



May 2012, number 200

For quite a variety of good reasons, members of the North Texas ARCE Chapter have not had access to the CyberScribe since last August. Back issues will not be sent out. If you wish to see what happened in those other months, the back issues can be accessed by going to Nigel Strudwick's site at the Newton Institute, University of Cambridge <http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/er/>.

At least until conditions change, members will get the CyberScribe through their e-mails. There have been many requests to continue the CyberScribe column. Hopefully you will enjoy getting the CyberScribe once more.

There are always many interesting things happening in the wonderful world of Egyptology, and the CyberScribe will present a variety of the best for your pleasure.

Let's get right to the news!

Recently there has been a lot of interest in that famous set of books called the "Description de L'Egypte", which most people know is a record of the research undertaken by the scientists taken to Egypt by Napoleon. These books are certainly rare, and a very much-neglected copy was discovered on the shelves of the library of the Antiquities Documentation Center in Cairo. Plans are now underway to clean it up and restore the treasurer.

Curiously, the article calls the series of books "La Description de L'Egypte", but the actual title is simply the "Description de L'Egypte".

The article below from Al-Ahram tells the story (<http://littleurl.info/6g5~>):



"After decades hidden on the shelves of the library of the Antiquities Documentation Centre, a genuine copy of *La Description de L'Egypte* is now being restored.

"Today the Ministry of State for Antiquities (MSA) transported the volume to the state-of-the-art labs of the planned Grand Egyptian

Museum (GEM) where it will be meticulously cleaned.

“MSA Minister Mohamed Ibrahim explained that the book has been damaged by insects and that some of its pages are tainted.

“Hussein Abdel Bassir, GEM supervisor, told Ahran Online that restorers are now examining the book and its hardcover in order to select the best method of clean and preserving it and the contents therein. He added that the restoration would take at least a year, as the book is in very bad condition.

“The first edition of *La Description de L’Egypte* was published in 1809, offering a comprehensive scientific description of ancient and modern Egypt as well as its natural history. It was the collaborative work of about 160 scholars and scientists who accompanied Napoleon’s expedition to Egypt in 1798 to 1801.”

A brief article relates the restoration and partial reconstruction of a beautiful small temple of the goddess Hathor. By the time you read this it should be reopened to visitors on the island of Philae. The source is Al-Ahran again (<http://tinyurl.com/7rjnq7p>) and is accompanied by very useful photograph. Read on.



“To the east of the famous Isis temple on the island of Philae in Upper Egypt, workers and

archaeologists are busy at work. They are cleaning and restoring the massive stone blocks that once formed the temple of Hathor, which is being rebuilt and restored in order to be officially inaugurated next month.

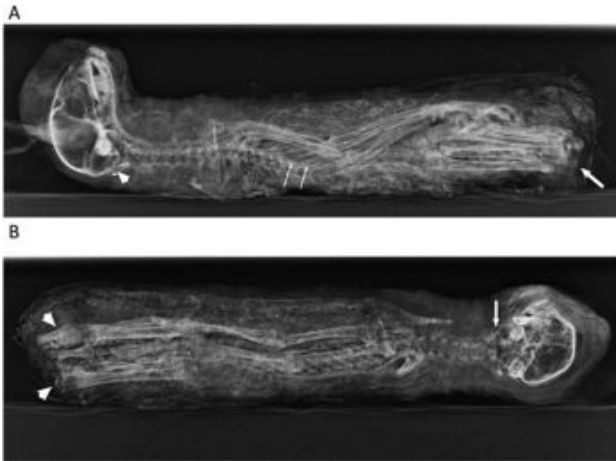
“Time has since taken its toll on the temple, which was built by King Ptolemy VI and extended during the reigns of Ptolemy VII and Roman emperors Augustus and Tiberius. Many of the temple’s stone blocks have deteriorated; its walls are riddled with cracks.

“The temple’s deteriorated blocks have been replaced with new ones, while fallen blocks have been returned to their original positions. Poor restoration work undertaken previously has been corrected.

“The temple consists of a colonnaded kiosk bearing 14 Hathor-headed pillars, a *pronaos* (vestibule) and a cult terrace facing the Nile River. Among the temple’s most impressive reliefs is one depicting a group of musicians performing before an assembly of ancient Egyptian deities.”

