



The Egypt Society of Bristol

NEWS UPDATE

Issue 23

May 2008

Chairman's Dig

I write this in a Bristol with a climate more akin to Cairo than the South-West of England: it can't last! The ESB has now entered its eleventh year, but it seems far less than that since the seeds of the society were first sown in the evening class that Pip Jones and I started to teach in October 1996. Through this, and the continuing classes taught by Lucia Gahlin, Bristol now has a flourishing amateur Egyptological community comparable to any in the UK.

Indeed, amateur groups continue to spring up around the country – last year I spoke at the inaugural meeting of a new group in Carlisle, where I am off to again next month, and where the President has also been spreading the Bristolian word. There are now at least some thirty groups around the UK (see <http://www.egyptology-uk.com/besdirectory/BESindex.htm> for a list) - which contrasts with the much smaller number in that rather larger country of the United States. There, the great distances involved (even within a single conurbation: Dallas/Fort Worth effectively covers the equivalent of Bristol to Reading!) make societies far less easy to organise and guarantee a viable level of attendance. However, one of the groups that flourishes is the North Texas Chapter of the American Research Center in Egypt, where the Chairman and Treasurer spent a most pleasant few days in April. The former gave one evening lecture, and then a dayschool on Tutankhamun – the latter being repeated as a University event on Bristol in the autumn (see Programme).

Another upcoming University day-school (in the Spring) will be one on hieroglyphs. There have been many calls for an event of this kind – the last one was some ten years ago, when Mark Collier was the presenter – and in the light of her exceptionally well-received lecture in April, Glasgow University's Angela McDonald has agreed to come

and do a full day on the subject. Booking for both day-schools will be through normal University channels.

Speaking of the 'T-word', the ESB's trip to the O₂ (AKA The Dome) went very well. In spite of some rather dubious weather, a coach-load were able to examine key pieces from the Valley of the Kings far more closely than would ever be possible in Cairo. My thanks to the Vice-Chairman for all her efforts in putting the trip together, and getting everyone back in one piece, after the Chairman and Treasurer had to head north at the end of the day in preparation for a lecturing engagement in Manchester

As you will see elsewhere in this mailing, the 08/09 programme is nearly complete. Only the last two dates need to be fixed – and in both cases the speakers are in the frame, just waiting for diaries to be synchronised. There will also be an excursion to be added-in, probably in May. This is likely to be a return visit to Kingston Lacy: the ESB went there back in its early days, and this will give new

EGYPT SOCIETY OF BRISTOL 2007

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

| | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| INCOME | | | |
| Membership fees | £1,282.85 | £1,075.00 | £1,152.50 |
| Events: | | | |
| Meetings | £73.00 | £32.00 | £20.00 |
| Parties: | £239.00 | £435.00 | £420.00 |
| Raffle | £32.01 | £69.64 | £77.00 |
| Trips: | £1,540.00 | £119.00 | £0.00 |
| | £1,884.01 | £655.64 | £517.00 |
| Donations: | £132.00 | £19.20 | £5.95 |
| | £3,298.86 | £1,749.84 | £1,675.45 |
| EXPENDITURE | | | |
| Speakers' costs: | | | |
| travel & hospitality | £619.92 | £624.16 | £359.50 |
| honouraria | £280.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Events: | | | |
| refreshments | £307.30 | £473.47 | £535.37 |
| porterage | £0.00 | £92.58 | £172.05 |
| Mailings: | £200.47 | £233.98 | £135.47 |
| Trips:* | £921.25 | | |
| Donations by ESB | £0.00 | | £1,500.00 |
| Raffle prizes | £13.50 | | £11.40 |
| Sundries | £9.03 | £119.00 | £31.16 |
| | £2,351.47 | £1,543.19 | £2,744.95 |
| NET INCOME | £947.39 | £206.65 | £1,069.50 |

Additional £510 for transport for Trip paid in FY2008, so 'true' net income £437.39.

*NB:



The ESB at the Dome waiting for the call of the Valley of the Kings (we were on timed tickets!)

members a chance to see this wonderful house – with some rather nice Egyptian antiquities as well! As previously, we will also be stopping off in Dorchester *en route* to allow people to visit *that* version of the Tutankhamun show – some rather nice replicas in an old chapel. Details will be included in the next mailing.

