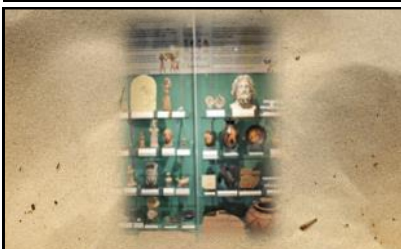


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Volunteer! Jan-Mar 2022

Newsletter

Museum of Egyptian Antiquities



Egypt and its Neighbours

New display?
Lucy Elford is on the case...



Egyptomania and Pop Music

Life's hard, you know,
So strike a pose on a Cadillac.



A.D. Wintle

Impromptu lectures,
unimpressed troopers, and the
mystery of Horus The Horse.

egypt.swan.ac.uk



Welcome



**Syd
Howells**

Editor in Chief

Hello all,

It is now two years since the pandemic arrived and we unexpectedly closed and moved online. It is good to see that some semblance of normality is beginning to return with national restrictions lifting or being eased. For current EC operational information see **Office News** on the page opposite.

Another wonderful issue of the Egypt Centre Volunteer Newsletter is here. Jam-packed with your usual favourites and some fine articles. Thank you to all who have contributed this issue, it is much appreciated.

Please keep submitting your work (technical guidelines are available from me on request). Until next time...

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, my duties have included Gallery Supervision in the House of Life, and assembling this newsletter. I have also been variously employed as an auditor, a judge, and a butler..!

Between roles I patrol Cupboard 8, diligently guarding against potential biscuit surplus.

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter or submit articles for consideration please contact:
dulcie.engel@icloud.com

The Newsletter will be published every three months - Next issue due **Jun 2022**.





Office News

Opening / Working Hours

The current situation at the Egypt Centre is as follows:

Tuesday 10-2 = School Visit 3-4 = Hour long slot for Visitors

Wednesday 10-2 = School Visit 3-4 = Hour long slot for Visitors

Thursday 10-2 = School Visit 3-4 = Hour long slot for Visitors

Friday = Hour long slots for Visitors. 10-11/11-12/12-1/2-3/3-4 All volunteer training will also take place on Fridays at present. Virtual school visits through ZOOM also take place on this day.

Saturday = Same hours as Friday.

There will be a return to weekly volunteer emails to let you all know which days we have schools booked in etc. As ever, there is no pressure on anyone to return to volunteering until they are happy to do so.

At this stage we are still wearing masks etc. and await any updates in procedure from Swansea University.

Retirements

Sadly, over the coming months we will be losing two of our paid staff to 'the horrors of' retirement. Firstly, on March 17th **Alison John** who has been our Saturday Workshop Leader for over 20 years and a volunteer before even that is retiring from her post. Fortunately, Alison will be continuing as a volunteer with us!

Secondly, our esteemed Curator, Dr **Carolyn Graves-Brown** is retiring from the Egypt Centre during April 2022. In 1997 Carolyn was employed as the collections first professional Curator prior to the Egypt Centre itself opening in September 1998. In a historically neat time-period, Carolyn has led the museum admirably through quarter of a century of change, education, and entertainment. We would like to offer her our warmest thanks and universally wish her the best for the future!



Meet the Volunteer



Student Volunteer

Lucy Elford

I come from: Northants.

I started volunteering: Dec 2021.

I chose to volunteer because:

I love museum environments and I currently study classics at Swansea University. I wanted to experience museum work first-hand and to get to know the world I'll hopefully be spending my life in.

My Favourite artefact is:

The mummified cat! I find the Egyptian rituals around death super fascinating, and I love learning about how pets were kept & treated throughout history - I have a real soft spot for them!

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helps me: It has improved my confidence in helping school groups, and taught me many new things about Ancient Egypt!



Student Volunteer

Amy Foster

I come from: Northants.

I started volunteering: Oct 2021.

I chose to volunteer because:

I aspire to be a Museum Curator after completing my education – volunteering helps me to gain experience.

My Favourite artefact is: Frog statue (**W219**) in the Animals Case in the House of Death.

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helps me: The Egypt Centre has opened my eyes as to what may be in store for me later in life. Volunteering has also helped with Uni work as it is full of useful resources.





Young Volunteer

Malena

I come from: Swansea.

I started volunteering: Mar 2017.

I chose to volunteer because:

It is cool and I used to go to the workshops, so I was influenced into it, and I always enjoyed the workshops at the museum.

My Favourite artefact is: Bearded man (**W914**) to be found in the *Egypt and its Neighbours* case in the House of Life; because I find the name funny, and it is an artefact with no information.

How volunteering at the Egypt

Centre helps me: I've gained confidence, have a cool lanyard, and have made friends.



Former Volunteer

Jayne Holly

I come from: Banbury, Oxon.

