



The Egypt Society of Bristol

Newsletter

Number 2, December 1999

Editorial

Welcome to the second ESB Newsletter. The last couple of months have been fairly hectic, with a number of committee changes, which are noted later.

Nevertheless, in spite of these problems, and the fallout from the Chairman's wedding, the forward programme has come together nicely, while the events so far this year have been very well attended, and suggest that the decision to push back the start time to 1845 was the right one. Our first speaker of the season was Carol Andrews of the British Museum, who gave us a stunning talk on the jewellery of ancient Egypt. She had battled through the aftermath of the Paddington rail crash to be with us - and then fell foul of it on her way home, not getting in until 0120 hrs! She thus doubly deserves our gratitude.

Also from the British Museum came George Hart, speaking on three foreign lands under the protection of the most ubiquitous of Egyptian goddesses, Hathor. He provided us with splendid views of Byblos in Lebanon, the turquoise mines of the Sinai, and Ethiopia, perhaps part of that legendary land of plenty, Punt. He explained how the Egyptians had interacted with these places from the Old Kingdom onwards, and how Hathor became their protectress.

For the new year, the programme includes two field-workers talking about their research, firstly Khaled Dawood, an Egyptian Egyptologist currently at Liverpool University, speaking about his recording of an Old Kingdom tomb at Saqqara, and Chris Kirby of King's College London, regarding two colossi of Ammenemes III in the Fayoum area, where he has been working for the past few years.

Another forthcoming lecture, by the Chairman, ties in with the ESB's most ambitious venture so far, a Nile cruise next November (see below). He will give members a chance to experience vicariously the planned itinerary, as a taster for those who are booked to go - and perhaps to tempt others to have second thoughts and raid their piggy-banks! The evening is also intended to be an open forum for anyone who has questions about the sites shown and their builders.

As a general point, anyone who comes across

someone who is a good lecturer on Egyptian subjects, please pass on their details to the Chairman: we're always looking for future lecturers.

London Life

September's trip to the Petrie Museum and the British Museum went well. Two dozen ESB members braved a rather chilly early morning to fight through London suburban traffic to view one of the world's finest Egyptian collections at University College London, and then the new funerary galleries at the British Museum. The BM is still suffering from the side-effects of the Great Court building work, with a number of objects off display. It is planned to re-run the trip in a couple of years time, once the dust has settled; it will also be another chance to expend vast amounts of money at the Museum Bookshop, opposite the BM and with the best stock of Egyptological books in the UK.

South Wales Here We Come

In February, another coach trip will be heading to the Egypt Centre at University College Swansea. Opened only recently, the Centre houses in particular part of the Wellcome Collection of Egyptian antiquities. A point of interest for those who went on the Petrie trip is that both museums contain fragments of the much broken and dispersed granite coffin and sarcophagus of Amenophis III's great official, Amunhotpe-son-of-Hapu.

... and Egypt Too

On 20 November 2000, ESB members, their families and friends will, *inshallah!* ('if Allah wills it', the inevitable accompaniment to any intention in Egypt, and used by almost anyone who has spent any time in the country!) step onto the good ship *Atlas* for the first part of the ESB's expedition.

We will be visiting all the major sites in southern Egypt with, as an optional extra, the temples of Nubia as well. A cruise is the ideal way of seeing Egypt, particularly for first-timers, who benefit from avoiding the need to check in and out of hotels, and being delivered often to within a few hundred yards of the monuments.

Bookings currently stand at twenty; subject to cabin availability, other members are welcome to join us! Details may be had in exchange for

a stamped addressed envelope.

Restoration of Amelia's Plaque

The last Newsletter heralded the ESB's planned restoration of the stone plaque affixed to the front garden wall of 22 Eastfield, which occupies part of the site of the long-destroyed home of Amelia Edwards, Bristolian founder of the Egypt Exploration Fund/Society.

We are pleased to report that work has now most skilfully carried out through the good offices of the President, and that it is once more a fitting memorial of a great lady.

