



# INSCRIPTIONS

*The Newsletter of the Friends of the Egypt Centre, Swansea*

## Issue 12

September 2002

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## Luxury Raffle!

We have had good news!

The New Opportunities Fund has agreed to fund another year of workshops for children. However, even through they are offering more funding, we are about £2000 short, due to higher overheads. We are holding a "luxury" raffle for Christmas to try to raise funds towards the shortfall. We will be approaching local business to donate luxury items, and if any of you would like to donate something we would be very grateful. Please contact Wendy at the Egypt Centre.

*by Wendy Goodridge*



*What's happening here? See page 2*



## Annual General Meeting

A reminder that the Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Egypt Centre will take place in the Esso Lecture Theatre on Wednesday 25 September, starting promptly at 6.30 pm (doors open 6 pm). Please make every effort to attend, as a new Chairman and committee members are due to be elected. The evening's lecture, to be given by Dr Kasia Szpakowska on the subject of "Spotty dogs and other guardians of the Afterlife", will commence at 7 pm.





## 2nd Annual Cream Tea -

Sunday July 28th 2002

### in aid of the 'Sunshine Project International' Home for abandoned children in Luxor, Egypt.

Debbie, Stuart and everyone at 'Sunshine' would like to thank everyone who supported the Cream Tea held in their garden on Sunday July 28th. Over 60 people turned up and enjoyed a fabulous tea with waitress service!! The picture on the front page shows some of our visitors relaxing in the garden after tea. There were also stalls and games and a quiz, but perhaps the highlight for some people was the Bingo!! Congratulations to the lucky winners. The raffle was also a huge success with many prizes being donated by the people who attended, thank you. Many people who could not make it on the date have given very valuable donations, thank you again.

Over £280.00 was raised on the day and donations are still being received. The money will help to sponsor two or hopefully three children over the next 12 months. The plans for the new 'Sunshine' home have now been drawn up and look absolutely fantastic. The three-storey building has an outdoor play area as well as teaching rooms, bedrooms for upwards of 100 children and many other wonderful facilities. There are 35 children at the 'Sunshine' home to date with the numbers rising by at least one a month. The estimated cost to build the home is £500,000.00 with a further £70-£100,000.00 to furnish. None of this would be possible without the help of people like yourselves who help support the children, Well done!!

Stuart has just taken in a new batch of Sunshine Christmas cards designed by the 'Sunshine' children, £2.50 for 10, and 'Sunshine' calendars, £3.00. If you would like some please get in touch with Stuart @ The Egypt Centre.

Once again a great big thank you to everyone from Debbie, Stuart and everyone at Sunshine.

*by Stuart Williams*

## A day trip to Abydos

Abydos is a place I have always wanted to visit, just like an Ancient Egyptian I suppose. I was fortunate last June to be able to fulfil my dream. All nine of us got up extra early to join the convoy of mini-coaches, coaches, and our mini-bus, which we were promised, was a 2002 model! Remember always check out anything before you buy in Egypt! Although more than adequate, luxurious didn't spring to mind. Curtains would have been nice to block out the searing 54° C heat, but we made do with a few 'Arafat' scarfs and Jill's beautifully white (not for long) scarf. We arrived second in the queue for the 3 to 4 hour journey and within an hour we were almost leaving. When the barrier was lifted, off set the convoy, past us, we hadn't switched our engine on!! Soon we were on our way, buses and coaches weaving their way along the road as women, children and cows scattered before us!! If you have ever been in an Egyptian 'coach' Grand Prix you will know what I mean.

The bus wasn't too uncomfortable, except for James, who at 6' 6" had a bit of trouble fitting his legs through the front windscreen. Jill's constant supply of crisps kept us going on what was a bumpy, but enjoyable run. Some of the scenery really has to be seen to be believed: towering cliffs, lush green fields, and huge vineyards (Egyptian Style). We were able to watch, as our bus slowed down, a goat being slaughtered, but there was worse to come! About half an hour outside of Abydos we noticed a very strong odour, even stronger than some of the shoes on the bus. We watched in horror as children played and women washed in a canal 100 yards away

from the cause of the odour - an exploded cow!! This poor dead upside-down cow had exploded in the extreme temperature, I'll leave the rest to your imagination.

