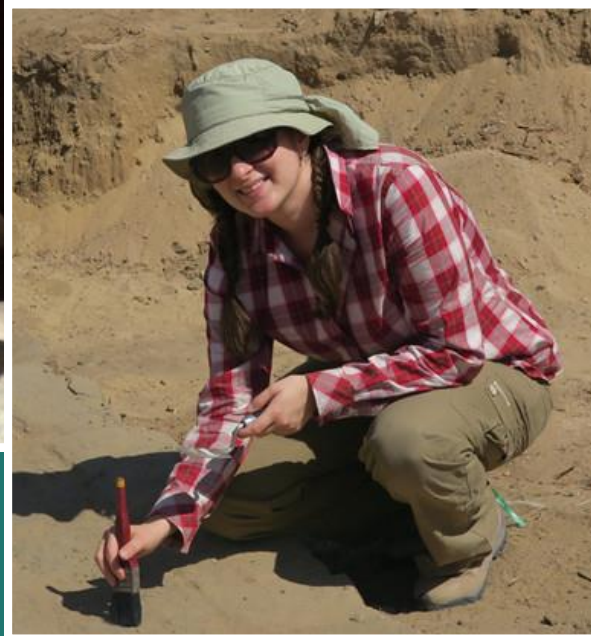
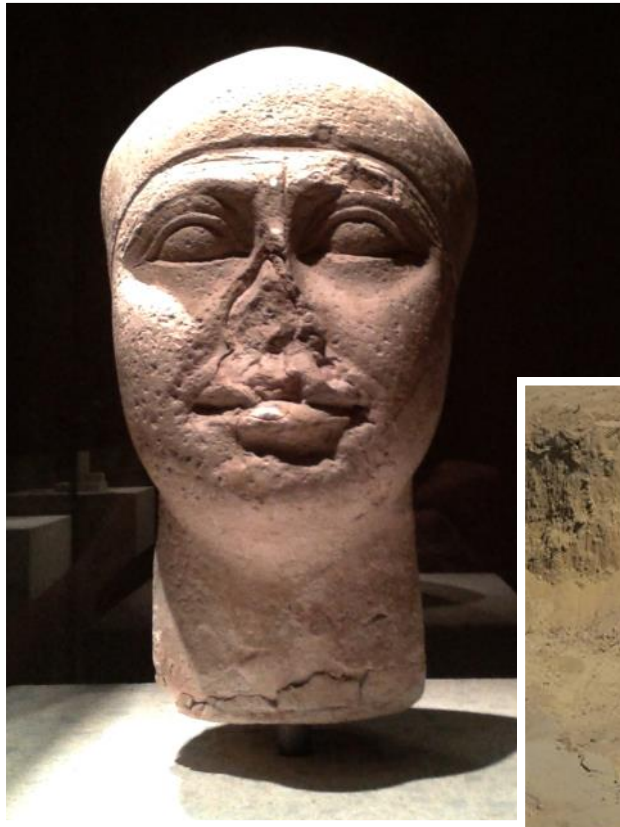




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volunteer Jan - Mar 2018
Newsletter

Museum of Egyptian Antiquities



Richard Glynn Vivian: A Swansea Collector

"The diary entry for 20th May 1871 reads 'Photo of myself as Arab 16s 8d'."



Heaven is a place... in France!

"Consumer paradise—or Ancient Egyptian Heaven?"



The Power of Knowledge

"In September 2017, one of my biggest dreams came true..."

egypt.swan.ac.uk



Welcome



Welcome to the January—March edition of the Egypt Centre Volunteer Newsletter!

For those that have not met me, my name is **Jack Morris** and I'm a Gemini who likes long walks on the beach. I am standing in as volunteer manager as part of my MA Heritage placement. Some of you may remember me from volunteering or sitting on the shop chatting away... (An apparent pastime of mine!). I will be in the office most days, so if you need anything feel free to pop your head in and I'll do my best to help!

I would like to mention that we are always on the lookout for new volunteers, at present particularly education volunteers (tell your friends!).

Also can you please book a time with me to carry out role chats; these are where we make sure you remember all the operational details, emergency numbers etc. and also determine what training you would like to do in order to achieve roles such as Education Assistant/Leader etc.

That about sums it up, Thank you to all of you for your continued help; the museum would truly be lost without you!



Dulcie Engel Associate Editor

A former French and linguistics lecturer, I have volunteered at the Egypt Centre since April 2014. I am a gallery supervisor in both galleries, and author of the Egyptian Writing Trails. Apart from language, I am particularly interested in the history of collecting. I won the 2016 Volunteer of the Year award.



Rob Stradling Technical Editor

A volunteer since 2012, you can find me supervising the House of Life on Tuesday & Thursday mornings, or at the computer desk, busy concocting this venerable organ. Just between us: I still don't really know what "Technical Editor" means, but so far I've been getting away with it.



Sue Cane Department Features Editor

I started volunteering 8 years ago and now work as a Gallery Supervisor in House of Death. I'm currently studying hieroglyphs with one of our MA graduates, and also doing an on-line course in Egyptology. My particular areas of interest are admission to the Afterlife and the solar barque.

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter or submit articles for consideration please contact:

dulcie.engel@icloud.com

The Newsletter will be published every three months—Next issue due **Jun 2018**



Visitor Comments

"Fantastic & amazing staff, so helpful. My 8yr-old loved it!"
-A. Dillon, Portishead

"Amazing—there is LOTS to learn!"
-Hattie Templeton, Stoke-on-Trent

"Fascinating, valuable collection. Thank you for huge patience & info for my granddaughter."
-Ms. Stephens, Aberystwyth

"Harry (the Archaeologist Padawan), and Thomas (the dinosaur fan), both loved the two exhibitions!"
-James & Claire, Llanfaethlu, Anglesey

Visitor Figures

Public:

October—1897
November—1177
December—656

School Pupils:

October—718
November—695
December—206

Office News

We have been without our volunteer Manager because **Syd** has been recovering from ankle surgery—everyone sends Syd their best wishes. **Jack Morris**, a current volunteer, is undertaking an MA Heritage placement with us. His role is Trainee Volunteer Manager and he has been extremely busy!

