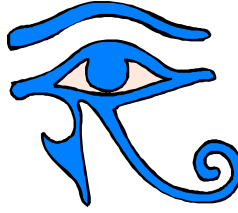


ESSEX
EGYPTOLOGY GROUP



Newsletter 60
June 2010

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

6 th June	Going to God's Land: Egypt's trade with Punt – Lucia Gahlin
4 th July	Recreating an Ancient Egyptian Market Place - Members
1 st August	“Free Mike Night” – 10-minute presentations by Members
5 th Sept	Queen Hatshepsut – Beloved Queen or wicked stepmother? – Victor Blunden
3 rd Oct	Alexander the Great and the conquest of Egypt – George Hart

JUNE MEETING

This month we welcome Lucia Gahlin, Egyptologist, excavator, author, lecturer, tour manager, works for the Petrie museum and organiser of the Bloomsbury Summer schools. She will be talking to us about the trade with Punt.

AUGUST MEETING AND BOOK AUCTION

Our August meeting will be a "free mike night" and we encourage you to talk for up to 10 minutes on a subject that you enjoy. A ten minute talk is only about one and a half pages of typescript and if you have photographs, even shorter. Give it a whirl. We will all be interested in what you have to say. See Alison or Janet and let them know of your intention to talk.

At the same meeting we will be holding our popular book auction - so sort out those books that you are no longer reading and bring them to our June or July meetings - Clare will look after them until the August event.

LECTURES AT THE EGYPTIAN CULTURAL BUREAU

The lectures begin at 6.45pm (75 minutes, followed by refreshment), held at the Bureau, 4 Chesterfield Gardens, London W1 (020 7491 7720). They are free of charge.

- 10th June – Dr Patricia Spencer – Recent work of the EES Delta Survey

Here is the final article that Joyce Filer has written especially for us on health problems in Ancient Egypt.

SOME NOTES ON HEALTH PROBLEMS IN ANCIENT EGYPT AND NUBIA

Part Three: Problems With Osteoarthritis

Joint diseases are a group of degenerative abnormalities, often referred to as 'arthritis', which, although related, have different causes. Joint disease is well-known in modern societies but there is also much evidence for its presence in ancient Egypt and Nubia. It is important to note that, nowadays, the medical profession does recognise a number of different types of degenerative conditions but in many of the biological reports on ancient Egyptian and Nubian human remains the general term 'arthritis' was used to cover what would nowadays be regarded as separate degenerative conditions. This article will concentrate on osteoarthritis.

Essentially, as the body ages so bones and joints experience wear and tear. Whilst the majority of examples of osteoarthritic conditions are linked to the aging process it is important to stress that not all osteoarthritis is age-related. Thus, evidence of osteoarthritis cannot be used reliably to assess the age at death of mummies and skeletons. Let's examine the situation further.

In part one of this series of health in ancient Egypt and Nubia we considered some commonly found dental conditions. It is a fact that osteoarthritis, together with dental conditions, are the most commonly found pathological conditions observed on the bodies of the ancient dead - whether they be Egyptian, Nubian, South American, European or elsewhere. In fact, from an excavation point of view, if the biological anthropologist examining the human remains does not find many examples of these conditions then there are some interesting research questions to ask and answer!



Degenerative joint disease, as the name implies, affects the joints linking bones together. Any joints can be affected - but some more so than others. The knee joint is commonly affected as the synovial joint here is easily changed by the aging process. As a person ages so the cushioning provided by the synovial structure lessens allowing the ends of the leg bones (tibia and femur) to rub together. As a response the unprotected bones grow outwards widening the area of bone in an attempt to absorb the strain, almost like shock absorbers in a car! However, the same situation can occur in younger people if the joints are overly stressed, as in the heavy and repeated agricultural work of ancient Egypt and Nubia. Additionally, it is important to note that septic arthritis can also occur, caused by blood-borne bacteria entering the joint areas through a wound. Again, this can occur at any age in life. Thus, my earlier warning about using osteoarthritis in assessing age at death.

In part two of this series I described how leg fractures in ancient times could heal but at a possible cost to the individual affected by the leg bone being shortened and causing an unsteady gait. There could also have been an arthritic 'cost' involved. If a person walks continually in an unbalanced manner because one leg is shorter than the other then it is likely that osteoarthritis will affect the hip joints as a consequence. Thus, one health condition can lead to another.



