



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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| 3 rd August | Members' 10-minutes presentations, book auction and AGM |
| 7 th September | Kings Valley in the Amarna Period
Dylan Bickerstaff |
| 5 th October | Beyond Indiana Jones: The Ark of the Covenant and Egyptian ritual processional furniture
David Falk |
| 2 nd November | New Discoveries at Hierakonpolis: Dr Renee Friedman |
| 7 th December | Times of Transition: the High Priests of Amun at the end of the New Kingdom: Jennifer Palmer |

August meeting

The August meeting is in three parts, members' 10-minute talks and we have 5 members who are going to stand up viz, Tilly Burton "The motif of the king trampling enemies in art and literature", Margaret Patterson "Kha and Meryt in the Turin Museum", Janet Brewer "The Rosetta Stone", Blake Sellors "Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri" and Dave Sutton "Old postcards from Egypt". This is followed by our AGM, agenda and notes of previous meeting have been emailed and hard copies are available for those not on the email list. Our annual book auction for a good cause follows this.

Three good causes were voted on and the Egypt Exploration Society's Library for the conservation of a book was the clear winner (15 votes), Friends of the Petrie Museum (6 votes) and Friends of Nekhen (2 votes). Please bring any unneeded Egyptology books for sale and also plenty of cash to bid on other books.

September meeting

Dylan Bickerstaffe, BA, PGCE, ACIM, is visiting us again in Witham. Over the last 18 years he has lectured extensively in the UK and contributed to conferences both here and abroad. His media work has included National Geographic TV and Channel 5. He is a contributor to KMT and AE magazines as well as other publications. He accompanies tours to Egypt, notably with Ancient World Tours. Today he will be speaking about the Valley of the Kings during the Amarna Period.

HIEROGLYPHS

If you have ever thought you might like to learn the basics of hieroglyphic writing I can recommend GlyphStudy to you. It is a free (yes, free) on-line resource; you join the group and agree to submit homework (put your initials at the top of the page and no-one knows who you are). Collier & Manley is a good start because you will learn enough to be able to read a few lines of offering stelae in any museum you visit. If you want to know more, please speak/email me and I can explain how it works.

Janet Brewer

GLYPHSTUDY

GlyphStudy is an online Yahoo group dedicated to the study of Middle Egyptian. Sections using Allen, Hoch and Collier & Manley are offered periodically, together with sections that study AE texts. We are not experts in AE but work together to learn the language.

A Collier & Manley 2014 section will start on 15th September. C&M is an introduction to Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs and will take about 1 year to complete. It is suitable for beginners or anyone who wants to learn how to read the first few lines of a funerary stela. It teaches you only the grammar required to complete the exercises (the majority of which are funerary texts) and is not a substitute for either the Allen or Hoch grammar books (both of which are more complete grammar books).

We will be using "How to Read Egyptian Hieroglyphs" by Mark Collier and Bill Manley, published by the British Museum Press. Any edition can be used – although there were a lot of errors in the original 1998 edition, so a more recent edition is preferable. However, there are lists of errata for all editions in the C&M folder on GlyphStudy, so you can check out the 1998 errata if you want to use that edition. You can purchase the book from Amazon.com or the British Museum shop.

If you would like to join the C&M 2014 section, then you need to join GlyphStudy first - so please send your full name to Karen (noting that you wish to join the C&M group) at glyphstudy-owner@yahoogroups.com. If you are new to Yahoo groups, then please let Karen know this as well.

"Music and Dance in Ancient Egypt" Suzanne Lax-Bojtos

In June Suzanne Lax-Bojtos came to talk to us about music and dance in Ancient Egypt. She started off by reminding us that we have no idea what Egyptian music actually sounded like, because they had no musical notation. We also need to remember that Egyptian art is not representative of what is but rather symbolic of what they wanted things to be (in particular in a funerary context). However, with those two caveats in mind it's still possible to glean quite a lot of information about the types of instruments the Egyptians played, and the sorts of contexts they played their music in. And Lax-Bojtos spent the rest of her talk showing us what we can learn, with the help of a lot of pictures.

