



The Chesterfield Egyptology Society

Are proud to present an illustrated lecture on

“THE WESTERN WADIS OF THE THEBAN NECROPOLIS: EVIDENCE, ANACHRONISM AND DOGMA”

- Date:** Saturday 7th May at 1.30pm.
The lecture lasts approximately 1 hr 45 mins and will include a break and Question and Answer session
- Speaker:** Piers Litherland
- Location:** Chesterfield Library New Beetwell St, Chesterfield S40 1QN
- Price:** £5 to all

The clearance of the Wadi Bairiya shaft tombs brought to light a hitherto unknown group of court women of the period of Amenhotep III, including a Great Chief Wife of the King, Nebetnehet, a Son of the King, Menkheperre, a Wife of the King, Henut, a Daughter of the King, Tia, and at least 28 other individuals whose burials were deliberately destroyed in pharaonic times. Further study of the site and its surroundings, and additional work in the Western Wadis and Wadi 300, has produced evidence of a cycle of wetter weather in at least four periods, the most extreme of which was the XVIIIth dynasty. As well as advancing our understanding of this landscape and its development, this wetter weather may account for a marginal expansion in the hunting and gathering constituents in the economy and provide a model for explaining the extraordinary expansion of the economy in the early XVIIIth dynasty and its subsequent contraction through the XIXth and XXth dynasties.

Amongst the discoveries of the NKRF mission are:

The identification of a previously unknown Great Chief Wife of Amenhotep III, Nebetnehet; a Wife of Amenhotep III, Henut; and a son of Amenhotep III, Menkheperre.

the clearance of unique, architecturally complex tombs of hitherto unknown design in the remote Wadi Bairiya.

The recovery and restoration of the largest collection of canopic jars ever discovered in Egypt. the re-clearance and first accurate mapping of the cliff-tombs of the Western Wadis.

The re-recording and analysis of graffiti in the Western Wadis which has disclosed that these wadis were filled with water in the XVIIIth dynasty and used in the Third Intermediate Period for watching and trapping live falcons (the name ‘Herihor’ previously associated with one of these wadis being a mistranslation of a priestly office associated with falcons).

discovery of foundation deposits below the cliff-tomb of Hatshepsut and the Baraize tombs

and the re-discovery of Carter's lost Tomb 23.

The clearance of 39 of the 45 tombs in the Wadi 300 and identification of the burials of Tenetiunet (Great Wet-nurse of the King), Ty (Keeper of the Seal), Inebny (Son of the King and King's Son of Kush) and several other royal children of the reigns of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III.

discovery of revelatory evidence of wetter weather in XVIIIth dynasty Egypt and consequent development of a framework for understanding the economy and development of the ancient Egyptian economy which offers radically different explanations for the rise and fall of the XVIIIth dynasty and the Amarna period in particular.

Piers Litherland is the head of the New Kingdom Research Foundation (NKRF) which was founded in 2000 with the late Geoffrey Martin to conduct research into New Kingdom Egypt. He is an Honorary Research Associate of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research at Cambridge University to which the NKRF is affiliated. He is the Field Director and Head of the NKRF Mission to the Western Wadis which has been working in the Western Wadis on the West Bank in Luxor for the last ten years. He has been involved in excavations in the Valley of the Kings and the Western Wadis since 1999. He took his undergraduate degree at Oxford University and holds an M.Phil in Egyptology from Cambridge University.

*His publications include "The Western Wadis of the Theban Necropolis" New Kingdom Research Foundation, London, 2013; "Skaktgravene i Wadi Bairiya - Den Gliterende Atens hustruer og hofdamer og deres familiegrave", Papyrus 36/2, 2016; "The Archaeological Future of the Valley of the Kings" in Van Dijk, J. ed. (2016) "Another Mouthful of Dust", *Orientalia Lovaniensa Analecta* 246, Peeters, Leiden; and "The Shaft Tombs of Wadi Bairiya: Volume I", New Kingdom Research Foundation/Genius Loci, London, 2018. Forthcoming in 2022 from the C.U.P.: "The XVIIIth dynasty Funerary Landscape: the positioning and construction of XVIIIth dynasty monuments in the Royal Necropoleis at Thebes in the light of new discoveries from the Western Wadis and Wadi Bairiya".*

He has lectured on the work of the NKRF at the universities of Cambridge, Copenhagen, Uppsala and Basel and at the Ministry of Antiquities in Cairo and Luxor.

This is a hybrid event involving a talk in a lecture theatre in Chesterfield (UK) which will also be broadcast live on Zoom.