

INSCRIPTIONS

The Newsletter of the Friends of the Egypt Centre, Swansea

Issue 32

August 2011

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Annual General Meeting

Don't forget this year's AGM will take place on

Wednesday 28 September 2011 at 6.30 pm

to be followed at 7.00 pm by

the first talk of the new academic year:

The *Rekhyt*-people and the things they do: Popular worship in ancient Egypt

Ken Griffin (Swansea University)



One of the longest surviving symbols from ancient Egypt, with a history of over 3,000 years, the lapwing bird was used to identify a section of the Egyptian populace (*rekhyt*-people). As 'commoners' they would have been restricted from entering the inner parts of the Egyptian temples. However, using both textual and pictorial representations, this lecture will examine the areas which were accessible, at which times, and the activities they participated in.

Don't miss what promises to be a fascinating lecture!

Fulton House Room 2

Payment of Subscription by Standing Order

We have had requests from members of the Friends to be able to pay their annual subscriptions by standing order. You will find a standing order mandate form enclosed with this copy of Incriptions. If you wish to pay by standing order, please fill it in and send to your bank. Your reference will be your Friends membership number, if this is not already on your form, please write it in; we need this so that we can identify your payment. Also remember to include date of renewal if this is not already on the form. Please allow processing time between the payment and receiving your new membership card.

*by Sheila Nowell
Hon. Treasurer*





A Crocodile in One Hand and a Mummy in the Other

Notes on a lecture delivered on 15th June 2011 by Bev Rogers

This lecture given by Bev Rogers, a PhD candidate at Swansea University, concentrated upon the phenomena of collecting Egyptian antiquities during the Victorian era. Bev began her talk by offering up background information on the influx of tourists into Egypt, beginning during Roman times. The lecture then covered the trading of mummies and the mistaken belief that bitumen had healing properties as it was thought mummies were covered in this, rather than just skin darkened by the embalming process. Indeed, ground mummy was available for purchase well into the early 20th century and from the 12th Century Mummy Brown paint was available. Bev explained that Napoleon's mission to catalogue Egypt's antiquities in the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries acted as a catalyst for the Victorian interest in Egypt, as this expedition led to the publication of the *Description l'Egypte*. Bev showed evidence of the popularity in Victorian cemeteries to use obelisks and other Egyptian symbols as grave markers and tombs.

Photography, newspapers and journals also came into being during this era and served to further popularise Egypt. Following the introduction of the concept of the Grand Tour during the 18th Century wherein those who could afford it would travel to far off lands by ship or steam train, the 19th Century saw the addition of Egypt to the itinerary. With this increased opportunity to travel came the possibility of obtaining exotic and intriguing souvenirs such as mummies.

Bev cited the example of the travel agency Thomas Cook placing mummies where tourists could find them. They would then take these back to unwrap at their hotel! After it became illegal in 1835 to export antiquities from Egypt, souvenir hunters would break off the fingers, toes, hands from mummies in order to smuggle them out in their luggage. As many will know the Victorians were renowned for their passion for collecting artefacts. It was not just human mummies which were collected, animal mummies were also popular (hence the title of the lecture).

The unwrapping of mummies before audiences had taken place before with the earliest attested taking place in 1698 in France; however from the 1820's onwards there

was a fashion for the event, which resulted in a catastrophic loss of important information, as those carrying out these actions were concerned with artefacts hidden within the mummy wrappings and not the embalming process itself. Indeed, Giovanni Battista Belzoni staged the unwrapping of mummies in order to promote his exhibitions. In 1833 Pettigrew conducted an unwrapping of a mummy in his hospital which was attended by a prince, lords, Egyptologists, travellers etc, which was indicative of the typical audience at this time.



It was at this juncture in the lecture that scraps of mummy bandage were passed round in an inspired piece of audience participation. Bev informed the audience not to panic, as they weren't real, rather they were facsimile pieces created to illustrate how they felt, looked and smelled (if you're wondering, rich in spices with an overtone of cinnamon).

