



The Egypt Society of Bristol

NEWS UPDATE

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Chairman's Dig

Once again, my sincerest apologies for the huge gap between this and the last Newsletter. All kinds of local difficulties have frustrated me sitting down and getting the thing done – however, at long last here it is!

We are now two lectures into the new season, both of which were well attended, as usual. I often get comments from speakers as to how good our turn-outs are, as well as on the enthusiasm generated – this is the sort of reaction that helps us continue to get top-notch lecturers. Speaking of which, next May we have managed to add an extra lecture by Dr Christian Loeben, from the Kestner-Museum, Hannover: he and I are speaking at a Bloomsbury Summer School event in London, and as the BSS had already paid his air fare to London.

Christian is also contributing to a conference in Swansea on **19/20 December** on *Sex and Gender in Ancient Egypt*. No fewer than eighteen scholars will be taking part, some from the USA, Czech Republic and Germany, and including our recent visitor, Terence DuQuesne. The cost is £38 for the whole conference, £20 for one day. Details at www.swansea.ac.uk/egypt/infosheetgen/Conference2005.htm - or call 01792 295960.

Those who have been to the Valley of the Kings will know that perhaps the most magical of all the tombs is that of Thutmose III. Now, those who haven't been (or would like to visit without the heat and *that* metal stairway!) can see an exact replica in Edinburgh. The *Immortal Pharaoh* exhibition is at the **City Art Centre, Market Street, Edinburgh 1** (www.cac.org.uk) until 8 January, entry £6.00 adults, with various concessions (advance bookings at www.usherhall.co.uk). With dirt-cheap **easyJet** flights thrice-daily from Bristol to Edinburgh it makes a perfect day out!

As a matter of fact, the rapid expansion of Bristol Airport's services makes a lot of Egyptology-related destinations accessible without trekking to one of the London airports. While links to Egypt itself are limited to charter flights to the Red Sea 'sun and fun' destinations of Sharm el-Sheikh and Hurghada, the new **Continental Airlines** daily link to New York's Newark Airport allows easy access to many places of Egyptophile interest. The Treasurer describes some of these below.

The Chairman and Treasurer also recently used another link, to Rome, for a long weekend obelisk-hunting in Rome (see below). There are more standing obelisks here than in Egypt and tracking them all down makes for a good walking tour of the city. The fruits of this should appear in the American *Kmt* magazine next year, *inshallah!*

Speaking of magazines, *Ancient Egypt*, now edited by Bob Partridge, who has in the past spoken to the ESB, is offering a special two-year subscription deal to members. Those wishing to get seven issues for the price of six should fill in the form at the end of the Newsletter..

Still on the travel front, you will see from the programme that we have now set up the latest of the ESB's peregrinations to **Egypt at Christmas 2006**. As well as allowing people to sun-bathe on Christmas Day, it is designed to complement the previous trips, mopping up some of the less visited, but fascinating, bits of **Upper Egypt**. If you wish to come, please fill in the enclosed booking form, or if you want to know more before committing yourself, please contact the Chairman. **NB: because of file sizes, we cannot e-mail booking forms to those who receive soft-copy mailings: if you need a form, please drop us an e-mail and we'll send one snail-mail.**

Straying a little from Egypt, the Chairman will be delivering a day school on **British Royal Tombs** for the University's History of Art Department on **Sat 17 June**. Leaflets and booking forms are available in dispensers on the window-ledge of the corridor of 43 Woodland Road.

Look forward to seeing you all on 13 December. Along with a lecture from an obscure local speaker, there will be mince pies to remind us of the time of year ...



Tales from the Treasury

Car sharing

Recently new member Brian Regan from Cheltenham has joined the society; he wonders if there is anyone in the area who might be interested in car sharing, if so contact me on 0117-942 1957. If there are any other people out there who would be interested in doing the same for any journeys they can do the same.

Renewals and Data protection

As you can see in this Newsletter we have included the renewals for 2006-7; please include any contact details, including e-mail addresses that you may have for our records.

With rules in force for data protection I just want to underline that any information passed to me stays with me, it doesn't get given to anyone else without your personal permission and at the end of it's usefulness it is destroyed.

