



The Rundle Foundation for Egyptian Archaeology

NEWSLETTER NO. 84

April 2003



PART OF THE DECORATION OF REMNI'S BURIAL CHAMBER

EXCAVATIONS TO THE NORTH OF TETI'S PYRAMID AT SAQQARA

For political and perhaps religious reasons King Teti, founder of Dynasty 6 (approximately 2345 B.C.), selected his cemetery in a rather restricted area which did not allow for any expansion should he reign for a long period and more space be needed for his future officials. Teti went as far as surrounding the whole cemetery with a temenos wall and dividing the area into sections allocated to officials according to their status. The excavation of this cemetery is now near completion and the only area remaining is that to the extreme north. In previous seasons the expedition of the Australian Centre for Egyptology cleared the north-east corner and discovered in it the mastaba of Kaaper. In the last two seasons attention was given to the north-west corner, and although the western section, in general, has proved to be occupied by tombs of lesser officials, mainly the palace guards, it was imperative to complete the excavation of the whole cemetery in order to recover the full data on a good cross-section of the society.

The upper stratum of the excavated section contained some interesting burials, although belonging to relatively modest individuals. In addition to the human remains which are being examined and which will no doubt enrich our knowledge of the Egyptian population at this time, many funerary objects accompanied these burials. A preliminary examination of these objects suggests the cemetery of King Teti was extensively reused by these individuals at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th Dynasties.

In the lower stratum five decorated tombs and one undecorated were discovered, all belonging to the latter part of Teti's reign and to that of his successor, Pepy I.

Although the owners of all these tombs are important in their own right since they must have played roles in the events of these turbulent times, the tomb of one of them named Remni (also called Merwi) was particularly rewarding, even though it has raised many unanswered questions.

Remni occupied the office of 'overseer of palace guards', perhaps a sensitive position, which brings its holders close to the king, yet is not ranked highly in the administrative hierarchy. With very few exceptions, tombs of such individuals contain limited decoration in their chapels. certainly undecorated burial chambers and very rarely a limestone sarcophagus. Remni owned a fully decorated chapel and also a decorated burial chamber, with a burial pit cut into the floor of the burial chamber and provided with a stone lid. Our work in the cemeteries of both King Unis and King Teti shows that no one, other than the viziers, owned decorated burial chambers. It is therefore extremely surprising to find that such a modest official like Remni not only owned a decorated chapel but also a decorated burial chamber. What had Remni done to deserve these very special privileges?

Naguib Kanawati

TRIBUTES TO JUNE ANDERSON



Everything was going well for the Australian Centre for Egyptology in Egypt this year. All expeditions were reporting significant discoveries and the tour, led by Boyo and Susanne, was progressing wonderfully well. Suddenly I received a phone call from Boyo telling me the extremely sad news that June Anderson had passed away. Dead silence, disbelief, shock and sadness! June was one of those people one cannot help liking from the very first moment of meeting. She was decent, generous and very helpful. When she realized how much we needed the expertise of an accountant in the activities of the ACE she volunteered to do it for a long time with great patience and dedication. But to me, personally, June was one of my brightest PhD students; with her interest in the Egyptian scribes we spent hours discussing the plan of her thesis and the original conclusions she came up with. Her premature passing has deprived me of a helper of intellectual challenge and above all, of a friend. On behalf of all members of the ACE, I would like to convey to June's family our very sincere sympathy.

Naguib Kanawati

Our dear friend June Anderson died suddenly in the early hours of the 17th January at a resort by the Red Sea in Egypt. She was travelling with a group from Macquarie University led by Susanne Binder and Boyo Ockinga.

June and I travelled together on numerous occasions, visiting many places including Egypt, Syria and Jordan. One trip to Jordan was organised by Alison Betts of Sydney University and was the first year of a dig at Tell Rukeis in the north of Jordan. We also drove around the UK for 40 days from the top of the country to the bottom, walked on Hadrian's Wall and explored many other archaeological sites, then continued on with a visit to Ireland. Another time, we checked out Alaska and the Canyon Area in the USA. Everything was so interesting and June was such a good travelling companion.

June will be sadly missed by many people. Her volunteer work, both with the Rundle Foundation and as treasurer of the Activities Committee of the Rundle Foundation, will be gratefully remembered, as will her cheerful smile.

Janet Condon. A friend.

ACE friends of June would like to establish a lasting memorial to her in recognition of her many years of generous and enthusiastic support of Egyptology at Macquarie University. As all who know her are well aware, June was a great lover of books. On this last visit to Egypt, in spite of often feeling under the weather, she purchased numerous volumes to add to her private library; her PhD thesis topic on the scribes of the Old Kingdom also illustrates her love of the written word. What could be a more fitting memorial than a gift of books to Macquarie University library in her name? The books will have bookplates recording the fact that they have been donated in June's memory. The work we have decided on is a major 7-volume new reference work, *Das Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen* ["Lexicon of Egyptian gods and designations of gods"], published by Peeters in Leuven/Louvain, Belgium in 2002. The lexicon has 56,500 entries, 100,000 links, and 200,000 references and will remain the standard reference on the subject for very many years to come. Members of the Rundle Foundation who would like to contribute to this memorial for June can do so by making a tax-deductible donation to Macquarie University; please fill out the form included with this newsletter and send it with your cheque to the address noted on the form.

