

King Tut weighs 40 tons.

As the Oriental Institute continues with its renovation, we took a look behind the scenes with Ray Tindel, AM'72, PhD'89.

My area of study was pre-Islamic south Arabia, but now, as the registrar of the Oriental Institute, I excavate the depths of the Ol.

I tell everyone we spent \$10.1 million to get me an air-conditioned office, ha ha!

"To renovate the basement, we had to move everything out and stack it on specially constructed shelves in the Egyptian Gallery. There were 4,569 boxes and crates."

Some of those boxes back in the renovated basement.

"I had a student assistant to help me pack up. She was wonderful. She packed 1,647 boxes weighing more than 38,000 pounds. Everybody who came in here said that it reminded them of that last scene in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*."

My office in exile was right here, under the winged bull. Sitting here all that time, gazing at the bull, I noticed slight ridges on his forehead. I find it poignant that for thousands of years, as he stood guard, rain puddled between his horns.

This is Laura D'Aelssandro, head of the conservation lab. She's our local expert in removal of Assyrian reliefs. Taking them down was a nerve-racking proposition—we basically had to chip out the wall behind them. This paper was applied to the face to prevent chipping.

We got Ray to show us some cool stuff in the newly renovated basement.

Potsherds for miles.

The god El awaits reinstallation.

And this is what keeps King Tut up there from coming through the floor!

Isn't this beautiful? It's a 15th-century illuminated Persian manuscript.

It was pretty boring stuff. Like "Shamush Hazar brought two sheep and one of them died and was given to the dogs, and the other was given to the temple."

Cuneiform tablets