As seen on TV

Back in early summer UKHistory had a week-long series of repeating programmes about Egypt. These were on the whole well researched, although the grinding of your Chairman's teeth when the disembodied narrator announced that Belzoni and Champollion had travelled and worked together, some years after the former's death was one of the Treasurers personal highlights!

The BBC are currently playing their much vaulted series about great discoveries, on BBC1, called simply *Egypt* the programme so far has shown the life of Howard Carter and the discovery and politics behind the finding of Tutankhamun. The programme itself was well filmed and gives anyone not overly familiar with the protagonists an idea of the times. The programme presently being shown is that of Belzoni, comments overheard by the reviewer concentrate distractingly on the constantly moving accent of the lead actor.

Accompanying the series is a book *Egypt: How a Lost Civilization was Rediscovered* published by BBC Books, written by Joyce Tyldesley. No doubt this will be in many Egyptophiles' stockings this Christmas.

BBC2 are also showing a series, also on Sunday nights, immediately following the BBC1 programme with Dan Cruikshank presenting on a range of topics, including tomb-building and Akhenaten. As to be expected there has been stunning photography for this and that alone makes it worth viewing. As some of you have spotted, the consultant for this series is a certain Dr Dodson ...

Up in the Air

As the Chairman has already noted, Bristol has an exceedingly good International Airport, and it has been suggested that members might be interested in destinations that might have collections worth seeing.

The start of flights direct to **New York** opens a range of possibilities for travellers. The flight itself goes into Newark, New Jersey and a short train journey from here (New Jersey Transit) takes you into Penn Station in the heart of New York. There are some wonderful collections to see in the city.

First, the obvious place to start, and be prepared for a whole day, is the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Easy to get to from downtown Manhattan, it's on 5th Avenue, backing onto Central Park, which itself

contains an obelisk originally from Heliopolis, via Alexandria, and the sister of our own Cleopatra's Needle on the Thames Embankment in London.

The collection at the Met is one of the great Egyptological assemblages of the world. Set up so that *everything* is on display this has to be regarded as one of THE teaching collections worldwide. The range of the collection is extensive, but the finest things to see have to be the Middle and New Kingdom displays, including the jewellery of Twelfth Dynasty Princess Sithathoryunet. They also contain many of the pieces discovered by Carter, which came with the Carnarvon collection, sold after the earl's death. Closed on Monday, photography is permitted and a huge café will mean you do not have to exit the building all day!

A pleasant day can be also a spent at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, with its very own subway station making access from downtown Manhattan. Another glorious collection, recently re-displayed, has many Amarna pieces as well as a stunning Pepi I statue.

As museums in America tend to close on Mondays that might be the obvious opportunity for a visit to the Strand bookshop. With two main shops, the best for history has to be at Broadway and 12th Street. Consisting, they claim, of over 18 miles of books, it is a must for any visitor to New York. The second store is better for art books and is on Fulton Street. Weekdays they open at 9.30; at weekends this is 11.00, but both are open to at least 8.00 at night.

Another museum well worth a visit is that of Newark itself. The Egyptian collection, whilst not vast, is a concise collection, well displayed. For the writer the joy in this museum has to be one of the best collections of ancient glass in America. This is an absolute gem and is worth a trip on New Jersey Transit to get to see.

A 90 minute rail journey from NYC is Philadelphia. The University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology is close to the railway (or should I say railroad?) station, and is amongst the best of its kind in America with a collection ranging throughout the whole of Egyptian history, consisting of the excavation material of the university, including a substantial amount of material from Memphis. There is also a large Mesopotamian display, and those focussing on other world cultures.

An Obelisk too Far

A recent trip from this cold climate to Italy took us to touring the obelisks of Rome. While most stand nobly in the centre of public squares, there is one rather sad specimen. Standing in a small park, it has fallen on hard times, covered in scaffolding, locked away behind a gate and surrounded by barbed wire. Shrouded by creepers and weeds to struck the Treasurer that this was similar to Sleeping Beauty's castle with the obelisk waiting for someone to come and wake up Rome city council to the fact this will be

lost if something isn't done to protect and conserve it NOW before it is too late.

