



Issue 48: March 2020

Editorial

So much has happened in the world since I wrote the last *Hotep*, what with storms and floods and now a pandemic virus, that I hardly know where to begin. We have to face the fact that all our lives are affected one way or another and our habits and behaviours have to change accordingly.

The SAES committee debated long and hard about trying to put on the March meeting, albeit with restricted facilities and close attention to what we now call 'social distancing', especially as our friend John Billman was still prepared to give the talk, but we were overtaken by events. When the Government authorised the closing of schools the loss of our venue made even that impossible. We have subsequently cancelled the April meeting, not least because our esteemed speaker, Dr Rosalie David, like so many of our members, is in the age group advised to self-isolate. Before that, her travel arrangements from Manchester had already been thrown into disarray by the Flybe collapse and current travel restrictions and uncertainties make the whole trip unfeasible. I am pleased to announce that both John and Rosalie have agreed to reschedule their talks for the next programme, 2020-21.

I'm afraid that further casualties in our remaining programme are bound to occur – we will keep you informed – but I think you will have to prepare for at least the planned evening class and probably the July Study Day to be cancelled. We will consider various options for reimbursement for those of you who have already paid evening class fees and how we might set the effective loss of a proportion of this year's subscription against next season's membership.

The newsletter of The Southampton Ancient Egypt Society

We have to expect that things will get worse before they get better but we will continue to plan for a 2020-21 season starting, fingers crossed, in September. We also have to allow for the fact that this enforced hiatus in our activities will have a knock-on effect on membership and thus, inevitably, on our finances. But as those of you who attended the AGM in September 2019 will know, we have a big enough financial cushion to weather this storm. We hope that those of you who feel able to continue supporting SAES will return to us as and when the venue is available again.

Meanwhile, in the world beyond Southampton, museums, societies and university departments across the country are closed and we have to feel sympathy for their staff. Later in this *Hotep* I have included information about what some institutions are doing to continue reaching out to their public through online facilities. You might like to explore the possibility of MOOCs – Mass Open Online Courses – which are presented by some of the world's most prestigious Higher Education providers. A browse through some of the programmes on offer reveals not only courses on Egypt and other aspects of ancient history, but also subjects from astronomy to zoology and every -ology in between, as well as a variety of arts, humanities and literature classes. These could relieve the boredom and loneliness of enforced isolation as most involve communicating with other MOOC students via online message boards etc.

For now, I want you all to keep safe and as healthy as possible in these trying times, and to assure you that you we are with you in spirit.

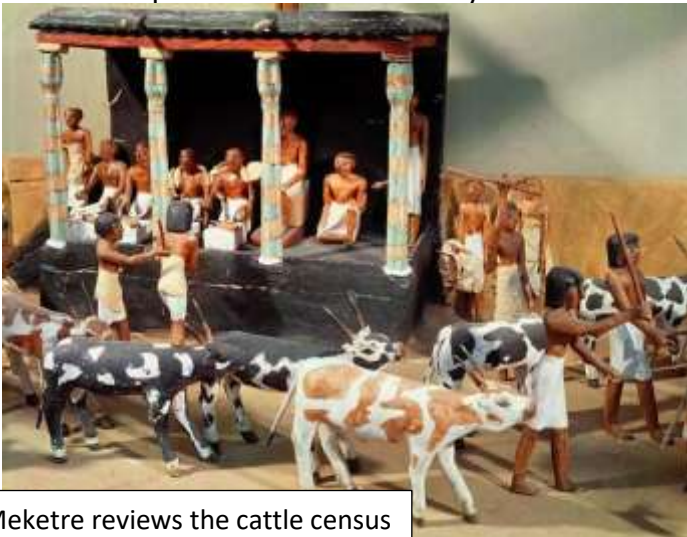


'All life and health to your spirits!'

Hilary Wilson

Review of the January Meeting

It seems a long time ago now so much has happened in the meantime, but in January we were treated to a welcome return visit by **Sarah Griffiths, Deputy Editor of *Ancient Egypt Magazine***, who talked about the rise of the Middle Kingdom and the men of power whom she called the Pooh-Bahs. Sarah's easy style and depth of knowledge made for a great lecture in which she shared with us some of the complexities surrounding the origins of Dynasty XI. The evidence for the careers of some of the provincial nobles who supported the new ruling family comes from a variety of sources including biographical tombs texts, inscriptions on statues and royal decrees.