Luke Keenan has joined us as a much-needed temporary member of staff and has proved to be invaluable, taking the pressure off the struggle with the heavy workload due to school party bookings. Luke has also been managing the galleries ensuring volunteers can attend Carolyn's training by missing the training himself and staying after his shift has finished.

We have been extremely busy since we reopened after the summer closure. We have been fully booked with schools, many travelling from England to take part in the award-winning education programme. We have also been busy with half-term visitors and workshops and have received amazing feedback from visitors about our wonderful volunteer team!

Lauren has been working with an underprivileged school in New York (*Isaac Young Middle School*), providing them with worksheets, colouring pages and videos, enabling them to learn about our museum and ancient Egypt even though they aren't able to visit. They have even sent photos back of their work – they can be seen on the notice board halfway down the stairs.

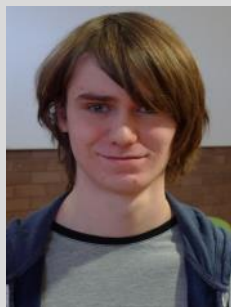
Sam has been busy sorting the *BBC Civilisations Festival* and *British Science Week 2018*. He has organised an exciting mixed reality event for Saturday 10th March: Create your very own 'Pyramid Projectors' and use them to view artefacts from ancient Egypt as holograms on your smartphones or tablets!

Mondays are just as busy with MA students doing a module taught by Egypt Centre staff and undergraduate object handling classes booked by lecturers Kasia Szpakowska and Kenneth Griffin on occasions all three on the same day and some at the same time, so a lot of juggling of space is going on!

During the last few months we have worked hard to carry on despite the loud drilling, dust and fumes from the development of the Taliesin ground floor. Well done everyone and hopefully it will be finished by the time you are reading this!

Volunteer of the Month

October '17
Jack Green



November '17
Dulcie Engel



December '17
Frank Norton



Meet the Volunteer



Egypt Centre Volunteer
Anne Rees

I come from: Sketty (via Essex).

I started volunteering: Apr 2016

I chose to volunteer because: Recently retired, I wanted to work with children within walking distance. I was also interested in learning about Ancient Egypt.

My Favourite artefact is: The coffin in the House of Death.

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helps me: I enjoy learning new things, and meeting new people. It's nice to have a regular routine after retiring.



Student Volunteer
Rebecca Hill

I come from: Liverpool.

I started volunteering: Feb 2016

I chose to volunteer because: I'm currently studying Egyptology, and thought the EC would give me experience in a museum.

My Favourite artefact is: The Horus cippus in the House of Death.

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helps me: It has made me more confident meeting and talking to new people. It has also helped with my course, to be in close proximity with the objects. When asked, I can provide explanations about the artefacts.





International Volunteer

Paulína Šútorová

I come from: Slovakia.

I started volunteering: Oct 2014

I chose to volunteer because: I study Egyptology and I wanted to practice my theoretical knowledge.

My Favourite artefact is: The blue faience fly amulet in the House of Death.

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helps me: I improved my English here. I met many international people and gained many contacts for the future. It also helped me learn more about Ancient Egypt than I knew from my course.



Former Volunteer

Sam Powell

I come from: Forest of Dean, Glos.

I started volunteering: 2003 whilst studying for my degree at Swansea Uni.

I chose to volunteer because: The EC is an amazing resource for students. It's also a fantastic opportunity to gain some museum experience.

My Favourite artefact is: Am I allowed to say the Playmobil pyramid? !

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helped me: It helped with my presentation skills and confidence - key in landing a role in the heritage sector. I practiced archaeological illustration using items from the collection.

What I'm doing now: After graduating I did my MA in Archaeology at UCL. I've since been running the training office at *Historic England*. I have returned to Swansea to do the Egyptian Material Culture MA, and have rejoined the *Friends* committee as Events Officer.



What's In Store?



A gilded mummy mask (EC 480)

EC480 is located in Box 69, shelf 9, room 8.

This is a badly damaged cartonnage mummy mask. According to the old label, it dates from the Ptolemaic period (305-30BC), and probably originated in Thebes. However, the style of the mask suggests it may be Roman, from the first century AD: in particular, the hairstyle would date it to c. 40AD onwards. The woman has wavy hair and long ringlets. The label states that it came from the mummy case of a priestess or a lady, and was intended as a portrait of the deceased.



Photos: Sam Wale, Dulcie Engel

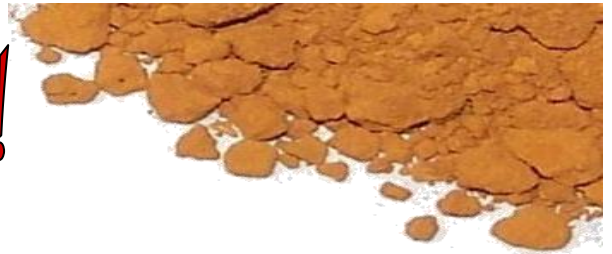
An examination of a damaged mask in the storeroom has highlighted a particular style of mask not currently on display in the galleries. We have also been able to consider the various components of cartonnage. Modern techniques have been able to analyse the composition of plaster and glue, and scans can now reveal the secrets of recycled papyrus.

The use of masks is a universal human characteristic, and was a key element in the Ancient Egyptian system of beliefs. Furthermore, Egyptian mummy masks are now among the most potent and recognisable symbols of that great civilisation.

Read Dulcie's complete article on the website: www.egypt.swan.ac.uk



Heaven is a place... in France!



Avenue des Champs-Élysées: Consumer Paradise or Ancient Egyptian Heaven?



Avenue des Champs-Élysées is the smartest thoroughfare in Paris. It was named after the Greek concept of the Elysian Fields (or *Elysium*, possibly meaning 'joy').

