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Participants in the project's first- and second-level training courses, accompanied by Prof. Fadi Bala'awi, director general of the Department of Antiquities, and Dr. Ahmed Fatima Kzzo, director of the project. (Photo by A. F. Ghareeb.)

The Prevention of Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property Project From Training to Sustaining

Ahmed Fatima Kzzo

The Prevention of Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property Project has made significant strides since it began in September 2021, courtesy of funding from the Embassy of the United States in Jordan. An important foundation document for the project, which runs until September 2023, is a memorandum of understanding signed by the United States and Jordan in December 2019. That MOU set out as one of its purposes the protection of Jordan's artifacts as defined under Jordanian law, a definition that encompasses everything from pottery to coins to mosaic tesserae to manuscripts to animal, plant, and human remains, and much else, pre-dating 1750. Jordan has long been a pioneer in controlling the antiquities trade, which

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it outlawed in 1976, and the project is designed to ensure that the country stands at the forefront of such efforts in the region.

Following several meetings with directors and sector heads in the Department of Antiquities of Jordan (DoA), the project team implemented a gap analysis and devised a plan to bridge these gaps. We identified the equipment essential for supporting DoA efforts to fight illicit trafficking of cultural heritage, including its Anti-Smuggling/Trafficking Unit, and we designed adaptive courses to increase its efficiency and capacity. To raise awareness of the project and its impact among both the academic and non-academic public, we participated in international conferences and created an account on Twitter (now called X) (link, p. 4). We seize every opportunity to promote the importance of cultural property, thus creating additional activities to raise awareness and achieve the project's goals, which last beyond the life of the project itself.

Equipment and Training

The quantity and quality of the equipment were defined to cover the DoA's most important workplaces. It consists of desktops, laptops, barcode printers and scanners, professional and compact cameras, and indoor

and outdoor photographic lights. The equipment was delivered to be distributed to the DoA directorates in Amman, Irbid, Balqaa, Mafrqa, and Aqaba, governorates chosen because they have an international airport or a land border with a neighboring country. For reaching rural areas, the equipment included tools for outdoor use. Thus, it is possible to form travel kits that can help employees during their missions in remote areas to document artifacts or illegal excavations. In addition to this hardware equipment, we supplied the DoA with software to increase efficiency, providing a three-year license for the video-editing program Adobe Premiere Pro. This application will support the DoA's production of videos to raise awareness of the importance of cultural heritage and its protection.

To teach the DoA staff how to operate the equipment, we led a training course about 1-D and 2-D coding systems, which are barcodes and QR codes, respectively. We concentrated on the QR code for its high margin of correction, meaning that a QR code can be read even when damaged. This system will help to track and control artifacts in an easy and more efficient way.

Training Courses

One of the main objectives of the project is to organize training courses on various aspects of fighting the illicit trafficking of cultural property for the DoA's employees. We divided the courses into two levels. First-level courses were held in three regions: central (for the governorates of Amman, Madaba, Zarqa, and Balqaa), northern (for the governorates of Irbid, Mafrqa, Ajloun, and Jarash), and southern (for the governorates of Karak, Tafilah, Ma'an, and Aqaba). The first level consisted mainly of lectures about legislation, conventions, and international organizations related to cultural property, whereas courses in the second/advanced level—held in Amman at the American Center of Research—concentrated on practical procedures and more specific legal issues. Those who took part in the advanced level were drawn from successful first-level participants, with their geographical distribution taken into account. Altogether, the project trained a total of forty-seven DoA employees, who occupied various positions, such as inspectors, museum curators, and section heads. Women made up nearly forty percent of the trainees. Courses included field visits to museums (the Jordan Museum in Amman; Dar al-Saraya in Irbid), sites (Aqaba Castle, Ayla, and the Aqaba Church), and the DoA's Unit for Fighting Illicit Trafficking, so that participants could see some actual confiscated artifacts and learn about the protocols developed to protect objects and sites from illegal excavations. Supplementing in-person lessons, lectures were also recorded for sharing during the courses, which allowed the project to engage experts who might not



Delivering equipment to the DoA. (Photo by A. F. Ghareeb.)

be able to otherwise participate. To bridge the language gap, the recordings were translated and subtitled in Arabic or English, as appropriate.

The sessions covered different aspects related to fighting illicit trafficking. Risks to Jordanian cultural heritage were addressed by Fadi Bala'awi, director general of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan. McKenzie Louw, cultural affairs officer at the American Embassy in Jordan, emphasized American-Jordanian cooperation and the results of the MOU related to import restrictions on Jordanian archaeological materials. A session on using satellite imagery and drones for monitoring archaeological sites was presented by Austin "Chad" Hill, a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Pennsylvania. Morag Kersel of DePaul University's Department of Anthropology (and the second vice president of ACOR's board of trustees) presented observations of the antiquities market and consumer types. Legislation and international conventions were explained by project director Ahmed Fatima Kzzo. Patty Gerstenblith, distinguished research professor of law and faculty director at DePaul University, focused on the differences among national laws and the implementation of international conventions. A lecture by Noah Charney, an American art historian and founder of the Association for Research into Crimes against Art, addressed authentic and fake artifacts. In addition, a survey about the damage to Iraqi cultural heritage and cases of repatriation was presented by Helen Malko, ACOR's former associate director, and cases from Jordan were presented by our current associate director, Jihad Haron. In addition, cases from Egypt and requests for the return of cultural property under the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of

Trustee Emeritus

Prof. Moawiyah M. Ibrahim

The board expresses its gratitude for Prof. Ibrahim's many years of service to ACOR, including as a trustee from 2006 to 2022, and, in recognition, has named him trustee emeritus.

Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property were covered by Ali Ahmad Farhan, former director of the Antiquities Restitutions Directorate in Egypt. Aktham Oweidi, DoA director of excavations, and Mohammad Nasser, head of the DoA's Anti-Smuggling/Trafficking Unit, provided sessions about the department's efforts in combating trafficking and presented confiscation cases and fake and authentic artifacts; they also explained the protocols between the DoA and law-enforcement entities in cases related to cultural-heritage crimes.

