johns Hopkins University): Call to Prayer: Romani People and the Islamic Mission. ACOR-CAORC POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP: **Kathryn Grossman** (Anthropology, North Carolina State University): Animal Lives at Petra: Analysis of the Zooarchaeological Remains from the Temple of the Winged Lions and the Petra North Ridge Project; **Sarah Islam** (Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University): Blasphemy (*Sabb al-Rasūl*) as a Legal Category in Islamic Law: Historical Formulations and Contemporary Applications; **Besnik Sinani** (Muslim Cultures and Societies, Free University Berlin): Sufi Scholars, Practices, and Communities in Saudi Arabia since 1979: Orthodoxy and Tradition in Contemporary Muslim Society. ACOR-CAORC PRE-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP: **Samar Ahmad** (History, Georgetown University): Gender and Revolution: A Social History of Jordan in the 1960s–1970s; **Lauren Erker** (Islamic Archaeology, University of Bonn): Ottoman Archaeology of Palestine and Transjordan; **Johnathan Norris** (Anthropology, Boston University): Politics of Place: Emotion, Religiopolitical Networks, and Place-Making Amongst Syrian Refugees; **Clare Rasmussen** (Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology, Bryn Mawr College): Water Consumption in the Decapolis: Examining Water Use in the Ancient Cities of Gadara, Jerash, Pella, and Philadelphia; **Jeremy Reed** (Ethnomusicology, Indiana University, Bloomington): The Jerash Festival of Culture and Arts as Indicator of Jordanian National Well-Being. PIERRE AND PATRICIA BIKAI FELLOWSHIP: **McClean Pink** (Anthropology, East Carolina University): Petra North Ridge Mortuary Practices.

Fifteenth International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan

Hanadi Al Taher

The American Center of Research participated in the Fifteenth International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan (ICHAJ), held August 2–5, 2022, at Yarmouk University under the title “Thoughtful Archaeology in the Ecosphere and Sociosphere.” It was organized by the Department of Antiquities and Yarmouk University with support from the American Center of Research. Over the four days, thirteen different themes were discussed, covering various topics related to the title of the conference, such as diversity and cultural heritage, applied sciences related to archaeology, tangible and intangible heritage, and, most prominently, Jordan’s history and cultural heritage at the threshold of the country’s second century.

American Center staff (Helen Malko, John Shearman, Pearce Paul Creasman, Jehad Haron, Hanadi Al Taher, Hussein Khirfan, Khadija Moallem, and Ahmed Fatima Kzzo) participated, presenting papers on heritage management, sustainability, community participation, and combating illicit trafficking of cultural heritage. The proceedings of the previous ICHAJ were issued (see p. 14).

This global triennial meeting, the first of which was held at Oxford University in the United Kingdom in 1980 as an initiative from HRH Prince El Hasan Bin Talal (who remains the conference patron), is one of the most important international scientific conferences that enable researchers, academics, and other professionals to present their work



Helen Malko and Ahmed Fatima Kzzo presenting on the Prevention of Illicit Trafficking Project at ICHAJ 15, with Carol Palmer moderating. (Photo by P. P. Creasman.)

and projects and their outlooks on the antiquities of Jordan. Different countries cohost the conference in rotation with Jordan; in addition to the UK, past venues have been in Australia, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, and the United States. As always, this fifteenth conference offered good opportunities to build knowledge, expertise, and a network of relationships among those working in the archaeological sector.

According to the conference organizers, 294 participated in the conference, 120 from Jordan and eight from other Arab countries (the Arab Emirates, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria). Other foreign countries—Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Turkey, the UK, and the USA—contributed the remaining 166 participants.

