

# ANTIQUITIES OF EGYPT

SCA's Monthly Newsletter

May 2006

Issue No. 1

## Relating Saqqara's History





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## Antiquities of EGYPT

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## Preface

The Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) is one of the most important scientific institutes whose activities always attract the attention of many regional and international authorities.

Everyday, the SCA receives thousands of emails and faxes requesting more details of current news of the SCA, including new discoveries, restoration work, and the opening of new tombs and sites.

Therefore, we made the decision to launch the first edition of the SCA's monthly newsletter in an attempt to inform all concerned people about the SCA's latest news and activities. Such a newsletter will be a reference for a diverse group of people who are fond of Egypt's archaeological news and activities and who are interested in following up the latest developments in excavation and restoration carried out in Pharaonic, Graeco-Roman, Coptic, and Islamic sites and monuments.

Due to our belief in preserving Egypt's archaeological and cultural heritage, this newsletter will provide an opportunity for experts to contribute their own suggestions and opinions about restoration works in progress in order to avoid any inappropriate actions during restoration. We have completely learned the lesson. False restorations previously occurred at the Sphinx on the Giza plateau, the Hanging Church in Old Cairo, in Al-Azhar, and Amr Ibn El As Mosques, which have costs us a lot.

The newsletter will also review all news concerning the restoration of old museums like the Coptic Museum or the building of new ones such as the newly opened Imhotep Museum at Saqqara, the Al-Arish Museum, and the Rashid Museum which will be inaugurated soon. It will also highlight activities related to raising the cultural and archaeological awareness of the Egyptian community, especially youth and children by establishing temporary mobile exhibitions, festivals for children, and the Egyptian Museum school for children and adults. A fee list for every archaeological site in Egypt will also be published as a service to the tourism industry. News of exhibitions abroad will also be included. In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the staff who exerted all their efforts to launch the first issue of this newsletter, and I call upon everyone concerned to send in their suggestions as an expression of their interest in preserving and protecting Egypt's cultural heritage.

**Zahi Hawass**

### Relating Saqqara's History



At the footstep of the Saqqara archaeological hill stands the Imhotep museum, the first ever site museum in Egypt, welcoming its visitors. Two weeks ago, it was officially inaugurated by Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak and Mrs. Bernadette Chirac, wife of the French president Jacques Chirac along with the Minister of Culture Farouk Hosni and Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) Zahi Hawass.

The museum was built to commemorate both the ancient Egyptian architect Imhotep and the renowned French Egyptologist Jean Philip Lauer, who devoted most of his life to Saqqara and its monuments.

After ten years of construction and preparation, the museum is finally seeing the light of day. With a budget of LE.20 million, the museum complex offers a new concept of how a site museum can be, which will set an example for a series of such site museums planned by the SCA to be built throughout Egypt's well known archaeological sites.

According to the site management programme launched by the SCA four years ago, such

complexes offer greater and more efficient storage space which in turn will help solve the incongruous and hazardous storehouses that were always vulnerable to illegal thefts during the last century. It will also preserve the artifacts in a healthy atmosphere that prevent its deterioration.

The idea of building such a museum began in 1990 but due to the inappropriate chosen location on the Saqqara plateau, which disturbed the panorama of the site, the whole project was kept in drawers until 1997 when, at last, it was put into effect and the foundation stones were laid down.

Construction work was completed in 2003 and since that time all inspectors started digging all over Saqqara's and Abusir's archaeological magazines in search of objects suitable for such display.

The museum is preceded by a palm tree avenue bordered on one side with seven bazaars, a bookshop, two-level cafeteria and a visitor centre which can host 55 people at one time. Inside the centre, visitors will enjoy watching a 10 minute documentary film relating Saqqara's history as

**The first ever  
site museum  
in Egypt  
welcomes its  
visitors**



well as admiring a cement model of the whole site where Djoser's Step Pyramid (2687-2668 BC) existed.

With its six halls, the museum relates the history of the Saqqara Necropolis, Imhotep's architectural style, and Lauer's memoir and devotion to restore Djoser's Step Pyramid.