Look forward to seeing you all at the next meeting, *inshallah!*



Tales from the Treasury

Thanks to all who have renewed their subscriptions. There remain a few people who have yet to change their Standing Orders to reflect the new rates: if you have not yet done so, *please* send the Treasurer your new form so that you can once again be 'legit'!

I include on the previous page the accounts for 2007 as presented at the AGM in February. As always, if there are any queries, please get in touch.



The Unwrapping of Horemkenesi: Were you there?

In 1981 the decaying mummy of Horemkenesi was carefully unwrapped at Bristol University over a period of 2 weeks. It was filmed and streamed live into the back hall of the City Museum. Were you there?

As part of the new Egypt gallery we are inviting people to add their 'voices' to objects. We would particularly like to hear from anyone who saw the unwrapping or who knows of any press coverage about it from the time.

'Voices' gives a personal opinion: it is not the curator's view, but the visitor's. We hope to get a wide range of people to talk about what they think of an object, such as its meaning to them now or to the ancient Egyptians 3,000 years ago, what it says

about Egypt and its place in African history, or what technological knowledge was needed to produce it.

A selection of visitors' voices can be found on the computers in the Explore and Respond area of the Egypt gallery.

If you have any comments about Horemkenesi (or any of the Egyptian objects on display), please come into the gallery and add your thoughts. Alternatively, you can send information (ideally 500 words or fewer) to:

Amber Druce (Documentation Assistant of Ethnography & Foreign Archaeology)
Bristol's City Museum & Art Gallery, Queens Road, Bristol BS8 1RL.

amber.druce@bristol.gov.uk

Lecture Reports

by Margaret Curtis

13 November 2007: *The Politics of Placement - The Development of the New Kingdom Theban Necropolis*, by Dr JJ Shirley (University of Wales, Swansea)

Tonight's lecture was about Theban tombs and their owners and asked the question, why did someone choose a particular place for their tomb to be built? It did not always follow that large tombs were built at the top of the Theban hills and small ones at the bottom, or that important people built their tombs looking down on lesser people.

The period of interest for this lecture was mainly the 18th Dynasty and Dr Shirley described how, over time, the areas popular for burials fell in and out of favour and ebbed and flowed across the hills into different neighbourhoods. At the beginning of the Dynasty the northern area at Dra Abu'l-Naga was preferred, although there were not many tombs at this time. During the reign of Queen Hatshepsut tomb construction greatly increased with Dra Abu'l-Naga almost abandoned and the move was made towards the central area. By the Amarna period building in this area dropped off again. During the Ramesside period the flow of building moved on again and Dra Abu'l-Naga comes to the fore.



Obviously, not all the rock or areas of the cliffs were suitable for any kind of building due to accessibility and the poor nature of the rocks, bearing in mind the building took place both above and below ground and preferably located east to west. Most tombs have a front hall showing the offering or banqueting scenes and daily life. This enabled the owners of the tombs to continue their daily lives in much the same way as when they were alive. The area at the rear of the tomb, further west, depicts scenes of the afterlife and contained statues and stele. The burial chamber, which was generally not decorated, was below.

The lower areas of the cliffs along the Nile were already being developed by the Kings themselves with the building of temples and procession ways to the temples. Illustrations during the lecture showed how tombs had been built in direct line of sight of various temples and near the routes of processions. The proximity of the tombs to the temples and pathways enabled the deceased person to enjoy these occasions even in death. Why let something like being dead spoil the fun? Tomb building appeared to shift to follow the temples as they were built.

Another obvious factor in choosing a site is the person's position in life, being near other family members or their association with the King. Tombs of viziers have been found and tombs of family members who followed in this role are found nearby. Some people of a much lower position have built their tombs near important persons, but family links have been found to tie the individuals together. Perhaps this choice site was obtained through family influence? Senior people are sometimes surrounded by their subordinates, perhaps loyal servants. Some tombs are linked by the fact that all the owners had strong connections to the priesthood of Amun, particularly in the early part of the 18th Dynasty. There is also a large area dedicated to military men. In this area there are no priests or individuals connected with civil duties and the tomb decoration shows more pictures of the King these individuals served.

