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EGYPT
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EIFFTAIDD

volunteer
October - December 2017
Newsletter

Museum of Egyptian Antiquities



Cover art by Megan Walker



What's In Store?

Dulcie Engel's latest adventure into the stores sheds light on a 4000-year-old text.



Freud's Egypt

Exploring the famous psychoanalyst's other passion.



On The Road...

Educational activities in a galaxy far, far away...

egypt.swan.ac.uk



Welcome



**Syd
Howells**
Editor in
Chief

Welcome to the October to December 2017 edition of the Egypt Centre Volunteer Newsletter.

Once again our wonderful volunteer team have captured the joy and variety of the volunteering experience at Wales' largest collection of ancient Egyptian artefacts.

I would like to mention that we are always on the lookout for new volunteers to join our team, and 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.)

Right, I've typed enough... read on and enjoy...

Syd



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.



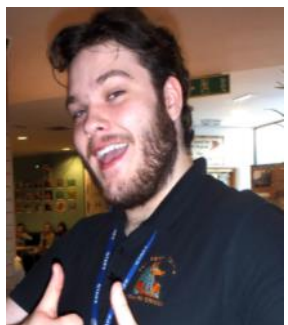
Rob Stradling
Technical Editor

A volunteer since 2012, you can find me supervising the House of Life on Tuesday & Thursday mornings; at the computer desk, busy assembling this esteemed periodical; or skiving in Cupboard 8, munching biscuits. Do say hello, I don't bite. Unless you're a biscuit...



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.



Alex Sheldon
Department Features Editor

I first came to the Egypt Centre when I was very young and I always enjoyed my visits. When I was 14 and starting my Duke of Edinburgh award I decided to start volunteering here, I have been here for 6 years now and have loved every part; helping out and working with other volunteers, teaching the public interesting facts about Egypt and having fun at the Christmas parties.

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 March 2018



Office News

Visitor Comments

"The staff here are brilliant - knowledgeable, great with children; they brought History to life!"

- Williams family, Carmarthen

"Great little treasure of a museum."

- Helen, Peterborough.



The Egypt Centre has been recognised in national awards for learning outside the classroom.

The Young Egyptologist Workshop staff were shortlisted in the Learning Outside the Classroom Innovator category in the national Awards for Outstanding Contribution to Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC).

The awards are presented annually by the **Council for Learning Outside the Classroom** (CLOtC) and recognise those people who have had a significant impact on the lives of children and young people through their commitment to providing exciting and inspiring LOtC opportunities. Although TEC did not win the award, we were highly commended.

Elaine Skates, Chief Executive of the CLOtC: *"We believe that every child should be given the opportunity to experience life and lessons beyond the classroom walls as a regular part of growing up. Egypt Centre staff are making great strides forward to make this happen, helping LOtC to grow and flourish."*

Wendy Goodridge: *"We are very pleased to have been shortlisted for this prestigious award and are extremely proud of the hard work and achievements of the workshops – to see a life-changing attitude to learning in a child is a great reward."*

Visitor Figures

Public:

May—1750

June—1295¹

July—384¹

August—387¹

Sep—6636²

School Pupils:

May—341

June— 81¹

July—21¹

August—0¹

Sep—22¹

¹ Figures affected by summer closure.

² Figures boosted by outreach.

