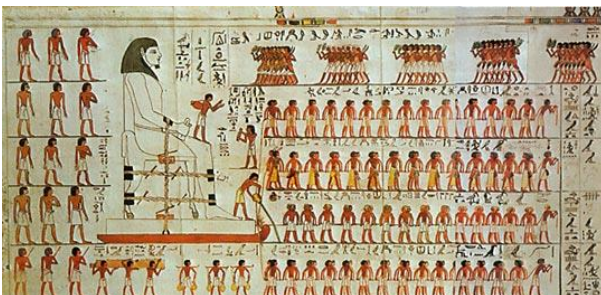


### Review of the April meeting

Saturday 22 April saw the welcome return to SAES of **John Wyatt**, possibly the world's first and only archaeo-ornithologist. His talk about **The Tomb of Djehutyhotep at el-Bersha**, (below) was dedicated to two local inspectors of the Egyptian Antiquities authority who were murdered last year when defending the site from would-be tomb-robbers.



John has been working with a team from the University of Leuven in Belgium to clear, record and preserve this nomarch's tomb, famous for the image of a colossal seated statue being dragged along on a sled. He described the history of the el-Bersha area from its Old Kingdom origins, through its flowering in the Middle Kingdom to the later depredations caused by occupation by displaced Copts and the quarrying of all ages.



John's particular personal interest lies in the animal and bird species depicted in the tomb. By comparing these with his own beautiful photographs of living examples he showed how capable the ancient Egyptian artist was in accurately depicting the wildlife that surrounded them. John's work has led to the identification of several species which

were common enough to the ancients for them to be represented in art and hieroglyphs but which are not now native or even visitors to Egypt. John suggested that the artist's depictions of certain species of wading birds, including juveniles and adults, indicate that the environmental conditions prevailing in the el-Bersha region in Djehutyhotep's time were substantially different from those of today. He posited the idea that a Mediterranean tsunami might have been responsible for the estuarial character of the Nile floodplain spreading much further south than previously suspected.

Good as John's pictures of the tomb were he predicts that those in the planned Leuven expedition's publication will be even better. If only we could be sure that it would be within the price-range of us average enthusiasts!

At the suggestion of several members who approached me during the refreshments break, a retiring collection was made for the families of the murdered antiquities inspectors. In addition to John's fee, which he had already promised, this collection raised £150 for the fund to support the families of the two dead men and their colleague who was severely injured in the same attack. John has expressed his thanks on their behalf for the generosity of SAES members.

If you would like to review a meeting or any other Egyptological event or publication, please send your contribution to: [info@SouthamptonAncientEgyptSociety.co.uk](mailto:info@SouthamptonAncientEgyptSociety.co.uk)

### April Quiz Answers:

The birds represented in a variety of ancient Egyptian artistic media are:

- 1:** Egyptian goose (*Alpochen aegyptiaca*)
- 2:** Red breasted goose (*Branta ruficollis*)
- 3:** Grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*)
- 4:** Sacred ibis (*Theskiornis aethiopicus*)

**Susanne Cook** has been on her travels again and has sent this report of her visit to the West Country.

### **Egypt in Cornwall**

Below is the reconstruction of the head of Iset-tayef-nakht from a mummy in the Royal Cornwall Museum at Truro. The mummy and sarcophagus are displayed behind a screen and visitors are requested not to take photos.

#### **Editor's comment:**

*Attitudes towards the public display of human remains have changed dramatically in recent years. For instance, in the Jewry Wall Museum in Leicester notices advise visitors when they are getting close to such displays, giving them the chance to avoid seeing things that might upset them. Other museums have used sheets to cover mummified bodies while some have removed human skeletal remains from display altogether. If you have come across this sort of censorship perhaps you could share your experiences and opinions on the matter.*



The **EGYPTIAN HOUSE** at **PENZANCE** was built in about 1835 in Chapel Street for John Lanvin as a showroom for a mineral and fossil collection (the beaches at Penzance still hold every kind of pebble, from quartz to chaledony). The inspiration is from the former Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly (demolished in 1905), and also Odd Fellows House in Devonport, built in 1823.

It is in the semblance of an Egyptian temple pylon with an extravaganza of striped columns, elaborate sash windows and weird cornices, (see right). The central door is flanked by closed papyrus columns and the torus mouldings are decorated to represent bundles of reeds lashed together. Blank cartouches are believed to be derived from Denon's paintings of Hathor at Dendera – Baron Denon was the first Director of the Louvre Museum appointed by Napoleon after the Egyptian Campaign of 1798-1801, which led to the world-wide fascination with Egyptian style.

A Royal Coat of Arms inscribed *Dieu et Mon Droit* is the most noticeably non-Egyptian element, along with stepped windows and fancy geometric glazing bars, though many features seem to be extrapolated hints at pyramids, uraei and sun discs. The whole glitters with gilded highlights.

In 1968 the building was acquired by The Landmark Trust, who discovered two small Regency period granite houses above a shop, all with decrepit interiors. These have now been reconstructed into apartments for holiday let. It is a Grade I listed building.

Chapel Street is an interesting and historic street, with the Union Hotel where the victory of Trafalgar and death of Nelson were first announced on the mainland. Also in Chapel Street are a 17<sup>th</sup> Century pub with a display of maritime memorabilia and an unexplained armed smuggler on the roof, *The Chocolate House* with ornate candy-striped columns, the 13<sup>th</sup> Century Turk's Head pub with a smugglers' tunnel, and a red brick house marking the home of the Bronte sisters' mother.



