

Museum of Egyptian Antiquities



Wigs of Ancient Egypt

Do we need to pay them more attention?



50 1971/2021
YEARS AT SWANSEA
MLYNEDD YN ABERTAWE

Golden Anniversary Conference

Celebrating 50 years of the Wellcome Collection at Swansea.



Eau de Nil

How Nile water became an emblem of chic.

egypt.swan.ac.uk



Welcome



**Syd
Howells**

Editor in Chief

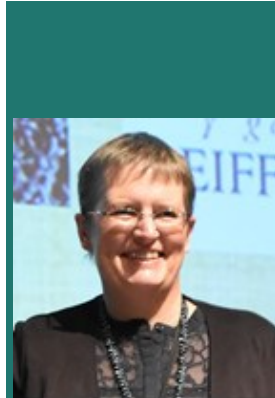
Hello,

Thank you to all Egypt Centre Volunteers, both those who have returned and those who will return when they are ready. It has been a long journey for us all from the moment the Egypt Centre closed to the public in March 2020 and our eventual reopening in September 2021.

At present it is a very different Egypt Centre, with booked visits (walk-ins allowed if there is capacity), limited numbers of children with the school visits, masks being worn, hand sanitising gel and antibacterial wipes everywhere. Rest assured that the usual humour, joy, and sense of community have not departed the museum! Touch wood, none of us have contracted COVID-19 from the museum and long may it remain that way.

We hope that you enjoy this newsletter and have a safe and Happy Christmas. See you in 2022!

- 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. In the Old Times, before The Flood, you could find me supervising the House of Life on Tuesdays & Thursdays; at the computer desk, painstakingly assembling this very tome; or in Cupboard 8, hard at work controlling the biscuit surplus.

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter or submit articles for consideration please contact:
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The Newsletter will be published every three months - Next issue due **Mar 2022**.



Office News

Christmas Opening Hours: The final school visit of 2021 took place on 7th December with the next scheduled for 11th January 2022. The museum is closing on Saturday the 18th December 2021 and reopening on 4th January 2022 (depending of course on the COVID-19 situation at that time).

Egypt Centre Branded Clothing: Desperate for a new 2022 wardrobe? Prepared to dazzle your friends with a peerless Egypt Centre hoodie? Fear not. Early in the new year Angharad our wonderful Gift Shop Manager will be placing an order. Please contact Angharad on a.gavin@swansea.ac.uk with details of your sartorial requirements.

Egypt Centre Collection Blog: This project led by Ken Griffin goes from strength to strength, with recent additions including articles on the Canopic Jar of Psamtek (as seen in the Egypt Centre collection – mummification case) and a fascinating piece on the funerary equipment of Iwesenhesetmut (including details of the cremation in 1973 of the mummy originally found within her coffin!). It is well worth bookmarking the blog!

Egypt Centre in Swansea Bay Magazine: There is a wonderful article on the Egypt Centre in the winter edition of the Swansea Bay Magazine and an interesting article on Kate Bosse-Griffiths can also be found in the issue. If you haven't seen a copy you can access it online:

<https://www.theswanseabay.co.uk/2021/12/01/egyptian-treasures-on-our-doorstep/>

Forthcoming Events:

In Service of the Gods: Priests & Priestesses in Ancient Egypt

Short course on Egyptian priests and priestesses, with ticket sales and donations going directly to supporting the Egypt Centre. To be as accessible as possible, this 5-week course will be run twice, with sessions taking place via Zoom:

- Sunday evenings 6–8pm (UK time) - Starting Sunday 16th January
- Wednesday mornings 10am–noon (UK time) - Starting Wednesday 19th January

Cost: £40

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/in-the-service-of-the-gods-priests-and-priestesses-in-ancient-egypt-tickets-220912494217>



Meet the Volunteer



Egypt Centre Volunteer
Rebecca Toghil

I come from: Lincolnshire.

I started volunteering: Oct 2021.

I chose to volunteer because:

I study Ancient History and Egyptology at Swansea University, and I wanted a more hands on experience with the ancient Egyptian world.

My Favourite artefact is: The Palaeolithic hand axe (**AR50/2883**) as it is the oldest object in the museum.

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helps me: It has helped me with my studies by seeing the artefacts in person, and being able to spread the knowledge and understanding with others.



Egypt Centre Volunteer
Safia Hooda

I come from: Northamptonshire.

I started volunteering: I recently graduated from Swansea University. I started volunteering as part of a Work Experience Scheme called GoWales.

I chose to volunteer because:

I wanted to explore the many different aspects of the career's world as well as my enthusiasm for working with children and enabling secure pathways for their learning and education.

My Favourite artefact is: Unfortunately, I was unable to see any artefacts in real life. However, I would have loved to see any artefacts to do with Mummification!

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helps me: It has broadened my knowledge of Egyptian Culture, and improved my communication skills with both team members and younger children.





Student Volunteer

Midori Takahama

I come from: Bristol.

I started volunteering: Oct 2021.

I chose to volunteer because: I study Egyptology and wanted opportunities to engage with Egyptian history outside of class.

My Favourite artefact is: The magic ivory wand in the House of Death (Domestic Religion Case). Egyptian magic is a very interesting topic to me... and the cute creatures pictured on it are always fun to look at!

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helps me: It's slowly helping my confidence regarding public speaking.



Former Volunteer

Daniel Bailey

I come from: Cheltenham, Glos.

I started volunteering: 2019.

I chose to volunteer because: One of my 3rd year optional modules was the Museum Practicum. I really enjoyed the environment, and interacting with visitors, so continued to volunteer around my lectures.

My Favourite artefact is: A flint (or chert) sickle blade from Amarna. I was given this artefact to study and it became very significant to me. I have become rather passionate about lithics generally, them being the core material for my master's dissertation.

How volunteering helped me: The module, and the further volunteering, brought me significantly closer to my course-mates and we have remained in contact.

What I'm doing now: When I moved university for my masters, I sought out a voluntary opportunity at the Petrie (which happened to be about Wellcome material) because of the incredibly positive experience I had had at the Egypt Centre.



