



Issue 5: February 2016

We are lucky to have had more than enough material for the first five issues of **Hotep**, but we are still keen to have your contributions. Have you a review of a film, book or TV programme that you would like to share? Have you an inspiration for a feature article (about 500 words plus a couple of pictures)? Is there anything else fitting the Egyptian theme that you feel inspired to write about? Please let us know and you could soon see your name in virtual print.

Review of the January Meeting

'**Identity, Disability & Personhood in Egyptian Bioarchaeology**' was the subject of the talk given by **Sonia Zakrzewski**, Associate Professor in Archaeology at the University of Southampton. Sonia's research is based on extensive fieldwork at many ancient sites in Egypt and elsewhere. She described the ways in which bioarchaeology, in particular the scientific and statistical study of human remains, can provide more than purely pathological details such as the age, sex and state of health of an individual at death. She looked at the Egyptian attitudes to gender, disability and age as represented in the physical record. What they ate, what occupations they pursued, how they treated illness or injury, how they prepared a body for the afterlife, all these matters left bioarchaeological evidence of the everyday life of the Egyptians, their social status and their relationships with others. Sonia explained how these studies can fill in some of the more mundane details of ancient life which help us to see the Egyptians as real people not so very different from ourselves.

Answers to January's Quiz

- 1) New Year's Day occurred on 19 July, or thereabouts.
- 2) One million years.
- 3) Seshet, scribe & archivist of the gods.



The newsletter of The Southampton Ancient Egypt Society



For MOOC Fans

A new Mass Open On-line Course simply entitled **Ancient Egypt** is offered by the **University of Pennsylvania** on the Coursera platform and starts in May. Coursera introduces it thus:

Join **Dr. David Silverman**, Professor of Egyptology at Penn, Curator in Charge of the Egyptian Section of the Penn Museum, and curator of the Tutankhamun exhibitions, on a guided tour of the mysteries and wonders of this ancient land. He has developed this online course and set it in the galleries of the world famous Penn Museum. He uses many original Egyptian artifacts to illustrate his lectures as he guides students as they make their own discovery of this fascinating culture.

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/ancientegypt>

Other MOOCs which might be of interest are current or have run recently.

Antiquities Trafficking and Art Crime offered by the **University of Glasgow**.

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/art-crime>

A second presentation of **Weapons & Warfare in Ancient Egypt**, offered by the **University of Manchester**

<https://www.canvas.net/browse/uofmanchester/courses/warfare-weapons-ancient-egypt-1>

Shipwrecks & Submerged Worlds (Marine Archaeology) offered by the **University of Southampton**

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/shipwrecks>

Most MOOCs will be offered more than once so if you have missed one keep a check on the providing platform for further presentations.

Avril has provided this precis of an article concerning the sale of the **statue of Sekhemka**, from the December 2015 issue of the magazine **'British Archaeology'**.

On July 10 2014, a 4.500-year old statue was auctioned and sold at Christie's, London, for the sum of £14 million, plus a buyer's premium of £1,762,500. It was a painted, limestone sculpture made for the tomb of an official of the pyramid age called Sekhemka.



The reviewing committee described it as *'the finest example of its kind anywhere in the world'* and *'very closely connected with our history and national life.'*

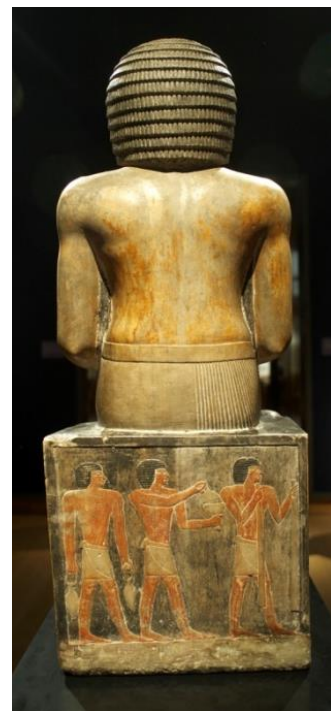
As a consequence, on 11 August, the UK Government announced a one-month extension to the export bar which had been put in force following a protest by the Northampton-based *'Save Sekhemka Action Group'*, at the time of the sale. The bar expires on 29 March 2016. However the bar system has one terrible flaw. To keep the statue in the UK, objectors had to raise the matching sum: £15,732,600 !!!



The situation became extraordinarily complicated.

