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EGYPT
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Volunteer! Apr-Sep 2020
Newsletter

Museum of Egyptian Antiquities



Coptic Items

Some highlights of TEC's Coptic Egypt collection.



The Screaming Mummy

Murder and vengeance in the 20th Dynasty.



How to Design An Egyptian Door

Do you know your Torus from your Cavetto?

egypt.swan.ac.uk



Welcome



Rex Wale
Editor in Chief

Dulcie Engel

Associate Editor

A former French and linguistics lecturer, I have volunteered at the Egypt Centre since April 2014. I am a gallery supervisor in both galleries, and author of the Egyptian Writing Trails. Apart from language, I am particularly interested in the history of collecting. I won the 2016 Volunteer of the Year award.



Rob Stradling

Technical Editor

A volunteer since 2012, you can find me supervising the House of Life on Tuesdays & Thursdays; at the computer desk, paternally tending this luminous organ; or roaming the corridors, pursuing my one-man quest for a biscuit-free workplace.



Hello all,

The World may be changing, but here's one thing you can rely on; the Egypt Centre Newsletter will keep on keeping on!

We hope you enjoy the issue, packed as it is with the usual (and the not-so-usual) to keep you informed and entertained.

We intend to keep going however long the hiatus lasts, so please don't stop submitting material. If reading a new newsletter helps you to keep your spirits up, just imagine how good *writing* for one would feel!

Take care,

Rex

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter or submit articles for consideration please contact:
dulcie.engel@icloud.com

The Newsletter is ordinarily published every three months, however publication will be on an *ad hoc* basis for the time being.

And | Quote...

"...We in Europe are only Lilliputians, and no Ancient or modern people had conceived the art of architecture on such a sublime, large, and grandiose scale as the old Egyptians."

- Jean-François Champollion, 1828



Office News

The COVID-19 Pandemic has had a tremendous impact on the Egypt Centre, which is likely to remain closed to visitors for the foreseeable future.

Yet not everything is doom and gloom. We have been working hard to find new ways of engaging with our visitors and have utilised this time to attract a new and international audience, helping to put TEC and Swansea University on the map.

TEC was due to host its annual *Wonderful Things* conference at the end of May, which obviously could not take place due to the lockdown. Therefore, it was decided to move it to a virtual format. Despite initial apprehension, it has proven to have been tremendously successful.

We hosted 17 free lectures between May and July, all of which revolved around the EC collection. The lectures have highlighted the diversity of the collection and many unique objects were showcased. In total, 2,691 people from 6 continents attended the live sessions, making this a truly international event. 16 of the lectures were recorded for our

YouTube channel, drawing an additional audience of 5,250 people to date.

Thanks to an anonymous donor and the hard work of Ersin Hussein (CoAH) and Ken Griffin, the Egypt Centre and Classics won an award for a joint project called 'Egypt and Its Neighbours', engaging local communities with issues relating to cultural identity and diversity. We hope this will have wide appeal and engage several groups. Ken is working on a display case in the upstairs gallery as part of this and it will include items from ancient Egypt's neighbouring countries that are currently in store.

September saw the launch of our brand new Virtual Classroom. This is a new part of our learning offer which allows us to engage with school groups digitally. The groups who book a virtual visit with us have exclusive access to brand new video content and worksheets as well as a one hour facilitated session via Zoom. We have hosted two classes so far and both have been brilliant. If anyone is interested in volunteering with school groups digitally, please contact Syd or Hannah.

Items bought by Wellcome from the Laurence-Cesnola Collection (Sotheby's 18 July 1919, lot 33)

9

W229a=GR-3

GR-4

Luigi Palma di Cesnola

The Diaspora of Cypriot Antiquities in Swansea - Ersin Hussein (YouTube)



Meet the Volunteer



Egypt Centre Volunteer
Donna Thomas

I come from: Sutton Coldfield, West Mids.

I started volunteering: Aug 2011

I chose to volunteer because: Ever since I was young, I have always had an interest in History, especially Egypt. I did a school project many years ago on King Tut. I have been lucky enough to visit Egypt on several occasions and each time learnt something new. In 2013 I undertook a degree in Egyptology and Ancient History, and I graduated in 2015. The Egypt centre helped me achieve this.

My Favourite artefact is: Cartonnage Gold Mask in the House of Death (**W920**)

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helps me: Engaging with different people and making new friends. I've fulfilled an ambition of mine to become a teacher, due to being one of a group of education leaders. Not to mention the outings (before lockdown)!



Egypt Centre Volunteer
Christine Harrington

I come from: Swansea.

I started volunteering: Feb 2017

I chose to volunteer because: I was born in Swansea and moved back in 2016. I wanted to take up voluntary work and I saw an advert asking for volunteers. I had worked with schools in the past, but had little knowledge of Ancient Egypt. It was just what I was looking for. I wanted to learn something new and also wanted an opportunity to make new friends.

My Favourite artefact is: the Carnelian bead anklet with three snake's head beads (**W277**) in the Body Adornment Case, HoL.

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helps me: I support the Educational Leaders when schools visit. This involves helping the students with various activities in both the HoL and the HoD. I have learnt so much about the various artefacts, which I find fascinating, and I have made many new friends. It has been a great experience.





Young Volunteer

Keiron Clarke

I come from: Swansea.

I started volunteering: About 3 years ago, when I was 11.

I chose to volunteer because: I visited the Egypt centre with my school and really enjoyed the workshops and wanted to learn more. When I found out that I could volunteer there I thought it was a great opportunity to learn more and meet new people who liked the same things as me.

My Favourite artefact is: The flint on the handling board.

How volunteering at the Egypt Centre helps me: Volunteering has helped me build confidence. Before I started volunteering, I was very shy. I now enjoy meeting visitors so I can tell them all about the artefacts. Because of this, I am also more confident when talking to people in other places too. TEC also helped me become more independent. Everyone is very friendly and helpful.



Former Volunteer

Rex Wale

I come from: Gloucestershire.

