

The Rundle Foundation for Egyptian Archaeology Newsletter

April 2008

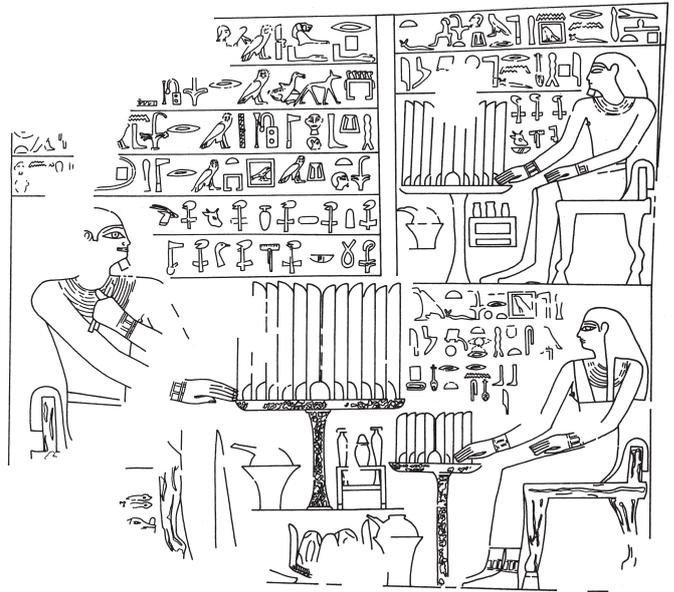
Issue 104

A FAMILY OF HIGH PRIESTS AT MEIR

Our interest in the 14th Upper Egyptian province, near present day Assiut, reaches back to 1989, when the Australian Centre for Egyptology recorded the tombs of Pepy-ankh the Elder and Khewen-wekh at Quseir el-Amarna on the east bank of the river. This was the first project undertaken by the ACE and accordingly was published as Australian Centre for Egyptology Reports 1. No tomb was found for Pepy-ankh's son, Sobek-hotep/Hepi; indeed, there were no other tombs at Quseir el-Amarna.

Working years later in the Wenis cemetery at Saqqara, we recorded the tomb of an official called Sobek-hotep/Hepi who added the name of Ny-ankh-Pepy. Our research clearly indicated that this individual, who served and died in the capital before succeeding to his father's office in the province, is actually the father of Pepy-ankh the Middle, who inaugurated the cemetery at Meir on the west bank. The ACE obtained permission to re-excavate and re-record the site of the Meir cemetery, previously excavated and published by A. Blackman in the first half of the twentieth century. In November to December 2007 we had our second season on the site, which is showing unusual promise. Meir is one of the rare sites with a continuity of use from the Old to the Middle Kingdoms and is, consequently, likely to shed new light on these two significant periods of Egyptian history, as well as on the little known and understood intervening period usually called the First Intermediate Period.

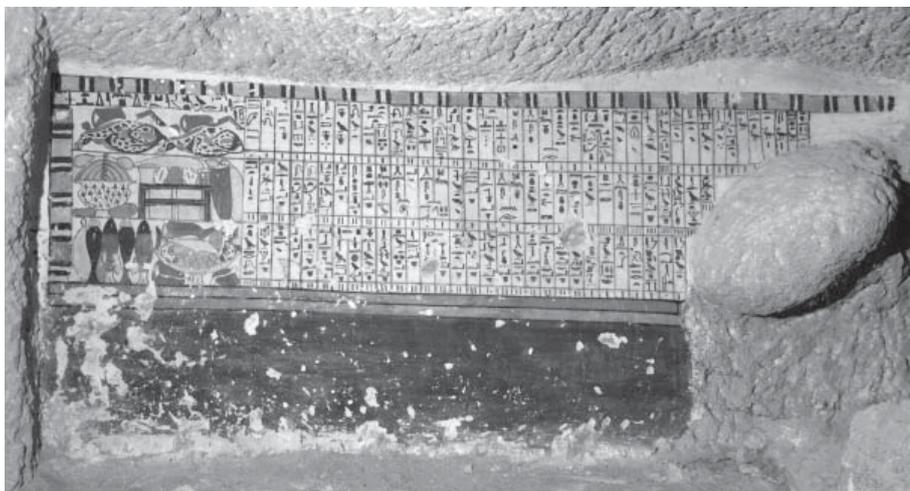
Meir is located in one of the most fertile and, accordingly, most important regions of Egypt, which is reflected in the high titles held by its administrators, and perhaps also in the fact that its main deity was the great goddess, Hathor. The tombs of these powerful officials are particularly well cut and richly decorated, in a standard of art among the best of the Old Kingdom, and they portray a range of themes showing a wide variety of activities.



