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Penn Museum

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM
of ARCHAEOLOGY and ANTHROPOLOGY

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Every Picture Tells a Story

WHEN I BEGAN EDITING *EXPEDITION* almost four years ago, I was unaware of the many wonderful stories associated with those who worked at the Museum, or the vast number of extraordinary objects on display and in our storerooms. Even as a graduate student at Penn, my research was generally confined to the Mediterranean and Near East collections. So I knew little about the history of this remarkable institution.

How does one capture 125 years of the Penn Museum in 48 pages? Which projects and people and artifacts should be highlighted? Working closely with Alessandro Pezzati, Senior Archivist, I read old books, magazines, and newspaper clippings; looked at hundreds of photographs and letters; and talked to those who had worked at the Museum for many years. We ended up with enough ideas on content to fill a book. What you see here is a small selection, a representative sampling, of stories associated with the Penn Museum since its founding in 1887, with a focus on the first 100 years. We have included more photographs than usual to recapture early 20th century life in Philadelphia, as well as the many scenes researchers witnessed in exotic locales. The men and women who worked at the Museum—excavators, explorers, epigraphers, professors, artists, researchers, scientists, editors, administrators, support personnel—were individuals with a keen sense of what must be presented to the public and preserved for future generations.

We open with “A Brief History of the Museum” written by Alessandro Pezzati. This is followed by a world map and short segments focused on each Museum section. We finish with “Museum Mosaic,” where you will read the latest news about the Museum, and an index of volume 54 of the magazine. This issue would not have been possible without many conversations with Alex Pezzati, who knows the Museum so well. Alex Fleischman and KC Boas helped with writing and assembling the components. Thanks are also due to Jennifer Quick, Bernard Wailes, Brian Spooner, Richard Zettler, Ann and David Brownlee, Ardeth Abrams, Eric Schnittke, Maureen Goldsmith, Elin Danien, Peter Harrison, Bill Wierzbowski, Gareth Darbyshire, Jennifer Wegner, Anne Marie Kane, and especially the Museum’s keepers and curators. 

Jane Hickman

JANE HICKMAN, PH.D.

Editor