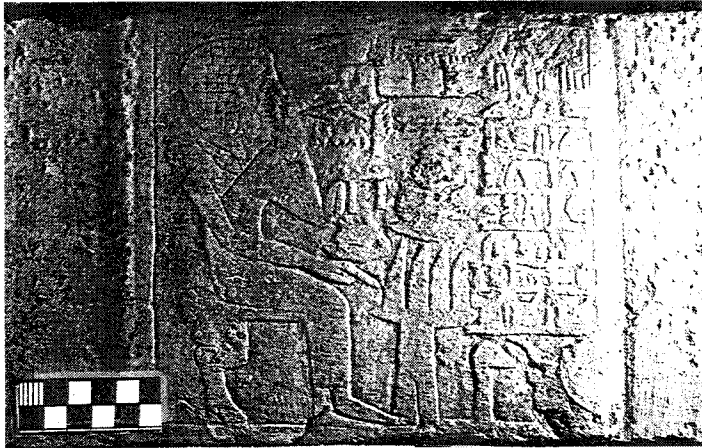




The Rundle Foundation for Egyptian Archaeology

NEWSLETTER NO. 62

November 1997



FUNERARY STELA OF THE CARPENTER /RN FROM HELWAN. LIMESTONE.
SIZE OF INSCRIBED FIELD CA. 19 X 20CM. ORIGINALLY FROM KING FARUQ'S
PRIVATE COLLECTION, NOW IN THE EGYPTIAN MUSEUM, CAIRO, JE88123.

Dr Köhler's lecture at Sydney's *Night with the Pharaohs*

On Friday, 5th September 1997, Dr Christiana Köhler gave the key-note address at a special evening *A Night with the Pharaohs*, held at the Sheraton Airport Hotel, Sydney, and organised by the Rotary Club of Maroubra.

Amongst the more than 150 guests were many members of Sydney's Egyptian Community and the Egyptian Consul, Mr Omar Youssef. Dr Köhler's illustrated address was enthusiastically received and fired further public interest in Macquarie's on-going research projects in Egypt.

Apart from outlining the current archaeological interests of Professor Naguib Kanawati at Saqqara, Dr Boyo Ockinga at Thebes and her own at Helwan, Dr Köhler's presentation focussed on the differences between the methods and agendas of modern archaeologists and those of the 19th and early 20th century pioneers of the field. These early excavators were mostly interested in pictorial representations, inscriptions and statuary of ancient monuments which they treated as *objets d'art* and 'treasures', more

appropriately appreciated in the Museums of North America and Europe. Their removal frequently resulted in the destruction of archaeological contexts.

In her address Dr Köhler sought to redefine the term 'treasure' in line with the practises and interests of modern archaeology in Egypt, by highlighting finds, while certainly modest in comparison with the monumental pieces exported to the West, which prove to be extraordinarily valuable for understanding ancient Egyptian society and culture.

Macquarie's two projects at Thebes and Saqqara were taken as examples of this new type of 'treasure'. For although most of the tombs at these sites were excavated by the pioneers of Egyptology, the majority were never fully published and the minor artefacts and decorations from each grave were largely overlooked or deliberately ignored. By preparing careful publication reports of these tombs and analysing both large and small objects and representations, Professor Kanawati and Dr Ockinga have been able to make important contributions to our understanding of the culture of Old and New Kingdom Egypt respectively.

The fruits of this new careful approach to archaeological research were spectacularly illustrated by the discovery of the tomb of Inu-Min in the Teti Cemetery at Saqqara. Even though this area has been excavated and plundered for hundreds of years, Professor Kanawati and his Macquarie team not only found a new tomb, but the grave of a previously unknown important personality at the court of the king.

In her presentation Dr Köhler also drew out the similarities between the three sites presently being studied by the Australian Centre for Egyptology. All three, of course, are cemeteries, yet more strikingly they are not the resting places of Pharaohs, but of important personalities such as bureaucrats and priests of the capitals and metropolitan centres of their times.

The up-coming Macquarie excavation at Helwan will be particularly interesting in this regard, as it will reveal new data on a presently scantily understood group of people during the first two dynasties of Egypt, the middle class, whose members witnessed the historical and cultural developments at Egypt's first capital city, Memphis.

