

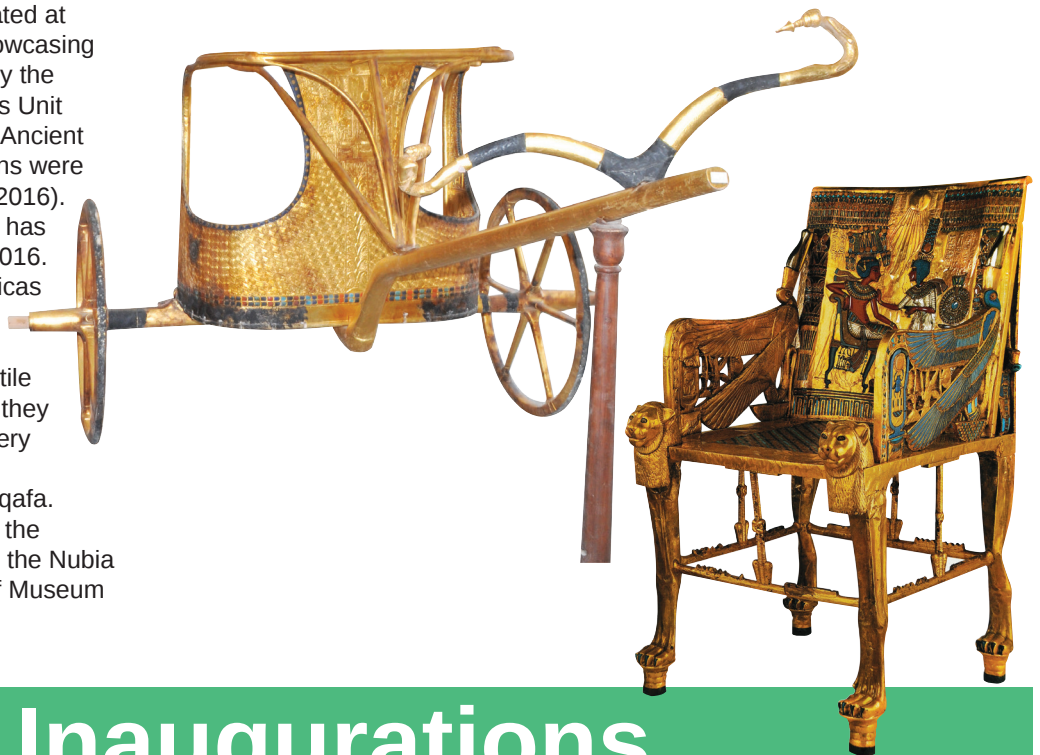


Ministry of Antiquities



Newsletter of the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities * Second Issue * July 2016

A special exhibition was inaugurated at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, showcasing replicas of antiquities produced by the Ministry's Archaeological Replicas Unit and the Centre for the Revival of Ancient Egyptian Art. Scientific publications were also sold at the exhibit (14 July, 2016). Due to its success, the exhibition has been extended until 15 August, 2016. Other outlets selling Ministry replicas and publications include Khufu's Solar Boat Museum in Giza and the Gayer Anderson and Textile Museums in Cairo. In Alexandria they can be found at the Royal Jewellery Museum, the National Museum, Pompey's Pillar, and Kom al-Shoqafa. Additionally, they are available at the Mummification Museum in Luxor, the Nubia Museum in Aswan, the Beni Suef Museum and at the Rashid Citadel.



Inaugurations



City of al-Qasr

The first phase of the restoration works of the city of al-Qasr in Dakhla Oasis has been inaugurated. The opening was attended by the Minister of Antiquities, the Governor of the New Valley, Ministry officials, representatives from the Social Fund for Development, and of the civil society and the Japanese government (21 July, 2016).

