

## **THE WONDERS OF EGYPT**

Sherry and I between us have travelled somewhat extensively all over the globe. Both of us were born overseas, she in the USA and I in the Netherlands. Both of us have travelled back to our respective land of birth, me a few times, Sherry often. Sherry has driven all over Europe in a travel van as well as through the Khyber Pass into Afghanistan and Pakistan.

When we got together and realized how much we both were into travelling, we commenced to tour together particularly following my retirement.

One place that Sherry had never visited was Egypt and so when my son Ben offered us to join him on the trip of a life time, it was like a dream come true for Sherry and a wonderful opportunity for me to spend some time with Ben, and to meet his partners in crime so to speak. Hence we accepted the kind offer with alacrity.

Egypt of course has long been a place of mystery, ancient megalithic structures and a history long lost in the sands of time. Historically it was believed that the Nile and Euphrates deltas were the cradle of humanity. We now know however that several times in the past, humanity was almost wiped out so, ostensibly there were more cradles. Noah's ark and the flood is one such example, and other possible cataclysms such as global fires and of course, meteor strikes the latest of which, that is significant strikes at least, was the younger dryas impacts of 13,800 years ago.

Food for thought when appraising the importance and meaning behind the pyramids and the sphinx, and the megalithic temples.

So, Sherry and I travelled to Egypt at the invitation of my son Ben, and his venture partners Yousef Aywan and Mo Tata.

These people run tours of the pyramids, other megalithic structures, dynastic and pre dynastic sites, tombs, and quarries looking for traces of advanced technologies perhaps employed by unknown civilizations. And of course, to search for answers to the many questions that Egypt asks of us.

These tours are organized through Ben's web site; [UnchartedX.com](http://UnchartedX.com), from where details for trips are available.

Sherry had long been wishing to see the pyramids, ever since I told her how awed I was upon first seeing them, which was many years ago. So, Ben's kind invitation was timely and very welcome indeed. The entire tour was conducted very professionally with lists provided recommending what to bring, how to react, (or not) to the hawkers that are ever present, and general advice on how to dress and behave in public. This is simply etiquette that ought to be observed when travelling to any foreign culture or nation.

The tour participants were issued a brochure describing the activities involved in the tour and in first reading it, it seemed too good to be true. In reality it was much better than that. The other pleasant discovery was the friendliness of the people in the tour. All having a common interest was a good start to many a conversation where everyone participated in

some lively discussions. All that was another great feature of the tour. In fact, the camaraderie began on the very first evening when introductions were made and the tour agenda highlighted.

For us, living in North Queensland, Australia, any trip overseas is a marathon effort. Firstly, we have to drive 145 kilometers to the airport in Townsville, and then fly for ninety minutes to the domestic terminal in Brisbane. From there, a short bus ride to the international terminal and from there, we flew to Dohar in Qatar, a fifteen- hour flight. We enjoyed a three- hour layover before flying into Cairo where we were met by the tour staff.

The whole tour, and all it entailed was a mind bending, once in a lifetime experience for both of us. This was due to a wonderful itinerary, incredible visual experiences, and, importantly, knowledgeable hosts; Ben, Yousef and the snake brothers, aka Kyle and Russell Allen, as fine a pair of Texans one could ever hope to meet. Collectively their commentary, explanations, and knowledge of the unexplained mysteries were enlightening to say the least. We were not surprised to learn that several in our group, were doing the tour for the second time. There was a heck of a lot of information to digest at first, and I for one would love to go back again though that is unlikely. There was so much data in fact that when there was a snippet I already knew, I would nod my head in agreement thus relaying some sagacity on my part. This did not occur often.

Our accommodation was the Cairo Hyatt a five- star hotel, which proved to be simply fantastic. All the accommodation venues in fact were splendid and enjoyable.

Gaining visas for Egypt was a simple affair, we had been advised beforehand to have \$25 US handy which we each handed over and duly received a visa in hand, which were quickly pasted in our passports. We then travelled by bus to collect Yousef at his shop. It was quite an experience meeting Yousef, though we have been friends on Facebook for a while. It was an emotional meeting for me at least as the first thing Yousef said to me was “Ron, you must understand that Ben is my Australian brother and so you must be my Australian father”. Well, while I did not shed a tear, I did take it to heart and told Yousef that I would be proud to be considered so. And I meant it.

It was absolutely wonderful meeting him. Sherry and I and the rest of the group there as well I imagine, were awestruck as Yousef lives not far from the Giza plateau. The street in front of his shop, was incredibly busy with kids on galloping horses, drays and camels all heading down the road towards the entry to the Giza plateau which could be seen from his shop. I must say though that the youngsters riding those horses were totally insensitive to the safety of the tourists I guess, relying on folk like Yousef to keep the people away from the action as it were.

I asked Yousef about his childhood and living so close to one of the world’s wonders. He did tell me that he used to hunt doves on the Giza Plateau when he was a kid, which I thought

was amazing. It's certainly a world removed from swimming in the freshwater creeks of tropical North Queensland like we did for amusement as kids that's for sure.

The group walked to the plateau to get our first glimpse of the wonders there. No matter how much one reads about the splendor and awesomeness of the pyramids nothing quite prepares you for their majesty and sheer size. Following that we bussed to the hotel to settle our accommodation, which was available after 2:00 pm. A couple of quick beers soon settled the dust and during this, the best of all for me anyway, a true emotional highlight, was when Ben turned up and so I bought a beer for him as well. Great memory.

And thus, ended day one, not entirely uneventful obviously. In fact, every single day was filled with wonders, and new experiences and always some new pieces of information we did not previously know about. It was all just wonderful. We were all given a radio with a dedicated channel so were able to hear what was being said by the guides at all times.