*'The first coinage of the name it now bears, "Champs-Élysées", appeared in 1694, but the name was not formally adopted until 1709, as mentioned in the royal accounts. The name was borrowed from classical mythology, the **Elysian Fields** being the ancient Greeks' equivalent of paradise, probably to point the contrast with the avenue's marshy origins' (**Champs-Élysées website**).*

Earlier scholars such as Budge used the Greek term to refer to the Ancient Egyptian concept of a paradise:

*'Sekhet-Aaru, i.e., the "Field of Reeds," typified some very fertile region where farming operations could be carried on with ease and success. Canals and watercourses abound, and in one section, we are told, the spirits of the blessed dwell; the picture probably represents a traditional "Paradise" or **"Elysian Fields,"** and the general characteristics of this happy land are those of a large, well-kept, and well-stocked homestead, situated at no great distance from the Nile or one of its main branches' (**Budge 1899/1908**).*

And, more recently:

*'...ancient Egyptians viewed the afterlife as a continuation of their life on earth (Budge 168). If a person passed the Weighing of the Heart, their bliss was to join the train of Ra and the neteru in the Fields of Hotep, or "Fields of Offerings" (also called the **"Elysian Fields"**). There the noble man could live an endless life of peace, grow crops "as high as a man" with numerous canals full of water, and "bread and beer of eternity" which would never grow stale' (**'Ancient Egyptian Heaven' website**)*

Whereas Budge was probably using the Greek term as it would be a more familiar point of reference for his audience, it seems quite possible that the Greek concept developed from the Egyptian. For example, Stilwell (2005: 167) sees it as a very clear case of cultural transmission:

*'...the Greek Isles of the Blest and the **Elysian Fields** look like direct descendants of the Egyptian Ialu Fields or Fields of Reeds'*

And Taylor (2010: 243) argues for a linguistic link:

*'The Field of Reeds was probably the origin of the **Elysian Fields** of Classical mythology: not only is the concept similar, the name 'Elysian' has been derived from a Greek pronunciation of iaru or ialu, the Egyptian word for 'reeds'.*

So the most famous street in France - if not in the world - can trace its name back to Ancient Egyptian paradise!

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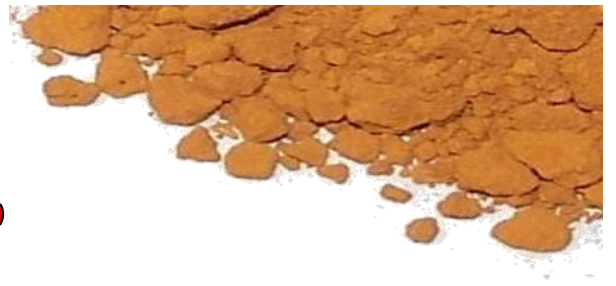
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Written by: Dulcie Engel



Making An Impression...



In a world full of bad news, I'd like to share two positive recent news stories with you all:

1. Here is a fantastic **Trip Advisor** review received three weeks ago:

*"**Bringing history to life** - We (myself and two daughters, age 7 and 5) are so glad we made the three hour journey from the south of England to visit this fantastic museum staffed by knowledgeable and enthusiastic volunteers. On entering the **House of Death** we were welcomed by a gentleman who asked us if we wanted to hear "the best story ever?" That's quite a claim, but we were not disappointed. A week later, the girls are able to recount the story of the battle between Osiris and Set almost word-perfectly and talk animatedly about the ancient artefacts they handled in the **House of Life**. We visited the **Ashmolean Museum** in Oxford yesterday, which arguably houses some more impressive artefacts, but the girls said they preferred **The Egypt Centre** as it was so interactive and all the staff were so passionate (even the lady in the shop was happy to tell the girls about the importance of the Egyptian cartouche)"*

Not only did the family travel for three hours specifically to visit our museum, but it also shows we are right up there with the 'big boys' such as the Ashmolean Museum; in fact they say we are better than them!

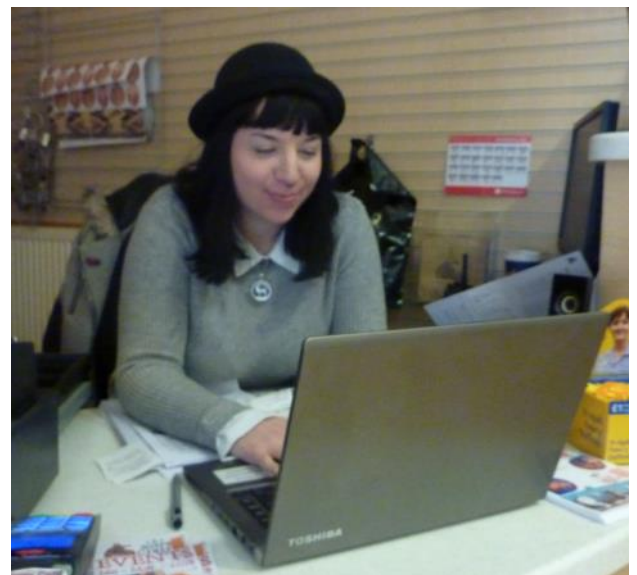
They really highlight the Unique Selling Point of the Egypt Centre; the people who bring this collection to life, and make it the fun and engaging place it is.

2. We received a letter from a 6th grade history teacher in New York who wrote to museums all over the world asking for donations of props and information to help him teach a subject he is passionate about, as there is a lack of funding in his deprived school. We sent him (via email) a collection of colouring pages, ancient Egyptian worksheets, as well as a link to our **YouTube** page which has videos of the museum.

This was his reply:

"Thank you!!! You were the first museum to respond, thank you so much for the videos and the worksheets! The kids loved that fact that we were able to connect with people halfway across the world and get a taste of the museum and the exhibits. Your response and information is greatly appreciated!"

I hope these stories brighten your day much as they did mine!



Written by: Lauren Wale



Wendy's visit to Heidelberg December 2017

While at the **CIPEG** Conference in Chicago last September, I met Dr. Dina Faltings, Head of Collections (Egypt), at the **Heidelberg Centre for Cultural Heritage**. Dina heard my talk about the Egypt Centre's public engagement efforts, and asked if I would go to Heidelberg to give two talks and participate in a staff workshop and funding bid! My husband was also invited so we set off on the morning of Wednesday December 13th and arrived at **Hotel Panorama** that evening. The hotel is situated in the centre of Heidelberg alongside the Neckar River. The University is within walking distance, through cobbled streets lined with interesting shops, including a wonderful Christmas shop!

