Welcome

Message from the ACE Director

Dear Member,

Welcome to 2022! I look forward to seeing you in person this year, covid rules permitting. A terrific program is planned, with the 6th Australasian Egyptology Conference slated for mid-June. As part of global efforts to celebrate the centenary of the discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb, a special Rundle Members day of presentations will form part of the Conference program. Stay tuned for registration details. In the meantime, we look forward to hearing from Dr Sue Kelly on 16 February for our first z-lecture of the year.

Best wishes, Karin

Dr Karin Sowada
The Australian Centre for Egyptology

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Crisis as Opportunity: Social Change in Early Middle Kingdom Egypt

On 24 December 2021, the Australian government announced the funding of two research projects located within the Faculty of Arts for the duration 2022 – 2024, one of which is Crisis as Opportunity: Social Change in Early Middle Kingdom Egypt. The project will be delivered by a competitive team consisting of Martin Bommas, Naguib Kanawati and Craig O’Neill. They combine 70 active years of fieldwork in Egypt and a total of 383 publications in their respective fields. The current study is Professor Kanawati’s ninth project funded by the ARC between 1981 and 2022.

Whereas traditional studies of funerary archaeology often address monuments in isolation and without integrating research on necropolis infrastructure, cross-site analysis, or social stratification, Crisis as Opportunity applies methods of micro-history to determine the personal experiences of three individuals/social groups in two different sites: Qubbet el-Hawa and Beni Hassan.

The study aims at determining how individuals during the early Middle Kingdom in Egypt responded to a period of crisis caused by the collapse of the Old Kingdom and the ensuing societal and cultural change of the First Intermediate Period. Traditional methods will be used as well as relatively new, or even unknown so far, approaches in the field of Egyptology: these include ceramological studies and residue analysis, as well as, remote sensing and the assessment of satellite radar and multispectral data, as tested at Qubbet el-Hawa, to update the maps of Beni Hassan from 1904. Assisted by the design of a database of finds from both sites, the team will be able to assess social change through ‘archaeological biographies’ and situate individuals/social groups that occupied both sites within their social and historical context.

COVID-19 regulations permitting, fieldwork is expected to re-commence in late 2022 after a hiatus of three years.
Research from the Australian Museum: an Egyptian funerary boat model


From a team of researchers, including Egyptologist Dr Jana Jones, this new research examines the unprovenanced and stylistically unusual wooden boat model (AM E60381) from the Australian Museum collection.

Stylistically, resembling a divine (sun) barque, the model has no parallels among comparable representations.

Through the combined analysis of iconographic motifs, construction methods and radiocarbon dates, the model can be attributed to the period spanning the late Old Kingdom and the early Middle Kingdom.

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The article is available as a free download here.

PUBLISHED!
Recently published research from an international team, including ACE Director Dr Karin Sowada and Dr Alice McClymont, sheds new light on the relationship between the Egyptian state and the polity of Byblos on the Lebanese coast in the Early Bronze Age. The paper presents geochemical results of ceramic fragments of imported pottery found in 4th Dynasty Giza tombs (c. 2613–2494 BCE). Emission spectroscopy techniques were used on the fragments, with the outcomes compared against a large ceramic dataset from sites in Lebanon, including Byblos.

The results revealed the presence of standardised local ceramic production at Byblos that was specifically tailored to the needs of the Egyptian state.

The work builds on a petrographic study of the jars published in 2020 by developing the picture of Egypt’s economic relationships in the eastern Mediterranean, and the role of regional intermediaries in exchange networks. The research program was supported by ARC Grant FT170100288, and grant funding from Durham University (UK).

READ MORE

The article is available as a free download here.

NEW BOOK: 100 Treasures 100 Emotions

Edited by Professor Martin Bommas, this new volume focuses on 100 works from a vast collection of 15,000 objects, to highlight the depth and history of the new Macquarie University History Museum, and its focus on the story and the human condition beyond the borders of space and time. The authors are united in a bold move to investigate objects from a non-standard, emotional perspective, using modern research to reveal the value and meaning in objects beyond the facts.

The objects featured were chosen by 52 Macquarie scholars to achieve a representative and rigorously researched survey of human experience and creativity over five millennia drawing on the depth and history of Macquarie's collections.

The work comprises, short essays on each of the 100 selected objects by a broad range of academic authors, complemented by entirely new photography of the objects commissioned from award-winning photographer Effy Alexakis.

Contributing to the work on Egyptological objects featured are Georgia Barker, Susanne Binder, Camilla Di Biase-Dyson, Linda Evans, Naguib Kanawati, Anna-Latifa Mourad, Boyo Ockinga, Karin Sowada, and Yann Tristant among others.

READ MORE
The book can be purchased through the MQ giftshop. Rundle members can use the code 100TREASURES at the checkout to receive a 15% discount.