Everyone loves a kitten, right? Well it seems that not everybody did, for as we know, there was an industry in ancient Egypt produced mummified animals for pilgrims to religious shrines. To meet the demand, the animals were farmed, and in many cases, the animals chosen to be mummified were kittens. The news source "LiveScience" (<http://tinyurl.com/7npau34>) (Abbreviated) gives us the details:

The cat mummy from the side (A) and front (B). In (A), the three thin white arrows indicate the squeezed thorax; white arrow, fractured backbones of the tail; white arrowhead, fracture/hole in the occipital region of the skull. CREDIT: Gnudi, et. al., *Jrn. Fel. Med. and Surg.*, 2012



embalmers fractured some of the cat's bones, including a backbone at the base of the spine to position the tail as close to the body as possible, and ribs to make the front limbs sit closer to the body.

“The arrangement of the mummy's wrappings is intricate, with various geometrical patterns. The eyes are depicted in black ink on small round pieces of linen bandage,” the researchers write. “The cat skeleton is also complete, meaning that it is one of the most valuable types.”

“Two thousand years ago, an Egyptian purchased a mummified kitten from a breeder, to offer as a sacrifice to the goddess Bastet, new research suggests.

“The cat mummy came from the Egyptian Collection of the National Archeological Museum in Parma, Italy. It was bought by the museum in the 18th century from a collector.

“The cat mummies from this period are common, especially kittens. Kittens, aged 2 to 4 months old, were sacrificed in huge numbers, because they were more suitable for mummification,” the authors write in the paper, published in the April 2012 issue of the Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery. The researchers did a radiograph of the mummy, finding the small cat was actually a kitten, only about 5 or 6 months old.

“The fact that the cat was young suggests that it was one of those bred specifically for mummification,” study researcher Giacomo Gnudi, a professor at the University of Parma, said.

“The cat was wrapped as tightly as possible, and placed in a sitting position before mummification, similar to seated cats depicted in hieroglyphics from the same era. To make the cat take up as little space as possible, the

The CyberScribe has mentioned this next item several times, because its history has been so contentious. This in reference to the mummy mask purchased by the St. Louis Art Museum, which was accused of having a stolen object. The legal battles have raged, but for the moment, the museum has prevailed, and has now put the disputed mask on display. The article (condensed) is from Al-Ahram (<http://tinyurl.com/7ksckjs>):

“After a six-year controversy over the ownership of the 19th-Dynasty mummy mask of Ka-Nefer-Nefer, a noblewoman from the court of Pharaoh Ramses II, a United States federal judge has ruled that it should stay at the St Louis Art Museum where it has been exhibited since 1998. The US government had claimed the mask was being held illicitly and should be returned to Egypt.



“US District Judge Henry Autry vindicated his ruling that the US government failed to prove that the ancient Egyptian mask had been stolen and smuggled abroad after it went missing from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo about 40 years ago.

“The US government "does not provide a factual statement of theft, smuggling or clandestine importation", Autry recorded in the 31 March ruling. "The government cannot simply rest on its laurels and believe that it can initiate a civil forfeiture proceeding on the basis of one bold assertion that because something went missing from one party in 1973 and turned up with another party in 1998, it was therefore stolen and/or imported or exported illegally," the judge wrote.

“The ruling came after almost a year-long lawsuit between St Louis Art Museum (SLAM) and the US government, which wants to seize the mask in order to return it to Egypt on the grounds that it is Egyptian property and has been stolen and illegally smuggled out of the country.

“The Ka-Nefer-Nefer mask is a very beautiful ancient Egyptian artifact depicting the face of a woman of the court of Ramses II. It has inlaid glass eyes and a smiling face covered in gold. The head is adorned with a startling black wig decorated with a gilded lotus flower, and each hand holds a wooden amulet signifying strength and position. A delicate scene carved

in relief on the arms shows her successful ascent into the afterlife on the boat of the Great God Osiris.

