



Issue 22: September 2017

### Review of the July Study Day

Dr Bernadette Brady from the University of Wales, Trinity St David, introduced herself as a cultural astronomer, specialising in the study of the astronomical practice of ancient times. Despite the technical complexity of her subject she provided a lucid and entertaining overview of how the Egyptians recorded their observations of the heavens and how their records might be interpreted today. She emphasised the difficulties in identifying the constellations and named stars recognised by modern astronomers with the star groups used by the Egyptians to aid surveying, architectural alignment and the passage of time.



With reference to the Pyramid and Coffin Texts, decanal calendars and astronomical ceilings,

Bernadette explained how ancient sky-watchers labelled stars according to the point on the horizon where they rose and the area of the sky they inhabited at different times of the year. By making clear that these observations were used mainly for calendars and time-keeping and not for any mystical or astrological purposes, she was able to demonstrate the sophistication of ancient Egyptian methods, and all done without optical aids of even the most primitive sort but helped, of course, by the clear, unpolluted skies of ancient times.

Bernadette had provided, in pdf form, a comprehensive guide to the theories she described which was circulated to all attendees and members so that it could be downloaded and studied at leisure. Making a principally mathematical subject accessible to an interested but largely non-technical audience is a skill which Bernadette exercised with great success and humour in spite of suffering from a nasty cold which threatened to rob her of her voice.

## The newsletter of The Southampton Ancient Egypt Society

### July Quiz Answers

There is still some debate about how big a part females played in the ruling of Egypt. The earliest Queen or Queen-consort who is believed to have exercised regal authority was **Merytneith**, mother of King Den of Dynasty 1, though her predecessor **Neith-hotep**, wife (?) of Narmer, may have a claim to be the first. Traditionally it was said that female 'kingship' was recognised as legitimate in Dynasty 2. In almost every case after that time a woman who claimed the throne in her own right was the last representative of a failing dynasty. According to Manetho, the final ruler of Dynasty 6 was **Nitocris**, sister-wife of Merenre, though her identity is not confirmed by other sources. Dynasty 12 ended with the reign of **Sobekneferu**, daughter of Amenemhet III and half-sister of Amenemhet IV. Some suggest that **Ahhotep**, mother of King Ahmose, took control of at least the southern part of the country while her son was waging his campaign of reunification in the North. The most of all female kings was **Hatshepsut**, daughter of Tuthmose I, widow of Tuthmose II and co-regent with Tuthmose III, who ruled in the middle of Dyn XVIII. There is huge speculation as to whether and if so for how long **Nefertiti**, wife of Akhenaten might have reigned as Pharaoh, either in co-regency with her husband or independently. **Tausert**, widow of Seti II and regent for his heir Siptah, who ruled at the end of Dyn 19, was the last female ruler, apart from the influential God's Wives of Amun in Dyns 21-26, before the Ptolemaic era.



Cartouches of Queen Tausert, UCL

**What Members did on their holidays!  
Part 1: Susanne Cooke reports on her  
visit to Norfolk.**

**The Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts:  
University of East Anglia**

The Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection is described as one of the few intact modernist collections of the 20<sup>th</sup> C, so it may be a surprise to learn that it has a selection of Ancient Egyptian artefacts, including these three:



Bone statuette of a man  
Predynastic Nagada I  
(4000-3600BC)



Large stone vase Nagada II  
Dyn I (3600-2800BC)

Walking hippopotamus,  
faience Dyn XII c 1880BC



**Norwich Castle Museum & Art gallery**

In 1921 a large collection of Egyptian artefacts was donated to Norwich Castle Museum. This included a folded and very crumpled textile covered with texts which, thanks to recent conservation work by Norwich Castle and the British Museum, proved to be a rare example of an early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty shroud covered with inscriptions from the Book of the Dead. (left) It belongs to a lady called Ipu, though her name was not actually on this fragment. By great fortune further matching fragments were found in the Cairo museum, and she was identified as *khekeret nesu*, 'king's ornament'. Read the



story and see more photos on - The Shroud of Ipu. [www.ees.ac.uk/userfiles/file/EA](http://www.ees.ac.uk/userfiles/file/EA)

The collection belonged to Jeremiah Colman of mustard fame, who visited Egypt in 1896-7 and brought back several objects, including a model of a granary. (right) During his journey he sailed the Nile on a dahabiya named Hathor, and after his death his daughters built a wherry (below) to commemorate their brother who died on convalescence during the trip, also naming it Hathor. It is decorated internally with various Egyptian themes, and can be hired on private charter in the Norfolk Broads.



