

TRIP TO EGYPT FROM THE 20TH TO THE 27TH OF FEBRUARY 2009



We travelled with the charter company Solia from Gardermoen to Hurghada.

Hurghada lies at the coast of the Red Sea. It has about 95 000 inhabitants. It is a popular destination for tourists and Egyptian holiday makers. Tourism is the town's main trade.

Both settling and industry and commerce in Egypt are mainly connected with the fertile Nile valley and the Nile delta.

As much as 96 % of the country is desert.

Totally there live about 76 million people in Egypt.

The first kingdom in Egypt was founded in 3200 before Christ. There were native rulers until the Persians took over the control in 343 before Christ.

It was the Persians who started digging the Suez canal. The canal was finished in 1869.

Later, Egypt has been ruled by Greeks, Romans, Persians again, Byzantines, Osmans and by Great Britain from 1882. Egypt was independent from Great Britain in 1922.



Solia used Norwegian to fly us there. Here is the plain we used.



This is some pictures from the airport in Hurghada. In 2007 the airport serviced 5 947 616 passengers.



We stayed at a hotel named Mina Mark.

Here are some pictures from the homepage to the hotel.

The hotel was 4-star and was quite OK.



When we reached the hotel it was late in the evening and we went out in the street outside the hotel and found a restaurant with Italian inspired food.

It was very good.



The next day we just relaxed.

We first ate breakfast in the restaurant. They had an all right selection of everything.

Here we could have pan cakes or omelet.



After breakfast we were a while at the pool. There was a quite nice pool area. There was a bit windy the all the time, but there was nice in the sun. We would try the pool, but it was not heated. We put the feet into the pool but it was freezing.



Here is the alley between the two buildings with flats. It stretches from the pool area downwards to the sea.



Here we are down by the sea where there was a small beach



Here we look from the beach and towards the hotel. There was also some sun beds.



After having seen the beach we played some billiard



Here we have a break



From the billiard room we could look over the wall and down to the street below.



Here is the same street seen in the other direction.



Here we pass by the pool back to our flat



Here is a small scene where there were music in the evenings



Here we look up on our flat



Here is the view from the terrace



In the afternoon we went down the street to find a place to have lunch. We found this restaurant that had much Indian food. Here is a picture from inside the restaurant and out on the street.



Here Anne Berit is sitting, talking with the staff.



Here is the food we ate



Here the staff is sitting, playing domino

The rest of the day we just relaxed. In the evening we had dinner at a Chinese restaurant.



The next day we went on an excursion by bus to Luxor.

We were picked up at 5 o'clock in the morning. At that time it was quite dark.

Most of the trip went through desert.

At dawn we got this picture of the sunrise.



We had a stop on the way and we could eat our breakfast, which we had brought along. Here is a bunch of Bedouins begging for money.



The mountains were not so high, but there were many of them.