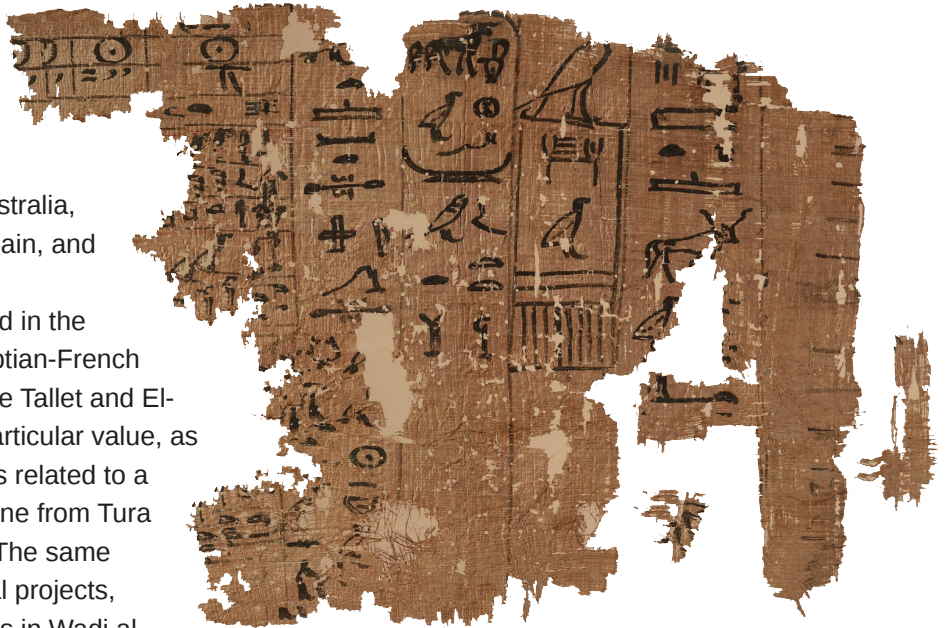
Al-Qasr is a prominent Islamic city, as it is only surviving example of urban architecture from the Ottoman Period in Egypt. Its structural texts and historical documents are an important source for the history of the Egyptian Oases.

Al-Rasheda Association for Social Development worked under the supervision of the Ministry of Antiquities and with a 2.7 million Egyptian pound Japanese grant to complete the first phase of the project. The second and final phase will start soon.

Temporary Exhibitions

Part of the oldest collection of written papyri known from Egypt went on temporary display at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo. The exhibition's inauguration was attended by ambassadors and cultural attachés of many countries including Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, France, Italy, Serbia, Spain, and the U.S.A. (14 July, 2016).

The papyrus fragments were discovered in the port of Wadi al-Garf in 2013 by an Egyptian-French archaeological mission led by Drs Pierre Tallet and El-Sayed Mahfouz. These papyri are of particular value, as they feature many administrative details related to a crew of sailors, who transferred limestone from Tura quarries to the Khufu pyramid in Giza. The same crew was also involved in other national projects, including construction of the royal tombs in Wadi al-Garf.



Training

- Several training courses and workshops were organized in July. One workshop focused on business and technical writing, while another was on the applications of geophysics in archaeology.
- A one-year training program was developed by the Ministry for its employees, in cooperation with foreign scientific institutions and universities working in Egypt, and Egyptian scientific and research institutions. Details of the program will be announced later in August.

Conferences and Lectures

- The Egyptian Museum, Cairo, hosted the first forum of archaeological discoveries in al-Beheira governorate, based on the work of Egyptian missions (19 July, 2016).
- Dr Alejandro Jiménez-Serrano, Head of the Spanish Mission of the University of Jaén working at Qubbet al-Hawa in Aswan, delivered a lecture titled "A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Ruling Family of Elephantine during the Twelfth Dynasty: The Results of Eight Years of Excavating in the Necropolis of Qubbet al-Hawa (Aswan)". The lecture was held at the Ministry of Antiquities' headquarters in Zamalek (19 July, 2016).
- The first forum on the "Achievements of 2015-2016" was organized by the Central Administration of Restoration and held at the Ministry's headquarters in Zamalek (24 July, 2016).

Field Visits

- The Minister of Antiquities Professor Khaled El-Enany was accompanied by heads of sectors and Ministry officials to visit several archaeological sites, museums and projects in the New Valley, Assiut, Minya, Giza and Cairo.
- The Ministers of Culture and Religious Endowment visited Old Cairo, accompanied by the Minister of Antiquities (15 July, 2016).
- Engineer Ibrahim Mehleb, Assistant to the President for National and Strategic Projects, visited the Grand Egyptian Museum Project and the Giza Plateau Development Project, accompanied by the Minister of Antiquities (26 July, 2016).



Projects

The Grand Egyptian Museum:

During July, work continued on the ceiling of the second hall of Tutankhamum. Parts of the metal and concrete structure of the Grand Staircase have been completed, and the front lawn has been levelled. Moreover, several heavy statuary have been moved, including a statue of King Menkaure, which will be displayed at the grand staircase. Several wooden statues are also being restored for final display.

