

Spring 2008

# SEDJEM

*The Newsletter of the Orange County Chapter  
of the American Research Center In Egypt*



## Event Update:

2008 continues to be an exciting year for Egyptology in Southern California. Tickets are still available (registration form inside), for the chapter's day long June 7 seminar on Ancient Egyptian Medical and Magical Practices. Dr. Robert Ritner, who has trained generations of Egyptologists, is coming out from the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago especially to teach this class.

The weekend of August 23 - 24 is huge for Southern California. On Saturday, August 23, the headline making husband and wife team from the Colossi of Memnon Project will speak to OC ARCE. Both Drs. Hourig Sourouzian and Rainer Stadelmann will speak and take questions. See the details inside the newsletter, **BUT PLEASE CORRECT YOUR CALENDARS, AS THIS EVENT WAS ORIGINALLY LISTED AS AUGUST 25.**

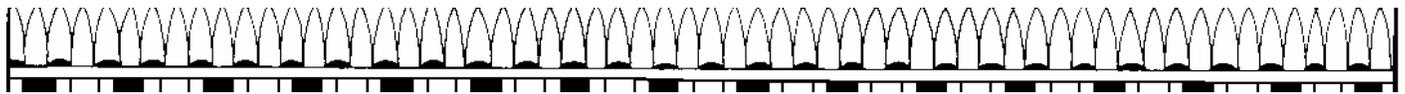
The next day, August 24, Dr. Zahi Hawass, Director General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, and star of countless TV specials, will speak at the Bowers, in a museum sponsored event. In his only Southern Californian appearance this fall, his topic will be the Pharaoh Hatshepsut, and the results of recent DNA testing and new archaeological discoveries in her re-excavated tomb. (And just maybe he will answer some questions about the speculation that a new tomb, which would be KV 64, has been discovered in the Valley of the Kings.)

This is a two tiered event, with a reception beginning at 5 PM and the lecture at 6 PM. Tickets for both are \$50, and for the lecture only are \$30. Tickets may be purchased now from the Bowers Education Department, 2002 N Main St, Santa Ana, CA 92706. This event will take place in the 299 seat Norma Kershaw auditorium and will sell out, probably a month ahead, so don't delay.

## OC ARCE Members Event

To thank members for their generous financial support of our speaker program, the chapter provides several opportunities each year for members to spend extra time with speakers. In February, OC ARCE members had the special opportunity to take an organized tour of the Bowers Museum Egyptian Mummy exhibit with Dr. Peter Piccione. He provided many fascinating insights into, and information about the objects which we would not have otherwise suspected. A group photo appears to the right.





## **Discoveries on the West Bank of Luxor in March/April 2008**

Covered by the press from South Africa to Kazakhstan to France, as reported here by AFP:

Rising from green fields, the two 18-metre- (59-feet-) high stone giants seem to be watching over roads leading to the temples and pharaonic tombs built in the valleys and ochre mountains of Luxor's west bank. The statues are all that remains of the funerary temple of 18th dynasty Amenhotep who ruled from 1391 to 1353 BC. He was the father of the iconoclastic pharaoh Akhenaton. Towering like sentries above the necropolis of Ancient Thebes in southern Egypt, the world-famous Colossi of Memnon will see their number double from two to four from next year.

The painstaking work of 12 archaeologists and hundreds of workers is about to redefine the way visitors see and understand this mysterious site that has cast its spell over travellers for more than 2,000 years.

"It will be sensational, that's for sure!" Hourig Sourouzian, the project's enthusiastic director, enthused to AFP.

Next year two giant statues of the pharaoh Amenhotep III will begin to rise again, just a hundred metres (328 feet) behind his two existing colossi that mark the entrance to the temple. Another two statues, still half-buried, will also be returned to their former upright position in the years to come.

Rises in the water level of the River Nile, pillaging of the stone by other pharaohs and a 27 BC earthquake all took their toll of the temple at Kom el-Hitan whose builders meant it to last a million years. But when what is left of the site began to suffer 10 years ago because of encroachment from irrigation works in neighbouring fields, renowned Armenian archaeologist Sourouzian decided to save it. She worked with her husband Rainer Stadelmann, former director of the German Archaeological Institute who was responsible for creating the site's first photogrammetric pictures -- three-dimensional maps made from two-dimensional pictures.