“According to records held by the antiquities department, the funerary mask of Ka-Nefer-Nefer was discovered in 1952 by Egyptologist Zakaria Goneim while he was excavating the area of the unfinished Step Pyramid of the Third-Dynasty ruler Sekhemkhet on the Saqqara necropolis. Along with many other finds from the excavation, the mask was



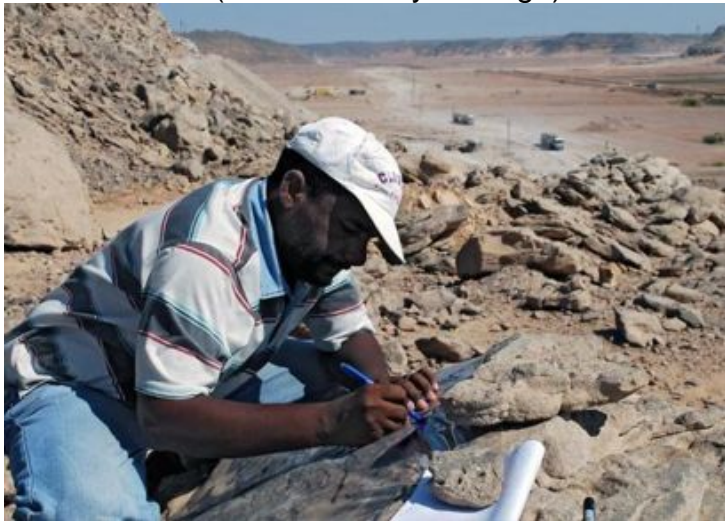
Egyptologist Zakaria Goneim

placed in the so-called Sekhemkhet magazine situated to the south of the pyramid of Unas. This and all the contents of the magazine were the property of what was then called the Egyptian Antiquities Authority.”

Among the most ancient human works in Egypt are the desert petroglyphs carved into rock outcrops. Many of these are now threatened by quarrying operations that will devour the ancient sites. As a geologist, the CyberScribe shudders at the use of the word “fjord” to describe a desert wadi. NO WAY. Fjords are only glacial features, and there has never been a glacier in Egypt.

The carvings have a passionate supporter and his story can be read below (<http://tinyurl.com/dx1wj7u>) (somewhat condensed):

“In 2006 one of the most important recent archaeological discoveries in Egypt were made in Wadi (Chor) Abu Subeira near Aswan: A team led by Adel Kelany found a stunning assemblage of petroglyphs dating to the Late Paleolithic era (c. 15-20.000 years ago).



“Emergency in Wadi Abu Subeira: Adel Kamel of the Supreme Council of Antiquities in Aswan recording Late Paleolithic rock art. In the background: Heavy trucks transporting clay from the numerous mines in the wadi. The clay is used in the Egyptian ceramics industry. Photo: Per Storemyr

Ongoing surveys have shown that the initial find was the tip of the iceberg only, which makes Subeira perhaps the richest place of “Ice-Age” art in North Africa. Unfortunately, the Subeira rock art is extremely threatened by modern mining, which lately has proven to be even more widespread than previously thought.

“15-20.000 years ago the waters of the Nile were much higher than today. The broad Wadi Abu Subeira may have been a small “fjord”,

reaching several kilometers into the Eastern Desert.

“It seems that it was along this “fjord” that the Late Paleolithic humans made their art. They pecked many aurochs (wild ox), hartebeest, fish, hippopotami and even a very large, beautifully executed Nubian ibex.



This superb auroch is part of Late Paleolithic rock art in Subeira

“The rock art is comparable to the better-known occurrences at Qurta by Kom Ombo, where Dirk Huyge and his Belgian team has recently confirmed the age of this type of rock art: It is definitely belonging to the Late Paleolithic era, and thus comparable to the great “Ice-Age” art in Europe – especially in the Late Magdalenian period. It is yet entirely unclear whether there is a relationship in terms of long-distance influence and intercultural contact. This is why it is so important to safeguard the Wadi Abu Subeira rock art and the associated archaeological sites for the future – otherwise we will lose an important place that may help us finding out whether there was in fact contact between North Africa and Europe in the Late Paleolithic.”

Speaking of spectacular monuments, the CyberScribe has been enjoying sending

photographs of the monumental culture to his various Egyptologists friends, and asking them to identify the location. Not one of them has even gotten close. Take a look at the photographs below, and the secret of their location will be revealed below the pictures.