The National Museum of Egyptian Civilization:

Preparations of the temporary exhibition hall are underway. A temporary exhibition on traditional Egyptian crafts is scheduled to open soon.

Egyptian Museum, Cairo:

The Ministry's Projects Sector is upgrading the internal and external lighting of the Egyptian Museum. The electrical network is also being updated and fans are being installed in the galleries. The gift shop has also been reopened after its 2011 closure.



Statue of Menkaure

Giza Plateau Development Project:

The Ministry of Tourism has covered the first installment of the project and work is now underway. An administrative building has been completed, and the visitors' centre is under construction.

Khufu's Second Solar Boat:

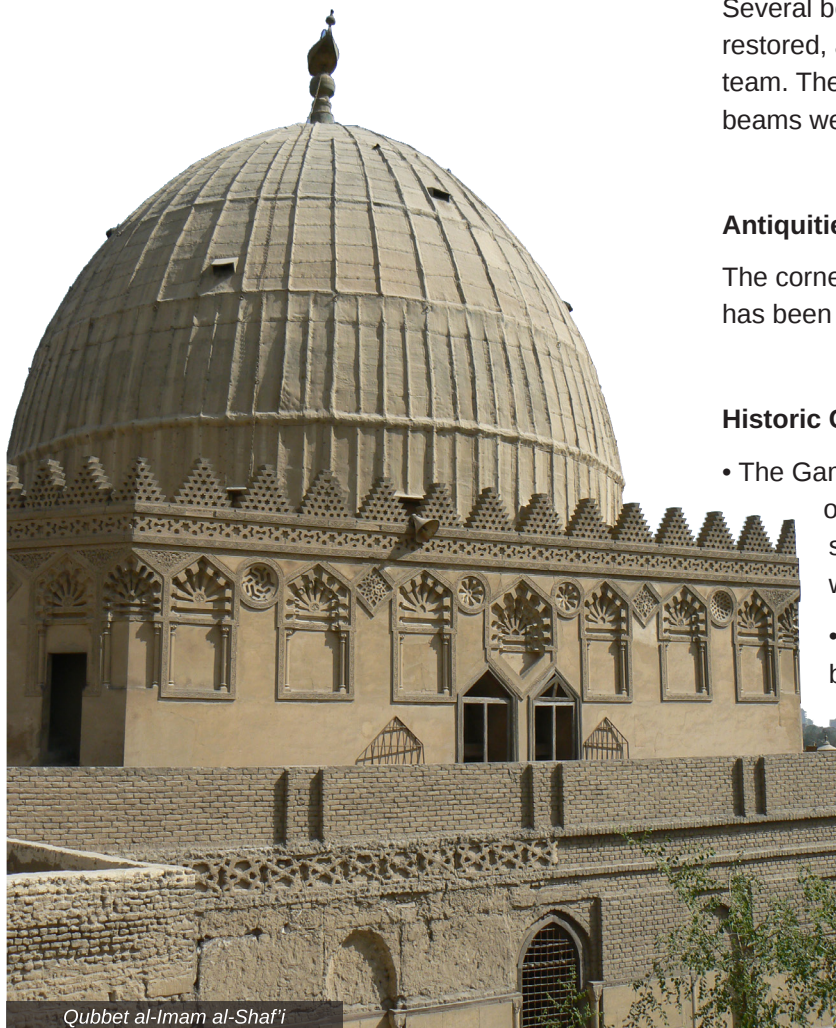
Several beams have been lifted from the boat's pit, restored, and documented by the Egyptian-Japanese team. The pieces were also laser scanned. So far, 685 beams were excavated, of which 645 have been restored.

Antiquities Storehouses:

The cornerstone of a new storehouse in Khargah Oasis has been laid (21 July, 2016).