Volunteer of the Month

June

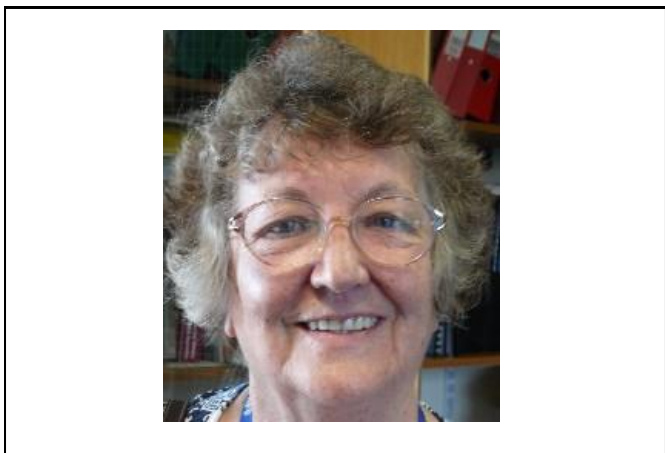
Paulina Suturova

July

Sue Cane



Meet the Volunteer



Egypt Centre Volunteer *Shirley Jones*

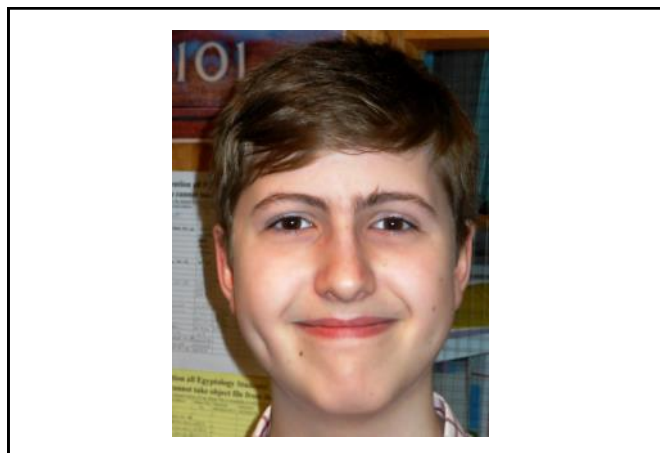
I come from: Gosport, Hampshire. But for the last 51 years I've lived in Ammanford.

I started volunteering: October 2010.

I chose to volunteer because: I saw an advert in *The Evening Post*. I find Egyptian stories interesting, so I gave it a go.

My Favourite artefact is: The reserve head - So fascinating and odd, all the different theories about the heads but no-one is really sure of their purpose.

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helps me: I've made new friends, I enjoy the social gatherings and museum trips. I've also joined the new sewing class!



Student Volunteer *Ewan Forrest*

I come from: Swansea.

I started volunteering: July 2013.

I chose to volunteer because: I have a love of History. The Egypt Centre seemed like the perfect way to do what I loved and get work experience in a museum.

My Favourite artefact is: The "hand grenades" in the pottery case, House of Life.

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helps me: Besides the work experience, I get to talk with fellow history geeks and study artefacts. All the while I'm helping the community by providing a fun, free experience for people living in or visiting Swansea.





International Volunteer *Camille Denizeau*

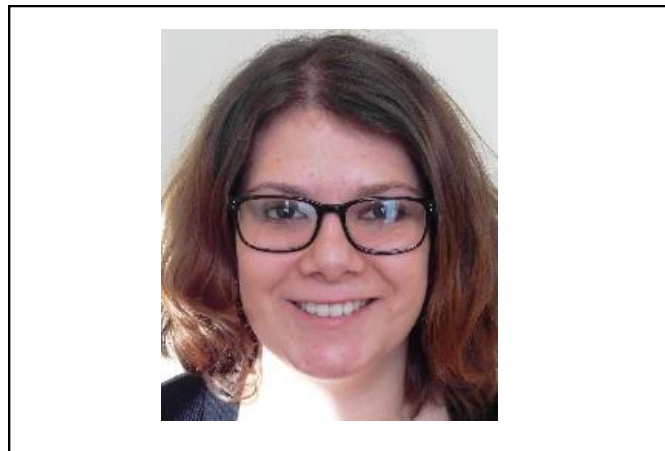
I come from: France.

I started volunteering: April 2017.

I chose to volunteer because: I wanted to learn English in a professional context. I studied Art History and want to work in cultural tourism.

My Favourite artefact is: The miniature metal book with sections of the Koran. It's the smallest book I've ever seen!

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helps me: I can improve my English by speaking all day with the public and the other volunteers. I can also develop skills as a cultural mediator.



Former Volunteer *Charlotte Morgan*

I come from: The Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire.

I started volunteering: 2013 (I think?)

I chose to volunteer because: I was studying Egyptology in Swansea.

My Favourite artefact is: The faience Bes bell. It's one of only two ever found, and Lord Carnarvon's is in a private collection - so ours is the only one on display.

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helped me: Everyone was so supportive. It was Syd who pushed me to apply for my current job, and Sam & Lauren who told me about the Master's degree I took.

What I'm doing now: Museum Manager at *Cynon Valley Museum*, Aberdare.



What's In Store?



What's in Store?

3: Cuneiform Brick (W950)

Dulcie Engel's latest adventure into the museum stores sheds some light on a 4000-year-old text:

"W950 is a brick from Ur inscribed with 4 vertical lines of cuneiform script in the Sumerian language. It dates from circa 2100 BC, and is 11cm long. Wellcome acquired this brick at Sotheby's on 23/07/1930. It is currently stored in box 122, room 8.

W950 has a dedicatory inscription, referring to King Ur-Nammu (2112-2095 BC). He was the first king of the third dynasty of Ur, a Sumerian city state.

There are four vertical lines of writing, to be read from right to left: '*Ur-Nammu King of Ur who built the temple of Nanna*'. Nanna was the moon god, and his temple was the ziggurat built by Ur-Nammu at Ur, which is linked to the Biblical Tower of Babel.

The earliest such bricks come from southern Iraq, date to about 2500 BC and were inscribed in the Sumerian language. These were replaced after 2000 BC by Babylonian dialect of the Akkadian language, whereas those made in the cities of Assyria, in northern Iraq, were in Assyrian dialect, and equivalent bricks made in Iran were inscribed in Elamite.