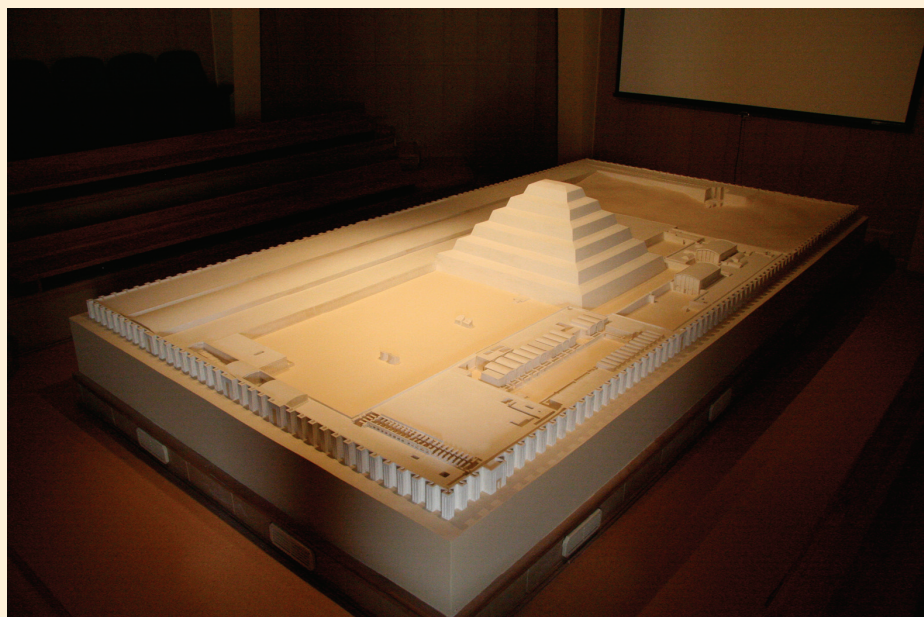
Entering the museum's main hall, visitors are greeted by a base from King Djoser's statue, on which the name and different titles of Imhotep are inscribed. This base will be exhibited for four months as it is on loan from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. Four graphics showing the different styles of architecture before and after the Imhotep period are displayed along with panels on Lauer and King Djoser.

The second hall shows masterpieces that have been unearthed in Saqqara by different archaeological missions during the last century. Among those are a collection of different shaped clay and alabaster vessels, statues of deities, an anthropoid painted coffin cased with gold and medical instruments found in the tomb of Qar the physician, a late period statue of King Psamtek, two funerary stelae - one of which bears the name of King Nikao, and a large collection of objects from Aperia's tomb.

The third hall displays the different styles of art found at Saqqara along with its ancient history through exhibiting vessels, stelae, statues, instruments, and tools used by the ancient Egyptians during the construction such of gigantic monuments.

Visitors then enter the largest hall in the museum, which shows examples of Imhotep's distinctive architectural style. It contains architectural elements from the Step Pyramid, such as columns, the blue tiled walls, a series of cobras decorating a wall, a headless statue of King Djoser, and the so-called Snake Pillar found in Teti's burial complex. A small bronze statue showing Imhotep seated and holding a papyrus in his hand is also on display.

A complete tomb with its sarcophagus, boat, and several funerary objects is exhibited in one of the museum's showcases. Objects featuring different schools of funerary art are also displayed. The last hall of the museum is dedicated to Lauer. On exhibit are some of his personal objects such as his hat, compass,



suit, and instruments that he used in excavation. The walls are decorated with photos showing Lauer at different stages of age, working at sites, escorting other colleagues, or guiding several heads of states during their official visits to Saqqara. His wedding photo is also on display. A scientific and archaeological library consisting of 300 books and newsletters of Lauer's own collection are also exhibited along with other scientific books.

As a site museum, two large state-of-the-art storehouses were built in the backyard of the museum. They include objects transferred from 65 unsuitable mud brick magazines in Saqqara and Abusir. An administrative building for the SCA employees and a residential complex for archaeological missions are also provided.

Imhotep, is the brilliant architect of the Step Pyramid of Djoser. He is the one who transformed the construction of the king's tomb from a mastaba to a pyramid, and for the first time used stone in the construction.