Eau de Nil

From colour of the Nile to
colour of chic sophistication?

The colour shade *eau de nil* translates from the French as 'Nile water'; the term was coined in the late nineteenth century, at the peak of a wave of Egyptomania in Europe.

Some attribute it to the influence of French novelist **Gustave Flaubert's** account of his travels in Egypt in 1849-50. This is a translation of one of his many descriptions of the scenery along the Nile, which shows his great sensitivity to shades of colours:

*'The water of the Nile is **quite yellow**; it carries a good deal of soil ... As the evening fell, the sky turned all red to the right, all pink to the left. The pyramids of Sakkara stood out sharp and gray against the vermillion backdrop of the horizon. An incandescence glowed in all that part of the sky, drenching it with golden light. On the other bank, to the left, everything was pink; the closer to the earth, the deeper the pink. The pink lifted and paled, becoming yellow, then greenish; then the green itself paled, and almost imperceptible, through white, became the blue which made the vault above our heads, where there was the final melting of the transition (abrupt) between the two great colors' (as quoted by **Kelleher** 2018. N.B. American spelling in this article. Translation of Flaubert, 1991, p.137-8)*

Not once in his travel notes does Flaubert use the term *eau de nil*, nor does he ever describe the Nile with the French equivalents of yellowish green, bluish green or pale green (see below), nor with any of the terms suggested by my French informants below. He mostly uses one-word terms; most frequently the French for yellow, sometimes blue, or purple (at night). He also uses murky blue, pale blue, pale slate (grey) and his two most imaginative descriptions are of the water looking like molten steel; and at sunset, when reddened by the sky's reflection, the colour of redcurrant syrup...

Furthermore, the term *eau de nil* (sometimes written as *Nil* or even *Nile*) does not appear in various French dictionaries (such as the authoritative *Robert*), and the French speakers I consulted were not at all familiar with the term, suggesting *vert d'eau* (water green), *vert amande* (almond green) or, in one case, *vert Nil* (Nile green). It can be found on French decorating websites, but it seems to be on ranges of paints with mainly English names. In contrast, most English dictionaries list the term (see below). According to the *Online Etymology Dictionary*, combinations of the French *eau* (water) appear as borrowings from French from the mid 18th century onwards: *eau de vie* (brandy) in 1748; *eau de cologne* in the early 19th century (when it soon replaces the translation *Cologne Water* introduced

in 1814); and *eau de toilette* in 1907. Oxford dates the appearance of *eau de nil* to the late 19th century in English: my theory is it was coined in English on the pattern of the borrowings from French listed above.

So what colour is *eau de nil*? Kelleher (op.cit.) says it is tricky to pin down precisely, and describes it as:

*'...a **light-greenish** hue, more saturated than celadon, less gray than sage. It has **tan** undertones and a cool **bluish** cast...Like the ever-changing waters of Flaubert's Nile, the color itself changes. Sometimes it is **yellowish** and springy; other times it is **bluish** and murky'*

A quick glance through online dictionaries yields more varied descriptions: a **pale yellowish-green** colour (*Collins*); a **pale bluish green** colour (*Wiktionary*); a **pale greenish colour** (*Oxford*). Furthermore, the term Nile green is sometimes used as a synonym, but it is also used to describe a darker blue-green shade. Very confusing!

And here are some quite flowery, evocative and imaginative descriptions from various design companies:

*Dulux (paint): 'Embrace blue-green appeal. Picture yourself as a fashionable traveller in the Victorian era, enjoying an exotic cruise down Egypt's River Nile. It may seem hard to believe now but back then, the shimmering water of the Nile was a beautiful **pale blue-green** that the locals called 'eau de Nil', literally translated as 'water of the Nile'. This pale, delicate colour became hugely popular in the late 19th century, especially in the glamorous Art Deco era' (I doubt the Egyptian locals ever called the colour eau de Nil!)*

*Edward Bulmer (paint): 'Some greens don't require any blue or green pigments and this is one of them. This is basically **yellow ochre** under the influence of **black** with a touch of **chrome yellow**. What colours the waters of the Nile these days may not conjure up the romance of the name this colour was given all those years ago when the Nile was in the news as the scene of Nelson's great victory' (i.e. Nelson's defeat of Napoleon at the naval Battle of the Nile, 1798, but I think this date is far too early).*

*Fortnum & Mason (the upmarket department store in London): '...there's one colour that tops them all at Fortnum's – Eau de Nil. Our unmistakable signature colour for decades, this **bright blue-green** is immediately discernible to the eye as*



Fortnum's – a beautiful hue that evokes a calm, soothing feeling. Inspired by the east, especially the flowers and fabrics of India, this 'new' colour was recreated by 18th century designers and has been a part of our palette since the beginning... eventually becoming the Fortnum's house colour' (Note that the origins and the shade (which is really a turquoise) described here don't match any mainstream definitions of eau de nil.)

*Rose of Jericho (paint): 'The image conjured up by eau de Nil is of tranquil evenings spent sailing exotic waters in faraway lands. Recreate this dreamy mood in your own home ...Eau de Nil is a romantic colour name possibly coined by Flaubert in the mid 19th century when France was obsessed by Egypt, more as a concept than an actual place. It is a **pure green**, not to be confused with the very different Nile Green colour. A possible explanation for the name is that the waters of the Blue Nile appeared green due to the large amount of yellow Saharan sand washed down with the annual flooding of the Nile. Eau de Nil subsequently became a hugely popular colour in the Art Deco period'* (As noted above, probably nothing directly to do with Flaubert or France! Furthermore, the 'Blue' Nile did not contain a blue pigment that mixes with yellow sand to make green: as Flaubert describes it, it mainly appeared as yellow.)