Bev spoke of the trend for mummy unwrapping parties wherein guests were invited to a sumptuous dinner which would then be followed by the unwrapping of a mummy. Mummies without treasures were disappointing; once unwrapped they were discarded or given to museums. Bev linked the idea of the seeing of mummies as a commodity - essentially entertainment - symbolic of adventure. Essentially the life expectancy of people during Victorian times was short - death was everywhere "a familiar companion". Their perception of death would therefore differ from our sanitised society where death is hidden.

Today the idea of removing the bandages from a mummy is obsolete as we can determine all the information we need from CT Scans. Bev briefly touched on the work of the scientist Gunter von Hagen and his techniques of plasticisation of human bodies which have toured the world to huge audiences and both protests and acclaim. The lecture ended with a fake advert for a mummy unwrapping and asked the question - how many would turn up to one today? I suspect I probably would, much against my better judgement. In conclusion, this lecture was very well prepared and presented and served notice to the audience of the quality of PhD student currently studying at Swansea.

by L. S. J. Howells





Editorial

Welcome to Issue 32 of *Inscriptions*.

Please take note in your diaries of the date, timing and location of the AGM. Once again we have the prospect of an excellent lecture after the AGM, so make sure you're there!

Sadly, over a year has elapsed since the last issue of *Inscriptions*. This has been due to lack of contributions, as we can't put together an issue until we have enough material. Please consider whether you could produce something for the next issue, however small: we're always interested to hear of any adventures (or misadventures) that you may have had in your travels. Anything original, from a simple anecdote to a scholarly article, will be included—it doesn't necessarily have to be about Egypt!

We are very grateful those who have sent us material for this issue, and I hope you'll agree it's worth the wait.

We wish all Friends and associates a happy summer holiday and look forward to seeing everyone again at the AGM and lecture on 28 September.

Mike Mac Donagh

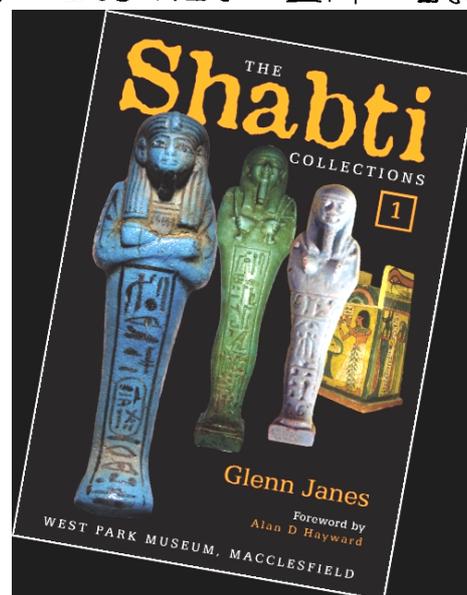
Review of The Shabti Collections 1 by Glenn Janes

Many of you will be familiar with the previous publication by Glenn Janes, this being *Shabtis – A Private View*, a well written and extremely well illustrated book which concentrated upon shabtis held in private European collections. Mr Janes has

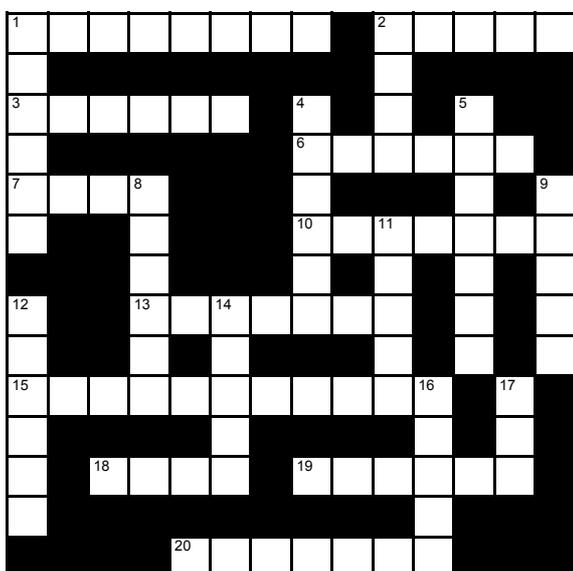
followed that up with another incredible book, this being the first in a proposed series of books covering the shabti collections of a number of museums, with this particular volume concentrating upon the shabtis held at West Park Museum in Macclesfield. As with his previous publication the photographs of the shabtis themselves are of exquisite quality and his publishers, Olicar House, appear to have taken great pains to ensure that they are printed in all their glory. Not to be outdone, the descriptions of each shabti and its inscription, where present, are also excellent. Provenance of each piece and the location in other collections of similar pieces are also noted. If this was not enough the book also features an excellent article on the Deir el-Bahari caches discovered during the latter half of the 19th Century. If you are interested in the study of ancient Egyptian funerary artefacts, and especially shabtis, this book is very much recommended. However should you wish to own one I suspect you will need to move quickly, as at the time of writing they are sold out on Amazon and I was only able to obtain my copy through Mr Janes' website, www.shabtis.com.