I started volunteering: 2008

I chose to volunteer because: I was studying Egyptology and Ancient History at University, and wanted to work hands on with the collection.

My Favourite artefact is: The damaged gold leaf mummy mask in the mummification case (**W920**).

How volunteering helped me: It was the volunteer training sessions and the DACE Egypt Centre Ambassadors course that first inspired me to pursue a career in museums and apply for my MA in Museum Studies.

What I'm doing now: I think you know that one! But as well as being Events & Development Officer here at TEC, I am also curating the University's *History of Computing* Collection.



Coptic Items in The Egypt Centre

Introduction

The *Coptic period* is used to refer to the time in Egypt from the end of the Roman period (395 CE) until the Islamic conquest (641 CE). However, the term *Christian period* would be more accurate, roughly equivalent to the *Byzantine period* elsewhere in the Near East. This is because the term Coptic, as well as referring to the art and architecture of the Christian period, is also used by some to refer to the earlier third and fourth centuries CE and the later early medieval period, 700-1200 CE (Shaw & Nicholson 1995: 71-2). Furthermore, the term Byzantine is used to refer to all Christian Greek art produced in the Byzantine (Eastern Roman) empire, and then in the countries which emerged from it.

The word 'Coptic' is 'gubti' in Arabic, from the Greek Aigyptioi, 'the Hellenized form of the ancient Egyptian name of the chief temple of **Memphis**, Hut-ka-Ptah, "ka-house (=temple) of Ptah"' (Mysliwiec 2000: 190).

The Coptic writing system combines Greek letters with six Demotic signs to write the Egyptian language. There are two ways in which Greek came to be adapted to write the Egyptian language. Firstly, the impetus came from the priests of the Egyptian religion. Following the establishment of the Greek language in Egypt, the population who could afford to buy amulets could not read aloud the spells on them: 'To avert such economic and religious massacre, [the priests] reverted to a transliteration system of these amulets' (www.coptic.org/language). The second, and most important, reason is the introduction of Christianity to Egypt. **St Mark** is said to have preached in **Alexandria** between 43 and 48 CE, and the first Egyptian Christians were Hellenised Jews in that city. The spread of Christianity among the wider population dates from the end of the third century CE.¹ Missionaries needed to preach using the same texts, so they translated them into Egyptian, but wrote them using the Greek alphabet with additional Demotic characters.²

The last original Coptic text is a poem dating from around 1300 AD, but the language has survived to this day as the liturgical language of the Coptic Church in Egypt. One of the most significant aspects of Coptic Christianity was the founding of the monastic tradition, when early Christians settled in remote desert areas for a life of prayer (for example **St Catherine's Monastery** in the **Sinai**).

Coptic art

Coptic art is influenced by Egyptian and Greek symbolism, but also borrows from Persian and Syrian influences (in particular, the use of the peacock and the griffin). Icons are clearly influenced by the style of Roman mummy portraits (such as W646 in HOD). Christian period wall-paintings, textiles, stelae, metalwork and manuscripts survive in Coptic monasteries and churches as well as museums (such as the large collection of the **Coptic Museum** in **Cairo**).

Coptic Items in the Egypt Centre

In the Egypt Centre, there are over 119 Coptic items (mainly textiles, jewellery, and stelae)³, and they are either on display in the House of Life, or in store. These are some of the highlights:

Stelae: Funerary stelae are the most common type of stelae found in Ancient Egypt, and these continue right into the Coptic period, where they mark Christian burials. Indeed, we can trace tombstones still used today back to the distinctive round topped rectangular shape typical of Ancient Egyptian stelae as adopted by the early Christians in Egypt. Coptic stelae tend to be very decorative, often carved with flowers and animals, or scenes from the Bible, set within a framework of architectural elements representing the sanctuary of a church. This is probably a visual reference to paradise. The ancient Egyptian obsession with symmetry remains.

W1076 is a stone stela with columns and bird decoration. The large bird with outspread wings under the arch and the two others that crouch above may represent the three eagles that Coptic texts describe as guarding the door to paradise.

EC519 is a Coptic funerary stone stela with cruciform and flower decoration, with an ornate symmetrical design based on circles. These two stelae are on the wall of the House of Life, to the right as you enter (between the door and the Metalwork case).

I. Gibbs 1, displayed in the Writing case, is a fragment of a stone stela from **Edfu**, with no decoration present. It is carved with four rows of Coptic writing. The text is cut through on the left, but it is possible to make out some of it. On line 2 the Greek letter abbreviations XC (Christ) and IC (Jesus) appear, and on line 4 there is the beginning of the word 'amen'. Of the Coptic stelae in store, three have recently been sent to **Cardiff University** for restoration and conservation. **EC521** is particularly beautiful, although currently in five fragments. The decoration features two birds (possibly peacocks) facing one another, and rosettes around the edge.



EC521

Textiles: Many of the textiles survive as they were buried with the dead in the dry Egyptian climate: the dead were buried in their clothing, or in shrouds made from wall hangings. Linen or wool tunics were decorated with patches of embroidery in a range of colours such as red from the madder plant or kermes insect; blue and purple from the indigo, woad, or murex shells; yellow from saffron; green from saffron and woad; brown and black from clay pigments and minerals. Patterns include hares, birds, vines, leaves, fish, dancing figures. Textiles are considered by many to be the best expression of Coptic art, especially as the colours and patterns tend to be so well preserved.



Many of our Coptic textiles came from the 1906 **Rustafjaell** sale. The most likely sites of origin are **Akhmim**, **Antinoë** and **Hawara**, where they were often taken from unrecorded graves.

Our textiles are on display in the Textiles case with its accompanying drawers, in other drawers in the House of Life, and in store. We have examples of a fairly complete linen tunic with embroidered decoration (**W1073**), as well as many fragments of tunics and shrouds. With respect to the decorative patches of embroidery, the positioning of the motifs can be traced back to Late Roman style, and is usually over the shoulders and knees. The decorated pieces have particular Latin names:

Clavi (vertical bands descending from the shoulders) such as **EC824**, **EC1049**, **W1077**.