As part of the coursework, short papers related to cases of smuggled objects, repatriated artifacts, illegal excavations, and international conventions were delivered by participants, who received certificates of either completion or attendance.

Additional Activities

The project does not limit itself to the employees of the DoA; it has extended its activities to participate in other projects, offering awareness and training sessions. During a program organized by the Petra National Trust dedicated to capacity-building for the employees of the General Organization for Antiquities and Museums of Yemen, held

in January 2023 (see p. 14), we gave a training session about the functionality of international organizations and tools used to report stolen cultural property. Another session was provided for trainees working in the archaeological excavations at the Amman Citadel, led by SCHEP (p. 4). Volunteers in the Abdoun Community Archaeology Project also received an awareness lecture (p. 11).

Communications

The project's Twitter (X) account publicizes events and related news so

Participants in the project's advanced (second-level) training are shown confiscated artifacts at the Department of Antiquities in Amman. (Photo by A. F. Kzzo.)





Examples of confiscated artifacts at the DoA.
(Photo courtesy of the Department of Antiquities.)

that it is readily available to all interested members of the public.

We have also given two formal scholarly presentations to bring the attention of colleagues to the project and its impact. Last year, we presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Overseas Research, which took place in Boston. This year we presented the project at the

USAID SCHEP Updates: January-June 2023

John Shearman & Shatha Abu Aballi



Amman Citadel and Downtown Trail Projects: Preserving Heritage, Boosting Tourism

The Urban Heritage Regeneration Project for the Amman Citadel and Downtown Trail aims to improve and rehabilitate Amman's historic downtown district. The project, which has the support of the Royal Court and numerous government organizations such as the Department of Antiquities (DoA), the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA), and the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM), aims to turn the location into an attractive tourist destination while promoting business activity and presenting new investment opportunities for the local community. The project seeks to revitalize this historic route and improve tourism opportunities by connecting various communities while also connecting the Amman Citadel with the downtown Roman Theater and other archaeological and heritage elements along the way.

The Tourism Trail Project will focus on connecting neighborhoods and communities that have often been

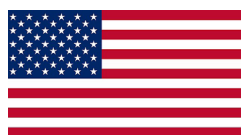
Thirteenth International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (ICAANE), held in Copenhagen from May 22 to 26, 2023.

Sustainability

For sustainability of the project after its closing in mid-September of this year, we are building a webpage and a manual, both of which will be available to the public. The webpage will offer all the learning materials used during the courses, including useful links. The manual will concentrate on the importance of international conventions, including the 2019 MoU between Jordan and the U.S. to restrict the trafficking of Jordanian cultural property.

Online

acorjordan.org/prevention-of-illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property-project
[@prevtrafficking](https://twitter.com/prevtrafficking)



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.

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.

overlooked. By engaging the local community through collaboration, training opportunities, and job creation, the Tourism Trail Project seeks to bring the city's heritage to the forefront and increase tourism mobility between the Amman Citadel and the Roman Theater.

In pursuit of this objective, an assessment and analysis of the spatial, social, and economic assets and challenges of the tourism path were conducted, along with an assessment of the needs of the local community. To involve the community in the process, a workshop was held in January with residents of the Amman Citadel area and stakeholders from the Ministry of Tourism. The workshop discussed the proposed tourism trail and its potential impact on the area.

Another significant aspect of the project was a study and design initiative associated with the stability and preservation of the Amman Southern Slope, which also provides a southern entrance to the Citadel plateau. A topographical, hydrological, and stability study was conducted along with drainage design that will assist in the preservation of the remnants and remaining old and modern structures on the slope. The investigations revealed rainwater courses and slope stability that supported the

engineering design. A local engineering design firm was utilized as the lead in this part of the process. The final report, which includes the technical and engineering aspects, was successfully submitted to the MoTA and DoA, and the ACOR Library retained a copy.

As part of the project, an archaeological field school was established on the southern slope. It focused on on-site supervision and documentation, theoretical lectures, and “first-aid” archaeological excavation work. Through this project, four individuals with little previous field experience and five workers from the local community were trained, emphasizing the importance of preserving urban archaeology.

Trainings for the Strategy for the Management of Jordan’s Archaeological Heritage 2023–2027

In the recently published *Strategy for the Management of Jordan’s Archaeological Heritage 2023–2027*, a thorough plan has been developed for preserving the country’s history and fostering sustainable tourism. As part of our support for the strategy, training is an important component. Various workshops have been held as part of the strategy implementation, to give key stakeholders the abilities and information needed to implement the strategy plan.

Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation was one of the main training programs. Its goal was to give participants a solid foundation in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) methods. Thirty attendees representing various technical and administrative backgrounds gladly participated in the two-day training. They gained knowledge of data-gathering techniques, key performance indicators (KPIs), and efficient reporting through interactive seminars and practical activities.



One of the local community members who participated in the Amman Tourist Trail workshop shows participants her location on the trail and presents her idea about how she can provide a new experience for tourists. (Photo by Shatha Abu Aballi.)

The Human Resources Management workshop held in association with Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Academy was another training opportunity for young associates. The eighteen-hour program included sixteen members from various governmental and non-governmental groups, among them the DoA and Petra National Trust. The program addressed subjects such as labor-structure studies and human-resource planning, with the goal of enhancing HR capabilities for successfully implementing the heritage strategy.

Furthermore, representatives from the DoA and other connected organizations participated in an advanced workshop titled Conservation Documentation 1 and 2,



Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop at the Dead Sea: all participants with Prof. Fadi Bala'awi, Dr. John Shearman (SCHEP COP), and ACOR staff.
(Photo from the ACOR collection.)



Taher Falahat of the PDTRA and Yumna Ghanem of the University of Jordan practice documentation tasks at Qusayr Amra, actively participating in the conservation documentation training. (Photo by A. F. Ghareeb.)

which was held in May. This included important facets of documentation and conservation, such as architectural interpretation, restoration methods, and creation of conservation reports. The participants from the DoA and the Petra Development and Tourism Regional Authority (PDTRA) had invaluable knowledge of how to maintain ancient structures and items, which helped further the larger goal of heritage conservation.

