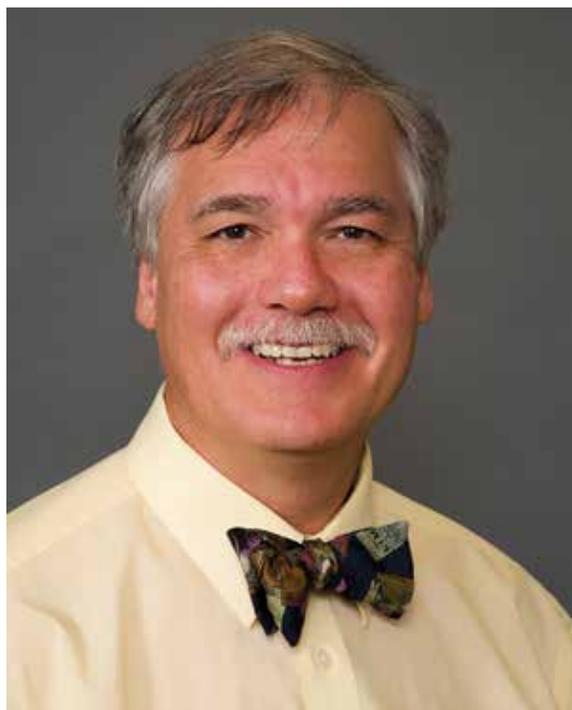


Dedication



Eugene David Cruz-Urbe, Ph.D.
December 22, 1952–March 12, 2018

*“Recall you the day of burial, the passing to a revered state,
when the night is made for you with ointments and wrappings
from the hands of Tayt” (Sinuhe B 190–192).*

This volume of the *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* is dedicated to the memory of Prof. Eugene D. Cruz-Urbe, who served as its editor from 2008 until his sudden and unexpected death in March. He was born and raised in Green Bay, Wisconsin and, since 2013, he lived in Richmond, Indiana, where he served on the faculty of Indiana University East. Although he retired in 2017, he maintained an active schedule of research and travel to Egypt, as well as his fulfilling his responsibilities with this journal.

Prof. Cruz-Urbe was a highly respected Egyptologist and Demoticist whose research in recent years focused on documenting Demotic graffiti wherever they were located, including: temples, monasteries, tombs and forts, as well as desert tracks, rock faces, quarries, and other places of both easy and difficult access. However, his innate sense of adventure and stalwartness often led him to seek out those locations more inaccessible or off the beaten track. In this regard he was as much an explorer as a philologist, epigrapher, and historian. Still, though

he was very skilled at working out the most difficult traces of texts, he wasn't limited merely to recording their existence and contents. Rather, he sought to understand what they revealed historically about Demotic-speaking Egyptians. Whether it was working in quarries in the Wadi Hammamat, temples and caravan stops along the Western Oases, tombs near Kharga and in the Kings' Valley, or Ptolemaic temples in Upper Egypt, Prof. Cruz-Urbe always asked the questions: Who are these people? What are they writing? Why are they here, and what does their graffiti say about their culture and civilization?

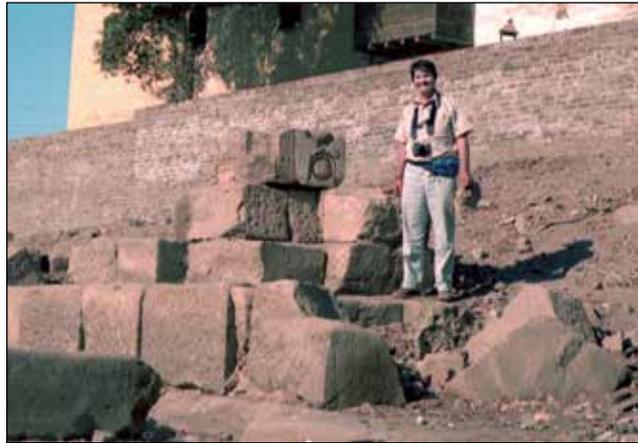
Second to graffiti was his burgeoning interest in Demotic papyrology, which was his ingress into the society and history of Late Period Egypt through Ptolemaic and Roman times. Here he was truly catholic in his research interests, as shown in his publications, which included studies on religion, pilgrimage activities, mythologies and cult, social structures, slavery, economics, politics, government administration and more.