These wonderful statues are probably thirty feet tall, and they adorn the façade of a place called “Carrollton Square Salon and Spa”. The establishment is run by an oriental outfit, and is part of a small chain. They say:

“Spa Castle is a 144,000 sq. ft. Full service spa that also has 27 beautiful boutique hotel rooms and 5000sq ft. of banquet space. The City of Carrollton has been anxiously waiting to discover what lies behind the curiously large stone facade of the 140,000 sq. ft. structure, which stands guarded by two, even more curious Egyptian pharaohs. Spa Castle, a wellness community that elegantly balances facilities conducive to achieving mental, physical and even social revitalization, is now sharing its secret with the South.”

Curious? They are located at: 1020 Raiford Road, Carrollton, TX 75007



There is a recent story of another odd monument that is vaguely Egyptian. This one is located near Utrecht in the Netherlands. The article below is a rough translation, edited a bit, but you may enjoy it. Read on (<http://tinyurl.com/7k93be6>) (condensed slightly):



“The Pyramide van Austerlitz was erected on the 12th of October 1804 by the 30-year old French general Auguste F.L.V. de Marmont as a memorial of the camping of his 18.000 army men on the moor of Zeist. Officially he dedicated this monument to Napoleon who was crowned emperor that year.

“Marmont choose for a simple memorial that he could quickly and cheap build and that would last for ages: a pyramid of earth and turf with a wooden obelisk and a scenic view.



“In 1806 king Louis Napoleon gave this monument the name of 'Pyramide van Austerlitz' in honor of the Battle of Austerlitz in Techia, won by his brother. Since the village nearby the army camp is also called Austerlitz. When Marmont left, the pyramided fell into disrepair. In 1894 a new stone obelisk replaced it.

“Marmont's inspiration for this monument was the Pyramid of Giza he had seen during the Campaign of Egypt with Napoleon in 1798. Even the steps were copied. After the Egyptian Campaign all kinds of Egyptian motives became popular in Europe. This Egyptian mania was seen in gravestones in the form of pyramids.



World-renowned Egyptologist John Taylor with one of the missing fragments of the Book of the Dead at Queensland Museum. Source: AAP

“WHEN visiting British Museum curator John Taylor asked to inspect Queensland Museum's collection of ancient Egyptian artifacts, he did not expect to stumble upon a long-lost section of the burial scroll of one of the civilization's greatest builders.

“The world-renowned Egyptologist, in Brisbane for the opening this week of a touring exhibition of mummies from his museum, was poring over a display case of antiquities when his eye was drawn to a shred of papyrus bearing the distinctive hieroglyphs of Amenhotep, a chief builder in the 15th century BC, whose burial scroll, known as a "Book of the Dead", was scattered across the globe in the 1890s.

“Intrigued by the fragment, donated in 1913 by an unknown woman, Dr. Taylor asked whether there were any more pieces in the museum's dungeons. "When I was brought into the conservation lab to see them, after a very short period of time it became apparent that we did indeed have many fragments of the Book of the Dead of this extremely important man," Dr. Taylor said yesterday. "This is not the papyrus of just anybody - this is one of the top officials in Egypt at the peak of Egyptian prosperity."

“After an archeological quest spanning more than a century, it is hoped the fragments can be used to piece together the "massive jigsaw" littered across some of the world's great museums.

“Dr. Taylor suspects that when it is completed, Amenhotep's book could be in excess of 20m long, representing one of the longest and most historically significant Egyptian burial scrolls in existence.

“Marmont and his soldiers built it. In 27 days about 30.000 cubic meters of earth were moved for the 36m high pyramid, which has 40 steps on a 2m high base. Then the 13m high wooden obelisk was placed.”

On a more serious note, fragments of a very important papyrus have recently been located in Australia, where they had been in storage for a long while, with no idea of their importance. The work is from a man called Amenhotep, but not, as several sources claimed, the famous Amenhotep, son of Hapu. The somewhat abbreviated article below (<http://tinyurl.com/6lk9bqt>) from “The Australian” tells us how this came about:



“The fragments are too fragile to be moved unnecessarily, but Dr. Taylor hopes to virtually match up digital images of the fragments with other sections from the British Museum, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

“Amenhotep was Egypt's chief builder during the construction of the Great Temple of the god Amun at Karnak, near Luxor, about 1520BC.