Twelve participants in the Beginners in Creative Videos training course at Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Academy polished their skills in producing effective advertising videos. The trainees were equipped with skills and practices to best exhibit ancient sites and their histories in an interesting and aesthetically pleasing way thanks to a concentration on mobile-based videography, editing methods, and narrative development.

ICOMOS-Jordan

ICOMOS-Jordan made great progress through the second funding cycle, which ran from February to June 2023.

A multilingual system on their website, which promotes access to a wider audience, and a member registration system for greater communication are major achievements. ICOMOS-Jordan created a plan for membership sustainability with university students' participation and held awareness sessions in universities. Participants' understanding of culture, heritage, and sustainable development was also improved through a two-day training course on sustainable development.

English Version of the Jordan Heritage Portal

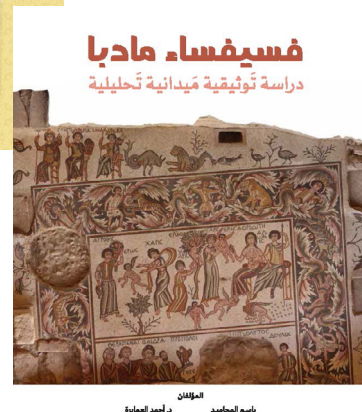
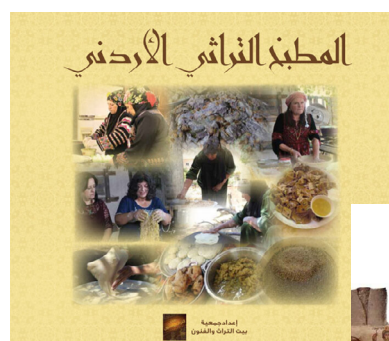
Having released the Arabic version of the Jordan Heritage Portal, the team continues work on translating the Arabic content into English. Allowing users to access content in

both languages increases the platform's accessibility. The work also included gathering projects for a "heat map" of cultural heritage; GIS coordinates are being assembled to show the distribution of sites and projects. Additionally, a central bulletin board is being created so that changes, events, and policies can be posted. These achievements represent significant advancement in the development of the Jordan Cultural Heritage Portal, which provides enthusiasts and stakeholders with educational and engaging elements. The English version of the portal will be released in the second half of this year.

New Publications

SCHEP supported the publication of two volumes that capture two different aspects of Jordan's past and present in an effort to preserve cultural heritage. Alida Al Madaeen and Hanan Daghmash's *Jordanian Traditional Cuisine* (in Arabic) examines Jordanian dishes as part of the country's intangible cultural heritage. Through in-depth conversations with local residents, researchers gathered information about everything from dish names to cooking methods. The book, published by Beit Al-Turath for Arts Association, honors Jordan's culinary heritage and is useful for both enthusiasts and scholars.

Madaba Mosaic: An Analytical Field Documentary Study (in Arabic) offers a thorough analysis of the intricate flooring and panels of Madaba. Written by Basem Al Mahamid and Ahmad Amireh and published by the Madaba Institute for Mosaic Art and Restoration, the book is an essential resource on these exceptional mosaics for future generations and reveals insights into maintenance and preservation methods.



These books, and others supported or published by ACOR and its projects, can be downloaded from:
publications.acorjordan.org/books



Fellows in Residence January–June 2023

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP: **Arpan Roy** (Program in Islamic Studies, Johns Hopkins University): Call to Prayer: Romani People and the Islamic Mission; **Yorke Rowan** (Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures, University of Chicago): Tracking the Small Things: Late Neolithic Material Culture of the Black Desert; **Sarah Wenner** (Classics, University of Cincinnati): South Jordan Ceramics as a Lens to Site Formation Processes. ACOR-CAORC POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP: **Kimberly Katz** (History, Towson University): Between Jordanian and International Law: UNRWA's Involvement in Jordanian Court Cases; **Sarah Islam** (Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University): Blasphemy (*Sabb al-Rasūl*) as a Legal Category in Islamic Law: Historical Formulations and Contemporary Applications; **Gary Rollefson** (Anthropology, Whitman College): Completing a Lithic "Library" for Future Late Neolithic Research in the Black Desert of Jordan. CAORC PREDOCTORAL FELLOWS: **Samar Ahmad** (History, Georgetown University): Gender and Revolution: A Social History of Jordan in the 1960s–1970s; **Nadine Fattaleh** (Media, Culture, and Communications, New York University): The Genesis of the Visual Culture of the Palestinian Revolution: Amman 1968–1971; **Johnathan Norris** (Anthropology, Boston University): Politics of Place: Emotion, Religiopolitical Networks, and Place-Making Amongst Syrian Refugees; **Nicolas Reeves** (International Development and Political Science, Sciences Po Paris and Freie Universität Berlin): The Impact of Low Tourism Demand on Tourism-Reliant Communities in Jordan.



Staff Retreat

An overnight retreat on May 10–11, 2023, brought staff to the Azraq Wetlands and Shaumari Reserve. The trip began with an early-morning departure from the center and took advantage of some desert castles along the way. Staff explored the historically significant sites of Qusayr, Amra, Kharana Castle, and Azraq Castle, appreciating their architectural and cultural value.

Subsequently, they had the opportunity to experience the remarkable Azraq Oasis, nestled within the heart of Jordan's Eastern Desert. This unique sanctuary, with its abundant birdlife and the awe-inspiring presence of feral water buffalos, was captivating. Observing these natural wonders served as a reminder of the importance of preserving and protecting the delicate ecosystem of the region.

On the following day, our staff ventured to the Shaumari Reserve, where they delighted in an exciting safari experience. We were thrilled to witness the grace and beauty of Arabian oryx—a species of antelope hunted nearly to extinction in the 20th century—in their natural



Above, left: A herd of Arabian oryx (*Oryx leucoryx*) in the Shaumari Reserve. (Photo by P. P. Creasman.)

Above, right: Staff at Azraq Castle. The fortress was established by the Romans on a previous Nabataean site, used to control the local oasis. It was subsequently reused and fortified by the Byzantines, Umayyads, Ayyubids, and Ottomans. In 1917, it served as T. E. Lawrence's desert base during the Great Arab Revolt. (Photo by M. Vincent.)

habitat. This encounter provided a valuable opportunity to appreciate the diverse wildlife and reaffirm the center's commitment to conservation efforts.