I started volunteering: 2004.

I chose to volunteer because:

I was studying Ancient History and Egyptology and loved history and objects! A few of my friends were already volunteers and really enjoyed it, and I was jealous of how much fun they had.

My Favourite artefact is: I have to say all the pottery offering trays, but I also love the apotropaic wand on loan from the British Museum, or the predynastic pot (**W415**).

How volunteering helped me: It both inspired and facilitated my career in museums. Without the opportunities volunteering gave me and the support of the staff past and present, I would not have had the confidence to do an MA in Museum Studies and pursue a career in museums and heritage.

What I'm doing now: Assistant Curator at the *Ure Museum of Greek Archaeology, Reading University*.



Egypt and its Neighbours

Upstairs in the Egypt Centre, through the doors into the *House of Life*, there's a display that at first glance may seem out of place alongside its Egyptian counterparts. This case is called *Egypt and its Neighbours*, a collection of pieces from ancient **Greece**, **Rome**, and other cultures from around the Mediterranean.



Although this collection of non-Egyptian artefacts may appear to be an anomaly, its place in the gallery is vital for learning and understanding the wider context of Egyptian history. The expansion of Greece, **Persia**, the Roman Empire, etc, into Egypt, as well as the growing practice of trading, led to a large merging of cultures. Egypt began to influence the wider world, and, in turn, the wider world influenced Egypt. Egypt was a cultural, economic, and political hub in the ancient world, and this is seen in the wide variety of artefacts we find today.

Graeco-Roman Pottery

Some of the most eye-catching artefacts housed in the display are arguably the Graeco-Roman pottery pieces. These artefacts typically serve as the figurehead for classical archaeology, with their bold

depictions of Graeco-Roman culture and mythology often standing out alongside other pottery pieces. In the collection, there is an ancient Greek *lekythos* (**GR29**).



A lekythos (pl. lekythoi) was used to contain oil and was typically made out of pottery (like the one on display). Lekythoi differ from typical jugs through their long thin neck. The Egypt Centre's lekythos depicts a scene of dancing satyrs and women, as well as featuring bulls on the shoulder of the piece. Satyrs can also be seen on the drinking cup, or *kylix*,

(**GR31**) located near to the lekythos, as it displays a seated *satyr*.

Satyrs are deities who appear to be men with horse-like features, such as ears and a tail, often filling more comedic roles within myths and literature. They



are typically found on Graeco-Roman pottery, especially storage and drinking vessels. This is likely to be because of their reputation of being completely devoted to wine and pleasure- they were companions of **Dionysus**, the Greek god of wine, festivity, and insanity. Satyrs embody the prioritising of pleasure, and, as such, they are typically featured on artwork linked to festivities/luxurious lifestyles.

Artefact **GR28**, a large jar, also strongly links to the theme of wine and extravagance, depicting a Dionysiac figure with an offering plate. As mentioned above, Dionysus, as the god of wine, held a strong influence over Graeco-Roman art. Dionysus himself was taught/raised by **Silenus**, a wise satyr, linking the two together once more. Due to Egypt's close



A black-figure Greek vase painting depicting a nude female figure, possibly a deity or personification, seated and holding a large, ornate object, possibly a mirror or a shield, decorated with floral motifs. The figure is surrounded by stylized foliage and a decorative border at the top.

The *Egypt and its Neighbours* case displays artefacts from a wider range of cultures than simply ancient Greece, Rome, and Meroe, with this diverse collection of pieces highlighting the influence and connections Egypt had in the ancient world. To learn about ancient Egypt is to learn about the entirety of classical Mediterranean history.

Ancient Egyptians colloquially named the Meroitic region '*Ta-Seti*', or the 'land of the bow' due to Nubia's reputation for its

Photos by Syd Howells

Abaset <https://egyptcentre.abasetcollections.com>]



Two Poems About Egyptian Sculptures

Irish poet and Nobel Prize winner **W.B. Yeats** (1865 -1939) uses Christian imagery to describe the unsettled atmosphere in Europe in his famous poem *The Second Coming*. It was written in 1919, in the aftermath of the First World War and the Russian Revolution; at the beginning of Irish War of Independence; and during the devastating flu pandemic. Its most famous line: 'Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold'.

The extract below uses the image of the sphinx as something immune to the apocalyptical world of human affairs and the disturbance of the natural world. The sphinx is a monument that has survived thousands of years throughout turbulence and chaos.

(...) : somewhere in sands of the desert

A shape with lion body and the head of a man,

A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,

Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it

Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.

I recommend these articles on its influence:

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/may/30/things-fall-apart-the-apocalyptic-appeal-of-wb-yeats-the-second-coming>

<https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2015/04/07/no-slouch/>

It also brings to mind **Shelley's** 1818 poem *Ozymandias*, about the ruined statue of **Memnon (Ramesses II)** in the Egyptian desert (the head and torso were removed by **Belzoni** to the *British Museum* in 1821).

