

# THE EGYPTIAN MUSEUM NEWSLETTER



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## A Word from the Director

Museums are now built around educational programmes with a social role to teach members of the society regardless of class or ethnicity.

After my first publication about children's museums 1993, I made it my goal to make museums around the country aware of the importance of museum education, especially for today's children, who are tomorrow's leaders.

The Museum Education Department at the Egyptian Museum has successfully carried out several workshops under the supervision of Zeinab el-Gizawy and her team. This team has implemented museum education programs in cooperation with several schools and children's institutions.

The primary target audience of museum education is children. Through docent tours led by the museum education team, we teach youngsters about the Egyptian

cultural heritage and history. Children participate in workshops to explore what they have seen in the Museum in a variety of media, making them gain further knowledge through practical activities, which helps reinforce their museum experiences.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Social Cooperation for the Care of Street Children, the museum education department accompanies a group of street children every week on a visit to the museum that culminates with a workshop. The department has also initiated the "mobile museum" scheme, where museum exhibits get to travel outside of the Egyptian Museum to reach further audiences.

Recently, the department co-sponsored a four week long Geology/Archaeology Conference. The conference included the participation of the Geological Mu-

seum and the Predynastic Department of the SCA and incorporated training sessions and exchange between both museums, as well as workshops. The museum education Department arranged hands-on training sessions for students in their fourth and fifth years in the Faculty of Arts from Helwan University and Cairo University. During these sessions, students were given background topics on archaeology and history such as myths, writing, children, educational games, jewellery and ceramics.

Orphans are invited to the Museum by the department in cooperation with the Sayeda Zeinab Garden in Cairo. These visits include not only a tour of the Museum, but also interactive games and activities to teach them about ancient Egypt.

*Dr. Wafaa el-Saddik*  
General Director

## Between the Past and the Present

So much has happened in the Museum over the years. Mr. Sayed Hassan, a director at the Egyptian Museum, looks back at the changes that have occurred during the past 30 years in the Museum, and shares with us his memories.

A graduate of the Faculty of Archaeology, Cairo University, Mr. Sayed joined the Museum in 1980 and, after holding several positions, has become a director and Head of the Papyrus and Coin Section.

One of the most exciting Museum events in the last 30 years was the reopening of the Royal Mummy room in 1994 after being

closed since 1978. This closure resulted in the mummies being neglected, and the collection became in dire need of conservation. Presently, the museum has two Royal Mummy Rooms of the highest standards and visitor attendance has increased significantly.

In 1982-1983 under the auspices of Dr. Ahmed Qadry (the then Secretary General of the SCA) and under the museum direction of Mohamed Saleh, the look of the museum underwent many changes; the amount of antiquities on display in the cluttered galleries was decreased and the quality of the installations improved dramatically.

Temporary exhibits rarely took place at the museum, but now they are held practically back-to-back, with only three months or even less between each. The number of external exhibitions has also increased in number; allowing museum treasures to be seen far beyond Tahrir Square. Currently, the Museum is undergoing innovative development and reorganization of its floor plan. These changes are not only due to the layout and the facilities, but also to accommodate new exhibits that are being developed.

# Temporary Exhibitions

## Victor Loret in Egypt (1881–1899) From the Archives of the Milan University to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo

A special exhibition was held in Room 44 of the Egyptian Museum between May 19 and June 30, 2008. Inaugurated by the Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities Dr. Zahi Hawass, the Director General of the Egyptian Museum Dr. Wafaa al Saddik, and the exhibit's curator Dr. Patrizia Piacentini, the exhibition was the product of close cooperation between the Supreme Council of Antiquities, the Egyptian Museum and the Chair of Egyptology of the University of Milan. For the first time ever, some 50 documents belonging to the archaeologist Victor Loret, which had previously been housed in the Egyptological Archives of the University of Milan, were on display together with 20 key objects discovered by Loret and housed in the Egyptian Museum. The exhibition included some of his beautiful water-colour paintings of monuments and objects, and was very much like stepping back in time to the era of this great archaeologist.

