

HOTEP

Issue 40: April 2019

Review of March meeting

On 16 March, we welcomed back **Paul Nicholson**, from the **University of Cardiff**, for a further instalment of his work in the animal necropolises of North Saqqara under the title ***'Going to the Dogs: latest findings in the Anubis Catacombs'***.



Paul's description of the working conditions experienced by himself and his team in the catacombs dug into the escarpment close to the Late Period Bubasteion and Anubeion temples, was truly hair-raising. Working by the light of head-torches and with the constant threat of ceiling-collapse, the archaeologists have explored hundreds of metres of narrow galleries opening off a main corridor, some of which were almost completely filled, floor to ceiling, with animal remains. The team were able to confirm and improve on plans of the catacombs produced by earlier excavators and to suggest that the galleries were in use for no more than 200 years. The construction of a wooden coffin, found to contain the remains of an adult dog and a puppy, suggests a Roman date for ritual activities at the site.

As with the cat, hawk and ibis catacombs, which Paul described on his last visit to Southampton, the Anubis galleries were repositories for animal mummies donated to the god to reinforce a

The newsletter of The Southampton Ancient Egypt Society

request for divine intervention. There is little or no inscriptional evidence to explain who was making these offerings, and nothing to indicate whether the offerings were dedicated by individuals in person or by proxy, or whether offerings were saved up for mass burials every month or so.

Analysis of the animal remains revealed that the vast majority were canine with a few interlopers in the form of cats and rodents. The most surprising discovery of this analysis was the age profile of the dogs which had been presented as offerings to Anubis – most were very young puppies, many new-born, suggesting the existence of a 'puppy-farming' industry to service the needs of the pilgrims or penitents. This method of celebrating a cult is typical of the Graeco-Roman Period and shows how native Egyptian customs were constantly evolving or were adapted to the needs of in-coming societies.

The area where the bodies were prepared, where the offerings were dedicated and where the cult rituals were performed, was probably outside the entrance to the catacombs which was located in the garden of the house used by the local representative of the Egyptian antiquities authority, which restricted the area available for exploration. We look forward to reading the write-up of this work which Paul is currently preparing.

March Quiz Answers

- 1:** KV5 is the tomb of the **Sons of Ramesses II**.
- 2:** KV7 is the tomb of **Ramesses II** himself.
- 3:** KV34 is the tomb of **Tuthmose III**.



4: KV46 is the tomb of **Yuya and Thuya**, parents of Queen Tiye.

5: KV62 is the tomb of **Tutankhamun**.

From our own correspondent (1)

Emily Hale reports on her recent trip to Egypt.

I spent a week in Egypt at the end of January/beginning of February, based in Luxor but with day trips to Cairo and to Edfu and Kom Ombo. Compared to when I last stayed, just before the revolution in 2011, the city is much quieter however we were told by the locals that from last year they had seen a positive increase in numbers which hopefully will continue to rise (but it was quite nice visiting the sites without lots of people being there!). Also, despite the upheaval over the past few years, at no point did I feel at risk or unsafe – the only unsafe thing perhaps being the locals' driving!

Since I last visited, photography is now allowed in tombs in the Valley of the Kings at an additional cost. It was nice to be able take some pictures to show people at home. Additionally, in the Valley of the Queens, the tomb of Nefertari is now also open to the public at a cost of 1200 Egyptian pounds – a lot of money however the detail and vivid colours within this tomb definitely made it worthwhile visiting!

Tomb of Merenptah KV8



Edfu Temple



Medinet Habu



Giza



Tomb of Sennedjem, Deir el-Medina



Luxor Temple



White Chapel of Sesostrius I,
Karnak Open Air Museum

Emily seems to have had a wonderful time. Unfortunately, not all visitors have such a positive experience. The welcome received by tourists seems to vary quite dramatically from region to region. In spite of attempts by the antiquities authorities to lure visitors to the country by publicising recent finds, the reality is that independent travellers often encounter unexpected and unnecessary difficulties in accessing even some of the most famous sites. On the next page Mike Hollis shares his recent experiences of leading a tour of Lower and Middle Egypt.

From our own correspondent (2)
Mike Hollis: EGYPT NOTES – FEB 2019

I have just returned from visit to Cairo and its environs. 24 pyramids, 14 tombs, plus Beni Hasan and Amarna in 12 days. Here are a few observations that SAES Members may find of interest.

Cairo is unchanged – noisy, filthy and chaotic, and don't even think of driving. Eat in local Egyptian restaurants – dirt cheap and (mostly) safe.

Travel restrictions are more intense than ever. To travel anywhere south of **Dashur** you will need a travel permit from the police – one for each site you visit – and expect to pay them a fee for the privilege of an armed escort.

I could not get close to the **Abu Sir Pyramids** or **Abu Gurob Sun Temple** due to security restrictions – even a bribe did not work.