Here are more mountains



There were lots of donkeys with carts like this to be seen



Here they are growing sugar cane

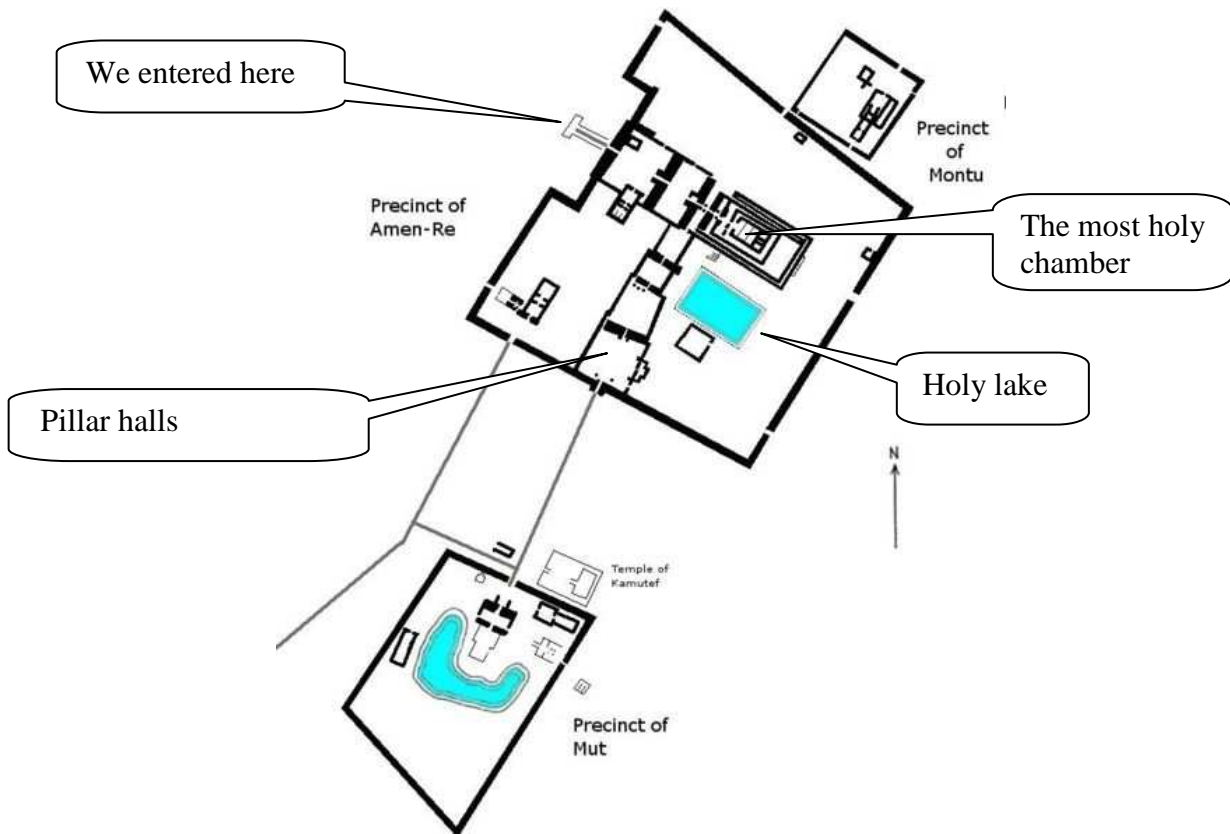


Here is a water wheel at a side canal to the Nile. It is driven by the current in the canal and it lifts the water up into ditches that distribute the water on the fields.

When we reached Luxor, the first stop was in Karnack. Karnack is an Egyptian village, which once was a part of the antique capital Thebe. The temple was built about 2000 years before Christ.

For many hundred years the temple in Karnack was the antique Egypt's religious centre. Each Pharaoh built new parts or made changes. It was the main temple for the Amon cult, but also other gods and goddesses were worshipped there.

Amon-Ra's national temple in Karnack, which is partly preserved, is the biggest temple construction that the history knows about. In the times of the new kingdom the temple had 80 000 employees.



This is a sketch of the temple in Karnack



Here we are at the entrance, where we have to pass through an imposing sphinx alley. The sphinxes here have lion bodies and the head of a ram. The ram heads point out that this is the creator god Khnum. The temples on the east side of the Nile (where the sun rises) most often have a connection with birth rituals of some kind.



The guide tells about the temple. He was an Egyptologist and new a lot about the old history



Here we are in the worlds biggest pillar hall with 134 pillars that are 23 m high.



Here are some close-ups of the pillars



Here is both the Egyptian guide and the guide from Solia, who translated as the Egyptian guide told us about the temple.



Here we see two obelisks. The highest is 30 m high and was put up by queen Hatshepsut for the honor of the god Amon.



Here is a beetle on a column. It is told that if one goes around the beetle 7 times, the one will be happy, rich and influential. Here a crowd is on with the 7 rounds.



This is the most holy chamber, which is built for the god Amon



This is the holy lake



Restoration is going on all the time



There were a lot of visitors this day with a lot of buses



Here we had lunch. The restaurant was positioned right besides the Nile.