Dyan Hilton

Lecture reports

24 May 2005 - Dr Marcel Marée,
Tracking and Identifying Artistic Hands in Middle Kingdom Sculpture

It is a truth universally acknowledged ... that artists today create for their own 'glory'. However, unlike more recent works of art, the Egyptian sculptures and tomb paintings were not signed by their artists, being done for the glory of the client. But it is still possible to see a style or a particular feature that identifies the originator without looking at a signature.

Dr Marée's lecture this evening described his search for identifying features in sculptures and tomb paintings. By studying a great many photos of items and the pieces themselves in museums, he realised a craftsman could create a piece and individual idiosyncrasies of design would be incorporated into the work without them even being aware of it. Therefore, valuable clues were left behind as to the origin of the piece. Details such as the way figures are depicted either sitting or standing and even the design of a table leg can provide clues. One particular artist Dr Marée had been studying had a particular interest in depicting cucumbers!

A valuable result of this work is the identification and placing of pieces to a region or collection of objects where their origin has not been recorded, or the item has been stolen by tomb robbers and later sold.

Dr Marée showed us three stelae of unknown provenance and compared similarities in the way the script was carved and which differed from the recognised way of carving. He also showed us a statue with similar inscriptions. From this he was able to conclude that the items probably came from the period of Senwosret II.

Hopefully his work will place objects to regions and collections of items to give them previously unknown meaning. He may even be able to prove that the same craftsman had created other pieces. Unfortunately, we may never know his name.

28 June 2005 - John Johnston
Mummies, Asps and Far Too Much Eye Makeup

For the lecture at the Summer Party 2005, John took us away from the thunder and lightning which carried on through much of the evening, to the bright lights of Hollywood and the various ways in which Egypt has been depicted in the 'movies'.

Since the early days of cinema, everything Egyptian has fascinated filmmakers and filmgoers alike. The first film to be made was in 1898 and entitled *Flight into Egypt*, a five-minute epic retelling the episode from the Bible. Unfortunately this film no longer exists.

Egyptian-themed films usually fall into three main categories: biblical, historical or fantastical. There are also the films whose stories use Egypt as a backdrop, such as *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, the first Indiana Jones blockbuster.

Some of the most famous early American films are the mummy horror films. The mummy in Boris Karloff's film of the same name has been said to have been modelled on the face of either Ramesses III or Sethy I, although he actually looks like neither! Several sequels were made starring Lon Chaney Senior. Although not very well received at the time, these have now moved into the category of 'classics'.

The last American film of this genre was made in 1955 and was the Abbot and Costello film *Abbot and Costello Meet the Mummy*. This was the usual Abbot and Costello format where Lou Costello is yelled at and beaten about the head by Bud Abbott, but this time in an Egyptian setting.

Four years after Abbot and Costello, Hammer in Britain picked up the Egyptian theme and the Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee version of *The Mummy* was released. Someone obviously had a good look at all things Egyptian, as the film used some very authentic looking props. Unfortunately they were less with the Gods, calling one Karnak!

Two sequels followed, *The Mummy's Shroud* and *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb*, not unlike the modern 'slasher' movies. Characters from the latter sported particularly ludicrous headdresses. After these, Hammer lost interest in ancient Egypt.

Only a few Egyptian themed films were made in the following years. *The Awakening* in 1980 was a remake of *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb*, which suffered from a lacklustre script and did not do well at the box office.

Following the books written by Erik von Daniken interest in Egypt and aliens was rekindled and the film *Stargate* appeared in 1994. This was followed by a successful spin-off TV series.

The next blockbuster was *The Mummy* in 1999 starring Brendan Fraser, which placed all the most recognisable Egyptian sights in one location! This success was followed by a sequel *The Mummy Returns* in which some characters from the original film discovered they were reincarnated priests and princesses from ancient Egypt.

As well as the mummy, the asp has also had a starring role in films featuring Egypt, the first being the 1917 version of *Anthony and Cleopatra* starring the vamp Theda Bara, whose real name was Theodosia Goodman. Her portrayal of Cleopatra fixed the image of the character for many films to come. Sadly, there is only 10 minutes of film left in existence.

The role was played again in 1933 by Claudette Colbert, but the film was not well received, and even received cat calls in Italy. Vivien Leigh then played the role and her film carried the tag line 'see the most seductive beauty the screen has ever seen'. One of the characters in this film was a maid with the gloriously unlikely name of Fatata Tita!