There is a slightly later claim to fame for Ur: it is considered to be the site of the world's first museum. Archaeologists excavating the palace (c. 530 BC) of Princess Ennigaldi-Nanna of Ur discovered a selection of artefacts from different periods, along with clay cylinder labels in three languages."

You can read the full article on our website.

Just go to <http://www.egypt.swan.ac.uk/volunteer-newsletter/>



From The Curator...

A week at the museum, October 2017.

14/10 We had an Out-of-School-Hours workshop for disadvantaged children. In school term time we invite 14 children over 2 Saturdays to come to do fun activities. The idea is to raise children's confidence and foster a love of learning. These children are either socially or economically disadvantaged and we have had a great deal of success. Some have gone on to university. We are in a competition for this, and hoping for lots of votes before the 27/10 deadline. You can also find out more about what we do here:

www.lotc.org.uk/news-and-events/awards-for-outstanding-contribution-to-lotc/

16/10 We had a group of Egyptology students in for a session on handling. This is always a great hit with the students; better than seeing things in cases. We have been contacted by the Geography Department about their students visiting in order to study how artefacts can tell you about societies.

This week we had meetings with ISS about getting our catalogue on a new online platform. We were one of the first museums to get our catalogue online but sometimes it doesn't do to be an early adopter; our online database now looks a bit dated.

17/10 Our volunteer manager, Syd, went to the National Waterfront Museum to attend a meeting of a new cultural volunteering management group for Swansea.

19/10 Our education officer, Sam plus the leader of our Saturday Out-of-School-Hours events were off to Cardiff for a special training session organised by the Museums, Archives and Libraries Division of the Welsh Government, on supporting special educational needs. This session confirmed that the Egypt Centre is quite advanced in ensuring the

museum is accessible for all children including those with special needs, and has given us some great ideas on how we can develop our offer further.

I discovered we had a bit of a canopic box in the Egypt Centre! I had catalogued it as a piece of a coffin fragment, but on closer inspection, and through a bit of searching online for other Canopic boxes, it seems we have one. What's a 'canopic box'? One puts canopic jars in the box. One puts the innards of the mummified in the jars.

www.egypt.swan.ac.uk/the-collection-2/the-collection/canopic-jars/

As Halloween comes up, we are hoping visitors may want to try our *Daemon Hunters Trail*. It's free and you get to find out what daemons lurk in our cases! And, you could buy a replica shabti from our shop to help you with your work!

Finally, we heard our coffin has been spinning; or more correctly, has been turned. We have a coffin under conservation in Cardiff and the students working on it have turned the lid over to work on the other side:



Stephanie Whitehead
@stephwhitehead

Follow

This week we turned the #sarcophagus lid over in the @CUConservation lab! A nerve wracking and rewarding experience #conservation



It should be a very impressive coffin when conserved. Big question is, where do we put it when it comes back?

Written by: Carolyn Graves-Brown



Young Volunteers



Left to right: Mostafa Rabab, Abby Richards Williams, Alexandria Voyce, Seren Harries, Rt. Hon Carwyn Jones, Naomi Newman, Seth Marshall, Kimberley Coughlan, Ffion Beynon.

EC Young Volunteers Are Champions

Museum volunteers travelled to **Cardiff City Hall** on 20th November 2017 to receive the *Diana Champion Volunteer Award* from Rt. Hon Carwyn Jones, First Minister of Wales.

The award is presented to young role models who are selflessly helping to transform the lives of others, going above and beyond to make a positive change in the world.

Syd Howells, Museum Volunteer Manager said:

"We at the Egypt Centre are incredibly proud of our young volunteers. The Diana Award recognises and encourages them to continue their selfless work and will hopefully inspire others to volunteer in their schools and communities. The young volunteers are delighted to receive an award in recognition of their commitment to helping others."

Visitor Feedback

"Enjoyed our tour with Seth & Lee. Most enjoyable; thanks boys!"

- Val Reed, Calgary, Canada.

"Seb, Tom & Mostafa were excellent; knowledgeable and very enthusiastic."

- The Virgo Family, Hereford.



House Points

Current totals
Nov 2017

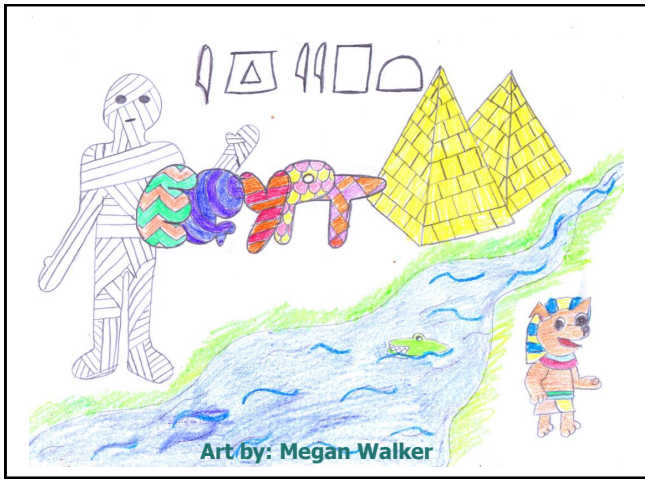
Selket 423

Montu 383

Meretseger 335

Sobek 404





Jordan Hawkes

Interviewed by Mostafa Rabab

Hi! How long have you been here?