*Susan Crawford (knitting yarns): 'Eau de Nil: a calming, **pale green** with a **grey** undertone'*

The late nineteenth century saw the flowering of *Art Deco*, which was very much influenced by Egyptian colour, materials and design: from furniture to lamps, jewellery to clothes. And *eau de Nil* was a key colour used. Although Art Deco faded away, the colour remained popular into the twentieth century. Kelleher (2018) quotes from **Adler** (2012):

*"**Dusty blue-green** 'eau de nil' is wartime London. When I see eau de nil, I am transported to the lobby of Claridge's hotel in London with its signature eau de nil china, its melancholy glamour, its stirring portrait of Winston Churchill framed with an eau de nil border."*

Interestingly, *eau de nil* also has a military connection, according to industrial paint specialists **Paintman**:

'A traditional single part Synthetic Coach Enamel paint, used in the cabs of most RAF specialist vehicles, including Fire Appliances, Land Rovers, airfield vehicles, tractors and lorries. Commonly called Cockpit Green this was the standard colour for the interior areas. It got the nickname of Cockpit Green from being used in the older RAF aircraft (although this is a totally different shade)...

The reputed reason for Eau de Nil being used was that the Royal Air Force and Air Ministry found the colour to be relaxing to the eyes of personnel. Normally this was when they were sat in aircraft or vehicles for long periods of time'

Kelleher (op.cit.) also notes that it was a favourite shade of green of film director **Alfred Hitchcock**, and he dressed two of his leading ladies in *eau de nil* suits: **Grace Kelly** in *Rear Window* (1954), and **Tippi Hendren** in *The Birds* (1963).

And from dressing elegant Hollywood stars to modern-day health care workers: *eau de nil* is a popular shade for uniforms in the sector, as this description from *Simon Jersey* shows:

'Confidence in the workplace is improved when staff feel great in their healthcare uniform. Our Eau De Nil with White Trim Healthcare Dress is durable & practical, this dress features two hip pockets and a breast pocket perfect for keeping equipment close to hand'

Eau de nil: a French term that is more English than French; a colour that can be described in many different ways; which can evoke elegance and practicality, sophistication and calm... and which although past its heyday, remains a popular decorating choice, and another reminder of just how much Egyptian art and style has penetrated Western culture.

Written by: Dulcie Engel

(With a special 'merci' to Cathy T.-C., Monique E.-Z., Odile L. & Nathalie R.-G.)

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Book Review

Jodi Picoult:

The Book of Two Ways

(Hodder & Stoughton, 2020)

The best-selling American author of over 26 novels, **Jodi Picoult** is often characterised as a 'chick-lit' author, and I admit that this is the only book of hers I have read; and purely because of the Egyptian theme. She writes about love, families and relationships, and indeed, these themes are at the heart of this novel.

The key to this is the title. Certainly, it refers to the Middle Kingdom text, a coffin text predating later expressions of the Netherworld such as the *Amduat* and the *Book of Gates*. *The Book of Two Ways* is painted on the floor of the coffin, and shows two paths that lead to the realm of **Osiris**, and cross a dangerous landscape beset with obstacles. They are divided by the *Lake of Fire*; one path is by water and the other by land. The novel also shows two ways in life. The chapters alternate between 'Land-Egypt' and 'Water-Boston'; between the past and the present for the heroine **Dawn**. She even survives a version of the Lake of Fire: a horrific plane crash. In the past Dawn was a promising *Yale* Egyptology student, able to work on an Egyptian excavation with fellow student **Wyatt** (a British aristocrat; his grandfather being a friend of **Lord Carnarvon!**). They fall passionately in love, and they also find clues which lead to a new tomb discovery. But Dawn is called back to **Boston** where her mother is dying and her younger brother needs care. At the hospice she meets a fellow visitor; good, kind **Brian**, a quantum physicist, who explains to her theories of parallel universes. Dawn falls in love again, finds she is pregnant, marries Brian, gives up her chance of a brilliant career in Egyptology, and a future with Wyatt. Inspired by the work of the hospice,

she becomes a death doula (not a carer, but a companion to the dying, helping them realise their last wishes, as well as sorting practical issues). Moving forward to the present, her daughter **Meret** is now a grumpy teenager, Brian seems to be spending too much time with a young female colleague... and a dying client wants to re-connect with her first, true love after many years (despite being happily married to a good man). The parallels with Dawn's situation are too much. She goes back to **Deir el-Bersha**, where Wyatt is now in charge of the excavation, and begs to be taken on to the team: to see 'what if'. But the real 'what if' is about her feelings for Wyatt, and his for her. Should she choose Egypt and Wyatt or Boston and Brian? Land or Water? And what about Meret in all this?

In her afterword, the author explains that the Egyptian parts of the book are based on the Middle Kingdom necropolis at Deir el-Bersha (the concession of which is actually held by the *Leuven* mission, not Yale as in the novel); and the real tomb of **Djehuty II**. The site is known for coffins containing a depiction of The Book of Two Ways. In the novel, the tomb of the nomarch **Djehutynakht** is discovered; a real person whose tomb has not yet been found. The layout of The Book Of Two Ways in his fictional coffin is borrowed from that in the coffin of **Sepi** (after **Adriaan de Buck**). The author's advisors were the well-known American Egyptologists **Colleen and John Darnell**, and Colleen was Picoult's guide on a research visit to Egypt. Picoult's bibliography shows that a range of Egyptology books were consulted. Parts of the book do read like an 'Introduction to Egyptology' lecture, which is I suppose necessary for the general readership. But if it familiarises more people with Egyptian archaeology and mythology, so much for the good!

Written by: Dulcie Engel



Work Experience:

Facilitating Virtual Learning Workshops



During the Summer Break, I was delighted to be a part of a 4-week Egyptian Virtual Learning Workshop. Whilst COVID-19 may have stopped us from meeting in person, the ability to have remote learning sessions enabled a positive, friendly environment for six- to eleven-year-olds to come together and learn about the Egyptian culture. I sat in with the EC Education and Learning Facilitator **Hannah** who guided me on my roles as an assistant for the sessions. The workshops incorporated all aspects of life as an Egyptian. For example, pets, jobs, geographical landmarks, and my favourite topic, mummification!