Burton MacDonald

September 13, 1939–October 20, 2022

As fellow archaeophiles, travelers, teachers, specialists, students, and close friends of Burton MacDonald, we all pay tribute to one of the fallen giants in the field of Near Eastern archaeology. With the passing of Burton MacDonald, we are all the poorer... even if, because of our acquaintance with him, we are all enriched. Having known him and worked with him for several decades, I came to appreciate his eternal optimism, his limitless generosity, his cheerful spirit, his inquiring mind, his boundless energy, his enduring and endearing politeness, his mischievous nudging, his indefatigable sense of adventure and curiosity.



Burton MacDonald at Qasr al-Mushatta, February 1987. (Photo by Nancy L. Lapp.)

Burton enjoyed a sixty-two-year relationship with St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, from which he received his BA in 1960, returning to teach there in 1966 and staying on for over forty years. He earned an MA in religious education from St. Paul's Seminary (University of Ottawa) soon after his BA. In 1974 he received his PhD from the Catholic University of America in Near Eastern languages and literature, with additional graduate studies at the École Biblique et Archéologique in Jerusalem.

Burton is best known for his archaeological research in Jordan, but he had already previously excavated in Israel, Cyprus, and Egypt. In Jordan he spent forty years carrying out five major survey projects, contributing significantly to our knowledge of mostly

rural, hinterland regions in the southern parts of the country. He published twelve volumes and more than a hundred scholarly articles. In addition, he was awarded fellowships at Cambridge University (UK), Massey College (University of Toronto), Dumbarton Oaks (Washington, DC), and at the American Center of Oriental Research (ACOR, now the American Center of Research) in Amman, Jordan. In a generous expression of support for archaeology in Jordan and of the American Center, he and his wife established the Burton MacDonald and Rosemarie Sampson Fellowship, available through the center.

With deep appreciation, sincere admiration, and warm affection, I wish for Burton, Rosemarie, and their family “Peace,” the trademark catch-term of this archaeologist/teacher, widely and well known and respected for over half a century among scholars, students, and professional and popular audiences interested in the ancient Near East.

—Douglas R. Clark (La Sierra University)

Levantine Ceramics Project Workshop

Jehad Haron

On August 6, 2022, Micaela Sinibaldi and Ian Jones, the Levantine Ceramics Project's editors for Jordan, led the first-ever LCP workshop in Jordan, at the American Center of Research in Amman. The goal is to begin building up the LCP's dataset of pottery from Jordan, so that the country's archaeological remains can become more easily accessible. We had an enthusiastic group of about twenty participants, with presentations of ceramic

wares ranging from the Iron Age to Ottoman times.

This workshop was dedicated to the memory of the late Prof. S. Thomas Parker and was held close to the first anniversary of his death (see *ACOR Newsletter* 33.2, pp. 8–9). Tom's long-standing involvement in the study of the pottery of Jordan and dedicated training of students was widely admired and is sorely missed.

Online

Levantine Ceramics Project
levantineceramics.org

Prevention of Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property Project Update

Ahmed Fatima Kzzo

In its fourth and fifth quarters, the Prevention of Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property Project made significant progress. We delivered equipment to the DoA, including computers, cameras and other photographic apparatus (lights, lightboxes, and color-calibration scales), label/barcode printers, and barcode scanners. In addition, we organized training in Aqaba with eight participants from the southern governorates of Karak, Tafilah, Ma'an, and Aqaba.

In late 2022, we presented the project at several conferences and meetings. We participated in the Fifteenth International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan (ICHAJ 15) (see p. 7), and in the Cultural Heritage: Before, During, and After Crisis workshop held at the American Society of Overseas Research (ASOR) annual meeting in Boston (see p. 10). The Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia invited us to participate in Research, Intelligence and Technology for Heritage and Market Security, a multi-year international project founded to improve the abilities of law-enforcement and customs authorities to combat illegal trade in cultural heritage with the development of an AI-based platform that will aid in the identification of criminal networks. For this, on October 14, we presented a paper about illicit trafficking and social media, spotlighting our project. Project director Dr. Ahmed Fatima Kzzo also gave a presentation to volunteers in the Abdoun Community Archaeology Project (see *ACOR Newsletter* 33.2, p. 7) about the damage



caused to cultural heritage property by illegal excavations and smuggling, thus increasing awareness of the problem among interested members of the public.

