

Review of September Meeting

Hilary Wilson gave the first talk of the 2020-21 season, in what has become the 'new normal', on Zoom – an online video meeting application. I for one had not heard of Zoom before lockdown in March but, of necessity, most groups and societies like ours have had to embrace this form of presentation. Apart from being viewed from the comfort of our own homes, the format of the talk

The newsletter of The Southampton Ancient Egypt Society

Hilary's talk demonstrated that Egypt had an extensive trading network with the peoples of the Aegean and was a great start to the season. She did admit that just sitting in a room in her home talking to the computer screen was a bit weird.

Glenn Worthington



Hagia Triada sarcophagus, Crete



Tomb Chapel of Maya, Turin

Artistic similarities

was what we are used to, and so there was a short comfort break at the halfway point.

The title of the talk was '*The Aegean Connection: Trade and Tribute*'. Although the popular perception of ancient Egypt is one of isolation, Hilary showed that this was far from the case. During all periods of Egyptian history trade with the surrounding peoples had been conducted, but during the New Kingdom trade with the Aegean was extensive. The evidence for this trade comes in the form of a number of Egyptian objects found at various sites around the eastern Mediterranean, such as scarabs bearing the cartouche of Amenhotep III which were found on Rhodes.

Further evidence has come to light as several shipwrecks have been found over the last few decades. One of the more famous is the Uluburun wreck located off the southern coast of modern-day Turkey. This ship was carrying a varied cargo which included glass ingots from Egypt and a gold scarab inscribed with the name of Nefertiti.

October Quiz Answer

Anthony Etherin's poems are **palindromic**. Egyptian hieroglyphs can also be read in both directions, from right to left or from left to right, the direction being dictated by the animal, human and bird figures which face the start of the line. Here the inscription is mirrored from the centre of the lintel outwards then down both jambs



Review of October meeting

Dr Kate Spence of Cambridge University gave the October talk for the Society, using zoom which worked well with no technical issues. The title of the lecture was *'Urbanism at Amarna: House and Home.'* Kate has worked at Amarna under the directorship of Barry Kemp as well as currently at Sesebi in northern Sudan (ancient Nubia), where she is co-director with Dr Pamela Rose of the Austrian Archaeological Institute in Cairo.

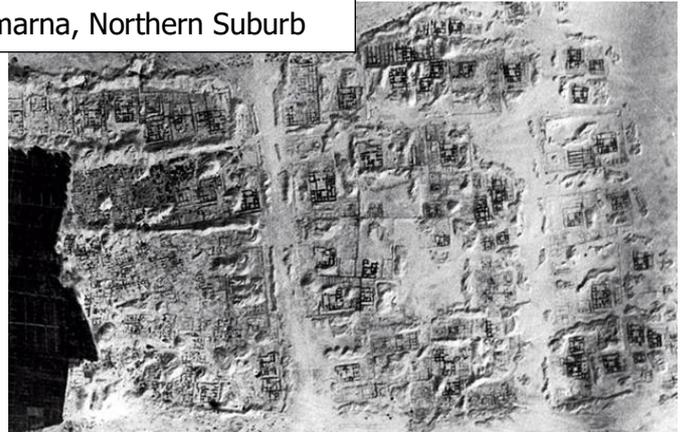
The talk began with a review of the site and the excavations carried out there, and then moved onto the question of whether the houses built at Amarna were different from those in the rest of Egypt. As Akhenaten turned most things upside down, did the design and layout of the houses built at Akhetaten (Amarna) differ from the traditional type?

There are plenty of houses at Amarna for Kate's research as some 1,000 have been excavated over the years. These fall into three broad categories, simply described as small, medium and large. The large houses are scattered about the city with the small ones clustered around them. The only part of the city that appears to have been planned are the large state buildings starting with the North Riverside Palace. From this palace a road, now known as the Royal Road, runs south past the Northern Palace then the Great Aten Temple, the Great Palace, the Kings House, Small Aten Temple and then running south to Kom el-Nana. The workman's village which is located between the central city and the Royal Wadi was also planned as the houses are all the same within a surrounding wall.

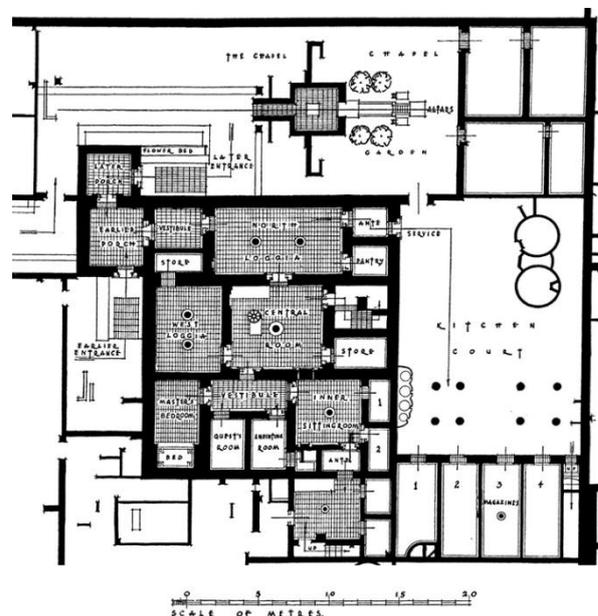


Amarna, Main City

Amarna, Northern Suburb



↑ The houses are mainly in the northern suburb (between the North Palace and the Great Aten Temple), the main city (south of the Small Aten Temple), and the south suburb. All types of houses are similar in that there is a front room a central reception room and a private area at the back, the difference is the number of rooms as the houses get larger. The front and central part of the house are the public areas with the rear of the house being the private or family areas along with any upper floor. The large houses are slightly off square and are quite big, some examples are 50ft by 56ft (15m by 17m).



