



# HOTEP

Issue 68: April/May 2022

## Review of March Meeting

The March talk was given by **Dr Nicky Neilsen**, Senior Lecturer in Egyptology at the University of Manchester. Since 2015 he has also been the field director of the University of Liverpool's Tell Nabasha Survey Project. The title of his talk was '**Excavating the City of the Snake Goddess: Flinders Petrie at Tell Nabasha 1886**'.



Nicky began by talking about the site's location and history. Nabasha is in the eastern delta some 10 km south of Tanis. It was first recorded by a French traveller, Jean-Jacques Rifaud in 1830 and he described the only standing monument which was a pink granite shrine of Amasis II, (below). The site then remained undisturbed until 1886 when Flinders Petrie excavated there.



## The newsletter of The Southampton Ancient Egypt Society

Petrie believed the shrine had housed a statue of the serpent-goddess Wadjet, patron deity of Lower Egypt, giving the city the name mentioned in the talk's title. Later it was shown that the principal god of Nabasha was Min with Wadjet as his consort. Together they were known as the Lord and Lady of Imet, the ancient Egyptian name for the city.

It was Petrie who gave the site its current name, but the site is also known by a couple of other names, Tell Fara'un (Hill of the Pharaoh) or Tell Bedawi, named after the Bedouin who lived in the area. Nabasha was the name of the local headman who developed a taste for the excavators' bottled mineral water, necessitating extra purchases to the aggravation of Petrie, who was notoriously parsimonious.

With Petrie was Francis Llewellyn Griffith who oversaw much of the work. Their living conditions were basic; they used a goat stable to sleep in, on beds that were raised platforms made of mud. They shared the space with rats, who got into the mud platforms and also chewed holes in Griffith's boot-soles. Petrie used a super-abundance of broken shabtis to stop up rat holes. Their excavations uncovered foundation deposits for a temple, a couple of sphinxes and cemeteries of the New Kingdom to Late Period.



Top of a so-called Canaanite pottery coffin found in the Nabasha cemetery



Nicky described how the site is today (above), which is much smaller than in the 1880's and has been used as the village rubbish dump. The shrine of Amasis II has fallen in the intervening years and is now in pieces, it has also suffered burn marks from rubbish being burned around it. Nicky believes that the shrine fell because it was undermined by Petrie's excavation. The archaeological site has become a tip over the years and Nicky explained how the team must be careful when on site as dangerous items (such as medical waste) have been dumped there. This was only one of the



Temple gateway foundations with sphinx, Petrie excavations

challenges confronting the excavators in dealing with the different priorities and expectations of the local population.

Since 2015 the team lead by Nicky has found pots of various types and a sculptor's model of the god Harpocrates, the third member of the Imet triad. They have also carried out a remote sensing survey of the entire archaeological site using satellite technology. This was a good introduction to a lesser-known site and Nicky was an engaging speaker.

**Glenn Worthington**

### March Quiz Answers

**WHERE?** The alabaster mummiform sarcophagus belonging to Seti I is now in the Sir John Soane Museum, London.

**WHAT?** The three gold ornaments usually described as flies (sometimes as bees) were military honours awarded to Queen Ahhotep, mother and possibly co-regent of Ahmose I, for her support during the campaigns to expel the Hyksos.

**WHO?** John Ward is co-director of the Gebel el-Silsilah Project of Lund University, Sweden.



Remains of the Amasis shrine, (above) 1985 and (below) 2015. Note the signs of burning from the area's use as a rubbish dump.



## Review of April Meeting

On Saturday 16 April we were royally entertained by **Mark Walker**, who was the first Programme Secretary and formerly Deputy Chair of SAES. His talk titled, "**A real Egyptian temple**" – the Iseum at Pompeii, provided an in-depth study of Egyptian temple style and layout of the



Statues of Isis & Serapis, from Gortyn, Heraklion Museum

Roman era. Inspired by the holiday discovery of the existence of a Temple of the Egyptian Gods at Gortyn on Crete, Mark has made a study of the cult of Isis which spread throughout the Graeco-Roman world, reaching

even as far as Hadrian's Wall in Britain.