There is always a delightful time when travelling overseas when one can relax with a beer and come to the realization that you have achieved something special by being where you are, and doing what you are doing. We did that regularly.

It was an early start the following day, as we departed the hotel at eight am after breakfast. We made our way back to the Giza plateau where we visited the viewing platform and had a close look at the three pyramids from the outside. Later on, we were able to gain entry into Menkaure's pyramid which was exceptionally special to Sherry and I as we had

long discussed how cool it would be able to nonchalantly say “yeah we went into the pyramid”. Of course, we did not know then that we, well Sherry mostly I have to admit would willingly crawl into the depths of all sorts of structures. I do not do speleology well.

Following this amazing experience the group visited the Valley Temple and the Sphinx. Simply incredible visuals. This was the third time I had seen the sphinx but Sherry’s first. This though, was the nearest to it I had ever been and we were both equally stunned by the sight and humbled by the understanding of the antiquity we were viewing. Simply amazing. It has to be said, that being in the same space as these wonderful examples of truly ancient structures is awe inspiring, and the very best reason for partaking the tour. The entire time we were there, we were pondering perhaps mostly subconsciously, how on earth did “they” do it and why and when and just what do these structures represent?

We enjoyed a late lunch at a what can only be described as a somewhat different restaurant in terms of what we were accustomed to and where the food kept coming. We could order quail, pigeon, other meats that were as tasty as they were mysterious, and no end of vegetables.

We arrived back at the hotel just in time to clean up and breast the bar for a few cooling ales. I must say, that never having been a pub person, I surprisingly though thoroughly enjoyed the beers at the hotel bar possibly because it was so awfully dry outside. I shared this experience with Roger, an

accountant from Western Australia. He and his son Mark were amongst seven or so Aussies on the tour.

The next day after breakfast, this was day three, we departed for a visit to Abu Rawash, where we had a special permission to explore the remains of a great pyramid. There was also a huge pit at its center that most of the group clambered down to and had an inspection of. Typical unselfishly I stayed on top and guarded the buses, you know, supporting the security guards.

There were some incredible and seemingly undeniable signs of ancient machining there indicating a technology that obviously, should not have been present. There were scoop marks, cuts in the granite that could only have been made by a saw of some sort and, what were unmistakably drill holes. There also exists drill cores. Trying to make sense of all that of course, is exactly what the tour was all about. Yousuf and Ben explained what the group was seeing and what, more to the point, demonstrated what really should not have been possible. Over the duration of the tour, we saw many examples and instances of an ancient technology that should not have been present and really, these examples are huge mysteries that are totally without answers. Bona fide enigmas.

The group spent about two hours looking around after which we retired for lunch at the same restaurant we visited the day before.

Following lunch, we headed back to the Cairo Hyatt. Normally lunches were very late like mid to late afternoon following a

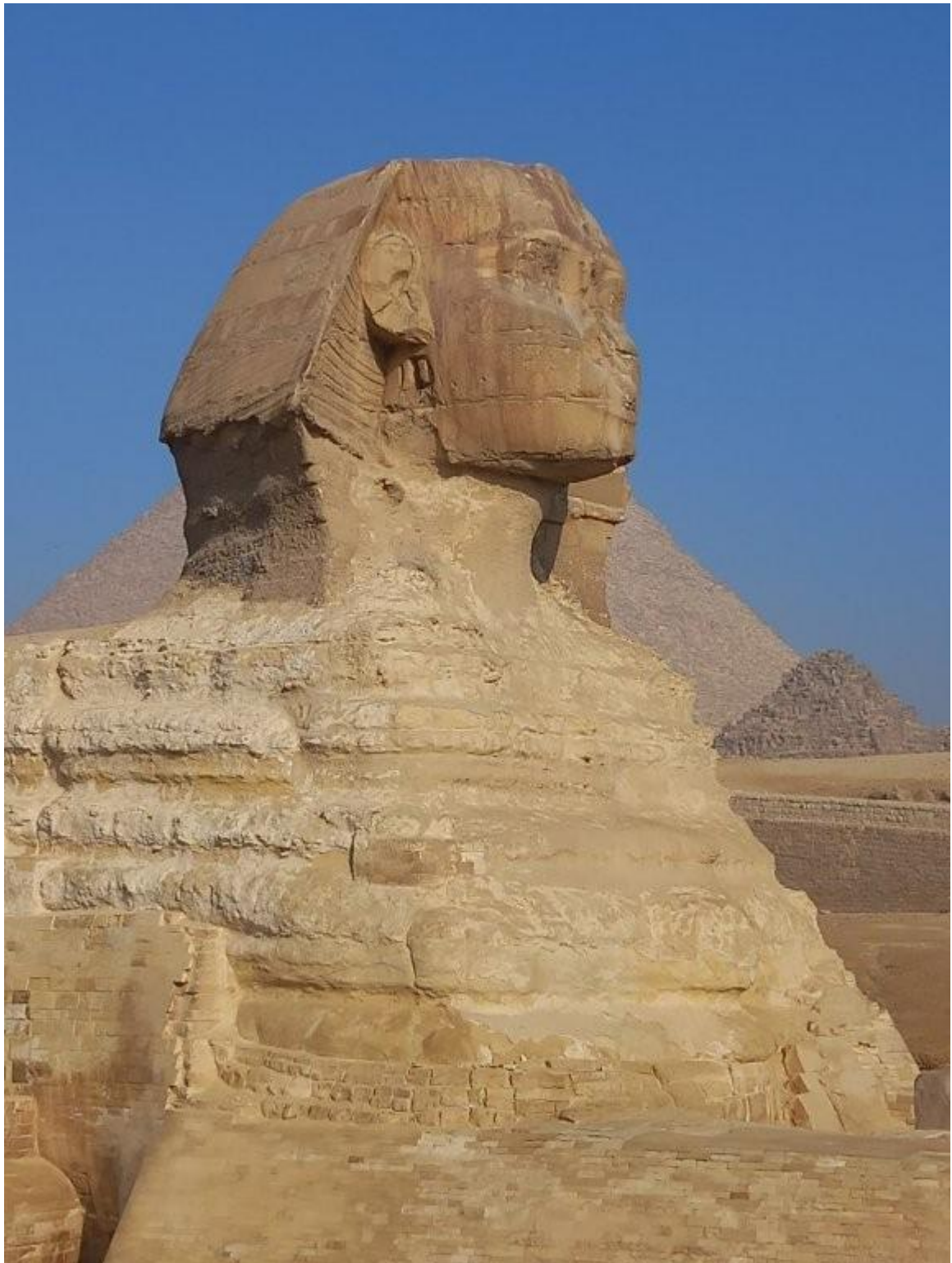
big morning of inspections and discoveries. It was all quite splendid.

