

Editorial

The publication of *Buried History* is again a little late and we apologise for that. The main reason for the delay is that the rejection rate for papers has left us short of a full issue until now, although the situation has not been as severe as last year. Some of the rejected papers will appear in the future after some revision.

One difficulty that faces us is that, while our contributors, reviewers and readers are predominantly international, the Australian ERA journal ranking system has awarded *Buried History* the lowest ranking; we are not aware of any objective assessment in this matter. The ranking means that Australian academics and researchers are not able to publish with us. There is a review of journal rankings currently underway and we hope that the standard that we have maintained over the last decade will be recognised.

Our Editorial Board has seen a number of recent changes. Dr John Wilson sadly passed away in January. He was Vicar-General of Victoria prior to his retirement a few years ago and his scholarly research was undertaken at Duke and Yale Universities. Over the last decade John was a staunch supporter of the Institute providing valuable advice, practical assistance and great encouragement.

Joining the Editorial Board in 2011 are Kenneth Kitchen, Emeritus Professor of Egyptology, University of Liverpool, and Dr Thomas Davis, who from July will be Professor of Archaeology and Biblical Backgrounds, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. We hope to appoint a number of additional scholars to the Editorial Board during the year.

The recent death of Professor Emeritus Anson Rainey also saddened us and we have commenced this edition of *Buried History* with a tribute to him. Anson was a scholar of great academic stature having mastery of his fields of research and the ability to offer well supported independent opinions. We will greatly miss his scholarship and friendship. We are indebted to David Bivin, Todd Bolan and Dr John Monson for assistance with illustrations.

Dr Thomas Davis visited Australia as a guest of the Australian Institute of Archaeology in 2010 and gave a number of fascinating lectures and seminars. The paper published here was one of them. Dr. Davis has been the director of the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute in Nicosia, Cyprus, since 2003 and has excavated in Cyprus, Jordan, Egypt, and in the United States, where he has substantial archaeological experience in cultural resource management. He is the author of *Shifting Sands: The Rise and Fall of Biblical Archaeology* (Oxford, 2004). Tom earned his Ph.D. at the University of Arizona, under the direction of Professor William G. Dever.

The Institute has a number of unpublished objects and in time we hope to remedy the situation. Emeritus Professor Kenneth Kitchen presents a reading of a rather fine fragment of an Old-South-Arabian inscription in the possession of the Institute. We hope that this exposure will contribute to the knowledge of the pre-Islamic culture of Southern Arabian peninsula.

Merrill Kitchen recently retired as Principal of the Churches of Christ Theological College in Melbourne. She was President of the Melbourne College of Divinity and will be awarded a Fellowship by the MCD in early May. Her paper explores early Jewish thought as demonstrated by synagogue mosaics as a background to the Gospel of Matthew.

Dr Lamia Salem el-Khoury is Associate Professor, Department of Archaeology, Yarmouk University, Jordan. She received her doctorate in 2001 at Mannheim University, Germany for a thesis entitled *The Nabataean Terracotta Figurines*. We are pleased to publish her paper on the stone grinding tools from the site of Barsinia in Northern Jordan.

As always we thank our reviewers and all who have contributed to this issue of *Buried History*.

Christopher J Davey