



# The Rundle Foundation

for

## Egyptian Archaeology

NEWSLETTER NO. 76

March 2001



TOUR GROUP AT SÂQQARA WITH PROFESSOR KANAWATI

### EGYPT 2000 TOUR

What better way is there to start a new millennium than by studying the past? Our trip in January gave us the opportunity to learn about many aspects of Egyptian life spanning different cultural influences over five thousand years. Egypt's images of temples and pyramids is so imprinted on the mind that one is apt to forget its Islamic roots. I found it interesting to visit mosques and medieval houses. One of the highpoints of the trip was wandering down the enclosed lane-ways of the old town of Qasr imagining the noise, bustle and smells of this town in the Dakhla oasis. The trudge across the desert sands to visit the monastery of Saint Simeon was another enlivening experience.

I last visited Egypt 25 years ago so the changes were interesting. More police, more tourists but fewer camels. I revisited favorite sites but was shocked by the encroachment of towns on archaeological sites. Monuments were better lit, more fully restored and accessible but I was sad to see the degradation of tombs like Mereruka's due to greasy hands. There were many new experiences too - the boat of Cheops, Nefertari's tomb and Deir el Medina. Standing between the paws of the sphinx and walking around its flanks admiring its sinuous curves was an experience I will treasure for a long while.

The journey through the oases of the western Desert gave us all new perspectives: fossicking for fossils, rock carvings on desert hillsides and glimpses of gleaming limestone buttes in the White Desert. We were also privileged to visit archaeological sites under study: townships in the Dakhla Oasis, the tombs of the pyramid builders at Giza and the exquisite ones being studied by Professor Kanawati's team near Saqqara.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication of Boyo and Susanne who worked so hard to make our trip trouble free and varied. Boyo's scholarship and patient explanations were enlightening, allowing us to comprehend what we saw and Susanne's good-humoured shepherding ensured we arrived at our destinations more-or-less on time. We thank them for all their hard work and I urge you to participate in a future study tour, but not if it costs me a place! Take my advice and get fit **before** you go and have the courage to leave your camera behind sometimes to imprint not just a visual image but a sense of texture and atmosphere in your lifelong memories. **Carol Allen**

### **THE QIFT REGIONAL EXPEDITION Kom el Momanien – Dec2000 / Jan2001**

The second season of the Qift Regional Expedition, under Gregory Gilbert (Macquarie University), was conducted at the antiquities site at Kom el Momanien (Previously Kom el Koffar), Qift. The aim of the 2000/1 season was to re-excavate, record and conserve the 8<sup>th</sup> Dynasty tomb of Shemai and Nebet, which had previously been excavated by the Egyptian Antiquities Organisation between 1979 and 1982. We plan to assist the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities in publishing this mastaba tomb.

The tomb was cleared and four trenches were excavated, one of which included a large pottery dump of 8<sup>th</sup> Dynasty offering vessels. The tomb architecture and in-situ blocks were recorded, along with the larger inscribed blocks, which had previously been removed from the site and are now held in the Antiquities store in Qift itself. To conserve the remaining ancient architecture, mud-brick walls and protective sand layers were erected. Stratified sampling, using test trenches and hand augering, in and near the village of Kom el Momanien was also undertaken.

For the full report see the Qift Regional Expedition website: [www.qift.com](http://www.qift.com)  
**GREGORY GILBERT**

### **REFLECTIONS OF A PhD GRADUATE**

On the 26th of February, two days after my birthday, the postman delivered the ultimate birthday present in the form of a letter from Macquarie University informing me that I had satisfied requirements for admission to the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. In the afterglow of this achievement, I have taken great delight in practising writing Dr in front of my name to see how it looks. Frankly it looks strange!

This award is the culmination of nearly five years of research, during the course of which I discovered rather more than any one person could reasonably want or expect to know about Agricultural scenes in Old Kingdom tomb decoration. Gathering agricultural scenes became my mission, some might say my obsession in life and I must confess to having developed a somewhat proprietorial attitude towards this subject during the course of my studies. With the thesis completed, I would impose a total ban on the discovery of any new agricultural scenes (i.e. anything not discussed by me!) if I thought for one second I would get away with it!

While this work will hardly change Western Civilisation as we know it, I can say it was an enjoyable exercise - now that it is over! In the throes of writing the thesis however, there were many times when I must confess the process was anything but enjoyable. How many times I sat gazing at the computer screen trying in vain to think of something extremely clever (or even remotely sensible) to write, only to suffer the embarrassment of mental blocks so dense that only laser surgery could hope to penetrate the solid concrete of my mind! I remember only too well the many frustrating hours of wading through Junker's volumes trying to make sense of the German, wishing fervently that the learned gentleman had written in English! So often I thought I had completed a section of work, only to find a new scene had been unearthed (usually by the Australian team!) and needed to be included! The process often seemed never-ending.