About 3 years now.

And I hear you've written an article yourself?

Yes I have, it's about how Egypt influenced the media.

Sounds great! What's your favourite object in the galleries?

The scimitar in the House of Life!

What is your highlight over all these years?

The Christmas parties.

What's the funniest thing a vol. has ever done?

Umm... Kim dancing with Bob, the Dummy Mummy!

Cool, thanks Jordan. That's all we have time for—see you next time!



Pharaohs & Queens Word Search



- AMENHOTEP
- CLEOPATRA
- DJOSER
- HATSHEPSUT
- NEFERTITI
- PSAMTEK
- PTOLEMY
- RAMESES
- SETY
- SNEFERU
- SOBEKNEFERU
- THUTMOSE
- TIYE
- TUTANKHAMUN

Words can appear horizontally, vertically and diagonally in any direction.

One Of Our Dinosaurs Is Missing...

The Natural History Museum has decided that their normal display out front of the exhibition hall will change, from the famous *diplodocus* skeleton (affectionately known as "Dippy"), to that of a blue whale. The museum says this will convey the "cutting-edge science" that happens at the institution.



In my opinion this change could lead to both positive and negative reactions. As Dippy is such a popular exhibit, visitors may show distaste for moving him; or, there could be an increase in visitor numbers due to there being something new to see, thus bringing in increased revenue?

What do you think? Is this a positive change? Or should they never have moved Dippy?

Written by: Jordan Hawkes

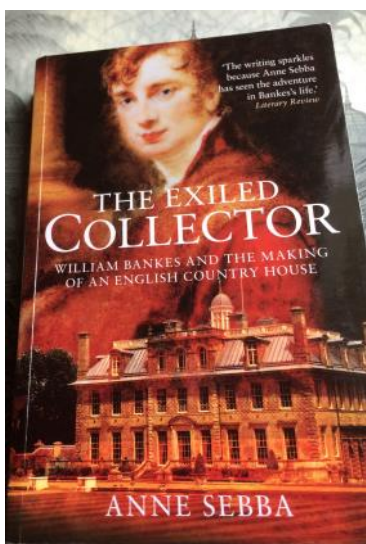


Book Review

The Exiled Collector. William Banks and the Making of an English Country House

by Anne Sebba (2004/2009: Dovecote Press, Stanbridge)

William Banks (1786-1855) was the heir to a large estate in Dorset (including Kingston Lacy Hall and the ruins of Corfe Castle), a house in Flintshire (Soughton Hall), and a graphite mine in Cumbria.



When the National Trust was bequeathed Kingston Lacy and other Banks properties in 1981, they found many treasures packed up and hidden away, including a statue of the god Hetep-baqef, hidden in the garden fernery! The hall opened to the public in 1986.

This book is of particular interest to us as Banks was a pioneering Egyptologist and epigrapher (copier of inscriptions and hieroglyphs). Thanks to Banks, Kingston Lacy is home to the largest private collection of Egyptian artefacts in the UK. The most impressive of these is an obelisk from the island of Philae. However, as Sebba notes: 'He

was rather cavalier about his Egyptian antiquities. There was no attempt to arrange them or build a collection' (p.144).

Things may have been different had he been able to live his life out in his home. Sadly he was forced into exile in 1841, having been found in compromising circumstances with a soldier in a London park. To avoid the death penalty, he fled to Venice. From there he continued to design and collect for his house, but was only able to make one secret visit home towards the end of his life.

The most interesting period of his life for us was between 1815-19 when he travelled in Egypt and the Near East (approx. p.63-144 of the 300-page book). He accompanied Belzoni and Salt on expeditions. Indeed, they helped organise the transport of his obelisk back to Dorset, where it was finally erected in the grounds of the house in 1839. His greatest discovery was that of the King List at Abydos, which he copied down for scholars. He was in regular contact with Thomas Young, supplying him and others with transcriptions of many Egyptian texts. Champollion actually used a cartouche on Banks's obelisk to confirm his phonetic system, with which he deciphered the Rosetta Stone in 1822.

The book is a fascinating biography of an exceptional person, an important early Egyptologist whose life was blighted by the prejudices of the British society and legal system of his time.