Emergency measures were set in place at the site and enforced by the Supreme Council of Antiquities. In 1998 and 2004, the temple was listed as one of the world's 100 most endangered sites by the World Monuments Fund, an international NGO based in New York, and funding was provided to help save it. French Egyptologist Alain Fouquet created the Association of the Friends of the Colossi of Memnon, which was generously funded by Monique Hennessy from the famous cognac family, and by Ursula Lewenton's Forderverein Memnon.

"From this moment onwards, everything became possible", Sourouzian said. Annual excavations on the site began to bear fruit under the labours of an international team of experts and 250 Egyptian workers. The team discovered pieces of four giant Amenhotep statues, two sphinxes, 84 statues of the war goddess Sekhmet depicted as a lioness, and a stele whose 150 fragments were spread across a site which has to be constantly drained.

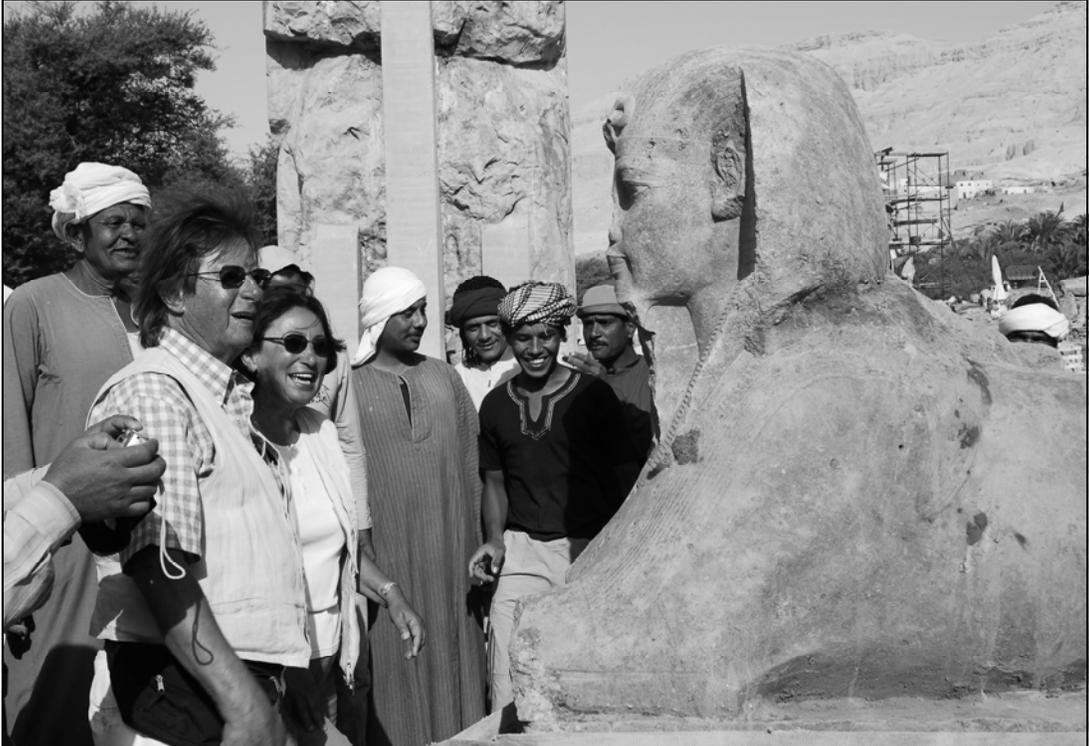
It is planned that five years from now the statues of Sekhmet the lion-headed goddess will stand again.

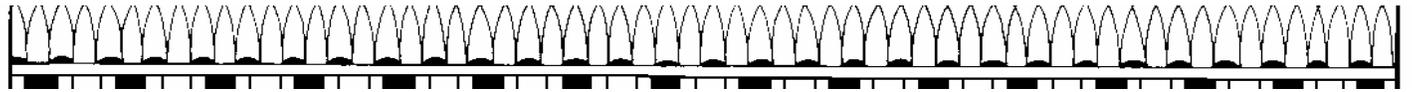
The tenth annual dig, which ends this month, has already unearthed a 3.62-metre- (11.9 feet-) tall statue of Tiya, Amenhotep's wife. "She has an extraordinary beauty", Sourouzian said. When the two 15-metre red quartz colossi of Amenhotep become upright again in 2009 Tiya's statue will once again stand next to those of her spouse. The two other giant statues that have been uncovered are not yet ready to reclaim their place alongside the others; they are made of alabaster and extremely rare because of the material's fragility.