We again departed early again the following day heading for Saqqara, leaving the hotel around eight am. This turned out to be one of the busiest days yet with a visit to the Unas pyramid followed by a special permission entry into the Step pyramid for two hours exploring the tunnels that run beneath the structure which was somewhat amazing.

An additional highlight of the day for most of us, certainly for me, was the experience of inspecting the newly opened Serapeum. This was a large subterranean cavern type system with a somewhat surprisingly large, long and wide type of hallway running east and west. The hallway was flanked by dug out chambers housing gigantic stone boxes. These boxes so called would have weighed many tons and most had lids. Some were lined with limestone but all had one feature in common; they were built to a precision that is truly staggering; measurements of the features indicated true vertical and horizontal aspects which really, given the time in history when they were supposedly built, should have been pretty much impossible to achieve to the level of precision these boxes demonstrated. While dynastic Egyptians most likely knew that the hypotenuse was the longest straight line in a triangle, achieving perfect ninety degree, angles in granite or sandstone material consistently, is a whole different aspect.





















































The oldest stone architecture on Earth dates back 5000 years



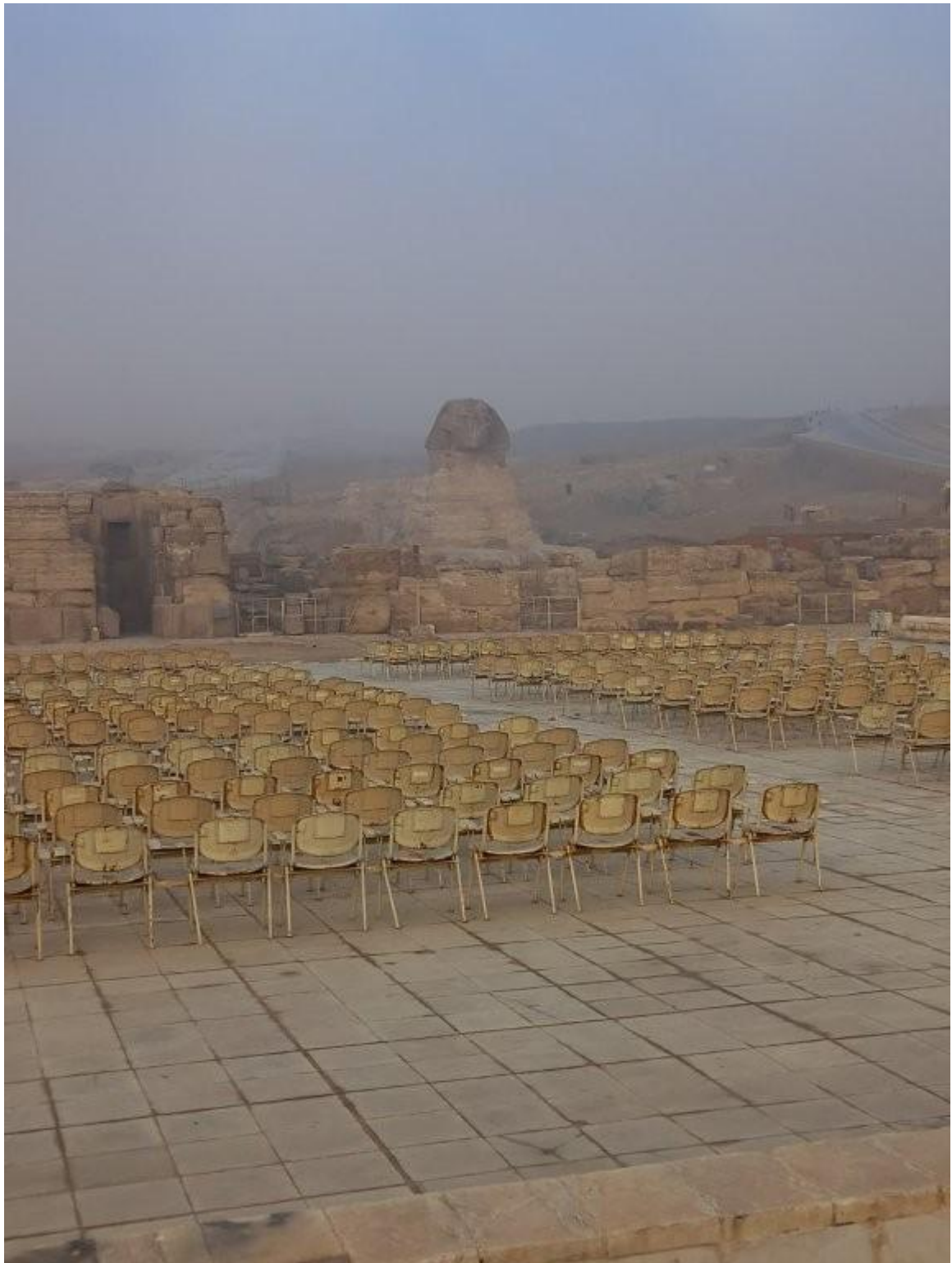
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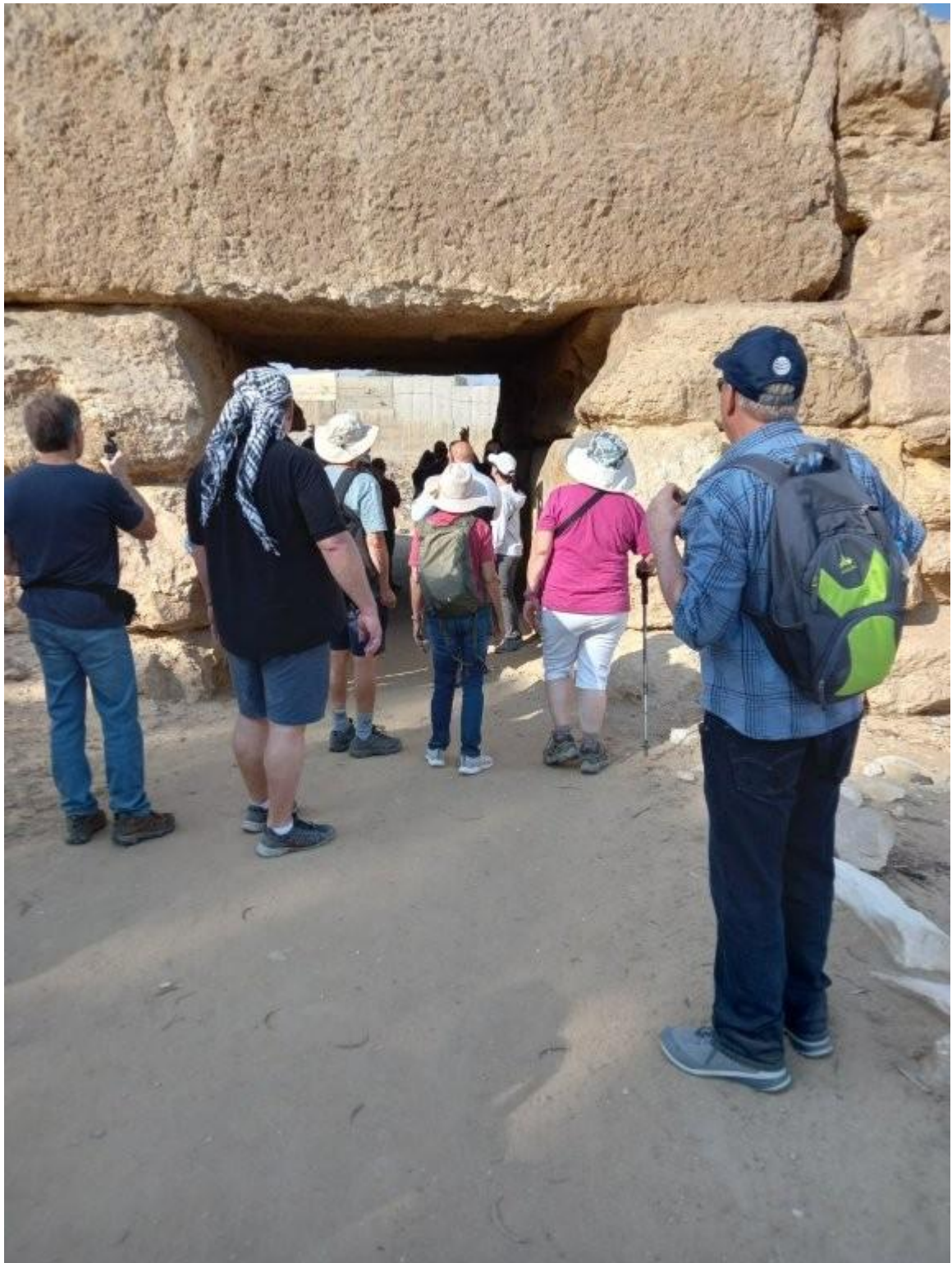










