Orbiculi (medallions) such as the round **EC603**, **EC607**, **EC935**, **EC1139**; the leaf-shaped **EC824**; and two 8 pointed star-shapes **EC606**, **W859**.

Tabulae (square panels) such as **EC614**, **EC1048**.

The patterns featured include animals (hares, lions, snakes: **EC166**, **EC1081**, **W1077**), human figures (**EC1068**, **W913**) and faces (**EC935**, **EC1049**), plants (vine and other leaves: **EC606**, **EC1048**, **W859**), and geometric designs (lozenges, circles, stripes, interlacing: **EC607**, **EC614**, **EC1066**, **EC1139**). There are two with a clearly Christian motif: a saint holding a staff (**EC1068**), and a Coptic cross (looking very like an ankh: **EC1082**). Hares are also a common Coptic motif for eternity, resurrection and fertility (**W1077**).



The colours used are red, red-brown, purple, black, blue, green, white, and orange. The most colourful pieces are **EC950** and **EC1082**, which feature green, orange, red and blue.

Jewellery: The collection is to be found in the Body Adornment case, and in store. Not surprisingly, Coptic crosses feature on earrings and pendants. This cross, much influenced by the ankh symbol, is the intersection of two lines of equal length; sometimes with a round loop at the top (known as the *crux ansata*). These are frequently made of mother of pearl (**AB31**, **EC2068**, **W235**) or copper alloy/bronze (**AB57**). We also have other pendants of shell (**EC2068**) and bronze (**AB71**), plus beads of glass (**EC2053**), faience and stone (**AR50/3485**, **AR50/3486**). Copper alloy is a

common material for earrings (**AB31**, **EC2068**), and torcs (**W559**, **W560**). We also find iron being used for earrings and bracelets (**W564**-**W580**), as well as lead or silver earrings (**EC2063**).

We have various jewellery finds from **Abydos** (**AB31**, **AB57**), **Armant** (**AR50/3485**, **AR50/3486**), and the 1929 expedition by **Brunton** to **Mostagedda** (**EC2063**, **EC2064**, **EC2069**).

To conclude: we have a rich and varied collection of Coptic art and craft, which illustrates the evolution of Ancient Egyptian art in the early years of the first millennium.

Written by: Dulcie Engel

¹Cannuyer(2001: 16-21)

²Cannuyer (2001: 122-124); www.coptic.org/language

³Some small items are catalogued together (such as beads).

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The Screaming Mummy



Ramesses III was a pharaoh of the 20th dynasty, which was not the most stable period in Egyptian history, with endless wars which drained the state treasury, and bad weather. All this led to a successful murder plot against Ramesses III in 1155 B.C.

In 1881 at *Deir el-Bahari* on the West Bank at **Luxor**, a Royal cache (collection) of mummies was discovered. It is said that the priests of the 21st and 22nd Dynasty hid the corpses of royal members to protect them from tomb robbers.

Contained within the collection was a mummy dubbed 'The Screaming Mummy'.

In 2012, Egyptologist **Zahi Hawass** and *Cairo University* radiologist **Sahar Saleem** scanned Ramesses III's mummy and revealed that a killer had cut through his oesophagus and trachea, killing him almost instantly¹. New evidence has come to light suggesting that multiple killers were involved. Furthermore, Hawass and his team have proved - by DNA sampling and CT scans - that the Screaming Mummy is that of **Pentawere**, a son of Ramses III.

Scans show that Ramesses III, as well as having his throat cut, had one of his big toes hacked off, as **Stephanie Pappas** at *LiveScience* reports², and that the wound never had time to heal, meaning it likely happened at the same time his throat was slit. This indicates that a different weapon was used, with Ramesses attacked from front and back, confirming the theory of multiple killers, the names of which will never be known.

The Egyptians believed that one could only attain an afterlife if one's body was mummified and preserved. So, it seems that Ramesses III's embalmers may have attempted to hide the wounds by doing a little cosmetic surgery, creating a fake toe

out of linen and covering it in layers of resin.

A manuscript titled the *Judicial Papyrus of Turin* details a plot to eliminate Ramesses III. In the manuscript it reveals that a secondary wife **Tiye** and her son Pentawere conspired with a butler named **Mastesuria**, the cattle overseer **Panhayboni**, overseer of the harem **Panouk**, and clerk of the harem **Pendua**. Since the harem had very restricted access, Panhayboni sought out the overseer of the King's treasury, **Paury**, to obtain a pass that would allow the conspirators access to the king³.

The trial of the above was overseen by **Ramesses IV** in the name of his murdered father. The court consisted of twelve judges. Over the course of the trial, 28 people who actively participated in the killing were executed, while 10 were forced to take their own lives. Pentawere had to hang himself, and his body was not properly mummified. This could explain why the mouth is wide open, as he was not embalmed.

Ramesses III was laid to rest in Tomb KV11, located in the main valley of the *Valley of the Kings*.

Written by: Donna Thomas

¹Hawass, Zahi; Saleem, Sahar N. (2016). Scanning the Pharaohs : CT Imaging of the New Kingdom Royal Mummies (Hardback ed.). New York: The American University in Cairo Press. pp. 181-182.

²<https://www.livescience.com/61749-screaming-mummy-backstory.html>

³Goedicke, Hans (December 1963). "Was Magic Used in the Harem Conspiracy against Ramesses III? (P.Rollin and P.Lee)". *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*. 49: 71-92. doi:10.2307/3855702.



Ernest Harold Jones

Howard Carter achieved international fame after the discovery of **Tutankhamun's** tomb in 1922, but it was Welshman **Ernest Harold Jones** (1877-1911) who first picked up the trail of the boy king.



Jones was born in Yorkshire in 1877, but raised in the family's native Carmarthen. His father William became the Principal of *Carmarthen Art School*, and Harold clearly had inherited his artistic talent, becoming a pupil teacher at the School of Art.