Mighty Aphrodites: Piecing Together the Petra North Ridge Aphrodite Statues

*Megan A. Perry, Mark Abbe, Michael Morris, &
Fatma Marii*

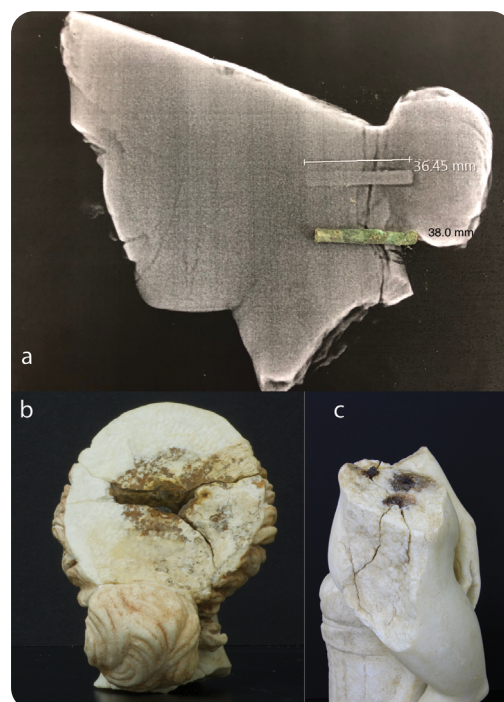
The excitement of archaeological research stems from its notoriously unpredictable discoveries. During the 2016 season, Petra North Ridge Project staff were surprised not only to discover a relatively well-appointed villa with a private bath in a seemingly nondescript residential area in Petra but also the broken fragments of two marble statues of Aphrodite in its ruins. In the six years since their discovery, project co-directors S. Thomas Parker and Megan A. Perry assembled a small group of experts to conserve, restore, and study these remarkable statues with funding provided by an ACOR-CAORC fellowship, an ASOR Harris Excavation grant, and a Patrimones Funding Initiative grant from the Gerda Henkel Foundation. On May 2, 2023, ACOR hosted the Petra Aphrodite-al 'Uzza Conservation Collaborative, which consisted of live-streamed paper presentations in the morning by Megan Perry, Mark Abbe, Michael Morris, and Fatma Marii, followed by a group visit to Aphrodite 1, now fully restored and mounted for display by Morris and assisted by Marii.

Perry described the archaeological context of the statues, suggesting they were initially fragmented during the 363 CE earthquake and then cached in the cryptoporticus of the villa for later reuse or recycling of their raw materials.

Abbe described how the statues were carved from imported materials from the Aegean, based on isotopic and petrographic work by Lorenzo Lazzarini of the University of Venice, and most likely transported to Petra as finished products. Aphrodite 1, dating to the 1st to early 2nd centuries CE, probably came from a Greek workshop that used Parian marble, and Aphrodite 2, carved in the late 2nd to mid-3rd century CE, from a workshop using Thasian marble. Abbe was able to identify a vast array of ancient pigments using infrared and ultraviolet imaging as well as x-ray fluorescence: Egyptian blue, red and yellow ochres, hematite, yellow goethite, black carbon, organic pink mixed with calcium white, and vestiges of gold leaf.

Morris discussed the conservation and restoration approaches taken with the statues, including the thorny issue of how to accommodate the multiple ancient repairs using varied materials in this work. The methods used to repair broken marble statues have not varied much in the past 2,000 years, with only the materials shifting from bronze or iron pins and hydraulic mortar in the ancient repair to carbon fiber rods and thermoplastic used here. Regardless of the materials, Morris points out, the goals are the same: a successful repair that is reversible using materials weaker than the surrounding marble, so that if the statue were to fall again, it would break along the earlier repair rather than causing new fractures in the marble. Finally, Fatma Marii spoke on how we can continue telling the story of these two statues in addition to ensuring their preservation in the long term.

Materials used in at least two, possibly three, ancient repairs: a) Bronze pin from right arm repair in Aphrodite 1 compared to x-ray of head showing bronze pin attaching chignon; b) Fracturing in head of Aphrodite 1 from expansion of iron pin adhering hair piece to head; c) spalling of marble from iron pins at waist of Aphrodite 2. (Photos by Michael Morris.)



Trustee Prof. John P. Oleson Receives the W. F. Albright Award

At its November 2022 annual meeting in Boston, the American Society of Overseas Research awarded Prof. John P. Oleson, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Greek and Roman Studies at the University of Victoria and Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, the W. F. Albright Award. ASOR grants this honor to an individual “who has shown special support or made outstanding service contributions to one of the overseas centers.” Prof. Oleson has long been an outstanding trustee of the American Center of Research, serving on nearly all of ACOR’s standing committees, chairing many (some at the same time), and being a constant source of valued advice and leadership. With an extensive corpus of published works and public presentations to scholarly conferences and local societies, Prof. Oleson serves as an inspiration for students and scholars of the region, making both the field and ACOR more robust and ensuring a vibrant future. The immense impact of his service and scholarship to date portends his continued contributions, with our gratitude.



John Oleson emerging from the painted tomb at Bayt Ras. (Photo by P. P. Creasman.)

Temple of the Winged Lions: Publication Project Update and New Sign

Nora Alomari

The American Center of Research has been dedicated to documenting and preserving the site of the Temple of the Winged Lions, a large Nabataean temple complex in Petra, while preparing it for publication. The TWL Publication Project is an ambitious collaboration involving specialists in archaeology, geology, architecture, material culture studies, conservation, education, and tourism. Two contributors have withdrawn from the work since it was proposed in 2020. However, so much has changed in the world since the proposal was originally developed (2019) and funded (2021) that we are pleased so many of the contributors remain engaged. A National Endowment for the Humanities Collaborative Research Grant (Manuscript Preparation) is making this possible by enabling scholars worldwide to contribute their knowledge to the volume, which will pave the way for new research on the Nabataeans and the broader region. To further enrich their studies, eight of the contributors have come to Jordan, and the Department of Antiquities has given permission for samples of ceramic fragments to be transported to New York University Abu Dhabi, where they will undergo detailed analysis and study under the guidance of William G. Zimmerle.