PEPY-ANKH THE MIDDLE WITH HIS PARENTS IN HIS TOMB AT MEIR

Two major observations may be noted with regard to the tomb of Pepy-ankh the Middle, which has now been fully recorded by the Australian Centre for Egyptology:

- While parents are rarely represented in Egyptian tombs, Pepy-ankh depicted both his father and his mother in a unique scene, with each seated at a separate offering table. Both parents were already deceased and had been buried at Saqqara. It is therefore thought that their representation in their son's tomb would allow them to partake in the offerings presented personally to Pepy-ankh, who would thus be fulfilling his filial duties even though he was buried at a distance.
- As we cleared the shafts and burial chambers belonging to Pepy-ankh and his wife, Hewet-iah, it became apparent that both burial chambers were beautifully decorated and well preserved. Decorated burial chambers are generally rare, especially in the provinces; thus these two examples represent a great addition to our information. It is curious, however, that the decoration of the wife's burial chamber was far more elaborate than that of her husband. When compared to the undecorated burial chamber of Seshseshet, eldest daughter of King Teti and wife of Mereruka, that of Hewet-iah stands out as a most unusual case. She was certainly a very important woman, perhaps even with royal background, although much research is still needed to trace her origin.



OFFERINGS AND OFFERING TABLE LIST IN THE BURIAL CHAMBER OF HEWET-IAH

Naguib Kanawati

Meet Sophie Winlaw

- **March 2008: PhD in Egyptology approved**

My love for the ancient world began when, as a fourteen year old, I travelled to Greece with my father who had been commissioned by Qantas to establish travel packages for Australians wanting to visit the Mediterranean region. I took one look at the monuments of the Acropolis in Athens and Ephesus in Turkey and I was hooked! On my return to school, I studied the history of the Greeks, Romans and Egyptians under the tutelage of an inspiring teacher and was awarded the HSC honour board prize for Ancient History. This led me to the University of Sydney and an honours degree with a major in Classical Archaeology.

My studies included two seasons in Cyprus excavating a Graeco-Roman theatre site. In the first season, some of the team members were asked by local authorities to visit a construction site near our excavations where a bull-dozer had broken into the roof of a Roman tomb. I was chosen for the salvage mission to rescue its contents. In my excitement, I guess I really didn't mind too much that the bull-dozers were still at work above our heads as I was mesmerised by the beauty of the gold earrings, rings and copper jewelry boxes that we found in this family crypt. Returning to the dig site was no less thrilling as we found numerous terracotta and glass oil lamps, which may have originally lit the theatre for evening performances, and a couple of colourful and rather unusual glass bracelets.

At the end of my second season at Cyprus, I took a two-day cruise to Israel and Egypt, which reignited my interest in Egypt and permanently changed the path of my career. On the day we spent in Egypt, we were allowed a fleeting moment at the Giza pyramids, where I was stunned by how impressive they were. We also visited the Egyptian Museum briefly where I was captivated by some of the masterpieces from the Old Kingdom, particularly the statue of Khafre which is enveloped by the protective wings of the falcon god Horus. My new direction was clear! Upon my return to Australia I enrolled in a Masters degree at Macquarie University and I have never looked back.

Towards the end of this degree I was accepted for the archaeological fieldwork unit and joined Professor Kanawati's team to excavate at Giza and Saqqara, the richest sites of the Old Kingdom. During my time at these sites I have always had an incredible sense of wonderment; a feeling which I think will never be equaled. Over the years, this has been enhanced by the discovery of exciting finds like the wooden statues from the tomb of Kai-hai that we unearthed in 2007. Other highlights from the four seasons I have spent in Egypt include the recording of the beautifully decorated burial chambers of Kaiemankh at Giza and Mereruka at Saqqara.

On completion of my Masters degree, I enrolled in a PhD at Macquarie and was awarded a RAACE scholarship. My thesis is entitled "Fifth Dynasty Mastabas at Giza: Typologies, Chronology and the Use of the Cemetery". Accordingly, over the course of the past four years, I became completely obsessed with these tombs. My life was consumed by architectural plans, typologies and the evidence for the chronological development of the mastabas. I literally wall-papered my apartment with post-it notes and huge print-outs of tomb plans. Piles of data that couldn't be touched, let alone moved, filled the study – my poor husband!

In 2004, I visited the Boston Museum of Fine Arts to consult the archives from the American excavations of Giza from 1905 to 1940. I also spent time in Egypt in an attempt to clarify the design of some of the architectural features of my tombs which were not visible on the plans or mentioned in published descriptions. In most cases, trying to visit the tombs resulted in disappointment, particularly at Saqqara. I recall coming over the sand dune from our excavation site to the area where my tombs should have been only to find that the whole area was covered by the sand which had been deposited by a hundred years of sandstorms. Malesh, or 'never mind', as they so nonchalantly say in Egypt! Still, as I am sure every PhD student will agree, completing a doctorate can never be done without a few set backs along the way.