Another interesting area is dedicated to people close to the King, even sons of the king's wet nurse. These children may have grown up together and therefore had the position to acquire a favoured site. Interestingly, individuals described as 'butlers' who were overseers of kitchens or wine seem to appear all over the place.

In the mid 1960s over 400 tombs were known in the area but some have now been lost or damaged

further. We now know of 900 or more, but not all are decorated or in very good condition.

Sadly, how the land given to tomb building was administered or how a plot was allocated is not known. Who owned the land, did an individual building a tomb pay for their plot? Unfortunately, inscriptions describing a person as 'Overseer and owner of land on which to build a tomb' or 'Horemheb & Son: Tomb Builders to the Gentry' have never been found. But it's early days yet.

11 December 2007: *Viscount Castlereagh in Egypt and the Levant 1841-2*, by John Ruffle (lately of the Oriental Museum, University of Durham)



Our lecture tonight opened with a painting by John Frederick Lewis showing a wealthy gentleman dressed in the gowns of an eastern potentate. He is sheltering from the hot sun under the awning of a tent in a camp site in the desert, surrounded by his servants and dead game. A local Bedouin sheik is paying our gentleman a visit. Could this oriental gentleman be Viscount Castlereagh?

Born in 1805 into the wealthy and landed Londonderry family, Viscount Castlereagh's travels are well documented by way of letters and a journal, which he sent back to his home. An edited version of his journal was published but was really only meant to be 'destined for the amusement of the family circle'. Five volumes of 160 drawings by an artist hired for the trip were also collected, but it is a mystery why only ten were published, although it was agreed they were not as good as the David Roberts' paintings of the same era.

The journey through Egypt and the Levant took Castlereagh and his companions to Abu Simbel where they carved their names into the stone of the temple. Even Dusty, the group's dog gets a mention. From Abu Simbel they slowly progressed to Cairo visiting the moments along the way. On reaching Cairo Castlereagh dismissed his servant Hill calling him an 'old impostor'. It came to light that Hill had a

rupture and couldn't lift or do his job properly. He couldn't ride a camel and was afraid of sleeping in the open air. Castlereagh hired local servants who he described as 'villains', referring to them as 'toads'. Sadly, Dusty didn't make it beyond Cairo either as by this time he had become ill and died.

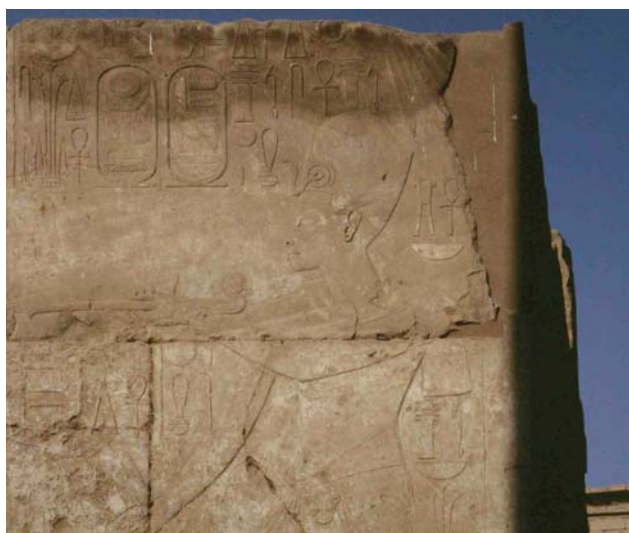
The group journeyed on to Jerusalem and Petra, north through the hills and on to Beirut and Baalbek to Damascus where he found 'not much worth seeing'(!). From here he picked up a Royal Navy ship to take him back to Portsmouth.

On his return he married Lady Powerscourt in 1846.

Castlereagh describes his journey as difficult as the natives were not always friendly. He comes across as easily bored and superior, mocking fellow British travellers as the 'John Bull tribe'. He writes that Alexandria was full of vagabonds and idlers, he was curious about Karnak but complained about the jumble of stones. He liked Philae but was not impressed with Dendara, and he liked Cairo although he thought there was no society. Although he knew he would encounter difficulties, in his letters he mentions the filth and the flies and the general discomfort. He complained the chefs 'picked their toes and then the food'. He wrote to his stepmother and complained about the ladies, the lack of and the type he met.