All Change!

Since the summer, there have been a number of changes on the ESB committee. Firstly, pressure of work has forced Linda Pike, our stalwart Honourary Secretary, to resign. Linda is one of those people without whose dedicated efforts the ESB would never have formed. The Chairman wishes to record his personal thanks for all the support that Linda has given him over the last couple of years - both in the ESB, and for giving him a roof over his head during the three weeks he was homeless after being moved to Bristol!

Sian Bryan, Honourary Treasurer and Programme Secretary, has left us for the North West, where she is taking a PhD in Egyptology at Liverpool University. I am sure that we all wish her every success with this, and that she will return to share with us the results of her research.

As a result, at the Committee Meeting of 13 December, Virginia Pearson was appointed Hon. Secretary, and Dyan Hilton and Nikki Blake co-opted as Hon. Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer, respectively. The duties of Programme Secretary have been combined, for the time being at least, with those of the Chairman.

All Committee positions will be up for election at the **Annual General Meeting** on 29 February (see separate notice); members are encouraged to put their names forward - there's always plenty to be done!

Other Egyptology in Bristol

As well as the ESB there are various organisations in and around the city that feature archaeology on their menus, and sometimes venture into the world of Egyptology. The Newsletter will endeavour to chronicle these - if you attend something and want to let everyone know about it, let us have a couple of lines!

This year's Egyptian title from the City Museum's 'friends' organization, the **Bristol Magpies**, was 'Mr Belzoni's exhibition of an Egyptian tomb, 1821' by Patricia Usick of University College, London - particularly apposite, given that the Museum is the home of many of Belzoni's original paintings and drawing made in the tomb of Sethos I.

The **Bristol and Avon Archaeological Society's** programme included 'Roman

Mummy Portraits from Egypt' by Dominic Montserrat of the University of Warwick. This illustrated talk was most informative and produced lively debate.

The same society hold an annual lecture in the memory of Leslie Grinsell, former curator of archaeology in the Museum, and author of an excellent book on the pyramids, *Egyptian Pyramids* (Gloucester: John Bellows, 1947), and another which covers the whole gamut of ancient tombs, *Barrow, Pyramid and Tomb* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1975). The lecture alternates between an Egyptian and a British topic. This season, it will be held on Wednesday 16 March and will feature Bath-based Egyptologist Lucia Gahlin speaking on work at Tell el-Amarna, where she formed part of the excavation team. For further information contact BAAS, c/o the City Museum.

The University of Bristol's **Archaeological Society** have a wide ranging programme, which has already this year has seen a talk by Israeli scholar, Yuvel Goren on the origin of the material from which the Amarna tablets were made. This talk was fascinating, with flashes of humour ('we prefer broken objects - they're easier to take chemical samples from!') and brought the latest technology into the arena. Amongst his results was final proof that the mysterious kingdom of Alashia was indeed based on Cyprus.

A pair of talks on 25 November concerned the debate surrounding the chronology of the first millennium BC. David Rohl, presenter of the controversial TV series and book, *A Test of Time* (London: Channel 4, 1995), which proposed to chop 350 years out of the Third Intermediate Period, gave a seminar and a lecture in which he attempted to defend his theories against the profound scepticism of various Archaeology Department wor-thies - including both your Chairman and Vice-chairman. Both were well attended, with good natured verbal sparring, albeit much of it above the heads of the other attendees. Rohl versus Dodson, Warren and Horton was a match worthy of Wimbledon!

The other University Egyptological event of the term was the **Amelia Edwards Memorial Lecture**, origin-ally endowed by Leslie Grinsell, and with the benefaction now supplemented by a generous donation by our President. Tony Mills of the Dakhleh Oasis Project spoke of his multi-national, multi-disciplinary team's re-cent discovery of an Old Kingdom settlement in the Western Desert, as well as on the 20-year story of the work in this beautiful place.