[See more at:](#)

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/kingston-lacy/features/discover-the-house-at-kingston-lacy>

<http://www.ancient-egypt.co.uk/kingston%20lacy/>

Written by: Dulcie Engel



Other Collections

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery
Chamberlain Square, B3 3DH

<http://www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/bmag>

The museum is housed in an imposing Victorian building just 5 minutes walk from New Street station. It was opened to the public in 1885, and has 500,000 objects in its collection.

Like our own Egypt Centre, the Ancient Egyptian Gallery has a large amount of material from the Wellcome Trust loan. This includes the beautiful New Kingdom **shabti box** belonging to Ptahotep, whose shabtis live in the Egypt Centre's House of Death (W378-397).



The writing case is particularly interesting. It includes a large writing board with a hieratic inscription over partially erased texts; a limestone ostrakon with an unfinished hieroglyphic text written by a trainee scribe, and a scribe's **wooden writing case** with reed 'pens' dating from the New Kingdom.



Highlights for me in the art case were the Late Period shabti moulds, and an unfinished limestone figure of a lion showing traces of the artist's grid pattern.

In other cases, I admired the delightful **terracotta model house** showing a row of grain bins in the yard, and mats or washing hanging over the wall to dry.



I also loved a **wooden jewellery box** with bone inlay.



While at the museum, I recommend a look at the stunning **Staffordshire Hoard** gallery - displaying the largest ever find of Anglo-Saxon gold - and the extensive collection of pre-Raphaelite paintings.

The toasted teacakes in the Edwardian tearooms are very nice too!



Written by: Dulcie Engel



Murder Mystery!



There was a master thief, a scheming diplomat, a dippy socialite, a fulsomely moustachioed police inspector, and many more colourful characters. Dodgy accents abounded as roleplaying skills were stretched to the full, and enormous fun was had, despite the lurking presence of ultimate evil. The pervading atmosphere of paralyzing, existential terror was laughed off by our intrepid investigators, as they raced to decipher the clues and identify the killer among them.

The Curse of the Pharaoh

The whole Egypt Centre became a "House of Death" for the evening of 25th November, when we hosted our Murder Mystery game.

Volunteers, staff and members of the public joined in to play a variety of characters, struggling to unravel the dark truth behind the murder of workman Abu Nazir on an archaeological dig site in 1922.

Able organized by Sam Wale - who had to perform minor miracles on the night! - staff in the guise of Egyptian servants guided players through a labyrinthine storyline of intrigue, deceit, death, and falafel.



Thankfully, the natural order was ultimately restored with the dramatic unmasking of **###SPOILERS!###** as the fiend, and all present retired for well-earned canapés under the canopies.

We hope to make this an annual event, and are on the lookout for new mysteries to confound and amaze. So watch out for next year's dance with death; and book early!

Photos by: Peter Jones



Book Review

Bletchley Park Brainteasers

by
Sinclair McKay (Hachette 2017)

Sinclair McKay is the author of various books on the Second World War, spying and code-breaking, and, in particular, the activities at Bletchley Park. This is a very challenging puzzle book with a difference, as McKay gives a lot of historical information in the introduction, and at the start of each puzzle section.



A recent **Radio4** discussion about the book mentioned the recruitment of Egyptologists to the Bletchley listening and cryptography station. This is taken from the book's introduction:

'Some were experts at working with ancient hieroglyphs from tombs and faded papyrus fragments. These were people who could reconstruct long-dead languages and long-lost stories by breaking different sorts of codes: the symbols employed by the pharaohs, the extinct languages found on clay tablets in the deserts of Persia'

Chapter 6 is called 'The Codes from the Mummy's Tomb':

'One particular route to a Bletchley Park posting was via the enigmas of Egypt: students and academics who were exceptionally adept at deciphering and

reading ancient hieroglyphs on the walls of the tombs of the pharaohs ... were considered suitably talented to attack German codes'

These Bletchley Egyptologists included the pivotal figure of Alec Dakin (1912-2003), plus Paul Smither and John Barns.

The front cover asks:

'Would Bletchley Park have recruited YOU?'

Surely a challenge for any keen Egyptologist?

And nice to think there was another, important career path for scholars of Ancient Egyptian!

Written by: Dulcie Engel



The Egypt Centre features in two short videos. Watch these now, and send the links to friends and family!

'**Introduction to the Egypt Centre Swansea**' features Egyptology lecturer and former volunteer, Dr Ken Griffin, renowned Egyptologist Professor Joann Fletcher, and student volunteers Jack Morris & Paulina Sutorova.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=9f1dCqoehZU

'**Exploring the mysteries lurking in Swansea's Egypt Centre**' is presented by Beverley Rogers (of the Friends of the Egypt Centre), with volunteer Krys Williams at the handling board. Also spotted: volunteer Ewan Forrest, plus staff members Syd & Lauren.

www.walesonline.co.uk/whats-on/family-kids-news/mummified-fetus-mysterious-treasures-wales-13652685



On The Road...