In 1901 he won a scholarship to the *Royal College of Art* in London. His drawing from the antique won prizes, and he later assisted in teaching lettering and writing in the School of Design. Due to the onset of tuberculosis, he had to leave the RCA in 1903 to seek a drier climate. He joined **Flinders Petrie's** *British School of Archaeology* in Egypt, where he met Howard Carter.

His first post was at *Beni-Hasan* as artist assistant to **John Garstang**. There he lived and worked among the Vth and VIth dynasty tombs. Work ceased in June due to the intense heat, and Jones returned home.

He was able to return to Egypt in 1907 to work in the *Valley of the Kings* for the American lawyer **Theodore Davis**, whose wealth allowed him to fund excavations at

this site. Jones' primary role was to draw the contents of the tombs and paint facsimiles of the decorated scenes on the tomb walls. This included the tombs of both Tutankhamun's father **Akhenaten**, and his successor **Horemheb**. It wasn't long before he became the director of excavations and began to discover small finds including ring bezels and seal impressions, which contained the name of the yet undiscovered pharaoh Tutankhamun.

His excavations in the Valley of the Kings led him to the discovery of *KV58* a few years later in 1909, which contained finds including gold-work items naming the boy king. Although Jones believed (correctly) that this was a robbers' stash, Davis was sure that this was in fact Tutankhamun's tomb, later announcing the discovery and concluding the valley was now fully excavated.

In 1911 Jones died of tuberculosis while on site, and was buried in *Luxor*. His funeral was organised by Howard Carter and **Lord Carnarvon**, who then took over excavations in the Valley of the Kings and discovered the real tomb of Tutankhamun in 1922.

The Egypt Centre displays a poster of this local Welsh Egyptologist, and some of his paintings and drawings are held at *Carmarthenshire County Museum*, as well as a number of artefacts donated by Jones.

Written by: Barbara Neilson

Fletcher.J.2019. *Tutankhamun unmasked: 7 intriguing truths about the pharaoh and his treasures*, **History Extra**

<https://www.historyextra.com/period/ancient-egypt/tutankhamun-unmasked-intriguing-truths-facts-about-pharaoh-treasures-exhibition/>



sticking out). It might seem more logical to start with a door opening of a sensible size and construct the ornamental frame around this, but that's not the way an ancient Egyptian would think about it. The door had to be properly proportioned, even if that meant that you needed to duck your head to pass through it, and it had to be as large as floor-to-ceiling height and available resources permitted. The outline rectangle needs to have an aspect ratio (ratio of height to width) between 2:1 (twice as tall as it is wide) and 4:3 (1.333:1, or one-and-one-third times as tall as it is wide), and preferably towards the middle of that range. The average aspect ratio of my 35 Rock Tombs doors is 1.649:1, and the extreme limits are 1.998 and 1.366. This why there is an error margin of +/- 19% in predicting height from width, though the tendency of the results to cluster around and just below the middle of the range means that using an average value probably gives better accuracy than the raw figures would suggest. In absolute figures, in the Rock Tombs data the outline rectangle width varies between 1.21 and 3.09 metres with an average of 2.03, and overall height between 2.21 and 4.84 metres, with an average of 3.33.

The Door Opening

The next step is to define the size and placement of the door opening. Draw the rectangle's diagonals - the upper corners of the opening will never be far from these lines. To locate the corners precisely, measure down from the top of the diagonal a distance equal to half the width of the outline rectangle. This measurement was evidently subject to negotiation, but few doors depart very far from it. This is why some of the doors reconstructed at Amarna have very low openings - a metre and a half high or even less. The height of the door opening is always more than two-thirds and less than four-fifths of the overall height, with an average value of 73.7%. Many ceilings at Amarna were only two metres, or a little more, above the floor, and three-quarters of two metres is a metre and a half. Width is less critical, but 60 centimetres (eight palms) seems to be the absolute minimum design standard in respectable construction, and anyone wanting an impressive door would aim for more than this. The minimum opening width from the Rock Tombs is 0.67 metres, the maximum 1.37 and the average 0.99, but by the normal standards of domestic architecture most of these doors fall somewhere in the range between large and enormous. One reconstructed door from the city (from house M50.13) had an opening width of 0.63 metres (and a height of 1.48!). Since the width of the door opening is usually close to half the overall width (closest in the middle of the aspect ratio range), you can allow for this beforehand.