For the past six years I have been tutoring classes in "Egyptian Archaeology: An Introduction", and more recently "Egyptian Culture and Society/Ancient Egypt" and "Egypt in the Old Kingdom/Old Kingdom Documents". Last year I was asked to present the students of "Egypt in the Old Kingdom" with a series of lectures which focused on the results of my PhD thesis.

Now that I have finished my PhD, I look back on the time I spent writing it with fondness and a sense of achievement. It is with relief and a sense of accomplishment that I gratefully and eagerly received the news that my thesis has been passed without requiring corrections before graduation. I now look forward to the next exciting step of my career.

Sophie Winlaw

Meet Alexandra Woods

- 2004: BA (Hons) First Class, Macquarie University
- 2003-2008: Archaeological team member of the Macquarie University expedition working at Saqqara, Deir el-Gebrawi and Meir
- March 2005: Alexandra developed a keen interest in Old Kingdom tomb decoration whilst taking Egyptian Wall Paintings as an Honours student as well as having spent several seasons as an epigrapher working on the tombs of Mereruka and Inumin in the Teti cemetery at Saqqara. This led to her beginning a PhD in Egyptian Art of the Old Kingdom with the assistance of an Australian Postgraduate Award. This research is entitled "'A Day in the Marshes': A Study of Old Kingdom Marsh Scenes in the Tombs of the Memphite Cemeteries"
- 2005: Published first Egyptology paper: "The Spear-fishing and Fowling Scene in the Tomb of Remni at Saqqara" in *The Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology*
- 2008: Further paper on the dating of Old Kingdom tombs accepted for publication in the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* and another accepted for presentation at the *10th International Congress of Egyptologists*, Rhodes, Greece
- March 2008: PhD approved in Egyptology and appointed as Associate Lecturer in Egyptology in the Department of Ancient History, Macquarie University

During my first season at Saqqara in 2003, the ACE expedition cleared the shaft and burial chamber of a tomb discovered in the previous year belonging to an official called Remni. As I climbed down the rope ladder and stood up to look around the tiny chamber, I was astonished to find that all the walls, which not been seen for over 4000 years, were still brightly painted! In

particular, the yellows and blues were as brilliant and clear as the day they were painted! I was captivated by the skill and precision of the ancient artist and knew immediately that I wanted to study Egyptian art.

In 2005 I began my PhD thesis and chose to examine scenes in Old Kingdom temples and tombs where kings, queens or tomb owners are shown pulling papyrus, fowling, spear-fishing, or are on a pleasure cruise or hippopotamus hunt in the marshlands.

Using a system of comparative analysis, I was able to examine the scene's composition, identify several standard elements, and follow their development by highlighting the similarities and innovations in the minor details. Using this method I could track the influence of one marsh scene on another in the Memphite region and explore a number of factors that may have contributed to a scene's composition. This method also allowed me to highlight numerous features that can be used as dating criteria to help refine the dates of certain Old Kingdom tombs and fragments.

With the work of the Australian Centre for Egyptology and visits from world renowned scholars in Egyptian art including Professors Gay Robins and Lise Manniche, Macquarie University is becoming known as a centre for the study of Egyptian art history. A new Masters in Ancient Art and Architecture has just been introduced in the Department of Ancient History and in second semester 2008 Egyptian Wall Paintings will be one of the first subjects in Egyptology to be available online. Egyptian art is an important area of research that will add to our understanding of the perceptions and world view of the ancient Egyptians. I am very much looking forward to contributing to this development at Macquarie University.

Alex Woods



ALEX AND BETH THOMPSON TRACING THE FACADE OF MERERUKA'S TOMB CHAPEL

Rundle Foundation Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due in June 2008 and a renewal form will be included in the next newsletter



ALEX AND SOPHIE, SAQQARA 2008

Registration for "Memphis in the First Two Millennia" is now open!

The conference will take place on August 14 and 15, 2008 and will include talks by 30 speakers, including our eight invited guests:

- MIROSLAV BARTA, Czech Institute of Egyptology, Prague
- BEATRIX GESSLER-LÖHR, Egyptological Inst., Heidelberg University
- JAROMIR MALEK, Griffith Institute, University of Oxford
- YVONNE HARPUR, Oxford Expedition to Egypt, Oxford University
- DAVID JEFFREYS, Inst. of Archaeology, University College London
- AUDRAN LABROUSSE, Director, French Arch. Mission at Saqqara
- ADELA OPPENHEIM, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
- ALAIN ZIVIE, Director, CNRS, Paris

Please check the conference website (galliform.bhs.mq.edu.au/~ace/) for full details, including local accommodation options and a list of the scheduled presentations.