The Egyptians had a variety of different instruments available to them, and it seemed like most of them were used throughout the whole sweep of Egyptian history. In terms of stringed instruments the main one was the harp - in a variety of different sizes. They also played lutes (and there were some really cool pictures of baboons playing lutes from reliefs on the walls of Philae temple). As well as this, lyres are sometimes depicted, but Lax-Bojtos explained that these were an imported instrument from Mesopotamia so I think they only show up later in Egyptian history. There was one scene she showed us where the people playing the lyre have been drawn with non-Egyptian clothes, faces and hair styles - she suggested that maybe lyre music for the Egyptians was a bit like Indian music is for us: something exotic sounding.

In terms of wind instruments the Egyptians had what Lax-Bojtos called flutes and double flutes (or oboes) - these don't look like our flutes and oboes, more like a recorder or penny whistle. The double flutes are two pipes played by the same person (I'm not sure if it's one mouthpiece or two). They also had trumpets - the most famous of these having been discovered in Tutankhamun's tomb. Those were played once after their discovery by a British military trumpeter, James Tappern, for the BBC in 1939 - there's a recording of that radio broadcast it here (obviously the music he's playing is a modern fanfare, rather than being intended to reproduce Egyptian music). He used a modern mouthpiece, and sadly one of the trumpets got damaged by the playing.

Percussion ranged from people clapping their hands to provide a beat to drums and sistrums. Oh, and as well as clapping your actual hands you might have a pair of hand shaped clappers to play. Sistrums are rattles, and are strongly associated with the goddess Hathor - they often have her face as a part of their design. I think Lax-Bojtos said that sistrums started out as people shaking papyrus reeds to create the sound, before they began to be made of metal.

As well as all these musical instruments people also sang. They did write down the words to some of their songs, so we know those even if we don't know the tunes; Lax-Bojtos read out snippets from several examples. The subjects covered a wide range, from songs about wine making through to hymns of praise for the gods. Also on some reliefs depicting dancers there are repeated hieroglyphs over the heads of the dancers, and Lax-Bojtos thought this might indicate repeated syllables in a song that went with a particular part of the dance.

Music seems to have been a part of all sorts of different contexts in Ancient Egyptian life. Lax-Bojtos showed us lots of examples including music to accompany workers at repetitive or boring tasks, of music for festivals, music in military contexts, music for worship (in private and non-festival contexts too) and music at parties. For the latter Nebamun's tomb paintings (at the British Museum) have a lovely representative scene of women playing instruments whilst other women dance to provide entertainment at a feast. Music was clearly an important part of worship, but it was also particularly associated with the goddess Hathor (who is also associated with pleasure and with drunkenness) and with the god Bes. Interestingly when scenes are drawn of people worshipping gods with music the musicians are often depicted blind or blindfolded - Lax-Bojtos speculated that this is about it not being permissible to look directly at a god.

I've not said much about dancing yet - she did show us several pictures of scenes during the talk which depict dancers, but we know even less about dancing than we do about Egyptian music. Dancers are often drawn in scenes with musicians, and the dancing looks quite acrobatic in some cases. Often they seem to be young women, often not wearing much. Lax-Bojtos explained that in a funerary context dancers and music are often associated with sexuality, fertility and rebirth.

This was a fascinating talk. In part because it covered a segment of Egyptian life that one doesn't necessarily think of much. And in part because it demonstrated just how much you can figure out from the details, even when you can never know a large part of subject (in this case what the Egyptian music sounded like).

Margaret Patterson

"Up the Nile with Amelia" Clive Barham Carter

In July Clive Barham Carter came to talk to us about Amelia Edwards. She was a rather formidable Victorian woman who was the driving force behind the founding of the Egypt Exploration Fund (which became the Egypt Exploration Society). Carter told us about her life, frequently reading from Amelia's own writings and illustrated by her own watercolour paintings (as far as possible).

Amelia was born in the 1830s in Islington, the only child of rather older parents. She described her father as having "indifferent health" and Carter pointed out that this was probably due to her father's days as a soldier. He'd been a lieutenant in Wellington's army in the 1812-1815 campaigns which were particularly harsh. Amelia was a multi-talented child - she painted watercolours, she was a musician and she also liked to read. I think Carter said she was educated by tutors, and that her neighbour (a satirical cartoonist) regarded her as having great potential as an artist and so offered to teach her. However her parents didn't think this was a suitable career for a young lady, and so she became a musician.