Decorating the Architrave

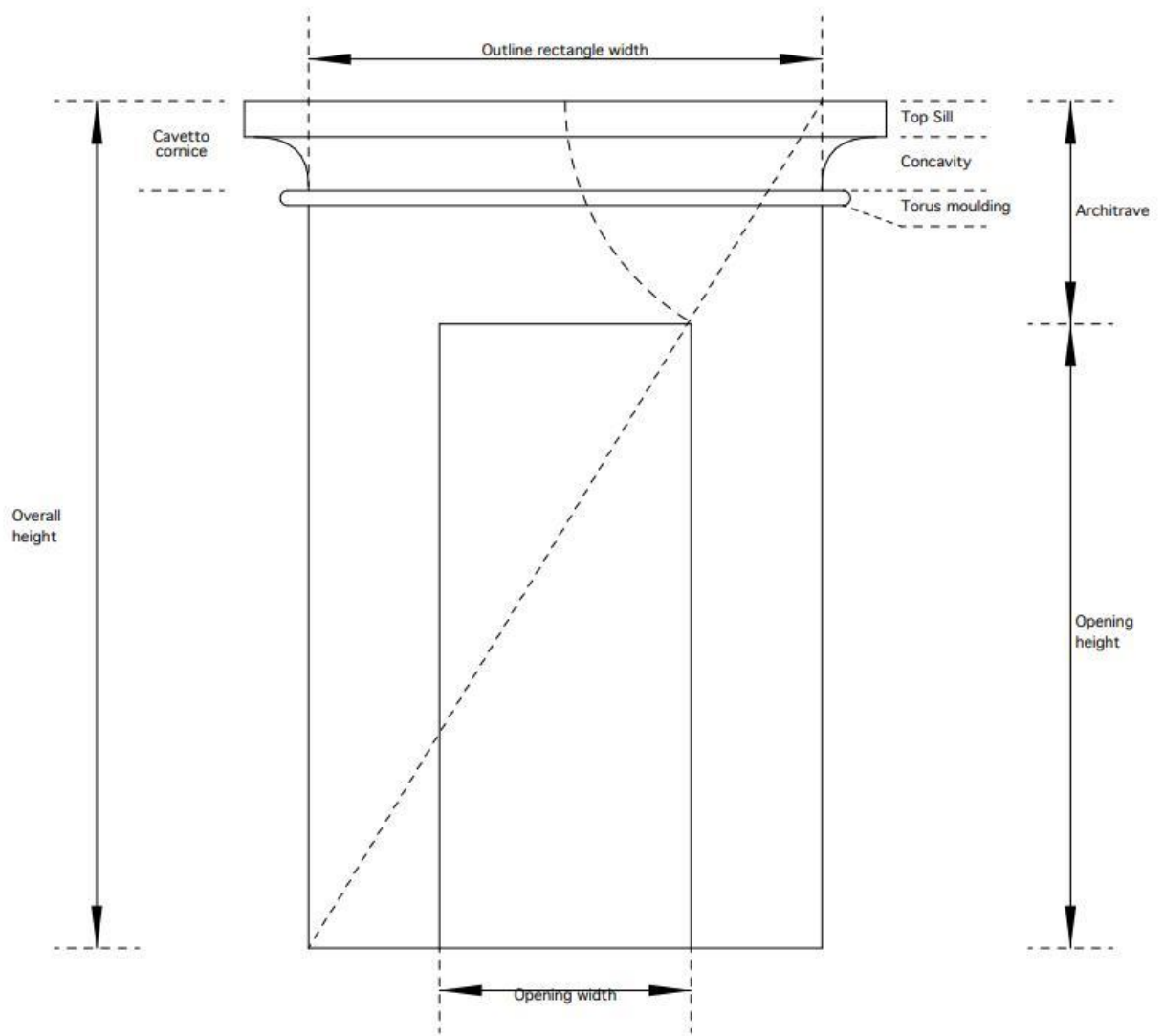
Now all we have to do is decorate the architrave above the door opening with the torus moulding and cavetto cornice. The torus moulding is the lower of these features - it's the protruding tube-like thing running right across the architrave and projecting on either side, with rounded ends. The cavetto cornice is the flaring top of the door, consisting of a concavity and a rectangular sill on top. Both are among the signature features of ancient Egyptian architecture, and they derive from the wood-fibre-and-fabric architecture of predynastic prehistory. The cavetto cornice imitates the drooping heads of vertical palm fronds bound side by side to make a fence - this is what the usual decoration of round-topped vertical stripes refers to. The torus moulding represents a long bundle of reeds bound together and tied to the fence to strengthen it and keep it straight. This is why it is decorated with loops and diagonal stripes representing the bindings.

Sizing and placing the Torus Moulding

Placing and proportioning these elements is where things start to get fuzzy, but there are some general rules - or guidelines. Let's start by dividing the height of the architrave - the space above the top of the door opening - into seven equal parts. Draw a line across the architrave at the fourth line up, just above halfway. Your torus moulding will straddle this line. Provided that it does, you can place it higher or lower as you like, and no-one can honestly tell you that you're doing it wrong. As for the top-to-bottom measurement of the moulding, this seems to be completely unrelated to any of the door's other dimensions. The range found in the Rock Tombs is between 3.5 and 7.5 centimetres. Curiously, there is evidence to suggest that in some royal buildings the torus moulding diameter (and the top sill height) could be smaller than anywhere else, perhaps 2 centimetres or less. We'll leave the question of how far out to the sides the torus moulding protrudes until we've dealt with the cornice, for reasons which will become obvious.

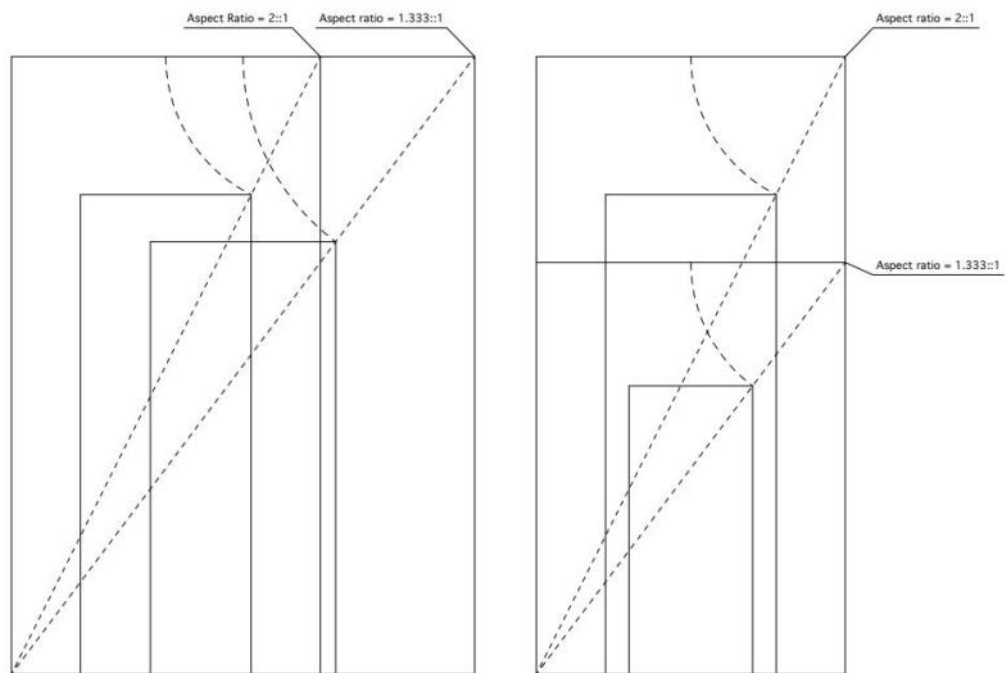
Despite the scope for variation in placing the torus moulding, this is actually the most consistent and reliable feature of the architrave decoration - the torus moulding diameter is small compared with the architrave height. This means that if you have remains of an architrave which preserve the torus moulding and either the lintel edge or the top of the sill, you can reconstruct the total height of the architrave with fair accuracy, and from that, the overall height of the door. The relationship between overall height and opening height is the most accurately predictable one found in the data, and the architrave height is, by definition, the difference between these two figures.