David Johnson, associate professor of anthropology at Brigham Young University, who is not formally associated with the project, generously donated digitized photos from

the American Expedition to Petra (AEP) excavations and site plans, enriching our collective understanding of this extraordinary site.

As part of our work at the TWL, staff make visits to Petra. During one of these, we were disheartened to discover vandalism at the site, particularly affecting the informational sign erected in 2018. Eager to preserve the site’s historical integrity and its fullest interpretive accessibility for visitors, ACOR has replaced the sign.



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*The National Endowment for the Humanities
and the American Center of Research together:
Democracy demands wisdom.*



Phillip C. Hammond, director of the AEP, and HRH Prince Raad Bin Zeid at the Temple of the Winged Lions, 1976. (Photo courtesy of David Johnson.)

Library Communication Skills Workshop

Samya Khalaf Kafafi

In order to support professional development of librarians in Jordan, ACOR hosted a course on “Communication and Communication Skills,” which focused on interacting with and supporting library users. The workshop, held June 25, introduced participants to the most important topics related to communication skills and effective communication and explained how to identify the elements of the communication process. Development and innovation trainer Ruba Abu Qaoud met twenty participants with a warm welcome. Together, they looked at the building blocks and features of communication, as well

as the influence one can have in shaping the ideas of others. This involved discussion of the science of communication and effective communication for librarians, communication barriers, active listening skills, and “speaking like a star.”

There was active participation by the attendees, who came from many scientific and educational institutions and centers and official Jordanian universities, including the University of Jordan Library, Yarmouk University, the Princess Sumaya University for Technology, Ammon Applied University College, the Hashemite Documentation Center, the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology, the Shoman Library, and the National Library of Jordan.



The National Inventory data specialist, Faris Saadeh (left), trains ACOR intern Chloe Marquardt on the assessment of archaeological materials in preparation for listing in the database. (Photo by A. F. Ghareeb.)

The National Cultural Heritage Property Database of the Kingdom of Jordan: Updates

Matthew Vincent & Jehad Haron

As we near the first anniversary of the National Cultural Heritage Property Database of the Kingdom of Jordan project, informally known as the National Inventory, we would like to share the substantial progress we have made over the past year.

One of our major achievements has been the integration of Axiell Collections into our systems at ACOR. Axiell is not just any tool; it is recognized globally and is the preferred software choice for many leading heritage institutions. What stands out for us, especially in our context, is its bilingual capacity. This means we can work efficiently with data in both English and Arabic. Plus, its user-friendly bilingual interface ensures that everyone, regardless of language preference, can navigate it with ease. Using Axiell reinforces our aim to make the National Inventory a regional benchmark for cultural property inventories.

With Axiell powering our efforts, have been busy cataloging our own material at the center, in order to stress-test the system. Our museum collection is now fully integrated, and we are deep into organizing and inputting materials from the Temple of the Winged Lions excavations (see p. 9).

Our team has grown stronger with the addition of Faris Saadeh and AbedalFatah Ghareeb. Saadeh, known in the archaeological circles of Jordan, brings to us a mix of technical know-how, archaeological insight, and linguistic skills. Ghareeb, who has a long history with SCHEP (pp. 4–6), adds depth with his IT expertise, photography skills, and genuine enthusiasm for our mission.

Looking forward, we are excited about crafting a comprehensive manual and developing training materials. These resources will be vital as we begin to integrate collections from across the country and empower local stakeholders to integrate and manage their collections through the National Inventory.

Our commitment to celebrating and preserving Jordan’s rich cultural heritage is unwavering. Through the National Inventory, we hope to make this heritage more accessible and better understood by all.

Your continued interest, support, and feedback are invaluable to us. We look forward to sharing more milestones with you as our journey continues.



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.

Exploring Layers of History: Progress and Community Engagement at the Abdoun South Archaeological Site

Jehad Haron & Matthew Vincent

As archaeologists, we often find ourselves standing at the crossroads of history and discovery, attempting to piece together the fragments of the past to uncover the stories of ancient civilizations. Archaeology is not just about the study of historical artifacts, but also about the process of unraveling the mysteries behind them. At Abdoun South, we have embarked on a twofold mission. First, we aim to actively engage with our community, allowing people from diverse backgrounds to experience the thrill of archaeological discovery firsthand. Secondly, our objective is to delve deeper into the site, revealing its story and answering the questions about its origins and function throughout history.

In the first season of 2023, the site bustled with activity as we welcomed a plethora of volunteers—over seventy individuals who added tremendous value to our work (also see photo on p. 16). Their dedication and curiosity helped us progress significantly in our understanding of the area. As we look forward to the second season, we are hopeful for another batch of equally enthusiastic participants.

Abdoun South presents an intricate archaeological landscape. Extensive modern activity has significantly obscured the site's historical layers, making it challenging to identify pristine archaeological contexts. However, our recent excavations suggest that this area has seen at least four distinct phases of occupation. While there's much left to ascertain, here is what we know so far:

Iron Age 1 Transition

The earliest signs of occupation point toward the end of Iron Age I (early 1st millennium BCE). At this level, we have discovered remnants of what appears to be a solitary building, possibly used for storage. It offers a glimpse into the simplicity of early architecture and the primary needs of its inhabitants.

Iron Age Expansion

As we move forward in time, the site starts to unveil more complex architectural designs. The previously solitary building expands, giving way to casemate walls that encircle a possible open courtyard. This transition signifies a potential shift in societal structures and the evolving needs of the community.

Byzantine Occupation

One of the most surprising discoveries is evidence of a Byzantine presence at the site. Due to its proximity to the



Project co-director Matthew Vincent (left) explains the features of the site to the Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Program group. (Photo by A. F. Ghareeb.)

nearby ancient wine and olive presses, we assume that they were contemporary with one another and possibly part of the same community.

Late Ottoman Period

The final phase we have identified points toward use of the site as a sheep pen. While the exact origins remain challenging to determine, it is plausible to believe that this usage extended to fairly recent times.