Abydos is a quite small, sleepy little town. There must have been only a dozen or so tourists there. We paid our money and in we went. I was expecting to see the most glorious colours of any temple in Egypt. Instead we were met with complete darkness; there was a power cut! After I'd wandered around with my little torch for about 10 minutes the lights were suddenly thrown on and we were met with spectacular colours and images of Seti and the Egyptian gods. Highlights, for me, were the King List, which was smaller than I thought it would be, and Seti raising the Djed pillar. I was even able to teach my dad a few hieroglyphs.... 'All the people of Egypt worship Seti, beloved of Ptah'..in fact he read them out loud on almost every pillar we passed!

We only had just over an hour at the temple before we had to set off for the return journey and our visit to Dendera, but the visit was definitely one of my Egyptian 'highlights'. Remember also, to always wear a hat! One of our party took no notice of this advice. The sight of the unmentionable person 'hurling chunks' out of the bus window was another 'highlight' of the day for us, but not for the police car behind us! Visit Abydos if you can and always be on the lookout for floating but hopefully not exploded cows!

*by Stuart Williams*





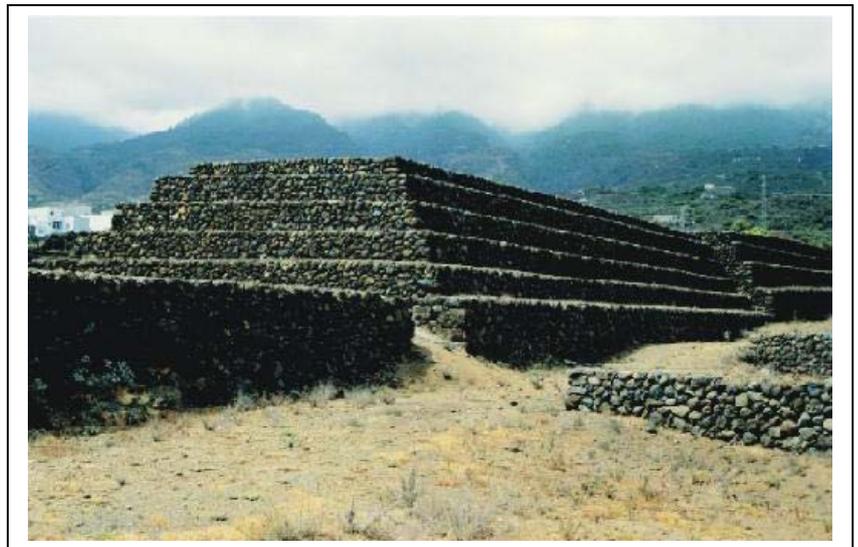
## ... and even more pyramids

On visiting Tenerife, the largest of the Canary Islands, I was amazed to find that it boasts a pyramid complex in the top North East point of the island. These six step pyramids, well off the regular tourist bus routes, are known as the 'Pirámides de Gûimar'. They are regarded as the most amazing archaeological discovery of the 1990s. Excavations started in 1997, supported by the late Dr Thor Heyerdahl of Kon-Tiki fame.

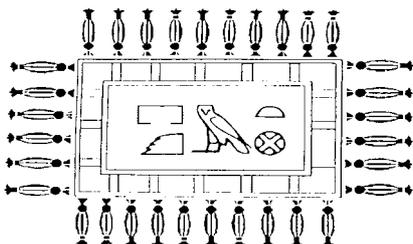


The pyramids represent a civilisation that existed thousands of years prior to Spanish rule which began in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. They resemble those found in other locations such as Peru, Mexico, the South Pacific and Mesopotamia and are believed (by some) to be the connecting link between advanced cultures in the Old and New Worlds. The discovery of an extension cave under one of the pyramids has revealed that it was used as a native commune. For many years local farmers insisted that the pyramids' steps were cultivation terraces and it took a great deal of persuasion (and pay-offs to the local farmers) before the authorities gave permission for any excavation to be done at all.

