



Issue 26: January 2018

Review of the December meeting

Ian Trumble, Curator of Archaeology and the Ancient World at the **Bolton Museum**, gave us a fascinating talk on the progress of the refurbishment and redisplay of the Bolton Egyptology collection. This includes a world-renowned collection of Egyptian textiles ranging from the Predynastic through to the Graeco-Roman Era and into the Coptic Period. Bolton benefited from donations from excavations sponsored by the Egypt Exploration Fund, later to become the Egypt Exploration Society, given to the Museum in gratitude for the subscription and fund-raising



support of several local dignitaries. Ian gave us a history of the Bolton Museum, its curators and collections as well as outlining the planning of the new space which has been designed around the life-size Factum-Arte replica of the tomb of Tutmosé III. This was a tantalising glimpse into the future of one of Britain's largest collection of Egyptological artefacts, most of them with impeccable

provenance having been presented to the Museum by the archaeologists who discovered them.

The lecture was followed by our usual Christmas Social which, this year, took the form of a short quiz with rounds on the festive topics of Stars, Sheep & Shepherds, Angels and Kings & Wise Men, with a fair sprinkling of Egyptian-themed questions. There was also a picture round in which members were asked to identify companies, brands and organisations represented by partial logos. The SAES Quiz Trophy was awarded to the team headed by Brenda and Jenny. A re-match will be offered next Christmas so be prepared!

The newsletter of The Southampton Ancient Egypt Society In the News

Under the headline '**Who's the Daddy?**' this picture and its caption appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, Wednesday 17 January 2018:



'Two mummies may be at the centre of a 4,000-year-old scandal. Khnum-nakht and Nakht-ankh are identified as brothers by inscriptions, but DNA tests have found they had different fathers. The pair are part of the Egypt collection at Manchester Museum.'

Like so many Egyptological items in the press recently this is 'old news'. The mummies of the Two Brothers are amongst the oldest in the Manchester collection and have been the subject of many scientific investigations and facial reconstructions. They were clearly identified as half-brothers at an early stage, for example in Rosalie David's book *'Mysteries of the Mummies'*, published in 1978, so what makes the DNA confirmation of this fact 'news'? I suspect it is another example of gender discrimination. No one would have thought it unusual if a man had had sons by two different wives but the fact that they were apparently born to the same woman by two different fathers is interpreted as suspicious. There are documented examples of Egyptian women who had children by two husbands, having been widowed and subsequently remarried. In such cases the second husband commonly 'adopted' his wife's children as his own. What is so scandalous about that? Once again a journalist has made an anachronistic moral judgement in a search for sensationalism.

Hilary Wilson

Jane Brady spotted this intriguing story which might have implications for many private collections.

INDIANA JOAN

...ran the headline 24th November 2017 on the **BBC News** web site, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-australia-42109046> and to quote; 'a 95 year old Australian woman has found herself at the centre of an international row over her collection of ancient Middle Eastern artefacts'. (The headline is from **The West Australian**.)

The Australian Associated Press reports that the country's Department of Foreign Affairs is now looking into the matter. The director-general of the Retrieved Antiquities Department at Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities, told the **Sydney Morning Herald** that Egypt's foreign ministry had requested the investigation. However it is not clear if any national or international laws have been broken by "this real life tomb raider" (**The West Australian** again.)

The **BBC** cites: Unesco's convention on illicit trade of cultural property adopted in 1970; Egypt's national laws to protect its antiquities dating back to the 1880s; and the International Council of Museums stating many other nations have had their own laws since at least the 1950s. Or does diplomatic immunity claimed by UN diplomat's wife, cover historical digging at Saqqara necropolis south of Cairo, for example?

Then the BBC reports archaeologist Monica Hanna has posted an open letter on social media, where she criticises the "spin" of the original newspaper article; "behaved like a pirate" are her words. I wonder if **The West Australian** now regrets "boasting" (Monica Hanna) the artefacts are worth over £571,000. It remains to be seen what happens to this collection. But I had one horrible thought, Hollywood might make a film called 'Joan of Ark.'



The story was also reported in the British press. This is an extract from **The Guardian** of the same date, 24 November, 2017.

'Monica Hanna of Egypt's Heritage Taskforce posted an open letter to Australia's ambassador to Egypt, Neil Hawkins, on Facebook this month, alleging Joan Howard spent most of her time during her husband's diplomatic trips looting archaeological sites. Howard's husband, Keith, held senior roles with the United Nations in the Middle East in the 1960s and 70s. Hanna said Howard had taken advantage of her diplomatic status and her behaviour was "not acceptable". "I demand that an investigation should be carried out on the sources of Mrs Howard's collection now in Perth," she wrote.

"There is a mischievous twinkle in the great-grandmother's eye as she reveals why she has humbly kept quiet about her derring-do," the article read. "You don't go round saying 'I've been in a tomb'," Howard said. Hanna said the celebratory tone of the story sent a very negative message, especially given the large amount of looting of Egyptian archaeological sites in recent years.

"These activities decontextualise the cultural heritage and transforms the archaeological finds from historical objects to mere aesthetic artefacts," she wrote. "The illegal market leaves the Egyptian cultural heritage with holes that cannot be filled, and many stories that cannot be told about the past."

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said it was investigating the matter and was obliged under Unesco conventions to return foreign cultural items that had been illegally exported from their country of origin.

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2017/nov/24/indiana-joan-perth-woman-95-accused-of-looting-egypt-artefacts>

December Quiz Answers

- 1:** The lapwing is an example of the **rekhyt** bird, representing the 'ordinary people'.
- 2:** The name on the canopic jar is **Duamutef**, the **jackal-headed** Son of Horus.
- 3:** The goddess shown here on the back of the throne of the seated statue of Ramesses II at Luxor is **Seshat**, archivist of the gods and female companion of Thoth.
- 4:** The starry ceiling is in Hatshepsut's temple of **Deir el-Bahri**.

Next Meeting 17 February 2018:

We look forward to the visit of an old friend, **John Billman**, Chairman of the Thames Valley Ancient Egypt Society. The title of his talk is: '**Hatshepsut: The eternal female pharaoh of Egypt – her monuments explored**'

'Daughter of one Pharaoh, widow of another, Hatshepsut is best known for becoming Egypt's first successful female ruler. This talk explores her monuments, from the Deir el-Bahri temple, considering both famous and lesser-known scenes and examples of archaism, to Karnak where she erected obelisks and constructed the Red Chapel, as well as evidence from Nubia which helps us to challenge the traditional narrative for this queen.'



Advance Notice

The next **Informal Evening Meeting** will be on **Friday 23 March** when **Hilary** will give a short talk entitled '**A Prince Among Princes**', a biographical study of **Prince Khaemwase**, son of Ramesses II.



The subject for this year's evening class is '**Pyramids, Fact and Fiction**', an introductory look at the great Pyramid Age of the Dynasties III-VI. The class will run on **Fridays** from **27 April to 25 May**.



And Finally - Quiz Time

Identify **the odd god out** in each of these groups.

1: Hathor, Serqet, Neith, Isis

2: Hapy, Imsety, Osiris, Qebehsenuef

3: Isis, Osiris, Nephthys, Nut

4: Hathor, Neith, Sakhmet, Nut,

5: Hapy, Nut, Serqet, Nun

Answers in the next edition of Hotep