A pre-'Ironside' Raymond Burr starred in *Serpent of the Nile* alongside Rhonda Fleming in another film of this era.

Of course, the most famous of all is *Cleopatra* starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton in the Joseph L Mankowitz 1963 epic. The original Mark Anthony was to have been played by Peter Finch, but Richard Burton took over the role and the tempestuous relationship of Burton and Taylor began. This was the most expensive film ever made until *Titanic* and took two years to complete, having been dogged by bad luck. Scenes filmed in the UK were rained off, Elizabeth Taylor was taken ill and the script was always being re-written. Some of Cleopatra's costumes were pretty bad, and in one Elizabeth Taylor appears to be wearing her own coat!

It was certain to be sent up and this happened with the 'Carry on' film *Carry on Cleo*. The production was even sued by 20th Century Fox for using the same poster design.

Another feature of films about ancient Egypt is the eye makeup. This alone seems to signify Egypt the same way a fringe for men depicts Roman epics. Think of all the male roles in Roman epics and count the fringes! The 1956 film *The Ten Commandments* was a good illustration of this. Also *The Egyptian* played by Edmond Purdon with Michael Wilding as Akhenaten and Victor Mature as Horemheb. This film did not recoup its costs.

Land of the Pharaohs directed by Howard Hawks starring Jack Hawkins was another film to make losses. This must have one of the most lurid tag lines of the genre – 'her blood stained every stone of the pyramid!' This is the film, which shows the pyramid being sealed after the burial of the Pharaoh, and all the servants are sealed in with him – as well riding a camel!

A fitting end to one of these films is that it has become the subject of its own archaeological dig. The props for the 1923 version of *The Ten Commandments* were left in the desert and are now being excavated.

John's lecture was funny and informed and was just the thing for the Summer Party. All I have left to say is "I'm ready for my close-up Mr de Mille".

18 October 2005 -- Terence DeQuesne
Life and Devotion in New Kingdom Asyut

During the middle kingdom, Asyut was an important town, economically, politically and strategically. The Nobles of the region were equally powerful. The lecture this evening focussed on the tomb of one of these Nobles, located to the south west of Asyut, set into the almost vertical face of a mountain.

The tomb of Hapidjefa III is the largest private tomb known in Egypt, larger than those of some of the Kings. Little is known about him as the tomb is badly damaged, but he was probably a Governor and the grandson of Hapidjefa I. What makes this tomb different is what was found inside.

From the 18th to the 26th dynasty votive offerings to the jackal-god of the region, Wepwawet, were placed in the tomb. In 1922 G A Wainwright (a Bristolian!) discovered these items that consisted of stela, figures and, at that time, mummies. Sadly, the mummies have subsequently been lost. Unfortunately, for Wainwright, he made his discovery in the same year Howard Carter discovered Tutankhamun. Had that not been the case, his discovery would have received more notice and would have been the discovery of the decade. In fact, the items were lost from view after being sent to the Cairo Museum.

Over the last decade some 500 votive stela have been rediscovered in the basement of the museum plus 100 statues. Terence has been studying the finds and showed slides of some of the most interesting items. Some had obviously been commissioned and donated by wealthy people as they were well carved by artisans and would have been expensive. Some of the more wealthy citizens of Asyut even paid for their donations to be paraded through the streets on their way to the temple. Hapidjefa I refers to events on New Years Eve when the God was carried to the Temple of Anubis.

The less well off made their own offerings from terracotta, as this is a much cheaper material. Stela made from terracotta are not known at any other site. One stela was half painted and half carved, whilst another was only painted.

Some of the stelae depict the person making the offering, many of whom wore military costume, reflecting the strategic importance of Asyut. Perhaps they were offering to Wepwawet for success in a military campaign. Wepwawet is a warlike god and is depicted standing, unlike Anubis, another jackal god, who is nurturing and shown seated.

As well as Wepwawet and Anubis, other gods were worshipped in Asyut, as there were also offerings to Hathor and Osiris. One picture showed a most unusual stela with a collection of animals and items never seen together before.

Although little remains of Asyut in the way of ruins, the lecture gave a tiny glimpse into the lives of the people living there during the 18th to the 26th dynasty. Their gods obviously played a large part in their daily lives for them to have amassed such a collection of offerings, and for the poorer people to have taken the time to make their own, however humble.

