

Editorial

This edition of *Buried History* coincides with the official opening of the Institute's new premises adjacent to La Trobe University. Again there is a range of papers three of which have been provided by people residing outside Australia. Our practice has been to publish the journal at the end of the year, however as a number of papers for Volume 44 have already been submitted, its timing is likely to be earlier in the year.

We are honoured to begin with an important paper from Professor Naguib Kanawati. It draws on the annual lecture of the Institute that he gave in August and argues that the decoration in the Tomb of Mereruka presents a narrative that was constructed at least partly with the oversight of the tomb owner.

Dr Kanawati is Professor of Egyptology, Macquarie University. He is an Egyptologist with a special interest in the Old Kingdom having excavated at Akhmim, Dershaha, Hawara, Giza and Saqqara. In 1997 Professor Kanawati was elected Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities, in 2003 he received the Centenary Medal "for services to the Australian society and the humanities in the study of archaeology" and in 2007 he was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia.

Juan Manuel Tebes is Assistant Professor of Ancient Near Eastern History in the University of Buenos Aires and the Argentine Catholic University. His research has focussed on the History and Archaeology of the Iron Age in the southern Levant, especially in relation to peripheral societies, such as the Midianites. In recent years he has been Fellow at the W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem, and at the American Center of Oriental Research in Amman. We have been pleased to establish links with another southern hemisphere institution.

Tremper Longman is the Robert H. Gundry Professor of Biblical Studies and the chair of the department at Westmont Westmont College, Santa Barbara CA, USA. He is a prolific author having written a number of articles and books including *Fictional Akkadian Autobiography*, *In-*

troduction to the Old Testament, *How to Read the Psalms*, *Reading the Bible with Heart and Mind*, *Old Testament Commentary Survey*, *Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation*, and *God is a Warrior*. He has written a short commentary on the minor prophet Micah, as well as major commentaries on Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Daniel, and Nahum.

Professor Longman's paper provides a Biblical Scholar's perspective on the archaeological and historical issues associated with the Exodus and the conquest of Canaan. Readers will note that he is critical of a number of other scholars who have contributed to *Buried History* or whose work has been reviewed in it. Readers should be aware that *Buried History* does not have defined positions on issues and instead expects its contributors to respect the evidence and the views other serious scholars. Its editorial policy does however mean that it may pass up the opportunity to publish material that is not in its defined area of interest. The Institute was pleased to have supported Professor Longman's 2007 visit to Australia and will be supporting a visit in 2008 by Professor James Hoffmeier, one scholar with whom he takes issue.

Helen Merrillees lives in Provence in retirement with her husband Robert. She and Robert have had a long association with the Institute and she is the author of a monograph on all cylinder and stamp seals in Australia, which she is revising and will be published by the Institute later this year.

During 2007 the Institute published Susan Balderstone's monograph on *Early Church Architectural Forms* and we were delighted to have it launched by Rev. Professor Robert Gribben. Robert is President of the United Faculty of Theology, a Fellow of Queen's College and the University of Melbourne. Robert has kindly adapted his remarks made at the launch to be included herein as a review.

As ever we acknowledge the contribution of our referees without whose work this volume could not be produced.

Christopher J Davey