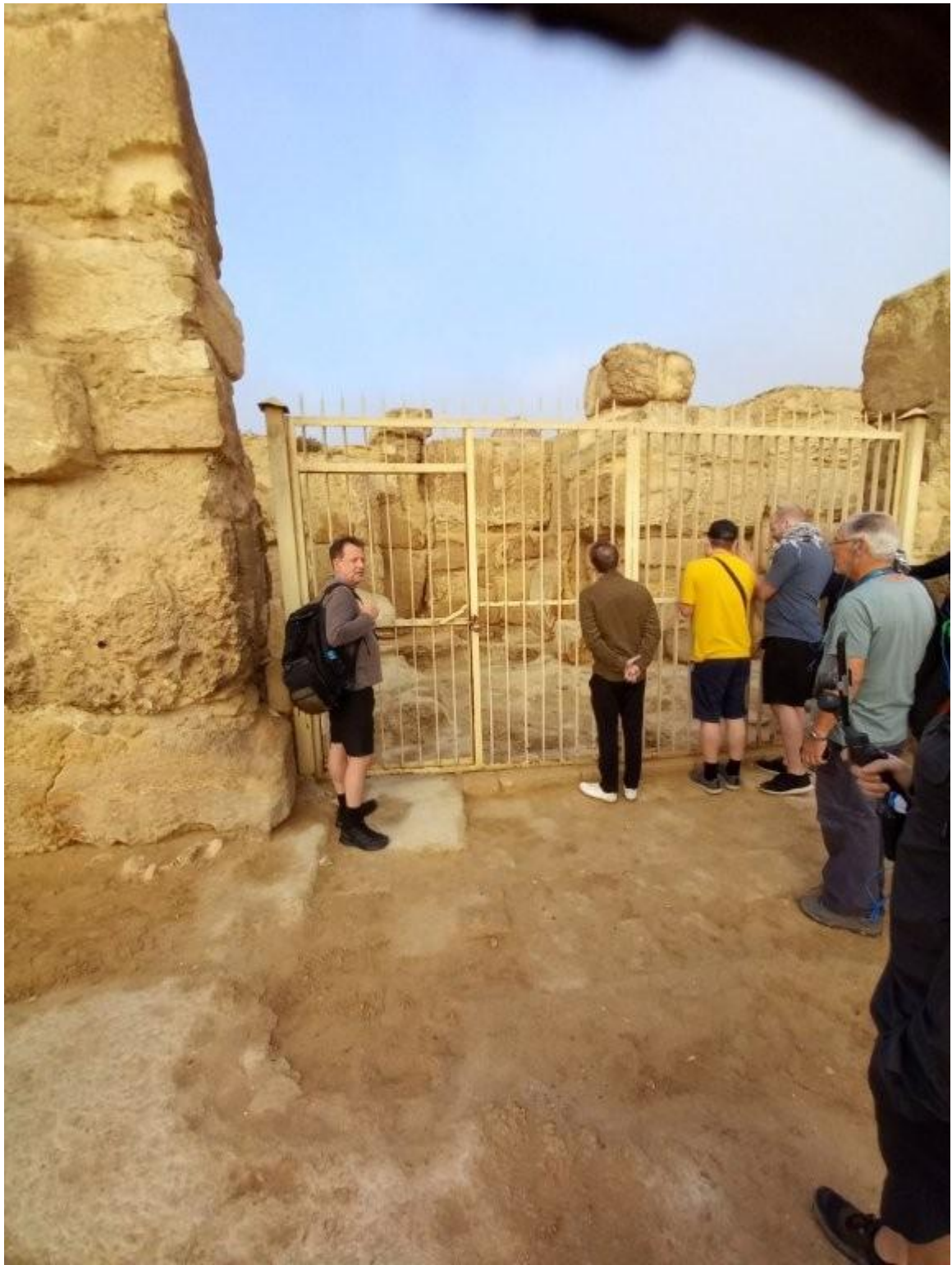


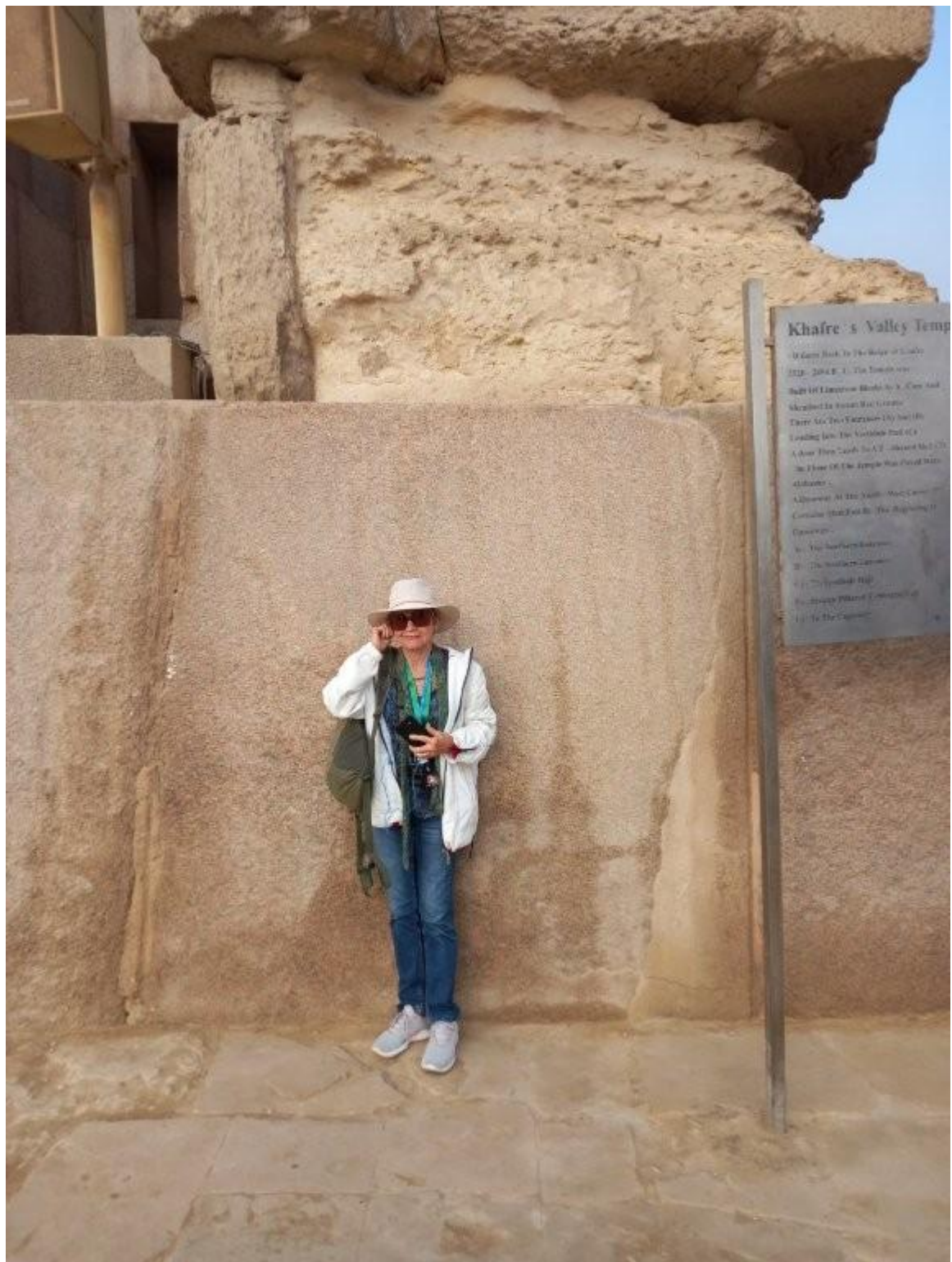




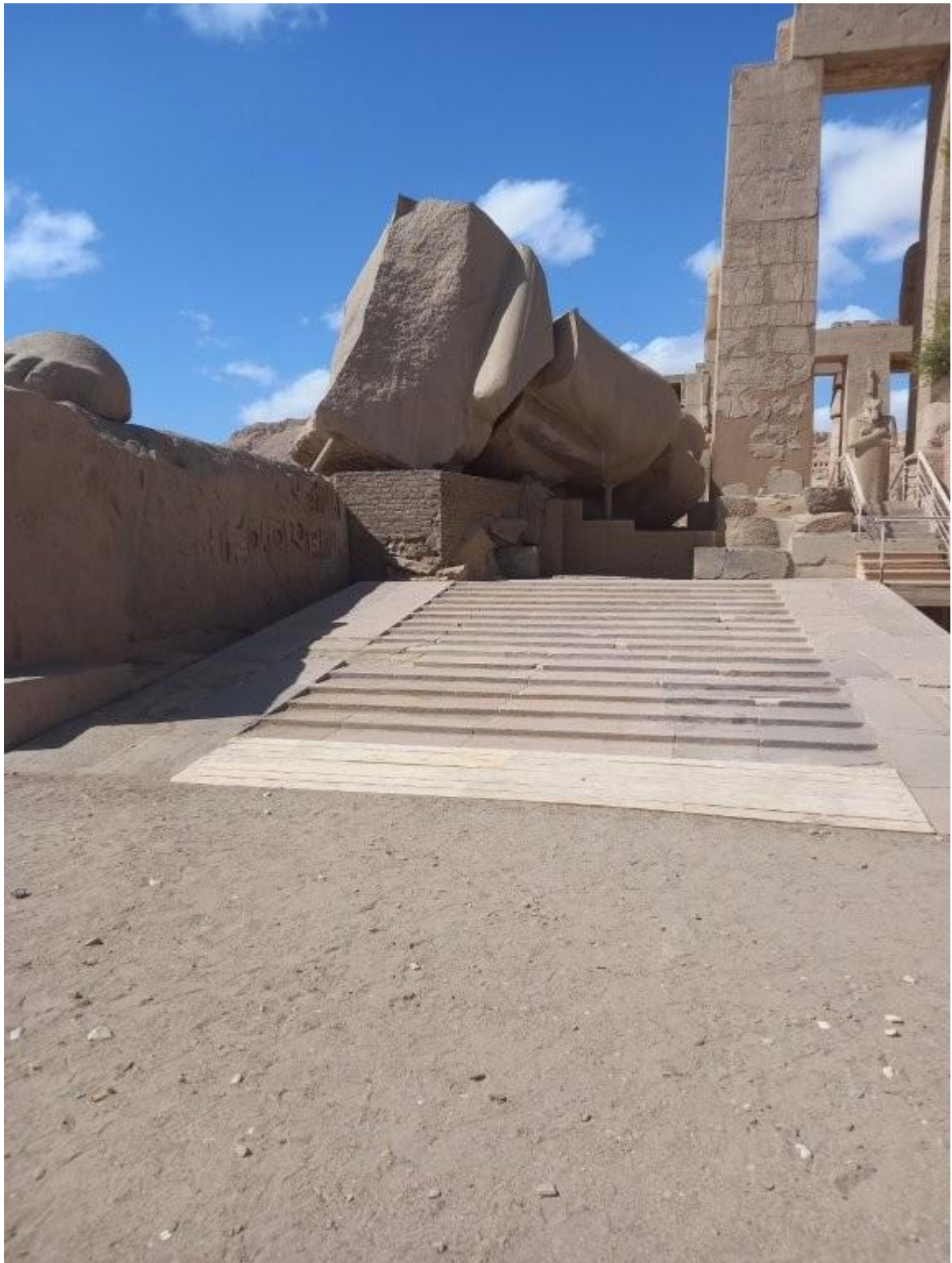


















One of the lids was determined to weigh 30 tons, with the boxes, which were made from basalt and granite and sandstone weighing in at 70 tons plus.

These amazing boxes were obviously constructed during the building of the Serapeum as there was insufficient space to have had them transported to their current resting place, once the building was completed.

One would suppose that these remarkable objects were built to a purpose though what purpose remains a mystery. There is an opinion these boxes were to contain bulls, though who knows for sure. No bulls were ever found in these boxes though bull remains were indeed found in some lesser tombs.

And herein lies the charm and attraction of Egypt where not only the way things were built or constructed is unknown, we have also simply no idea at all why they were constructed or what indeed their function may have been. Once more, this is the allure of the place, all the unknowns, mysteries, megalithic constructions and the reasons for them. Obviously, this is not like a weekend where a few guys became bored and said lets' go camping and fishing. These guys were highly unlikely to suddenly decide to alleviate the boredom of desert dwelling by signing up for a few decades of building incredibly huge buildings utilizing really huge blocks and, with what tools and technology pray tell.