Imhotep became one of the king's most trusted advisors. He eventually held the offices of High Priest of Heliopolis and Lector Priest, making him a very powerful and influential man whose name was given the great honour of being inscribed on the base of one of the statues of King Djoser. Imhotep's influence lived on well after his death. In the New Kingdom, he was venerated as the patron of scribes,

personifying wisdom and education. In the 'Turin Papyri' from this period, he is also described as the son of Ptah, chief god of Memphis, in recognition of his role as a wise councillor.

During the Late Period, his veneration extended to deification, and he became a local god at Memphis where he was glorified for his skills as a physician and a healer. He is said to have extracted medicine from plants and treated diseases such as appendicitis, gout, and arthritis. At Memphis he was served by his own priesthood and was considered to be an intermediary between men and the gods. It was believed that he could help people solve difficulties in their daily lives and cure medical problems.

When the Greeks conquered Egypt, they recognised in him attributes of their own medicine god Asclepius, and continued to build temples to him. His reputation continued until the Arab invasion of North Africa in the 7th century AD. His tomb has never been found but he is thought to have served under four kings and lived until the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Dynasty (2649 BC).

## Admission Fees

<i>Foreigners</i>	<i>15 LE</i>
<i>Foreign Students</i>	<i>10 LE</i>
<i>Egyptians</i>	<i>2 LE</i>
<i>Egyptian Students</i>	<i>1 LE</i>



### More secrets revealed in Mattariya

During a routine excavation to inspect the site of Souk El-Khamis in Mattariya carried out last month by an Egyptian-German team, the remains of a sun temple dated back to the reign of the 19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty King Ramses II (1307-1196 BC) were revealed. This site is believed to be the ancient Sun City "Oun" which was one of ancient Egypt's three main cities. It was an astronomical centre, a city that worshipped the sun god Aten, and a literary focus that gathered ancient intellectuals, Greek philosophers, and students.

They also unearthed a pink granite colossus of King Ramses II weighing five tons and a 1.5 metre tall sandstone headless statue of an unidentified ancient Egyptian figure. Within the walls of the newly discovered temple, the team located three cartouches of King Ramses II along with an unknown royal head wearing a nemes (headdress) carved in pink granite and a number of talatat (small painted stones) bearing the name of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty Queen Nefertiti, wife of the monotheistic king Akhenaten.

Considered one of the most important discoveries excavated this year, this find completes missing parts of Oun's history. It also suggests that Oun continued to be an important city throughout Egyptian history, from the prehistoric era to the Saite period. Here, due to the talatat found, king Akhenaten built a temple or a shrine. The archaeological evidences for massive constructions of sun temples had been carried out much earlier than the 19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.

The story of such a discovery began in early 2003, when the Cairo governorate allocated an area in the backyard of the new obelisk station in Mattariya for a mall in order to transform the whole area into a more developed commercial zone than the one that already existed.

While laying the foundation stone, workers stumbled upon huge limestone blocks engraved with hieroglyphic text. All construction work stopped and the German-Egyptian team started their archaeological excavations uncovering a Saite head that originally was the head of king Senusert I of the 12th Dynasty (1991-1783 BC.) along with a number of stones engraved with different names and titles of king Ramses II. Talatat blocks were also unearthed.

During further excavation work, the Egyptian team expects to find more remains which will enable them to draw the temple's borders and the complexes that once were used as residential buildings for the temple's priests.

Mattariya also contains the remains of the granite obelisk erected by king Senusert I of the Middle Kingdom period, along with a collection of offering tables and statues, as well as the ruins of an obelisk belonging to Thutmose II, and objects bearing the names of Amenhotep II, Thutmose IV, and Amenhotep III.

It also includes the remains of a 3rd Dynasty shrine built under king Djoser, part of a 6th Dynasty obelisk of King Teti, several Old Kingdom tombs of high priests, and a stela of Tuthmose III. Excavations have also revealed several Ramesside constructions, including temples, a cemetery for Mnevis bulls -- which were

sacred to Re -- and a 12th Dynasty donation list from the time of Ramses III, indicating that the temples at Heliopolis were second only to those of Amun at Thebes.