**9-10 September 2017: EGYPT CENTRE
AT THE SCIENCE FESTIVAL,
SWANSEA MUSEUM & NATIONAL
WATERFRONT MUSEUM**

This was an extremely busy weekend for all volunteers who manned stalls at the Swansea and Waterfront Museums. We provided activities for: *Maths* – Alison, Frank; *Measuring* – Shirley, Donna; *Costume* – Micheala, Yasmin, Luke, Naomi; *Mummification* – Mostafa, Ffion, Elizabeth, Kimberley; *Hieroglyphs* – Sue, Paul, Krys.

On Saturday we started off at the Swansea Museum but there were few visitors, so we quickly moved the Hieroglyph table to the Colonnade at the Waterfront, and were soon under siege from children and their parents! We advised them to pop over and enjoy the other Ancient Egyptian activities at the Swansea museum.

All activities moved to the Waterfront on Sunday and we were grouped together, enabling the children with worksheets (collecting stars for completed activities) to quickly obtain their badge. Lauren kindly kept the volunteers provided with drinks and biscuits as it was impossible to take a lunch break owing to the huge number of visitors.

All of us were absolutely inundated the whole weekend with excited children wanting to participate in our activities. On the Hieroglyph stand, Paul and I helped several adults to write their names using an activity we devised with laminated hieroglyphs. We peeled off the laminated signs to spell out each person's name, and consequently our spelling of Welsh first names has improved enormously! We also designed a Rosetta Stone poster for the display. Alison and Frank were wearing



costumes, attracting children to their Maths table. Shirley and Donna were assisting children with Measuring, and trying hard not to tie up other visitors with their knotted rope!!

We seized the opportunity of informing visitors of our autumn re-opening and handing out leaflets. The Waterfront staff were very helpful, assisting us with any general queries, and we were all thrilled at the high visitor volume and success of the Science Festival.

PLUS TRAVELLING BOB'S AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY ADVENTURE...

Following my suggestion to Syd, and agreement with the Waterfront staff, we decided to try and raise the profile of the Egypt Centre during its enforced summer closure by bringing the mummification activity to the centre of Swansea. Consequently, we occupied a room at the Waterfront Museum from 10-3 on the Saturday and Sunday, but there was very little footfall through the Colonnade and consequently Travelling Bob's sleep was not interrupted very much! However, on the Bank Holiday Monday, as he was in the back of my car, he enjoyed a trip to Pontlliw Reservoir!!

Written by: Sue Cane



25 September 2017: EGYPT CENTRE WINS 2017 MARSH TRUST AWARD



On September 25th Syd and Wendy accompanied nine volunteers (Tom Clarke, Dulcie Engel, Shirley Jones, Nikki Lloyd, Rhodri & Hywel Protheroe-Jones, Breda Regan, Brenda Senior, Dan Williams) in a minibus to the **British Museum** for the *Marsh Award for Volunteers in Museum Learning* ceremony. We won the regional award for Wales: certificates and a cheque for £500. The afternoon ceremony was preceded by coffee and cake, and followed by refreshments and canapés, and the chance to meet the other attendees and winners.

The Marsh Awards are sponsored by the Marsh Christian Trust, which provides grants and runs award schemes for charities and volunteers in the arts, sciences, heritage, literature and conservation. The museum volunteering awards are hosted by the British Museum every year.

Before that, all attendees were offered free entry to the current British Museum exhibition '*Scythians: warriors of ancient Siberia*'. This was certainly worth a visit: stunning pieces of workmanship in gold, bronze, bone and felt.

An enjoyable day, but very long!

Both articles on this page written by:
Dulcie Engel

Other Collections

**EGYPTIAN ARTEFACTS AT
THE FREUD MUSEUM**
20 Maresfield Gardens, Hampstead,
London NW3 5SX
freud.org.uk

This museum was the final home of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), founder of psychoanalysis and one of the most influential thinkers of the twentieth century. Having spent most of his life working in Vienna, he was forced to flee to Britain with his family following the German annexation of Austria in 1938. Fortunately he was able to negotiate the export of all his possessions, including his beloved antiquities.

Freud was an avid collector of antiquities, mostly acquired from Viennese antique shops. His particular interests were Egyptian, Greek, Roman and Chinese artefacts, of which almost 2000 fill his study/library at the centre of the house. The majority of these are Egyptian. His bookcases also reflect his serious interest in archaeology and ancient history (including volumes by Budge, Carter, Maspero and Petrie).



'The psychoanalyst - like the archaeologist in his excavations - must uncover layer after layer of the patient's psyche before coming to the deepest most valuable treasures'. – Sigmund Freud

One of the most stunning objects is his writing desk, filled with rows of statuettes, including Osiris, Neith, and Thoth (as a baboon). Also in the collection, we find mummy masks, shabtis, wooden figures, predynastic pots and a hand axe, a model boat, amulets, beads and scarabs. In recent years these objects have been loaned for exhibitions in museums all over the world.