The Shabti Collections 1 was published by Olicar House Publications during 2010. ISBN 978 0 9566271 0 0.

by L. S. J. Howells



Crossword



See how well you've read *Inscriptions* by trying our little crossword! All the answers are somewhere in this issue.

Across

- 1 A spice used in mummification (8)
- 2 British officer who became collector and Egyptologist (5)
- 3 His house is found at Tel el Amarna (6)
- 6 Myers described this site as 'a heap of ruins' (6)
- 7 A bird associated with Thoth (4)
- 10 Director of Antiquities in Egypt at Myers' time (7)
- 13 Tarry substance thought to have been used in mummification (7)
- 15 Ruined city founded by Hadrian (11)
- 18 God of chaos, sometimes symbolized by the Ibex (4)
- 19 Lapwing bird (6)
- 20 A bird associated with the common people (7)

Down

- 1 Early Christian civilisation in Egypt (6)
- 2 Necropolis of 6th dynasty tombs of Senbi and Ukhotepe (4)
- 4 Site of colossal statue of Meritamun (6)
- 5 Finely glazed ceramic material (7)
- 8 Small statue to serve the deceased in the afterlife (6)
- 9 Falcon-headed god (5)
- 11 6th dynasty tomb located at Meir (5)
- 12 An oasis in Upper Egypt (6)
- 14 This god's head is an ibis (5)
- 16 Location of White and Red Coptic monasteries (5)
- 17 She guides the deceased from the darkness of the coffin towards the light of eternal life (3)





A Journey of the Rekhyt to Middle Egypt (Part One)

(N.B. I have written this report while attempting to translate my notes written down in a speeding minibus whilst on the trip. They appear to be written in another language, therefore I apologise for any errors in advance.)

Following the usual adventures getting to Egypt in the first instance, the action commenced on the 16th September when we arrived at our first port of call the town of Akhmim, location of the colossal (21 feet tall) statue of Meritamun, daughter of Ramesses II which was discovered in 1981 during excavations. After a short time taking far too many photographs we next moved on to the White and Red Monasteries, located near to Sohag. A team from the United States are currently working at the Red Monastery restoring the Coptic decoration. Unfortunately only the 6th Century church survives.

There are those who when visiting Egypt are less interested in Coptic remains and concentrate wholly upon the Pharaonic era. I feel this misses the point as the Coptic era is of course just another stage in Egypt's history and to dismiss it means missing out on a rich period of the country's heritage. Indeed, many blocks from pharaonic sites were reused during the Coptic era, with an example being featured in the photograph below:



The White Monastery in particular features many such blocks with pharaonic inscriptions as it was built by Shenute, during the 4th Century C.E., who adopted a strategy of deliberately reusing blocks from what he considered were temples dedicated to pagan gods.

After a warm day's exploring we retired to our accommodation in Asyut, the basic but very friendly Akhenaten Hotel, located in the centre of town. No swimming pool, so we drowned our thirst in the well stocked, and very cheap, hotel bar. The next day we travelled to the necropolis of Meir, home to the Sixth Dynasty tombs of Senbi and Ukhoteb. These tombs are notable for their excellent decoration, particularly Senbi's which dates to the reign of Amenemhat I and features a particularly fine desert hunting scene. We had to wait for three quarters of an

hour for permission to visit these tombs, however once this was granted we were able to view these excellent tombs.

