



Issue 13: November 2016

Review of the October Meeting

On 15 October our speaker was **David Marriott**, a long standing member of the society and committee member. The title of his talk was '**Egyptian Odyssey, Ancient Egypt in 90 minutes**', no small task for a civilisation that lasted for some 3,500 years. David began by giving some facts and figures, which included a time line for those new to the subject. Rather than a chronological overview, David chose instead to travel up the Nile from north to south starting in Alexandria and finishing at Abu Simbel. This made excellent use of his photos from numerous



The sole remaining column of Taharqa's colonnade at Karnak

visits to Egypt. There were well known sites such as the pyramids at Giza and those more off the beaten track such as El Bersha. The object of this talk was to give an introduction to Egyptology and encourage new visitors which it accomplished brilliantly.

MOOC News

The long-awaited MOOC '**Introduction to Ancient Egypt and its Civilization**' hosted by Pennsylvania University on the Coursera platform, finally got underway on 1st November – only seven months late!

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/introancientegypt/home/welcome>

There has been no explanation for why the course start was so delayed. I had hoped that it was because Dr David Silverman, the presenter, was making sure the course was what we all hoped it would be. Sadly I have been disappointed.

The newsletter of The Southampton Ancient Egypt Society



The content is well-chosen with each of the six weeks devoted to topics such as *History and Chronology*, *The Pharaoh and Kingship*, *Gods and Mythology* and *The Pyramids and the Sphinx*. Each topic is covered by a series of short videos narrated by Silverman, who is shown standing in the main Egyptian gallery of the Penn Museum, augmented with images, mostly still photos, of related sites and museum artefacts. But no matter how interesting and informative Silverman's talks are they are spoiled by his uninspiring delivery and a lack of variety in the presentation. I would have liked some input from other archaeologists mentioned, such as Josef Wegner of the Penn Museum Abydos Project, or to have some of the artefacts, of which we see tantalisingly fleeting glimpses, discussed in greater detail. The list of image credits at the end of each video is useful but there are some glaring errors in the captions – wrongly numbered dynasties, Amenhotep confused with Amenemhet etc. In spite of promising privileged access to the on-line Penn collection and others, the web-links to museum collections are only what you can find for yourself with any search engine.

1800 students introduced themselves in Week 1 but the discussion forums are nowhere near as active as I have experienced on other MOOCs and I have seen no interaction with members of the course team other than Dr Silverman. This is a great shame as this is just the sort of course that Egyptophiles have been waiting for.

Hilary Wilson

Answers to October's Quiz

1) The sailing boat with its distinctive lateen sail is a **felluca**.

2) **Khnumhotep II** was a 12th Dynasty nomarch or provincial governor who was buried in a cliff tomb at **Beni Hasan**.



'The Cat in the Marshes' from the tomb of Khnumhotep II, painted by Howard Carter 1891-3

3) The **Black Pyramid at Dashur** was built for the 12th Dynasty King **Amenemhet III**.

As seen on TV

Inspired by the recent four-part TV drama **Tutankhamun**, **Susanne Cooke** has been researching Howard Carter's career before his most famous discovery.

Tutankhamun on ITV told the story of how the 5th Earl of Carnarvon and Howard Carter got together and discovered the world famous tomb treasures in November 1922. But I wonder how many people are aware that, even if they'd never discovered the tomb of the Boy King, their work in Thebes, the Delta, and other sites along the Nile in 15 years of archaeological collaboration was a considerable achievement and contributed significantly to the advancement of knowledge of Ancient Egypt?

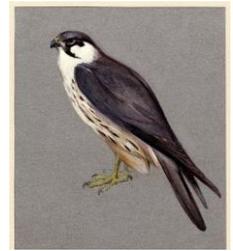
Howard Carter began his career in Egypt in 1891 as a draughtsman logging details of the tombs of Beni Hassan in Middle Egypt. This led to an introduction to Flinders Petrie to whom he became assistant when working on the temple of Akhenaten at Tell el-Amarna. During the next few years Carter had different jobs with the Egyptian Exploration Fund, later to become the Egypt Exploration Society, beginning first by recording the paintings and inscriptions at Queen Hatshepsut's Temple at Deir el-



Carter's painting of Queen Ahmose, from Hatshepsut's temple of Deir el-Bahri

Bahri, a job which took 6 years.