Unlike other neighbouring funerary temples such as the Ramasseum, dedicated to Ramses II, and Ramses III's temple at Medinat Habu, "we will be able to admire the temple's content, not only its skeleton," said Sourouzian.

But is it right to try restoring such a site to its former splendour? For Sourouzian there is no question about it.

"We didn't invent anything. We just put something that was about to disappear for ever back in its original place. A living temple lay here, not just the colossi."





## **MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR A MINI SEMINAR ON AUGUST 23, 2008**

### **"Extraordinary Discoveries at the Colossi of Memnon Amenhotep III Temple Site at the West Bank of Luxor"**

Dr. Hourig Sourouzian and Dr. Rainer Stadelmann, the dynamic husband and wife team now in their eighth season at the Colossi of Memnon, kick off a nationwide speaking tour with Orange County ARCE at 1 PM on Saturday, August 23 at the Norma Kershaw Auditorium at the Bowers Museum. Note the earlier start time as this is a DOUBLE lecture covering the excavation and conservation of the remains of the funerary temple of Amenhotep III including colossal statues, monumental stelae and, architectural elements with decorated blocks from wall and columns. In the words of Dr. Peter Piccione, watching the scope of this excavation is like seeing Howard Carter or Petrie at work. OC ARCE Chapter President Robin Young had the opportunity to spend time with this expedition in 2007, where incredible discoveries were made about every fifteen minutes by the 28 team members along with a work crew of 230 local men.

The only way this chapter could afford to bring both speakers in from Europe was for OC ARCE to organize a national speaking tour to share the costs. Even so, there will be a \$5.00 charge to the general public for this event, payable at the door. Individuals with ARCE memberships will be admitted free. Tickets will be sold at the door only, no advance sales.

**OC ARCE members will be invited to a special event so they may visit personally with the speakers.**

#### **Colossi of Memnon – “Snap shots”**

[“Some 1,000-tonne twin statues have been standing firm for more than 3,400 years at the entrance of the Theban Necropolis. ... takes off the shroud around the Colossi of Memnon.”]

“Amenhotep III ruled for about 40 years during the 18th Dynasty, his reign forever remembered as one of the most prosperous and stable of Ancient Egypt. With no major military activities save one expedition into Nubia, his was a diplomatic rule. ... Amenhotep III undertook a grandiose makeover of Karnak Temple, not to mention the mortuary temple he built for himself on the flood plain of the West Bank at Thebes.... the largest and most lavish among Egypt's temples up until his time. Guarding the temple and the whole of Thebes necropolis are the pair of giant statues known as the Colossi of Memnon. Twin statues of the Pharaoh in a seated position with his hands resting on his knees, his mother and his Great Royal Wife Tiye at his knees, a subtle gaze in the direction of the sun, and the Nile adds to the solemnity of the posture. ... As noted by the Greek historian and geographer Strabo in his writings around the first century, an earthquake struck the area in 27 BC causing a rupture to the northern colossus. As a result and with the effect of rising temperature and humidity, especially in the morning, the statue was re-marked for a bell-like sound. The sound evolved into a myth; hence the legend of Vocal Memnon was born. To marvel the miracle, travellers came from miles afar, and the Greeks associated the statue and its sound with Memnon, the son of Aurora whose mother Eos was the goddess of dawn. Royals, too, were intrigued by the legend. Roman Emperor Hadrian paid the Colossi a visit in 130 AD. Another Roman emperor, Septimius Severus, had the good intention of repairing the statue around 199 AD. Unfortunately, by repairing it, the vocalisation ceased and the Colossi of Memnon was forever silenced.”▲

Excerpted from: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2008/878/tr401.htm> [Al-Ahram Weekly On-line, 10-16 January 2008]

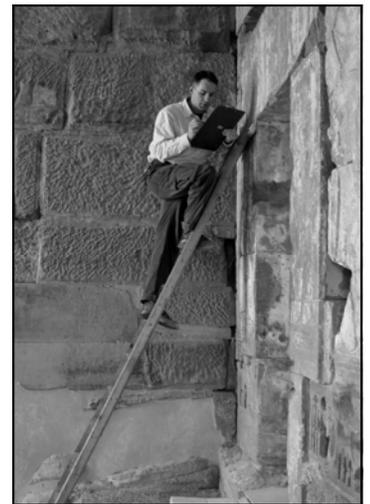


ARCE President, Robin Young (seen here in middle) was one of many superb authors who took part in OC Public Libraries' second annual author festival, Literary Orange on April 5, 2008. Planning is already underway for next year's event which will take place on April 4, 2009.