Prof. Cruz-Urbe's focus on the Demotic did not preclude skills and interests in earlier pharaonic history and texts. In true Chicago fashion, he was deeply and well trained in all other periods of Egyptian languages and civilization. To his credit, he also studied Akkadian and Elamite. For Demotic, he trained under Janet Johnson, while George Hughes and Charles Nims were also important influences on him. Klaus Baer and Edward Wente were his other professors, as was Michael Rowton in Assyriology. Early in his career, he thought he might specialize in the Old Kingdom and Old Egyptian language, and he published in that area. Later he shined as a New Kingdom specialist, especially when in 1978 and 1979, he served as project Egyptologist for the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* exhibits in Seattle and New York. A survey of his entire bibliography shows he was polymathic in his knowledge, his skills, and interests, and like a typical polymath (so it is said), he prided himself not so much on his knowledge but on his curiosity and hunger to learn. He was smart. He knew a lot of people, and many knew him. So what do these diverse achievements reveal about the man? What can we say about this scholar as a person?

Gene Cruz-Urbe was my friend. He was many other people's friend, too, and he was well-liked and respected by most those who knew him. To his family and oldest friends, he was Gene. To others, he was Cruz. Gene (or Cruz) had that ineffable quality of making the people with whom he worked and socialized feel they were his special friends (viz. *smr ʕ n mrw.t*). He had a temperament that could be called sanguine. He was characteristically affable and lively; he liked talking to people; he was warm hearted and optimistic. The current review editor of this journal described Cruz as "one of the most lighthearted and 'normal' people in Egyptology" that she knew. He certainly knew how to have a good time, especially socializing with friends over drinks and a meal. At academic conferences, he was great company. One need think only of his part in the revelries at the Duke of York in Toronto and the King's Head in Luxor. Most importantly, Gene was non-judgmental, and it was rare to hear him say anything negative about anybody. Acrimony and rancor were not his style. Sometimes I teased him that his reaction to difficulties and setbacks was often "like water off a duck's back." So, in addition to being sanguine, he was characteristically phlegmatic, giving the impression of being calm, imperturbed, and unruffled in difficult situations. Yet he did not see himself as phlegmatic; he saw himself as stoic. At a hotel in Kharga during the Hibis Temple project, I was his project expediter, and I had complained to the management about their serving spaghetti three nights in a row. His reaction was, "Peter, let it go." My response about an "army traveling on its stomach" left him unimpressed, because he was unfazed by spaghetti three nights in a row. As he admitted, his ability to turn off his frustrations and to accept people and situations arose from growing up in a family of six noisy children. The result was a house full of chaos and tumult. So complete was his ability to tune out the clamor and ignore discord that his wife tells the story of an airplane he once missed in a chaotic airport by deeply immersing himself in a book, despite his name being called many times on the public address system.

The news of his death spread very quickly, and the intense outpouring of spontaneous grief in the social media was dramatic and powerful. The response was nearly as startling as the news itself. What I found heartwarming was the number of people—friends, colleagues, and acquaintances—who expressed their sorrow and shared their heartache. I've never seen anything quite like it in 45 years of Egyptology. Just as amazing was the number of people who started wearing bow ties in his honor, many—myself included—who learned to tie them for the first time! Gene, of course, was known for the hand-tied bow ties that he always wore and for laughably touting their superiority to ordinary neckties. Six weeks after he died, many people wore bow ties or bow tie pins in his memory at the ARCE Annual Meeting in Tucson.

Of course one of Cruz's more notable projects was his annual "News From Egypt: An April Fools Report," posted to the *Egyptologists' Electronic Forum*. Here he attempted a humorous slant on the year's developments in Egyptology. It resulted in an odd combination of jabbing satire and humor, mixed with just enough truth, that sometimes one couldn't be sure what wasn't true, since the names of real people were mixed with the fictional. Sometimes I was afraid he had crossed a line, and I'd say, "Gene, you can't say that, not if you want to keep working in Egypt!" He would look at me and make his characteristic chuckle, because he knew folks were not offended since, while his humor might be satirical, it was never mean-spirited (well, rarely). Case in point:



Exploring Armant Temple, 1990

Russian Porn Star (now known as) Carmen de Luz, winner of a best Porn Video Award in front of the pyramids in this column last year, has now apologized to the Egyptian people and government. She said she had no plans on shooting a pornographic film in front of the pyramids. That is like American football star Tom Brady saying "I didn't know the balls were deflated." Go figure (EEF, April 1, 2016).