- The sellers comprised of two parties – Northampton Borough Council and the 7th Marquess of Northampton.
- The buyers also comprised of two parties.
- There is no written provenance to link the present Marquess with the statue, save the note of the 2nd Marquess who had travelled to Egypt in 1849 – 1851, and who was in the area when the tomb of Sekhemka was discovered
- There is no museum record beyond a list of small Egyptian articles collected by the 2nd Marquess, who was President of the Royal Society 1838 – 1848.

The Museums Service of Northampton has been stripped of its accreditation because of its decision to sell the statue, condemning unethical sales from collections "primarily held in trust as cultural and not financial assets."

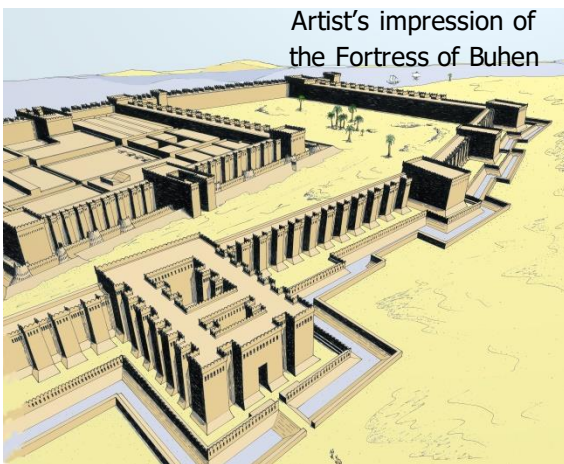


In spite of the protests, it is thought that the statue has been released to its anonymous overseas buyer. Today the statue is set to disappear into its new world of private collections, where no legal safeguards apply. Not only may we, the public, never have the right to see the statue again, we may not even know whether it is being cared for, will be cared for by the new owner, or successive owners. An Egyptian masterpiece will be gone – we threw it away.

**Upcoming events
Saturday 19 March**

'Nubia: What Lies Beneath'

Dr Carl Graves is an experienced field archaeologist and curator of museum exhibitions who is currently Education & Public Engagement Manager for **The Egypt Exploration Society**. His talk focuses on Lower Nubia which since 1964 has lain submerged beneath the waters of Lake Nasser leaving much undiscovered and many questions unanswered. Who were the Nubians and how did they interact with the Egyptians? What was the nature of Egyptian imperialism in the south? Dr Graves will propose some possible answers using material from The Egypt Exploration Society archive to better understand Egypt's role in Nubia...and vice versa!



Artist's impression of the Fortress of Buhen

The Osiris Story: a 5-week evening class, starting Friday 29 April 2016, 7.30-9 p.m.

This provides an introduction to the mythology of one of Egypt's most popular deities. Many of the rituals associated with death and burial, and Egyptian concepts of the afterlife and kingship, were based on the stories surrounding the divine family of Osiris, Isis and Horus and the rivalry between the god and his brother Seth.



This is an informal course with no assessment. It is intended to enhance Members' understanding of some of the ancient customs and beliefs which are regularly encountered in our lectures.

Editor's Reminder

There is still just time to catch up with the 4-part series called **'Immortal Egypt'** from **BBC 2**, if you have a BBC IPlayer connection. Flame-haired Professor **Joann Fletcher** takes us through Egyptian History from 7000 BC to Graeco-Roman times, which is a great help to us who are just concentrating on 'ancient' Egypt.

News from Egypt

As we reported in January's **Hotep**, Tutankhamun's mask is back on display. German conservators had to re-attach the false beard after a botched repair job. On 23 January the **BBC News website** reported that eight employees of the Cairo Museum have been referred for trial on charges of negligence and violating professional standards. There are differing accounts of how the damage occurred but prosecutors said that workers had 'recklessly' tried to cover up the mistake, using large amounts of an inappropriate adhesive in an attempt to fix it. A report, in *The Daily News Egypt*, quoted prosecutors as saying: 'Ignoring all scientific methods of restoration, the suspects tried to conceal their crime by using sharp metal tools to remove parts of the glue that became visible, thus damaging the 3000-years-old piece without a moment of conscience.' Those due to face trial include a former director of the museum and a former director of restoration.

Quiz Time

- 1) Which of these is an estimate for the number (in millions) of stones used in the Great Pyramid of Giza?
a) 2.3 b) 2.9 c) 3.5
- 2) The female demon called Ammit or Ammut, the Devourer of Souls, who waits beside the Scales of Justice, is shown as a composite of three animals. What are they?
- 3) Which Mediterranean island was named after the dwarf-god Bes?