A perfectly average door

All the proportions of this door are taken from the averages found in the Rock Tombs data



Two different ways of visualising the aspect ratio range of the Rock Tombs doors



Egyptology in The News



New revelations about Belfast's famous mummy

Takabuti was the first mummy to be brought to Ireland, in 1834, and resides in the Ulster Museum in Belfast. She was the mistress of a great house in Thebes 2600 years ago. A recent study of her DNA and scans has revealed that she came to a violent end, stabbed in the back. Furthermore, her DNA is more closely related to that of Europeans than to modern Egyptians.

Tuna al-Gabal tomb discoveries

On the edge of the western desert near Minya, archaeologists have found sixteen tombs containing twenty sarcophagi and five wooden coffins, most probably belonging to high priests of Thoth and other important officials. Hundreds of amulets and ten thousand shabtis have also been found at the site.

Has lost fourth pyramid of Giza been found?

Egyptologist Matthew Sibson claims to have found evidence for this pyramid, first described by Frederik Ludvig Norden in 1737. Matching up Norden's sketches to satellite imagery, Sibson believes the site is a flat piece of land slightly due west of the remaining pyramids, and connected to the Wall of the Crow, just south of the Sphinx.

Huge predynastic burial ground found near Alexandria

83 graves have been discovered at Koam Al-Khiljan, south-east of Alexandria, dating from at least three different periods. Most are from the first half of the fourth millennium BCE, the Buto culture (also known as Lower Egyptian). Three graves date back to the Naqada III (Proto-dynastic) period; and there are also four burials from the Hyksos (Second Intermediate) period. Related pottery, utensils, jewellery and amulets have been found in the graves.

New claims about Nefertiti's burial chamber

A team of scientists led by Mamdouh Eldamaty have used ground-penetrating radar to survey Tutankhamun's tomb, and have discovered a previously unknown space behind the north wall of the burial chamber, which could well be the last resting place of Nefertiti. This revives the claims made by Nicholas Reeves in 2015, and refuted by Franco Porcelli in 2018.

A funeral mask "more beautiful than Tutankhamun's" ?

A Spanish research team has discovered a stunning cartonnage funerary mask dating from the Middle

Kingdom in the sand outside a tomb in the cliffs at Qubbet el-Hawa, near Aswan.

A coffin reveals its secret

Researchers from the Harvard University Semitic Museum recently made a stunning find when opening the 3000 year old coffin of Ankh-khonsu, a doorkeeper in the Temple of Amun-Ra at Luxor: a well preserved painting of the sun god Ra-Horakhty.

Cat goddess is recycled

Egyptian sculptor Ibrahim Salah has created a statue of the goddess Bastet at Marioteya, Giza. He assembled the 400 kg, six-meter-high statue in a month, using 3000 pieces of scrap metal.

Royal find at Deir el-Bahari

Egyptologists have found a stone chest containing a sacrificial goose, a goose egg and an ibis egg, plus a separate faience box, in the royal cemetery. The box is inscribed with the name of Thutmose II, husband to Hatshepsut.

Step pyramid re-opened

After a 14 year restoration, Djoser's pyramid has re-opened, and his sarcophagus has been restored.

Digital reconstruction of 2000 year old leopard painting

The brightly coloured fragment from a sarcophagus discovered near Aswan last year has been reconstructed by scientists at the University of Milan.

New nanomaterial based on Egyptian blue

Scientists at the University of Göttingen (Germany) have produced a new nanomaterial based on one of the oldest manmade pigments, Egyptian blue, or calcium copper silicate (see article in Oct-Dec 2019 Newsletter). The material can be used in near infrared spectroscopy and microscopy, promising future developments in the areas of biomedical and agricultural research.

Egypt responds to the coronavirus pandemic...

Egypt is disinfecting the pyramids at Giza and other archaeological sites in an attempt to stop the spread of the virus. On World Heritage Day (18/4/20), the message 'Stay home' was projected onto those pyramids. And the Egyptian Tourist Board is offering four virtual trips of historic sites, with help from Harvard University for the 3D modelling. These include the 5000 year old tomb of Queen Meresankh III,



granddaughter of Khufu. It has particularly fine painting on the walls.

More Ancient Egyptian inspired sneakers!

Following Nike (see Oct-Dec 2019 Newsletter), Vans has released two new styles printed with the ouroboros symbol of a dragon (or serpent) eating its own tail. The serpent originally represented the god Mehen, who protected Ra in his underworld journey. The symbol represents the cyclical nature of life.

Plan to move Tutankhamun's mummy sparks anger

It has been confirmed that the pharaoh's body is to be moved in May from his tomb in the Valley of the Kings at Luxor to the new Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM) in Cairo. This follows the removal of other burial items belonging to Tutankhamun from Luxor Museum, as the plan to house all royal related items in GEM continues. People in Luxor are upset at the loss of their heritage, which draws so many tourists south.

Scottish museum coffin reveals painting of goddess Amentet

A 3000 year old mummy, Ta-Kr-Hb, a priestess or princess from Thebes, has resided undisturbed at Perth Museum and Art Gallery for over one hundred years. Recently, conservationists removed her from her coffin for preservation treatment; and discovered a well-preserved painting inside the coffin, depicting Amentet, a protector of the dead, who personified the Land of the West.