In his favour he deserves credit for undertaking, what was then, a very difficult journey. He was interested in the modern politics of the country and met with various officials and visited Mohamed Ali, the ruler of Egypt for much of the early 19th century, who he thought 'overrated'. He noticed the hard life of the local people and the men press-ganged into working on the canals with little or no pay.

As he was so unimpressed by most of what he saw, our speaker wondered why he went in the first place. He suggests Castlereagh could have been convalescing after an illness or was seeking maternal approval, which had not always been forthcoming. He did not have a good relationship with his father either saying he never received a letter 'without a rowing'. He was a bit of a rake so might have left the country after trouble involving a woman. He certainly wasn't interested in antiquities although he wanted a



Tutankhamun, as shown in the Temple of Luxor

trophy of his expedition. He couldn't find antiquities to buy, only fakes, although he did pay £200 for a mummy.

Castlereagh's journal gives the impression of a connoisseur, but his letters describe the dirt and discomfort and shows him in a different light from the writings in the journal. Despite what he thought of the journey he was determined to complete the trip saying 'I shall go on 'til I drop'.

Castlereagh died in 1872 after being certified as 'unsound of mind'.

Perhaps the painting by John Frederick Lewis was how Castlereagh imagined the journey would be, rather than the dirt and discomfort he actually encountered.

28 January 2008: *Just Who Was Tutankhamun?* by Dr Aidan Dodson (Chairman of ESB)

Our story begins around 1350 BC with the Posh and Becks of the Amarna period, Akhenaten and his wife Nefertiti. Akhenaten is infamous for having abolished the old gods of ancient Egypt in favour of one god? the Aten. The period is known for its radical change in artistic style with the elongated features and full hipped depictions of both men and woman. Nature was beautifully drawn and, from the items which remain today, we can only guess at how wonderful the complete pieces must have been. During these changing times, Tutankhamun, or rather Tutankhaten, makes his first appearance.

Amenhotep IV followed his father, Amenhotep III who had reigned for 40 years. Amenhotep III's wife, Queen Tiye, appears from surviving statuettes to be a woman who wouldn't stand for any nonsense. Quite a bit is known about Tiye, her father and mother were General Yuya and his wife Tjuiu, whose tomb was found almost intact.

In his fifth regnal year, Amenhotep IV 'sees the light' and proclaims the Aten as the true and only God. He changes his name to Akhenaten and takes his people on a journey to find a new home, the site for which will be shown to him by the Aten. Amarna is founded and over the course of a relatively short time a new city appears on the banks of the Nile.

Akhenaten even had his own Valley of the Kings in a wadi behind the new city where his own tomb was to be built. It included separate rooms for the women of his family, one of which was Meketaten, the second daughter of a family of six girls. On the walls of the tomb is a picture of a woman nursing a baby: did Meketaten die in child birth? Or is this the symbol of the dead person being reborn? Could it show the birth of Tutankhaten? Tutankhaten's mother is not known for sure and, although he is not shown in the company of Nefertiti, we cannot rule out that she was not his mother. Tutankhaten is named as a prince in a carving on a block of stone found at Ashmunein which strongly suggests he was a son of Akhenaten, born around year 10 of Akhenaten's reign.

Around year 13 of Akhenaten's reign, Smenkhkare, his son in law, joins him as co-regent. What is thought by many to be Smenkhkare's body has been found in the Valley of the Kings having been buried there after at least one move. The

remains have been very badly damaged by water and no name can be found on the body or badly damaged coffin. The body is that of a man in his 20's and some believe it is Smenkhkare whilst others believe it is Akhenaten himself.

Contrary to various past proposals, including those of Aidan himself, it is now pretty clear that after Smenkhkare's demise, Nefertiti herself joined her husband as a Pharaoh, under the name Neferuneferuaten, sometimes with the epithet 'beneficial for her husband'. Items were found in Tutankhamun's tomb were originally meant for Neferuneferuaten's burial.