“Dr. Taylor said he never expected to make the "once in a lifetime" discovery on his visit to Australia, adding the long-lost relic could have turned up almost anywhere. "In Egypt in the 1890s, people were collecting and digging up antiquities at a very fast rate and often it wasn't documented where these things were going," he said. "Private individuals would go on holidays to Egypt and buy things like this and take them home, so there's still a lot of material out there that people haven't seen.”

Another short piece was also on a serious note. A New York man had smuggled in and was selling quite a variety of Egyptian artifacts. He was finally nabbed and prosecuted. The story shows some of the materials he imported, and tells the bare bones of the story from “ArtInfo” (<http://tinyurl.com/7cct9v2>):



“How did a Brooklyn man smuggle enough Egyptian artifacts into the U.S. to open a small museum? Mostly by lying on customs forms.

On Wednesday the New York antiques dealer Mousa Khouli (aka Morris Khouli), 38, pleaded guilty to smuggling Egyptian artifacts into the country at a Brooklyn courthouse, including an ancient sarcophagus in Greco-Roman style, a three-part nesting coffin that once contained an ancient Egyptian named "Shesepamuntayesher," a set of funerary boats, and limestone figures. Khouli could face as much as 20 years in federal prison.

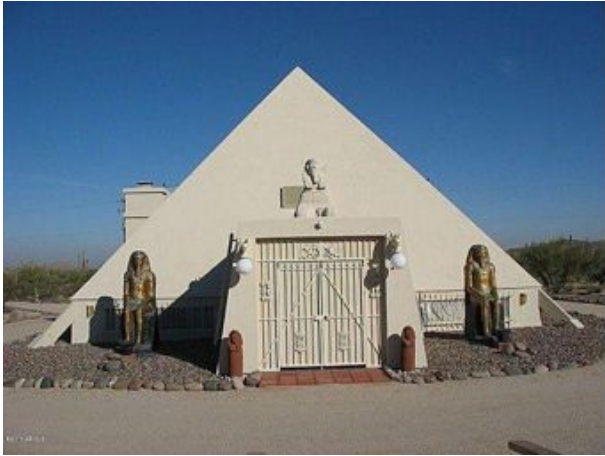
“The artifacts, which he smuggled into the United States from Dubai between October 2008 and November 2009, have all been recovered following an investigation by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

“Khouli was able to bring the artifacts into the country by falsifying customs documents, providing inaccurate information regarding the artifacts' provenance and value, and giving misleading descriptions on container labels, like "wooden painted box" and "wood panels,"

“The majority of the artifacts were recovered on July 14, 2011 at the time of Khouli's indictment. Parts of the multi-chambered nesting coffin were recovered from his home during a September 2009 raid, and from containers at the Port of Newark, New Jersey, in November 2009. Still other smuggled objects were found in a raid of his co-defendant Joseph A. Lewis II's house last July. Khouli handed over the remaining pieces of the coffin in court on Wednesday, which may help reduce his jail sentence.”

And in a lighter vein, there is a pyramid for sale. “MSNBC” showcased this odd structure (<http://tinyurl.com/8y7zb2n>). Technically a house, it is waiting for the right buyer...or one odd enough to want such a domicile:

Rising out of the desert is a grand pyramid. Guarded by two gold statues, the pyramid has stood watch over the Arizona landscape for 24 years.



This Arizona pyramid even has golden statues framing the front entrance. For sale: \$495,000

It's not quite what you'd expect when you hear the word "pyramid," but situated on 13 acres in Arizona is a pyramid home that looks like it belongs in Giza, not in the city of Maricopa.

Unlike the ancient buildings built to house the tombs of kings, this particular pyramid is a single-family home designed and built by a couple who have an affinity for Egyptian culture. And while it's not filled with gold, it does have more than 3,000 square feet of living space and two master bedrooms. Also, unlike the pyramids in Giza, this structure is for sale.

Listing agent Glenn Marsh of All For 1 Real Estate says despite the home's monolithic shape, the interior is a light-filled, open space with three levels of living areas.

"The home starts 6 feet below grade, sort of like a poured-concrete basement," explained Marsh. "You go in and there's the large main living area with dining room. There's another story on the side that has a bedroom and an

office, and another level at the peak of the pyramid that holds the master bedroom."