Saqqara: Large caches of animal and human mummies reveal secrets

In the sixties, archaeologists stumbled across a series of tunnels in Saqqara filled with millions of mummified animals, but a recent CT scan of the burials has shocked experts. Only one third contained the full skeleton of the animal; another third contained parts of the animal; with no animal-related material found inside the last third.

Also in Saqqara, near the Sacred Animal Necropolis, a cache of human burials dating from the late Pharaonic era has just been discovered, and one coffin was found to contain 365 shabtis, one for each day of the year. Some of the mummies were priests and priestesses of a mysterious snake goddess, known as Niut-shaes.

A coffin belonging to the woman Didibastett was found to contain 6 canopic jars instead of just 4, the extra 2 also containing human tissue. Furthermore, at the mummification workshop complex, a cache of pottery and a rare gilded silver mask have been found. More recently, 13 wooden coffins, dating back 2500 years, have been found fully intact, 11 metres deep in a burial shaft.

Luxor: Mummy of a teenage bride and her trousseau discovered

A Spanish team from the Djehuty Project found the coffin on a hill known as Dra Abu el-Naga. It dates from

almost 3,600 years ago, and the girl was aged between 15 and 16 at death. Her treasure comprises two earrings, two rings and four necklaces.

Grand Egyptian Museum opening gala snub

Lord Carnarvon, the great grandson of the 5th Earl of Carnarvon, says he and his wife have not been invited to the grand opening of the new museum in Cairo next year. The three day gala is timed to celebrate the famous discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922 by Howard Carter, funded by the 5th Earl. The museum will house all the treasures from that tomb.

New photographic technologies bring Egyptology to life

Irish photo technician Matt Loughrey has developed a technique using facial recognition technology to reconstruct faces from history. The project has just reconstructed the face of Seti I. See his website: mycolorfulpast.com.

In another development, a recent BBC4 documentary presented by Elizabeth Froom of Oxford University showed how cutting edge colourisation technology can bring to life details of the original 1920s film footage of Carter's excavation of the tomb of Tutankhamun.

'Black goo' mystery solved!

Dr Kate Fulcher of the British Museum has led a project to analyse the 'black goo' found in a number of coffins. Over 100 samples were taken from 22nd Dynasty coffins and mummy cases, and analysed using gas chromatography – mass spectrometry. The substance was found to include plant oils, animal fats, tree resins, beeswax and bitumen. As some of these ingredients are not native to Egypt, they must have been imported from regions of the Mediterranean and Western Asia.

'Offensive' statue back in the spotlight

Egyptian archaeologists are taking advantage of the global anti-racism movement to renew demands that a statue of Champollion standing with his foot on the head of a pharaoh be removed. The 1875 statue of the famous archaeologist who deciphered the Rosetta stone is located at the Collège de France in Paris.

Ancient Egyptian artefacts found in Saudi Arabian desert

An international team of archaeologists have discovered a vast triangular ritual platform dating from the 6th millennium BCE at the oasis settlement of Dumat al-Jandal in northern Saudi Arabia. They uncovered Egyptian artefacts, including blue glazed stone scarabs, indicating ancient trading relations between the inhabitants and New Kingdom Egypt.

USA: man caught with Egyptian artefacts in suitcases

At JFK airport in New York, a man was arrested in January for attempting to smuggle 590 ancient Egyptian artefacts in three suitcases. When they were unpacked, the objects were still covered in wet earth



and sand, suggesting they had been dug up recently. The smuggler has been indicted by federal prosecutors.

A step closer to finding Cleopatra's tomb?

At the Taposiris Magna site 30 miles from Alexandria, archaeologists have discovered two 2000 year old high status mummies, indicating that this was an important necropolis, and therefore a good contender for the last resting place of Cleopatra VII.

Teeth shed new light on origins of the Hyksos

Chemical analysis of the teeth of 75 skeletons found in the Hyksos capital of Avaris that these people from the Levant immigrated to Egypt centuries before the takeover by the Hyksos: so the dynasty was more likely to have been the result of an immigrant uprising rather than a foreign invasion.

More statues discovered

At Mit Raineih, south of Cairo, statues of the goddesses Hathor and Sekhmet, and the god Ptah, as well as of Ramses II have been uncovered. Furthermore, Coptic era limestone blocks were found at the site.

Now we can all write hieroglyphs thanks to Google!

Google has launched a new tool called Fabricius, which uses machine learning to teach hieroglyphs. It is available free on the Google Art & Culture website and app.

Sorry Mr Musk: pyramids were NOT built by aliens!

Following a tweet from Elon Musk supporting the well-known conspiracy theory, the Egyptian government has invited the American entrepreneur to find out how the pyramids were actually built, and to check out the tombs of the pyramid builders.

Parade of the royal mummies

22 royal mummies are to be transported from their current home in the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir Square, central Cairo, to their new permanent display in the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization in Fustat, Old Cairo. The mummies, from the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th dynasties, include those of Ramses II, Thutmose III, Seti I, and Hatshepsut .

Egypt Centre animal mummies make headlines

A research project, led by the Egypt Centre and Professor Richard Johnston of Swansea University College of Engineering, has been published to general media interest. It shows how 3D micro CT scans can digitally 'unwrap' mummies to reveal much greater detail. Furthermore, the images can be rotated and viewed from any angle. Mummies of a cat, a snake and a bird were chosen from our collection for this project. The collaboration between Egyptologists, archaeologists, engineers and biologists enabled identification of the species, age, health and cause of death.

Pet monkeys from India buried with grave goods in Egypt

Archaeologists from the University of Warsaw's Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, along with researchers from Delaware University in the U.S., found 16 monkeys buried at a first century CE pet cemetery in Berenice, a Roman era port on Egypt's Red Sea coast. 3D scans and bone analysis showed that they were from two related species found in India: rhesus and bonnet macaques. The method of burial along with grave goods such as shells, pottery, and even a blanket, shows that they were well-cared for, although all died young, possibly from bad diet or disease.

Montblanc launches hieroglyphic pen

For 2020, the luxury pen company has resurrected its 1920s 'Egyptian Fountain Pen', which features the company name in hieroglyphs (translating as 'White Mountain').

