

ARCE Team Uncovers Two Unknown Tombs

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The American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) mission in Sheik Abd el Qurna (Tombs of the Nobles) near Luxor, and in cooperation with the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities has discovered two new unregistered tombs during their work in the courtyard of the tomb of Djehuty (Theban Tomb 110)*. ARCE's work in Luxor is made possible with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The new tombs, which appear to be those of a father and son, are located to the east of TT110. Further work will determine if they shared the courtyard of TT110. Both tombs contain considerable debris and there is evidence of looting and vandalism in antiquity. The clear wall sections have beautiful scenes with bright colors on plaster, each showing a tomb owner and his



Fig. 1—View into the tomb of Amenhotep, known as Rebiu. On far wall Rebiu makes offering to the goddess Renenwetet who nurses the childlike figure of the king wearing a blue crown. Photo by Ayman Damarany

wife seated before offering tables. Some of the texts, including the name and title of the owners, were damaged in antiquity. However, preliminary examinations of partial remnants have revealed the tomb owners' names and titles.

The first tomb owner is Amenhotep called Rebiu whose title was Doorkeeper of the god Amun. His wife is likely named Satamen. In addition to the offering scenes, the tomb walls show the funeral of Rebiu, a view of a goddess nursing a royal child, as well as hunting scenes with marsh plants and birds. The second tomb is somewhat smaller in size and located next to the Tomb of Rebiu. This tomb owner is named as Samut and there are scenes with his wife Takhaet. Samut was the son of Amenhotep called Rebiu and apparently succeeded his father as Doorkeeper of Amun. The walls in this tomb include beautiful scenes of banqueting and musicians. It is likely that both tombs date to the Eighteenth Dynasty

of the New Kingdom (between 1543 and 1292 BC).

The discovery of the first tomb was made on March 2 and the second on March 10, 2015 and were made by an ARCE team of Egyptian archaeologists who had received training in ARCE sponsored field schools, conducted with funds provided by USAID. On March 21, 2015 the Minister of Antiquities, Dr. Mamdouh El Damaty, the Governor of Luxor, Mohamed Sayed Badr, and USAID Mission Chief, Sherry Carlin visited the project site in Qurna and amid a throng of local media were able to take a brief look from the installed security doorways into both tombs. Entering the tombs was not possible since this is an unexplored archaeological site and the debris still must be recorded and carefully assessed before clearing. In the future, ARCE,

BULLETIN OF THE
AMERICAN RESEARCH
CENTER IN EGYPT

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The *Bulletin* is published
by the American Research
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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear ARCE Members,

In Egyptology there are always new discoveries to be made. This is true whether we are looking at monuments, objects, or texts long known or in instances where archaeologists discover something previously unknown through their excavations. Such new discoveries occur from time to time and this last March ARCE archaeologists discovered two previously unknown decorated tombs. These belong to a father and son, both of whom were officials and lived during the Eighteenth Dynasty. The story of the discovery is our lead article for this issue of the *Bulletin*.

As regular readers of the *Bulletin* will know, a team of scholars, conservators, and technicians has worked for the past decade to bring back to light the magnificent wall paintings in the monastic church of the Red Monastery at Sohag. The results of this work, undertaken with the support of USAID, will soon be published by ARCE in conjunction with Yale University Press. An important aspect of that work, however, could not be included in that publication and Nicholas Warner, a conservation architect who has been a member of the Red Monastery team for several years, records that information here.

The Red Monastery is also the subject of a Fellow's report in this issue. Agnieszka Szymanska discusses her research on the visual environment created by the painted decoration of the church and its importance to both the sacred space and the monastic community.

ARCE's Antiquities Endowment Fund (AEF) continues to support worthy projects in a number of ways, as you will read in Dawn McCormick's article on the 2014 Season of the South Abydos Mastabas Project and Hannelore Romich and Eman Zidan's report on a pilot project to improve conservation practices at Cairo's Egyptian Museum.

We value our Research Supporting Members and it is always good to hear about their latest activities. Brett McClain brings us up to date on new innovations to the "Chicago House Method" of epigraphic documentation ongoing at the University of Chicago's Epigraphic Survey in Luxor.

Rounding out this issue is a brief, illustrated report on ARCE's most recent Annual Meeting, held in Houston, Texas; a development update on ARCE's continuing efforts to improve our financial condition; and a remembrance of the late Irene Bierman-McKinney, a scholar known for her work in the field of Islamic art and architecture and who supported ARCE and even served for a short time as interim director.

As always, I hope that you will enjoy reading about the many and varied activities that ARCE undertakes with your support.

Gerry D. Scott, III
Director

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