Before starting the main component of my work experience, I met with the volunteer manager of the centre, **Syd**, multiple times. This meant throughout my placement, I felt there was an open space for myself and other staff members to converse over what may be expected of me during my time with the Centre. Whilst working with The EC Learning Team, I always felt welcome, comfortable, and part of the team despite not meeting in person! I commend the staff for the continuous support throughout this experience and am looking forward to working with everyone again.



Written by: Safia Hooda



Golden Anniversary Conference

50 years of the Wellcome Collection at Swansea and beyond: 1971-2021

On three afternoons in mid-September (finishing on the actual anniversary, September 17th), the Egypt Centre hosted a Zoom conference to celebrate the transfer of 4500 objects, part of **Henry Wellcome's** vast Egyptian and Sudanese collection, to *Swansea University* in 1971. This loan forms the bulk of the c. 6000 objects which the Egypt Centre now holds.

The conference was a great success, superbly organised by **Ken Griffin** and **Sam Powell**. 23 speakers took part; 361 tickets were issued to attendees from around the world, and total attendees for each day were between 206 and 147. There were presentations by academics, curators, and postgraduates (including former EC volunteers) from a range of institutions: the *Wellcome Institute*, the *Egypt Exploration Society*, the *Petrie Museum* (which organised the Egyptian dispersal), and museums which benefited from that: **Swansea** (now the Egypt Centre), **Liverpool** (*World Museum*), **Durham** (*Oriental Museum*), **Manchester**, **Bolton**, **Cambridge** (*Fitzwilliam Museum*), **London** (*Science Museum*); from researchers interested in Wellcome (collecting agents, Sudan excavations, plaster casts), and other collectors from whom Wellcome bought objects at auction.

It is hoped that the talks will eventually be put onto the Egypt Centre YouTube platform. The PowerPoint presentations showcased archival documentation and photos which were wonderful to see. Indeed, a common theme running through the conference was the importance of collaboration on the Wellcome collection. In fact, one of the positive aspects of the Covid period has been the rise in virtual placements for postgraduates, and virtual collaboration between institutions: the

sharing of documents, and work on transcription (a project very much promoted by Ken at the EC, and embraced by the Wellcome Institute with its Transcribe-athon). Indeed, more than one speaker referred to 'detective work' and made pleas for help with information. Another type of collaboration was the virtual matching up of pieces of objects in different museums: such as a terracotta vase whose body is in Cambridge, and whose handle is in Bolton. And it was sad to learn about lost or missing records and objects, in particular, the 'ghosts' in the Liverpool collection (objects destroyed in the Blitz which linger on through surviving records and pictures). A strong theme was the recognition of the colonial context during the heyday of collecting, and the implications for modern displays and museums. We also heard about many strong and inspiring women in the history of collecting, museum patronage and curating: it was not just **Amelia Edwards!** To mention a few who stood out: Wellcome's collecting agent **Winifred Blackman**, Bolton's patron **Annie Barlow**, and inspiring curators **Brenda Adams** (Petrie), **Elaine Tonkard** (Liverpool), and **Kate Bosse-Griffiths** (Swansea).

But it was not just talks: we heard memories of taking part in the 1971 dispersal at Durham and Swansea; we watched a wonderful film made for the public opening of the Swansea Wellcome Museum in 1976, which was only recently deposited at the University's *Richard Burton Archives*. We had tours of stores and galleries at Manchester, Bolton and the Egypt Centre; including the launch of the new '*Egypt and its Neighbours*' case at the EC (House of Life) and two very special



announcements were made on the final day:

Firstly, **Anna Garnett** of the Petrie Museum announced that the plaster cast of the **Djedhor** the Saviour statue (whose original is in **Cairo**) will be transferred to Swansea to be reunited with the cast of the base, [currently in store](#). It is believed to be the first time any of Wellcome's Egyptian material has been reunited following the dispersal of the collection, and is a project first discussed 20 years ago by our curator **Carolyn Graves-Brown**, and **Stephen Quirke** at the Petrie. Several months ago Anna and Ken put a proposal together for the UCL museum committee to consider transferring the statue to Swansea, and learnt just two weeks before the conference that they had been successful. The EC is very grateful to Anna and all those involved at UCL in making this happen and looks forward to receiving the statue in due course.

Secondly, Ken Griffin, Egyptologist **Tom Hardwick** and Abaset Collections Manager / EC volunteer Sam Powell launched the *Hilton Price Virtual Collection*. The project started in June

2021. The catalogue, while still a work in progress, presents over 5200 objects, which were dispersed widely following the sale of the collection in 1911. Over 600 objects were purchased by Wellcome at this time, with many others in subsequent years; indeed several are in the EC. An appeal was made to museums, researchers, and others to get in touch if they are aware of the current location of any Hilton Price objects. The Hilton Price Virtual Collection is available to view [online](#). You can find Tom Hardwick's history of Hilton Price and his collection (including images of stickers commonly associated with HP objects) [here](#).

So, all in all, a wonderfully successful conference, with the promise of many more collaborations on a number of fronts.

Written by: Dulcie Engel

NOTE: This report first appeared on the Egypt Centre Collection blog on 27th September 2021.



50 1971/2021
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Wig-making in Ancient Egypt

A brief history of wig making and popular wig styles throughout pharaonic Egypt



Figure 1: 18th dynasty duplex wig from the British Museum.
(British Museum, 2021, object number EA2560)

Wigs played a very important role in ancient Egypt, both in everyday life and special occasions. They can be seen adorning the heads of the royal family, the gods, and other elite members of the ancient society. Both depiction and surviving archaeological examples of these wigs can be seen throughout pharaonic Egypt.

The context and purpose of wig use in ancient Egypt is highly debated. Some scholars suggest that it was a display of status and social rank, or a protective head-covering for the scalp or natural hair. It is entirely possible that the reasons behind wearing wigs evolved and changed over time. It is also debated what was done with natural hair while wearing a wig. Some suggest it was shaved and other suggest it was kept long. This could have varied from period to period and could have also been a personal choice.