Online

twitter.com/prevtrafficking

[@prevtrafficking](https://twitter.com/prevtrafficking)

acorjordan.org/prevention-of-illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property-project/

Twenty-first Conference of Jordanian Librarians

Ryder Kouba and Samya Khalaf Kafafi

In October, the American Center of Research library staff had the honor of attending and presenting at the Twenty-first Jordanian Library and Information Association meeting at Yarmouk University in Irbid. While the writing of the presentation was a joint effort, associate librarian Samya Khalaf Kafafi did a wonderful job promoting the American Center and our resources, facilities and the roles of the library and archives in

supporting research and researchers in Jordan to an audience of around a hundred (including Egyptians and Yemenis). Her presentation was well received and was followed by thoughtful questions from the audience. Of course, as with any conference, socializing (and, in the case of librarian and archivist Ryder Kouba, meeting formally) with fellow professionals is valuable, and we enjoyed learning about challenges and opportunities with other libraries in the country. We are excited to continue engaging with librarians and information professionals throughout Jordan and the region and sharing the value and capabilities of the American Center.

Employee of the Year

Ayman Abdallah

Housekeeping Supervisor

Ayman Abdallah, a veteran in the hospitality field, joined the American Center of Research in November 2021. Since then, he has been bringing five-star service to the center.





Board dinner, with President Gnehm making remarks. (Photo by B. A. Porter.)

ACOR Participation at the ASOR 2022 Annual Meeting

China Shelton

The annual meeting of the American Society of Overseas Research (ASOR) took place in person in Boston, Massachusetts, November 16–19 (there was also a virtual component October 19–23). Many American Center board members, staff, and fellowship alums participated, in (just for example!) the Archaeology of Petra and Nabataea, Museums and Social Justice, and Archaeology of Jordan sessions. ACOR at ASOR scholarship recipient Ahmad Hussein AlAdamat presented “Impact of the Refugee Community at Umm el-Jimal on the Re-Use of Basalt Stone in Local Community Architecture and Urban Fabric” in the Cultural Heritage: Before, During, and After Crisis session. ACOR librarian Ryder Kouba presented “A Map is Worth Twenty Thousand Pictures: Improving Access and Use of Digital Archives through Mapping” in the Digging Up Data: A Showcase of Ongoing Digital Scholarship Projects workshop. The board of trustees and friends gathered for a lovely dinner on the Friday evening before the board meeting, in celebration of the center’s many achievements and the strong relationships that have been forged over the course of building the center’s programs.

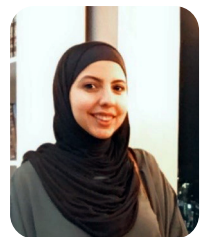
Staff Updates



Raghad Barakat, who holds a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from Al-Balqa’ Applied University and a master’s degree in architectural conservation from the German Jordanian University, was hired as outreach project archivist in September 2022. She is responsible for contributing to item-level descriptions

of digitized materials, creating finding aids in Arabic, and translating existing English metadata into Arabic.

Fayzeh Darwazeh joined as an administrative assistant in September 2022. She graduated from the University of Jordan in 2018 with a bachelor’s degree in the Chinese and English languages.



Public Events

Our fall 2023 lecture series opened on September 6 with a hybrid in-person and online presentation given from the Department of Antiquities, which co-organized the event. Dr. Hani Hayajneh, dean of Yarmouk University’s Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, delivered “Cultural and Linguistic Diversity of Ancient Jordan as Gleaned from the Epigraphic and Written Sources” in Arabic. Real-time English translation was available for online attendees. Prof. Hayajneh presented on Jordan’s myriad inscriptions as special forms of primary sources that contrast with “composed historical works” that were transmitted through copied manuscripts.