The next morning we made our way to the University to meet up with Dina and her colleagues to discuss the itinerary. I was told that I would be giving their 'Keynote Lecture for a slightly wider public', including professors in charge of collections at the university and/or working in or with the collections. It was held in the museum gallery and soon all the seats were filled! The talk was entitled '*From Town to Gown: A University Museum Engaging with the Community*', illustrating the ways we break barriers to public engagement and encourage disadvantaged groups to participate. The main points were about the Saturday Young Egyptologist workshops and the volunteer programme. At the end there were many questions on how we attract diverse groups, as the staff were planning events to attract refugees and asylum seekers. Then we all went for a meal where I chatted to a student who was interested in doing a postgraduate work placement with us: so watch this space!

On Friday morning I was asked to join staff for an internal workshop which was held in the Egyptian and Mesopotamian gallery. We did a brainstorming session on attracting diverse groups, then went through ideas for an application for extra funding from Volkswagen and I was asked if I would be a collaborative partner for the funding bid.

On Saturday morning we walked along the river and crossed the bridge before returning to the

university to meet with lecturer Ildikó Maaßen and her students. Her module involved learning how to teach children about their subject area in a workshop. Subject areas could include: Egyptology, Mesopotamia (mainly Uruk), Classics, Classical Archaeology, Mediterranean Archaeology, Ancient/Prehistory. Refugee/asylum seeker children will be invited to take part in the workshop, called *KinderUni* (Children's university).

The students were very welcoming and I gave a talk entitled '*Making a Difference: a University Museum Engaging with the Community*'. This covered engaging with the community through child & adult volunteer/work placement; a case study of volunteers whose lives have been transformed by engagement with the museum; and a case study illustrating how the children's workshops can make an impact (breaking down barriers to participation, inspiring children and building self-esteem, developing skills and fostering a love of learning).

The students loved hearing about our Saturday workshops and Young Explorers workshops, and were very keen to take on new ideas. After my talk finished, they all banged the table in appreciation and then asked many questions about the impact they could possibly have on the lives of the children taking part in their *KinderUni*. I did not leave until late afternoon, which gave me another opportunity to browse in the nearby Christmas shop. However, I struggled to cross the narrow road to the shop as it was completely packed full of people of all ages enjoying the Christmas markets – I forgot it was Saturday!

Heidelberg was beautiful and a highlight was a visit to the castle with the most amazing views. We travelled in a small train up the steep slope to the castle and stopped off at various points to take in the view. The little Christmas markets were lovely and we tried the local mulled wine.

All too soon, it was Sunday morning and time to head off for the train to Frankfurt, and home!

Written by: Wendy Goodridge



Other Collections

Neues Museum, Berlin

After a three hour journey from the small town of Rodewisch, to the large city of Berlin, we arrived at the famous Berlin Egyptian museum. I looked around and was immediately underwhelmed. The first room we came to was about the size of the Taliesin and only had about eight artefacts that were spaced out. None of these were particularly of interest: a few canopic jars, some statues of not-that-impressive people and a series of diaries of a German archaeologist. Needless to say, I took a photo of everything in this room.



Reserve Head

There were in total four rooms devoted to Egypt spaced over three floors. Two rooms stood out the most to me, the first of which was breath-taking. They had taken actual sections of an offering temple dedicated to Metjen and placed them accurately in a gallery. They had paths which you could

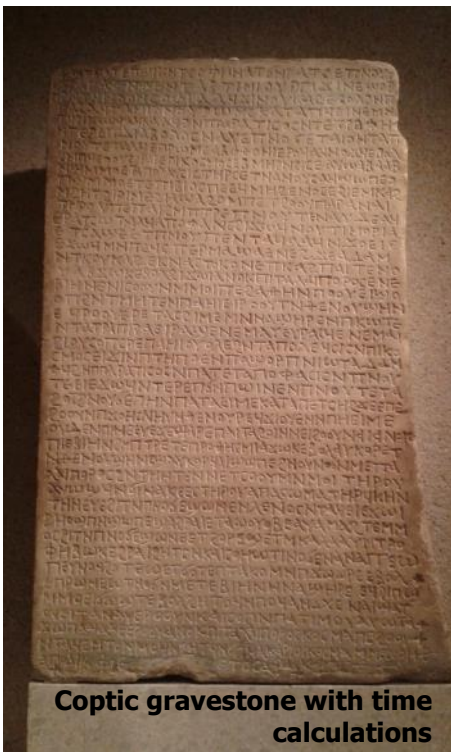
follow and really get a feel for what it would have been like. The lighting in this section was well chosen as it gave a warm glow on the sections, which helped to cast enough light so that all the carvings had the perfect amount of shadow to see them clearly. The wall sections featured all the usual carvings and elaborate scenes as you might expect, sadly none of them were painted.

The other room that stood out was the Sarcophagus room, the first view you have of them is from the floor above and you are granted with a spectacular bird's-eye view. There were around ten in the room and they were all from different periods and made from different materials. In this room also was something that I took particular note of... *The Book of the Dead* for our very own Tashay! I would say it was around the length of from our main office to the start of the Taliesin Café. It was in amazing condition, the hieroglyphs were all clearly visible and the art work running through out were mind-blowing. The *Weighing of The Heart* scene was perfectly drawn and the colours were so vivid.

They did have many other items of interest; their gods cabinet was immense, but actually a little disappointing at the same time. The idea was great, however they dropped the



ball a little. They had the gods spread out across several long cabinets with maps of Egypt placed in each one. The statues of the gods, which were all pretty much the same as the ones we have, were then placed on the map in the appropriate temple locations. This I found very good, but they did not give any information about the god other than its name, I did not like that.