The strangest part of the whole exercise is that, despite the feelings of mental torture and self-doubt with which the process constantly filled me, I miss it now that it is over!

RODNA SIEBELS

**CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSES FOR 1<sup>ST</sup> SEMESTER 2001**  
See inserts for further details.

**THE LATER PYRAMIDS:** A five week course with **Dr Michael Birrell**  
**COST:** \$75.00(incl.GST) **VENUE:** Museum of Ancient Cultures, X5B, Level 3  
**DATE:** Starts Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May **TIME:** 7 p.m.- 9 p.m. **RSVP -19<sup>th</sup> April.**

**ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY BEFORE THE PYRAMIDS:** A course over three Saturdays with **Dr. E. C. Köhler** investigating the beginnings of Egyptian civilisation from prehistoric times into the Early Dynastic period (c.5000-2750 B.C.E.).It will study the cultural and political developments leading up to the Pyramid age in a series of fully illustrated lectures. The course covers archaeological evidence, architecture, art and earliest hieroglyphic inscriptions from crucial archaeological sites such as Buto and Abydos. The course will utilise the results of Macquarie University's archaeological project at Helwan as well as the original artifacts from the Museum of Ancient Cultures.  
**COST:** \$110 (incl. GST) **VENUE:** Museum of Ancient Cultures X5B Level 3  
**DATE:** Three Saturdays, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> May **TIME:** 11am – 3.30pm

**2001 DINNER – Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2001-03-30**

**Prof. Naguib Kanawati, Dr. Boyo Ockinga and Dr. Christiana Köhler** will discuss their recent excavations and findings at Saqqara, Giza, Thebes and Helwan.

A delicious Buffet Dinner will be served. Our traditional raffle will be held and the major prize will be one return economy class airline ticket to Cairo kindly donated by Singapore Airlines. The winner will also be entitled to spend one day on a Macquarie dig of their choice if the journey is taken during an excavation season.

\$40 for Members  
\$50 for Non-Members  
(Drinks not included)

6.30 for 7 p.m.  
Heritage Function Centre  
Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club  
117 Ryedale Road

**RSVP 16<sup>TH</sup> May 2001**

West Ryde (right at West Ryde Station)

(All prices include G.S.T)

## CONFERENCE 2001 –SATURDAY, 11<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST

### *Her Majesty King Hatshepsut*

Three distinguished scholars, Prof. Gay Robins (Emory University), Prof. Peter Dorman (Chicago University) and Dr. Gae Callender (Macquarie University) will present papers about the career of Hatshepsut. This should prove an exciting programme, so note the date in your diary. Further details will appear in our next Newsletter.

**Venue:** Building X5B Theatre 1, Macquarie University  
**Time:** 9.30 for 10am (First paper will commence at 10am sharp)  
**Tickets:** Members \$40 Pensioners, School or University Students \$30  
 Non-Members \$45 Groups of 5 or more school students \$25 each  
 (Prices include GST) One teacher accompanying 5 students – FREE

### EGYPT BY TOUCH

A venue is being sought for this exhibition which eventually will be on permanent display at the University.

### RUNDLE FOUNDATION MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Last year the Foundation carried the cost of the GST. Unfortunately it is now necessary to pass this cost onto the members. As a result the subscriptions will be increased by 10% from 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2001.

### A.C.E. OFFICE

We are sorry to be losing two of our office volunteers – Margaret Hordiewicz and Greville Burrell – who have decided to retire. Margaret and Greville have staffed the office on Wednesdays for many years and their hard work has been greatly appreciated by all. We would like to thank them for their efforts and wish both of them every happiness in their retirements.

### VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED FOR ACE OFFICE

We would like to hear from anyone who would like to give some time, however infrequent to help staff the office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays. Please ring 9850 8848 if you wish further details. No experience required.

### PUBLICATIONS -Reports

No. 14 N. Kanawati & M. Abder-Raziq, *The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara*, Vol. 6, *The Tomb of Nikauisesi*.

No. 15 A. McFarlane, *The Unis Cemetery at Saqqara*, Vol. 1 *The Tomb of Irukaptah*

**CHEQUES PAYABLE:** Please make cheques payable to MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

**LATE CHANGES TO ARRANGEMENTS:** A recording will be left on our answering machine notifying any changes. Please ring after 5 pm in the week before the function.

*All mail should be addressed to:*

The Australian Centre for Egyptology  
 Division of Humanities  
 Macquarie University 2109

*Enquiries*

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