Our day concluded at the Middle Egyptian city of Minya, a large town with a tendency to be Cairo-esque in its hustle and bustle. We were staying at the Nefertiti Hotel which was quiet but welcoming, containing both bar and swimming pool. However the bar was not as cheap as we would like and we took matters into our own hands by attempting to cross the road and investigate the pleasing looking hotel nearby.

Our police escort took exception to us and insisted that should we wish to do this we would need an armed guard as they intimated that Middle Egypt was a dangerous place to be (we saw no evidence whatsoever that this was the case throughout our stay). Rather than create a national incident we acquiesced to their demands and indulged in the ludicrous act of being escorted by armed men to a hotel not thirty yards away which we happily discovered served cheaper drinks.

Strangely however they were less concerned as to how we would run the thirty yard gauntlet once we had sated our thirst and once we had finished we returned to the Nefertiti Hotel. Our erstwhile guards were nowhere to be seen.

The following day brought us the deadly boring sight of another gloriously sunny day, with our destination being the ruined city of Antinopolis. Ruined is the correct description for the place. Mound after mound of potsherds litter what appears to be a lunar landscape and stretch far away into the distance as far as the eye can see. The Roman city founded by Hadrian and named after his lover Antonius who drowned in the Nile is a huge site, but other than potsherds there is little to see besides a temple dedicated to Ramesses II (photo below).



Perhaps the size of the site dictates that it must wait to be excavated as such an undertaking would be extremely expensive and time consuming, and as we all know there are plenty of sites in Egypt waiting to be worked.

Onwards then to Deir El Bersha, a necropolis which features tombs from the Old Kingdom, First Intermediate Period and Middle Kingdom as well as limestone quarries which are





believed to have been used from the New Kingdom to the Roman period. The site has fallen prey to many earthquakes over the centuries which whilst damaging the tombs has not detracted from their beautiful decoration.

The 19th of September took us to the chaotically distributed sites of Tel el Amarna, a location that needs a good days exploring due to the distance between its noted features. However, before we set out our platoon of armed guards thought it prudent to wave a mirror under our buses to check for bombs. Rumours circulated that the reason for this was due to our extensive dominoes win against several of the locals the night before. Indeed, several members of our expedition were seen carrying large wads of piastres for days later. Once this charade had concluded we split from the town and headed for the desolate plains of Tel el Amarna, visiting Akhenaten's Tomb, one of the Boundary Stelae as well as the North Tombs and Palace. We concluded our trip to Tel el Amarna by viewing the Temple of the Aten, Panesy's House (see photo below) and the Tomb of Ay which features both unfinished columns and decoration.



Following our exhausting jaunt around Tel el Amarna we moved on to the necropolis of Tuna el-Gebel to visit the tomb chapel of Petosiris. Upon arrival we were confronted by the grumpiest tomb guardian I have ever encountered. One or two of our crew allegedly took photographs of the tomb chapel and he then decided that he was going to call the police, which he did. Meanwhile we entered another tomb chapel which contained the mummy of a girl who had drowned in the Nile in the 2nd Century A.D. However, the smell of the mummy was ripe to say the least and we exited for fresh air within seconds. I don't recall the name of the mummified girl (*Isadora, Ed.*) however I suspect that the aroma of her mortal remains will stay within my nostrils till I expire myself.

We next descended to the catacombs, the entrance to which is flanked by a room full of rotting hawks and baboons. I could see a theme manifesting itself here. If you want good quality mummification, try elsewhere other than Tuna el-Gebel. A short wander amongst the remains of millions of sacred ibis birds and we then depart, avoiding the guardian who still wants to drag in the police, the army or anyone else who would listen

because we had allegedly taken illicit photographs. I suspect he'd have called in Dr Hawass and Interpol if he'd had their phone numbers. We were convinced we would be followed as we pulled off in the minibus, a fear that wouldn't pall for several miles.

Our final stop of the day was to visit the Ashmunein Baboons. We got there five minutes before it closed due to the Tuna el-Gebel shenanigans. A photograph or two, not illicit, then we returned to Minya.