#### **Editor's comment:**

*There are many examples of Egyptian-themed architecture and interior decoration throughout the UK. If you come across one in the course of your travels this summer and are willing to share your pictures with the Society, we would love to publish them in a future edition of **Hotep**. Send any contributions to the usual e-mail address: [info@SouthamptonAncientEgyptSociety.co.uk](mailto:info@SouthamptonAncientEgyptSociety.co.uk)*

**John and Ann Holmes** heard a rumour about an up-coming museum exhibition concerning the 19<sup>th</sup> Century collector and adventurer Giovanni Belzoni. A little detective work elicited this response from the curator at the **Sir John Soane Museum**, Lincoln's Inn, London:

'Thank you so much for your enquiry regarding a Belzoni event. I am sorry for the delay in response, we have been confirming our plans until recently. We are actually holding an exhibition to mark the 200th anniversary of the discovery of the sarcophagus of Seti I by Giovanni Belzoni. Entitled **'Egypt Uncovered: Belzoni and the tomb of Pharaoh Seti I'** it will open on Wednesday 11 October 2017 and run until Saturday 14 April 2018.

I'm afraid that I cannot tell you any more at the moment as we have not launched the exhibition publicly yet, but do please keep checking the 'Whats On' pages of our website as information will be posted there in due course.'

<http://www.soane.org/whats-on>



Alabaster sarcophagus of Seti I in the Sir John Soane Museum, London

As well as Seti's inner stone coffin the Museum has fragments of the very similar alabaster sarcophagus of his son Ramesses II. These shown remnants of the inlay and paint which would have given the sarcophagi a multi-coloured finish, very different from the plain appearance as in the picture above.

The Sir John Soane Museum has been shortlisted for the **2017 Art Fund Museum of the Year Award**. The winner will be announced at a ceremony at the British Museum on 5 July. Find out more about this prestigious award at:

<https://www.artfund.org/supporting-museums/museum-of-the-year>

## In the News



On 14 May the Egyptian Antiquities Authority announced the recent discovery of a Graeco-Roman catacomb at **Tuna el-Gebel**, in the province of Minya, 250 km south of Cairo. The site is well-known as the necropolis of Hermopolis, the city of Thoth and the Ogdoad.



In the galleries, some eight metres below ground, seventeen bodies have been found so far but the director of the excavation, Professor Salah el-Khولي of Cairo University, says there are likely to be at least double that number. The careful wrappings of the mummified bodies suggest that they were all people of status, perhaps priests or local officials.



Pictures from Sky News online at:  
<http://news.sky.com/story/mummies-found-in-egypt-ancient-burial-site-10876752>

There's still time to book your place for our  
**Study Day 15 July 2017**  
**An Introduction to Egyptian Astronomy**

presented by **Dr Bernadette Brady** from the **University of Wales Trinity Saint David** School of Archaeology, History and Anthropology.

This Study Day is designed to introduce you to the Egyptian sky with its mythic, religious, and civic role in Egyptian society. It will begin with the pyramids of the Old Kingdom and carry through to the Hellenistic period.

By the end of the day you should be able to look at a piece of Egyptian astronomical art or design and recognise its probable intentions and major themes. Handouts will be provided to aid your own study after the event.

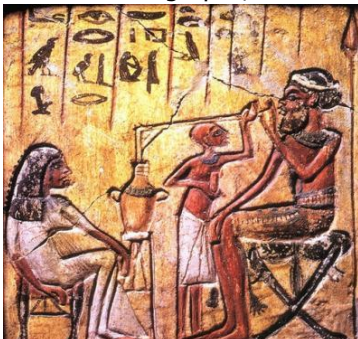
**Fee for the day:**  
**£20 for SAES Members**  
**£25 for non-Members**  
**Book your place now.**

The next **Informal Evening Meeting** is on **Friday 23 June**, starting at 7.30 p.m. **Annette Winter** and **Anna Welch** will be entertaining us with:

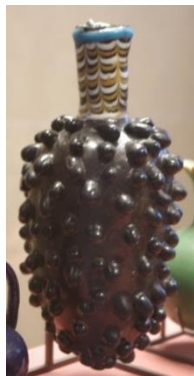
**Drink Like an Egyptian.**

There is a £2 charge to cover light (non-alcoholic) refreshments.

(right) 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty glass perfume bottle in the shape of a bunch of grapes, Louvre



(above) Amarna Period stela showing a butler drinking or decanting wine by means of a siphon, Berlin



**Next Meeting: Saturday 17 June**

**Dr Penny Wilson** from the **University of Durham** where she is **Senior Lecturer** in the **Department of Archaeology**.

Penny is Field Director of the joint Durham University/Egypt Exploration Society/Supreme Council of Antiquities project at Sais (Sa el-Hagar). Her talk



entitled **'Sais: Biography of an Ancient Egyptian Royal City'**, is a summary of what has been achieved through survey and excavation at the Delta site of Sais, the capital of Egypt in the 26th Dynasty. From the discovery of Neolithic and Predynastic levels, to 26th Dynasty royal ushabtis, Greek pottery and two Late New Kingdom cities, one on top of another, Sais has proven to be richer in history than previously anticipated.

<http://www.dur.ac.uk/penelope.wilson/sais.html>

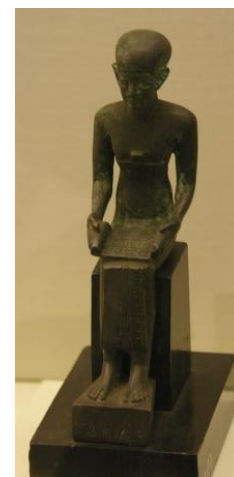
**Quiz Time**

A few Egyptian general knowledge questions this month, all related to recent SAES talks.

**1:** Which goddess was recognised as the patron of the City of Sais?

**2:** Where was the 'Admiral' Ahmose Son of Abana buried?

**3:** Who is represented in this statue?



**4:** How is the sacred barque of the god Khonsu identified?

Answers in the next edition of Hotep