NEWS OF OTHER MACQUARIE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECTS IN EGYPT

Excavations at Helwan: 14 New Tombs and FARAH Opened

Christiana Köhler reports that the sixth field season of the ACE excavations in the cemetery at Helwan on the southern outskirts of modern Cairo went very well. The first three weeks were spent finalizing the analysis and recording of the skeletons, artefacts and pottery from the 29 tombs discovered last season and another 14 previously unexcavated tombs. Amongst the larger of these new tombs were two mastabas (Op. 4/49 and 4/50). One had an offering niche and a vertical shaft of 8 metres leading to its burial chamber and the other a mortuary chapel with the remains of painted plaster on the surviving socles. As these tombs date to the early Old Kingdom, they provide important and unexpected evidence for the use of Helwan beyond the Protodynastic and Early Dynastic Periods (c.3300-2700 BCE). One of the smaller tombs included the skeletal remains of a mother and her baby (Op. 4/44). This burial contained a number of pottery and stone vessels, ivory bracelets, a copper object and a delightful Egyptian alabaster (calcite) container.

Concurrently with the excavations the ACE team oversaw the construction of the Research Facility for Archaeological Research at Helwan (FARAH), which was officially opened on 27 February 2003. The ribbon at the opening ceremony was held by Christiana and Roxie Walker, Director of Research for the Institute for Bioarchaeology (San Francisco), which funded the facility and has also pledged to build phases 2 and 3, including a site museum. FARAH, which means happiness in Arabic, is the first Australian research facility in Egypt.

ACE Theban Tombs Project

The ACE Theban Tombs Project conducted a successful season in November/December 2002. The finds from TT233 and the associated new tomb -183- belonging to Saroy and Amenhotep called Huy were studied and recorded in preparation for the final publication; work on the architecture of the tomb complex was also completed. Further epigraphic work was also done and the relationship between Saroy and his assistant Amenhotep/Huy could be established – in a fragmentary text Amenhotep is designated the son of Saroy. This explains the unusual feature of TT 233 being decorated equally for both men. Work on a new tomb, TT147, was also begun. This painted tomb dates from the reign of Thutmosis IV – Amenhotep III. The restoration work done by the ACE has produced extremely promising and exciting results. The tomb had been occupied as a dwelling in the past and the ceiling and upper third of the walls were covered with a film of soot and tar of varying thickness that obscured the painting underneath. It has proven possible to very effectively clean the walls, revealing very well preserved beautifully painted scenes, similar to those in the well-known tombs of Nakht and Menna.

Further details on the archaeological activities of Macquarie University in Egypt will be presented by illustrated lectures at the Mini-Conference to be held on April 13th (see details below).

SIX WEEK COURSE with Dr. Michael Birrell

This course examines the personality and times of Ramesses II, the legendary King of Egypt. We shall look at the man, his family and the aspects of his reign which made him "great", including his building program and military campaigns. Participants in the course will have an opportunity to study artefacts from the Museum of Ancient Cultures. Booking Form with this newsletter.

MINI CONFERENCE

As previously notified a mini Conference is to be held on **Sunday 13th April 2003 starting at 2 pm**. The location will be the Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club. There will be a raffle held during the afternoon.

N.B: Please send in your **Booking Forms for the Mini Conference to reach us by 7th April**. No bookings will be taken after this date; if any tickets remain they will be available for purchase at the door on a first come, first served basis.

ANNUAL DINNER

The Annual Dinner is being held on **Saturday 14th June 2003 at 6.30 pm**. The venue will be the **Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club**. This year's guest speaker will be Mrs. Linda Evans who will discuss animal behaviour as depicted in Egyptian art. Members who may have heard Mrs Evans speak at USER meetings will know that her animal topics are fascinating and ones which people of all ages and interests can enjoy. Despite large price increases, the cost of the tickets to members will remain the same as last year. Please see booking form for further details.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Annual Conference will be held on 9th August 2003 and guest speakers will be Dr. Martin Raaven and Dr. Rene Van Walsem. Further details and Booking Form will be in the next newsletter.

VOLUNTEER ACCOUNTANT REQUIRED

Due to the death of June Anderson, the Rundle Foundation is in urgent need of the voluntary services of a qualified accountant to reconcile the Rundle Accounts with those of the University. Although the reconciling is carried out about four times a year, ongoing assistance with accounting procedures at ACE events, such as the Annual Conference is required. The position would provide interesting challenges for someone in retirement. If interested, would you please contact the office on 9850 8848, Mondays to Thursdays.

A.C.E. OFFICE

Kathy Parker and Marie McKerverey have volunteered to work in the office on Wednesdays, so the office will now be opened Monday through to Thursday. Thanks to Kathy and Marie for helping.

NEW PUBLICATION

N. Kanawati *Tombs at Giza*. Vol. II: Seshathetep/Heti (G5150), Nesutnefer (G4970) and Seshemnefer II (G5080). ACE Reports 18, Warminster, 2002. [members' price \$44]

All cheques should be payable to MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY and forwarded to this office.

– INCREASE IN SUBSCRIPTION RATES –

We regret to inform members that due to increases in the costs of postage, printing and other expenses, Foundation membership fees will be increased. As from July 1st, 2003 the rates will be: *Single Membership* \$33.00; *Double Membership* \$38.00; *Student Membership* \$22.00 (incl. GST). We hope members will understand this increase has been kept to an absolute minimum amount.

A recording on our answering machine will notify members of any late changes to events or functions. Please ring after 5 pm in the week before any function or event.

All mail and enquiries should be addressed to:

The Australian Centre for Egyptology
Division of Humanities
Macquarie University 2109

Phone: (02) 9850 8848
9.30am – 3 pm Monday - Thursday
e-mail: egyptology@hmn.mq.edu.au