Friends of the Egypt Centre



The Making of a Modern Mummy – from Kings Valley to Kings College – 6 June 2017

Prof. Joann Fletcher and Dr. Stephen Buckley – University of York

In 2011, a TV documentary “Mummifying Alan” featured Prof. Fletcher and Dr. Buckley performing the mummification of an adult volunteer Mr. Alan Billis, who had died of cancer. I remember seeing this programme which won several awards.

Prof. Fletcher talked us through the ancient method of mummification and focused particularly on the natron used. Dr. Buckley has spent almost 20 years researching this successful preservation process. They were interested in how ancient Egyptians produced mummies and in particular how those from the 18th Dynasty were created. Using modern equipment they analysed the remains of the various waxes, oils and resins used in ancient Egyptian mummification procedures to determine the composition of the materials, and with the use of modern imaging technology identified the mummification processes used.

Dr. Buckley and Prof. Fletcher made a breakthrough discovery in 2003 whilst working in the Valley of the Kings. Studying X-rays of three particularly well-preserved royal mummies, Queen Tiy, Thutmosis and Nefertiti, they noticed unusual “snowflake-like” patches in the skull. The “snowflake” mystery led them to discover that the best preserved mummies had been placed in a bath of liquid natron during the process, rather than being covered in dry natron. We have no knowledge of the type of bath used. Prof. Fletcher suggested as some sarcophagi had plugs in the bottom, they may have been used for this purpose.

Using the “liquid bath” procedure they carried out the mummification process on Mr Billis’ body at the Sheffield Medico-Legal Centre. Subsequent imaging has shown the process to be completely successful and to have very similar characteristics to 18th Dynasty

Upcoming...

13th December—Syd Howells (The Egypt Centre)

Dr William Price & the ‘Welsh Pharaohs’

24th January—Amber Fumage (Swansea University)

The Role of Magic in Egyptian Medicine

21st February—Dr Carolyn Graves-Brown (The Egypt Centre)

Magic Wands and Serpopards

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

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

mummies. His organs have been removed. “Mummification is about removing water,” explained Dr. Buckley, “but this way doesn’t remove the water so quickly, allowing the body to keep its shape and size for much longer.”

The Human Tissue Authority and the BMA, who approved the project, proposed the Gordon Museum of Pathology, Kings College, London, as an ideal permanent home for Mr Billis, and with the agreement of the Museum, his mummy has become a new addition to the collection.

Written by: Sue Cane



For further information or to become a member please contact:

Membership Secretary Wendy Goodridge:

01792 295960 w.r.goodridge@swansea.ac.uk



A Magical Mystery Tour Through the Ancient Egyptian Afterlife With Ra – 11 October 2017

Dr. Kasia Szpakowska

I was particularly looking forward to this lecture. I found it absolutely fascinating and thoroughly enjoyed it – hopefully there may be a “part two” one day, investigating this subject in more detail!

Kasia showed us the tomb paintings in KV34; Thutmose III, one of the most sophisticated 18th Dynasty tombs. These wall paintings resemble papyrus and are the earliest and most complete version of Ra’s nightly journey, assisting Thutmose III to succeed in the Afterlife after rebirth and regeneration. His sarcophagus was red, the same colour as the sun’s disc.

Rameses VI also had a superb tomb interior (KV9) depicting this nightly journey. The decorative plan of his tomb paintings is the most refined and complete and there are various representations of this theme in tombs up to the Ramesside period.

Initially only an aid for pharaohs, The Book of the Duat describes the Afterlife/Netherworld with text and images.

Ra’s barque was called *Mesektet*. During the highly dangerous nightly journeys, he was accompanied by several people including Maat, Isis, Nephthys, Thoth and Horus. The western gateway of the horizon is the entrance to the first of the Gates of Night and as Ra’s barque passes through, the sacred apes lament his death. The twelve goddesses of night board the barque and call the names of each of the gate guardians as they pass through.

1st Hour - Watercourse of Ra

Ra distributes grain and assigns land to the Afterlife population. He receives praise from the Duat gods. The tomb painting shows water as a zigzag pattern above a panel of dots depicting sand. Isis and Nephthys are shown as snakes protecting Ra and lamenting as he passes through this gate. At the doorway of Wernes he transforms into a ba and ascends the portal.

2. Wernes – Field of Reeds

Bes resides in this area, all its inhabitants enjoy this peaceful abundant place which is dominated by the waters of Wernes.

3. Waters of Osiris

Ra pauses in the fields and orders punishment of the damned. He is not visible on the boat, but his loud voice can be heard in this cavern. He passes and receives praise from Osiris.

