

Ancient Egypt



...lifting the veils of time

Compiled by JANINE DE VILLIERS
Publications and Promotions

Through the ages generations have been fascinated by the rich history and intriguing mysteries of Ancient Egypt. Mummies, hidden tombs, pyramids with miles of labyrinths, powerful pharaohs and unsolved mysteries continue to hold the world spellbound as new discoveries shed more light on the dynasties of old or uncover even more unexplained phenomena.

Enthusiasts of Egyptology are fortunate to have access to the never-ending endeavours of archaeologists, archivists and historians to lift the veils of time from the past by means of videorecordings. The Central Collection of the Library Service boasts several videos on this riveting topic and related issues.



Egypt eternal: the quest for lost tombs
producer and director,
Amy Bucher.

National Geographic's love affair with all things Egyptian continues, but when the material is so interesting, who's complaining. This programme once again tackles archaeological excavations, but concentrates not

on the pharaohs, but on the Ancient Egyptian aristocracy who served them. As befitting their status in life, they were also given magnificent funerals and it is thought that hundreds of unfound tombs are still buried under the desert sand. At Saqqara, where the first pyramid was built, French archaeologist Alain Zivie is shown at work on two projects, the one uncovering the tomb of Tutankhamun's wetnurse and another excavating the tomb of a highly-placed official who is thought to have negotiated the peace treaty with the Hittites during the rule of Ramses II. Also, at the oasis town of Bahariya, Egypt's Head of Antiquities, Zahi Hawass and his team have uncovered the tombs of a local governor and his wife. Fascinating stuff and the focus on Egypt's nobility gives it a new angle. The director Amy Bucher also worked on **Egypt: secrets of the pharaohs.** (On order.)



The lost pharaoh: the search for Akhenaten
producers, Tom Daly and
Nicholas Kendall;
director, Nicholas Kendall.

The pharaoh Akhenaten ruled Egypt from 1375 BC to 1358 BC. Despite being the son of Amenhotep III, the husband of

Queen Nefertiti and the father-in-law of Tutankhamen, this king was almost lost to history because his successors went to extraordinary lengths to wipe out any traces of his existence. During his 17-year reign, this enigmatic man introduced the religious concept of a single, omnipotent god, an idea that shook the foundations of Egyptian civilisation. He was regarded as a heretic and upon his death his temples were deliberately destroyed by those who came after him. This programme joins a Canadian expedition involved in uncovering the remaining evidence. Led by Dr Donald Redford, they are shown at work in the Valley of the Kings at Karnak, digging and sifting through the sands in order to re-assemble this archaeological puzzle. In the process the film tries to piece together a portrait of this remarkable man.



Mysteries of Egypt
producers, Robert
Swofford and Lisa Truitt;
director, Bruce Neibar.

Even if one hadn't been told so at the end, one would have known that this was originally made for screening in Imax theatres. It has all the sweeping vistas and helicopter

shots associated with the genre and, for once, they survive quite well on video.

Actor Omar Sharif, in the role of a grandfather who shares the information with his granddaughter, narrates the story of Ancient Egypt, a civilisation that lasted 4 000 years and left the world some of its greatest monuments. It starts at the source of the Nile - cue for some lovely aerial shots of travelling up-river and then depicts the giant structures at sites like Carnac, Abu Simbel and Luxor.

It also includes a well-handled re-enactment of the discovery in 1922, of the tomb of a minor pharaoh - now world famous as Tutankhamen - by archaeologist Howard Carter. The visuals are very seductive, though the actual content is quite superficial. On the same tape is **Pharaohs and filmmakers**, which takes a brief look at the making of the film, particularly the re-enactments of King Tut's funeral and the building of a pyramid. It clearly shows that not everything that was filmed appeared in the final programme and that careful attention to detail can go to waste.



Mysteries of the Nile

producer, Rick King.

There is a never-ending interest in everything to do with Ancient Egypt and organisations like National Geographic and the Discovery Channel keep us well supplied with programmes on the subject.

This video is part of a NGT series entitled *Treasure seekers* and deals with the lives and work of two of the first European Egyptologists. The first is Giovanni Belzoni, an Italian who, during the early part of the 19th century, ventured up the Nile and, amongst other accomplishments, started excavating the temples at Abu Simbel and uncovered a number of royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings. Many of the treasures currently in the British Museum were shipped to England by him. The second is Howard Carter, the Englishman who, in 1922, achieved fame by discovering the tomb of Tutankhamun. Both men had a deep love for Egypt and felt very much at home there, but ultimately they were

acting for the colonial powers, gathering material for European collections.

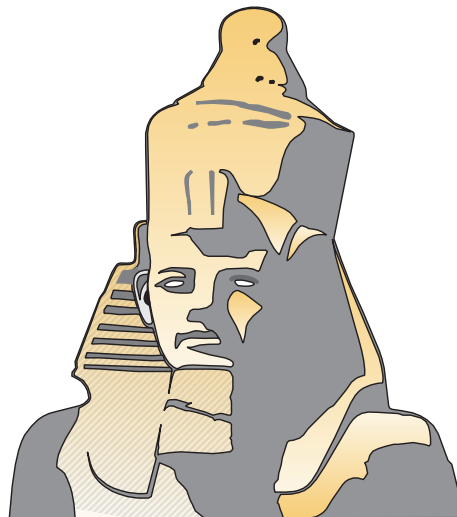
The programme was filmed on location and combines documentary footage with partial re-enactments. (*On order.*)



Pharaohs and kings: a Biblical quest

producer and director, Timothy Copestake.

In the past, there has been little archaeological evidence to prove that some of the most famous figures who appear in the Old Testament actually existed. David M Rohl argues that though scholars have been looking in the right place, they were concentrating on the wrong period, with the result that nothing seemed to fit. It is his theory that fundamental errors have been made as regards the dating of events in ancient times. More specifically, he argues that the conventionally accepted chronology of the Egypt of the pharaohs has extended this period of history by several centuries, resulting in anomalies in the archaeological evidence. In this three-part series he sets out to establish a new historical framework for Ancient Egypt and then discusses the implication of his findings as far as Biblical history is concerned. He starts by explaining how scholars arrived at the traditionally accepted dates and travels to various sites in Egypt to illustrate his own



theories. After that he relates his conclusions to aspects of Biblical archaeology, from identifying the pharaoh who plundered Jerusalem to establishing the nature and whereabouts of various notable Biblical sites. In the process he consults a number of archaeologists and historians, not all of whom support his theories.

Other titles of interest are:

Egypt: quest for eternity

Egypt: secrets of the pharaohs

Genesis in stone: mystery of the pyramids

Nile: river of gods

Ra: the path of the sun god: a vision of Ancient Egypt.

A considerable number of interesting and well-illustrated books on Ancient Egypt have been published and librarians will surely have some of these titles in stock. Display the available material on this topic with these videos and win even more enthusiasts for this fascinating field of study.

Note: Reviews by Freddy Ogterop, Film/Video/DVD Selector.

2003