Although the pharaoh has not survived, the statue did...

Two vast and trunkless legs of stone

Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,

Half sunk a shattered visage lies,

(...)

And on the pedestal, these words appear:

My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;

Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!

Nothing beside remains. Round the decay

Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare

The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Written by: Dulcie Engel



A.D. Wintle in Egypt

Lieutenant Colonel **Alfred Daniel Wintle MC** was not like other people. Besides a long and distinguished career as a soldier serving in both World Wars, he also unusually spent time imprisoned by both sides during the Second World War. Later, during the 1950s he came to wider public attention for taking a legal case to the *House of Lords* and gaining a unanimous verdict in his favour, the first time that such an event had taken place. Wintle was a fascinating and deeply eccentric character.



He spent two periods of his army service in Egypt and the Middle East, firstly during the early 1920s then later during the early 1940s. In his literally incredible posthumous autobiography, *The Last Englishman*, the period during the 1920s is covered in greater detail than the later period, possibly because the Second World War was raging at the time.

In 1927 he was posted to Egypt with the Royals (1st Royal Dragoons). A week after arriving at **Suez** he found himself stationed at the Main Barracks, **Abbassia**, Cairo. Instructed by his Adjutant to give the troops under his command a series of lectures on the country, he was informed:

"Don't forget to tell them how the Sphinx, Pyramids and such other things were built..."

"But nobody really knows how the bloody things were bu..." I began.

"Well, if you can't find out about a little thing like that, you're not fit to be a cavalry officer."

Wintle was a well-read man and managed to give those under his command a series of lectures on ancient Egyptian Mythology and was thrilled some weeks later when visiting the regiment's stables to read one of the new horses had been named **Horus**.

Impressed that one of his men had taken enough notice of his talks to name his horse after an Ancient Egyptian God, Wintle sought him out. After engaging in conversation, he asked:

"How did you come to call your horse Horus then Capstick?"

"Oh, I sees wot you mean, sir. "Horace!" 'E's named after me bruvver wot's in the Life Guards!"

The Pyramids

Wintle talks of his first view of the Pyramids. He rode to them accompanied by a Trooper **Collins**. Wintle noted:

"They completely took my breath away. I felt that anyone who went out to Egypt, went straight out to look at the Pyramids and then went straight home again would not have wasted his time."

Wintle asked Collins what he thought of them?

"Well, sir, what I says is, when you've seen one
you've seen 'em all"

Wintle's other thoughts on the monuments on the **Giza** Plateau include the following:

"If one pauses to consider, the architects of the time cannot have had a very difficult job. When Pharaoh told them to submit a suitable design for a Pyramid I expect they had one ready to hand and could submit it without delay."

The Suez Canal

Despite being initially impressed by the Pyramids, Wintle held the Suez Canal in higher regard.

"And when we compare this monument with the Pyramids of Egypt, monuments which are even more famous, we realise the true folly of mankind. For here in the Pyramids we have a gigantic effort fully comparable with the effort of building the Suez Canal. And yet anything more useless or even more vulgar than they are it is impossible to conceive."

Wintle's second period in Egypt was less comical, with his involvement mainly focussing upon military intelligence. However, it was during this time Wintle became a close friend and colleague of **Prince Aly Khan** (the son of **Aga Khan III** whose final resting place can be found at his mausoleum on the West Bank of the Nile at **Aswan**). Prince Aly Khan also appeared on the episode of the television programme *This Is Your Life* which celebrated Wintle's life in 1959.

Written by: Syd Howells



A Visit To Bolton Museum

The refurbished Bolton Museum has a magnificent 3D copy of the burial chamber of Thutmose III.

In 1898, a team led by French archaeologist Victor Loret excavated the tomb of the 18th Dynasty pharaoh Thutmose III. It was given the number KV34. Loret found that even though the tomb was inaccessible ancient Egyptian tomb-robbers had depleted its riches.

However the walls of the oval burial chamber are covered in an unusual style of decoration, more like inscriptions done by a scribe with their pen and ink.

These inscriptions can be seen in Bolton Museum's refurbished Egypt galleries. Constructed between 2004 and 2010 by international digital production company Factum Arte, it formed part of a touring exhibition of ancient Egyptian objects from the collections of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, Luxor Museum, and latterly Bolton Museum.

It is an exact 3D copy of the original burial chamber in the Valley of the Kings, made by digitally enhancing photographic scans of the original, removing distortions, and matching colours and dimensions so that it is accurate down to the millimetre. Particular attention was paid to recreating damage effects; scans of the tomb allowed for a faithful etched reconstruction of damage on the plaster replica, giving the walls their aged character.