## From our Special Correspondent in Luxor: An Update from the Field

*By OC ARCE Vice President Dr. J. Brett McClain*

Over the last few years we've become ever more aware of the impact that tourism, environmental degradation, overpopulation, and climate change are having on Egypt's antiquities in general and on the monuments of Luxor in particular, and this lends a sense of urgency to our mission both of documenting the information contained in the temples and of conserving them for the future. These concerns drive our work at Medinet Habu and equally so at Luxor Temple, where our concession from the Supreme Council of Antiquities includes responsibility for the conservation and documentation of tens of thousands of inscribed fragments, arrayed in storage areas to the east and west of the temple itself. Here, with the support of a Robert Wilson Challenge Grant To Conserve Our Heritage from the World Monuments Fund, our expert stone conservator Hiroko Kariya and her team are continuing their race against time to preserve and protect this vast and priceless treasure of sculpted stone, the broken remains of monuments from all over the Theban region, with the goal of keeping the material safe and in good condition so that it can ultimately be documented, analyzed, and even reconstructed. This year, we've received additional funds from WMF to construct a display area within the blockyard, accessible to Luxor Temple's visitors, to showcase a selection of the finest fragments in the assemblage, ranging in date from the Middle Kingdom through the Islamic period. Over the next year, the inscribed blocks will be prepared and installed on specially-built *mastabas*, or brick platforms, designed to protect them from the damp ground while making it possible for visitors to appreciate the variety and potential of the fragment collection as a whole.



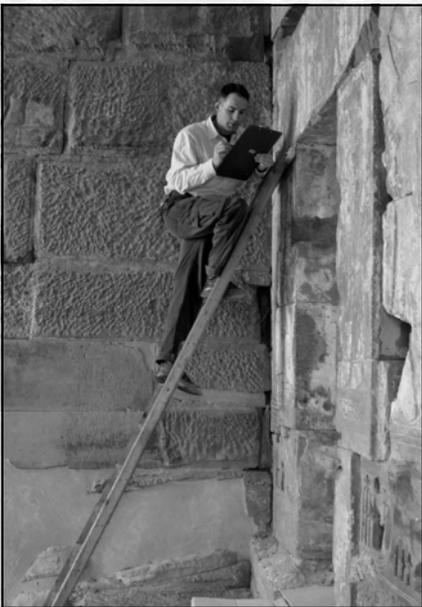
**The Orange County Chapter of the American Research Center in Egypt  
and The Orange County Public Library  
Present**

**Dr. J. Brett McClain**

Vice President, OC ARCE Board of Directors, Assistant Director, Chicago House, Luxor