Coptic gravestone with time calculations

Mummies were a little bit of a let-down, also the death masks. The only mummies I found were during the Graeco-Roman period. They did have a mother and her two children, which I thought was touching and the mummy portraits were very well preserved.

The majority of the Berlin collection was busts of people ranging from architects, generals and mayors to pharaohs. The "crown jewel" of course being the world-famous bust of



Nefertiti herself: this was a sight to behold! Such an amazingly well-made bust that you would fall in love with her the moment you saw her. Although she did have a look about her that said "Mess with me and see what happens". Due to the 5 or 6 security guards in the room dedicated to her, I decided not to mess with her and sadly she was very camera-shy!

There was a lot to see at this museum and by the end, we ended up skipping the top floor. I would like to go again and this time absorb more of what they had on display. When you first go there you are very much swept up in everything that you forget what you have seen.



Guidelines for creating stela



Faience bead necklace

Written by: Luke Keenan



Richard Glynn Vivian: A Swansea Collector

Richard Glynn Vivian (1835-1910) was the fourth son of John Henry Vivian 1785-1855), head of the wealthy copper smelting family. He was born in Singleton Abbey (now part of our campus), and later lived in Sketty Hall (on the north west edge of Singleton Park), where he housed his collection of paintings, prints, ceramics, glass, books, etc. He had no interest in the family business, but the Vivian money allowed him to indulge his passion for travelling and collecting. His love of art may well have been inherited from his father, one of the leading lights in the establishment of Swansea Museum (which opened in 1841).

Richard Glynn Vivian (RGV) was also a great philanthropist, founding a network of miners' missions, as well as a home for the blind (in Caswell Bay) and a school for the deaf in Swansea.

In 1908 he left his entire art collection to the citizens of Swansea, along with money to build a gallery. The Glynn Vivian gallery on Alexandra Road was opened in 1911, a year after he died.



View of gallery: modern extension to the left of the original building

When the gallery re-opened in 2016 after a massive refurbishment, four of the rooms were dedicated to an exhibition about the founder's life and travels, showcasing his large collection of items from all over the world. Entitled 'Journeys between Art and Life', it is scheduled to run until October 2019, and entry is free.

The exhibition entrance graphics feature a large-scale image of RGV in Arab dress, taken in Alexandria by the Schier & Schoefft studio in May 1871, to use as a calling card as he travelled back from the Far East in time for the start of the social season in London. The diary entry for 20th May 1871 reads 'Photo of myself as Arab 16s 8d'.



Entrance to the exhibition featuring RGV in Arab dress.

With regards to Egypt, he crossed through the Suez Canal twice on his journeys during the 1870s: in May 1871, and in June 1879. He visited Alexandria (see above), and Port Said. In his sketchbooks, the only photographs and sketches he made of Egypt are of these three locations, plus some of the voyage on the Red Sea from Aden to Egypt.

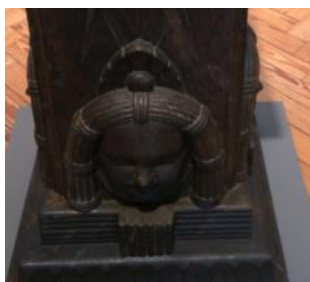
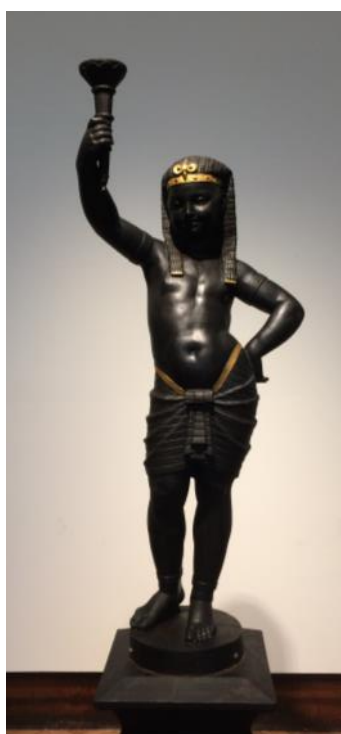
Despite a lovely image of the pyramids and the sphinx on the film of his adventures made by local children, we have no proof that he journeyed to any Ancient Egyptian sites. From his diaries, it seems that Egypt was very much a stopping off place on his way back to London (where he also had a house) from long trips to India and South Africa. Why he never visited the well-known sites is not clear. Perhaps he was in a rush to get back for the London social season (as suggested by the 1871 calling card). And in 1879, he may have been concerned about unrest and hostility towards British visitors: a mutiny and coup in 1878 led to the 1882 Anglo-Egyptian War.

RGV was a patron of the French painter and illustrator Gustave Doré (1832-1883), whose work can be seen in the exhibition, along with RGV's diaries and sketchbooks of his travels. As well as visiting Europe, he travelled to



North America, Japan, China, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, India and South Africa. His collection includes ceramics (mainly porcelain), paintings (including miniatures), glass, silver and enamel items, fans, furniture, watches, and books.

One item on display is a cast iron torchbearer represented as a Nubian girl in Egyptian dress. This is a 19th century piece, attributed to the famous French art foundry at Val d'Osne. Egyptian style was very fashionable in Europe following Napoleon's Egyptian Campaign (1798-1801), and again during the reign of Napoleon III (emperor from 1852-1870). It was in this latter period that Egyptian and Nubian torchbearer statues were popular.



Cast iron torchbearer in Egyptian revival style figure and detail from base of plinth.

The Glynn Vivian gallery has another Egyptian link: the 'Face of Egypt' exhibition took place there in 1996-97. It showcased items from the Wellcome collection (this was just before the museum got its dedicated building and was renamed the Egypt Centre), as well as Swansea Museum, Cyfartha Castle, Carmarthen Museum and the University of Wales Aberystwyth.

The exhibition catalogue with accompanying postcards is for sale in the EC gift shop.

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This article would not be possible without the help given to me by Glynn Vivian staff: Ellie Dawkins (Documentation Officer) gave me useful information by email and in person; and Sarah Wheatley (Archive Intern; Swansea Egyptology graduate and former Egypt Centre volunteer) took time to show me diaries and sketchbooks by RGV which are not on display. I am very grateful to both of them.