Beyond the unusual design of the house, Marsh says the best part of the home is its setting, which affords sweeping views of the surrounding desert and mountains in what Marsh describes as a pretty pristine area. In the same way the ancient Egyptians gave their kings a setting fit for eternal enjoyment, this Arizona home is also makes for a pretty splendid earthly location.



According to current mortgage rates, an estimated mortgage payment on the Arizona pyramid would be \$1,865 a month, assuming a 20 percent down payment on a 30-year mortgage. There is a large second-story deck out back, perfect for entertaining.



“Why would he do such a thing, you may ask? Because he wants to prove that McDonald’s no longer makes food, they make a medium for morbid sculptures.

“He combined the burgers with a little bit of resin to show the world that McDonald’s food is so full of preservatives that it will literally last forever.

“Well, I guess I’m adding a trip to McDonald’s to my will, who needs embalming fluid when you’ve got the Big Mac?!”

The main living area is below the entrance.



And finally, lets look at something good that came from a McDonald’s fast food store. We have all heard the horror tales of what happens to people who eat too much fast food, but this artist used McDonald’s products in a totally unexpected manner. The CyberScribe doubts very much that McDonald’s is pleased to have the publicity.



“Artist BenEverywhere decided to drop \$200 on McDonald’s hamburgers in order to make this mummy/skeleton monstrosity.



And something that must be true...because the CyberScribe found it on the Internet:

Hundreds of Egyptian chariots found at bottom of Red Sea prove Moses really did part the waters

By MIKE FOSTER / Weekly World News

AI WAJIL, Jordan — The discovery of hundreds of chariots at the bottom of the Red Sea has provided astonishing new evidence that the Bible was right all along: Moses really did part the sea — and Pharaoh's army was drowned when the two walls of water came crashing back together!

The chariots were overturned and shattered to bits, as if they'd been hit by a massive tidal wave," said Dr. Moslemar al-Nazir, a Jordanian archaeologist whose team made the remarkable find.

It is really hard to imagine how those chariots could have gotten there, to a depth of more than 1,200 feet, unless the story told in the Book of Exodus is literally true.

The wheels, axles and other remnants of what appear to be at least 100 of the ancient vehicles were found partially buried in the mud, with the help of a robot-controlled mine-mob.

"Analysis of images gathered by the robot sub's camera shows that the chariots closely resemble those depicted in Egyptian art of the 13th century B.C. — the time Moses lived," said Dr. Nazir.

The miraculous parting of the Red Sea is one of the most thrilling episodes in the Bible and has been retold by Hollywood, most memorably in the 1956 epic The Ten Commandments and in Disney's recent animated film The Prince of Egypt.

After Pharaoh grudgingly agrees to free the Hebrew slaves from bondage and let them leave Egypt with Moses, he has a change of heart and decides to pursue them.

The Bible says, "And he took 600 chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them." (Ex. 14:7).

With the Egyptian army bearing down on them, the Chosen People reach the Red Sea and are trapped by the impassable barrier. Then God gives a command to Moses and a miracle occurs.

"Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land and the waters were divided," the Good Book says. "And the children of Israel entered into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground, and the waters were a wall unto them on the right hand and on their left" (Ex. 14:21-22).

"Unbeknownst, Pharaoh's horse men and chariotmen follow. But as soon as the Hebrews have crossed safely, God gives Moses the go-ahead to close the divided waters, the Bible says.

"And the waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen and all the host of the lead the Hebrew slaves out of bondage.

Pharaoh that came into the sea after them, there remained not so much as one of them" (Ex. 14:28).

Most historians have believed that the Biblical account was just a colorful myth — until now.

ARTIST'S REVISIONS of Moses parting the Red Sea to be could lead the Hebrew slaves out of bondage.

RARE MAN-EATING ELEPHANT DEVOURS 34 PEOPLE IN INDIA!

By GEORGE SANFORD / South Shore News

AHMEDABAD, India — An enormous rogue elephant has killed at least 34 people — and eaten them, authorities here have confirmed.

their heads, crushing them like eggshells.

of the country's leading anti-behaviorists, says that



That's all for this month, says the CyberScribe. See you next time!

(The CyberScribe reminds you that if you ever wish to see the entire, unabbreviated, text of one of these stories, contact him and he will provide that access).