**Edward Thomas Daniell (1804-1842)**

The Reverend ET Daniell was a talented watercolour painter and etcher, friend of JMW Turner, Edwin Henry Landseer and David Roberts. Roberts' drawings inspired Daniell to follow in his footsteps and he travelled to Egypt and the Middle East in 1838-9, and visited Egypt again in 1841. Sadly he died young and his works were sold by his descendants to the Colmans so are currently on display at the Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery.



The Temple of Saboaa, (Sebua), built by Amenhotep III, restored by Rameses II; usually shown from the other side with its avenue of sphinxes

This view of Philae is a from a rather unusual angle, and shows the delicacy of the artist's work



**The following press release is printed here with no added comment for your amusement/edification (?)**

August 28, 2017 Contact: Robert Urbanek (707) 446-1732 Vacaville, CA, USA

**Beatles embodied Egyptian sun god**

The Beatles were an incarnation of the Egyptian scarab god Khepera, according to Robert Urbanek, author of the e-book *Modern Egyptology: Sun Gods Rule the World*.

In the sun-god trinity, Khepera brings the dawn, Re appears at noon, and Tem carries the deity through the night. Khepera (or Khepri) rolls the sun across the sky like the scarab rolls a ball of dung. He has the power of resurrection, bringing the sun back to life after it "dies" at night.

According to Urbanek, the Beatles represented the resurrection of Western civilization after it had "died" during World War II and slumbered during the conservative



social and political era of the 1950s. The Beatles and the beetle god also expressed the general creativity and challenge to authority that began in the mid-1960s, a period also popularized as the "Age of Aquarius," the author noted. The sun inspired the song writing of the sun gods, said Urbanek. The words "sun" or "sunshine" are mentioned in 17 songs recorded by the Beatles, such as these lyrics from "Dear Prudence":

*The sun is up, the sky is blue,  
It's beautiful and so are you.*

Urbanek continued, "John Lennon's most controversial statement, that the Beatles were more popular than Jesus, was hardly an outrageous comparison as the scarab form, like Jesus, represents resurrection. For example, the German artist Albrecht Dürer associated a beetle with Christ in various paintings." The ball of dung pushed by the scarab god also had its counterpart in modern culture, according to Urbanek: That rolling ball is "like a rolling stone," which begat the Rolling Stones and *Rolling Stone* magazine.

Urbanek's book describes more connections between the Beatles and Khepera and claims that the sun-god trinity was embodied in other modern figures, including Abraham Lincoln, Albert Einstein and Walt Disney. *Modern Egyptology: Sun Gods Rule the World* is available at Amazon.com. <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B074TPQHZX>

**Next Meeting**

**21 October 2017:** Our own **David Goldsmith** will be entertaining us with **'Tales from Ancient Egyptian Literature'**

This talk shows how the upper classes of Egypt in the Middle and New Kingdoms were entertained with tales that were based on myth and reality. The popularity of certain themes and stories, as demonstrated by the number of copies which survive, illustrates an idealised life to which all aspired

**Quiz Time**

This month's questions relate to the text, known as the *hotep di nesu* formula, found on funerary stela.



- 1:** What are the two most common items requested in the funerary offering formula?
- 2:** In funerary texts what expression is most commonly used after a person's name to indicate that the owner is deceased?
- 3:** To which deity is the funerary offering formula most often dedicated?



Funerary offering stela, Dyn 12, Louvre

Answers in the next edition of Hotep

