Over the last several decades, Afghanistan has suffered from invasion, revolution, and civil war. Although we frequently read about the suffering experienced by the Afghan people, we rarely see firsthand the lasting impact of continuous conflict. Our first feature article focuses on one aspect of Afghan culture that reflects its recent history: war rugs. These rugs will be featured in Battleground: War Rugs from Afghanistan, a new exhibition which opens at the Penn Museum on April 30, 2011. The 63 rugs in the exhibition do not depict the traditional designs of oriental carpets; instead they include images of war—tanks, fighter jets, helicopters, land mines, and guns.

The next two articles describe aspects of current archaeological projects associated with the Penn Museum. Frank G. Matero and C. Brian Rose write on efforts undertaken by Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey, and the University of Pennsylvania to develop and implement a preservation plan for Gordion. This is followed by a two-part article on recent work in San Pietro d’Asso, Italy; the first section chronicles the results of the 2010 excavation season, followed by a description of what it was like, from the perspective of Penn undergraduates, to spend a month working and living in Tuscany. Our fourth feature is a review article by Penn Professor Emeritus and former Editor of Expedition, James D. Muhly. Jim reviews a recent festschrift published in honor of Michael Tite and discusses current scholarship on copper oxhide ingots and bronze artifacts discovered on shipwrecks off the coast of Turkey.

Several short articles are also included in this issue. In “From the Archives,” Alessandro Pezzati describes the lives of two people associated with the Penn Museum in the mid-20th century: Jim Thompson, the “Thai Silk King,” and his friend and colleague, Elizabeth Lyons. Jean Turfa tells the unusual story behind two clay urns in the Etruscan collection. And Lucy Fowler Williams describes the intersection between Native American culture and contemporary fashion.

The Museum has had a busy winter, as evidenced by the expanded “Museum Mosaic” section.

We are planning several special themed issues for the next two years: a Summer 2011 issue on excavations in Italy, and 2012 issues that celebrate the Museum’s 125th anniversary and a new exhibition on the Maya. As always, we welcome your feedback on Expedition.