While installing a new drainage system near the granite obelisk, a collection of limestone statues, granite sarcophagi, and stelae from the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty was

found. Once cleaned and restored, they were placed on temporary exhibition next to the obelisk. Two kilometers to the east is a tomb from the 26th Dynasty of a man called Panehsy that was accidentally discovered during the demolition of a villa owned by the Egyptian Lawyers' Syndicate, which had filed a request for archaeological inspection prior to the start of a construction of a new members' residence. The tomb consists of a vaulted limestone room, whose ceiling features the sky goddess Nut, while beautiful vignettes and spells from the Book of the Dead decorate its walls. Another tomb of Waja-Hur, a well-known architect, was also found. It has two long corridors leading to three burial chambers -- the first belonging to the deceased, and the other two to members of his family. Although devoid of funerary equipment, the tomb contains 19 ushabti figures bearing his name.

All tombs have now been dismantled restored and relocated in the Mattariya open-air museum, where royal granite sarcophagi found near Panehsy's tomb are already on display, and a concrete base was installed.



## LISTINGS

- 1-15 May** A cultural program in Cairo Maadi Club, including an exhibition of replicas, workshops in carving and drawings for children.  
Friday, Saturday and Sunday From 10 am to 5pm  
A lecture will be held every Thursday at 7pm.
- 7-14 May** An exhibition of replicas under the title "Egypt's Civilization Throughout Different Ages" in Damietta as part of the governorate's National Day celebration.  
Damietta Culture Palace.
- 16-30 May** A cultural program in Gezira Club in Zamalek, including an exhibition of replicas, workshops in carving and drawings for children.  
Friday, Saturday and Sunday From 10 am to 5pm  
A lecture will be held every Thursday at 7pm.
- 20-27 May** An exhibition of replicas under the title "Egypt's Civilization Throughout Different Ages" in Sinai  
Al-Tor Culture Palace.
- 23 May** Lecture about "Arabic Papyri" by Mohamed Abdel Latif head of the Permanent Committee of Islamic monument  
Ahmed Basha Kamal Hall at the SCA's premises - 3 Al-Adel Abu Bakr St. Zamalek - 6pm.
- 29 May** Celebration of World Museum Day  
Imhotep Museum, Saqqara 6:30 pm
- 30 May** Lecture about Islamic monuments in Sinai by Tareq El-Naggar head of Islamic Antiquities in Sinai  
Ahmed Basha Kamal Hall in the SCA's premises - 3 Al-Adel Abu Bakr St. Zamalek - 6pm.
- 1-30 May** Free Educational Classes for Children
- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Egyptian Museum</b>            | Friday, Hieroglyphics Class<br>Saturday & Sunday, drawing Papyri     |
| <b>Alexandria National Museum</b> | Saturday, Hieroglyphics Class<br>Sunday, learning Mosaic Class       |
| <b>Luxor Museum</b>               | Friday, Hieroglyphics Class<br>Saturday & Sunday, learning sculpting |

## NEWSREEL

### Ali Radwan

Last month, the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) honored Dr. Ali Radwan, who is the former Dean of the Faculty of Archaeology at Cairo University and the current head of the Arab Archaeologists General Union. This distinction was initiated by the SCA earlier this year as a new policy of honoring Egyptian and Foreign pioneer archaeological figures, who have devoted their lives and made all efforts towards the protection of Egypt's cultural heritage. During the celebration, Dr. Zahi Hawass, Secretary General of the SCA, offered Dr. Ali Radwan edition number 34 of the SCA's Annales publication issued especially as Radwan's Festschrift. Meanwhile, Helwan University gave him a golden medallion.

Dr. Radwan's devotion to archaeology and Egyptologists is legendary. Upon his return to Egypt after receiving his Ph.D. from Munich University in Germany, Dr. Radwan played a major role in not only building up generations of pioneer archaeologists but was also responsible for several important discoveries, such as uncovering a vast necropolis of the 1st and 2nd Dynasties at Abusir. He has supervised more than 30 Master's degrees and Ph.Ds as well as publishing many archaeological papers in scientific and archaeological journals. He received the State Prize of Egypt in Archaeology 1983 and the State Prize of Merit in Social Sciences, 2003.