I first met Gene in Fall 1973 at the University of Chicago when we were students starting in the Egyptology program. He was an undergraduate student taking graduate-level classes. He was bright and adept at languages. Of the fourteen students who started first year Middle Egyptian with Jan Johnson, only three went on to second year. He graduated in 1975 with a B.A., and then earned his M.A. in 1977. The program was based in the Oriental Institute, and we took nearly all our classes together. In the Institute's Research Archives, we sat for years at the first table nearly facing each other. There we did our homework, we researched, and we wrote our dissertations. We talked, kibbitzed, and helped each other. He was always into purple marker pens, and he wrote everything in purple! He was totally unpretentious and never stood on ceremony. He was active in the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity (Fiji), and he thought it was so cool that the Fiji house on campus was previously the home of James Henry Breasted, founder of the Oriental Institute. In 1977 we partnered to co-edit the student journal *Serapis*. In 1980 we incorporated as a not-for-profit, and he completed the paperwork for tax-exempt status using his fraternity contacts in Washington, D.C. Thus, the Serapis Research Institute was born. First we raised money to publish the journal. Then we got smart and applied for grants for field research. We even double-dated at times (he was good at snagging dates). In February 1981 he started keeping company with Kathy Alwarden, a doctoral student in physical anthropology and archaeology. This relationship they kept confidential, until my fiancée and I ran into them at a film screening on campus, and we hit it off right away. Following a whirlwind romance, Gene and Kathy were married in December of that same year. He landed a job as Assistant Editor of the Chicago Demotic Dictionary, which he held until 1985, and we continued to publish *Serapis*, by now subtitled, *The American Journal of Egyptology*. Once Alan Schulman chided Gene—and not entirely in jest—for having the "chutzpah" to try to elevate the status of *Serapis* beyond a student journal.

As a student, Gene was an avid reader outside of Egyptology. He belonged to the History Book Club and was constantly reading and expounding on histories outside of Egypt and the ancient world. However, his special interest was science fiction and fantasy. Like many Egyptologists, he had written a detailed treatment for a fictional story about ancient Egypt, the curse of the mummy's hand or some such, about a hand wearing a golden ring on display in a museum (not unlike the Oriental Institute Museum), which apparently went on a murder spree. For a while, he worked downtown at night, and that's when he hatched a plan to photocopy the entire *Wörterbuch der Ägyptischen Sprache* for us in facsimile. When that worked, we started photocopying and binding other out-of-print



Recording on the Architraves of Philae Temple

years old, and that Friday night was a blast, happy times, plenty of beer and wine, good food and friends and lots of laughs! (See his Facebook page for picture). Afterward, we spent the entire weekend repairing and cleaning up from the celebration.

Later that summer, Gene and Kathy left for Providence, Rhode Island, where he started teaching at Brown University. Joe Manning helped them drive the truck out east, and that's a story by itself. Later, when Myrna and I drove out to visit, Gene and Kathy showed us the Wilbour Institute and the Brown campus. He had us laughing as he told us the story of his very first day on the job: he wore his signature bow tie, Mickey Mouse watch, and carried an old-fashioned Mickey Mouse lunchbox. Students and faculty were appropriately startled. As always with Gene—no pretensions there.

In 1989 I went back out to Chicago House. In the same year, Gene's non-tenured appointment at Brown ended. He and Kathy moved to Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, AZ, where they accepted positions, he as assistant to the dean, and she as full-time faculty. In time, he moved up the ladder to associate dean, and he obtained a teaching appointment, which ultimately became full-time. In this capacity, in 1997 he invited us to visit and for me to guest lecture in his classes (a favor that I was able to reciprocate later at the College of Charleston). While he was moving from administration to teaching, Kathy was transitioning from teaching to administration; eventually, she was appointed to be a full-time dean. Gene was still active in field work and research. Sometimes he was able to bank his teaching and, instead of taking additional salary, negotiate for travel time and funding in Egypt. By this time, he was starting to collect Demotic graffiti. Earlier in the winter of 1990, while I was working at Chicago House, Gene passed through for a few days to visit antiquities south of Luxor and to survey some graffiti. Peter Dorman, the Director of Chicago House, generously gave me the day, so Gene and I took off for Armant, el-Kab, Edfu, and points in between. Dr. Henri Riad gave us introductions to the inspectorates, so we could visit closed sites. We explored the rock tombs of el-Kab, the enclosure of Nekheh, and the temple of Amenhotep III. At Edfu, the inspectors let us explore the roof of the main temple, where we walked every square meter and climbed all the floors of the pylons to the top. I was looking for graffiti of senet boards and other games, while he was looking for Demotic inscriptions. Here is where I discovered Gene's love of heights and where I saw him light up with Late Period and Ptolemaic monuments. Then we crossed the river and traveled down the West Bank stopping at Armant and Deir el-Shelwit.