Cost: \$100 for students, \$125 for members of the Rundle Foundation, or \$150 for non-members.

Includes: Catered lunch, morning and afternoon tea on each day, and an abstract booklet.

Location: Robert Menzies Chapel, Macquarie University (corner of Herring Road and the Waterloo Rd entrance to the University). Parking will be available directly behind the Chapel, or in the University parking lots.

Hours: 9 am sharp to 6:30 pm daily (You are asked to be in your seat by 9 am as talks will begin promptly on the hour)

If you wish to attend this unique event, please fill out the enclosed Registration form (or download a copy from the conference website) and send it with a cheque or money order (payable to **Macquarie University**) to:

The Australian Centre for Egyptology
Macquarie University
Sydney NSW 2109

Numbers for this event are strictly limited – so book early to avoid disappointment! The deadline for registrations is Friday, July 4 or until available seats are filled.

Please note that our eight guests will also be speaking on August 16, 2008, at the Annual Conference of the Australian Centre for Egyptology (see details later in this Newsletter).

Email

Members are reminded to update their email addresses with the ACE office so that they will not miss out on important and last minute information or events.

Diary Dates

Mini Conference

Sunday April 13 2008

Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club Auditorium

1.30 for 2 pm

Annual Dinner

Saturday June 21 2008

Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club Function Centre

6.30 pm for 7 pm start

Memphis in the First Two Millennia Conference

Thursday and Friday August 14 and 15 2008

Robert Menzies Chapel, Macquarie University

9am sharp - 6.30 pm daily

Annual Conference

Saturday August 16 2008

Theatre 1 Building X5B Macquarie University

10 am sharp



GROW YOUR DIGITAL LIBRARY

with Beverley Miles

GIZA ARCHIVES PROJECT - MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

<http://www.gizapyramids.org>

For members with a particular interest in Giza, the Giza Archives Project is a site full of interactive material: a digital library of archaeological reports, articles and studies; maps, aerial photographs, satellite images; an interactive panorama of the Museum's Giza collection, videos and more.

LOUVRE MUSEUM – EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES DEPARTMENT

<http://www.louvre.fr/llv/commun/home.jsp>

Under the 'Collection' menu click on 'Overview', then select 'Egyptian Antiquities' from the list 'Curatorial Departments'. You can select 'English' along the far right hand side of the Menu bar. The Louvre Museum site offers many resources with information on their artefacts: timelines, bibliographies, virtual tours, documentaries etc. I recommend a mini-documentary: select 'Resources' from the menu, click on 'A Closer Look', then under 'Publications' you'll find 'A Closer Look at the Seated Scribe'. Students, don't forget the database of objects.

THE EGYPT ARCHIVE BY JON BODSWORTH

<http://www.egyptarchive.co.uk/index.htm>

Recent photographs of sites including Giza, Saqqara and various pyramids, tombs and temples from the Old, Middle and New Kingdoms, plus artefacts in museums such as the Ashmolean, Louvre and Petrie. Worth a look whether you are a student, an enthusiast or both!

More next issue.

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Mini Conference 2008

Sunday, April 13, 2008 at 1.30 for 2pm start

Auditorium, Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club

The Australian Centre for Egyptology's Annual Mini Conference will be held at Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club. Members and friends are invited to attend in to hear progress reports of the most recent ACE/Macquarie University excavations in Egypt.

Lectures will begin promptly at 2 pm and should conclude about 4.45pm. A booking form is enclosed with this newsletter and tickets will be available at the door between 1 pm and 1.45 pm.

Cost: \$25 per head including afternoon tea.

Annual Dinner 2008

Saturday, June 21, 2008 at 6.30 for 7 pm

Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club Function Centre

117 Ryedale Road, West Ryde

Let Rome in Tiber melt.....Here is my space

Assoc. Prof. Tom Hillard of the Dept of Ancient History, as this year's guest speaker, will solve the riddle. 'Egyptians' will love it! A booking form is included with this newsletter.

Cost: \$50 per head.

Annual Conference 2008

EGYPTOLOGY: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Saturday, August 16, 2008 at 10am sharp

Building X5B Theatre 1, Macquarie University

The eight international keynote speakers, who will be delivering papers at the Memphis conference, have accepted the invitations to present a further lecture on a topic of their choice at our Annual Conference. This is an exceptional opportunity to hear world renowned egyptologists speak. Further details will be advised in the next newsletter. However, for those who would like to book early, a booking form is included with this newsletter.

Cost: Members \$60; Non-Members \$70;

Students and Pensioners \$40.

Publications

Reports and Studies \$55 ea

Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology (BACE) \$12.00 ea.

Details of ACE publications are available on the web site.

ACE Website

www.egyptology.mq.edu.au

All Cheques should be made to MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY. All prices quoted include GST

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