Egyptology in The News



Egyptian Mummy's secrets revealed at hi-tech laboratory in Chicago

A 1900 year-old mummy of a young girl from the collection at Northwestern University in Chicago has been placed under a high intensity synchrotron X-ray, the first time this equipment has been used to scan a mummy. It gives a highly detailed 3D image of what lies underneath the wrappings. It is a portrait mummy from the Roman period (one of only 100 known to exist intact), originally excavated in 1911 by Flinders Petrie at Hawara. According to the investigators, the most likely cause of death was disease (possibly malaria or measles).



Pooled resin has also been noted at the back of the skull, and this may indicate how mummification was carried out. Medical researchers plan to examine the bone and teeth in more detail.

Source:
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-42218032>

Egypt announces discovery of 3500 year-old mummy in Luxor

Two 18th dynasty private tombs near Luxor, discovered twenty years ago, have finally been explored, and the remains of a person of high prestige have been found. The mummy was wrapped in linen and may either have belonged to a top official or a scribe, given conflicting evidence in the tombs. A range of other artefacts were also found (wooden masks, figurines, clay vessels, wall paintings, funerary cones).

The discoveries are part of an effort by the Egyptian government to promote the tourism industry, which relies in part on its ancient heritage.

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<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/mummy-discovered-unexplored-tomb-ancient-egyptian-city-luxor-1650873>

Scan technique reveals secret writing in mummy cases

Researchers at University College London have found a way to read the pieces of papyrus used in 2000 year old cartonnage coffin cases and masks, thus giving an insight into the daily lives of ancient Egyptians. Before now, the only way to read these documents was to destroy the cartonnage. Now, new scanning techniques allow Egyptologists to read what is beneath the plaster and glue by using different kinds of light which make the inks glow. One of the first successes was with a mummy case at Chiddingstone Castle in Kent.

Source:
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-42357259>



New film about Cleopatra intensifies debate on her appearance



A new film about Cleopatra intends to tell her story from her point of view, rather than that of the men in her life. This has re-ignited debate about her actual appearance, in particular her large nose. Coins minted during her reign portray Cleopatra with a large hooked nose and chin. For those of us living in modern times, these features are hard to understand in conjunction with contemporary descriptions of her great beauty. However, ideas of beauty change with time, and it is wrong to assume that a big nose is incompatible with beauty. Furthermore, it is possible that Cleopatra wanted to emphasise her power and attractiveness by exaggerating the size of her nose on the coin. Perhaps the actress chosen to portray this great queen should bear a more accurate resemblance to the real Cleopatra than has been the case in previous films?

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jan/05/cleopatra-big-beautiful-nose-hollywood-convention>

Offended by swearing? Even the ancient Egyptians did it according to a stela...

'Swearing is a constant feature of any social group. According to one historian, the earliest recorded example of public swearing is on an inscription on a burial stone from ancient Egypt

which can be found in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. It describes how people who don't give a ritual offering will find that "a donkey will copulate with him, he shall copulate with a donkey, his wife shall copulate with his children".'

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jan/15/toughen-up-senior-snowflakes-swearing-at-work-is-good-for-us>

DNA analysis: 'brother' mummies had different fathers

In 1907, the mummies of 2 priests were excavated by Flinders Petrie at Deir Rifeh, and dubbed 'the two brothers'. They were shipped to Manchester and unwrapped the following year by Margaret Murray, whose team cast doubt on their relationship. Manchester scientists extracted DNA from their teeth in 2015, and the sequencing has now revealed that while the priests had the same mother, they had different fathers:

'It is the first analysis of mummies anywhere in the world to use both mitochondrial DNA, which comes from the mother, and Y chromosome DNA from the father'

Source:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2018/01/17/egyptian-scandal-meet-mummies-different-daddies/>

New excavations: In search of Tutankhamun's wife

The search for the tomb of Ankhesenamun is focussing on the West Valley of the Valley of the Kings, close to the tomb of the Pharaoh Ay. One of the daughters of Akhenaten and Nefertiti, she married her half-brother Tutankhamun, and then his successor Ay.

Radar images revealed the foundation deposits of a tomb entrance, and archaeologists have just started the excavations.

Source:

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/ancient-egypt-archaeologists-now-searching-tomb-king-tutankhamuns-wife-ankhesenamun-1655540>

Compiled & Summarized by: Dulcie Engel



The Power of Knowledge

Hieroglyphics:

The Power of Knowledge

In autumn 2016 I arrived at the Egypt Centre to volunteer as usual. The first person I met congratulated me on becoming the teacher of private classes for volunteers who wanted to learn the secrets of ancient Egyptian scribes, i.e. hieroglyphs. At first I was shocked, as I had no idea what everyone was talking about. Then I bumped into my friend Sue Cane, who explained to me that she had this idea to form a group of a few volunteers who would be interested in learning the ancient Egyptian script and asked me if I would be up to teaching them. Since I am an Egyptology student who mainly focuses on language and queens, and Sue seemed to have arranged everything already, I agreed. How could I refuse such a brilliant opportunity to gain experience in teaching such fantastic students as Sue Cane, the Wonderful Roger Jones and Paul McAdam?



