



ESSEX EGYPTOLOGY GROUP

Newsletter 115

August/September 2018

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 5th August Flies, lions and oysters: military awards or tea for two: Taneash Sidpura and Annual General Meeting
- 2nd September Egypt's Origins: the view from Mesopotamia and Iran: Dr Paul Collins
- 7th October Exploring Egypt through woodcraft: Gersande Eschenbrenner-Dieme
- 4th November An introduction to papyrology: Dr Margaret Mountford

This month we will be holding our annual general meeting (agenda etc. emailed to members on 11th July) first, and followed by Taneash Sidpura who is from the Egyptologist-producing town of Bolton, Lancashire and has a degree in Egyptian Archaeology from the University of Liverpool. He has worked on the Egyptian collection at the Atkinson Gallery in Southport and excavated at the Neolithic site of Boncuklu in Turkey. Currently, he is a PhD student at the University of Manchester, where he is studying golden flies from ancient Egypt. He will be presenting his research in this talk.

In September we welcome Dr Paul Collins who will discuss the significance of cultural borrowings from Mesopotamia and Elam in the formation of the Egyptian state during the period 3500-2900 BC which has long been debated. This talk will explore the evidence from Syria, Iraq and Iran for the emergence of cities, trade routes and associated technology and art that provides the wider context for the emergence of Egyptian kingship.

Chairman's Corner: A look at last year's survey at Hatnub

During September 2017 I worked at the University of Liverpool and Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale project at the Hatnub travertine (or Egyptian alabaster) quarries. I had several roles, including Reflectance Transformation Imaging of difficult-to-read hieratic inscriptions, archaeological survey of excavated archaeological features and a 'ground-truthing' survey of the archaeological features visible in satellite imagery. Most of the many huts, shelters, cairns and quarries spread across the plateau have been recorded off-site using high resolution satellite imagery, but to 'ground-truth' the accuracy of the off-site survey a sample of survey grid squares were investigated on-site during the 2017 season.



Enjoying surveying 'light' with my tablet.

I was very excited to undertake the survey as for the first time I was able to survey archaeological remains using only a GPS-enabled tablet computer. Previously I had to carry large, expensive and heavy survey equipment, but this year I was delighted to work light (not least because I was already feeling the effects of early pregnancy).



A large indurated limestone quarry at Hatnub, in use during the New Kingdom, may have provided stone for Amarna.

images were former limestone quarries which had filled with light silty-sand that contrasted with the surrounding dark stony surface of the desert. A larger indurated limestone quarry was also surveyed (above). There is evidence of New Kingdom activity around Quarry P and indurated limestone was a popular stone at nearby Amarna. Did these innocuous stones provide the raw material for some of the more famous Amarna-period statuary in museums around the world?

The survey also took in the escarpment at the Nile end of the Hatnub Quarry Road and a series of cairns stretching eastwards into the desert from Quarry P. Where the Hatnub Quarry Road meets the edge of the Amarna plain I surveyed several cairns, marking the road to the quarries, and a series of shelters. As well as protecting quarry workers on their way to and from Hatnub, those huts with expansive views probably also sheltered guards protecting or securing the route. Beyond Quarry P I visited three cairns, probably marking a trail heading east into the desert. The highest and most visible had been constructed in the form of a windbreak, but although the desert beckoned, by then we had come to the end of our fieldwork season and I had to return to Cairo.



The cairns leading eastwards into the desert. Despite the enticing trail, this was as far east into the desert as I could go.

Hannah Pethen

BOOK SALE

August is the last chance to buy Egyptology books in aid of our chosen beneficiary: The Friends of Nekhen.

FRIDAY KNITTING IN LUXOR



Sue Robinson would like to thank all those members who have so generously given wool and knitting needles for "Friday Knitting " at the Kent Weeks Library on the west bank at Luxor .

The mud brick house has a small front yard, full to capacity with chairs and tables. Its walls are covered with paintings created by young local children who attend enthusiastically every week, together with young girls eager to indulge in the mysteries of knitting. Language differences are no bar to laughter, singing and a need to hunt for lots of dropped stitches

Within the house is the essence of its purpose - Kent Week's academic library of Egyptology - his personal collection, with some additions by other academics; a point of reference for students and scholars alike. There is one rather elderly computer and shelves of books to the ceiling in the confines of one, not very large room.

Both inside and out of this modest building is an atmosphere of learning and enthusiasm over seen by Kent Weeks - he

has even been known to bring balls of wool back from Cairo to keep the Friday Knitting group going! I will update you on knitting progress, it may not be Egyptology, but it is Egypt and certainly the message from KW is that it makes a difference for local children and has a positive effect on how the parents see his Library in the context their local village.

Sue Robinson

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

7th-9th September 2018, Egypt Exploration Society/University of Manchester
"Fourth British Egyptology Congress"

Over 100 scholars will present their research across the weekend representing institutions across the world and a range of topics including languages, archaeology, museum and archive, and the history of travel and exploration.

Tickets on sale now from the EES website. (Takes place in Manchester.)

24th November 2018, Egypt Exploration Society Study Day
"Egypt's Shifting Capital"

The Egypt Exploration Society has a long history of landscape study and settlement excavation in Egypt and this study day celebrates Egypt's unique history through the story of its shifting centres of urban life. Experts will focus on the urban development of Egypt from the Late Predynastic Period through to Medieval Islamic Cairo, considering Hierakonpolis, Nagada, Amarna, and Memphis along the way.

Tickets on sale now from the EES website.

19th-20th September 2019, British Museum Annual Colloquium

“Amarna: The Lived City : Urban life, identity, memory, production, networks, belief and the changing city”

The Colloquium takes place over two days in the basement lecture theatre and on the Thursday evening there is a “stand alone” lecture and reception (usually in the sculpture gallery) which in 2019 will be given by Dr Barry Kemp. Tickets are usually on sale from the BMs website 3-4 months in advance.

The Essex Egyptology Group Committee

Chairman: Dr Hannah Pethen (Honorary Fellow, University of Liverpool)

Treasurer: Rosemary Ackland (treasurer@essexegyptology.co.uk)

Secretary/Membership: Janet Brewer BEM (secretary@essexegyptology.co.uk)

Programme: Tilly Burton (programme@essexegyptology.co.uk)

Publicity/Facebook: Dick Sellicks

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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