Co-organized with the Jordan Museum, the next lecture, on October 11, was the first in-person public event held at the center since completion of its extensive renovations (see *ACOR Newsletter* 34.1, pp. 1–4). In “The Jordan Museum: More Than 10,000 Years of Human Resilience and Innovation,” Dr. Ihab Amarin, director general of the Jordan Museum and chair of the Jordanian Museums Association, provided insights into the museum’s governance structure, the importance of partnerships, and the museum staff and how these facilitate the museum’s mission to preserve Jordanian cultural heritage and educate the public. A reception followed the lecture.

On November 8, Dr. Agnete Wisti Lassen, associate curator of the Yale Peabody Museum’s Babylonian collection, moderated a Zoom webinar co-organized with the Yale Babylonian Collection and the Archaeological Museum of the American University of Beirut: “Digital Archives: Preservation, Accessibility, and Future Directions.” Other participants in the discussion were Dr. Daniel Asmar, associate professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering of the American University of Beirut, Dr. Elizabeth Knott, former postdoctoral associate of the Yale Babylonian collection, and the American Center of Research’s librarian and archivist, Ryder Kouba.

For videos of many of our lectures, visit our YouTube channel.

Online

youtube.com/acorjordan1968

Library Update

Ryder Kouba

Over the past six months life at the library has more or less settled back into the normal routine of acquiring, receiving, and cataloging new arrivals, researching and soliciting feedback for potential acquisitions, and, of course, supporting visitors to the library with their research as well as those who reach out via email. Visitation to the library is slowly closing the gap with pre-COVID figures.

In December, Jihad Haron, Samya Kafafi, and Ryder Kouba visited the Hashemite University to present on the American Center's history, mission, available fellowships, and resources (including the library and archives) to around fifty students; following that success, in January students from various Jordanian universities will attend an information session on the center.

From July to December 2022, 400 new resources were added to the library catalog, including purchases (thanks to Pearce Paul Creasman, China Shelton, and others who lugged suitcases from the U.S. and elsewhere), and donations from generous donors. Eighty-five of the new resources are open-access publications available online around the world, and include such titles as *Borderlands: Europe and the Mediterranean Middle East*, by Raffaella A.

Del Sarto (2021), *Exploring "Dark Ages": Archaeological Markers of Transition in the Near East from the Bronze Age to the Early Islamic Period*, edited by Raffaella Pierobon Benoit, Costanza Coppini, Rocco Palermo, and Raffaella Pappalardo (2021), and the 1890 Palestine Exploration Fund publication *Northern 'Ajlūn, "within the Decapolis."*

Two hundred sixty-six new physical books were added from both purchases and donations (p. 15). We appreciate all the donations and are thrilled to be able to provide visitors with access to these volumes. Among the selected highlights are *About Antiquities: Politics of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire*, by Zeynep Çelik (2016), *The Ammonite Citadel Park Project: Involving Cultural, Historical and Social Surrounding*, by Razan Adel Tuama (2021), and both volumes of *Digital Heritage and Archaeology in Practice*, edited by Ethan Watrall and Lynne Goldstein (2022). As usual, the most frequent keywords in new acquisitions include "Middle East," "Jordan," "Islam," and, of course, "Archaeology" and "History."

In the coming year we are looking forward to growing the library collection further, and we are always happy to receive donations and recommendations for publications that will strengthen our holdings in the social sciences and humanities in the Middle East.

Publications Update

Noreen Doyle

An updated edition of the center's booklet, *The American Center of Research Since 1968*, was published online and in print (cover, at right). Well illustrated like its 2019 predecessor, the 2022 publication features projects old and new and is available for download on our website. Printed copies can be obtained at the center. Likewise freely available online is *Archaeology in Jordan 3*, covering the 2020–2021 seasons and thus dubbed *The Pandemic Volume*. In this biennial journal are summaries of fieldwork and research undertaken throughout the country by thirty-five projects. SCHEP publications (pp. 5–6) and the proceedings of the Fourteenth International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan (p. 14) round out the major printed works that appeared with our support during the last half of 2022.

