



Issue 28: March 2018

Review of the February meeting



On Saturday 17 February we welcomed **John Billman**, Chairman of the neighbouring **Thames Valley Ancient Egypt Society**, and old friend of SAES. In his talk entitled *'Hatshepsut: the eternal Pharaoh – her monuments explored'* he shared with us his great depth of knowledge on Egyptological matters. His focus this time was the female pharaoh Hatshepsut, daughter of Tuthmose I and regent/co-ruler of Tuthmose III. He concentrated on her funerary temple at Deir el-Bahri to illustrate her life and time – the divine birth, the expedition to Punt and the transport of great obelisks being just a few high lights. Although the Deir el-Bahri temple was the main focus, John also used the Red Chapel, which originally stood in the temple of Karnak, to illuminate her life as pharaoh. He described the motivation behind and timing of the erasure of her name, titles and images from several of her principal monuments. At the end of his presentation he talked about the body from KV60 (one of two in that tomb) which has been identified as being that of Hatshepsut. If it is, and the identification is reliant on a tooth from a box that has her name on it found in the cache tomb DB320, then at the end of her life Hatshepsut was obese and suffering from diabetes. All in all, John gave us a valuable insight into the life and reign of Hatshepsut.



The newsletter of The Southampton Ancient Egypt Society

Doing our bit for the Planet!

In response to the recently raised concerns over the use and disposal of non-recyclable plastics we have decided to stop using polystyrene cups for our refreshments. Starting at our April meeting we will be serving drinks in bio-degradable paper cups in re-usable cup-holders. There is an initial outlay for the cup-holders and the paper cups are more expensive than the plastic ones but we believe this is money well spent. We would ask all our members to be aware of the changes to the way in which we deal with the 'empties': the cup-holders will obviously be saved to be used multiple times while the used cups should be disposed of in a sack separately from other rubbish. If you are in the habit of having a drink before the meeting you might like to save on expenditure by keeping your cup for a 'top-up' during the break. During the introductory phase please accept our apologies for the repetition of this advice which will be necessary to inform everyone of the new system.

February Quiz Answers:

1: The Hatshepsut sphinx is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Arts, **New York**.



2: The obelisk, thought to have been meant as a partner to the unfinished obelisk at Aswan, is now to be seen in the *Piazza S. Giovanni in Laterano* in **Rome**.

3: The temple of Dabod, dedicated to Amun-Ra, was started by the Meroitic King Abdikhalamani and extended during Ptolemaic and Roman times. Originally built 15km south of Aswan it can now be seen in **Madrid**.

4: The four-metre-tall statue of Taharqa is in the National Museum of Sudan, **Khartoum**.



In the News

This was the headline in the *Daily Telegraph* of **2 March 2018**

'Missing ink: Egyptians made their mark with tattoos 5,500 years ago'

This article by **Anita Singh** related to the recent examination under infra-red light of the male mummy in the British Museum, known to generations of visitors as Ginger because of his apparently red hair...



'The male mummy, who was aged 18-21 when he died from a stab wound to the back...He has been on almost continuous display since 1901, but his tattoos were not clear to the naked eye. Daniel Antoine, the museum's curator of physical anthropology, said: "We were cleaning and conserving the remains and as part of that we discovered ...these dark smudges on his skin but no one really thought about them." He explained: "It is the first time we have found evidence that people were putting imagery on their bodies that was also used in other art mediums, such as pottery...That is a big departure [for



archaeologists]." Experts do not know what the images symbolised. "For him, there is a bull, and the bull later becomes a symbol of male power and virility, but we don't know if that was true during this period. We don't know what the

sheep represents," he said.

Both animals featured in pre-dynastic Egyptian art but scholars had no idea that they were also inked onto the skin. The pigment is carbon-based, believed to be some kind of soot.'