The replica is the only copy of this tomb in the world, and is one of only three copies of Egyptian tombs made by the company: Seti I and Tutankhamen, both of which are in Egypt, and Thutmose III in Bolton.

The space is intended to be experiential; visitors have the feeling of standing in an ancient Egyptian tomb. No prior warning is given before entering the space, adding to the effect of being overwhelmed.

Following an unenforced cyclical flow of Bolton's displays, visitors exit the burial chamber through one of the side storeroom doorways. Through this doorway shines the bright natural daylight of the entrance gallery, a celebration of ancient Egyptian daily life, and so the visitor – like Thutmose – is reborn and set on the journey to explore Bolton's Egypt all over again.



Left is a precis of an article by **Ian Trumble** in *Current World Archaeology* issue 98.

I visited the museum in January and found the whole experience both impressive, and overwhelming. To suddenly walk into the tomb without any preamble is breathtaking and shocking. It really does feel like being in a tomb, and there was a hush from those entering as they looked around in awe. I enjoyed Ian Trumble's Zoom talk last year and as my son John and his family now live in the area, we went for a visit.



Bolton has some very grand architecture, harking back to its grander days as a major textiles town. Many of the artefacts were acquired because much of the cotton for the textiles industry came from Egypt. *Bolton Museum* sits very impressively on Le Mans Crescent.



I really liked the way so many of their artefacts were housed in see-through boxes. It was a fascinating way to view them and it made the entrance gallery exciting but uncluttered. There was also a link with the Egypt Centre as they also had a bust of **Nefertiti**.



If you have an opportunity to visit the museum I would recommend it, as there is much to see.



Written by: Teresa Davison



Work like an Egyptian with your Egyptian
from Egypt Central to Egypt State

Egyptomania and Pop Music

All I did was search for Egypt Centre videos on YouTube...and found right next to them Egypt Central... then I just had to look for more Egyptian themed music ...

It's in the look

'Hollywood-style Egyptian' videos, performances and costumes abound in late 20th and early 21st century popular culture, very much influenced by the sets and costumes of films such as *Cleopatra* (1963), starring **Richard Burton** and **Elizabeth Taylor**.

In 1992 **Michael Jackson** starred in a lavish video for his song *'Remember the Time.'* Set in the palace of a pharaoh called Ramses, whose queen looks very much like that famous **Nefertiti** bust (with the same crown), various entertainers are called forth to amuse the bored queen. Those who don't succeed are quickly despatched. Then Jackson appears, clad in gold satin, and wows her with his singing and dance moves. Which of course annoys the pharaoh, so MJ has to run and hide.

More recently, in 2013, **Katy Perry** channelled Cleopatra as 'Katy Patra' in her video '*Dark Horse*' with a range of 'Egyptian' costumes, wigs and sets. According to **Smith** (2020), the theme was to suggested to honour **Juicy J**, a well-known Memphis rapper who features on the video:

... she suggested the video have an Egyptian theme to pay homage to his "Memphis" roots. Featuring a pyramid made of Twinkies and a chariot with hydraulics, the resemblance is actually uncanny.

There is no real narrative in this video: it really is all about the look. However it clearly had enough interest to form the subject of an academic paper by **Vossman** (2019). Part of her abstract reads:

... some proportions of film industry, pop music and the hip-hop genre are intertwined with the reception of ancient Egypt. Especially the visual presentation of this form of Egyptomania is observed and it shows the connection to already existing examples of popular culture. A final interpretation works out a Hellenized magical tradition in relation to Cleopatra as the adopted model, which lasts from antiquity until today.

As for live performances, **Metwaly** (2014) points to **Madonna** at the 2012 Super Bowl halftime show. The costumes and sets evoked Ancient Egypt, **Babylon** and **Sumer**. Also in 2012, at the *Hackney Weekend*, **Rihanna** appeared on a pharaonic throne under a pyramid, in front of a picture of the Sphinx, when she performed '*Where Have you Been?*' Metwaly notes that Rihanna dressed up as an Egyptian queen in an earlier appearance in **New York**; and that the American singer **Cher** has frequently appeared on set as an Ancient Egyptian queen or goddess.

It's in the words

Well, the first song which springs to mind (is it my age??) is '*Walk Like an Egyptian*', a hit for **Bangles** in 1986: incorporating:

"...a light-spirited, catchy reference to ancient Egypt in a repetitive line."(Metwaly 2014)

and encouraging people to do the walk/dance (i.e. a sideways shuffle with head turned to one side, with hands and feet pointing horizontally in the same direction).