*Top Right: Model Boat, discovered by Loret in KV 35. JE 32219, Right: Dr. Zahi, Dr. Wafaa and Dr. Patrizia*



# International Exhibitions



From the fourteenth of June until the fourteenth of September, 12 antiquities from the Egyptian Museum were on display at the Egyptian Pavilion in Zaragoza, Spain, as a part of the Water and Sustainable Development Expo Zaragoza 2008. All objects on display were related to water, such as the boat model pictured here.

*JE 25841 = CG 4916, Model Boat from Saqqara*

From 12/7/2008 to 14/9/2008, some of the most spectacular objects relating to Egyptian queens are on display at the Grimaldi Forum in Monaco. This exhibition is put together from Egyptian collections around the world, including 26 from the Egyptian Museum., such as a statue of the Goddess Isis seated, shown on the right (JE 38929, from Saqqara).



76 objects from the Egyptian Museum and 3 sarcophagi from Dahshur have been touring Japan since the 20<sup>th</sup> of June in an exhibition titled "Eternal Life". The exhibition's schedule is as follows:

- Old Tokyo Museum 06/09/2008 – 05/10/2008
- Eeky Museum in Kiyoto 11/10/2008 – 24/11/2008
- Oheeta Art Museum 02/12/2008 – 01/02/2009
- Nagasaki Historical Museum 08/02/2009 – 05/04/2009
- Okayama Museum 11/04/2009 – 31/04/2009

*Photo on the left: Gilded Roman Mask from the Tomb of Petosiris in Tuna el Gebel, JE 58507.*



# Egyptian Museum Sections

MUSEUM  
ACTIVITIES



## THE EGYPTIAN MUSEUM BASEMENT

From the early days of the Museum, objects not on display were stored in the basement beneath the floor of the Museum. For a hundred years, pottery, sarcophagi, statuary, amulets, and even ancient human remains, have been accumulating from a variety of archaeological missions, both foreign and Egyptian. These



were mostly stored in crates marked merely with the provenance and the name of the mission. Antiquities confiscated from a variety of dubious sources have also found their way into the basement. With all that, the underground passages of the Egyptian Museum overflowed with objects from Egypt's Predynastic to Islamic Periods. This multitude of antiquities was not documented until 1959–1960 when the first basement registers were compiled. Sadly, this task was not completed as a mere 20,000 objects were registered.

By 2004, the basement was in dire need of a rescue operation /refurbishment to reorganise its contents, register them, and protect them, as many were in poor condition. Thus started a project to reorganise the basement and put it on the first steps to becoming a world-class storage/display facility. Under the direction of Sabah Abdel Razek, the basement became recognised as the Museum's eighth section. This project started with registration of the previously unregistered objects and the resorting/reshelving of what had already been registered. It included building new shelving systems and cabinets for displaying and storing objects. Some 500 skulls which have been previously left to collect dust in the basement, as see on the left photo, have been studied and

packed safely.

After a clean-up of available space and restoration of the ceilings and supports, offices are being prepared for a conservation laboratory, a photography laboratory/studio, curators' offices, exhibition preparation facilities and spaces for scholarly work. Room 56 in the basement has already been prepared as a DNA Laboratory. Room 57 has been prepared as offices for the curators, and of course, as it is not only underground but also in a hot climate, ventilation and air-conditioning systems are being installed to help us survive the Cairo heat and humidity. A new lighting system is also being installed.

Since this project started, nine corridors in the vast basement have been cleared, such as on display in the photo on the right, and iron security doors have been fitted where antiquities are stored. Many objects from the basement have been chosen for a variety of exhibitions, or have been assigned for display in other museums, such as the Textile Museum, the Imhotep Museum in Saqqara, the Sohag Museum and the Suez Museum.

*Top left, before and after views of one of the cleared out corridors'. Left: Skulls previously stacked on shelves; they have now been packed suitable. Right: One of the formerly full corridors of the basement.*



## CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

Staffed by highly qualified conservators and specialists, the conservation laboratory of the Egyptian Museum houses state-of-the-art equipment for analysing and conserving all types of materials. These materials include organics, such as wood, textiles, and papyrus, and inorganic materials like stone, faience, glass, metals, and pottery/ceramics.