Most of the surviving examples of wigs have been excavated from tombs and temples. It is also common to find a wig on the mummy, within the linen wrappings. Both elite members of Egyptian society and gods are shown wearing wigs. Depictions of wigs are found in almost every art medium. Overall, the construction process of ancient Egyptian wig-making is very similar to modern practices today.

Predynastic Evidence (5300-3000 B.C.E.)

The first use of 'false hair' evidence dates to the Predynastic period of ancient Egypt, roughly around 3500 B.C.E (during the Naqada II phase). These two examples were excavated from cemetery KH43 at Hierakonpolis in Upper Egypt (south of modern-day Luxor).

The first comes from burial 16 belonging to a woman who had small sections of matted hair knotted to her natural hair. This is what we would roughly describe as a hair extension. These sections were knotted at the root of the natural hair.

The next example comes from burial 333 belonging to a man who had a hair piece made of animal hide and hair (the oldest toupee!). This is also the only known example of an ancient Egyptian hair piece made out of animal hair, all other examples are made from human hair. It is believed that this piece would have been placed and 'glued' or stuck on top of the owner's head and worn. Not much else is known about these two pieces but they both show that hair and its appearance held some importance during the very early stages of Egyptian history.

A large number of worked/braided sections of hair were found at Umm el-Qa'ab necropolis at Abydos but these sections date closer to the 1st dynasty and pre-Old Kingdom.

Old Kingdom Evidence (2686-2160 B.C.E)

Depictions of wigs and wig use is present from as early as the 1st dynasty and continues until the very late periods of Egyptian history. The actual use and wearing of wigs seem to have been introduced after the 4th dynasty but this is a rough estimate. Currently there are no surviving archaeological examples that date to the Old Kingdom. It can be noted that different types of wigs were highlighted and differentiated in the art of this period.

For example, the tripartite wig, worn by women and the gods, is different in style, depictions and construction to the short, round, curly wigs that were also worn by women during this period.

Both elite members and the gods are shown wearing wigs which could suggest an early religious association with wigs or some kind of religious influence. From depictions it also seems that both men and women were shown wearing different styles of wigs. If wigs were being worn during this time it is likely that these same distinctions were made.

First and Second Intermediate Period Evidence (2160-2055; 1650-1550 B.C.E)

The Intermediate periods can be a little difficult in general when trying to find archaeological examples, however one of the oldest wigs recovered dates to the 8th dynasty from El-Hagarsa located in Lower Egypt in the delta. Although vague, this wig is important because it gives us information on who was wearing wigs during this period and that wigs were being included in the tomb assemblage, most likely found on or near the body of the deceased.

In general, very few archaeological examples and materials have been found from the first two Intermediate periods but depictions of wigs are still seen in the art of the period.



Middle Kingdom Evidence (2055-1650 B.C.E)

Based on the archaeological evidence, wigs quickly gained popularity and traction during the 11th dynasty specifically. The oldest wig in the Cairo museum dates to the 11th dynasty.

During the Middle Kingdom, we begin to see hairdressing scenes. These are extremely important for showing the people who may have been involved in the wig-making industry. In these examples, the hairdressers are females working for elite women. This brings up the separation or boundary between hairdressing and wig styling and if they were considered the same thing or not.

New Kingdom Evidence (1550-1060 B.C.E)

The New Kingdom is where we start to see actual wigs and more variety of wig styles, the most common being the male duplex and the female gala wigs. Also during this period, we see the development of titles with one specific title directly related to wig-making and the cult of Amun at Karnak temple (Thebes/modern-day Luxor).

As noted, the Second Intermediate period (SIP) does not have any archaeological evidence but depictions of wigs are still common. This could suggest that the popularity of wigs decreased during the SIP and then increased again in the New Kingdom (or this could be the way of Egyptian archaeology and represent a gap in the surviving material) but of this we cannot be sure .

Overall, the New Kingdom sees a wider variety of wig styles and a larger number of archaeological examples.

Third Intermediate Period (1069-664 B.C.E) to Late Period (664-332 B.C.E) Evidence

Most surviving archaeological examples date to the 20th and 21st dynasties. From this it seems that the wear and use of wigs was very popular and common during the early Third Intermediate period (TIP) and into the Late period.

The TIP saw an increase in the use of plant fibre in the construction of wigs as stuffing (to add volume and shape to the wig). This use of stuffing can suggest that there was an increase in the demand for wigs, which in turn caused an increase in production.

Wig Construction

The most common raw material used in wig construction was human hair. In later periods plant fibre from the date palm tree was used as wig stuffing. This 'stuffing' was used to add shape and volume to the wig without adding more hair and raw materials (using stuffing likely saved time and effort in the wig-making process). This probably made wigs a lot lighter in weight and more comfortable on the head.

Different wig styles incorporated different construction techniques in order to achieve the desired look. A mixture of beeswax and resin was used to hold the braids, curls and general style of the wig. Styling tools such as awls or picks, combs, and hair pins were used to section, style and hold the hair during the construction process.

The first step of the construction process was gathering the hair and processing it. This included washing, combing and detangling the hair before constructing the foundation of the wig. Once the hair had been prepped the desired wig foundation was made.

Wig foundations were constructed differently based on the style of wig. There were two main foundation styles; a net base with diamond shaped openings (like a hair net) and one large braid that ran from the forehead to the back of the head. The second step was to attach small sections of hair to the foundation in the desired style (see fig 2 below). These sections of hair could be braided or curled. Some wig styles, like the male duplex wig, incorporated both styles.



Figure 2: Diagram of the open-mesh/net foundation of a wig with an anchored strand of hair. (Stevens-Coz, 1977, p. 70)

The third step was used for finishing touches and styling of the wig. The stuffing would have been added during this step. In the final step a mixture of resin and beeswax was applied to the hair to hold the styling of the wig (similar to modern day hairspray).

Wig styles

There are at least six different wig styles known (some of them are only known from depictions, no archaeological evidence has been discovered as of yet) but there is a high chance that there are more styles that have yet to be identified or discovered.