**Report on**

**Conservation and Documentation Projects of the Oriental  
Institute's Epigraphic Survey in Luxor"**

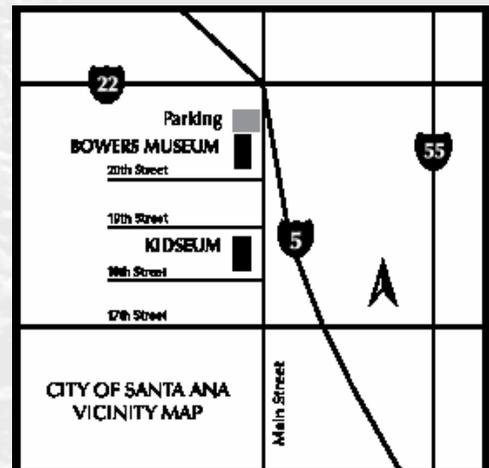


Dr. J. Brett McClain received his doctorate in Egyptology in 2007 from the University of Chicago, and since 1998 has spent six months of every year working as an epigrapher on the Epigraphic Survey's projects at Medinet Habu. The Epigraphic Survey is the flagship field project of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Founded in 1924 by pioneer American Egyptologist James Henry Breasted, the Survey's mission is to produce photographs and precise line drawings of the inscriptions and relief scenes on major ancient temples and tombs at Luxor (Egypt) for publication; documentation so precise it could stand alone in the absence of the original monument. To accomplish this aim, the "Chicago House Method" has been developed which involves photographers, artists and Egyptologists in producing the records that capture all the details of the wall scenes. In the eighty seasons of field work which the Survey has now completed, records have been created to preserve the images of Luxor Temple, Karnak Temple, the Medinet Habu temples and various tombs and mastabas in Luxor. The publications of the Survey are universally recognized as setting the standard for epigraphic recording. For the past twenty years, conservation has also become a major activity of the Survey.

**SATURDAY, JULY 26, 2008 - 10:30 AM**

**THE BOWERS MUSEUM  
NORMA KERSHAW AUDITORIUM  
2002 N. MAIN, SANTA ANA, CA**

**ADMISSION IS FREE**





A Full Day Seminar in

# ***Ancient Egyptian Medical and Magical Practices***

Presented by Dr. Robert Ritner,

Professor of Egyptology, the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago

Sponsoring partners:

The American Research Center in Egypt, Orange County Chapter, the Egypt Exploration Organization of Southern California,  
the Orange County Public Library, and the Bowers Museum

June 7, 2008 - 9:30 AM to 4:45 PM

Doors open 9:00 AM

Norma Kershaw Auditorium, Bowers Museum

2002 N. Main St, Santa Ana, CA 92706

(714) 567-3600

Topics include:

Magic and Medicine in Theory and Practice, Curses and Love Charms, How a Temple Works,  
The Great Deities of Egypt, The Function of Egyptian Art

Price: \$40 ARCE/EEO Members \$45 General Public \$30 Student with id

includes box lunch from Patina Catering's TANGATA Restaurant, souk market, & parking

Tickets:

Space is limited. If not sold out beforehand, Registration closes 5/29/08.

All tickets will be held at the door the day of the event.

Please print legibly Number of tickets ARCE member \_\_\_\_ Student \_\_\_\_ General Public \_\_\_\_

Total enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ #: Turkey wrap lunches \_\_\_\_ # Vegetarian lunches \_\_\_\_\_

Name (s): \_\_\_\_\_

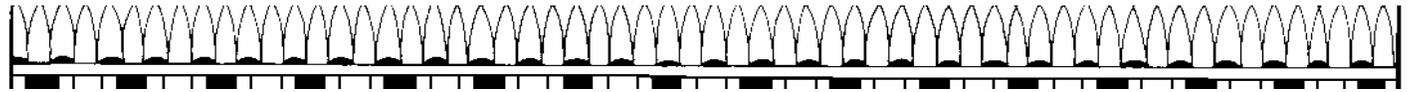
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email to receive confirmation: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to ARCE OC & mail with form to: ARCEOC 125 La Ronda, Tustin, CA 92780

Queries: arce-oc@earthlink.net



The Orange County Chapter of the American Research Center in Egypt presents 10 - 12 lectures annually on a variety of topics by Egyptologists working in various expeditions throughout Egypt. Our partners are the Orange County Public Library system and the Bowers Museum. While the lectures are free to the public, all speakers are paid honorariums and sometimes travel expenses to come to the OC. The sole source of revenues to fund these lectures comes from the dues of ARCE members. Everyone who attends is encouraged to join ARCE and support not only this lecture series, but ARCE's important work program of discovery and conservation of some two dozen ancient Egyptian monuments. To find out more, visit [www.arce.org](http://www.arce.org) and click on expeditions. Click on membership to print a form to join for \$55 per year (\$45 seniors, \$25 students). That averages out to about \$5 a lecture and it's fully tax deductible.

Membership in ARCE entitles you to one-year subscriptions to the annual *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* and the Center's triennial *Bulletin*, discounted fares on EgyptAir between the United States and Cairo, special rates at selected hotels, access to ARCE's centrally located residence and its research library, and invitations to special ARCE-sponsored events both in Egypt and the US.

**VISIT THE ARCE WEBSITE!**

[www.ocpl.org/lectures/egypt.htm](http://www.ocpl.org/lectures/egypt.htm)

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