The next day we headed toward Speos Artemidos, a rock cut temple of Hatshepsut. The location was wonderfully desolate and our guards warned us that the area was rife with Hashish and firearms smugglers and other ne'er-do-wells. About a mile up the valley is the Tuthmosis III Shrine, less than conveniently situated slap bang in the middle of where the naughty people were known to frequent. Nevertheless we were bolstered by having to deal with the Guardian at Tuna el-Gebel the day before and we braved the walk in the blistering sun to the shrine.

Other than the shrine, no excitement presented itself and we then returned to the minibuses to visit possibly the highlight of the entire trip, the tombs of Beni Hassan. There are few greater decorated tombs than these and they are situated quite a way up a cliff commanding a superb view of the Nile and its valley. I won't bore you with the details of our trip here; however some have recommended that should you visit the site it is advisable to split into two groups, the idea being that one group would always be one step ahead of the guardians in order to take illicit photographs, whilst the other asked questions. Not that I would recommend anyone taking photos where they were not permitted (cough...ahem...). A far better write up than I could attempt can be found at: <http://egyptsites.wordpress.com/2009/02/14/beni-hasan/>

Next we moved onward to Zawyet El-Maiyitin, which features the scanty ruins of a 3rd Dynasty pyramid. There are also a number of tombs there, but they were high up on a hill, and we were low down by the guardians of the site. These guardians had tea. Perhaps next time tea will not triumph over tombs.

Time was running out, next stop the Fraser Tombs. The Fraser Tombs are a number of Fourth and Fifth Dynasty tombs, two kilometres south of Tuna El-Gebel, which are named after the explorer George Willoughby Fraser. These tombs are rarely visited by tourists, and so it proved as it appeared that the guardians were unsure what exactly to do with us. Typically with the less visited sites the tombs are well worth viewing and it is only their isolation that prevents them from being more feted.

Before we visited the final open tombs at the site I spotted a slightly less welcome visitor soaking up the sun. Personally I'm not that bothered by snakes; however there are several poisonous varieties in Egypt. Watching grown men who despite being armed with automatic weapons appeared reticent to go anywhere near the snake was not without its amusement factor. However it then decided it had had enough of the disturbance and disappeared into an abandoned tomb shaft.





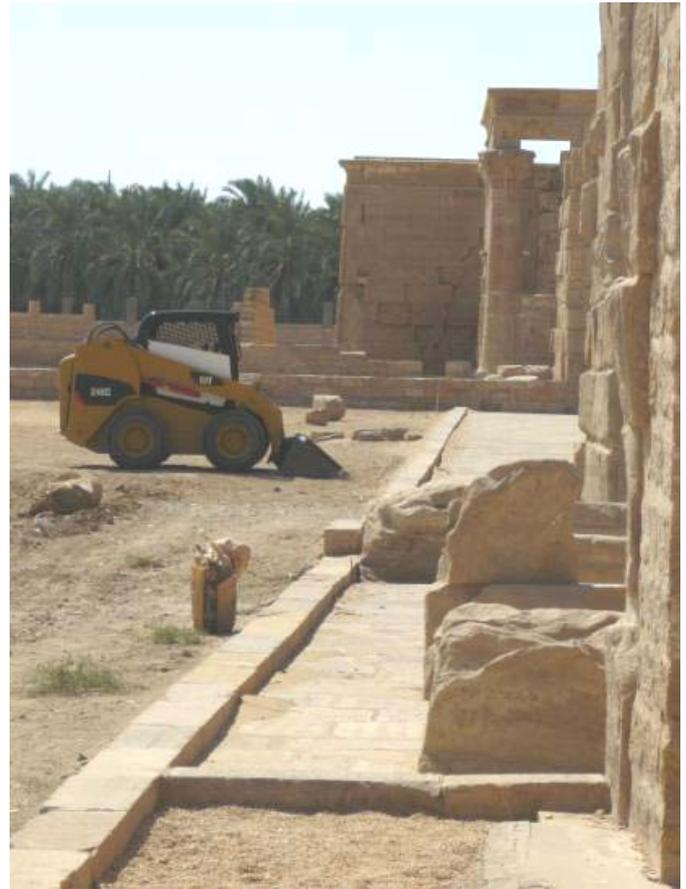
Our visit over, we returned to Minya for an early night as our next day's journey would be a long one. We were to travel from Minya, leaving behind the Nefertiti Hotel and head to Kharga Oasis, a gargantuan journey indeed. Our first stop on the outskirts of Kharga was Bagawat Coptic Cemetery. Several of the team preferred not to visit this site and instead retired to the shade and cool drinks. However I, being more of an 'experience everything while you have the opportunity' kind of person ventured into the cemetery. Bagawat is an extensive site of Coptic tombs and chapels, many of which had been defaced. However several still feature excellent quality paintings of Christian saints and I would recommend visiting should the opportunity arise.