When she was 19 she suffered a bout of illness that coincided with the loss of her position as a church organist and with the break-up of her engagement. I'm not sure whether the illness was cause, effect or coincidental! She then turned to another of her talents in order to make a living. She had been a published writer since she was 6 years old, but now she made this her main work. She published many short stories in Charles Dickens's periodicals, including a series of ghost stories (one every Christmas). She also began to write novels, many of which were best-sellers and translated into several languages. In her early 30s she suffered a series of bereavements - first her parents both died very soon after each other, Carter suggested this was in one of the last cholera epidemics in London. After that she moved in with a friend of hers, and her friend's mother, who lived nearby. But her friend sadly died not long afterwards. Amelia, and her friend's mother, then moved out of London (feeling it wasn't a particularly good place to thrive!) to a village that's now a suburb of Bristol.

Amelia had also enjoyed travelling, and had family in places like Ireland and Paris who she'd visited frequently. In the 1860s and 1870s she began to travel more adventurously - in part to generate material for travelogue books. As a woman of that era couldn't travel alone she joined forces with a friend, a lady of a similar age to herself who was of independent means (having a wealthy father) and who also wanted to travel. Their first trip was to the Dolomites, where they spent some months walking about visiting the region and Amelia made lots of sketches and several more finished paintings. As an indication of how formidable these two ladies were - they took a maid with them initially, but she went home after a day because it was all too much. When Amelia returned to England she wrote (and provided the illustrations for) a very successful book called "Untrodden Peaks and Unfrequented Valleys: A Midsummer Ramble in the Dolomites".

In 1874 Amelia and her friend set off on another journey - in the book that resulted ("A Thousand Miles Up the Nile") Amelia says they ended up in Egypt by chance. They were travelling south from Paris, through France and then Italy, and Amelia says it just kept raining and they just kept heading south until they found themselves in Cairo (where it wasn't raining). This isn't likely to be true - not only has a recent biographer checked the weather reports for the time period and places in question and seen that it wasn't raining the whole time, but also Amelia had been interested in Egypt since she was a young child. Once in Cairo, they hired a dahabiyeh (a sort of boat) and sailed up the Nile as far as Abu Simbel and back. Again Amelia painted as she went - both sketches and more ambitious paintings. Carter showed us several of these, which he pointed out compare favourably with other more well known artists of the time who painted Egyptian scenes (like David Roberts). You can see a progression as the journey goes on - her hieroglyphs and reproductions of the scenes on the temples get more accurate. Sadly the versions of her paintings that ended up reproduced in her book aren't nearly as good - they are prints made by an engraver and a lot of the vibrancy and delicacy of her work is lost.

During this journey Amelia began to get concerned about the state that the Egyptian temples were in, and this is what led to her formation of the EEF. She also gathered the start of a collection of Egyptian objects, which she continued to add to for the rest of her life. Carter spent a bit of time talking about the relationship (professional and friendship) between Amelia and Flinders Petrie - which presented a rather more human side to Petrie than one normally sees! Despite not being able to be on the board of the EEF (unsuitable for a woman) Amelia continued to work tirelessly to raise funds and raise awareness. This included a lectureship tour of the USA, which she subsequently published as a book.

Amelia died in 1892 after contracting pneumonia. Apparently during one of her last

conversations she said "I think I'm better, but don't tell anyone in case I'm wrong"! She left her papers, collection of Egyptian artefacts and her paintings to be split between Somerville College, Oxford and University College, London. The choice of institutions was significant - both were involved in the education of women, and Amelia had felt later in life that she'd missed out by not being able to study archaeology properly when she was younger. She had also met the Mary Somerville after whom Somerville College was named.

This was a really interesting talk. Clive Barham Carter was a good speaker, who brought his subject to life. And Amelia Edwards sounds like she was formidable, but had a great sense of humour and seems like someone it might have been fun to know.

Margaret Patterson

Peeling Back the Shadows (SSAE Chesterfield Study Day 12 July 2014)

In July John and I visited Chesterfield to go to a study day being held there by the SSAE (<http://www.ssaе.org.uk/>) called Peeling Back the Shadows. This consisted of two talks (each split into two parts), one given by Chris Naunton about Tutankhamun and one given by Barry Kemp about the latest work at Amarna.