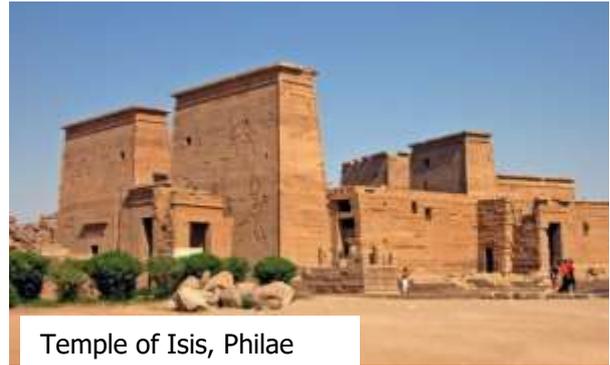
In 79 CE the Temple of Isis at Pompeii was both destroyed and preserved by the famous eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Its discovery in 1764 caused a sensation providing an insight into the connections – political, economic and religious – between two civilisations, Rome and Egypt. Mark set out to assess the accuracy of the description of this monument as the "a real Egyptian temple", as claimed recently by the Naples Archaeological Museum.

By comparing the Pompeii Iseum



Pompeii's Iseum c. 1870

with contemporary temples of Isis in Egypt, particularly the Temple of Philae which was active beyond the Fourth Century CE, Mark showed how, though the architectural styles and decoration may have reflected the traditions of the region in which they were



Temple of Isis, Philae

built, the essential details of the Isis temples in Italy and Egypt were the same. He pointed out the analogues of the peristyle court, the hypostyle hall, the temenos wall, the water source, equivalent to the sacred lake of a temple in Egypt, which was a necessary part of the priestly purification rituals, and even the 'hearing ear shrine' in the rear wall, dedicated to Dionysus.



Model of the Pompeii Iseum, Naples Archaeological Museum

Mark compared the Roman and Egyptian artistic styles, showing us how differently the Egyptian gods, and the rituals associated with them, were represented in frescoes, relief carving and statues. Mark was successful in demonstrating that Pompeii's Iseum has most of the characteristics of a 'real' Egyptian temple, translated into the Classical Roman style. A fascinating talk.



Zeus with Io & Isis

Further images can be found in the work of Carole Radatto:

<https://www.worldhistory.org/image/11295/the-temple-of-isis-in-pompeii/>

**Hilary Wilson**



## Forthcoming Meetings

Further details of our Zoom meetings are published on the website [www.SouthamptonAncientEgyptSociety.co.uk](http://www.SouthamptonAncientEgyptSociety.co.uk)

### **Registration is required for all meetings.**

Registration links will be released on a meeting-by-meeting basis and priority will be given to SAES Members.

If you would like to have your personal email details added to our non-Members mailing list, please contact the Secretary at: [saesinfo55@gmail.com](mailto:saesinfo55@gmail.com)

**The joining link for any meeting is only released on confirmation of payment.**

**The joining link is unique to the name & email address with which you register. If you share this link, you risk being prevented from joining the meeting yourself if the person with whom you shared signs in before you.**

**Please note:** if the Zoom system allows you to register this means a place is available and has been reserved for you. The joining link will be sent on confirmation of payment, but, since all Zoom messages, including the meeting joining link, will be sent to the email address with which you register, **please make sure that you have correctly entered the email address which you will be using for the meeting.**

**The joining link will also be re-confirmed the day before and/or on the morning of the meeting. Please check your junk folder if you do not see this in your inbox.**

## Zoom Protocols

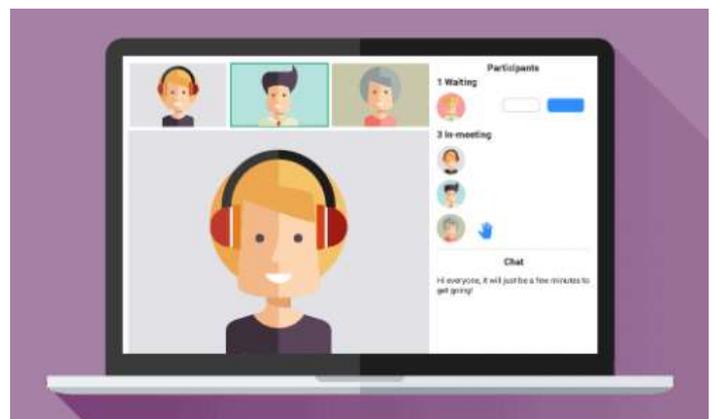
These guidelines on the thoughtful use of Zoom have been adapted from those promoted by our friends at TVAES. We think they are worth repeating here.