In the fall of 1995, Gene asked me to join him on the Hibis Temple-Kharga Oasis Project to copy inscriptions and help administer the project. We flew from Cairo to Mut, and through his amiable good-naturedness, he managed to convince the Egypt Air agent to upgrade the four of us to first class. It never happened again. We

references. His student years had their fill of trials and successes. We commiserated when his heart was broken, and when he was hospitalized; we celebrated his successes, his first publication, first consulting job, and we enjoyed the immense fun that all the advanced students had lecturing for the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* exhibit. He beat me out of a job as guest curator for that show in New York, but that was okay, because he was Gene. Not long after that in 1979, I went out to Chicago House in Luxor.

The student attrition rate at Chicago was very high, and Gene and I were the only two of our original class who ultimately completed the Ph.D. there. He finished in 1983, years before I did. My fiancée, Myrna, and I organized and hosted his Ph.D. celebration that summer. She and I were housesitting for friends, and the party there was a blowout. She cooked in the kitchen, and I grilled outside. Gene and I were both 31

were Delores Ward, Wally Eldredge, Gene, and myself. At Hibis, Gene had us copying Demotic graffiti inside the temple, and climbing all over the roof to locate, photograph, and trace graffiti on the roofing blocks, capitals, and architraves. Gene was very deft at negotiating narrow footholds, and he had no discernible fear of heights. It was not unusual for him to lean or hang precariously off the edge of an architrave to copy an inscription. Sometimes he did so standing up (sure-footed and well-balanced); other times he sat on the edge of the architrave, legs dangling with the inscription between his knees, he bending over deeply to read it. The man was dauntless, and I think he enjoyed the rush of being up high and pushing his boundaries. He certainly pushed mine.

An important part of the project was to survey and locate Demotic graffiti in Kharga Oasis and along the Darb el-Arba'een from Tarakwa in the north to Douch in the south, and westward to Dakhleh Oasis. We investigated the fortresses of Nadura and el-Deir, the temples of Tarakwa, Qasr el-Ghueta, Qasr el-Zayan, Douch and Deir el-Hagar, the cemeteries of Bagawat, Bashendi, el-Muzzawaqa, Balat/Qila el-Dabba (and others), the monasteries of Ayn Zaf and Mustapha Kachef, as well as the caravan stops and rock faces of Gebel el-Teir (where I got heat exhaustion) and Ayn Tafnis. Oh, let's not forget Ayn Amur and Umm Dabadib. He had us going! We saw a lot, we did a lot, we copied a lot. We came home exhausted, but we also had fun. It was exploration, and it was adventure.

To get around, Gene negotiated with Tony Mills, Director of the Dakhla Oasis Project, to allow us to hire his expedition's Land Rover and driver, which we used during the week. On the weekends, we took *service-taxis* to visit sites as tourists. That Rover was prone to breakdown, and several times it did so on the desert surface, and each time we had to push the vehicle over the sand. Once heading to Tarakwa, smoke started to billow from behind the dashboard. A quick stop, and we put out the electrical fire, but then we had to push that heavy sucker over loose sand for nearly a kilometer back to a village we had passed. Heaven bless those people. The men came out and, without being asked, opened the hood and started to fix the ignition, while the women sat us in the shade and fed us juice, dates, and oranges. Again, Gene was unfazed and optimistic. We experienced dramatic breakdowns at least twice again and each time the oasis people came to our aid, happily and generously, and they would accept no *bakshish*. Gene was in his element. The only thing that drove Gene to real annoyance were the roosters behind the hotel that crowed all night long keeping everyone awake.