Antiquities on display and in storage are periodically monitored. When conservation is needed, the lab uses the latest equipment in conservation. Among the equipment is the newly acquired TRACER III-V by KeyMaster Technologies Inc., which is a scanner used for detecting the composition of material therefore identifying it. Objects are cleaned; they are reinforced if necessary and are sometimes remounted. Of course, the process is well documented, by before and after photos. The laboratory has its own photographic studio to document its work and progress.

Objects are also inspected for their state of preservation as part of the "Condition Reports" prepared before objects are moved or packed for exhibitions within or outside the Museum. Condition Reports prepared by the conservation lab represent proof of the state of the object before leaving the Museum. Objects are rechecked by the laboratory staff upon their return to ensure that all is in order.



# How to ... Photograph Objects in the Museum?

Photography in the Egyptian Museum is only allowed with prior written permission. Scholars and students who wish to photograph objects in the Museum should apply several months beforehand to obtain permission and security clearance. Photographing objects not on display, or ones that need to be taken out of vitrines, requires a letter addressed to the SCA. Objects that do not require vitrines to be opened or do not need to be physically examined need permission from the Museum Director. Scholars and students can either photograph objects themselves or use the Museum's photographers. Fees apply for both, but are often waived if photographs are only used for academic research.

## Requests must include

- 1) A list of all objects to be photographed and/or studied.
  - 2) Projected dates of work. Please make sure you check the dates of national holidays and work around them!
  - 3) An explanation of the research that objects are needed for.
  - 4) Whether photographs/objects will be published and where (commercial or academic publications).
- If a request is approved, the scholar will be contacted and advised on how to proceed. Where applicable, a courtesy copy of the publication must be given to the Museum.

*Requests to the Director of the Egyptian Museum should be addressed to the Director, Dr. Wafaa el Saddik and sent to the Museum's address or to [egyptianmuseum@hotmail.com](mailto:egyptianmuseum@hotmail.com)*

*Requests to the SCA should be addressed to Mr. Magdi el Ghandour, Director of the Department of Foreign Missions, Supreme Council of Antiquities, 3 El-Adel Abu Bakr Street, Zamalek; or e-mailed to: [sca\\_missions@hotmail.com](mailto:sca_missions@hotmail.com)*

*This is meant to serve as a guide for scholarly photography and is correct at the time of circulation. Please contact the Museum for a detailed and updated list of requirements. Good luck!*

## King Tut in Foreign Press

A monthly French magazine, *Archaeologie*, recently featured an article titled "The World Adores Tutankhamun" about the international exhibition held in Vienna under the title "Tutankhamun: The Golden King and the Great Pharaohs."

The one and only boy king is, of course, a hot topic and always attracts the public's eager attention. Seventy objects from his tomb are being displayed in Vienna as part of a cooperative effort between National Geographic, the SCA, and the Kunst Historisches Museum. The exhibition is being held in the Museum of Ethnology until September 2008.

*For opening times of the Museum of Ethnology and other information, please refer to [www.ethno-museum.ac.at/en/frameset.html](http://www.ethno-museum.ac.at/en/frameset.html)*



### PROFILE : AZZA ADLY:

Over the last five months we have become used to seeing Mrs. Azza Adly busy on her rounds of the Museum and its gardens. Recently retired, Mrs. Azza has been volunteering her new-found free time at the Egyptian Museum to supervise the cleaning and maintenance with her critical eye and strict manner. She is only just getting started though, and hopes to be able to continue being involved; we hope so as well!



المتحف المصري  
THE EGYPTIAN MUSEUM

Contact the Newsletter at  
[emcnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:emcnewsletter@gmail.com)

Please note that <http://www.egyptianmuseum.gov.eg> is not valid and should not be consulted.

A new website is under construction.

Phone: 2-02-2582448, 25782452

Fax: 2-02-25796974

Visiting Hours: 9 am - 6.30 pm

General Working Hours: 9 am - 3.30 pm

### Ticket prices:

Foreign Adults: 50 LE

Foreign Students (with valid ISIC ID): 25 LE

Egyptian and Arab Adults: 2.00 LE

Egyptian and Arab Students: 1.00 LE

### Mummy Room:

Foreign Adults: 100 LE

Foreign Students (with valid ISIC ID): 50 LE

Egyptian and Arab Adults: 10 LE

Egyptian and Arab Students: 5 LE

*This newsletter is prepared by:*

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*Mennat-Allah El Dorry*