When we had finished the lunch, we went with these two boats over to the other side of the Nile



Here we are sitting in the boat



Here the cruise ships lies moored for the day



There was also some sail boats to be seen



Here we have reach the other side of the Nile



The first stop was the Valley of the Kings. Here is a map of the area



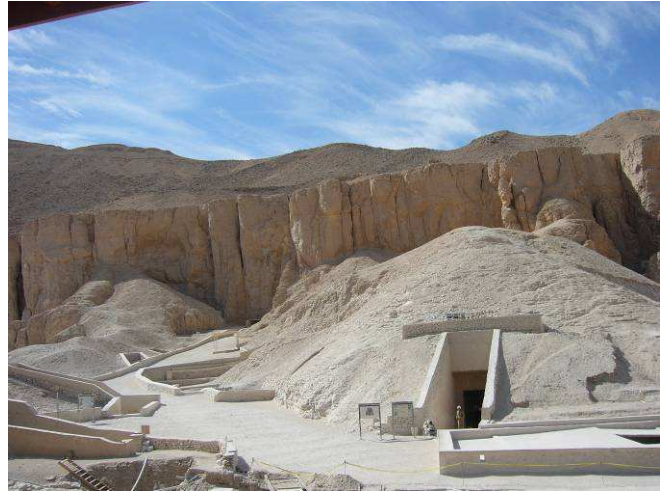
We were taken by this train into the valley

In the Valley of the Kings the pharaohs in the 8th to the 20th dynasty, from about 1539 to about 1075 before Christ, buried. The first pharaoh who was buried there was Thutmose I, and the last was Ramses X or Ramses XI. The most known of the graves is the grave of Tutankhamun. Each grave has several chambers. The biggest has over 120 chambers made for Ramses II's sons.



Here we are on the way up the valley



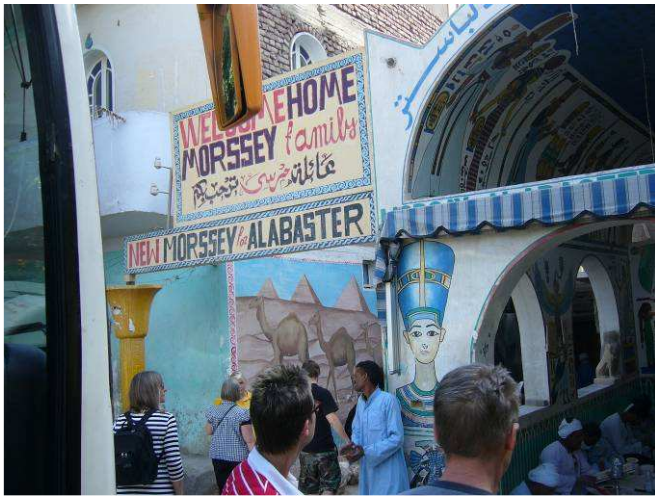


This were various pictures from the area

It was not allowed to take pictures inside the graves, so here is a picture from Internet of how it looked like.



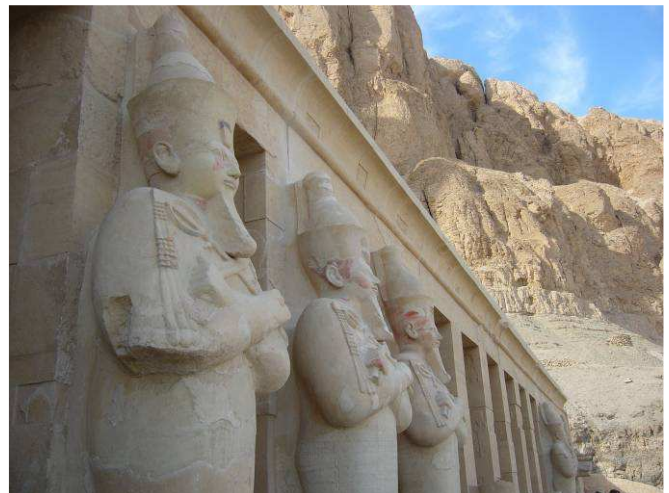
These are jars that was dug out in this area the week before we arrived



Then we visited an alabaster factory where they made figures, vases and pictures, etc.

Alabaster is a fine grained variant of plaster that already in the antiquity was used to make small statues and other art objects. It is found among other places in Italia and at Isfjorden on Svalbard.

There is also a variant of marble, which is called alabaster (chalk-alabaster), and it is found among other places in Egypt (oriental alabaster) and in Mexico.



Here we are at Hatshepsut's temple.