We then moved on to the Hibis Temple, which we then discovered was closed. No matter as one of our crew, a well known Luxor resident who knows everyone worth knowing, and a series of phone calls would deal with the problem. Meanwhile as the wheels of progress and authority were turning slowly we moved on to Kharga Museum to await judgement. Should anyone get the opportunity to visit Kharga Museum, embrace it! It is an excellent museum with exhibits that run the gamut of all of Egyptian history. Unusually it also permits the taking of photographs. It also has a very cheap bookshop with all manner of gifts available. After a brief spending frenzy which resulted in my rucksack being weighed down with the equivalent of a small library and a reproduction of a Roman era clay hedgehog we returned to the Hibis Temple now that our wonderful contact had arranged for us to visit the closed temple. The Hibis Temple is undergoing extensive restoration by a team from Newport. The work is currently being carried out at the temple which explains why it is closed. However, the work is of a very high quality (I'm not just saying that because the team are Welsh).

Following our perusal of the Hibis Temple we then quickly sampled the cuisine of Kharga at one of its restaurants before departing for Luxor. Back home again after a very very very long journey by bus through the desert from Kharga to Luxor we retired to the King's Head Pub for refreshments. The King's head is a public house which features an image of Akhenaten dressed as Henry VIII as its logo (classy).

Fortunately it extends its cheap drinks happy hour by several hours just for us after some negotiations and this is just what's required after such a dry and dusty journey.



The next day was a day off after an unusually busy week of travelling, a rare moment of leisure indeed which we were eager to take full advantage of. As the travellers who were joining us for the second week were not due to arrive till later in the day, several of us grasped the opportunity to catch up with old friends, shop, engage in verbal haggling combat with the locals etc. A few of us went to visit what we believe is Luxor's only antique shop, run by a wily old Copt whose name I won't mention as he won't give me a discount even if I do advertise his business.

As you may or may not know, Luxor is undergoing yet another facelift with all manner of works on the Corniche itself. Unfortunately there are many businesses in the way of this development and these are in the process of being moved. We arrived at the shop to find it unusually bereft of stock while the two shops located immediately before it were now a large pile of plaster and bricks. We hung around for a short time, observed the pandemonium and sensibly decided to leave as the large digger began to advance toward the building and the people who were unhappy at having their shops dispatched to history began to raise their voices to levels that illustrated their displeasure at proceedings. We then left them to it and returned back to the hotel.

Egypt, always different, yet strangely always the same.

by L.S.J. Howells





Sacred and Profane: The Myers Collection in the Barber Institute of Fine Arts

1899 was a mixed year for Eton College. They lost one of their most distinguished alumni and yet, in the process, obtained one of the finest collections of Egyptian antiquities in private hands.

Major William Joseph Myers was the Adjutant to the Eton College Rifle Volunteers when he died in action in South Africa during the first month of the Second Boer War. His was a long-standing connection to the College since he had been a student there from 1871 until 1875, at which time he left for Sandhurst. Obtaining commissions from the 16th Foot in 1878, and rapidly transferring to the 60th Rifles in 1879, he spent 16 years in service around the world. It was in Egypt, however, that the major laid the foundations for his enduring legacy, through acquiring a superlative collection of antiquities.