Figure 3: 18th dynasty male duplex wig from Thebes. (British Museum, 2021, object number EA2560)

One of the most common wig styles is the male duplex or double wig. This wig gets its name from the use of both braids and curls which creates a double look. It features small tight ringlet curls on the top section and long thin braids on the bottom section. This style was worn by elite men with most surviving examples dating to the 18th dynasty and have been found in tombs.





Figure 4: Merit's gala style wig.
(Turin Museum, 2021, object
number S.8499)

The second most common wig style is the female gala or enveloping wig (also named after its appearance). This style was constructed using the long centre braid with long strands of hair that were curled using the wax mixture technique. This style could incorporate either braids or curls depending on the time period and potentially the desired look of the owner. Most examples date to the 18th dynasty and have been found in tombs and on the body of the deceased.

Conclusions

Hair and its appearance were important to the Egyptians as early as the predynastic and early dynastic periods. Each major period of pharaonic Egypt saw the influence of wig wearing through depictions and archaeological evidence. Wig wearing had practical, social, religious, and economic factors/purposes. Wig making was a specialized craft that took time and skill.

Written by: Mollie Beck

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And I Quote...

"And now, amidst the bustle and noise of a great seaport and manufacturing centre, lies Taut Heru, the worshipper of Isis, the Priest of Mendes, the Scribe of Panopolis – he who, 2,000 years ago, on the banks of the Nile walked, clad in priestly robes, midst all the waving banners, the ostrich feather fans, the wild music, in the possession of his God – now rests, surrounded by railways, telegraphs, and all the ever increasing wonders of modern discovery."

Francis Grenfell, 1888

(on the Swansea Museum mummy)

*"I see the temple where I was born
or built, where I held power.*

*I see the desert beyond,
where the hot conical tombs, that look
from a distance, frankly, like dunces' hats
hide my jokes: the dried-out flesh
and bones, the wooden boats
in which the dead sail endlessly
in no direction.*

*What did you expect from gods
with animal heads?
Though come to think of it
the ones made later, who were fully human
were not such good news either."*

Margaret Atwood - 'Sekhmet, The Lion-Headed Goddess Of War', 1995



Marsh Award: Sam Powell

Egypt Centre Press Release: 03/11/21

The Egypt Centre, Museum of Egyptian Antiquities at Swansea University is delighted to announce that one of its committed and longstanding volunteers, former Swansea University student, **Sam Powell**, was awarded the Welsh Regional *Marsh Award for Museum Learning* at the *British Museum* on Monday 1st November.

Originally joining the Egypt Centre as a volunteer during her undergraduate degree, Mrs Powell returned to the Egypt Centre during her postgraduate degree at *Swansea University* and has proved to be an incredible asset to the museum, with her talent, ability and passion for the teaching and learning of ancient Egypt particularly coming to the fore during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During this time Sam moderated online Egyptology courses, fundraising events and conferences, has created and hosted online quizzes on behalf of the Egypt Centre, written blogposts and proofread others' work for the Egypt Centre Collections Blog. Sam presented Egypt Centre research at the museum's 2020 online conference as well as other conferences such as BEC5, OLCAP 2020 and CIPEG 2020. Sam was involved in facilitating the museum's MA Object Handling Module, acting as an audience member for the examination and assisting with object condition checks. Sam is also the Co-Chair and Events Officer for the *Friends of the Egypt Centre*, the friends group which supports the museum's work.

Sam's creation of online media such as the ABASET catalogue (an online mechanism where all the Egypt Centre's collection can be accessed), Egypt Centre Bitesize Videos,

courses etc. have opened up access to the museum's collection and this development will remain in the museum's future activities. Her research on Egypt Centre objects, specifically wooden ancient Egyptian figures, has broadened the knowledge of these items.

Without volunteers such as Sam, the Egypt Centre would have struggled during lockdown. Through her tireless efforts the Egypt Centre has been kept in the public eye during a difficult time and has served as a kind of virtual community hub for those with an interest in ancient Egypt.

"The commitment Sam has shown to the museum has been peerless and the effort she has put into her volunteering has changed how the museum will operate in future. This is how it should be. Volunteering can make a difference." – **Syd Howells**, Museum Volunteer Manager, Egypt Centre



L-R: Sinead O'Haire (Marsh Charitable Trust), Muriel Gray (Deputy Chair of the British Museum), Sam Powell (Egypt Centre Volunteer).



Friends of the Egypt Centre



The Artists and the Archaeologists

In October, the Friends of the Egypt Centre were fortunate enough to have **Dr Carl Graves**, Director of the *Egypt Exploration Society*, present via Zoom.

Carl's lecture, entitled 'The artists and the archaeologists' focused on the little-known *Society for the Preservation of the Monuments of Ancient Egypt (SPMAE)*. It was formed in 1888 with the intention of drawing public attention to the need to protect Egypt's ancient remains, whilst advocating for their better management under the British government, and focusing on preservation rather than excavation. Carl described in detail SPMAE's formation, overviews of the key members (which included some fantastic beards!), as well as summarising the society's achievements in the context of British philanthropy at the end of the nineteenth century. It was great to see that some things never change, with regards to the strong, and often times conflicting, personalities within the society itself. The amount of innovative detective work involved in researching SPMAE and its members was extremely impressive.

Once again, a massive thank you to Carl Graves for giving up his time for the Friends of the Egypt Centre, and we look forward to welcoming him back again soon!

Written by: Sam Powell

Upcoming...

19 Jan 2022

Egypt in Reading

Jayne Holly, Ure Museum

The Ure Museum has grown a small but perfectly formed collection of Egyptian Antiquities for all to enjoy. This talk will highlight some of the acquisitions and the story behind them.

16 Feb 2022

The Swansea-Brown excavations on Uronarti: Past, Present and Future

Christian Knoblauch, Swansea University

The Brown-Swansea Uronarti Regional Archaeological Project in the Sudan investigates the imposing fortress built by Senwosret III close to the Semna Border. The talk will introduce the project, its background, results to date and future prospects.