The multiplicity of occupations is a testament to the ever-changing nature of human settlements and their adaptability over time. Each phase presents a new set of questions, a new mystery to solve, driving our commitment to investigate further.

The site remains a goldmine of historical information, waiting to be thoroughly examined and understood. As we strive to uncover its intricacies, we are reminded of the importance of community involvement. The collective passion and curiosity of our volunteers enhance the depth of our research. We are excited about the prospects of the upcoming season and hope to present even more revelations about this long-overlooked archaeological marvel.

Online

acorjordan.org/abdoun-community

Call for Submissions!

ARCHAEOLOGY IN JORDAN 4

The deadline for *AIJ* 4 (covering work in 2022–2023) is April 1, 2024. For details, visit:

publications.acorjordan.org/how-to-submit-aij

Open House for Jordanian Students

Samya Khalaf Kafafi

Because it is in the interest of the American Center of Research to raise awareness among Jordanian students about the annual fellowships they are eligible for, we held an open house on January 7. Nearly forty undergraduate and graduate students from several Jordanian universities attended to find out about the opportunities available to them for study at universities in Jordan and abroad. Because these grants can provide significant assistance in financing and otherwise supporting their research, staff offered guidance for how to properly fill out the application and what the required papers are.

This interactive event was organized by associate director Jehad Haron, associate librarian Samya Kafafi, and librarian and archivist Ryder Kouba, who showcased

the opportunities available. We were very happy for the interest of all the attendees and look forward to seeing the research they will conduct as a result.



Students at the open house. (Photo by A. F. Ghareeb.)

Fellowship Awardees

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP: **Sarah Wenner** (Postdoctoral, University of Cincinnati, Classics), South Jordan Ceramics as a Lens to Site Formation Processes. ACOR-CAORC POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP: **Kimberly Katz** (Professor, Towson University, History), Between Jordanian and International Law: UNRWA's Involvement in Jordanian Court Cases; **Suzanne Richard** (Professor, Gannon College, History and Archaeology), Archaeological Expedition to Khirbat Iskandar and Its Environs, vol. 2: Final Report on the Early Bronze IV Area B Settlements; **Gary Rollefson** (Professor Emeritus, Whitman College, Anthropology), Completing a Lithic "Library" for Future Late Neolithic Research in the Black Desert of Jordan. ACOR-CAORC PREDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP: **Nadine Fattaleh** (Graduate Student, New York University, Media, Culture, and Communications), The Genesis of the Visual Culture of the Palestinian Revolution: Amman 1968–1971; **Molly Hickey** (Graduate Student, Harvard University, Political Science), The Political Economy of Reform under Authoritarianism; **Alex Jreisat** (Graduate Student, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Interdisciplinary Program in Anthropology and History), Occluded Circulations: Mapping the Smuggling Histories Straddling the Jordan River. BERT AND SALLY DE VRIES FELLOWSHIP: **Annmarie Delgado** (Undergraduate Student, University of California, Berkeley, Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures), Dhiban Excavation and Development Project. JENNIFER C. GROOT MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP: **Shane Cook** (Undergraduate Student, Wilfred Laurier University, Archaeology/History), Town of Nebo Archaeological Project; **Holly O'Neil** (Graduate Student, Simon Fraser University, Archaeology), Renewed Archaeological Survey of the Azraq Wadis Sectors; **Miya Pletsas** (Undergraduate Student, Wilfred Laurier University, Archaeology and Heritage Studies), Khirbat al-Mukhayyat Archaeological Project; **Annetta Savvidis** (Undergraduate Student, Wilfred Laurier University, Archaeology and Heritage Studies), Khirbat al-Mukhayyat Archaeological Project. HARRELL FAMILY FELLOWSHIP: **Timothy Loh** (Graduate Student, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, History, Anthropology and Science, Technology, and Society [HASTS]), Assistive Technologies for Deaf People in Jordan: Entanglements of Language, Religion, and Disability. KENNETH W. RUSSELL MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP: **Natalia Handziuk** (Graduate Student, University of Toronto, Anthropology), Archaeological Expedition to Khirbat Iskandar. LAWRENCE T. GERATY TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP: **Hafsa Al-Jandabi** (Undergraduate Student,

German Jordanian University, Architectural Conservation), Old City of Sana'a Salvage: Damage Assessment and Recommendations for Post-Conflict Conservation. PIERRE AND PATRICIA BIKAI FELLOWSHIP: **Benjamin Allison** (Graduate Student, University of Texas at Austin, Department of History), Through the Cracks of Détente: The Superpowers, the Arab "Radicals," and the Coming of the Second Cold War, 1977–1984. S. THOMAS PARKER MEMORIAL FUND: **Craig Harvey** (Postdoctoral, University of Western Ontario, Classical Studies), Khirbet al-Khalde Archaeological Project. BURTON MACDONALD AND ROSEMARIE SAMPSON FELLOWSHIP: **David Minielly** (Undergraduate Student, Wilfred Laurier University, Archaeology and History), Khirbat al-Mukhayyat Archaeological Project. JORDANIAN GRADUATE STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP: **Rudaina Almomani** (Graduate Student, The University of Jordan, History), The History of Settlement and Planning in Jabal Al-Weibdeh Amman Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) between 1900–1990; **Jenan Hourani** (Graduate Student, The Hashemite University, Queen Rania Faculty of Tourism and Heritage, Department of Sustainable Tourism), Exploring the Potential of Developing Abila as a Sustainable Heritage Tourism Site. JAMES A. SAUER FELLOWSHIP: **Bayan Mujahed** (Graduate Student, German Jordanian University, Architectural Conservation), Investigating Amman's Modern Cultural Heritage: Mid-Twentieth-Century Single-Family Houses. FREDERICK-WENGER JORDANIAN EDUCATIONAL FELLOWSHIP: **Husam Hamdan** (Undergraduate Student, The Hashemite University, Queen Rania Faculty of Tourism and Heritage), University Study; **Lama Khaled Maabreh** (Graduate Student, Yarmouk University, Faculty of Education, Department of Curriculum and Teaching Methods), University Study. ACOR JORDANIAN TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP FOR ASOR ANNUAL MEETING: **Fardous Al-Ajlouny** (The Hashemite University), The Application of Laser Scanning and Photogrammetry for the Documentation, Preservation and Conservation of Miniature Figurative Ancient Pieces from Southern Levant in the Early Bronze Age (Khirbet Ez Zeraqon Miniature Figurative Pieces, Case Study); **Jalal Alheji** (Yarmouk University), Neolithic Lithic Sickle Blades of Tell Abu Suwwan from 2005–2008, 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2022); U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TITLE VI EDUCATOR FELLOWSHIP: **Monika Bachmann** (Geography, Prince George's Community College); **Cassandra Farrell** (Map Collection, Library of Virginia); **Silvio Gaggi** (Humanities and Cultural Studies, University of South Florida); **Breanna Hooks** (Mathematics, Santa Fe College); **Rebecca J. Johnston** (English, Santa Fe College); **Lori Merlak** (Kirkwood Community College).