In our zoom meetings we make use of the chat feature and would like to ask members and visitors to follow these guidelines:

**1:** You may use the chat function to introduce yourself and chat generally before the lecture, but please avoid frivolous comments, jokes and any other comments that may not always translate to other cultures or those in different circumstances. Remember, we now have an international audience.

**2:** Please do not use the chat function during the lecture itself as the pop-up messages can prove distracting for both speaker and audience.

**3:** After the lecture, please focus your use of the chat on Questions and Comments re the lecture itself. This will help us to navigate and run the Q&A session. If you would like to ask your question live via audio (and video too if you wish), please use the raised hand (in Reactions) and wait for one of the co-hosts to call on you.



(Saturday Zoom meeting opens 13.30 (GMT). Please be patient while we set up the presentation. Admission from the waiting room from 13.45 for a 14.00 start.

**Saturday 21 May 2022:**

**Provisions for the dead, ritual implements, luxury objects?  
Conceptualising grave goods in New Kingdom elite contexts**

by **Claudia Näser**



Ancient Egypt is often held synonymous with an excessive concern for the afterlife. Packed burial chambers, with funerary provisions piled one above the other or neatly arranged around the coffin, are prominent images in this respect. At the same time, grave inventories do not feature prominently in scholarly analyses. Conventional studies and museum displays mostly treat them as object assemblages that illustrate aspects of earthly life, represent social status, and can be explained through the religious concepts known from texts and depictions. This talk will investigate grave goods in their own right. Using assemblages from New Kingdom contexts in the Theban elite necropolis, we will look into what they tell us about the motivations – religious, social, emotional and practical – which guided the composition of grave inventories. And we will explore the evidence they give about the preparation and implementation of the funeral as well as the multiple dimensions of subsequent use and reuse of graves.



**Dr Claudia Näser** is Lecturer in Egyptian Archaeology at University College London. She has worked in Egypt and Sudan for more than two decades and has been directing archaeological salvage and research projects in Sudan since 2004. She is also the editor-in-chief of the Journal of Egyptian Archaeology.

**Registration in advance is required for this meeting using the link below:**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0tce6qrTkrGdZqmx0vXFTsOmHzMh6K\\_o\\_bB](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0tce6qrTkrGdZqmx0vXFTsOmHzMh6K_o_bB)

**Payment: £3 for Members; £4 for Overseas Members; £6 for guests**

**Please note:** if the Zoom system allows you to register this means a place is available and has been reserved for you. The joining link will be sent on confirmation of payment, but, since all Zoom messages, including the meeting joining link, will be sent to the email address with which you register, **please make sure that you have correctly entered the email address which you will be using for the meeting.**

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## The Future

We had a couple of responses to the item in the March edition of *Hotep* regarding plans for a return to face-to-face meetings. We have also heard from our friends at TVAES that they are planning their programme for 2022-23 with seven Zoom meetings and seven in-person meetings as they have decided the hybrid solution is not workable or financially viable in either of their venues. However, while we continue to explore our options, we are planning for Zoom meetings only at present.

As things stand at the moment, our main difficulty is finding a venue which:

- a) is available on a Saturday
- b) has the necessary Wi-Fi and projection facilities
- c) has sufficient parking
- d) can be hired at a reasonable cost.

This is proving a lot more difficult than you might expect. If anyone knows of such a venue within the general Southampton area, please let us know.

If, in principle, you are prepared to attend in-person meetings, or if you have any other comments, please send them to the Secretary at [saesinfo55@gmail.com](mailto:saesinfo55@gmail.com)

Meanwhile, we continue to work to present a varied programme catering to the interests of all our Members, old and new. Thank you all for continuing to support the Southampton Ancient Egypt Society.

**Hilary Wilson**

## May Quiz

**The following names, of deities and humans, are given in their Hellenised (Greek) forms. Can you give a (slightly) more authentic Egyptian form of each?**

**Amenophis**

**Sesostris**

**Amasis**

**Seth**

**Thoth**

**Suchos**

**Anubis**

**Ammenemes**

**Sethos**

**Chephren**



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