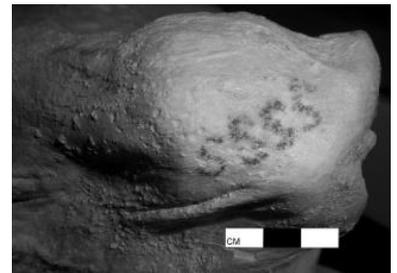
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/the-missing-ink-mummies-gebelein-man-a-and-gebelein-woman-have-earliest-tattoos-d8nfn763>

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/tech/5700334/worlds-oldest-tattoo-showing-pictures-of-animals-discovered-on-5000-year-old-egyptian-mummy-in-the-british-museum/>

The following is taken from **Michelle Starr's** report which you can read in full at:

<https://www.sciencealert.com/oldest-figural-tattoos-egyptian-gebelein-mummies-predynastic>

'The male (Gebelein Man A) has two tattoos - a wild bull and a Barbary sheep on his upper arm - while the female (Gebelein Woman) has linear and S-shaped motifs inscribed on her upper arm and shoulder. The S motif on the woman's shoulder. The mummies were actually excavated in the 1890s, and have been in the possession of the British Museum since the 1900s. They predate Egypt's Pharaonic dynasties, and their mummification was completely natural - they were buried in shallow graves, and the heat, salinity and dryness of the Egyptian desert did the rest. However, tattoos on mummies aren't always easy to see. In the case of Gebelein Man A, the tattoos on his arm appeared as a dark smudge under natural light, and remained unexamined for over a century. It was only thanks to recent infrared photography that the tattoos could finally be noticed.



The bull and the Barbary sheep on the man are both motifs seen in rock art while the crooked line on the woman resembles staves held by figures on painted ceramics. The S motif is also found on Predynastic Egyptian ceramics.

It's impossible to know what the significance of the tattoos could be, but...it's possible the tattoos indicate some sort of status, especially as they were placed in highly visible locations on the body.

"As the oldest known tattooed figural motifs, they add to our understanding of the range of potential uses of tattoos at the dawn of Ancient Egyptian civilisation and expand our view of the practice of tattooing in prehistoric times."

The research is due to appear in the *Journal of Archaeological Science*.'

(all pictures © Trustees of the British Museum)

Study Day 21 July 2018

'Last of the Pharaohs: Incest, Intrigue & Bloodshed under the Ptolemies & Cleopatras'

presented by **Sarah Griffiths,**

Deputy Editor of Ancient Egypt Magazine.

Following the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great in 332 BC, a succession of kings called Ptolemy ruled Egypt for nearly 300 years, presiding over one of the most remarkable and complex periods in Egyptian history.

This was an era of unprecedented change for Egyptian culture and society as the new dynasty used religion and tradition to increase their power and wealth, and their new cosmopolitan capital, Alexandria, with its world famous library, became the cultural and economic centre of the ancient world.

And yet the House of Ptolemy was a family at war with itself, a complex tangle of relationships based on incest, bitter sibling rivalries, corruption, intrigue and murder, set against a backdrop of foreign wars, civil unrest and the growing influence of Rome. In this study day, Sarah Griffiths will paint a vivid picture of Egypt's last ancient dynasty, from Ptolemy I to the famous Cleopatra VII, revealing the absorbing family dramas, exploring their distinctive art and architecture, daily life in Ptolemaic Egypt and the series of catastrophic events that led to the decline of the kingdom and its final annexation by Rome.



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

**Spring Informal Meeting
Friday 23 March 7.30 – 9 p.m.**

'Prince Among Princes: a biographical study of Prince Khaemwase'

by **Hilary Wilson**

Fee: £2 (includes light refreshments)

Places are still available on the 5-week informal evening course starting Friday 27 April 7.30 – 9 p.m.

Pyramids – Fact and Fiction



**Fee: Members £20 Non-Members £25
Places may be booked now**

Next Meeting: Saturday 21 April 2018
Roland Enmarche's talk is ***'The Tale of Sinuhe: Biography and Poetry in Middle Kingdom Literature'*** in which he examines one of the most famous of all Egyptian stories.

Now it's Quiz Time

In anticipation of the evening course, name as many Kings as you can who are known to have built a pyramid tomb in:

- a) The Old Kingdom
- b) The Middle Kingdom
- c) From the New Kingdom onwards

Hint: some pyramids are badly preserved and others were never completed. Not all royal pyramids were built within the traditional boundaries of Egypt.

Answers in the next issue of Hotep.