Historic Cairo Project:

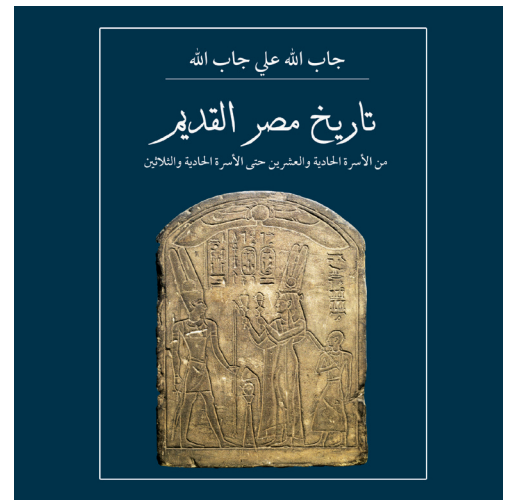
- The Gamaliyyah police station has been moved out of the historical building. Documentation of the surrounding area of Beit al-Qady and restoration work is underway.
- Maintenance work on twenty-eight historical buildings in al-Gamaliyyah has begun.
- The Project, in collaboration with Megawra Collective, was awarded a grant from the US AmbassadorsTT Fund to renovate the dome of al-Imam al-Shaf'i
- The Project was awarded a grant from Barakat Foundation in collaboration with Archinos Architecture to study the Qaitbay Quarter.



Qubbet al-Imam al-Shaf'i

Publications

The Ministry published a book by the late Professor Gaballah Ali Gaballah on the Egyptian Third Intermediate and Late Periods. The Arabic publication is Professor Gaballah's work over many years which had never published during his lifetime. His family and two of his former students, Professors Ahmed Saieed and Hussein Rabei (Faculty of Archaeology, Cairo University), worked to ensure this unpublished material finally saw the light.



Protocols of Cooperation

A protocol of cooperation was signed between the Ministry of Antiquities and the Egyptian General Company for Tourism and Hotels (EGOTH). The protocol includes establishing an open-air parking area to serve the Grand Egyptian Museum's visitors, and the utilization of an EGOTH-owned area next to the museum to build shops that will serve visitors. The protocol was signed by Dr Mostafa Amin, Secretary General of the Ministry of Antiquities, and the signing was attended by the Ministers of Antiquities and General Business Sector (12 July, 2016).

Cultural Events... and Community Outreach

- The Children's Museum at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, in collaboration with Archaeological Awareness Departments at the Ministry of Antiquities, launched two educational programs for students from a number of international and private schools.
- The Giza Pyramids received 52,783 Egyptian and foreign visitors during the Eid al-Fitr holiday (5-9 July, 2016).
- On the occasion of the inauguration of the Replicas Exhibition at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, the Children's Museum began several educational activities to raise archaeological awareness of children and introduce them to the ancient Egyptian civilization.
- The Egyptian Museum, Cairo, hosted a panel on the role of UNESCO that was attended by H.E. the Prime Minister Engineer Sherif Ismail. During the panel, Egypt nominated former Minister of Family and Population H.E. Mrs. Moshira Khattab for the position of Director General of UNESCO. The panel discussion was attended by many ministers and ambassadors (19 July, 2016).
- Prince Mohamed Ali's Palace at Manial hosted the opening ceremony of the First Afro-Chinese Arts and Folklore Festival (21 July, 2016). Seventeen African countries, in addition to China and Egypt, participated in the festival.
- As part of the #Unite4Heritage campaign launched by UNESCO in 2015, an international photography exhibition was held under the title "A Story and a Photograph". Egyptian photographer Mohamed Abdel Gawad won first prize in a ceremony held at the Manasterly Palace in Cairo (26 July, 2016).
- Manial Palace Museum hosted the First National Day for Population in its Golden Hall. The event was attended by the Prime Minister and several ministers (31 July, 2016).
- Four new positions for Assistant to the Minister have been announced. The deadline for applying was 31 July 2016.
- The Ministry has started issuing a weekly newscast on its official Facebook page.

Decrees

The decrees issued by the Board of the Supreme Council of Antiquities and the Permanent Committees in July include:

- Limiting visitors to the Seti I and Nefertari tombs in Luxor to 150 visitors per tomb per day.
- Removing sixteen illegal constructions on Coptic and Islamic monuments.
- Starting the documentation of the Qubba Palace in Cairo and inventorying its contents.
- Starting restoration works at Sakakini Palace in Cairo.
- Approving the registration of Ahmed Pasha al-Minshawy Complex in Tanta in al-Ghabrbiyyah Governorate.
- Approving a project between Suez National Museum and an Italian institution specialised in the technological applications in the field of heritage. The project aims to 3D scan and document the three boundary stelae of King Darius I.
- Approving the conservation of Abu Samra and al-Bassary Domes in al-Bahnasa in Minya.
- Specifying buffer zones for several archaeological sites and building of historical or archaeological value including: monuments in al-Darb al-Ahmar neighbourhood of Cairo, Mohamed Aly Palace in Shobra in al-Qalyubiyah, the Mausoleum of al-Nabi Danial in Alexandria, Qus in Luxor, the Church of Abu Heniss in Minya, as well as other important structures in Minoufiyya, Ismailiyyah, Alexandria, Minya, al-Beheira, and Marsa Matruh Governorates.
- Approving non-commercial photography for one hour in the gardens of Alexan's Palace in Assiut for a fee of 300 EGP.
- Approving a discount of 50% on cinematic, television and video recording in the desert areas surrounding archaeological sites.
- Accepting a project to restore the temple of Seti I in Abydos, funded by the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation.
- In an attempt to attract international movie makers to film in Egypt, the Ministry of Antiquities has cooperated with the National Centre for Cinema and the Ministry of Culture to issue new regulations and fees for cinematic and television productions in Egyptian sites and museums.
- For the first time, an annual antiquities pass for both foreign and Arab residents, as well as Egyptians to visit archaeological sites and museums in Egypt will be issued starting 1 September, 2016.
- For the first time, a five-day pass can be issued for open museums and archaeological sites in Luxor at a cost of 100USD for foreign visitors, and 55USD for foreign students.
- An extension has been granted on overdue payments from bazaar tenants at archaeological sites in Qena, Luxor and Aswan.

Appointments

- * Marwa Abdel Razek, appointed as the director of the Registration and Collections Management Department at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo.
- * Mamdouh Taha Thabet, appointed as the supervisor of the Second Khufu Boat Project.
- * Mohamed Mohamed Aly, appointed as the General Director of the Archaeological Stations in ports across Egypt.
- * Ahmed Mahfouz Ibrahim, appointed as the Director of the Archaeological Unit at the Damietta Marine Port.
- * Ingy Saad Gemei, appointed to the International Relations Administration.
- * Saied Saied Shebl, appointed as the General Director of the General Administration for Archaeological Sites Affairs in the Egyptian Antiquities Sector.
- * Mohamed Alaa al-Din al-Shahhat, appointed as the Head of the Central Administration of Cairo and Giza Antiquities.

In Memoriam

Abdel-Rahman Abdel-Tawab (1916-2016)

On 7 July, 2016, the community of Egyptian archaeology mourned the passing of Abdel-Rahman Mahmoud Ibrahim Abdel-Tawab, who is known as the dean of Egyptian archaeologists working on Islamic archaeology; he was also considered a pioneer in the field.

Professor Abdel-Tawab was born in Minoufiyya, 1916, and went on to study in Cairo, graduating from the Department of History at Fouad I University (now Cairo University) in 1941, and receiving a diploma in Islamic archaeology in 1944.

In 1947, he was appointed as an inspector in the Saving Antiquities Administration. He rose in the ranks to become the General Director of the Islamic Antiquities Sector, General Director of the Documentation Centre, and General Director of Archaeological Affairs at Egyptian Antiquities Organization.



Recognising the value of Coptic archaeological material, he developed the Sector of Islamic Archaeology to also include Coptic antiquities. After his retirement, he became a consultant to the Chairman of the Egyptian Antiquities Organisation.

His excavations extended to many sites, including: Aswan, Deir Abu Heniss in Middle Egypt, and St Macarius Monastery in Wadi al-Natrun, Bawit in Middle Egypt, Rosette, Fustat, Abu Mina and Saqqara.

Professor Abdel-Tawab was also involved in the restoration and conservation of Islamic antiquities. After the 1992 earthquake that devastated Cairo and its environs, he was appointed to head an emergency committee to determine the conservation projects to prioritize and which antiquities needed restoration.

Committees

Committees formed during July include:

- A ministerial committee formed by the Prime Minister to assess historical palaces, houses, and Islamic buildings to maintain and restore them for their opening. The committee members are the Ministers of Planning, Housing, Tourism, Culture, Finance and Antiquities.
- A committee to supervise the restoration of al-Shaf'i Dome, funded by the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation.
- A committee to study, assess, and support a project to restore the southern tomb in Saqqara.

In addition, the following committees have been convened:

- The higher committee for the National Museum of Egyptian Civilisation (25 July, 2016).
- The national committee for the repatriation of Egyptian antiquities (28 July, 2016).
- The Egyptian-Japanese Senior Officials' High Committee for the Grand Egyptian Museum (28 July, 2016).