"What Killed Tutankhamun?" Chris Naunton

Chris Naunton started his talk by explaining that he had deliberately chosen the title to be sensational and that he doesn't have a definitive answer, just one that he thinks is plausible. This talk is a companion piece to a documentary that aired in two different forms last autumn.

The point of the documentary and of Naunton's research about Tutankhamun was to revisit what is known about the Pharaoh and see if there was any more information that could be gleaned from the evidence we have. So he started with Howard Carter - in order to properly understand the records Carter left of the excavation of Tutankhamun's tomb it's a good idea to be aware of the context of these records. So Naunton gave us an overview of Carter's biography up to the point of the tomb discovery. Carter first became involved in excavation in Egypt when he was brought in as an artist and epigrapher for Griffith's Archaeological Survey of Egypt. This project was intended to record all the standing monuments (tombs, temples etc) in Egypt in the late 19th Century - a scope that was a bit too ambitious, but they did record several sites. Prior to Carter's involvement the recording of the reliefs was fairly basic and although the hieroglyphs and the basic outline of the artwork was recorded many of the nuances were lost. Even though Carter was only in his late teens at the time he joined the project he was a trained artist, who had great talent at watercolours. He revolutionised the recording of the reliefs, capturing much more of the detail than before - and this achievement wasn't superseded until photography became the routine way of recording them.

Carter was trained as an archaeologist by Petrie - almost by accident, as the person who had been intended to be Petrie's apprentice that season had been sent home in disgrace. He became regarded as a competent and reliable archaeologist, and in this capacity he was a member of the EES expedition to excavate Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahri. The leader of that particular expedition was Édouard Naville, who is not regarded as a particularly good archaeologist any more - even at the time he was thought of as a bit slapdash, hence Carter's inclusion on the team. Carter continued to establish himself as prominent Egyptologist, even becoming Chief Inspector of the Egyptian Antiquities Service.

After this biography of Carter, Naunton moved on to the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb. At the time at which it was discovered there was a strand of thought that held that the Valley of the Kings was exhausted - that all discoveries that could be made had been made. This was definitely the opinion of Theodore Davis who had made many discoveries there at the beginning of the 20th Century - he even thought he'd found Tutankhamun's tomb, but we now know what he found was a cache of discarded mummification materials associated with

Tutankhamun. Carter disagreed with this assessment, so was still looking for tombs - and famously found the tomb of Tutankhamun in what was the last season he had funding for from Lord Carnarvon. Another important piece of context for this discovery is that prior to finding his tomb Egyptologists didn't know much about Tutankhamun. His name was known, and where he fits in the succession (post-Akhenaten, pre-Horemheb) and that was about it. It was also known that his reign was the one during which the old religion was restored after the heresy of Akhenaten.

In some senses Carter was overwhelmed by the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb. There was so much material in the tomb that he spent the next several years removing and cataloguing it, but not much research or examination was undertaken. And this is still the case - even the major iconic objects haven't been thoroughly examined and those that aren't on display may not even have been seen for decades. We don't actually know that much more about the Pharaoh than we did before his tomb was discovered.

Up until now Naunton was explaining the context for his decision to re-examine some of the evidence we have about Tutankhamun. The second half of his talk then covered much the same ground as the documentary. Most of the work that has been done on Tutankhamun has focused on his mummy, and there has been a lot of speculation about what he died from. The only definite fact is that he died between the ages of 17 and 19 - so given we know he took the throne at 9 years old he had a short reign of a little less than a decade. There have only been four first-hand studies of the mummy of Tutankhamun, around which there have been built many theories. The first was Carter's initial examination (with the help of an anatomist) in 1925. In 1968 the mummy was x-rayed for the first time, and this work is where the murder theories have come from - well, not from the study itself, but from the subsequent media speculation. In those x-rays there seemed to be a portion of the skull that had been damaged as if it had been hit hard by a blunt weapon - but subsequent work suggests that this happened post-mortem, perhaps during the mummification or afterwards. In 1978 further X-rays were taken, concentrating on the teeth and skull. And in 2005 Zahi Hawass's team CT scanned the mummy.