Furthermore, the more than 10,000 graves at Helwan promise to provide lots of those newly defined 'treasures', as the site was being excavated by Zaki Saad during the 1940s and 1950s, but never fully published. Nonetheless, Dr Köhler has already succeeded in discovering a number of 'treasures' when she studied objects in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo in

January this year (already mentioned in Newsletter No. 60, April 1997). In addition to coming upon the 156 mysterious crates in the Museum's basement, she found out that most of the finds from Zaki Saad's excavations were actually labelled with their individual grave numbers. This will allow systematic cataloguing of the contents of each grave, and in turn, the drawing of conclusions of the site's internal chronology as well as the evaluation of the social hierarchy of this early Egyptian society.

Dr Köhler is presently waiting for the final approval from the Supreme Council for Antiquities in Egypt before beginning excavation at Helwan. She is hoping to take a team of seven Macquarie students, four surveyors and three German and British Egyptologists to begin this task in December.

ACTIVITIES IN OTHER CITIES

Brisbane

On 20 July at the University of Queensland, approximately 300 members and friends attended a public lecture given by Professor Kanawati, on Ankhmahor, a Vizier of Teti.

Professor Kanawati also gave a weeks course studying hieroglyphs to 45 participants.

An afternoon of lectures given by Professor Kanawati, Dr Ockinga and Dr Köhler was attended by 150 members of the public.

Canberra

On Saturday 26 July, at the Egyptian Embassy, Anna Cordin gave two talks on the Australian involvement in excavations in Egypt.

Adelaide

Professor Kanawati gave a lecture on the continuing work at Saqqara.

During September, Dr Ockinga gave a weeks course in hieroglyphs at the W.E.A.

Armidale

On October 8 at the University of New England, Dr Ockinga gave a lecture on *The Armidale Shabti of Mery-re: a witness to ancient Egyptian funerary beliefs*.

Melbourne

On Thursday 16 October, at Monash University, Professor Kanawati will give an evening lecture on Excavations at Saqqara.

For further information please contact: Gillian Bowen

Monash University - (03) 9905 3264

On Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 October, a group of Activities Committee members will visit Melbourne with Dr Ockinga to inspect the collection at the Australian Institute of Archaeology and at the National Gallery of Victoria. A buffet dinner will be held at the Victoria Vista Hotel, Little Collins Street on Saturday night and it is hoped the Victorian members will be able to join us.

A.C.E. STUDY TOUR OF EGYPT - JANUARY, 1999

A three-weeks tour will leave Sydney on SATURDAY, 2 January, 1999, led by Dr Boyo Ockinga.

The cost of \$6,000 includes:

RETURN BUSINESS CLASS TRAVEL WITH EGYPT AIR (SYDNEY/CAIRO)
 ALL INTERNAL TRANSFERS AND TRAVEL
 ACCOMMODATION IN 5-STAR HOTELS (Twin share only)
 MOST MEALS
 VISITS TO: VARIOUS SITES IN CAIRO - LUXOR - ASWAN
 SPECIAL VISITS TO WORKING MACQUARIE DIGS
 ALEXANDRIA AND THE MONASTERY IN THE WADI NATRUN
 ISLAMIC AND COPTIC SITES IN CAIRO
 A 4-DAY NILE CRUISE (LUXOR-ASWAN)
 A LAKE NASSER CRUISE TO ABU SIMBEL

OPTIONAL: At no extra cost you can have a return flight from Cairo to either Aleppo, Damascus, Amman or Beirut by Egypt Air.

EARLY BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL.
 THE GROUP IS LIMITED TO 20 PERSONS.

A non-refundable deposit of \$500 is required. **CLOSING DATE FEB. 27, 1998.** Business Class seats are limited, so no late applications can be accepted. For further information please contact:

Joan Beck Phone (02) 9850 8848
 School of History (Mon. & Wed. 8 am - 3 pm)
 Macquarie University 2109

ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR 1998

A.C.E. DINNER AND CONFERENCE: Venues and dates to be announced in the January Newsletter.

COURSES AND LECTURES - 1998

THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN IN EGYPT: Ms Rodna Siebels will give a lecture on WEDNESDAY, 25 February at 8 pm. (Venue to be advised).
 COST: \$5.

EGYPTIAN CURIOSITIES: Ms Rodna Siebels will conduct an 8-weeks course each WEDNESDAY from 7-9 pm commencing 11 March. (Venue to be advised).
 COST: \$70 (Members \$65).

ALL ENQUIRIES: JOAN BECK - (02) 9850 8848