### Back Home

An ancient Egyptian relief from Brussels and a wall painting from Spain are the most important objects that will return to Egypt this month.

In mid-May in Louvain, Brussels, an Egyptian archaeological team will receive an ancient Egyptian relief that was originally part of a false door but was cut from the tomb of Sennenu, the person responsible for purifying the king during the 5th Dynasty (2513-2374 BC). This relief which bears hieroglyphic text was taken from the tomb in 1965 during its transportation from the Giza plateau to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. After several years, the relief was located by a foreign archaeologist, who sent a secret letter to the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) informing them that it was in the possession of the Institute of Archaeology and Art History in Louvain.

Meanwhile, Egypt has succeeded in its attempts to recover another relief from the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge University in England, which was stolen from Cairo University's dig in the 1980's and also a painted limestone statue of a 5th Dynasty woman from the Barcelona Museum in Spain. This statue is very similar to princess "Nefret", wife of the royal prince Rahotep (2649-2609 BC), now exhibited at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo.



# ANTIQUITIES OF EGYPT

## ADMISSION FEES LIST

Culture Minister Farouk Hosni approved the delay of the application of the SCA's new admission fess list to 1-11-2006 upon the request of Tourism Minister Zoheir Garana, in on attempt to allow the tourism agencies enough time to Re-Structure their pricing.

Archaeological sites					Cinema & video						Photo					
Areas	Site	Prices		Visit time	Advertising		Novelist & Commercial		Documental		Advertising		Novelist & Commercial		Documental	
		Egy	Forei		Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei
Cairo & Giza																
Giza area																
Great pyramid & valley temple	Pyramid	2	50	9:5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Great pyramid	Pyramid	20	100	9:5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Khafre pyramid	Pyramid	2	25	9:5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Menkura pyramid	Pyramid	2	20	9:5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Saqqara area	Saqqara	2	40	9:5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Alexandria																
Kum el shokafa	Alex	2	25	9:5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Luxor																
Tut anch amun tomb	West bank	2	80	9:5	*	*	*		*	*	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Valley of kings	West bank	4	70	9:5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Nefertari tomb	West bank	*	*	9:5	*	*	*		*	*	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
El der el bahari	West bank	2	25	9:5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Karnak temple	Luxor	2	50	9:5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Luxor temple	Luxor	2	40	9:5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Aswan & Nubia																
Philae temple	Aswan	2	40	9:5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Broken obelisk	Aswan	1	25	9:5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Kalabsha temple	Aswan	2	25	9:5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Edfu temple	Edfu	2	40	9:5	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	500	1000
Islamic & Coptic antiquities																
Mary's tree	Matarya	2	10	9:4	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500
St. George Abbey	Old Cairo	Free	Free	9:4	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500
Al ghouri mart	Al Azhar	Free	Free	9:4	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500
Saladin Citadel	Citadel	2	40	9:4	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500
Fustat area	Old Cairo	1	10	9:4	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500
Al Sehemee House	Al Gamalya	2	25	9:4	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500
Al harrawy House	Beyond Al Azhar Mosque	1	10	9:4	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500
St. Katrina Abbey	Southern Sinai	Free	Free	9:4	7000	7000	3000	5000	600	1000	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500

All prices in L.E Pound / shooting fees inside the tombs per hour/ archeological sites opened for visiting only

\*Fees defined after the SCA secretary general agreement.

Museums					Cinema & video						Photo					
Museums	Site	Prices		Visit time	Advertising		Novelist & Commercial		Documental		Advertising		Novelist & Commercial		Documental	
		Egy	Forei		Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei	Egy	Forei
Main museums																
Cairo Museum	El Tahrir – Cairo	2	50	9:7	*	*	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500	250	500	150	300
Coptic Museum & the Archaeological Area	Old Cairo	2	40	9:5	*	*	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500	250	500	150	300
Nubia Museum	Aswan	4	40	9:5	*	*	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500	250	500	150	300
National Museum of Alexandria	Alex	2	30	9:5	*	*	1000	2000	1000	2000	250	500	250	500	150	300

All prices in L.E Pound / shooting per hour without opening the showcases or using flash

\*Fees defined after the SCA secretary general agreement.