Other volumes remain in progress. Notably, the Temple of the Winged Lions Publication Project gained an assistant: former TWL intern and current SCHEP digital projects assistant Nora Al Omari. She attends to the day-to-day operations of the project, helping the contributors with their research and administrative needs.

The center's blog, *Insights*, published four essays: "Analyzing Petra's Small Finds" by McClean Pink (Pierre and Patricia Bikai Fellow, 2022–2023), "Travers-



ing the Landscape" by Amy Karoll (ACOR-NEH Postdoctoral Fellow, 2021), "Animal Lives at Petra" by Kathryn Grossman (ACOR-CAORC Postdoctoral Fellow, 2021–2022), and "ICHAJ 15 and the Value of International Collaboration in Cultural Heritage" by Danielle Wolfson (International Exchange Program intern with the Prevention of Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property Project, 2022).

Online
publications.acorjordan.org

Staff Updates



Emad Abu Rassa' was hired in October 2022 as financial manager. He previously worked for Anham FZCO, where he was administration and finance manager for a subsistence prime vendor project.

Dr. Russell Adams, an archaeologist specializing in the Near East, joined in October as an editor for SCHEP. He has directed archaeological projects in Jordan since 1989 and specializes in archaeological method and theory, ancient technology, and the archaeometric study of ceramics and metals.



Matthew Vincent, who has been involved with the archaeology of Jordan since he joined his first excavation at Tall al-'Umayri in 2004, is now a project co-director for the National Inventory Project.



Lauren Erker, a PhD student in the Islamic Archaeology Research Unit at the University of Bonn in Germany, serves as the archaeologist for SCHEP's work on the Amman Citadel.



Ayman Kharma joined the American Center in November 2022 as projects accounts manager, dealing with program activities, budgets, expenditures, reporting, and other duties in support of the chief financial officer, project managers, and other staff. He has a BA in accounting from the University of Jordan and

brings fifteen years of experience.

Maen Al Omari joined the American Center as senior accountant for SCHEP in November 2022. He holds a BA in accounting from Yarmouk University and has eleven years of experience.



Ala'a Al Badarin joined the American Center of Research in November 2022 as the archaeological and preservation projects supervisor. She received her MSc in heritage visualization from the Glasgow School of Art/University of Glasgow and has formal training in

architectural engineering.

Archives Update

Ryder Kouba

The past six months have been quite successful for the ACOR Digital Archive and its work providing access to thousands of photographs donated over the years: 6,530 images were added. The Barbara A. Porter, Brian Byrd, and Paul and Nancy Lapp collections made up the bulk of this material, contributing photos from around the region and North Africa, including Lebanon, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Iran, and Jordan. Jordan is featured in archaeological projects and sites that Brian Byrd documented in the 1980s, including Amman, Qusayr Amra, and Wadi Hasa, among others.

In addition to being overrun by 35 mm slides (as anyone who has seen Ryder Kouba's office can attest), which were digitized in-house, we had more than one hundred Betamax and VHS tapes in the audiovisual collection to deal with. These were digitized by a vendor and are now online as well. The videos, from the mid-1980s to early 1990s, document the construction of the present American Center building and lectures at the center, as well as videos on the center itself and the Petra Church project.



*Scanned 35 mm slide in the Barbara A. Porter collection:
Colorful items for sale in a Sidi Bou Said, Tunisia, souvenir shop.*

We are always looking to document the history of Jordan and the region through archival collections, including archaeological projects (notebooks, photos, maps, etc.) and primary research material, as well as photographs or documentation of any number of subjects. We are always happy to hear from potential donors and explore the possibility that their collections fit into our guidelines as we continue to expand the archives.

Online
acor.digitalrelab.com



Participants in the UCN conference on the American Center veranda. (Photo by P. P. Creasman.)