Meketre reviews the cattle census

Putting together character studies of such dignitaries as Meketre, the owner of a fantastic collection of tomb models, Sarah threw light on the men who stood in the historical shadows behind or beside the throne. She also discussed, all too briefly, the mystery of the Soldiers' Tomb, the burial place of sixty military men believed to have died in the 'civil war' that helped Montuhotep II to the throne. The talk was very well received and we hope to have Sarah back some time in the future to follow it up with a study of Dynasty XII, the golden age of the Middle Kingdom.

Review of the February Meeting

Last month we were entertained by Lee Young a freelance Egyptologist whose main interests are the influence of Egyptian art in the modern world and the work of female artists and epigraphers in Egypt. This talk was based on the work of Nina de Garis Davies, a British archaeological artist who, together with her husband Norman,

Nina's painting of a scene from the tomb of Nakht



recorded some of the most iconic tomb paintings of ancient Egypt.

Lee outlined Nina's career while working with Herbert Winlock's archaeological team, from the Metropolitan Museum of Arts, New York. Lee described the methods Nina employed to achieve results of a high degree of accuracy and artistic quality, with reference to some of the amazingly detailed drawings and stunning water-colours the couple produced to illustrate the excavation memoirs. Many of these will be familiar to anyone who has a book of Egyptian art on their shelf since the Davies' facsimiles are sometimes more accessible than the originals, some of which have since suffered damage and decay. To appreciate Nina's work, you might like to look at the Met's website and take a virtual tour of the gallery where the pictures are displayed. Lee's talk was a visual treat and a fascinating look at a less well-known area of Egyptology.

What's On (or Not)

Egypt Exploration Society

Following the successful trial of online webinars from the EES, we will be launching a programme of online lectures during our closure due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

These lectures will be provided for free over the next two weeks in order to ensure that our supporters around the world have a good reason to stay at home, stay motivated, and stay active. We hope that this stimulates responsible online socialising focused around topics that we are all passionate about. Each webinar has a chat facility so you can participate in the lecture and ask questions of the presenter and other attendees.



The first lectures will focus on the EES, its history, and collections

Webinars have a maximum attendance capacity of 100, so please only sign up if you're confident that you can attend. We will repeat webinars, rather than record them, so that people can experience greater engagement with other participants. They will be repeated at different times during



the day (including early morning and evening in the UK) so that supporters around the world can choose a time that suits them.

Lectures will also cover recent archive projects and fundraising appeals

Don't forget, if you know people around you that might be interested in these webinars then feel free to share the links with them.

During this difficult time of self-isolation, we would like to thank you for your patience if any technical problems happen and want to reassure all of our supporters that we are here to help where we can.

Visit our events listings to see which webinars you can register to attend.

New York: Metropolitan Museum of Arts

How to Stay Connected with The Met while We're Closed | March 18, 2020

Daniel H. Weiss, President and CEO; and **Max Hollein**, Director

Last Thursday, the Museum announced that it would temporarily close all three of its locations to protect the health and safety of our visitors and staff. Today we have some additional information to share about how our institution is responding to the coronavirus (COVID-19) as well as how visitors can stay engaged with The Met during this time.

As it stands today, the Museum will remain closed at least through Saturday, April 4, 2020, and all programs and events have been cancelled through Friday, May 15. We are constantly evaluating the situation and will continue to provide updates on our closure. We have remained closely aligned with public health and local officials to make decisions about the Museum's operations, and we did not hesitate to close our buildings as soon as it became clear that it was the right thing to do. The Met, indeed all institutions, will surely face difficult decisions as this situation unfolds, but we are steadfast in our mission to protect and preserve this great institution and its magnificent collection in perpetuity, and to

be good citizens and leaders in our current times.

Our staff have risen valiantly to the many challenges, particularly those who have been reporting to work at the Museum over these past days to clean our buildings, shore up our infrastructure, and protect the art. Their service during this crisis has been invaluable. We also recognize the ongoing work that so many are doing at home: providing crucial operational support, pursuing scholarship, developing digital programming, making many of our offerings available online, and more. Our staff are the Museum's greatest asset, and we proudly and gratefully acknowledge their contributions, as well as our many friends and supporters.