There are many theories about Tutankhamun's death which generally fall into a couple of categories. The first is that Tutankhamun was murdered - and mostly these come from the 1968 X-rays, which are generally not considered to support this hypothesis by people who know what they're looking at. The second category of death causes are those that speculate that Tutankhamun wasn't a very healthy individual. There have been many proposed defects - some of which build on physical data, and some on the objects in the tomb (which included a large collection of walking sticks, and at least one decorative panel not from the tomb which may show Tutankhamun using a walking stick much like a crutch). Naunton put the list of proposed illnesses up on a slide and there were far too many to remember - Salima Ikram has published a thorough review of all the relevant literature and Naunton quoted her conclusions as being reasonably dismissive of the idea that there is any overwhelming evidence for any of these.

Naunton's own theory concentrates on the torso of the mummy - most of the previous theories have been concerned with the head or the legs of the mummy. The torso has a significant amount of damage - the left side of the ribcage is broken and missing, the heart is missing(!) and there is damage to the pelvis on that side. He was careful to point out that not everyone agrees with him that the damage on the torso is linked with Tutankhamun's death - some experts say that this damage occurred after death. Naunton explained some of his evidence that the damage was least relatively soon post-mortem. Part of his rationale was that examination of the broken edges of the ribs shows that they were cleanly broken. Over time dead bone becomes more fragile and the bone won't break cleanly - so the damage must have been either at death or fairly soon after death.

This theory is the one that he explained in the documentary, so I'll only give an overview here - basically the damage along the left side of the torso can be explained as resulting from a chariot wheel running into/over Tutankhamun when he was in a kneeling position on the ground. Naunton hypothesises that the Pharaoh had fallen out of his chariot and then was run over by it. Perhaps on the battlefield, perhaps while out for a ride in the desert. Originally it was thought it couldn't be military, because there are no known battles during Tutankhamun's

reign. But careful analysis of battle scenes depicting him suggest that these aren't generic "Pharaoh in Battle" scenes. There are enough unique details to indicate that they are intended to represent a particular event - so perhaps Tutankhamun did see battle.

The other oddity that Naunton re-examined was the state of the mummy. Carter several times in his notes discussed the charred appearance of the mummy and its wrappings. It has been suggested that this was damage caused by Carter (he did use heat to get the mummy out of its case) - but Naunton thinks Carter would have mentioned that in his notes. Generally he recorded what actually happened even if it might be seen as an error. Again the theory that Naunton puts forward was in the documentary - he believes that the mummification of Tutankhamun was done in a hurry and the body was sealed in the coffin before the oils on the wrappings were dry. It's possible for some types of oils (including some of those known to be used in mummification) to spontaneously combust - and Naunton believes this is what happened to Tutankhamun's mummy.

To conclude Naunton pointed out that we still don't know very much detail about Tutankhamun, but his name and image are now some of the most iconic representations of Ancient Egypt in modern culture. And in many ways this is what the Pharaoh would've wanted - one of the key tenets of the Egyptian beliefs about the afterlife were that if your name and image were known then you would be immortal.

This was an interesting and entertaining talk, despite a lot of it being information I had seen or heard before because it had been in the documentary. Naunton presented it from a different angle this time by including the context for Carter and his discovery of the tomb. I was particularly struck, as I am every time it comes up, how little of the tomb contents have been properly examined and published!

"The House of the Aten at Amarna" Barry Kemp

The second talk of the day was of a very different style - Barry Kemp was giving us an overview of the most recent work his team have done at Amarna. I was at a slight disadvantage here because I think his talk assumed you had more context than I actually did, even though he gave a brief overview of the history of the excavation at the site. A lot of the talk was showing us pictures of the area that they have excavated or diagrams of the site and artists impressions of the building, which is hard to summarise in text - I'll give it a go, though.

The main focus of the work, and thus of his talk, recently has been on the Great Aten Temple in Amarna. The site was first excavated by Petrie during his seasons in Amarna, and subsequently by Pendlebury. In recent years the modern cemetery immediately next to the archaeological remains has been expanding, and so Kemp has focussed on the temple site both to record it more thoroughly before any (more) of it vanishes and to clearly demarcate the boundary between the land the villagers can use and the land that is for the archaeologists to study.