A large house ↑ was entered by way of a porch built at one end of the front. This led to a small ante-room which gave access to a large columned hall. It was from this hall that visitors and guests made a 90° turn to enter the central hall, this is the main reception room of the house and where all

the meetings and entertainment were carried out. This room had a high ceiling as the windows needed to be above the roof. The family rooms at the rear of the house were reached through a door at the back of this central hall. The number of rooms depended on the size of the house but include a master bedroom with a raised platform at one end on which a bed was placed. Above the bed was a wind scoop to catch the breeze to cool the room, therefore this part of the house must have been single



Bathroom drainage

storey. Next to the bedroom was a bathroom and toilet. Another of the doors from the central room led to the stairs that gave access to the upper floor.

Kate discussed the issue of upper floors, which has proved contentions amount Egyptologists over the years. She explained that continental Egyptologists assumed the houses were single storey, whereas British Egyptologists favoured some form of upper level. Extra column bases found in the debris cleared from the ground floor rooms near to other column pads are evidence for rooms above.

Kate introduced the evidence of tomb paintings from Thebes to consider the existence of upper floors and whether the houses at Amarna were different from those elsewhere. Those Theban tombs which show houses do appear to have several floors and in tomb TT104 Djehutynefer there is the depiction of a three-storey house with increasingly slender columns on the higher levels. Kate's conclusion is that the Amarna houses have the same layout as elsewhere in Egypt, the advantage of Amarna is space. In cities like Thebes which had existed for centuries space was more of a premium and so houses with more floors were built.



In the question and answer session at the end there was a question about toilets and Kate mentioned the limestone seat with a keyhole cut that had been found at Amarna. I took a photo of this when I last visited the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

Glenn Worthington

Next Meeting

We are happy to announce the first talk in our occasional **Evening Programme**.

Maat, Morals & Justice in Ancient Egypt
by Beth Asbury

Thursday 3 December from 7 pm



Maat in the bark of Ra

Morals encourage cooperation between individuals, which is useful for community survival. The ancient Egyptians' answer to this was a belief in *Maat*, originally an abstract concept that became a deified entity in about 2350 BC. Documentary sources show the range of behaviour that people aspired to in order to live up to *Maat* but as a pragmatic society, the Egyptians did not always live up to their ideals, and historical texts also shed light on how they dealt with their criminals.

This topic was the subject of Beth's MPhil dissertation at the University of Birmingham.

These are the instructions for registering for the evening meeting on

Thursday 3 December 2020

The waiting room will open about 6.45 pm for a 7 pm start.

Zoom Meeting Joining Instructions

To join the meeting on **3 December** all you have to do is follow these steps:

1: Click/tap on this registration link at any time from receipt of this message:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZUvcu6orTIuHtQ72J83agPMHi0sUZTRv9BI>

You will be asked to enter your name and email address to register for the meeting. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

2: The fee for this meeting is £3. **Please note, this is an extra meeting not covered by prepayment.** Contact the Secretary at saesinfo55@gmail.com to arrange payment. Payments can be made by BACS transfer, through PayPal, or by cheque. Details on the website.

3: Look out for the **meeting link** which will be sent during the week before the talk. You may need to check your junk or spam folders in case it goes astray. If you have not received this link by the day before the meeting please try registering again or contact the Secretary. **For reasons of security and copyright the meeting link should not be shared with anyone else.**

Remember, the registration link given here is only valid for the meeting on 3 December. **A new registration link will be issued for each future meeting.**

Here is the registration link again.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZUvcu6orTIuHtQ72J83agPMHi0sUZTRv9BI>

December Meeting
19 December 2020, 2 pm

'Letters from the Desert: the story of Amice Calverley and Myrtle Broome'

by Lee Young



This lecture tells the story of the two women who worked in the 1930s, recording the great Temple of Seti I at Abydos. As well as the wonderful work from the Temple produced by the women, we also have over 400 of Myrtle's letters documenting their life in Egypt.

Lee Young is an independent lecturer and researcher specialising in the work of archaeological artists in Egypt. Her particular interest is in the women artists and her book on Myrtle Broome, 'An Artist in Abydos' is due for publication in January 2021.



The registration link for this meeting will NOT be available before 4 December.

November Quiz:

In the month of Bonfire Night and Diwali can you say what each of these hieroglyphs represents?