At last, in the 17th year of his reign, Akhenaten dies, although there is no indication of the cause. He certainly upset a lot of people by abolishing an age-old way of worship, so there would be a great number of suspects. Tutankhaten, as the only surviving son becomes Pharaoh, probably at around 9 years old. Because of his age, someone would have been appointed to act on his behalf and for several years the co-ruler was Nefertiti and things carried on as before in Amarna.

Suddenly, Tutankhaten is back at Thebes with no sign of Nefertiti. We can only assume she has died or perhaps retired: the reuse of her burial furniture for Tutankhamun shows that in any case she was not buried as a pharaoh. New individuals take over caring for the young King. Ay, who may have been Nefertiti's father, is the first to fill the role, followed by Horemheb, the General who was head of the infantry.

Even while Nefertiti was directing events, Amun was being restored to his place, and with the return to Thebes this is completed. Found in the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak, the 'Restoration Stela' describes the return of Amun; and it was about this time Tutankhaten changed his name to Tutankhamun. He had also taken a wife – his (half?)sister, Ankhesenpaaaten, who is shown with him on the beautiful golden throne now in the Cairo Museum. She also changes the end of her name to Amun. For the next 5 or 6 years a great deal of building and restoration took place and Tutankhamun's name is found on new and restored monuments. On one in particular, Ay is seen standing very close behind the King, the position usually taken by a god. This is unheard of.

Suddenly, at the age of about 18, Tutankhamun dies. There are many theories about the cause, some say murder, some say accident or illness. He appeared to enjoy hunting and other outdoor activities as he is shown on artefacts from his tomb riding out on his chariot, so he could have fallen or the chariot turned over. A scan was recently carried out on the body which shows he suffered a broken leg before death. The wound had not healed at the time of death as some of the embalming fluids can be seen under the skin. The wound could have become infected causing death, otherwise the scan does not show any particular illness or other major injury.

Ay takes over and Tutankhamun's funeral takes place with Ay shown in the tomb paintings carrying out the 'opening of the mouth' ceremony. Again, this is something not previously seen in a royal burial chamber.



The Pyramid of Ahmose I at Abydos

Following her husband's death, Ankhesunamun sends a letter to the Hittites asking them to please send one of their sons as a husband for her. It is believed a son was sent, but he never reached his destination and was probably murdered on his journey. It is unlikely the Egyptians would have wanted a foreign king as their ruler.

Ay seems briefly to have married Ankhesenamun, cementing further his claim to the throne of Egypt. A ring has been found linking their names. She then disappears from history and we have no idea what happened or even where she might be buried.

As king, Ay reigns for four years, after which General Horemheb takes over. When Horemheb dies, he has no surviving children and General Rameses (I) becomes King heralding the next dynasty.

Tutankhamun was probably considered by the ancient Egyptians to be a minor King and his name almost disappears from the pages of their history, particularly with his relationship with Akhenaten who they considered heretic and who disrupted the pattern of life. Following the discoveries by Howard Carter in 1922, Tutankhamun has become the most famous of them all and his name will live forever.

26 February 2008: *The Pyramid of Ahmose I at Abydos*, by Dr Stephen P Harvey (Stony Brook University, USA)

The pyramid of Ahmose was commissioned by the founder of the 18th Dynasty, Ahmose I (1550-525 BC) who was celebrated as the victor over the Hyksos after the Theban rulers had been pushed down to the south by the Hyksos invaders. The remains of the pyramid and the site were found in 1899 by Arthur Mace for the Egypt Exploration Fund under the overall direction of Flinders Petrie. Sadly, he published very little information on the findings, about one page of information together with a scrappy map and did not identify the exact locations, size or extent of the complex. It was not a complete structure but found broken into over 5,000 pieces, most of which were corners and edges of blocks. Later excavations have found larger pieces showing bowman and ships with oars.

The style of the pyramid was a transitional style from pyramid to rock cut tomb and is thought to be the last such royal complex built in Egypt. It is much smaller than the pyramids of the north of the country, being only 60 metres per side. The casing stones found show it to have had a steep angle of ascent. The pyramid is unique due to it having the first known representations of horses and complex chariot warfare with the Hyksos. The Hyksos introduced horses and chariots as well as bows and the art of

glass making. An inscription has been found in the tomb of a sailor which describes the taking of cities.