It has been generally assumed that we know what the temple looked like when it was standing - there are pictures of it in the reliefs on tomb walls in Amarna (such as the tomb of the Priest of the Aten Meryra). These depict a fairly standard looking temple entrance with pylons, flag posts and a courtyard in front of it with eight columns on each side. Behind this there is a very large courtyard filled with offering tables. Kemp's more recent work shows that while some of this is accurate some of it is artistic licence - in particular the flag poles, which can't be where they are depicted as there isn't room!

Petrie had plotted out the basic foundations of the entrance, plus a large group of offering tables to the south of the temple. Next to excavate was Pendlebury, assisted (amongst others) by Ralph Lavers who drew a plan of the site. It's not entirely clear how much, if any, extra work Pendlebury did on the bits that Petrie had already discovered - all the photos were taken after Pendlebury's team had cleared the site so you can't tell which pits were already there! Lavers plan is a pretty good representation of what was known to be there, Kemp's work has more been filling in the detail rather than changing that overview.

Kemp's team have been undertaking two main strands of work on the temple site. One is

excavation work - re-excavating Pendlebury's spoil heaps (which include significant amounts of archaeological material that Pendlebury missed in his haste) and also new excavation of the entrance to the temple and the offering table area to the south. The other strand is to re-create parts of the temple layout in order to mark it out clearly. This involves capping the foundations with low modern mudbrick walls in order to protect the archaeological remains. They have laid out their best guesses for the walls and the columns when there aren't foundations to follow. Doors are hardest to locate, but they can make assumptions based on other places.

The excavations at the temple have revealed the foundations of the pylons at the entrance, and a courtyard with the bases of eight columns on either side. This is as expected from the depictions in the tomb paintings - the difference is that the columns are so close to the pylons that there doesn't seem to be space for flagpoles. Around the columns, and leading to the north of the structure, is what appears to be the remains of the construction ramp for the columns. And next to the columns at the front is a part of the foundations that appears reinforced to take a particularly heavy object. Kemp speculates that this might be an obelisk - the temple was also known as the Temple of the Ben-Ben (the sacred stone) and an obelisk would be particularly appropriate in that context. Whether or not it was ever put in place is unknown.

There are now known to have been two building phases of this temple - I'm assuming this is from earlier work done by Kemp and his team. The offering tables to the south that had been found by Petrie are now shown to be from the first phase - Kemp has discovered their bases were covered by the rubble and floor of the second phase. This building rubble includes pieces of stone with carvings on them. They are mostly what is known as "sculptor's trial pieces". But some appear to have been pieces of statuary from the first phase of the temple that were then deliberately broken and used as rubble rather than be re-used in the second phase. Which seems wasteful of the Egyptians, but Kemp doesn't know the reason for it. This class of object includes a torso from a very fine statue that was almost certainly of Nefertiti, and probably at least one other figure. The piece doesn't match any other statue (available for comparison) so the rest is possibly still to be discovered in this rubble layer.

Some of the second phase rubble layer also gives clues as to the dating of the first and second phases. There are fragments of cartouches containing the name of the Aten from the first phase which use the later form name of the Aten - so these date to somewhere after Year 9 of Akhenaten's reign (or thereabouts). Under the platforms for the columns at the front they have discovered a wine label, dating to Year 12 of Akhenaten's reign. So the first phase of the temple was built sometime after Year 9, and it is then torn down and rebuilt sometime after Year 12. Obviously it must pre-date Year 17 (as that's the when Akhenaten dies). Kemp said that it's possible that this second very ambitious temple wasn't completed in Akhenaten's lifetime (and thus not completed at all). Even if it was finished then Akhenaten didn't have many years to worship in it.

Kemp also told us about the evidence for popular participation in the religion of the Aten. This is a matter of some debate - was this just a state religion in which the elite participated with everyone else carrying on worshipping the gods they always did? Or was it something that percolated down through all levels of society? Or something of a mix of the two? There are two pieces of evidence that Kemp has uncovered that fit on both sides of this spectrum. The first of these is a rather interesting grave of a child partly under the phase 2 rubble layer. It had been robbed, but a small, and rather rough, pendant remained - probably representing the god Ptah. By context this must be from the early Amarna era, but by style it looks a lot more like a Late Period piece. As it seems to represent one of the old gods at least some people (probably of low status, given the workmanship) were still worshipping those rather than the Aten. The other piece of evidence he talked about was from some basins that they have discovered outside the front of the temple complex. Kemp said that these might be evidence for popular participation in the Aten religion (but I can't remember what reasoning he gave).