16 Mar 2022

Recording and collecting antiquities with Robert Hay 1824-1834

Gemma Renshaw

This lecture is a short introduction to Hay, his collection and the antiquities that we find recorded in the archive.

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

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



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



Merlys Gavin

1937 - 2021

Sadly, during the summer, our Number One volunteer expert on ancient Egyptian mathematics, Merlys, passed away. Following soon after the death of her close friend and co-conspirator in the House of Life Gallery, Barbara Miles, Merlys was a committed and long-standing volunteer at the Egypt Centre, having originally begun volunteering with us in 2000. Merlys inspired many through her deeds as an Education Leader and Assistant and her capability in mathematics gained through her earlier career as a teacher was, as you can imagine, exceptional. Merlys was also involved with the creation of the Egypt Centre Maths Worksheets and Activities for visitors and school groups.

Blessed with a patience and ability to explain the most difficult of ideas in an understandable and enjoyable fashion, Merlys enjoyed interacting with the occasional visitor who arrived at the museum with 'interesting' and non-mainstream interpretations of ancient Egyptian history. Merlys always gently fielded their questions and enjoyed telling all about the Egypt Centre and the lives of the ancient Egyptians. Merlys was a lovely person.

Involved with the Friends of the Egypt Centre as both a member and Committee Member for many years, and a graduate of Swansea University's Certificate of Higher Education in Egyptology, Merlys was involved in many facets of the museum's work and will be much missed by those who knew her.

Godspeed, Merlys.



Written by: Syd Howells



Egyptology in The News



Greco-Roman finds in Alexandria

Remains of a residential and commercial suburb dating from the Greco-Roman era have been discovered in the **Al-Shatbi** area in **Alexandria** by an Egyptian archaeological mission. Finds include 40 water wells and cisterns, clay amphorae, vessels, lamps, coins, fishing equipment, remains of marble statues and a shrine.

Ancient Egyptian palm leaf gives hope for future

Researchers from *New York University*, **Abu Dhabi's Center for Genomics and Systems Biology, and from the *Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew*, have been able to determine the ancient hybrid origin of some date palms, which could be useful for modern date palm breeding. The breakthrough came from successfully sequencing the genomes of a 2,100 year-old date palm leaf found in a Late Period temple south of **Cairo**.**

Egyptian Museum makeover

The Egyptian Museum in **Tahrir Square**, Cairo, is undergoing extensive refurbishment and renovation this year. This includes the provision of new display halls, new caption cards for artefacts, guiding boards and seats for visitors, and pathways through the galleries for those with special needs. The museum contains the largest collection of Egyptian antiquities, from the pre-Dynastic period onwards, including over 136,000 Pharaonic pieces.

Replica of Tutankhamun's golden mask gifted to United Nations

On September 9th, representatives of the Egyptian government handed over a replica of the famous mask to the Under-Secretary of the *United Nations* in a ceremony at the UN headquarters in **Vienna**. The gift will join the UN's collection of art and cultural pieces from around the world.

Evidence of Hathor worship in the Delta

A group of religious tools used for **Hathor** rituals have been excavated at the *Temple of Pharaohs* in **Kafr El-Sheikh** in the Nile delta. The Egyptian team also found beautiful ivory carvings, a large limestone lintel, a limestone pillar in the form of Hathor, incense burners, and a small maternity chair, as well as a large limestone well for sacred water, and a mud brick Ptolemaic bath.

Pencil portraits with a twist!

Egyptian sculpture artist **Ibrahim Belal** carves miniature sculptures on pencil tips of the most prominent Pharaonic Egyptian statues and landmarks. He dreams of creating a museum of miniature sculptures.

Animal mummy wrappings shed light on use of dyes

In order to reconstruct the colours that once decorated animal mummies, researchers at the *British Museum* and the *Museo Egizio* in **Turin** have analysed the dyes using

broadband multispectral imaging (MSI), fibre optic reflectance spectroscopy (FORS), optical microscopy with visible or UV light (Vis-OM, UV-OM), as well as high performance liquid chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry (HPLC-MS/MS), to identify the chemicals used on the linen wrappings. The two principal dyes found were safflower and red ochre.

Egypt re-opens tomb on Giza plateau

The 4,700 year-old southern tomb of King **Djoser** has reopened to the public after a 15-year restoration. The south tomb consists of a limestone mastaba on the surface, and a labyrinth of passages leading to an underground tomb. Extensive repairs to the floors were made, and a new staircase installed.

Psamtik the priest flies the flag for Egypt in Dubai

The coffin of ancient Egyptian priest **Psamtik**, Son of **Pediosir**, arrived at the Egyptian pavilion of the *World Expo 2020* in **Dubai**. The exhibition was originally scheduled for last year, but delayed due to the pandemic. The anthropoid wooden coffin from Saqqara will be displayed there for six months.

Looking Ancient Egyptians in the eye

Researchers from *Parabon Nano Labs* in Virginia, USA, have created 3D reconstructions of the faces of three Egyptian men after processing DNA samples from the 2,000 to 2,800-year-old mummies. The reconstructions show what the three men, all from **Abusir el-Meleq**, may have looked like at the age of 25. They were primarily of Middle Eastern ancestry, with some Southern European genes.

Cairo column restoration

A project has begun to restore and assemble a pink granite column located in **Saray al-Qubba Park**. The 8 meter high column dates from the New Kingdom and is topped with a palm frond crown.

Tutankhamun the opera!

Next November, the opening ceremony of the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM) will include the debut of the opera *Tutankhamun*, written by archaeologist **Zahi Hawass**. At GEM, for the first time in history, the complete collection of Tutankhamun (5,000 artefacts) will be displayed in one place.

Smuggled artefacts: Restitution and Prevention

In **Belgium**, two objects were returned to the Egyptian authorities at a ceremony in Brussels: a coloured limestone statue of a standing man from the Old Kingdom, and a Late Period faience ushabti. And in Egypt, customs officials seized 16 artefacts at **Safaga** seaport (on the Red Sea) after a tip-off. They included wood and bronze statues, an inscribed funerary funnel of burnt clay, remains of cartonnage funerary masks, and gilded wooden amulets.