Another interesting adventure Gene led us through was the trip to Ayn Tafnis, a sheltered rock face with inscriptions north of Douch. It is located high up the eastern escarpment near to the upper desert, overlooking the oasis and the town of Baris in the distance. About a three hour drive south of Kharga City, and east onto the desert surface, the trip proceeds to the base of the escarpment. Then comes a difficult 3-hour hike up the rocky scree-filled slopes following the wadi to get close to the top. It nearly killed the rest of us, but Gene was stalwart and sure-footed, tall and strong. I was carrying the day's water for us all, and when he saw me start to falter, he insisted on taking the cooler and adding it to his own burden, and he still didn't break his stride. Oh yeah, by the time we got to the top, most of the plastic bottles had broken and the water was lost. So, we rationed whatever we had through the day. The hike down at the end of the day took nearly two hours. We six (with the inspector and the guide) were tired and thirsty. As we hiked down, we saw in the far distance a large wellhead gushing wide bursts of water into a large fountain-like basin. It looked delicious, and we headed straight for it, our thirst and anticipation growing larger as we got nearer. Nearby was a *ghafir's* hut and a large tent-structure covering a few big water jars. It was the stuff of a Hollywood film (think *Sahara*, Columbia Pictures, 1943), where thirsty survivors in the desert run to a well or open pool of water to throw themselves in and slake their overwhelming thirst. We got there, put our hands in that beautiful cool-looking water to take a draft, and ouch! It was hot (geothermal, nearly scalding)! The *ghafirs* were laughing at us, saying "*ya majaniin!*" "crazy people!" Wally, Delores, and I were dumbfounded, but Gene was laughing. He saw the humor in it. Then the *ghafirs* sat us down in the shade and ladled out cool delicious water from the water jars, still laughing at the crazy *khawajahs*.

It was incredibly fun to work with Gene in Egypt. He had a true sense of adventure. He was dauntless and intrepid and with a great sense of humor. Driving out into the desert in an uncertain Rover? No problem. Pushing it over the sand? No worries. Car on fire? We'll take care of it. He was unflappable. When he worked, he was always on the go. Even on the weekends, when all I wanted to do was sleep, he would haul us off to some site in the far-off desert that he had read about and wanted to see. When that project finished, and we pulled into Luxor,

I found a room at Chicago House, fell into bed and slept for two days. Oh didn't I say? That project lasted only less than three weeks!

In 2013 Kathy accepted the position of Chancellor of Indiana University East in Richmond, and Gene took an appointment as Professor of History. Where he found the time to teach, counsel students, research, engage in fieldwork, and edit *JARCE*, I cannot fathom. Gene ultimately retired from teaching in spring of 2017. At that time he undertook a major renovation of his garage, and he sent friends notice that he had finally built his “man-cave” for his retirement. I assumed he meant a place to watch the Green Bay Packers (his favorite American football team) destroy the Chicago Bears on a 60-inch HD television while quaffing copious amounts of Dos Equis. Imagine my surprise when I opened the pictures and saw that he had built instead a very large comfortable Egyptology office with cabinets full of papers and free-standing book shelves arranged library style into rows of book stacks (he had a substantial professional library). Now I was the one laughing, and I e-mailed him to say it looked just like Klaus Baer's office back at the O.I., and did he do that on purpose? No response.

In 2016, Myrna, my wife of nearly 35 years, passed away. It hit me terribly hard, and I know Gene and Kathy were affected too. Then in May of 2017, we organized a memorial for Myrna sponsored by her former employer, the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, where she had been Dean of Students. Of course I invited Gene and Kathy, but I wasn't certain they would show since the drive to Chicago is not easy on a weekday. Only as the program was starting did I see Gene come into the room. As we walked toward each other, I said, “Gene, you came!” And he replied, “How could I not?” Indeed. It meant everything to me and probably just as much to him. That was Gene, too. That was the last time I saw him, although we e-mailed and telephoned frequently, especially about *JARCE*. I wish I had seen him again.

As I look over my photographs of Gene in the field, it seems most of them are of him high up on the roof of a temple, on a hilltop or up along a cliff—like an eagle up in its aerie, and it soars from high above (see his Facebook page). So, “the falcon flew up to heaven and united with the sun-disk, the divine body merging with its maker.”

Gene died from injuries incurred in a bicycle crash on a country road outside of Richmond, Indiana. He was an avid cyclist, and most mornings before dawn he went out for a hearty ride through the farm country. On Monday morning, March 12, for some unknown reason, he apparently lost control moving at a high speed. He was found badly injured at 6:28 a.m. The sun had not risen yet. Skid marks from his tires show he attempted to stop his bike unsuccessfully. No other vehicle was involved, and, while authorities are uncertain, it appears he collided with something, perhaps one or more deer moving in the dark, and he crashed, resulting in multiple serious injuries. His family lost a loving husband, father and brother. Egyptology lost a valued colleague, and many of us lost a dear friend. So long my dear friend of 45 years, but not goodbye. “Until we meet again on better shores.”

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Peter A. Piccione
Interim Editor



Standing on the roof of Qasr el-Ghueta Temple, 1995

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