For me, this was one of the definitive highlights of the tour. I was familiar with the Serapeum from podcasts from the Uncharted X site on you tube. However actually being there, right there, was amazing. I find it difficult to write the words that adequately describes the level of awesomeness one felt whilst actually there looking at these marvels. The incredible



precision involved in the manufacture of so much of the boxes, obelisks and statues is nothing short of remarkable, and so impressive. I still feel awed to this day, when recollecting what we all saw.

Following a late lunch, it was back to the hotel for another free evening.

On Sunday we checked out of the Hyatt in preparation of flying to Abydos. Before flying out though, the group visited the Cairo Museum. Well, what an incredible eye-opener that turned out to be. To my mind, and I reckon the rest of the group felt the same way, we could easily have spent several days looking at the incredible display of artifacts and still not see it all. In my estimate, this museum is right up there with the worlds' best, even though it has on display to a large degree, only those objects and things Egyptian.

In due time we flew to Sohag and then had a pleasant and lengthy drive to our accommodation, called The House of Life, in Abydos. For me it was an interesting drive through what obviously was a sugar cane growing region. Much of the traffic was indeed harvested sugar cane being transported by all sorts of means from trucks to horse drawn drays. It reminded me of Vietnam.

The following day we visited the Temple of Seti and had a private entrance into the Osirion which lasted a couple of hours. Following lunch, we were driven to Luxor where we checked into the Steigenberger Nile Palace. The Egyptians certainly know how to provide sterling and luxurious accommodation that's for sure. In fact, for the entire duration

of our visit the food as well as the hotels was top class and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Our next destination was Dendera where we inspected the Temple of Hathor which could only be described as spectacular. Amazing frescoed ceilings and huge megalithic pillars covered with hieroglyphs, simply stunning to see. Utterly mind numbing some of it. There were also several crypts that were explored including one that included the Dendera Lightbulbs. The Dendera lights depicts the Egyptian myth of creation with supporting texts. Harsomtut, often in the form of a snake is pictured emerging from a lotus flower usually attached to the bow of a barge.

We had a very late lunch then travelled back to the hotel where we had a free evening on our own. The group ended up discussing the wonders we had seen which resulted in a Q&A session on how these huge temples were built. It seems likely that the dynastic Egyptians could have built the structures in sandstone where it was obvious that the pillars were segmented and then mounted on top of each other. This was not the case however in the granite temples, where each pillar is a single piece. In addition, the sandstone crossbeams would have been of much less weight than those made of granite. In the end, it was cordially agreed that we simply did not understand how they did it. It was another mystery to add to how the pyramids were built. Over two million blocks with an average weight of two to three tons, quarried and carted from hundreds of miles away, beggars the imagination, given that no steel, and no wheels were

then in existence. Looking at and enthusiastically discussing these mysteries and solutions forms the essence of these tours. One certain thing is that the Egyptians had a lot of resolve because the stuff they did build would have required a huge effort and lots of dedication.

Our next destination, was the famous Luxor Temple and museum. For those who chose to do so there was a daybreak hot air balloon ride. Sherry and I and all the others who went up absolutely loved it, another tour highlight. Everything about it was marvelous and thrilling including the filling of the balloons with the gas at dawn. The pilot flew us over the valley of the kings which was an amazing sight from the air, as the extensive areas under burial crypts were easily visible. There were surprisingly large areas under sugar cane and in fact, our balloon touched down in one of the paddocks. Having spent forty- six years working in the sugar industry in Queensland Australia, I have encountered and experienced many and varied incidents in blocks of sugar cane and I can now add landing in one in a hot air balloon to the list. Just so amazing really and a real hoot for me personally.

As a little technical aside: Egypt produces around 2.8 million tons of sugar and as there are normally seven tons of cane required to produce a ton of sugar, the annual crop would approximate twenty million tons. This is somewhat the same size of the north Queensland sugar industry. Sugar beet is also grown. I have no knowledge of how technical their milling systems are, but their transportation systems are very basic. Hopefully the readers will find this of some interest.



Later in the morning the entire group visited the incredible Luxor Temple with its' amazing ancient architecture and obelisk. We also visited the small though quite remarkable Luxor Museum which displayed some incredible artifacts.

It is an interesting exercise to compare Egypt history to Australia history. In the first place, Australia has been occupied for around sixty thousand years or thereabouts, a time frame fairly universally accepted. Egypt was first populated around five thousand years BC, or between seven and eight thousand years ago, given the evidence. (There are differing theories on this.) Secondly, all the Australian artifacts could be displayed in the trunk of a car by comparison to Egypt's absolute treasure trove of ancient and religious artifacts plus of course the remarkable megalithic structures. Hard to believe that all that could have been achieved in such a comparatively short period of time. Like I said, interesting.

The next day Thursday, we packed up our gear and after breakfast departed for the west bank of the Nile in order to visit the Valley of the Kings. There, we were able to view three of the royal tombs all of which appeared to have been raided or at least robbed. We also visited the Ramesseum which was nothing less than incredible; a magnificent temple which housed the remains of an utterly gigantic statue. The temple was the mortuary for Ramses the Great. This statue, which is a single piece of granite, has been estimated to weigh in excess of a thousand tons. We also visited the tombs

of the nobles where we viewed some very ancient Egyptian scenes.

Following lunch, we bussed to the Colossi of Memnon. These statues which are sixty feet tall, depict Amenhotep son of Hapu. It is believed that Amenhotep was also the architect. Both statues are from quartzite material such as sandstone. The southern statue is a single piece of stone. The material for the statue was mined near Cairo and thus had to be transported some hundreds of miles from the quarry to the site.