Swansea Science Festival – Sue and Paul

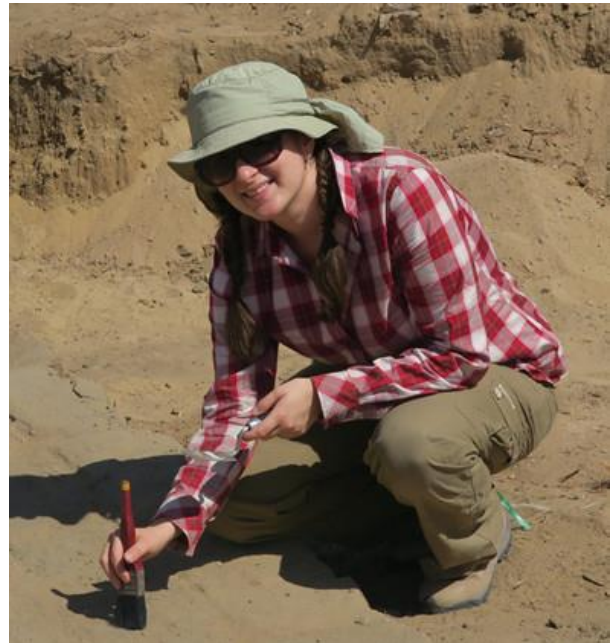
This is how our weekly hieroglyphic classes started on 1st February 2017. We have been meeting every free Wednesday onwards for 22 times now and during this period, my students have mastered the uniliteral signs (basic alphabet) of hieroglyphs perfectly. They have also represented our classes at the Swansea Science Festival at the National Waterfront Museum, where they demonstrated their advanced knowledge of hieroglyphs to the families there and taught them how to write their names. Apart from getting to know the basic alphabet, Sue, Roger and Paul learnt the

Egyptian numerals and how to solve mathematical problems in ancient Egyptian. Recently, I have been introducing them to reading stelae. We have discussed the Egyptian dating system and the offering formula, which we are working on now. I am enormously proud of what my students have achieved so far and in such a short time. They have learnt the basics of "the gods' speech".

Well done, followers of Thoth!

A Dream Come True:

Excavations in Egypt



In September 2017, one of my biggest dreams came true. I was asked by Slovak Egyptologists from the Aigyptos foundation to join them on their excavation trip to Egypt. We have been in touch ever since I attended couple of their public lectures held in Bratislava under the title "Expeditions to ancient Egypt", and I even presented my own work several times for them there. My colleagues, who were grouped with a Polish team, introduced me to their archaeological site at Tell el-Retabi, which is located on the north-east of the Nile Delta. It used to be a fortress with a defensive wall from the time of Ramesses III, under which were found settlements of earlier New Kingdom



houses, and underneath those, Hyksos burials. It is important to understand that we were excavating a site on which ordinary people lived. Therefore we did not expect to find any "golden/precious" treasures there, but rather houses or workshops, so that we would learn something new about these people's lives. During this process of unearthing a big area, I learnt how to excavate professionally by using a trowel and a brush, and I mastered filling in the documentation forms for each layer of sand/soil and finds. I got very excited every time I found a tiny piece of pottery (which in reality covers the whole of Egypt). My excitement was highlighted by the fact that one of my dreams was turning into reality. However, if you think that archaeology is an easy and exciting job at all times, you could not be more wrong.

Our excavations started on 4th September and continued until 30th September. We woke up each morning at 3:45 am to get the minibus at 4:15, so that we could start our work at 5 am with the sunrise. Such work on the site continued until about 2 pm when we loaded ourselves, exhausted, into the same minibus and went back to our accommodation for lunch. We had about two hours' break to take a shower, change from our sweaty and dusty clothes, and possibly to take a short nap. And that is not where the work ended! The finds had to be properly recorded both on paper sheets and in database form. Moreover, all of them had to be photographed, drawn and properly documented before the next day, which might have revealed new discoveries, which means more work! The only free day for us was Friday, the Muslim holy day, when our workers had a day off. We took the opportunity to either head to the beach near the Red Sea, or visit museums and archaeological locations.

Despite the demanding physical work, followed by exhaustion and slight health issues, I had the time of my life in Egypt. During the twenty-six days of hard work, we were able to find over 12 Hyksos burials of adults and children, animal bones, jewellery, lots of pottery sherds as well as 3 intact pots, copper-alloy beads, kilns, silos, querns and other objects used in everyday life. The highlights of this season were a silver ring inlaid with an amethyst stone in the shape of a scarab, a silver nail, silver plates possibly used as a form of payment, a necklace and a bracelet formed of amethyst, crystal and carnelian beads, and 3 scarabs from children's burials. I hope that this year our Slovak team gets a grant so that we can continue our big adventure to uncover more secrets of this Ramesside fortress. I can't wait for another season to begin!

If you are interested in our work in and outside



Egypt, you can subscribe to our Facebook page [Aigyptos](#) or to our official website <http://aigyptos.sk/en/>.

More entries in English will be added soon.

Written by: Paulína Šútorová



Holograms & History

March 10th

Discover our brand new in gallery hologram display, and make your very own 'Pyramid Projectors' to view holograms of some of our ancient Egyptian artefacts on your smart phones or tablets wherever you go!

Supported by the [Art Fund_](#)

Family friendly
10.00am — 3.00pm
Drop in event
Free entry



Friends of the Egypt Centre



Dr William Price and The Welsh Pharaohs: A look at the influence of Egypt on the life of Wales' Greatest Eccentric
by Syd Howells, 13/12/17

Along with wine, nibbles and cake, our very own volunteer manager served up a lively, amusing and wonderfully detailed talk at the Friends' Christmas meeting.

Dr Price (1800 -1893) is described on a blue plaque at Glyntaff (Pontypridd) as 'Chartist and druid. Pioneer of a co-operative society, socialised medical care and cremation'. Son of an Anglican minister, he was steeped in the Bible, which at this period was the sole source of Ancient Egyptian history for the majority of people. A proud Welsh patriot, he believed that the Welsh were the most ancient of peoples, which also explains his interest in Ancient Egypt. He had an epiphany when he saw a stone inscribed with hieroglyphs at the Louvre, claiming only he could understand the script. He wrote in an opaque Welsh patois of his own creation; he claimed the builders of the pyramids came from Caerphilly; and famously described mine owners as 'Welsh Pharaohs', exploiting their workers. He wore a striking druidic costume (the headpiece was a skinned fox), which is now in St Fagan's Museum. His device was a snake swallowing its own tail (a symbol used in Ancient Egypt as a protective enclosure, known in Greek as 'Ouroboros', encircling a goat, i.e. himself as scapegoat).