Also available at the MQ giftshop is Macquarie University History Museum’s exhibition catalogue *East Meets West: The Crusades and the Age of Decolonisation*. The temporary exhibition is currently showing at the Macquarie University History Museum. Rundle members can use the code EASTWEST at the checkout to receive a 5% discount on the catalogue.


**ACE/Rundle Events and Lecture Series**

The first lecture in the 2022 ACE/Rundle Lecture Series will be held on Wednesday 16 February, 6.30 pm (AEDT) on Zoom. Our presenter Dr Sue Kelly will speak on *Lifting the veil: Female social power in Early Egypt (c. 3080–2180 BCE)*. [Register for Sue’s talk here.](#)

**READ SUE’S ABSTRACT HERE**

Despite an exponential increase in women and gender studies in Egyptology spanning three decades, women’s engagement in the socio-political-economic structure of the early Egyptian State remains underrepresented in scholarship. Historically, the State has often been investigated via hierarchical models of the male elite’s autobiographical material, with prominence given to the study of official titles that act as barometers for the status and rank of the personnel. The predominance of males employed in centralised state administration, private sectors, and religious positions has overshadowed the concomitant female workforce, leading to a perception that women were excluded from these areas.

Mainstream studies have tended to relegate female participation in the private sector, primarily in the employ of other females. Categorisations such as these structurally marginalise women’s service by implying that being in the employ of elite females or a queen constitutes an inferior position. This presentation delivers the results of my recent PhD that advanced a theoretical study of 1400 ancient biographical inscriptions belonging to women from a cross-section of society, from Dynasties 1 to 6 (c. 3080–2180 BCE). Please join me to hear new perspectives on women’s access to social power and engagement in Egypt’s political, economic, and ideological domains.

*Image: Nsi-Skr, Pyramid Builders Cemetery, Giza. Photo: Sue Kelly*

We are continuing to hold lectures on zoom and will move to a hybrid format as soon as suitable. Please reserve the following Wednesdays **6.30–8.00 pm Sydney time (AEDT)** for the ACE/Rundle Lecture Series:

**Semester 1**

- Wed 16 February 2022
- Wed 9 March 2022
- Wed 13 April 2022
- Wed 11 May 2022

**Semester 2**

- Wed 10 August 2022
- Wed 14 September 2022
- Wed 12 October 2022
- Wed 9 November 2022
The Australian Centre for Egyptology, on behalf of Macquarie University, has the pleasure of announcing the 6th Australasian Egyptology Conference, taking place from 9–12 June 2022. Save the dates! Registration will open in March.

This hybrid conference will be held both in-person and online at the new Macquarie University Arts Precinct. We warmly welcome everyone interested in current Egyptological research and fieldwork. Local and international scholars and postgraduate candidates are invited to submit abstracts for:

- papers of 20 minutes duration
- papers of 10 minutes duration
- poster presentations

Please submit your Abstract (up to 300 words) and title before 15 March 2022 to AAEC22@mq.edu.au for consideration by the Scientific Committee.

Students of Egyptology: MRes Projects 2022

In 2022 we welcome in a new cohort of Master of Research (MRes) Year 2 Egyptology students. Over the next year, these students will work on preparing a research thesis of 20,000 words.

We wish them well as they embark on the next stage of their studies.

Eleonora Ferretti  The Neolithic Badarian Culture of Egypt: A Social Network Approach
Khyya Ryder  Composite Creatures in Dynastic Egypt: The Significance of Representation and Identity Construction
Meredith Stewart  Painted by fire: an investigation of Predynastic black-topped pottery
Michael Hitchens  To Bee or not to Bee: An Investigation in the nsw bity title and the Egyptian understanding of apiculture
Michelle Kay  Tattoos and Identities in early Middle Kingdom Egypt: A Case Study of Three Tattooed Women Buried in the Temple of Mentuhotep II
Sinead Kyral  Scavengers of the Desert: The cultural value of the Striped Hyena in Ancient Egypt
We also continue to extend our well wishes to those students who are currently in their final stages of completing their MRes theses from 2021.

**Vale John Dean**

We are very saddened to hear of the illness and passing of John Dean, a dear friend and supporter of our Rundle community who over so many years (John and Judy Dean joined the Rundle Foundation in 1990) never missed an event we organised. We will miss John and our thoughts are with Judy and the family. Those of us who have travelled in Egypt together remember John with his camera in hand enjoying the colourful scenes in crowded streets, lanes and markets and always on the look out for the perfect picture to hold fast the essence of the place.

Boyo Ockinga and Susanne Binder

Banner image architrave from the mastaba of Mehi, Saqqara, Dyn. 6. Photo: Australian Centre for Egyptology

Rundle Foundation e-Newsletter 6 was compiled by Gillian Smith, January 31, 2022. Many thanks to all who contributed to this edition.

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