

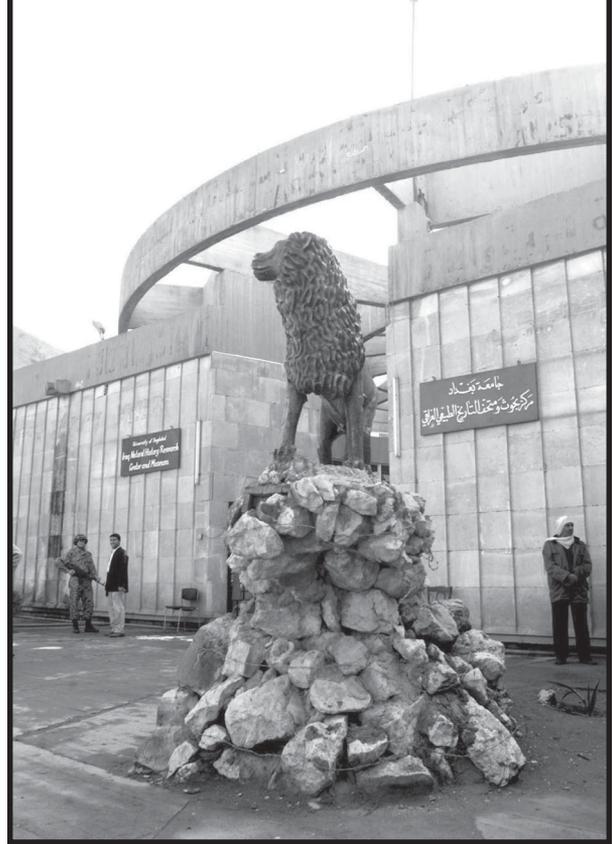
Iraq Museum Reopens

By Staff Sergeant Conrad College

U.S. soldiers and Baghdad University staff, faculty, and students mingled on 3 December 2003 at the university's Bab Muadham campus for a historic day. The Iraq Museum of Natural History was reopened, a new Internet café began serving patrons, and a refurbished child care center for staff and faculty opened its doors during the ceremonies.

The three projects were a cooperative effort of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), the Ministry of Higher Education, the University of Baghdad, and the U.S. Army. The renovations are part of an ongoing effort by the coalition military, the CPA, and the U.S. Agency for International Development to rebuild Iraq's educational system.

The 16th Engineer Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, was in charge of the three projects, which took about six months to complete. The Army provided more than \$10,000 for the work.



Iraq Museum of Natural History

Looters had badly damaged the museum, stealing or breaking displays, fixtures, and every piece of glass. Many of the exhibit cases are still empty. Iraqi contractors were hired to repair the facility, replacing broken glass and missing fixtures to allow the museum to restart its role in scientific research and public education. As part of the recovery process, the museum has established relations with American and British natural history museums.

There was no Internet café at Baghdad University before coalition forces arrived. The CPA and the Ministry of Education provided \$40,000 for the computer equipment and Internet satellite service, and local contractors were hired to refurbish the building. There are now 20 new computer stations in the café, which will provide a link for students to the rest of the world.

More projects are underway. Coalition forces are working with the Ministry of Higher Education to improve schools throughout Baghdad. A number of schools still require repairs and renovations, and there are still books to be printed and delivered. 

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Museum reopening dedication ceremony