Sphinxes 1: Suffolk!

A pair of "heavily weathered" stone sphinx statues that a **Suffolk** couple bought 15 years ago for £300 as garden ornaments have sold at auction for £195,000. They each measure a metre long, and were originally believed to be 18th or 19th century replicas acquired on a European Grand Tour. They have now been identified as genuine ancient Egyptian statues, and researchers are looking into their provenance.

Karnak colours revived

The first phase of the restoration of the *Great Hypostyle Hall* in **Karnak** has recently been completed. By removing dirt and calcifications, its original red, yellow, blue and green colours have been revealed. The hall has 134 columns, each about 20 meters high.

Modern Art comes to Giza

For the first time ever, the **Giza** plateau is home to a contemporary art exhibition, entitled "*Forever Is Now*". Large scale artworks line a trail leading to the pyramids. The highlight is a steel-and-mesh sculpture by French artist **JR**, depicting a giant hand holding a postcard of one of the pyramids that, from a certain angle, creates the illusion that the top of the pyramid is levitating above its base. (Not to be confused with the artwork created by **Flyte** of a magnetic levitating pyramidion based on the Great Pyramid, as reported in our last issue.)

Sphinxes 2: Luxor!

Archaeologists discovered three more ram heads as part of the project to re-open the 1.7 mile avenue between **Luxor** and Karnak temples. And on November 25th, the Grand Opening Parade took place in the presence of the Egyptian president. The extravagant display included people in ancient Egyptian costume marching along the route, a symphony orchestra, lighting effects, professional dancers, boats on the Nile, and horse-drawn carriages.

Mummification technique dating in question

The mummy of a high-ranking nobleman called **Khuwy**, discovered at **Saqqara** in 2019, has been found to be far older than assumed and indeed, one of the oldest Egyptian mummies ever discovered, dating to the Old Kingdom. The mummification process used was highly sophisticated. The materials used were of high quality, usually associated with New Kingdom techniques. According to **Prof. Salima Ikram** (*American University in Cairo*): "If this is indeed an Old Kingdom mummy, all books about mummification and the history of the Old Kingdom will need to be revised."

Interior of royal official's tomb revealed

Archaeologists from *Cairo University* have discovered the interior of a tomb at Saqqara necropolis.

The tomb belonged to **Ptahemwia**, an official who served under King **Ramses II** in the 19th Dynasty around 3,300 years ago. He was a royal scribe, head of the treasury, chief overseer of the cattle, and in charge of divine offerings at the *Ramesseum* in **Thebes**.

Ancient Egyptian toddler prince lies in American cemetery

In a recent local news report from **Middlebury, Vermont** (USA), we learn that the ashes of a 4000 year-old Egyptian mummy are buried in the town cemetery. **Amum-Her-Khesh-Ef** was just a toddler, possibly of royal birth. In

the 1800s, the local museum founder was looking for a mummy for his collection. However, the mummy (costing \$10) arrived in too bad a condition to display. After many years mouldering in the museum storeroom, the remains were cremated in the 1940s and buried under a headstone decorated with Egyptian symbols. The grave has become a local attraction, and visitors leave offerings of coins on it.

Wealth of finds at Heliopolis

An Egyptian-German archaeological mission has discovered some basalt blocks which form part of the western and northern facades of **Nectanebo I's** temple at **Heliopolis**. Other finds include a fragment of a statue of **Seti II**, a shrine for the god **Shu** and the goddess **Tefnut** from the reign of **Psamtik II**, part of a statue of Ramses II, part of a quartzite obelisk for **Osorkon I**, and of an offering table for **Tuthmosis III**.

Egyptian cosmetics spoon causes furore on TikTok

When a white make-up artist showed her followers the genuine artefact she had in her collection, there was a chorus of disapproval. She was accused of modern orientalism, colonialism, racism and cultural theft.

Plans for restoration and redevelopment of Aswan Museum on Elephantine Island.

The building was constructed in 1898 as a mausoleum for the British engineer **Sir William Willcocks**, who designed the first *Aswan Dam*. It was later converted into a museum, and officially opened in 1917, making it one of the oldest regional museums in Egypt. In the 1990s, an annexe was built to house the finds of the German archaeological mission working on the site. The new displays will highlight finds from **Aswan** and **Kom Ombo** as well as **Elephantine Island**.

Lost Sun Temple found near Cairo

According to the co-director of the Polish mission, **Massimiliano Nazzolo**, the remains were buried underneath another temple in **Abu Ghorab**, 12 miles south of Cairo. The temple was built by 5th dynasty King **Niuserre** (ruled 2400-2370 BCE). Finds include seals of earlier kings, limestone column bases, and intact beer jugs.

Deeper insight into Egyptian artistic process

Anastasiia Stupko-Lubczynska of the *University of Warsaw* has just published findings on a research project carried out at **Hatshepsut's** Temple near Luxor. Her team copied the surface of two 13m long wall reliefs onto plastic film, which was then scanned. Analysis of the scans clearly revealed the 7 stages in their creation: 1) Wall smoothed and plastered; 2) wall divided into sections and gridlines marked on; 3) preliminary sketch added in red paint; 4) sketch corrected and details added in black paint by master artist; 5) text added; 6) relief cut out by sculptors, following the black lines; 7) finished surface whitewashed and colour added.

Compiled & Summarized by: Dulcie Engel



ANIMALS IN ANCIENT EGYPT Word Search

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

BABOON
 BEETLE
 BULL
 CAT
 COBRA
 COW
 CROCODILE
 DOG
 FROG
 GOAT
 HEDGEHOG
 HIPPOPOTAMUS
 HORSE
 JACKAL
 LION
 SHEEP
 SHREW

Show / Hide Answers

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



the
EGYPT
centre
y ganolfan
EIFFTAIDD



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We need volunteers to help with transcribing documents and catalogues
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