2022 Conference of the United States-Jordan University Cooperation Network (UCN)

Mark S. Johnson (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

The U.S.-Jordan University Cooperation Network (UCN), which was formed in 2018 and is now being operated out of the Fulbright Commission in Amman (formally the Jordanian-American Commission for Educational Exchange, or JACEE), is dedicated to supporting and intensifying cooperation between U.S. and Jordanian universities in research, education, and community service.

The organizers of the UCN were pleased to cooperate with the leadership and staff of the American Center of Research to host the final session of a conference held in Amman in July of 2022, and the center also graciously hosted a reception for U.S. participants and visiting scholars, many of whom also stayed at the center's residence. The UCN conference, hosted by the International Affairs Unit (IAU) of the University of Jordan, was on "New Approaches to US-Jordan University Cooperation for Sustainable Development" and was held July 24–25, 2022, down the hill from the center at the UJ main campus. Presenters and participants came from numerous Jordanian universities, as well as from the University of Florida, the University of Arizona, the University of Nebraska Medical Center, North Carolina State University, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Yale University, the University of Nevada-Reno, and Purdue

University. Conference sessions included innovations in university teaching and learning; "public health and one health"; climate change and agricultural innovation; cybersecurity and computer sciences; dryland agriculture and water conservation; alternative energy; services and social inclusion for refugees and displaced students; and innovative approaches to community engagement and public outreach around climate change. We would like to recognize the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy Jordan for their encouragement and financial support and the leadership and staff of the American Center for their generosity during the July 2022 events.

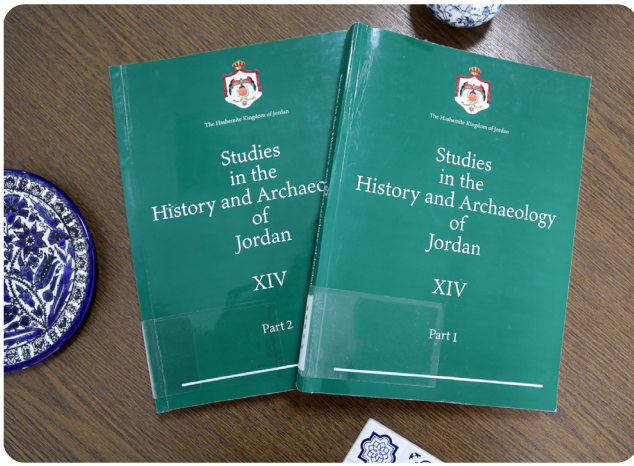
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RAWABIT: The U.S.-Jordanian University Cooperation Network:

fulbright.org.jo

Tours July–December 2022

Trustee Øystein LaBianca and visitors from Andrews University were shown the newly renovated center by executive director Pearce Paul Creasman in July, as was, in December, a group from the University of Warsaw accompanied by Dino Politis. At Petra, Jihad Haron, our associate director, led a tour of the Temple of the Winged Lions for Dr. Paul Zimmerman and eight other archaeologists on August 13, as well as tours for several individuals and groups arranged by the Discovery Bespoke travel agency in November and December.



Publication of *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan* 14

Noreen Doyle

The Fourteenth International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan took place in Florence, Italy, January 21–25, 2019. Given the theme “Culture in Crisis: Flows of Peoples, Artifacts and Ideas” and organized under the patronage of HRH Prince El-Hassan Bin Talal, the conference drew a large gathering of scholars both new and established. The programming

The ACOR library's own copies of SHAJ 14. (Photo by A. F. Ghareeb.)