In 1999 the Ethnographic Park of the Pyramids of Gûimar opened to the public, though most tourist operators and couriers whom I asked knew little or nothing of this site. Check out their web side for more information on the pyramids and Dr Heyerdahl at [www.fredolsen.es/piramides](http://www.fredolsen.es/piramides) which also shows more coloured photos of them.



*by Merlys Gavin*





## Editorial

Welcome back to another academic year and the twelfth issue of *Inscriptions!* We hope this will be another successful year for the Egypt Centre.

Contributions to the next issue of *Inscriptions* will be gratefully received and should be sent to the Egypt Centre, marked for the attention of Mike MacDonagh. Don't forget that contributions should be either your own work or something in the public domain. You must obtain the copyright holder's permission before we can reproduce material from other published work.

*by Mike Mac Donagh*

## Baedeker

Den Strohhut zwischen zwei  
spitzen Fingern auf dem Kopf,

Sandfarhenes Kleid zwischen  
sandfarbenen Säulen

Verträumt eine Statue  
betrachtend

Die sich in einem glaslosen  
Fenster zeigt

Staub von den Sandalen  
schüttelnd

Und Thuthmosis beim  
Aufrichten seiner Obelisken  
beobachtend

Ein kleines dickes Buch

Fällt lautlos in den Sand

Halbversunken

Haucht der Baedeker sein  
Leben aus.

(170897)

*by Sandy Velten*

## Book Review

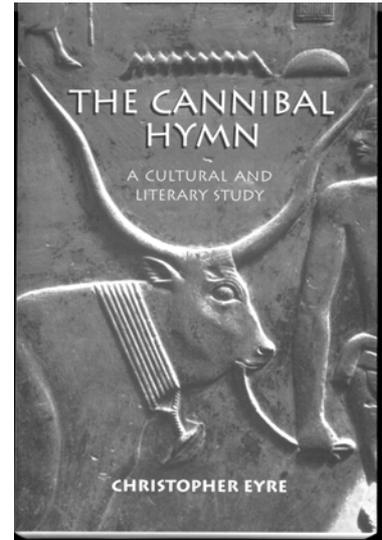
*The Cannibal Hymn, A Cultural and Literary Study*,  
By Christopher Eyre. 234 x 157  
mm. Pp. xiv + 272, ills.,  
appendix. Liverpool, Liverpool  
University Press, 2002. ISBN  
0 85323 696 8, price £39.95  
h/b. ISBN 0 85323 696 9, price  
£16.95 p/b.

This book is structured in seventeen chapters. The first two are an introduction to the topic and a translation of the relevant passage from the Unas Pyramid. The remaining chapters deal with the transmission of the text, the reconstruction of a ritual and the associated problems for scholars. The author then discusses the text's cultural and literary implications in the context of a bull-sacrifice ritual and an associated meat-feast. He rightly points out the indissoluble link between ritual text and the associated ritual actions, together with the difficulties which arise when scholars are presented with what are excerpts from an underlying corpus of ritual material about which there is only limited knowledge available.

The work is supported by an appendix which contains the hieroglyphic text of the hymn. The appendix is a particularly useful and thought-provoking element of the book, in that it is arranged as parallel excerpts from the Unas and Teti pyramids together with later material tracing the use of the ideas and wording (in modified form) of the Cannibal Hymn in later burial custom – e.g. in Coffin Texts. The author's translation of the hymn uses the standard Utterance Numbers and is a subset of the texts reproduced in the appendix where no numbers are provided. As a result, a reasonable reading knowledge of the ancient language is needed to locate relevant passages. Also, some familiarity with Ancient Egyptian (especially, Old Egyptian) is needed to fully appreciate the problems posed by the hymn and the subtlety of the author's interpretation and discussion. There is no mention in the book of the archaeological evidence suggesting possible, but not fully substantiated, cannibalism in predynastic times. Nor is there any mention of the evidence, from the pyramid builders' village at Giza, which suggests that some 'royal' funerary ideas were already being used by the builders of the pyramids.