Library and Archive Updates

Ryder Kouba

In addition to workshops held at the library (pp. 10, 12), the first half of 2023 saw the library add 367 items to the catalog, including 194 physical books, journals, and a number of individual articles, as well as open-access online resources. As usual, the topics covered leaned toward archaeology, but other social sciences and humanities were well represented. Thanks to a donation by Edward “Skip” Gnehm, the Gulf region features prominently in early 2023 acquisitions, while thanks to Linda K. Jacobs, numerous social sciences books were added to our shelves. A selection of notable or interesting books acquired in the first half of 2023 include: *Time and Power in Azraq Refugee Camp: A Nine-to-Five Emergency* by Melissa Gatter (American University in Cairo Press, 2023), *Gertrude Bell: Queen of the Desert, Shaper of Nations* by Georgina Howell (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), and *Ebla: Archaeology and History* by Paolo Matthiae (Routledge, 2020).

The physical archives in the center were reorganized, and the ACOR Digital Archive continues to grow, with 10,778 items made accessible in the first half of 2023. Notable additions include 4,400 slides from the Robert Schick collection documenting archaeological sites across the region, videos of USAID SCHEP activities, and almost 4,000 slides from the Petra Church Project collection. We are, of course, always open to donations of physical or digital materials of enduring historical value that document an aspect of the region (be it archaeology, architecture, social life, or most anything else).

Staff Awards and Achievements

Lina Shara'an

Hanadi Al Taher presented “Origins and Connotations of Site/Place Names in Jordan” at the Ninth Arab Conference of Arab Experts on Geographical Names (“Geospatial Integration: Significance and Impact,” December 5–7, 2022, in Muscat, Oman).

Ahmed Fatima Kzzo joined the ICOMOS International Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management as an expert member. In addition, he participated in the Thirteenth International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (ICAANE 13), one of the most important conferences related to ancient Near Eastern archaeology, held in Copenhagen, May 22–26, 2023. He presented a paper, “Fighting Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property in Jordan,” on behalf of Helen Malko, Jehad Haron, and Pearce Paul Creasman (ACOR) and Aktham Oweidi and Mohammad Nasser (DoA). The paper highlights the Prevention of Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property Project (pp. 1–4).

Executive director Pearce Paul Creasman also presented

Publications Update

Four new essays by ACOR fellows appeared on *Insights* over these six months:

- “Diverging Paths: A Socio-archaeological Investigation of Rural Settlement in Ottoman Palestine and Transjordan” by Lauren Erker
- “Water Use in Roman Cities” by Clare Rasmussen
- “In Small Things Remembered: Late Neolithic Material Culture of the Black Desert, Jordan” by Yorke Rowan
- “Toward a Romani Ethnology of Jordan” by Arpan Roy

All can be found at: publications.acorjordan.org/insights

Call For Applications TITLE VI EDUCATOR FELLOWSHIPS

We are offering three one-month remote fellowships for faculty members and administrators teaching at community colleges and/or minority-serving institutions. Educator Fellows will develop lesson plans or curricular materials, which will be made available via our open-access digital archive. For details, see:

acorjordan.org/news-and-events/title-vi-educator-fellowship-call-for-application

Deadline: October 31, 2023

a paper at ICAANE 13: “The American Center of Research and Sharing the History of the Past.”

Jehad Haron took part in several conferences: Strengthen the Capacity of the World Heritage Experts in the Arab Region (Aswan, Egypt, January 28–February 3, 2023), the Third International Conference of Tourism Management and Heritage Conservation (May 23rd–26th, 2023, Queen Rania Faculty of Tourism and Heritage, Hashemite University), and the First Regional Conference on Cultural Property Protection Series (Cairo, June 7–12, 2023).

Samya Khalaf Kafafi attended a 45-hour training course on “Documentation Management in Public Institutions,” given by the Royal Jordanian Hashemite Documentation Center (June 11–21, 2023).

Nora Alomari completed two training courses: “Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning for Development Professionals” (through PM4NGOs and Zain International at German Jordanian University) and “Beginners in Creative Videos” (SCHEP and Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Academy).

Public Events

Shatha Abu Aballi & Lina Shara'an

In this period's lecture series, a diverse range of online and live presentations were offered in both Arabic and English, making it a rich and educational experience. One notable lecture took place on March 13, delivered by José Ciro Martínez, titled "States of Subsistence: The Politics of Bread in Contemporary Jordan." During the presentation, he delved into the significance of *khubz 'arabi*, a popular flatbread in Jordan, and its impact on individuals' lives by providing social assistance. The lecture provided an in-depth analysis of how the stability of the state is maintained through regular acts and behaviors, closely examining both bakers and bureaucrats.

A presentation held on April 5, "Sustainable Tourism in the Middle East: Nature and Heritage Conservation," by Lubna Qaryouti, introduced a groundbreaking ecotourism approach created through joint EU programs. Her talk stressed the significance of combining protected areas, the tourism sector, and local communities for a good influence on the environment, preservation of cultural heritage,

Staff Updates

Lina Shara'an

Faris Saadeh joined the American Center of Research as a data-entry specialist for the National Inventory project (p. 10) in April 2023. He holds a master's degree in archaeology from the University of Jordan, where his thesis focused on the history of archaeological practice in the region. Saadeh has been actively involved in various research projects across Jordan and is passionate about preserving cultural heritage and raising awareness about the importance of protecting archaeological sites. He has volunteered with universities and organizations dedicated to this cause and has also presented at conferences and other events.