Nile FM (2018) note two more songs :

*'Princess of Egypt' - **E-Type** (1999) The song was recorded by a Swedish musician whose pseudonym is E-Type. It was a hit in **Sweden**, peaking at number 9 on the Swedish singles charts where it remained for 11 weeks.*

*'My Egyptian Lover' - **Space Cowboy feat. Nadia Oh** (2006) This song was the lead single from singer and producer Space Cowboy's third album 'Digital Rock.'*

Another example is *'Egypt, Egypt'* by **The Egyptian Lover** (pseudonym of an American singer), from his 1984 album *'On The Nile'*. The music style is hiphop electro fusion, and the track on YouTube shows a picture of the artist wearing a nemes headcloth.

It's in the album artwork

Egypt Station is a solo studio album released by **Paul McCartney** in 2018. The cover artwork (and associated video trailers) by McCartney himself certainly uses Egyptian tropes: palm trees, pyramids, desert, bright sun, and a horned antelope. According to **Kielty** (2018):



He previously used the title on a painting, and social media commentators noted that the teaser images appeared to make use of background elements of the artwork (...) McCartney discussed his painting, saying he'd been inspired by ancient Egyptian imagery. "Why I called it 'Egypt Station' was because it looked like a station, like train lines at the bottom, and underneath that, the edge of the platform," he explained.

Kiely also notes that a small sketch on the cover:

appearing to look like a pyramid in front of the sun could also be interpreted as a railway line going into a tunnel

As for content, there are no Egyptian references, and the commentator from Record Collector (2018) feels the station link is pretty weak too:

Introduced by the ambient buzz of Opening Station (...), Egypt Station ducks any pretence thereafter of thematic continuity (penultimate track Station II's slight return notwithstanding).

It's in the name

Apart from The Egyptian Lover and Egypt Station (see above); I want to mention here **Egypt Central**, which as I said at the start, was my trigger to investigate the theme more closely. According to their biography (Fulton, n.d.):

*Based in **Memphis** and named after one of its roads, hard rock group Egypt Central were formed by lead singer **John T. Falls** in 2001.*

What is interesting here is that their name links to the Egyptian connections which are maintained in Memphis Tennessee, founded in 1819, and named after the ancient Egyptian city, as Smith (2020) explains:

***John Overton, James Winchester**, and future President of the United States **Andrew Jackson** seized the opportunity to one-up the founders of the newly-formed Cairo, Illinois. (True story.) They named their new city Memphis in hopes of it one day being the seat of great kings like its river-adjacent namesake. And, technically, it was.*

That final reference of course is to **Elvis Presley**, King of Rock'n'Roll. We can make a connection here to the EC, as we have a glass head pendant in the *House of Life* (possibly from the original Memphis) which looks uncannily like Elvis (**AB15**).

Smith (2020) continues:

For the better part of the 80s and 90s, Memphis, Tennessee was hell-bent on Egypt-ifying itself. Technically, you could classify this into the Post Modern Egyptian Revival architectural style



AB15 "Elvis" glass head pendant
(egyptcentre.abasetcollections.com)

In 1985, the Institute of Egyptian Art and Archaeology was opened at the University of Memphis:

One particular highlight of the museum (...) are two ancient quartzite blocks. These blocks were presented to the city of Memphis in 1917 by the chairman of the Memphis Park Commission and are possibly Memphis's oldest acquisition relating to its namesake. The two blocks were originally part of a palace in Memphis, Egypt and are decorated in honor of Pharaoh Amasis of the 26th Dynasty.

In 1990 Memphis Zoo was renovated in Egyptian style with an obelisk, a temple, statues, columns decorated with hieroglyphs, and a miniature River Nile. And the Pyramid Arena was built in 1991. Originally a concert stadium, it has since undergone various incarnations.

So from Memphis back to Swansea (home of another modern pyramid, Plantasia): enjoy the music!

Written by: Dulcie Engel

References

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A Return to Object-Based Learning at the Egypt Centre

Excerpt from Ken Griffin's Egypt Centre Collection Blog:

Many readers of this blog will know that the Egypt Centre is a strong advocate of *object-based learning* (OBL). Several blog posts have previously highlighted handling sessions delivered to Swansea University students and other audiences. While the COVID-19 Pandemic meant that in-person handling sessions couldn't take place, since October 2021 these have been able to resume again. This semester is particularly busy as the Egypt Centre works with colleagues in the *Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences* at Swansea University. This short blog post will briefly highlight some of the exciting opportunities provided to Swansea University students this semester.



Students examining a First Intermediate Period stela (EC148)

Second-year Egyptology students have had weekly handling sessions as part of a module led by Dr Christian Knoblauch on *Egyptian Art and Architecture* (CLE220). So far, they have had weeks on sculpture and relief, while the most recent session looked at the art of the Old Kingdom. These handling sessions are directly related to assessment, so the students are always very attentive. Students spend approximately fifteen minutes examining an object before switching to another one. In total, they have the opportunity to examine five to six objects per session. At the end, students are asked to stand next to the object they liked the most, which is always a fun experiment!