This was a fascinating talk about the detail of the current work at Amarna. The most interesting part was the last section of it where Kemp gave us a glimpse into how the archaeologists build up a picture of what happened when and where - the little details of dating and so on.

Margaret Patterson

"A Beautiful Burial: Decorating an Old Kingdom Mastaba Chapel" Ann Macy Roth

This lecture which is available on YouTube at <http://youtu.be/3i8q94B3Fys> was given in 2013 and is the first of three lectures of the annual Charles Wilkinson Lecture series at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The overall title for this series was The Art of Burial, and each of the three lectures is associated with the three departments that this Charles Wilkinson was associated with during his 60 years at the museum. So this one is the Egyptian department, the second is the Ancient Near Eastern department and the last is the Islamic Art department. This lecture was introduced by Diana Craig Patch who mostly did the standard intro stuff (explained the lecture series, explained who the lecturer was and so on), but she also played a short video about the mastaba that they have in the MMA. It was brought to New York in 1913, so was celebrating its centennial and the Journey of Perneb video explained how it was found and how it was taken to New York. And a bit about what was done over the century to display it suitably.

The main speaker was Ann Macy Roth and she was talking about her work on the decoration of Old Kingdom tombs (like the mastaba Patch was talking about). It was a pretty interesting talk - full of little details and things I'd never even thought of looking for. I shall write about a few of the bits and pieces that particularly struck me.

One of these came from near the beginning of the talk when she was giving an overview of the evolution of tomb chapel format. Originally mastabas were based on an architectural idea borrowed from Mesopotamian culture, and they had niches evenly spaced all around the rectangular structure (which was painted to resemble a building constructed out of painted mats). But Egyptian funerary rituals require a focus point for offerings, and so two niches became more and more important (on the eastern side) and the others faded away. Usually this was one niche for the owner and one for his wife. Over time the primary niche became more elaborate and deeper set, and the secondary one moved inside that - and that's what a tomb chapel in a mastaba is. It is an elaborate niche in the wall, and I'd never really thought of them like that before.

One of her themes during the talk was that the scenes in an Old Kingdom tomb chapel are spatially organised to represent something about the real world - either the geography of the country (Delta scenes to the north, for instance) or the layout of a typical nobleman's house. One example of this sort of thing definitely falls into the category of things I didn't even know to look for: She showed us a wall with 6 registers of scenes. Three were Nile scenes and three were desert scenes. And the line between the two groups of scenes was also the line that formed the ground that the closest image of the tomb owner was standing on (this was a large image that stretched across several registers). Roth said this was effectively a "you are here!" marker for the spirit of the tomb owner - these tombs all stand on the west bank of the Nile, so you are between the river and desert.

Another example was a wall that had (working from the bottom up) hunting scenes, then food preparation scenes and finally offering tables piled high with food in front of a large image of the tomb owner. The progression is obvious, but what I wouldn't've noticed till she pointed it out was that this isn't just a progression of scene types. As well as that there are details that move through the scenes - like the ducks. At the bottom are men catching ducks, and one of them is striding out of the scene carrying three ducks. In the food prep scenes, there is one of a man roasting three ducks. And then when you look across the offering tables (of which there are several) you can count three roasted ducks being offered. It sounds like an obvious thing to do, once it's spelled out like that, but I would not have thought to look for the repeating details.

There are several other things like that, plus a lot of overview of the general scheme of the decoration and of each wall. She also mentions things that she's still working on (like trying to figure out if there's a pattern behind which servants are portrayed as naked and which not). Worth watching.

Margaret Patterson

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Tilly Burton for gaining the Diploma (with distinction) in Egyptology from Manchester University and to Rowena Sellors for gaining the Certificate (with distinction) in Egyptology from Manchester University.

Well done !!

This month thanks go to Margaret Patterson for four articles

The Essex Egyptology Group Committee

Rosemary Ackland - Clare Banks (Treasurer) – Janet Brewer BEM
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The Newsletter Editor, Janet Brewer, welcomes all articles, letters, reviews and quizzes.

All articles express the views and opinions of their authors

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