There are known to be four temples at the base of the pyramid which were built after the defeat of the Hyksos, plus one other building. A mud brick construction ramp has been found and it was during Ahmose's reign that mud bricks were first stamped with the name of the King, his wife or even the name of the architect.

Ahmose built a shrine for his grandmother, Tetisheri, including a pyramid of which the pyramidion was found, all within a 90m enclosure.

Once royalty had tired of the pyramid design, which was mainly popular in the north of the country, it was used for private tombs. Ahmose's reign covers the period when this change was taking place and, at Abydos, there is a visual record of this. In year 22 of his reign, Ahmose ordered the reopening of the great stone quarries where the blocks of stone were dragged by captured bulls and, perhaps, foreign captives, to complete the massive building projects he undertook. He also reopened trade routes and reorganised the administration of the country.

Ahmose's cult lasted for many years and he is sometimes shown as a God. His name means 'the moon is born'. In one representation he is shown being paid homage by a figure who could be Tutankhamun. He has no known temple or tomb in Thebes, but his body was one of those found in the royal cache, despite not being listed as one of the mummies stored for safety in the unused tomb. His mummy is now on display in Luxor. Ahmose should have been followed by his eldest son, but, for some reason, this did not happen. Instead, a younger son, Amenhotep I, is the next King and this was the beginning of the New Kingdom.

There is still a great deal of material to be found at the site and, despite the stones being made up of many hundreds of fragments, will no doubt yield much more information for future digs.

1 April 2008: *The Secret Lives of the Ancient Egyptians - Love, Laughter, Fear and Hieroglyphs*, by Angela McDonald, University of Glasgow

The aim of the lecture was to take us inside hieroglyphs and in doing so, reconstruct the past to try to find out more about the ancient Egyptians themselves - what did they do, who were they and how did they think?

Grand monuments such as the pyramids were meant to survive through history, but the magic is that small fragile items, such as the medical papyrus, survived as well and these sometimes tell us so much more.

When translating hieroglyphs we read the words but miss a great deal of the emotion and feeling behind the words. The choice of sign or even the space between the signs makes a difference.

Our speaker showed a picture of a sign for an evil snake god. The ancient Egyptians believed that the written word had magic and that words and symbols had a life of their own. The sign for the serpent had daggers sticking into it and this was done to prevent the sign for the serpent god from living and actually doing evil.

Another illustration of this is the Egyptians' belief of how their world was created. They believed that before creation was chaos. The god Ptah thought of the world and brought life with the thoughts of his heart and the words of his mouth, showing they believed the thought or the word was enough to bring things to life. Therefore children were given names immediately, very often a name that gave them an affinity with a particular god, for instance Montjuhotep meaning 'Montu is content'. Or perhaps the name conveyed the parents' wish for a child, for instance Seneb meaning 'The Healthy One' or Ankhtyfy. 'The one who will live', in the hope their child had a long and healthy life. A particularly charming name is Webennesiah 'She for whom the Moon shines'.

Further evidence that they believed the written word lived can be found at the temple of Sethy I at Abydos. His wish for a long and happy reign reads

My hand writes his long existence, the pen is eternity, the inkwell is countless festivals.

Animals were also given names and we were shown a picture from a tomb where a little dog sits beneath the chair of its owner. The dog's name was Enmereni meaning 'I don't like anyone' which paints a picture of a little dog who barks at everyone and which immediately gives it character.

The title *wer* means a great person or dignitary and the hieroglyph for this shows a man standing straight and carrying a staff. The same word is used for any foreign dignitary but the Egyptians added more meaning to this by showing the man stooping or even with his arms tied behind his back, therefore looking far less dignified as befitted an enemy.

Love poems were written where the feeling of love was expressed in ways such as 'your love is more precious to me than soothing oil on weary limbs' and this turned the words into a feeling people could understand.

This was one of the most fascinating lectures we have had and I'm sure we would have been happy to listen for much longer. Hopefully Angela can return in the future, to provide us with yet more insights into the minds of the ancient Egyptians.

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