The Met collection represents five thousand years of human civilization's creative output. As we think of everyone in New York City and around the world in this exceptional time, we want virtually to share the riches of this vast output as resource for inspiration and connection. As part of that mission, we invite you to experience The Met online, anywhere. There's a whole host of material available on metmuseum.org for all our visitors to enjoy—indeed, The Met has had a robust digital publishing program for many years, and now is a moment for us to revisit those offerings. Visitors can take a deep dive into art history through essays and chronologies on the Heilbrunn *Timeline of Art History*, a trusted resource for over twenty years, for example. Many of our iconic spaces have been captured in magnificent detail so you can visit them virtually, and our Primers will give you access to select exhibitions and installations, including *Gerhard Richter: Painting After All* and *The British Galleries*. We also regularly publish blogs featuring voices across the Museum responding to contemporary moments—like the one you're reading now. And of course, thousands of works of art are available for you to view, download, and reuse online. To help you navigate The Met online, we've created a digital digest collecting highlights from these programs and more.

In that spirit of connecting through art, we encourage you to sign up for our newsletter, below, and follow us on our social media channels, where one can enjoy a gallery visit, take a close look at a masterpiece alongside a renowned artist, enjoy a performance, or find an engaging activity for the family. We're surfacing our greatest hits and hidden treasures on social media with [#MetAnywhere](#), while keeping up with weekly favorites like:

[#TuesdayTrivia](#) & [#MetSketch](#).

We hope that even when the buildings are temporarily closed the Museum can provide some measure of comfort through the beauty and wonder of the world's shared cultural history.



The Museum is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year—a testament to the resilience of this institution. During these turbulent times, we encourage you to find hope and inspiration in The Met collection and our exhibitions, as art lovers have done for generations before us. We're honored to share this moment with you, wherever you are, and look forward to the future to come.

www.metmuseum.org

PETRIE MUSEUM: UCL

Due to the evolving coronavirus outbreak & related concerns the Petrie Museum is currently closed & events and research visits will be cancelled until the end of April 2020. We hope to be open again soon and our decision will be guided by the Government's public health advice.

Don't forget you can always get your Petrie fix here:

<https://www.uclpress.co.uk/products/82987>

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums-static/digitalegypt/Welcome.html>



British Museum

The British Museum is closed temporarily. Hartwig Fischer, Director of the British Museum said: 'We've taken this decision with a heavy heart but our absolute priority is the health and safety of our staff and visitors. At present we don't know when we'll be able to reopen but we hope to be able to provide further updates soon.'

'We'll be updating and adding to digital content during the period we're closed to allow visitors to stay in touch with the Museum. We'll share our collections, research and programmes in new ways that will not require a trip to the Museum.'

'We look forward to welcoming our visitors back to the Museum as soon as we can.'

The Museum remains accessible through our digital channels. We'll be updating and adding to this, during the period we're closed, to allow visitors to stay in touch with us.

Our website includes a variety of interesting content, including information about:

Galleries: find out more about the collection in each of our [galleries](#), plus take a virtual tour of [Prints and Drawings](#) and [Oceania](#).

The collection: [Collection online](#) (Opens in new window) allows visitors to search over four million object records online or take a look at our [collection highlights and stories](#).

School resources: From Early Years Foundation Stage up to Key Stage 5 we

cover all [areas of the curriculum](#) whether you're in the classroom or teaching at home. We will continue to share the collection with you as fully as possible on social media. Follow us on:

[Instagram](#) [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [YouTube](#)

Explore the Museum's galleries virtually via [Google Street View](#)

Take a journey behind the scenes with the [Museum's downloadable podcasts](#) Google Arts and Culture for [online exhibitions and stories](#) including a project looking at the [Mayan World](#)

<https://www.britishmuseum.org/closure>

MOOC Platforms

www.coursera.org

www.futurelearn.com

January Quiz Answers

Egyptian Fiction

The authors of these historical fiction stories set in ancient Egypt:

1: *Death Comes as the End* is a historical whodunnit by **Agatha Christie**

2: *River God* a historical romance set in Old Kingdom times, by **Wilbur Smith**

3: *Nefertiti: The Book of the Dead* one of the many interpretations of the life of Egypt's enigmatic queen, by **Nick Drake**

4: *The Son of the Light* first in a 'biographical' series based on the life of Ramesses II, by **Christian Jaques**

Answers in the next issue of Hotep

A new quiz will be issued next month