For many years now, Egypt Centre staff have been directly involved in teaching an MA module (CL-M77) called *Reaching the Public: Museums and Object Handling*. During this module, students explore topics such as museum ethics, education

in museums, preventive conservation, and object-based learning. As part of their assessment, students have to undertake a condition report on an unseen object from the collection. Additionally, they are required to select four objects from the collection, based around a common theme of their choice, before delivering a thirty-minute handling session to an audience. In order to prepare the students for these assessments, they have been able to handle objects over the past few weeks. For example, last Monday students were provided with five objects and were asked to utilise all their senses when examining them. They were also introduced to the *Visible Thinking Strategy* (VTS), which further encourages students to think critically about museum objects.

A special project started this year is the *Swansea University Pottery Project* (SUPP), a collaboration between Dr Christian Knoblauch and I. The aim of this project is to fully document all the pottery in the Egypt Centre collection, including providing descriptions, measurements, classifications, new photography, and eventually drawings. Eleven students, ranging from first-year students right through to PhD level, have been selected to undertake these tasks. The project itself is expected to last for two years, if not more, so while some students will be able to continue with the project in the next academic year, new students will also have the opportunity to join us. This is an extramural project that doesn't carry any credits or have any assessments, but it is clearly one that the students enjoy immensely since some of them regularly turn up ahead of the time slot so that they can start working on the objects. The project has already been successful so far in identifying some new provenances for some of the vessels, including one from **Naqada** and another from **Meroe**. More details about this project will follow in a separate blog post!

Feedback from students indicates how much they enjoy these sessions and appreciate the opportunity to work directly with the Egypt Centre collection. It's certainly wonderful to be back offering these sessions in person rather than virtually, as was the case in the last academic year!



Written by: Ken Griffin



Egyptology in The News



Beer: new insights from Predynastic Egypt

Researchers **J. Wang** (*Dartmouth College USA*), **R. Friedman** (*Oxford University UK*) and **M. Baba** (*Waseda University Japan*) have used microfossil residue analysis on pottery fragments recovered from **Hierakonpolis** to show that a thick porridge-like beer, transported in 6 litre beer jars, was used by local elites in ceremonies during the Naqada II period.

Amarna necklace found on Cyprus

In a Bronze Age tomb discovered on **Cyprus** in 2018, archaeologists from the *University of Gothenberg* (Sweden) have found stunning Egyptian jewellery dating from the Amarna period, including a gold necklace in the shape of a lotus flower with inlaid gemstones. It is one of 500 objects discovered in two tombs, along with the remains of 155 individuals. Other Egyptian items testifying to the intense Mediterranean trade include scarab amulets and Nile fish bones. The team have been working through the finds for four years.

Wise women of Ancient Egypt

A recent study of **Deir el-Medina** texts by **Rosalie David** (*Manchester University*) suggests that women were the prime interpreters of dreams and predictions about the future. The most famous 'dream nursery' was the Temple of **Hathor** at **Dendera**, run mainly by women.

26th Dynasty tombs found

A Spanish archaeological mission working in the **Bahnasa** area of Upper Egypt have discovered two adjacent tombs dating back to the Saite period (26th Dynasty). Finds include a limestone sarcophagus, canopic jars, over 400 faience shabtis, and a set of small amulets and green beads. The Greek name for Bahnasa is *Oxyrhynchus*, and it is known for the enormous collection of papyrus texts found there.

Restitution of stolen artefacts from Israel, Spain...

The Israeli foreign minister handed over 90 plus artefacts during a December visit to **Cairo**. The items were confiscated following two smuggling attempts in 2013, and include parts of hieroglyphic stone inscriptions, part of a wooden sarcophagus, inscribed papyri, as well as statues of ancient Egyptian deities. Also in December, the Spanish authorities returned 36 pieces which were seized from smugglers in 2014. The repatriated items include busts of limestone, marble and granite; bowls, vases, canopic jars, and an ornate wooden box.

Met to remove donor name from temple space

The *Metropolitan Museum of Art* in **New York** has announced that it will no longer display the name of the **Sackler** family, prominent donors linked to the manufacture

of opioids. This will affect seven exhibition spaces, including the one that houses the famous *Temple of Dendur*.

Gang arrested for illegal excavations

Authorities in Cairo have arrested eight people who excavated antiquities in the **Ain Shams** area of the city. The gang had bought the basement of a house and dug a three metre deep hole to reach an ancient cemetery containing a huge granite sarcophagus with Pharaonic inscriptions. They had hoped to smuggle their finds abroad.

More than 18,000 ostraca discovered

A joint Egyptian-German archaeological mission made the discovery during excavations near the *Temple of Atribes*, west of **Sohag**. The ostraca date back to the Ptolemaic, Roman, Coptic and Islamic eras. They record financial transactions such as cash, wheat and bread accounts, as well as lists of names and scribe practice pieces.