Amarna. There is now easy road access to boundary **stela U**, (plus wooden steps so one can get close), and to the **Royal Wadi**. The tomb of Akhenaten and family can be viewed if you can find the man with the key. My visit had a driver, myself, my companion, an armed guard and the key man all in one car, the key man riding in the boot! Car needful because **Akhenaten's tomb** is far from site entrance.



Saqqara. The **Pyramid of Unas** is now open to the public at last.

Be sure to get the guardian to shine a light obliquely along the walls of the burial chamber at the head and foot ends of the



sarcophagus. These walls are decorated with palace façade depictions, but hidden under the paint are low relief figures of the king. Intriguing! Lots of mastaba tombs now open to view – more than are advertised at the ticket booth. Especially don't miss the **Tomb of the Butchers**. The relatively new **Imhotep Museum**, close to the entrance, is also a must. You will not be able to get to the north side of the **Step Pyramid** to view the serdab due to access restrictions, (conservation work).



Giza. Kids were on holiday when I visited this time – sheer hell. Lots of mastaba tombs and **Pyramid of Menkaura** now open to the public. Witnessed an interesting punch

up between two Egyptian men in Khufu boat foyer – no idea what it was about, but entertaining. You can view the workers' village if you want to, but you will need an enormous bribe to the right man at the site.

Abu Rawash. Could not get near the Pyramid of Djedefra for love nor money, so don't even try.



Dashur. Red Pyramid is open to view, Bent Pyramid not so. Black Pyramid out of bounds, but you can bribe your way in if you can find the right corrupt official.

Meidum. Pyramid is open to view. Big mastaba nearby – you can wriggle down a hole at one end and into a burial chamber with a lovely stone sarcophagus and lots of bats for a bit of baksheesh to the guardian. Mastaba east face entry shaft is team.



Lahun and List. Pyramids and environs open to view. No problems.

Beni Hasan. Four tombs open to the public – more with baksheesh. Café is rubbish. Take a picnic.

The message to be taken from this is that, for the present at least, it's best to go to Egypt with an organised group or someone who really knows what they're doing!

**Upcoming events:
Saturday 18 May 2019
Luigi Prada**

'Egypt in Rome: Obelisks and Ancient Cultural Appropriation'



More obelisks stand in Rome than in all of Egypt, with more in locations around the Roman Empire. From the time of Augustus the Romans removed obelisks from Egypt, to display as demonstrations of power, and commissioned new obelisks as monuments of cultural appropriation, laying claim to Egypt's linguistic, religious, and

artistic traditions.

Informal Evening Course



'The Seasonal Round' is a study of the Egyptian calendar and the events and religious festivals that marked the annual cycle.

Presented by **Hilary Wilson**, this 5-week course will start on **Friday 26 April, 7.30 – 9.00 pm.**

Study Day, Saturday 20 July 2019

'The Valley of the Kings' by **Aidan Dodson**

The Valley of the Kings is perhaps the most famous cemetery in the world. For more than four centuries it hosted the burials of numerous kings, queens, princes, princesses and nobles of Egypt. Today, we survey the Valley's history looking in detail at some of its most important sepulchres and their contents. We also take a look at the memorial temples, built some distance away on the edge of the cultivation, but intimately linked with the tombs themselves as part of the magical machine that facilitated the dead kings' rebirth and eternal life.

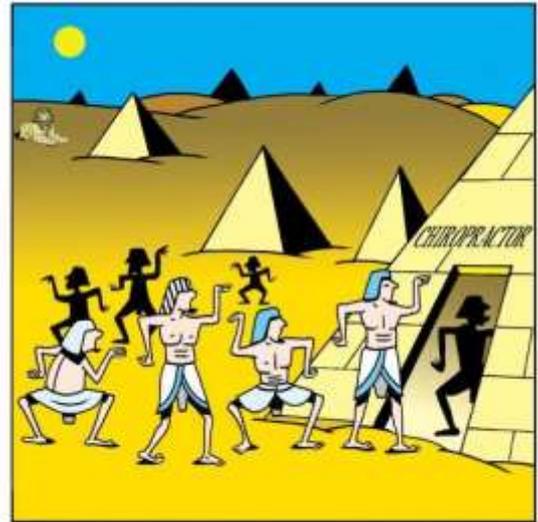


Fees for each of the above:

Members: £20 Non-Members: £25

Please contact the Secretary to book places

A little something to make you smile



And finally: Quiz Time

A small crossword (non-cryptic) this month. Have fun!

	1			2	3		4
			5				
6						7	
					8		
9							
			10				

Clues:

- 1D:** Thoth by his Egyptian name
- 2A:** Truth
- 3D:** Solar god of creation
- 4D:** Saqqara tomb owner
- 5D:** Vizier, Theban tomb owner
- 6A:** Modern name of cult city of Montju
- 7D:** Corrupt official of the Amarna Letters
- 8A:** Funerary dancers
- 9A:** Modern name of the city Waset
- 10A:** The uraeus serpent was a manifestation of the ___ of Ra.

Answers in the next issue of **Hotep**.