Margaret Curtis

Accommodation for members from distant parts

A limited number of University rooms are available nearby, at a current B&B cost of £52 (single)/£65 (twin). Bookings may be made on 0117-954 5555 or Hawthorns-reception@bristol.ac.uk.

Also, our member Nigel Venner is generously offering ESB members a 25% discount on rooms at the Castle of Comfort Country House Hotel, Dodington, Nether Stowey, Bridgwater (01278 741264/reception@castle-of-comfort.co.uk: normal rates from £38 single and £95 double).

Egypt Society of Bristol Programme 2005/6

Tues 18 October 2005: Lecture, *Life and devotion in New Kingdom Asyut*
Terence du Quesne

Tues 15 November 2005: Lecture, *New discoveries at Tell Edfu*
Dr Nadine Moeller, University College, Oxford

Tues 13 December 2005: Lecture, *Ramesses II's Poisoned Legacy.*
Dr Aidan Dodson, Department of Archaeology & Anthropology, University of Bristol.

Tues 24 January 2006: Lecture, *Chests of Life: Coffins and Burial Ritual in Ancient Egypt*
Peter Robinson, Poynton Egypt Group

Tues 21 February 2006:

- Annual General Meeting (at 1830)
- Lecture: *The mummiform image in ancient Egypt*
Dr John Taylor, The British Museum
- Winter Party (at 1945)

Tues 28 March 2006: Lecture, *The Drowned Land of Nubia and the Rescue of its Monuments*
Martin R. Davies, President ESB.

Tues 9 May 2006: Lecture, *The Lost Tomb of Alexander the Great*
Andrew Chugg

Tues 16 May 2006: Lecture, *title to be confirmed*
Dr Christian Loeben, Kestner-Museum, Hannover, Germany

Tues 27 June 2006

- Lecture, *British Painters and Egyptian Visions 1850-1900*
Donato Esposito, University of Plymouth
- Summer Party (at 1945)

18 to 29 December 2006: Trip to some of the less-visited corners of Upper Egypt (as well as the less-visited bits of a couple of heavily visited ones!). Special price £1,499 per person when booked using enclosed special booking form. For detailed itinerary see overleaf.



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5

Itinerary: December 2006

Mon 18th – London/Luxor

Fly London to Luxor with EgyptAir and seven nights at the Old Winter Palace Garden Pavilion.

Tues 19th – Karnak

A very full and in depth investigation of Karnak Temple, including some of the less-visited outlying chapels and shrines

Wed 20th – Akhmim/Sohag

A full day journeying north to visit the remains of Akhmim, including the famous colossal statue of Ramesses II's daughter, Meryetamun and also the lovely Red and White Monasteries of Sohag.

Thu 21st – Western Thebes (1)

Visiting the Qurna temple of Sethy I, the tombs of Pabasa, Kheruef and Ankhhor on the Asasif, the ruins of the temple of Thutmose III, the tombs of Dra Abu'l-Naga (including the newly-discovered pyramid of Inyotef VI) and the new Merenptah Temple Museum.

Fri 22nd – Wadi Hammamat

We head into the Eastern Desert to study the expedition-inscriptions of the Wadi Hammamat.

Sat 23rd – Western Thebes (2)

An in-depth exploration of visit the workman's village and tombs at Deir el- Medina..

Sun 24th – Abydos

A visit to the Temple of Sethy I, perhaps the finest in all Egypt.

Mon 25th – Luxor/Aswan

Transfer by road to Aswan and check into the Elephantine Hotel for four nights.

Tue 26th – Philae/Kalabsha

A short boat ride and tour lovely Philae Temple, plus the hardly-ever visited rock inscriptions at Bigeh and the temple of Kalabsha.

Wed 27th – Aswan

A day on the river, taking us to Sehel Island for the famous inscriptions there, to the ruined city of Elephantine and to the tombs at Qubbet el-Hawa..

Thu 28th – Gebel Silsila

An excursion to the quarries at Gebel Silsila, and an evening trip to the Nubian Museum.

Fri 29th – To London

Flight from Aswan to Cairo, to connect to London.

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