Solar alignment at Karnak marks Winter Solstice

Every year on 21st December, the rising sun enters through the eastern gate of the temple, along the main axis of the temple and lights up the *Holy of Holies*, which was the location of the statue of **Amun**. In Ancient Egypt, the Winter Solstice marked the beginning of the germination system after the long flood season.

Mummy news 1: Automatic virtual segmentation of animal mummies

University of Malta researchers have developed a tool to automatically segment volumetric images, aiming to drastically reduce the effort involved from weeks to hours. Segmentation allows a more in-depth analysis of materials and parts. It is linked to *Propagation Phase Contrast Synchrotron Microtomography* (PPC-SRμCT), the technique used for imaging hidden internal structures of archaeological remains: performing virtual autopsies and virtual mummy unwrappings. The team have used the automatic virtual segmentation tool on Ancient Egyptian mummified animals.

Mummy news 2: Amenhotep I digitally unwrapped

The 3500-year-old mummified body of Pharaoh **Amenhotep I** (reigned 1525-1504 BCE) has been scanned at *Cairo University* by radiologist Professor **Sahar Saleem** and her team. The results provide rich details about his appearance and the jewellery he was buried with. For example, he had unusually good teeth for an Egyptian mummy, and his brain was not removed. He was buried with 30 amulets, and a golden girdle strung with gold beads and a green snail amulet. Hieroglyphic texts state that he was unwrapped and rewrapped by priests in the 11th century BCE, in order to repair earlier damage by tomb robbers.



Mummy news 3: evidence of child infections from CT scans

A new study using CT scans of ancient Egyptian child mummies is the first to show radiological evidence of dried pus due to infections, and an original bandage dressing used for treatment. A team of European and American researchers carried out the scans of 21 Egyptian child mummies (mostly from the Ptolemaic and Roman periods) in German, Italian and Swiss museums, under the auspices of the *Institute for Mummy Studies at Eurac Research (Bolzano, Italy)*.

Mummy news 4: How a foetus was preserved inside a pregnant mummy

In April 2021, the *Warsaw Mummy Project* announced the first documented case of a pregnant mummy and its foetus. The 2000-year-old mummy was in the 26th to 30th week of her pregnancy. A new study has now shown how the foetus was preserved. The natron salt used to mummify the woman caused chemical reactions inside her uterus, including the production of formic acid, which 'pickled' the foetus.

Mummy news 5: Tutankhamun probably not murdered

Recent analysis of X-rays and CT scans by radiologist **Ashraf Selim** show that bone fragments found in Tutankhamun's cranial cavity match perfectly with pieces missing from his first vertebra, in the neck. As the pieces were loose and showed no traces of resin, it became clear that they were not there before death, but probably dislodged during the first attempts to remove the gold mask from the mummy. Furthermore, a CT scan of the left leg shows resin covering a femur fracture, which may well have played a role in the pharaoh's early death.

Royal statues discovered in Luxor

While restoring the statues of **Memnon** and the funerary temple of King **Amenhotep III** in **Luxor**, an Egyptian-German archaeological mission headed by Professor **Hourig Sourouzian** discovered pieces of two colossal limestone statues of Amenhotep III in the form of a sphinx, wearing a mongoose headdress, a royal beard and a wide necklace around the neck . They also found three black granite busts of the goddess **Sekhmet**.

Aswan: Graeco-Roman cemetery uncovered

The *Egyptian-Italian Joint Mission in West Aswan*, headed by **Patrizia Piacentini** (*University of Milan*) and **Abdel Moneim Saeed** (Director General of *Aswan Antiquities*), have uncovered a Graeco-Roman era cemetery carved into rocks with four burial chambers holding about 20 mummies. Other finds include: offering tables, stone panels with hieroglyphic inscriptions, a copper necklace decorated with Greek writing and wooden ba bird statues.

Zahi Hawass launches autobiography

The famed Egyptian archaeologist launched his book, "*The Guardian: Days of Zahi Hawass*" at a glittering reception in a Cairo hotel.

Seti I's city found in Egypt: but it isn't real!!

Two Egyptian journalists claim that they have found the Pharaonic city set built for **Cecile B. DeMille's** 1956 film *"The Ten Commandments"* starring **Charlton Heston**, and based on the 1949 novel *"Prince of Egypt"* by **Dorothy Clark Wilson**. At the time, the Egyptian authorities

requested that the set be left as an attraction, but DeMille was worried it would be used by other film-makers, so he ordered it to be destroyed and buried. The journalists claim the location of the buried set is near the village of **Bani Youssef**, south of **Giza**.