Christopher Eyre has provided a number of thought-provoking ideas for further scholarly debate. The work will be of interest to Egyptologists, in the main. However, students of anthropology and of ancient literary material will also find its discussion of the problems associated with the interpretation of such material useful. The author has stated that his aim was to use his chosen text as a case study to provide an essay on literature as an artefact of cultural history. He has succeeded in his aim and in so doing has illustrated the difficulties of dealing with Ancient Egyptian literary material.

*by Mike Mac Donagh*





## More about pots

Let's go back in time to when the Egyptian potter would have his or her kiln outside in the open air.

At an early date potters started to embellish their wares. Some early pottery, like that in the Egypt Centre, is red with a black top. Eventually, other techniques were used. Marl clay was used and a red paint applied. One pot in the House of Life has signs of triangles at the top of the rim, though the colour has faded through age. New Kingdom decoration has different pigments from the early decoration.

The potters painted their pots using a brush made out of a reed (see the pot in the main case in the House of Life which has lost some of its colour through wear and age). Some Egyptian potters had an individual potter's mark which they placed underneath the pot. Royal potters had more choice of materials than other potters.

Where the pigment was used to decorate the marl clay, the calcite element (gypsum/chalk) in the clay acted as a flux and served as the bonding substance for blue, green and yellow pigments. I used to collect wall masks (heads with Arab faces and with a hawk on the shoulder, somewhat like the canopic head jars) from a firm called Bossons in Congleton, Cheshire. Because they are chalk based they chip easily if handled roughly. These were thrown on a wheel. There were gypsum mines in Sussex, England.

In my last article I mentioned there were no plain pots in tombs, but I am informed that actually a large number have been found, including some from Tutankhamun's tomb.

Red ochre, which was found in desert areas, was ground down to make pigment. It is often used on pots.

Animals and gods were used as decoration that was noticeable. A leaping calf was one example of such decoration and there is an amphora jar with one of the handles shaped like an antelope. On the front of pots the gods Hathor or Bes are sometimes seen.

In a period which I am talking about (thousands of years ago in the Roman Period) kaolinite was used. During the Amarna Period an old favourite of my Dad's – Cobalt Blue – was used. He's always telling me about Nailsea Glass, from Bristol, some of which was made using this material. It was rediscovered by a Frenchman in 1804. What more mysteries can we find from these ancient Egyptians?

Before the Late Period, horizontally positioned lotus flowers were represented, and these were the last examples of painted decoration using solely Egyptian motifs. These were found in Upper Egypt.

I would like to thank my friends and staff at the Egypt Centre who have helped me in my pottery quest, to all of them I will always be grateful.

Please note: it is impossible in a short article to put all types of firing, pigments etc., the ancient Egyptians used.

*by Ian Jones*

## Kein irdischer Ort

kein irdischer Ort  
in Stein gegossen

sonnendurchwirkt  
steindunkelversteckt

zwischen Lotus und Papyrus  
glühendbunt leben Bilder

kein irdisches Leben  
für die Ewigkeit erstarrt  
in Staub gebettet

scherbendornbüschubersät  
von siegreichen Königen  
und fallenden Feinden

kein irdischer Ort  
wo die leere Hülle eines  
Skarabäus  
vom Wind getragen

in einen Thronraum schwebt  
säulenmangelnd klein  
lebendmenschenunbwohnbar

Erscheinungsfenster

kein irdischer Ort

(170897 Medinet Habu)

*by Sandy Velten*





# Bumper Wordsearch!

**1 Find the following words in the grid opposite:**

- Egypt
- Mummification
- Pharos
- Amulets
- Gods
- Anubis
- Hathor
- Giza
- Pyramid
- Tomb
- Ra
- Relics
- Bastat
- Isis
- Osiris
- Scarabs
- Shabtis