In between his work for different Fund projects, he relaxed by drawing the wildlife found in Egypt, especially the birds. In 1899 he was offered the post of Inspector in Chief for Monuments for Upper Egypt and Nubia based in Luxor, where he documented and mapped the Necropolis on the West Bank of the Nile at Thebes, including the Valleys of the Kings and Queens (4 years).



Carter's painting of a Horus falcon

After an incident at Saqqara which led to his dismissal, Carter found himself unemployed at the age of 31, with no formal education, no profession and few prospects. For two years he earned a living as a draughtsman and selling paintings to rich tourists, before meeting with Carnarvon when the latter returned to Egypt for his health and applied for a concession to excavate. After being palmed off initially with rubbish mounds at Sheikh Abdel-Gurna, Carnarvon was able to choose a site leading to the temples of Deir el-Bahri where he discovered an important 18th Dynasty tomb of a king's son who became Mayor of Thebes, the earliest reference to the office of Mayor.

The explorations at Thebes from 1907 to 1911 by Carnarvon and Carter were recorded and published in 1912 with analytical contributions from many distinguished Egyptologists. Their findings included tablets discovered in



Carter's painting of Deir el-Bahri

the Deir el-Bahri valley which were the first to record the conflict 3500 years ago between the Hyksos and 17th Dynasty King Kamose of Egypt. Deep below Queen Hatshepsut's Valley Temple were rock hewn pits and tombs from the 12th Dynasty, nearly 4000 years old; these had been plundered but they were able to cut through further rock debris to examine them, and identified two types of tomb. They also found unique pieces such as an unusual wooden boat, leather sandals, bowls, as well as an ivory gaming board, and a necklace of gold-capped obsidian. Carter restored a

smashed casket of ivory, ebony and cedarwood, enabling deciphering of the inscription of the 7th king of the 12th Dynasty. They found 65 coffins and miscellaneous items in a large chambered tomb.

During the Great War, when Carnarvon returned to England and was engaged in military aerial photography, Carter remained in Egypt. In between occasional services in Cairo for British Intelligence, he continued some excavation work at Luxor. In October 1916 Carter heard about the discovery of a tomb, exposed in torrential rain, half way down a cliff face; one evening at midnight he descended down a rope into the tomb to persuade the robbers he found there to leave. After a team worked clearing the debris, a chamber was found which contained a magnificent sarcophagus for Queen Hatshepsut, though not used. He hoped to sell it to raise funds but was refused permission to take it out of Egypt.

More details of the activities and achievements of both men can be found in the book *Carnarvon & Carter, the Story of the two Englishmen who discovered the Tomb of Tutankhamun* by Fiona, 8th Countess of Carnarvon.

Portrait of Howard Carter painted by his brother in 1924



Carter and Carnarvon in the Valley of the Kings

The seat of the Earls of Carnarvon is about 30 miles up the A34 from Southampton at **Highclere Castle**. At one time the Egyptian collection there was the largest in the UK, and today there is also a replica tomb of Tutankhamun and various collections in the basement. Luckily I visited it years ago before the advent of Downton Abbey, as it is now almost solidly booked in advance every summer with visitors from around the world.

In the last **Hotep** (Oct 2016) **Hilary Wilson** asked

Whatever happened to Zahi Hawass?

On 2 November we received this reply from two SAES members holidaying in Luxor.

'Further to your newsletter about Hawass, he's with us! Actually there is a tourism conference at our hotel and he spoke very briefly to us. He's on Hardtalk next week and then on to give a talk in Oxford.

From your roving reporters!'

Rosemary Nassoori and Dianne Bunce

Next Meeting: Saturday 10 December

Glenn Worthington will give a suitably seasonal talk on **Theban Holidays**, looking at how the Egyptians celebrated some of the major religious festivals held in and around Thebes. This will be followed by our **Christmas Social** with a **Hounds and Jackals** tournament. As in previous years you are welcome to bring along homemade produce or handicrafts for sale. All we ask is a contribution from your profits to Society funds.

Hounds & Jackals board; a cross between Ludo and Snakes & Ladders



And finally.....**Quiz time.**

1) What was the name of the **notorious brothers** who were caught by Carter raiding the mummy cache at Deir el-Bahri?

2) Where in the UK can you see a collection of **Howard Carter's watercolour paintings**?

3) Howard Carter negotiated on behalf of which Museum for the purchase of the **Treasure of the Three Princesses**?



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