British Egyptology Societies Directory

The Manchester Ancient Egypt Society produces the above handy publication. It lists the nearly thirty groups in the UK that are dedicated to things-Egyptian. This far outstrips the number in the USA and reflects the fascination that Egypt continues to exert

over Britons.

If you have friends around the country looking for something Egyptian, please get in touch with the Chairman, who holds a copy of the Directory, and will be pleased to let you know what exists in a given area.

For Your Christmas Stockings

A number of new books have appeared in recent months to whet the appetite of any Egyptophiles.

In particular, there are the wonderful catalogues of two travelling exhibitions. *Egyptian Art in the Age of the Pyramids* (New York: MMA, 1999, £60) deals with a stunning show that some members may have seen in Paris earlier this year. Rita Freed, et al.'s, *Pharaohs of the Sun: Akhenaten, Nefer-titi and Tutankhamen* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1999, £36) covers a show that will hit Europe at the end of 2000, at the Rijksmuseum van Oedheden in Leiden, Netherlands. Neither are cheap, but are almost as good as visiting the exhibitions!

Another monumental and glorious volume is F. Tiradritti, *The Treasures of the Egyptian Museum* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1999, £45), covering all the greatest monuments of the museum, as well as some of its lesser-known treasures.

A rather different book is Ian Lawton and Chris Ogilvie-Herald's, *Giza: the Truth* (London: Virgin Publishing, 1999, £20). This is a comprehensive demolition of the various lunatic speculations and publicity-stunts of such individuals as Robert Bauval (who gave a talk at Blackwell's Bookshop in November; some members of the Committee attended - and were not impressed) and Graham Hancock. Which brings us to

Television

In the wake of Hancock and Bauval's TV series and books claiming that the Giza pyramids were a manifestation of a global civilisation derived from the lost continent of Atlantis, around 10500 BC (rather than the boring old Egyptian kingdom of 2700BC!), the BBC Horizon series produced two programmes, one exposing the myth of Atlantis as just that, and the second pointing out the rather fundamental problems with the Hancock-Bauval 'evidence'. Rarely has one seen someone so comprehensively skewered, as Hancock was left to protest that his theories would not be displaced by nit-picking - unfortunately some very large nits were involved!

Egyptology Magazines

A number of members enquire as to where they might find out more about what is going on in Egyptology. Two magazines do just that. Both are available on subscription:

Egyptian Archaeology, published by the Egypt Exploration Society, 3 Doughty Mews, London WC1N 2PG (£4.95 per issue).

KMT: A modern Journal of Egyptology, published by KMT Communications, P.O. Box 1475, Sebastopol, CA 95473-1475, USA (\$42 per annum, 4 issues a year - they take credit card payments).

The two magazines are complementary in coverage. Although US-based, KMT has a

The ESB Officers and Committee, Dec 1999-Feb 2000

<i>President</i>	Martin Davies
<i>Chairman</i>	Aidan Dodson
<i>Vice Chairman</i>	Mark Horton
<i>Hon. Secretary</i>	Virginia Pearson
<i>Hon. Treasurer</i>	Dyan Hilton
<i>Deputy Treasurer</i>	Nikki Blake
<i>Membership Secretary</i>	Sue Giles
<i>Social Secretaries</i>	Sylvia East Margaret Curtis
<i>External Relations Secretary</i>	Claire Galbraith

world-wide coverage - and has the Chairman on its editorial team.

Your Newsletter

The ESB Newsletter is intended to be an organ for *all* members. You are accordingly encouraged to submit short articles for future issues. In particular, we are looking for short reports on ESB events - lectures and (especially) trips. We're not looking for literature (although it would be nice!), but are keen to have the flavour any particularly memorable event to be captured for posterity. In particular, it would be nice to be able to publish an 'Egyptian Diary' next Christmas, if anyone coming on the cruise fancies trying their hand

Don't, however, feel constrained by this - if you have something Egypt-related that may be of interest to the ESB membership, let the editor know - we're thinking in terms of no more than 500-1,000 words.



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