E	F	Y	E	V	Z	M	D	S	H	T	P
G	G	H	E	C	W	U	I	C	P	C	Y
U	T	Y	B	H	E	M	T	A	D	H	R
A	D	O	P	H	Y	M	B	R	I	Z	A
M	F	E	G	T	N	I	J	A	E	E	M
U	A	V	R	M	A	F	A	B	J	N	I
L	B	I	K	J	W	I	E	S	E	K	D
E	C	T	A	A	O	C	E	T	Y	E	C
T	V	W	O	L	N	A	K	D	N	G	A
S	H	B	C	D	D	T	N	I	X	T	H
N	O	T	G	F	T	I	S	T	O	M	B
A	P	E	O	C	B	O	E	I	C	G	S
R	E	U	D	B	C	N	F	T	U	B	T
A	W	O	S	S	B	T	K	T	O	D	O
T	O	I	A	I	F	S	K	O	L	M	T
R	A	W	E	S	R	E	L	I	C	S	T
A	E	V	R	Q	V	C	O	T	A	S	S
I	S	I	S	U	E	R	O	H	T	A	H
W	X	F	H	H	I	I	R	G	B	S	T
G	I	Z	A	T	S	R	T	Q	B	F	S
L	E	O	V	E	L	P	T	J	A	N	H
O	S	I	R	I	S	X	F	A	S	M	A
O	Y	I	K	N	T	P	S	A	T	N	B
N	M	Z	O	O	S	T	I	M	E	K	T
N	N	B	O	O	M	A	B	B	T	C	I
M	T	K	R	N	X	N	U	Q	K	K	S
A	M	A	B	T	A	K	N	T	I	B	L
T	H	A	B	C	L	K	A	G	A	O	C
P	M	T	O	T	O	M	P	K	S	I	T

**2 To complete the second puzzle you must first answer the questions. The correct answers are hidden in the wordsearch.**

1. Egyptian god of chaos (4)
2. Place in north Egypt (4)
3. Land of the Pharaohs (5)
4. An underground burial site (4)
5. Burial site above ground (7)
6. They were put on the body during mummification (6)
7. An engravement in stone (5)
8. A queen in the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty (10)
9. Egyptian god of wisdom(5)
10. The sun god (2)
11. Protector of the pharaohs (5)
12. God of mummification (6)
13. A type of beetle (6)
14. Incarnation of Thoth (4)
15. The cat god (6)
16. The hidden one (4)
17. The field of reeds (9)
18. Servants in the Afterlife (6)
19. The son of Horus with the head of a **human** (5)
20. The son of Horus with the head of a **baboon** (4)

*by Rhiannon Waters - Young Volunteer*

B	A	S	T	E	T	A	E	X	O	P	J	W	K	P	I	T	C	E	A
A	Z	X	U	F	C	O	M	C	K	T	K	G	I	Z	A	G	I	I	F
I	T	B	S	U	P	V	B	T	D	A	U	W	J	N	L	L	H	K	T
T	Q	P	O	E	G	Y	P	D	E	M	X	S	O	P	K	M	Y	Z	E
B	Z	H	G	F	T	D	Q	E	P	U	O	L	P	T	O	M	B	S	R
A	X	A	E	X	S	H	B	N	O	L	L	B	N	E	Q	S	R	I	L
H	C	A	T	M	I	R	A	S	T	E	M	A	A	G	H	M	T	B	I
S	U	W	A	V	H	Q	R	R	P	T	Y	A	I	Z	U	S	V	U	F
R	S	R	E	X	P	S	A	M	U	N	P	B	B	W	Y	X	T	N	E
E	Y	D	L	C	Q	M	C	T	V	I	A	U	I	M	S	E	T	A	O
P	F	H	I	A	G	Y	S	U	R	O	H	W	S	N	T	H	O	T	H

*by Alex O'Brien - Young Volunteer*