resulted in the publication of more than fifty papers as *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan* 14. Published by the Department of Antiquities, SHAJ 14 was edited by Fadi Bala'awi, general director of the Department of Antiquities, and Pearce Paul Creasman, the American Center of Research's executive director, with Dr. Carrie L. Sulosky Weaver, adjunct teaching professor at the University of Pittsburgh's Department of Classics, providing the final copyediting and arrangement of the contents. Other DoA and American Center staff—Mohammad Naser, Hanadi Al Taher, Dr. China P. Shelton, Hala Alsyooof, Mariam Ibrahim, Osama Eid, Dr. Ali Alhajj, and Noreen Doyle—assisted in various phases of the editorial process. Doyle, the American Center's assistant director for publications and grants, designed and typeset SHAJ 14 in two parts because of its great size—more than 900 pages in all. Along with the introduction and keynote address, papers on prehistory, the Bronze Age, and Iron Age and Nabatean archaeology occupy part one; papers addressing the Greco-Roman, Byzantine and Islamic periods, as well as archaeological methods, excavation, curation, and reception, make up part two. Copies may be obtained directly from the Department of Antiquities, and the volumes can also be found at our library.



Second Workshop of the First Regional Conference on Cultural Property Protection

In August 2021, the first in a series of three regional workshops addressing the problem of the illicit trade in antiquities was held, undertaken by the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE), the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC), and the U.S. Department of State. American Center staff were important participants at this first workshop. The second workshop, Site Management: Strategies and Practices, took place in Amman, September 5–8, 2022, with our support.

Participants in the Amman workshop of the conference, which was supported by the American Center of Research, from left to right: Dr. Amel Hachana (Tunisia); Dr. Mohamed Al Sakkaf (Yemen); Dr. Mohammed Rahoumah (Libya); Dr. Mohammed El Seaidy (Egypt); Prof. Fadi Bala'awi (Jordan); Dr. Laith Hussein (Iraq); Mr. Jihad Yasin (Palestine).
(Photo by P. P. Creasman.)

For this event, government officials and representatives from around the region convened in person to discuss the impacts of the region's challenging political and economic circumstances and climate change on its vast and varied cultural heritage. The workshop resulted in suggestions for effective practices and strategies to preserve and manage these resources under such conditions.

Donations (July–December 2022)

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Some of our board members, fellows, friends, and executive director gathered in Amman to watch Morocco in the 2022 FIFA World Cup, held in Qatar. It was the first World Cup to take place in the region.

From left to right:

(sitting): Ahmed Abu Ghazaleh; James Murren; Hala Lattouf; Jenna de Vries Morton; Pearce Paul Creasman; Yorke Rowan; Dawn Mack Goddard; (standing): Reem Habayeb; Maureen Schafer.

(Photo courtesy of ACOR.)

November 2022 Board Meeting

The board of trustees meeting took place in person on November 19, 2022, at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel in Boston, MA, with some members attending remotely via Zoom. Edward ("Skip") Gnehm called the meeting to order and noted that a quorum was present. Three new members were elected to the board: Prof. Andrew Smith II to the class of 2023, Prof. Maysoon Al-Nahar to the class of 2024, and Prof. April Nowell to the class of 2025. Prof. Lawrence T. Geraty was elected trustee emeritus. Skip Gnehm updated the full board on matters addressed by the Executive Committee in the interim since the May board meeting. Executive director Pearce Paul Creasman gave his update to the board. It has been busy in Amman, with five fellows resident in the fall and the lecture series up and running. The library is open; we are working to raise usership by promoting it at local universities and may open sometimes in the evenings. The Abdoun Community Archaeology Project, where volunteers can come to excavate, went well this past summer and is now closed for the winter, but it will resume in spring 2023. We received another SCHEP extension, and the National Inventory Project began in October. We are also still working with the Department of Antiquities on three projects that will take place at Aqaba, Kerak, and Bayt Ras. Treasurer David Nickols reported on the center's financial situation, which is still strong despite recent drops in the stock market. The 2023 budget was approved. Prof. Sharon Herbert, president of the American Society of Overseas Research (ASOR), visited the meeting for updates and discussion. The board approved the appointment of April Nowell to the position of Named Fellowship Subcommittee chair. Work is still proceeding on legacy publications. The next board meeting will take place in Washington, D.C., on April 15, 2023.

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