Upon first landing in Alexandria in 1882, Myers found it a dull, war-torn place and he was glad to move inland to Cairo as soon as he could. The heady attractions of Cairo entranced Myers and his extensive diaries (he wrote 34 volumes) tell of river trips, polo matches, fine dining, and, more prosaically, donkey racing. In among the usual social activities expected of a British officer, there are other entries revealing visits to the pyramids, to bazaars, and to view Coptic churches. Myer's interest in history and art that he once displayed at Eton was now finding an outlet.

In 1884, Myers describes a lengthy journey he took up the Nile, taking Amelia Edward's recently published *One Thousand Miles Up The Nile* as his guide. The Major was particularly spellbound by Abu Simbel, which he viewed from a distance, but his comments are dismissive of Karnak, calling the site a 'heap of ruins'. It was to be another century before the monument would be restored to the glory we know today.

All the while, Myers evidently collected antiquities and his diary comments that antique vendors swarmed around him, probably with good reason. By 1887, he completed an initial catalogue of his collection, inadvertently revealing the helping hand of Émile Brugsch in obtaining the finest items on the market. Brugsch was, of course, assistant to Gaston Maspero, the Director of Antiquities in Egypt, who, unlike his predecessor Auguste Mariette, had a relaxed attitude to the export of antiquities. It was just as well for Myers, as he eventually amassed around 3,500 objects that he took with him when he returned to Britain. The collection is not particularly scholarly, and provenance is rarely recorded, but it is astonishingly beautiful. The Major clearly had the eye of a connoisseur.

Retiring in 1894, and taking up a position at Eton by 1898, Myers allowed his collection to become the focus of an exciting outing for schoolboys on a Sunday afternoon, when they would take a trip to Myer's house and view the treasures.

Unfortunately, war interrupted the quiet life of retirement and Myers, despite being quite able to excuse himself from active duty, returned to the front line in South Africa and was killed at the Battle of Ladysmith. He was 41. His library, his diaries, and his incomparable collection of antiquities were all left to Eton College.

Since Eton does not actively teach Egyptology, the collection languished, never quite finding the permanent home its value demanded, and only viewed by the public when selected pieces were lent for display in temporary exhibitions around the world. Moreover, the majority of objects were denied proper study. The Fellows of the College looked for a solution to these two issues and decided that, all bar a small core that would remain at Eton, the collection

would be split between the University of Birmingham and Johns Hopkins University in USA, for a period of 15 years. This will allow the objects to be studied, catalogued, and photographed to the highest standards. When the period of loan expires, the collection will move back to Eton College, where, if all goes well, it will find a permanent museum and storage facilities that befits its worth.

Until early next year, there is an opportunity to see a small part of the collection at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts in Birmingham, where curators have selected the best of the 567 items that formed Birmingham University's share of the division.

The title and theme of the exhibition is *Sacred and Profane*, a now established method of explaining a society where everyday life was shot through with the influence of the afterlife and the intercession of the Gods. As a theme, the exhibition is perhaps not quite large enough to do it justice but the issues are followed up in the lavishly illustrated exhibition catalogue. Better is to approach the exhibition as a display of Egyptian art (the sub-title of the exhibition is *Treasures of Ancient Egypt*, after all) and to marvel at the sophistication of the original artists in crafting the items and in Myers for recognising their beauty and for collecting them.

The display is not large and is rather shoehorned into the Coin Rooms, an annexe off the large art galleries. There are three large glass cases with their contents attractively presented and lit and five smaller cases of varying size. The entire exhibition is easily viewed in an hour.

The thematic rather than chronological approach to the display allows the exhibition to begin with a wonderful mummy portrait, probably from er-Rubayat, and dating to c. AD 160. Perhaps fittingly in opening the collection of an army officer, the





portrait shows a soldier dressed in the *sagum* and *balteus*. Staring into his piercing eyes and recognising that here is a living descendent of the Egypt of the Pharaohs is an exhilarating experience.