Hatshepsut was queen in 1490–1469 before Christ. She was the only female pharaoh in Egypt.

In 2007 Egyptologists believed to have identified the 3500 year old mummy of the queen. The mummy was found in the Valley of the Kings in 1903, but was not identified before the newest methods were available.





This is the most holy room where a statue of the god Amon was kept.



This is the view in direction of Luxor from Hatshepsut's temple.



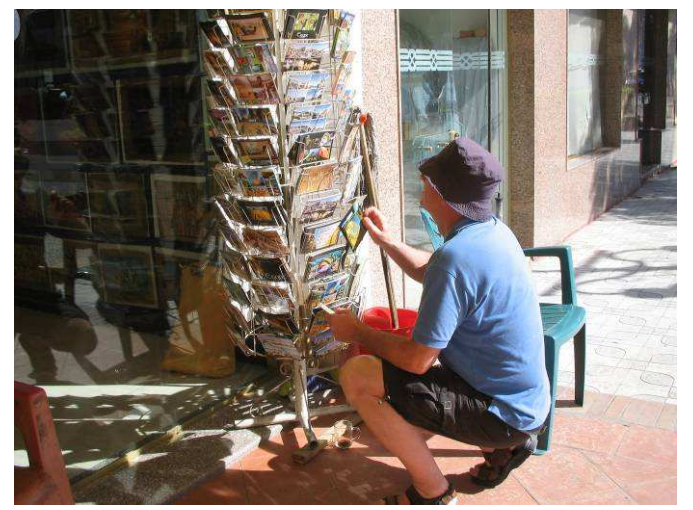
In the evening we had dinner at china restaurant right beside our hotel



Here the waiter is making pranks



Here the fruit salesman is waiting for customers



Here Kjell is about to by post cards



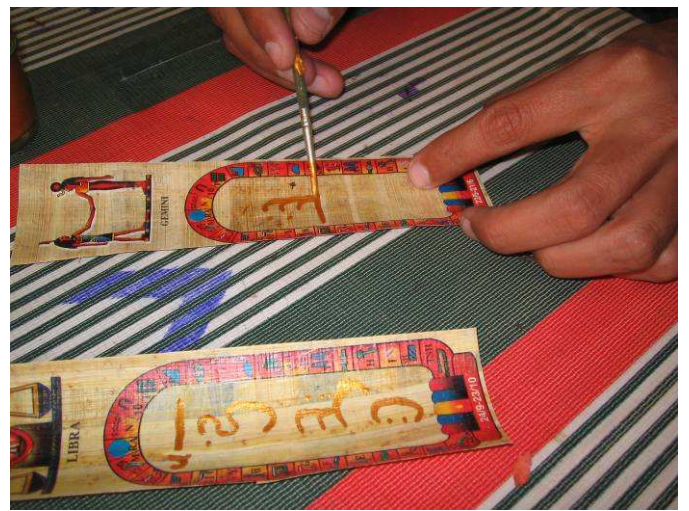
The shop owner is wrapping up the post cards



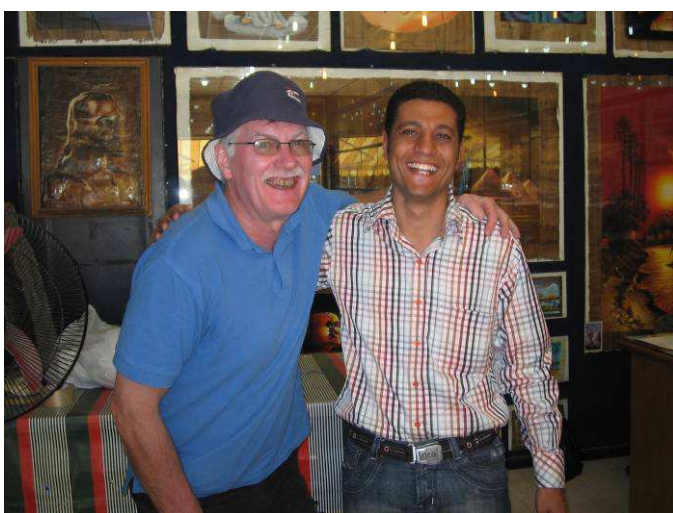
Kjell is looking at bigger pictures



He bought this. It is painted on papyrus at the original way and signed by the artist.