Osteophytosis affects the spine and is commonly seen in ancient Egyptian and Nubian human remains, especially in the neck and lower spinal areas. Again, stress and also the wear and tear of aging causes the discs between the vertebrae to rupture. The bone responds by growing spurs of bone (osteophytes) at the edges to

redistribute the load, again like shock absorbers. Sometimes these spurs of bone from individual vertebrae can actually grow to such a length whereby they 'lock' together resulting in some degree of immobility. Understandably, in this situation the affected person might have experienced a stiff back.

Osteoarthritis, affecting many joints in the skeleton, is a fact of modern life and the evidence from ancient Egypt and Nubia demonstrates it was just the same in ancient societies.

Photos courtesy of Joyce Filer

Joyce Filer
Egyptologist and Physical Anthropologist

JOYCE FILER – STUDY DAYS

The Forensic aspects of Ancient Egypt - £30
Find out how age at death, gender, health (and more) is discovered.
Saturday 19 June 2010: 11am - 5 pm
Hughes-Parry Hall, Cartwright Gardens, Central London

For more information contact:
Richard at: rikki_promo@yahoo.co.uk or tel: 07973 6951 68

ON-LINE COURSES ON EGYPTOLOGY RELATED TOPICS

Each course lasts six weeks and is delivered entirely on-line from Manchester University.
Courses include:

Queens of Ancient Egypt
Warfare and Weapons of Ancient Egypt
The Temple in Ancient Egypt

Courses start in October 2010, and February and May 2011.
The Programme Director is Professor Rosalie David and the Course Tutor is Dr Joyce Tyldesley

For further details, please visit www.knhcentre.manchester.ac.uk/continuingeducation

TOMB MODELS

This tomb model was found in the subsidiary burial of a woman whose shaft tomb was on the north side of the mortuary temple of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep at Deir-el-Bahri.

This tomb model dates from 2050BC to 2000BC, 11th dynasty.

It is 47cm wide and 78cm long.

Only middle class people and higher had tomb models. Anyone lower wasn't buried with tomb models. The models were made of wood and were painted with the colours the Egyptians had, for example red paint was ochre, black paint was charcoal. These colours were also both used for makeup. Some were made of clay and some had plaster covering the wood.

Tomb models were included so that the servants could provide food and drink for the soul or *ka* of the deceased in the afterlife. They were first used during the late First Intermediate Period and Early Middle Kingdom. They stopped being used sometime around the reign of Senusret II in the 12th dynasty.



In this model servants are making beer. This model depicts 27 people, 13 women are crushing barley on quern stones. Opposite them are nine women (originally 13) who are sieving the flour that is being ground on the quern stones. The man standing on the far right is overseeing all the work. We can see that he is a man because his skin is darker than the women's. Nearest to us are three women sieving the barley mash into vats for the beer. The other three are heating barley in ovens so it can be fermented. One of them would have been fanning the flames to keep the oven hot.

Unfortunately 6 of the servants have lost part of their arm whilst another 6 have entirely lost one arm and 2 have lost a part of one arm and have entirely lost the other.

This model is now in the British Museum, in the mummy room, and its catalogue number is 40915. It was donated by the Egypt Exploration Fund in 1904.

Blake Sellors

EEG NILE CRUISE

Just back from our week on the Nile. We visited Karnak and Luxor temples, Kom Ombo and Dendarah, Philae, Elephantine – why not join us in 2011? See Janet.



Rameses Setepenre

The chosen one
Ozymandias
Lord of the Two Lands
In white kilt, tied neatly
On his window of appearances
Gold pectoral blazing
Hand reaches out
Hand reaches out for
Nefertari, the beautiful companion
Dust to dust
Do your eyelashes still linger
On the remains of your face?

Rita Kramer

CONTRIBUTIONS

This month thanks go to Joyce Filer, Rita Kramer and Blake Sellors

The Newsletter Editor, Janet Brewer, welcomes all articles, letters, reviews and quizzes.

All articles express the views and opinions of their authors

Please e-mail to eeeg_newsletter@btinternet.com

You can visit our web site at www.essexegyptology.com