Just inside the annexe is another portrait, this time from the New Kingdom, where the extended mummy mask of 18th Dynasty Master Builder Amenhotep shows that we have left behind the naturalistic period of Greco-Roman influence and have journeyed back into Egypt's more ancient past. On the rear of the mummy mask, and illustrated in the catalogue, is an image of Nut and lines of hieroglyphs from her formula, guiding the deceased from the darkness of the coffin towards the light of eternal life.

Contrasted with this, and with other items such as the intricate model of a rowboat, demonstrating the soul's journey to the afterlife, are papyrus documents that wrench us back to the world of the profane. One is an employment contract for a worker at a vineyard and the other, delightfully, is an invitation to dinner, albeit at the *kline* of the God Serapis in the Serapeum, the main temple at Oxyrhynchus where the papyrus originates. Again, the sacred overtakes the profane although, since the host, a man called Chairemon, only gave a few hours notice of the impending dinner, it would be nice to know if the unrecorded recipient was

able to attend. Such are the vagaries of what the archaeological record reveals and what it keeps hidden.

Reflecting Myers' taste, faience is well represented throughout the exhibition with some beautiful pottery and statuary. An image of the ibid-headed God Thoth is so fine it is hard to believe that it originates in Late Period Egypt rather than during more recent times. Even the feet end in finely carved jackal's heads, representing the God Upuaut, the 'Way-Opener'. Here is craftsmanship of the highest order.

Close by is a miniature faience plaque that shows Horus, in Roman cavalry dress, astride a horse and spearing an ibex, a symbol of Seth, at his feet. It is hard not to think of later Byzantine renditions of saints such as St George with the Dragon and to conclude that the iconography started with images such as this, in fourth century AD Egypt.

One of the most curious pieces in the exhibition is a tiny doll with beaded hair. It is one of two found in an adult tomb of the First Intermediate Period, and it is difficult to imagine what purpose the object served. It is surely too small for a toy at 7.5 centimetres, and, in any case, there does not seem to be any evidence for a child within the burial. The doll remains an enigma and it feels good that there are things we still do not understand.

In total, the exhibition ranges from spectacular Pre-dynastic black-topped burnished vessels to several examples of Byzantine coinage from the Barber Institute's extensive collection, providing a broad sweep of Egyptian past. This time depth is refreshing as, all too often, the later periods are sparsely covered and many of the continuities from Egyptian tradition to the Byzantine and Coptic church and on into our own society are ignored. The Horus plaque, for example, gives much food for thought.

Following the closure of the exhibition in 2011, the University is hoping to attract PhD students who want to base their thesis upon the Myers Collection and provide the detailed research of the objects that has been lacking in the past. Major Myers may not have collected for scholarship but the time has come to inject some brains into all that beauty.

Sadly, the exhibition *Sacred and Profane: Treasures of Ancient Egypt* closed in January 2011, but the results of scanning and photographing the collection can be accessed at:

http://www.vista.bham.ac.uk/projects/Eton_Myers.htm.

by Dr Mike Williams

Apologies to Dr Williams for the delay in publication of this article. Lack of other contributions meant that an issue of Inscriptions could not be published earlier – Ed

Crossword Solution

C	I	N	N	A	M	O	N	M	Y	E	R	S
O								E				
P	A	N	E	S	Y	A	I	F				
T						K	A	R	N	A	K	
I	B	I	S			H			I		H	
C			H			M	A	S	P	E	R	O
			A			I	E	N			R	
K			B	I	T	U	M	E	N	C		U
H			T		H			B		E		S
A			N	T	I	N	O	P	O	L	I	S
R					T					O		U
G			S	E	T	H		R	E	K	H	Y
A											A	
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Forthcoming Events

Wednesday 28 September	AGM (6.30) followed by lecture (7.00) 'The Rekhyt-people and the things they do: Popular worship in ancient Egypt' Kenneth Griffin (Swansea University)
Wednesday 12 October	'Master of the Animals: Recent Discoveries at Hierakonpolis' Rene Friedman (British Museum)
Wednesday 9 November	'Archaeology in the Nile Delta' Patricia Spencer (Egypt Exploration Society)

All lectures in Room 2, Fulton House, commencing 7.00 pm.

