



HOTEP

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Review of February meeting



On 16 February, **John J Johnston**, former **Vice-Chairman** of the **Egypt Exploration Society** and now a free-lance Egyptologist and author, treated us to a character study of the god Seth (Set or Sutekh), under the title **'Seth, Lord of Chaos, Defender of Re: The Chequered Career of a Deity'**. He discussed the almost diametrically opposed Egyptian perceptions of Seth as the chief protector of the sun-god on his night barque and as the brutal murderer of his brother, Osiris. Seth's iconography from the earliest times includes an animal which is generally known as the Seth animal or the Typhonian beast. John put forward several candidates for the animal on which this creature might have been based, including the okapi, the aardvark and the wild ass, as well as some cryptozoological and purely mythological beings. He made clear the long-standing association between Seth and the hippopotamus and between the god and the art of archery, pointing out features such as some hippo behavioural traits which the Egyptians would have observed, and the representations of the Seth beast in which the tail is clearly represented as an arrow.



This was an entertaining and thought-provoking talk which went a long way to dispel some of the common misconceptions about this much-maligned deity.

The newsletter of The Southampton Ancient Egypt Society

February Quiz Answers

The four canine deities are:

A: Wepwawet, 'the Opener of Ways', who guides the deceased through the paths of the afterlife. Wepwawet is often seen on a standard carried before the King when he goes into battle.

B: Seth, Set or Sutekh, brother and murderer of Osiris. The identity of this particular species of canine is still debated as John J Johnston explained, (see review of Feb meeting).

C: Duamutef, one of the Sons of Horus, guardians of the coffin and the canopic chest. Jackal-headed Duamutef specifically protected the canopic jar containing the stomach.



The Four Sons of Horus stand on the lotus flower before Osiris, wall painting fragment, BM

D: Anubis, son of Nephthys, who was said to have created the first mummy when he bound together the dismembered body of Osiris. This led to his recognition as the god of embalming.



Twin Anubis figures, coffin foot-board, Madrid

Have you found anything Egyptian which might inform or entertain us? Please let us know so that we can share it through Hotep.

The Central Park Obelisk

Like its London counterpart, the obelisk that stands behind the **Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York** has also been given the nickname 'Cleopatra's Needle'. They are in fact a pair, commissioned by Tuthmosis III c.1450 BC, to celebrate the 30th year of his reign. They stood either side of the portals to the Temple of the Sun in Heliopolis until the Emperor Augustus decided to have them relocated to Alexandria c.12 BC. There, they stood in front of the Caesarium, the temple dedicated to the now deified Julius Caesar. In Alexandria a base, steps and four bronze crabs, one at each corner, were added. There they remained until around 1500 AD when one fell down. This fallen monument was dug up in 1877 and sent to England whilst the other was dismantled in 1879 and transported to New York in 1880. The journey to New York aboard the SS Dessoug was not as hazardous as its counterpart to England



erected in the snow. A time capsule was buried underneath it which included a bible, a copy of the Declaration of Independence and the complete works of Shakespeare.

Like the original, it too is supported by four replica bronze crabs, each weighing 900 pounds, (see below). Only two Roman ones were found and are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Two crabs and one claw remained, the inscription on the claw in both Latin and Greek reads:-

'In year 8 of Caesar the governor Barbarus erected [this obelisk] in Egypt. The architect was Pontius.'

The replacements have four different inscriptions which read as follows:-

1. *Removed to Alexandria Egypt and erected there B.C 12 by the Romans*
2. *Removed to the United States of America A.D 1880 and erected New York City January 22 1881.*
3. *Rutherford Burchard Hayes President, William Maxwell Evarts Secretary of State.*
4. *Lieutenant Commander Henry H Gorringe United States navy designed the plans for and superintended the removal and re-erection.*

Made from the pink granite of Aswan it stands approximately 71 feet high and weights around 200 tons and the plinth weighs 50 tons. The decorative fence which surrounds it was designed by Jacob Wray Mould (1825-1886) and the bronze plaques that translate the hieroglyphs were donated by filmmaker Cecil B. DeMille (1881-1959).

In 2014, the Central Park Conservancy undertook a cleaning and conservation project covering 2,112 square feet. Lasers were used to clean dirt and grime that had accumulated and fragile areas were stabilised. Inscriptions not seen for decades were revealed.

Sue Marriott



though the ship suffered a broken propeller. Once it had docked in New York it took 112 days for it to arrive at Central Park. The journey had involved 32 horses hitched in pairs plus a steam engine to push it on a specially constructed trestle bridge from 5th Avenue to its final resting place. On January 22nd 1881 a crowd of thousands watched it being



**Review of Informal Evening Meeting,
Friday 1 March 2019**

Mike Hollis talked about *'The Tomb of Nakht'*.



Starting with a useful explanation of the purpose of the Egyptian tomb as a point of transition between this world and the next, and the creation myths on which much tomb decoration is based, Mike used the tomb of Nakht and his wife, Tawy, (TT52) to illustrate funerary beliefs and practices. He stressed the differences between royal and private tombs saying that the latter give us much more information about everyday life in ancient Egypt. Mike also showed how Nakht's tomb, as with most tombs in the Theban necropolis, was unfinished since work on it would have continued throughout his life, as and when he had wealth to spare on the project, and then stopped at his death. This was a very enjoyable way to spend an informal evening with other Egyptology fans. We would like to be able to offer more such meetings, so if anyone out there has a topic they would like to share with our members, please let us know.

Next Meeting: Saturday 13 April 2019



Paul Collins, Curator for the **Ancient Near East** at the **Ashmolean Museum, Oxford**, will be making a welcome return to talk about: *'Egypt's origins - the view from Mesopotamia and Iran'*. The significance of

cultural borrowings from Mesopotamia and Elam in the formation of the Egyptian state during the period 3500-2900 BC has long been debated. This talk will explore the evidence from Syria, Iraq and Iran for the emergence of cities, trade routes and associated technology and art that provides the wider context for the emergence of Egyptian kingship.

We are taking bookings (and fees!) for the following:

Informal Evening Course

'The Seasonal Round' is a study of the Egyptian calendar and the events and religious festivals that marked the annual cycle. This will start after Easter and run for five weeks on Friday evenings, 7.30-9.00p.m.

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.



Study Day Fee:

Members: £20 Non-Members: £25

To book places on either or both of these events, please contact the Secretary



And finally: Quiz Time

Who were buried in the following tombs in the Valley of the Kings?

1: KV5 2: KV7 3: KV34 4: KV46 5: KV62

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