The shop owner wrote our names in Egyptian



Here the business is finished



Afterwards we went to the beach



Here Kjell has positioned himself on the sun bed



Here is proof that Kjell is walking into the Red Sea



A camel is cooling off in the wind out on the pier



Here the camel is back on the beach. It was possible to ride the camel, for a fee of course.



Here is a pigeon that often sat on our terrace



This is the guy who made up our room every day



There was an enormous security outside the banks. This guy should "help" me, pushed himself in front of me, pushed the keys, took out my money and wanted 20 pound for himself as a thank you for his "help". He got 10 pound.



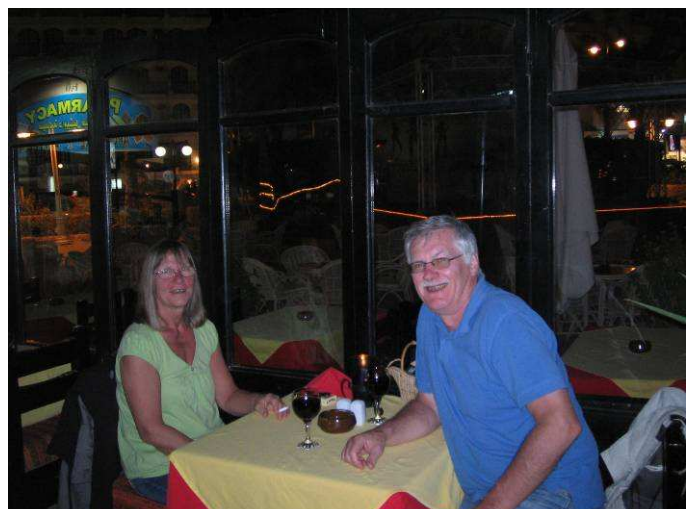
A guard



A guard



In the evening we went to the china restaurant



Here we have ordered food



This was our waiter this evening



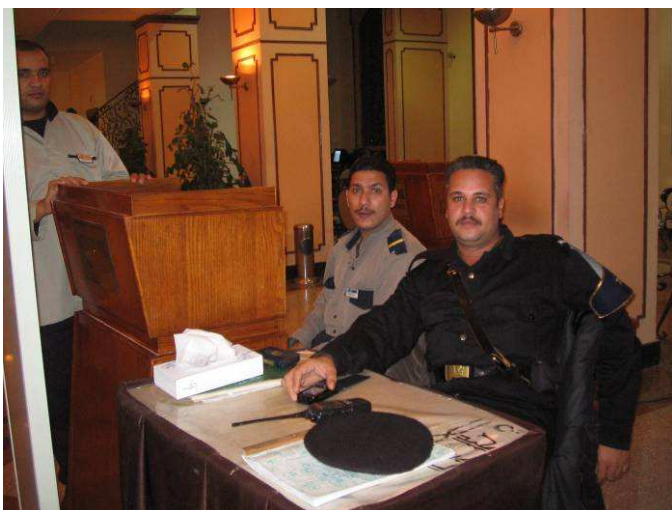
Decoration on the plate, carrot bird.



Here is another carrot bird



All the taxis looked like this one. There were an enormously amount of taxis in the city and they stopped all the time and honked to ask if we wanted a taxi.



There was just as much security at our hotel. There were three fully armed watchmen sitting here, day and night.



This was the Internet section at the hotel



When we came from the china restaurant we played chess. Kjell is standing, studying the position.



Here Kjell is playing with one of the neighbors



The fourth day we should have been on an excursion by bus to Cairo.

After the excursion to Luxor that lasted 16 hours, we were tired of driving by bus. In addition we had got a cold because of the air-condition device in the bus.

On the trip to Cairo we had to start the trip 2 o'clock in the night and the trip was twice as long.

We therefore gave the message that we did not come.

Then we missed these pyramids outside Cairo.

Egypt was a nice country to visit. Everybody was gentle and forthcoming.

The only drawback was that when we went along the street, everybody wanted to sell something. We were generally not interesting to by anything, so it got tiresome to say no thank you or to stare straight ahead as if we did not hear.