Abu Sir cemetery find

The archaeological mission of the *Czech Institute of Egyptology* led by **Miroslav Barta** has discovered a cache of embalming materials in 370 large pottery vessels inside a group of 26th Dynasty burial wells at the Nile Delta site.

Tutankhamun's golden scarf restored

Conservation experts at the *Grand Egyptian Museum* laboratory have spent three weeks restoring and unfolding an amorphous lump of material back into a 4.8m long scarf. After examination with Yd and RI lamps, the piece was straightened with a water vapour device. Inscriptions were found on the front part of the scarf.

Major tourist events in double centenary year

2022 marks the centenary of **Carter's** discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb, and the bicentenary of the decipherment of the *Rosetta Stone*. Some major tourist events have been announced, including:

Abu Simbel Solar alignment: 22-02-2022: This year's special date for the 6-monthly event marks the anniversary of the coronation of **Ramses II**.

International fashion show in Luxor. Italian designer **Stefano Ricci** will celebrate 50 years of his brand with a show in front of the *Temple of Hatshepsut* at the end of March.

March announcement of new archaeological discovery at Saqqara: this will be announced in a special ceremony.

Inauguration of Graeco-Roman museum, Alexandria: after a hiatus of 10 years, the museum should be ready in a few months.

Inauguration of Grand Egyptian museum (GEM), Cairo. this event will take place over several days. The date is still to be confirmed officially, but rumoured to be in November, to coincide with the anniversary of Carter's discovery.

Inauguration of Capitals museum, New Administrative Capital (NAC): also opening this year, a new museum in the NAC, showcasing ancient and modern Egyptian cities. The NAC has been under construction since 2015, and is yet to be named. It is situated 45km east of Cairo, and will serve as the administrative and financial capital, aiming to relieve congestion and overcrowding in Cairo.

Compiled & Summarized by: Dulcie Engel

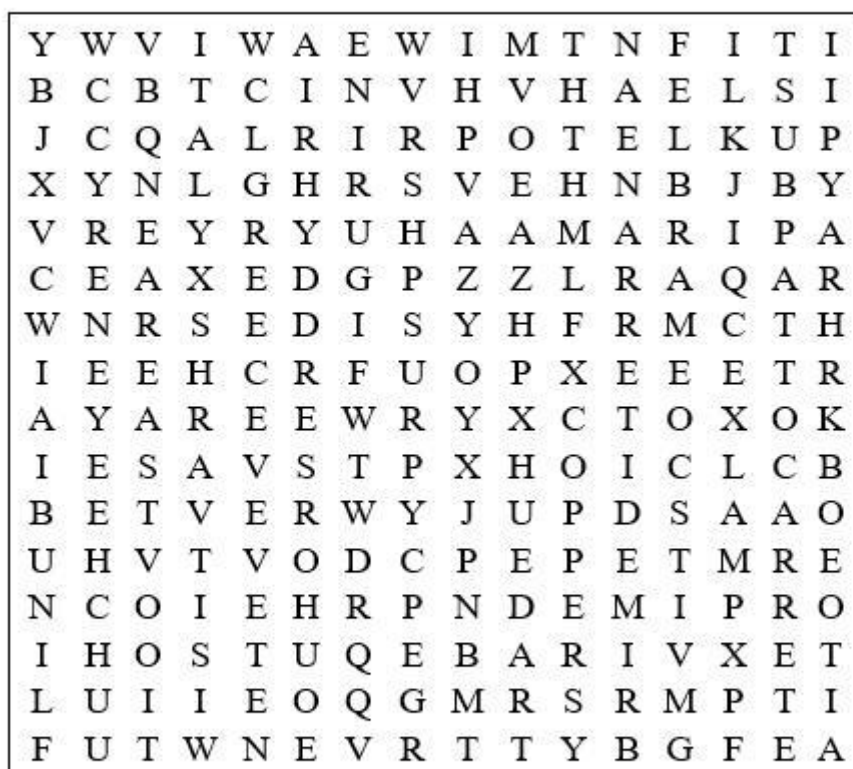
And I Quote...

At first I could see nothing, ... but presently, as my eyes grew accustomed to the light, details of the room within emerged slowly from the mist, strange animals, statues, and gold – everywhere the glint of gold ... when Lord Carnarvon, unable to stand the suspense any longer, inquired anxiously, "Can you see anything?" it was all I could do to get out the words, "Yes, wonderful things."

- Howard Carter, 1922



Egypt & its neighbours Word Search



BOEOTIA
BUST
COIN
COPPER
CYPRUS
CYRENE
FIGURINE
GREECE
HORSE
ITALY
LAMP
MARBLE
MEDITERRANEAN
NEAREAST
NUBIA
TERRACOTTA
TRADE
VASE
VOTIVE

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



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EGYPT
centre
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