Compiled & Summarized by: Dulcie Engel

And | Quote...

"The Roman state adopts the gods of Egypt: Horus and Anubis strike fancy-dress poses in Roman military costume. A hawk-headed Roman on horseback carrying a lance is both the receding Horus and the yet-to-come St George. Christian iconography appropriates the image most popular in Egyptian devotion: the mother with the baby on her knee. Then young Islam abstracts it all, grasps the old vivid colours and the motifs of plant and animal life and develops them into designs that will influence the look of the world from the great tapestries of Cluny to the facades with which the city states of Italy faced the Mediterranean.

As for the people, they will get help wherever they can; prayers and spells and amulets combine ankhs, crosses, old deities, seven-point diadems, the archangel Gabriel. The people will fashion talismans in hieroglyphs, Coptic, Greek and Arabic."

- Ahdaf Soueif, 2015 (on the British Museum exhibition 'Egypt. Faith after the pharaohs')



Friends of the Egypt Centre



This year's Friends of the Egypt Centre programme is slightly different than in previous years. As a result of the ongoing Covid-19 social distancing rules, we've taken the programme online. Although using **Zoom** is very different to meeting in person, "meeting" online seemed a better option than not meeting at all!

Our programme kicked off on 23rd September with **Essam Nagy**, of the Egypt Exploration Society, and Director of the *Osiris-Ptah Nebankh Research Project*, who presented on the recent discoveries South of the Tenth Pylon at **Karnak** Temple. Due to the wonders of Zoom Essam was able to join us virtually from Egypt. As one attendee pointed out, the sounds of cars honking in the background and the beautiful photographs Essam shared left many of us feeling very homesick for Egypt. Essam discussed his work at the chapel of Osiris Ptah Nebankh, which lies just south-east of the tenth pylon at Karnak, a little to the east of the avenue of sphinxes that connects the enclosure of the god **Amun** with that of his consort, **Mut**. It was amazing to see the colossal amount of clearing work that was undertaken, as well as some of the beautiful objects found, including a fragment of a beautifully carved stela depicting a ram and goose.

As this was our first Friends lecture in an online format, we made this first lecture free of charge in order to introduce our fantastic programme of speakers to a wider audience. As well as some of our usual familiar faces, it was nice to welcome so many new ones with over one hundred delegates in attendance from all over the world (I doubt we would have all fitted into the Mall Room of the Taliesin!).

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who attended, and stuck with us in spite of any technical difficulties. Speaking to the delegates of the many different online courses and lectures being offered by the Egypt Centre at this time, it's good to hear how much of a difference being able to access the content from home is making. If you were not able to make the September lecture, please do join us for future events; we'd love to "see" you there!

Written by: Sam Powell



For further information or to become a member please contact:
Membership Secretary Wendy Goodridge:
01792 295960 w.r.goodridge@swansea.ac.uk

Upcoming...

14th Oct 2020

Kasia Szpakowska, Swansea Uni.

The Inebriated Heart: Ecstasy through visions & dance in Ancient Egypt

"This discussion focuses on the specific terminology that indicates an ecstatic experience..."

18th Nov 2020

Campbell Price, Manchester Uni.

The Two Brothers of Manchester Museum

"An intact Middle Kingdom tomb group from Rifeh is a central exhibit in the museum..."

11th Dec 2020

Carolyn Graves-Brown, TEC.

All That Glitters Is Not Gold

"Some of the most 'dull' objects in the Egypt Centre are actually 'golden stars'..."

All presentations online only until further notice.

Check the Friends' website for further information, and more dates:

egypt.swan.ac.uk/about/friends-of-the-egypt-centre/



A Message from Syd



Dear Egypt Centre Volunteers,

We hope that you are all well and coping under the current circumstances. As you can imagine it has been difficult for all of us. The air conditioning at the museum has finally expired and needs to be replaced. Until it is there is little chance of us returning to the galleries. The museum has also experienced serious budget cuts, therefore if anyone is interested in, or has ideas for fundraising, please let me know.

Some volunteers have managed to be involved with the EC remotely: writing blogs, newsletter articles, transcribing catalogues and auction slips, translating documents, co-hosting our online lectures and even naming a new line of jewellery which will eventually be available from our shop! We recognize that not everyone can be involved digitally but please be reassured that you all remain part of the Egypt Centre team. If you can engage with the museum's online talks, digital events etc. please do so. Details as ever will be posted in the weekly volunteer email.

Training will be underway shortly for the virtual school visits, and these have enabled some of our former volunteers to return to us (in virtual form!). If you are an Education Leader and are interested in participating, please contact me.

Syd Howells,

Museum Volunteer Manager



Ancient Egypt has inspired many singers, but you might not be aware of this particular example: a 1914 **Singer 66K** 'Lotus' model sewing machine!

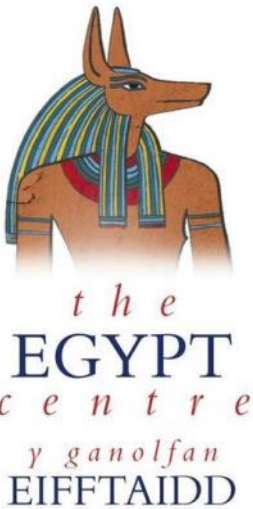
The 66K was produced in **Kilbowie**, Scotland, between 1907-39, and later in the USA until 1956. Widely recognised as the first sewing machine with a "near-perfect" stitch, its design incorporated many innovations which are still present in sewing machines today. Later models replaced the lotus design with a sphinx.

This one is still in working order after over 100 years, and the photo was kindly shared with us by proud owner **Elisabeth Bennett**.





Some photos taken at **Sainsbury Centre for The Arts, UEA, Norwich**, by our own **Dulcie Engel**, during a visit this summer.



WE WANT YOU!

We need gallery and education volunteers to help run our museum

For further details email the Volunteer Manager on l.s.j.howells@swansea.ac.uk

egypt.swan.ac.uk