Varia

- The Central Department for Archaeological Units in Ports has assessed 214 cases, and received 125 objects from Egyptian customs.
- The Minister of Antiquities delivered a presentation on the National Museum of Egyptian Civilisation to the Advertising, Cultural, and Antiquities committee of the Egyptian Parliament.

International Participation

- The Ministry participated in the fortieth committee for World Heritage held in Istanbul, Turkey (10-15 July, 2016).
- The Ministry participated in the international conference held at Dakar to prepare the Opening of the Museum of Black Civilisations in Senegal (28-31 July, 2016).

Monument of the Month

Alexan's Palace in Assiut



The Minister of Antiquities Professor Khaled El-Enany visited the Governorate of Assiut accompanied by the Governor of Assiut Mr Yasser Dessouky, and parliamentary representatives of the Governorate of Assiut. A full documentation of the palace and an inventory of its contents will start soon, and the building is now earmarked for restoration (22 July, 2016).

Assiut is renowned as a city of trade, where wealthy merchant families lived. One of such families was that of Alexan Pasha. A political man of renaissance, Alexan Pasha was born in 1865 and joined the American School of Assiut before going on to study law in his hometown. He married Farouza Wisa, the daughter of another wealth family, and they had four sons and four daughters.

A strict protestant, he was the head of the protestant community in Assiut until his death in 1949. Throughout his life, he was able to influence family members and friends to financially contribute to establishing the Protestant Church in Alexandria in 1920.

The house was built on the bank of the Nile in 1910, on one of Assiut's most prestigious locations at the time. Designed and built by Italian architects, the building follows a classical style. Its fenced garden extends over 1.5 feddans. Its fruit trees are maintained and still bear fruit.

In 1995, a decree was issued to register the palace as an Islamic monument, and it was registered by the decree number 1931 of the year 1996.

Behind the Scenes

Individuals or institutions often end up with antiquities in their possession, whether through inheritance, in the case of private individuals, or through institutions housed in archaeological or historical buildings that acquire the building's contents. These privately held items often go unnoticed by the world in their private collections.

A department was thus created at the Ministry of Antiquities to ensure that these privately owned objects are properly cared for, documented, and registered. The "Department for Private Archaeological Collections" registers and documents movable antiquities. Having such objects registered also facilitates the tracking of these items, in case of their export outside the country, and therefore aids in their repatriation. The legal frame within which this department moves is the Antiquities Law No. 117 of 1983, as amended by Laws No 3-61 of 2010 and the Executive Order No. 712 of 2010, which stipulate that: «Those who own unregistered objects are to head to the Supreme Council of Antiquities to register said objects once it comes into their possession or once they are aware of its antiquity, and the



Marble statue of a lion at the Marriott Hotel in Zamalek

Department for Private Archaeological Collections

The Ministry of Antiquities aims to highlight the various tasks it undertakes by presenting a different department in each issue of the newsletter.

Department for Private Archaeological Collections is to register these items following standard procedures.» Any archaeological objects up to the Muhammad Aly Dynasty (1952 AD) can be registered. Items less than 100 years old, however, must have historical, religious, artistic or literary value in order to be registered.

Upon the submission of a request for registration, whether by an individual or an institution, a committee is formed to examine the objects in question and adequately document them, using written description and condition reports, as well as photography. The objects are then presented before the specialized Permanent Committees to approve their registration. The items are then presented to the Board of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, to issue the necessary decrees for the registration. Three identical register books are issued for each collection, one kept by the owning individual or institution, and two at the Ministry. Finally, the owners present the necessary guarantees that they can and will adequately care for the items. In order to ensure that, the Department pays regular visits to private collections to assess their maintenance.



Ceramic vessel in a private collection

The Department has been able to register more than three thousand objects among private collectors that cover a diversity of objects, materials, and dates. A few of these registered items are actually unique pieces.

Some of the more recognisable collections are to be found in hotels, such as the Mena House, Marriott Cataract in Aswan, Winter Palace in Luxor, and Cecil in Alexandria Hotels. Non-Ministry of Antiquities Museums also house valuable collections including the Ethnographic Museum and the Museum of Ancient Egypt at the Agricultural Museum, both in Cairo.

For those who wish to document and record archaeological or historical collections in their possessions, kindly get in touch with the Department at the Ministry of Antiquities in Zamalek, or connected through 02-27363259.

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