



# ESSEX EGYPTOLOGY GROUP

Newsletter 117

December 2018/January 2019

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

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| 2 <sup>nd</sup> December | The coffins of Nespawershefyt & Pakepu at the Fitzwilliam Museum:<br>Helen Strudwick |
| 13 <sup>th</sup> January | Lunch at Crofter's Wine Bar – see below for booking                                  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> February | Ancient Egyptian & Nubian Leather – Lucy Skinner                                     |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> March    | Egyptian Texts in the Age of the Pyramids – Dr Nigel Strudwick                       |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> April    | Tomb Security in Ancient Egypt – Reg Clarke  |

This month we welcome back Helen Strudwick, curator at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. The Egyptian collection at the Fitzwilliam Museum contains two nested coffin sets, belonging to Nespawershefyt (21st Dynasty) and Pakepu (25th/26th Dynasty). Detailed examination of these coffins, as part of a large scale project to publish all the coffin material at the Fitzwilliam, has revealed unexpected new findings about them and the people for whom they were made.

## **JANUARY 2019 LUNCH**

Alison Woollard will be organising our January lunch for Sunday 13th January 2019 at Crofter's Wine Bar in Witham. £5 deposit per person to reserve your place(s). Last deposits to Alison at the December meeting. Members may bring a guest.

## **2019 STUDY DAYS – KEEP THE DATES**

We are very pleased to announce two Essex Egyptology Group Study Days in 2019. The first will be held on Saturday 27th April with Dylan Bickerstaffe, "Royal Ladies of the New Kingdom" and tickets will be on sale from January. The second will be held on Saturday 12th October featuring Prof Joann Fletcher and Dr Stephen Buckley, "Mummification in the Egyptian Empire". Tickets will be on sale in July. Further details to follow; all members will have the opportunity to buy tickets in advance of general publicity

## **Chairman's Corner: Egyptology for the next generation**

At the beginning of November, I was invited to give a presentation on ancient Egypt to year 7 of Notley Green Primary School, in Great Notley near Braintree. I am always interested in spreading interest in ancient Egypt to anyone and everyone and so I accepted their invitation.



What is an archaeologist?

Since Egypt is too large a civilisation to even scratch the surface in one 2 hour session, I had to pick and choose my topics, focussing on those which I thought the children would find most interesting and those which I believe are important for general understanding of archaeology. We began by thinking about who we think of as archaeologists and what they do, considering the tomb of Tutankhamun as a case study. An 'Odd one out quiz' showing a variety of different archaeologists provided the best answer of the day when one student correctly identified Indiana Jones as the odd one out because 'he was the only one with muscles'!

Thinking about archaeologists. How many of these can you name?

Then we thought about what Egypt makes us think of and an opportunity for everyone to write their name in hieroglyphs. This led us to the importance of having one's name preserved and a natural opportunity to discuss the stars of any ancient Egypt related activity with children: the mummies. We looked at how mummies are made, why people were mummified and how to create the 'perfect tomb'. Then there was just time to think about the Book of the Dead before we had to finish for the day. Overall it was a super day, the children were really interested and engaged and I'm grateful to them and their teachers for inviting me. Perhaps we might even see some of them at our meetings in the future.

Hannah Pethen



Name that artefact! What was it used for?  
(Images from the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology)

## Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

The Hapsburg imperial family were collectors; their first Egyptian antiquity came into the collection about 1560 but it wasn't until the 19th century that significant numbers of Egyptian artefacts were sought.



Emperor Franz Joseph had two museums built, the Kunsthistorisches to house the imperial collection of art, coins and classical objects and another to house natural history.

The Kunsthistorisches opened in 1891 with an Egyptian collection of 6,000 objects; since then most of the acquisitions are the result of archaeological excavations.

The Egyptian galleries are stunning; the walls and ceilings are decorated in an Egyptianising style. In the first gallery are scenes from the tomb of the nomarch Khnum-hotep II at Beni Hasan.



Richard Lepsius had the entirety of the tomb copied during his expedition in 1843; the coloured reproductions were then seen in the “World Exhibition” in Vienna in 1873 and afterwards were purchased for the Kunsthistorisches Museum.

The wall paintings show motifs of craftsmen working, hunting and fishing, and a wonderful depiction of Bedouin with their different clothing and hairstyles. The galleries have ceilings of starry skies, sun discs and of winged vultures.

There are three huge rose-granite columns in the first gallery which actually support the ceiling. The artefacts on display range from pre-dynastic cosmetic palettes, through those fascinating “reserve” heads of the Old Kingdom to coffins of all periods, an entire Old Kingdom tomb chapel and stelae and statues. A thoroughly eclectic collection; if you are thinking of a weekend away, go to Vienna, a wonderful city and a wonderful Egyptian collection.



Janet Brewer

## CAN EVERYBODY HEAR ME?

The Group now has its very own sound system, a fact those of you who were at the November meeting will already be aware of. Whilst this was on the wish list for a long time, the lack of secure storage for anything electrical at Spring Lodge meant that the system components would have to be stored off site and brought to each meeting. A loudspeaker that can fill a hall is necessarily large and heavy. The Chairman has volunteered to store and transport the system to meetings and hence the purchase and the ability to hear Dr Margaret Mountford and keep the heating on.

Whilst the Group has the system, it needs volunteers to set it up before meetings, operate it during the meetings and then take it down afterwards. Once familiar with the components, set up can be accomplished within fifteen minutes as can taking it down. Operation involves getting microphones and body packs to speaker(s), establishing a comfortable volume level at the start of the meeting, turning the level down for the duration of the interval and then down at the end.

If you were at the November meeting, I operated the system and found it much easier than I thought it would be, as my sound equipment experience does not extend beyond home use.

Does this interest you? Do you feel you could help with the sound at meetings? Please ask the Secretary for a copy of the system guide. This illustrates the component parts, how they fit together and how to operate them. You don't have to have been a roadie, there are no circuit diagrams involved and there is no need to stand up and say “One, Two, One, Two.”

Dan Brewer

# **The Essex Egyptology Group Committee**

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

**Treasurer: Rosemary Ackland** ([treasurer@essexegyptology.co.uk](mailto:treasurer@essexegyptology.co.uk))

**Secretary/Membership: Janet Brewer BEM** ([secretary@essexegyptology.co.uk](mailto:secretary@essexegyptology.co.uk))

**Programme: Tilly Burton** ([programme@essexegyptology.co.uk](mailto: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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