The Egypt Centre holds 2 copper alloy coins or tokens (**EC 1149**), struck by Price to commemorate the cremation of his young son Iesu Grist (yes, Jesus Christ!) at Llantrisant in 1884. The first attempt at cremation was stopped by the crowd, and Price was sent to court. The judge (an uncle of Virginia Woolf) accepted his argument that the law did not state that cremation was illegal (nor did it state that it was legal), and this judgement paved the way for legal cremations and the building of crematoria. Price successfully cremated the baby at the second attempt!

The coins were accessioned by our first honorary curator, Kate Bosse-Griffiths. We do not know their exact provenance. The museum also holds a poster printed by

Upcoming...

21/03/18—Prof. Alan Lloyd

"Uneasy Lies The Head That Wears The Crown": Ancient Egyptian Conspiracies

18/04/18—Dr. Linda Steynor

Undercurrents & Inklings: Behind the Words of an Ancient Egyptian Literary Classic

16/05/18—Carolyn Graves-Brown

Magic Wands and Serpoads

Check the Friends' website for further information, and more dates:

egypt.swan.ac.uk/about/friends-of-the-egypt-centre/

Price (**EC1943**), bought by Swansea bookseller Jeff Towns at an auction of Price family artefacts. Produced to celebrate the birth of Iesu Grist II in 1884, it includes a text known as the *Bembine Tablet*. This bronze tablet is a Renaissance forgery of a Roman text, purporting to be an Egyptian text about Isis. The scholar Athanasius Kircher (1601-1680) published it in 1652, and used it in his attempts to decipher hieroglyphs, almost 200 years before Champollion succeeded in that task in 1824 (thanks to the Rosetta Stone).

I was particularly pleased to hear about the Dylan Thomas connection: he loved the story of the eccentric Dr Price, and used it as the inspiration for his short story *'The Burning Baby'*, written in 1934, and published in 1936. It happens to contain the earliest reference to Llareggub, the village in [Under Milk Wood](#).

Written by: Dulcie Engel



For further information or to become a member please contact:
Membership Secretary Wendy Goodridge:
01792 295960 w.r.goodridge@swansea.ac.uk





The Role of Magic in Ancient Egypt **by Amber Furmage, 24/01/18**

Amber gave us a very interesting talk, and started by defining the role of magic within the context of Egyptian medicine. Today, our interpretation of magic is based on fantasy and superstition, which is not how the Ancient Egyptians considered it. The concept of Heka (magic) was first mentioned in the Old Kingdom Pyramid texts and described as something included in the natural order of the cosmos and consequently part of the daily lives of men and gods, serving a functional purpose to explain or cause events.

According to the Oracular Amuletic Decrees, some supernatural forces could influence illness and these forces could include deities, demons, foreigners, animals or even the deceased. (Oracular Amuletic Decrees were small hieratic papyri worn as amulets during the 3rd Intermediate period.) Amulets played an important role in curing illnesses, as did ivory and serpent wands and the use of birth bricks during childbirth.

Egyptian physicians fulfilled various medical roles from preparing remedies, performing some surgery to indulging in ritual practices. Specialists also existed, such as dentists and opticians. Wab priests of Sekhmet were closely associated with healing and hygiene, and the Ebers and Edwin Smith papyri attest to their medical role. The earliest attested doctor in history was Hesy-Re who lived during Djoser's reign in the 3rd Dynasty and whose title was "chief of dentists and physicians".

Although demonic entities were mentioned in medical papyri, they were rarely depicted, as the Ancient Egyptians believed that by doing this, the entities' existence would be confirmed. However there is an image (on an ostracon) of

one demon, Sehaqeq – "one who has come forth from heaven and earth...". Sekhmet is a frequently mentioned deity in the Decrees. Her character could be "black or white", Mistress of Life/Lady of Terror - a duality shared by other Egyptian gods.

The Edwin Smith papyrus mentions entities, in particular "wanderers", which may mean that they are searching for a place to occupy, possibly becoming the disease itself and invading the body as an infection. Other malicious entities included "foreign magicians" (symbols of chaos) and venomous animals (the latter are mentioned in 60% of the Oracular Amuletic Decrees). Even the deceased could be accused of malicious intent as mentioned in the Letters to the Dead, a collection of 15 letters addressed to deceased relatives. Conversely, the deceased could also be appealed to with a request for a wish to be granted.

In conclusion, magic was crucial to the medical practices of Ancient Egypt and served to explain the unknown, and to provide complimentary therapies and reassurance to patients. Textual evidence and archaeological remains help us to piece together some of the Egyptian attitude towards healthcare. To them, there was no distinction between medical and magical processes as both were used within the natural order of the cosmos to protect them, or to heal physical and spiritual ailments.

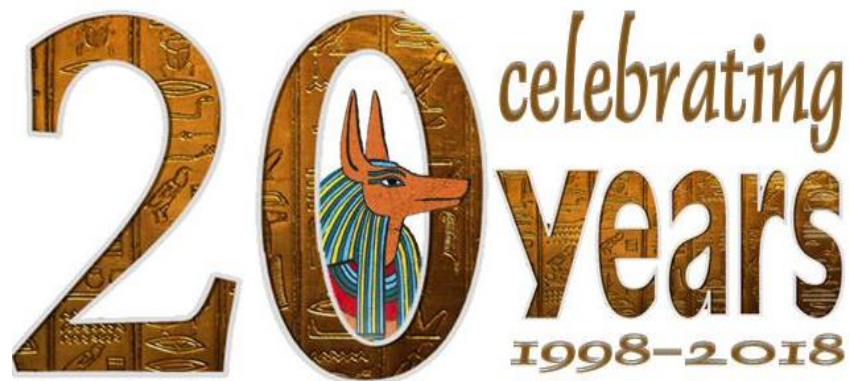
Later this year Amber will be leaving Swansea and starting her MA at UCL, and we wish her good luck with her future studies.

Written by: Sue Cane





TEC made the Feb/Mar '18 issue of "SA2 Times", with an introductory article by Dulcie Engel. Wendy has already received volunteering enquiries quoting this magazine!



We need gallery and education volunteers to help run our museum

For further details email the Volunteer Manager on l.s.j.howells@swansea.ac.uk