4. Sacred Cavern of the West

This is the Land of Sokar, it is very dark and Ra is not visible but his voice can be heard along with the hissing of serpents – some of them are winged and some have

legs. Apep the serpent is the most dangerous entity. Ra emerges into the next hour by the transformation of his boat into a snake which carries Ra upon its back.

5. Sokar of the Cavern

Desert again in this cavern, and no water. Darkness and silence reign. Sokar in the form of a falcon lives under a high mound of sand. Two guardian sphinxes either side of him have outstretched claws to seize any intruder. On the top of the mound is a 3-headed winged snake. Khepera the scarab beetle waits for Ra’s arrival, and then flies onto his chest.

6. Abyss of the Waters

Ra unites with Osiris and receives new eyes. This event shows Ra in a horizontal position encircled by a 5-headed snake with a scarab beetle above his head. He is protected by the snake known as “One with Many Faces” and his body is re-united with Osiris.

7. She who Repels and Decapitates

Ra rests in a mysterious cave, gathering his strength in his vulnerable new body after uniting with Osiris to become a new entity. Apep the fearsome serpent is shown staked down with knives. He attempts to swallow Ra’s boat but with Isis at the prow reciting powerful spells and the protection of the cobra Mehen, Ra is able to continue his journey.

8. Clothing Allocated

Again, desert is depicted and no water but there are cubicles from which emerge different noises from the cavern dwellers (souls of dead gods), to whom Ra gives clothing. They will slay his enemies for him.

9. Preparation for Battle.

The river flows again through this peaceful area. Twelve gods guard the barque, and twelve huge snakes breathing fire wait at the rivers edge. The gods and the inhabitants of this area sing Ra’s praises.

10. Protection of Ra

The upper register shows the Solar Eye and the Eye of Horus. Armed warriors guard Ra’s boat, also a snake named “Living One of the Earth”. In this land Khepera unites with Ra’s soul, although his dead body remains in the boat. Horus guides drowned bodies out of the water but the immortal Apep is still alive and a threat.

11. Mouth of the Cavern

The water level of the river has become lower. Demonic gods are shown spitting fire at the damned. This region is where criminals receive their punishment – fire and knives await them. Horus oversees this retribution as it has been ordered by Osiris. Ra prepares for transformation into the new “daily” Ra.

12. Rebirth

Khepera moves to the prow of the boat ready to complete Ra’s transformation, the barque passes through the body of a huge serpent, emerging through its mouth. The corpse of Ra is thrown from the barque as his soul and life are now present in Khepera, and the transformation is complete. With much jubilation, Ra passes out of the Duat and into a new day. His barque is now renamed *Mandjet*.

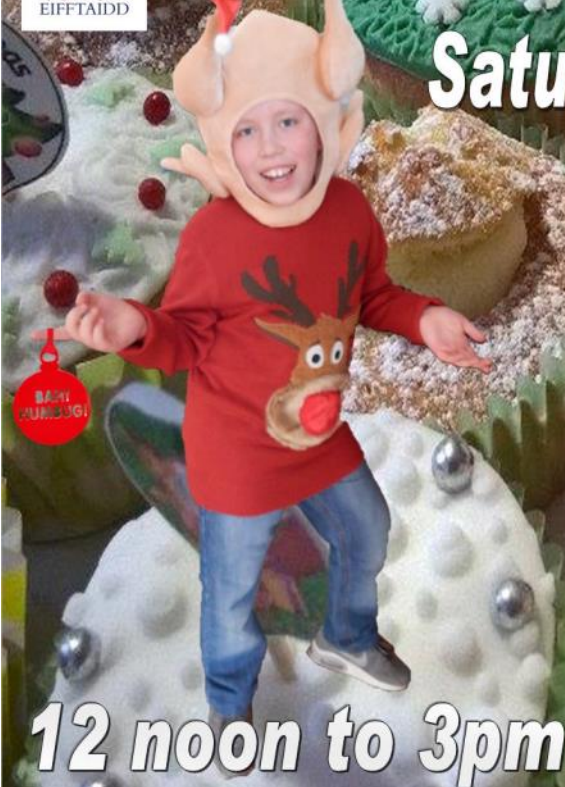
Written by: Sue Cane



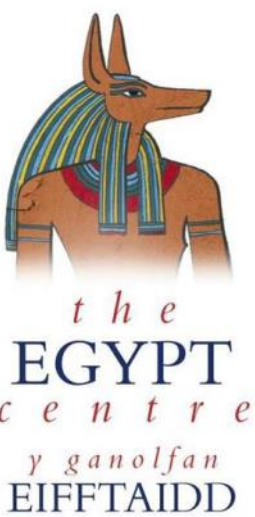


Young Volunteer Christmas Party

Saturday 16th December 2017



12 noon to 3pm



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