Many of these truly magnificent statutes, tombs and temples have been seen by millions around the globe on various media outlets however, it is completely impossible to grasp their sheer majesty until you see them close up in the flesh as it were. A single piece granite statue over a thousand tons is a sight to behold even when lying in pieces on the ground, it really is. When you behold a toe, a granite toe no less, part of a fallen statue, that is nearly as big as a normal man, you have no choice other than awe, and perhaps reflection upon how that was carved back in the day and why? OK, the Pharaohs were revered and that may answer the why, but how did they produce those colossal carvings from sheer, living granite using only wooden tools, some copper tools and stone hammers. As a comparable ideology, Christianity revered Jesus Christ, son of God. Similarly, there are many temples or churches built to demonstrate reverence, and many of these buildings are beautiful and ornate but none are megalithic.

Another line of thought offered is that the pyramids were there when the dynastic Egyptians came along and they valued and adopted them. Some of the pharaohs adopted them for themselves and autographed them so to say. It appears that the early Egyptologists assumed that a pyramid was constructed as a burial site for whosever name was on it.

We then travelled to the river Nile for embarkation on the much looked forward to, Nile Cruise. An interesting fact about the Nile: the river was notorious for its huge crocodiles and territorially protective hippos. Apparently, since the construction of the dam, the section used for tourism has been cleared of those dangerous animals, presumably for safety reasons. It would not be a good look to have drunk tourist on a cruise go over the side and be gobbled up by a happy crocodile or, bitten in half by a rambunctious hippopotamus.

I am happily able to report that indeed, no one fell overboard and in fact, there were no mishaps of any import during the tour which had elderly people participating including the writer and his lovely wife.

The Nile River cruise was certainly a highlight of the tour. Ben, Yousef, and the snake brothers provided some music during several jamming sessions that were well appreciated by all. There was a "Question and Answer" session one evening, that answered a host of questions and clarified a raft of issues. There really is an enormous amount of data presented during the tour which had to be mentally processed at time of delivery, so an opportunity to recap was welcomed.



The whole Egyptian experience is full of mystery, enigmas and lack of understanding. This is precisely what Ben, Yousef, the brothers of the serpent, Graham Hancock and others are attempting to address. When you think about it, it is not known when exactly the pyramids were built, same for the sphinx because it is not possible to carbon date rocks. Therefore, we are at a loss to adequately explain why they were built, or when and not least by whom and how. It is a pity that no organic material was found, akin to what was found in Gobekli Tepe and which enabled carbon dating of the site. This allowed approximate dating of when the site was inhabited.

There are those who believe that the sphinx existed prior to the younger dryas period which was 12900 years ago. This was the time of meteor impact which pretty much ended the ice age, and which was felt around the globe. The melting ice also raised sea levels significantly, which would have impacted many coastlines around the globe.

There are additional issues also unexplained. It seems the pyramids are aligned with the constellations and are mathematically sized. And a host of other pyramid shaped structures have been discovered somewhat recently in other parts of the globe, and are also most mysterious. Couple all this with the discovery of ancient civilizations like the above mentioned Gobekli Tepe in Turkey and you have a sound reason to question the veracity of modern archeological ideology and explanations.

The other aspect of what we saw and cannot explain is just why the temples were built to such a megalithic size. Perhaps the larger the temple, the greater the demonstration of idolization, perhaps they were built by or for, giants. Who could know. There are other examples: the boxes in the Serapeum are a case in point. Personally, I love this stuff, love mysteries and having been involved in agricultural research for many years, am frustrated by the lack of answers.

All of the above serves to add mystique to any visit to Egypt, and it is small wonder that the tourist industry is growing each year.

Allied to all this mystery is the belief by researchers like Graham Hancock that modern humanity is missing a lot of history. His belief is that humanity is suffering from historical amnesia. That ancient civilizations did exist however cannot be debunked as the evidence is in the ruins and furthermore, carbon dating of organic material from food remnants and bones provides rough estimates of the time these folks existed. What is not known why they disappeared or why as in the case of Gobekli Tepe, the city was deliberately buried.

Massive underground societies also existed though why underground is not fully understood. Perhaps for defensive reasons or escape from disease who knows.

There are many other incredible and ancient religious sites around the world such as Angkor Wat a Buddhist temple in Cambodia and My Son in Vietnam. We have seen both of these and while similar to Christian churches in ornateness,

they are very much of normal size. They were also obvious places of worship and totally without megalithic proportions.

Just recently I watched a raft of podcasts and videos on the existence of giants and some discoveries that supported the view that once, long ago they were indeed amongst us. Now the size of these beings varied tremendously from kilometer plus heights to beings, more believably, ten meters tall. If any of it is credible, it could go some way to explain how some of the huge rocks were shifted to build some ancient structures and why some megalithic temples are the size they are.

The other issue is, that these giant beings should have left memories of their presence, but no, we must have lost those memories or, had them taken from us. How and why? In addition, would there not have been some more evidence of their existence discovered by now? Ten- meter tall, people and enough of them surely would leave some relics behind, such as weapons or tools which most likely would have been of wood and stone.

There are other places of course where ancient technology was seemingly used to produce rather startling structures such as the amazing granite caves of Barabar with its' precise symmetry, the megalithic structures of Peru and many more. Not having seen them I really cannot comment any further.

In summary, both Sherry and I could not rate the adventure we had too highly as upon reflection and once back home, we remained in awe for some time. I personally would urge anyone who has an interest in the unexplained, and things Egyptian, to go on this tour. There is a very valid reason why



quite a few people on that tour had been before and decided they had to go again.

We both gratefully thank Ben, Youseff and Mo for their great generosity, their company and their collective sharing of knowledge and insight. I would also like to thank the Snake Brothers for their friendship.

Finally, thanks to all the wonderful folk we shared the tour and experiences with. We hope you are all well.

Ron and Sherry van Kerkwyk