Chloe Marquardt, an undergraduate studying anthropology at Western Connecticut State University, joined on a three-week internship, during which she received training in the software used for the National Inventory (p. 10) and subsequently collaborated with our data specialists in the review and preparation process of data entry. To enrich her experience, we arranged for her visits to heritage sites around Madaba, where she could observe public-engagement aspects of heritage conservation, and she also participated in the Abdoun Community Archaeology Project (p. 11).



and improvement of the quality of local life. The season concluded on May 5 with a captivating presentation titled "Geology and Fossils from Jordan," by Abdalla Abu Hamad and Ikhlas Alhejoj. During this lecture, the speakers provided valuable insights into the various lithofacies (subdivisions of geographic layers) present in Jordan's rocks, shedding light on their ages and the importance of economically significant resources they hold. The presentation highlighted Jordan's structural location as an integral part of the Arabian tectonic plate, and fascinating seismological data on past earthquakes in the region was showcased. The talk was a compelling exploration of the geological wonders and rich history preserved within Jordan's rocks and fossils.

Those who missed our lectures can catch up by visiting our YouTube channel: youtube.com/acorjordan1968.

Yemeni Workshop

Hanadi Al Taher

In cooperation with the Petra National Trust (PNT) and with support of the ALIPH Initiative (International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas), we conducted the Preserving Yemen's Heritage through Physical Interventions and Capacity-Building Program for twelve employees of Yemen's General Organization of Antiquities and Museums/Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Information on January 7–27, 2023. This intensive regional program equipped participants with essential knowledge and expertise related to heritage preservation and management and focused on building a group of professionals capable of leading site-based intervention projects based on international best practices. The program came as a response to the urgent needs and requirements of the ministry as a result of the ongoing civil war in Yemen. Jordan plays a vital role in responding to regional crises not only in hosting refugee camps and providing medical support but also in the combat of illicit trafficking of cultural heritage properties and offering capacity-building programs. The American Center also has a strong history of offering cutting-edge training programs in cultural resources management, particularly for groups from Yemen and Iraq, in partnership with different organizations.

Our staff participated in this training program as coordinators and trainers, presenting the fruition of their knowledge and expertise to the trainees. Some specialists from national organizations and universities also gave lectures.

Photo, right (p. 15): The Yemeni trainees with the organizers and hosts of the training program from the American Center of Research and the Petra National Trust.

(Photo by A. F. Ghareeb.)

Donations (January–June 2023)

ANNUAL FUND

Björn Anderson; Mary Susan Barnette; Michael Becker; Robert and Mette Beecroft; Virginia L. Bennett in memory of David H. Bennett; Daniel Bernstein; Donald A. Best; James M. Buchanan; Michele V. Cloonan and Sidney E. Berger Fund; J. Glenn Cox; Pearce Paul Creasman; John Criner; Thomas Davis; Noreen Doyle; Paul E. Fitzpatrick; Priscilla Grew; Debbie Harper in memory of Dr. Phillip C. Hammond and his work on Petra's Temple of the Winged Lions; Ray Anita Hemphill in honor of Dr. Barbara A. Porter; Caroline Lovelace; Malcolm Hewitt Wiener Foundation; Zovinar Mananian in honor of Pearce Paul Creasman; Daniel Massey; Stanley M. Maxwell and Phemie C. Maxwell; The Initiative for the Science of the Human Past at Harvard and its MHAAM Collaboration through the auspices of Michael McCormick; Paul and Jean Nelson; John Oleson; Megan Perry; Meg Pickering and John Schmidt; Barbara A. Porter in honor of Joan Porter MacIver; Elizabeth Pratt in honor of Joan Porter MacIver and Barbara A. Porter; Barbara Reeves; Dennis R. Ryan; Cooper Schwartz; John Shearman; Andrew Michel Smith II; Sue E. Tatter; Claudia C. Vess; Virginia Wellington Cabot Foundation in memory of Anne Cabot Ogilvy; Thomas Whetstine in memory of Dr. Donald Wimmer

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Some of the participants in the Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Program—which brought American elementary and middle-school teachers and administrators to Jordan—excitedly discuss the potsherds they found while volunteering for the Abdoun Community Archaeology Project (see p. 11). (Photo by A. F. Ghareeb.)

Now Available

Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Report

1 January–31 December 2022

acorjordan.org/annualreports

April 2023 Board Meeting

The American Center of Research Board of Trustees meeting took place in person on April 15, 2023, at the Arab Gulf States Institute office in Washington, D.C. (with some members attending remotely via zoom). Edward (“Skip”) Gnehm called the meeting to order and noted that a quorum was present. Eight members of the class of 2026 were elected to the Board of Trustees (all returning prior members). Skip Gnehm updated the full board on matters addressed by the Executive Committee in the interim since the November board meeting. Acting executive director of CAORC, Heidi Wiederkehr, visited the meeting and updated the board on CAORC programming and priorities. Executive director Pearce Paul Creasman gave his update to the board, noting that staffing and operations are running well. The fellowship selection process had just concluded and there was an increase in application numbers, although we are always seeking higher numbers. ACOR is moving toward installing solar panels on the roof. The Abdoun South project will resume in spring 2023, and the National Inventory Project, directed by Matthew Vincent and Jihad Haron, is going well. Three projects operated in cooperation with the Department of Antiquities at Aqaba, Kerak, and Bayt Ras were anticipated to begin in May. Activity in the library and with public lectures has been lively. Treasurer David Nickols reported on the center’s financial situation, which is strong, especially since the market has leveled out. The board approved the appointment of non-trustee Dr. Jim Barnhart to join the Finance, Audit, and Investment Committee. The Planning Committee was dissolved and its duties transferred to the executive director and the Executive Committee. The next legacy ACOR publication to be completed is likely to be the Madaba Burnt Palace. Updates to the award amounts and numbers of awards given for various Named Fellowships were discussed and approved for the 2024–2025 application cycle based on improved financial circumstances. The next board meeting will take place in Chicago, IL, on November 18, 2023.

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