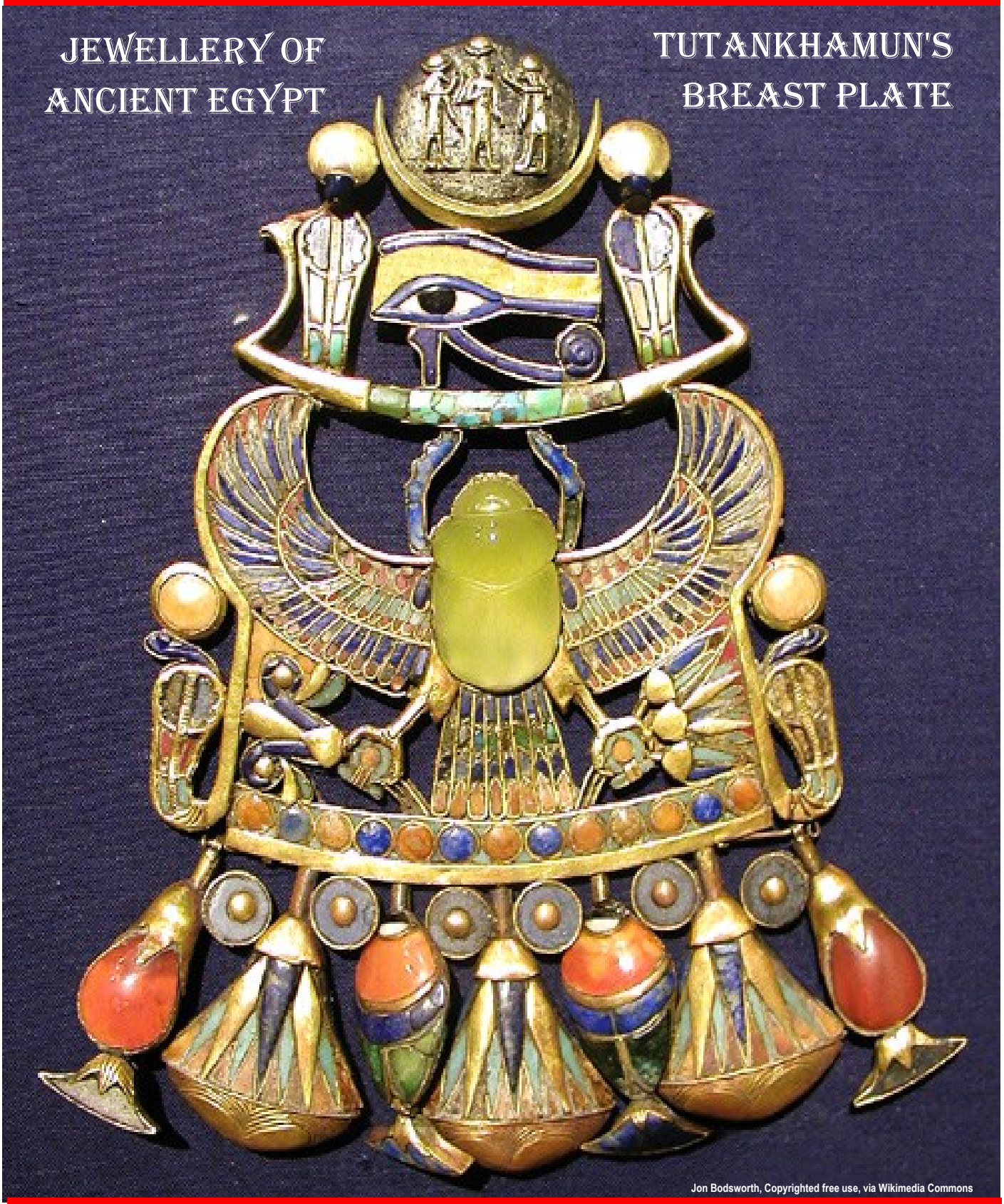
FASCINATING FACTS

Issue N° 25 Date April 2024

JEWELLERY OF ANCIENT EGYPT

TUTANKHAMUN'S BREAST PLATE



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Welcome to this issue of Fascinating Facts. Now retired, with a background of journalism, literature production, international pubic relations, and ex editor of a leading industry publications, I now have the time to combine my abilities and share my interests in historic facts, especially in connection with military matters. While I have written most of the articles in the Scarletman I am happy to accept ideas and contributions from readers; giving them credit for their work. The Scarletman is free issue e-magazine therefore if you would like to circulate copies further then I am happy for you to create a wider readership of those with a similar interest to mine.

In this issue In this issue In this issue

IN SUPPORT OF UKRAINE

APRIL FOOL'S DAY AS RECOGNISED IN OTHER COUNTRIES

UNITED KINGDOM
April Fool prank is revealed by shouting "April fool!" A 1950 study found that in countries whose traditions derived from the UK, this continued with the practice.

ARMENIAN An April Fool prank is revealed by saying ապրիլ մեկ! which means April 1.

CANADA
In Quebec, it's traditional to have Maple Sugar Pie or "tarte au sucre".

GERMANY
An April Fool prank is revealed by shouting "April, April!" at the recipient, who becomes the "April fool".

ISRAEL
Recognises the UK custom of April Fools' Day.

LEBANON
The prank is revealed by saying كذبة أول نيسان(which translates to "First of April Lie") to the recipient.

NORDIC COUNTRIES
Danes, Finns, Icelanders, Norwegians and Swedes celebrate April Fools' Day. Their news media outlets publish one false story on their first page.

TURKEY
It is called "Nisan Balığı" (April Fish) Pranks are revealed by saying "Bir Nisan! / Nisan Bir!" (April 1st!).

UKRAINE
It is widely celebrated in Odesa since 1973 with the local name Humorina a festival including a city centre parade free concerts, street fairs and performances. Festival participants dress in a variety of costumes and walk around the city fooling and pranking passersby. One tradition is to dress the main city monument in funny clothes. Special souvenirs bearing the logo are sold. Since 2010, celebrations include an International Clown Festival. Both celebrated as one in 2019, when the festival was dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Odesa Film Studio and all events were held with an emphasis on cinema.

In the second half of the 16th century, in the midst of the English Renaissance, a particularly creative period in the era of William Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, Philip Sidney, Christopher Marlowe, it was the time for banquets and sumptuous meals. Also new exotic fruits, vegetables and spices were being imported from the Americas. One of which was ginger the underground root of a plant from the tropical rainforests of Southern Asia and was exported to India and Europe during the early spice trades. According to The Gingerbread Book cakes made with ginger and molasses. Honey were likely introduced to Western Europe by 11th-century crusaders returning from Mediterranean countries—early adapters of the spice.

GINGERBREAD MEN & JESUS

Legend traces gingerbread men back to Queen Elizabeth I, who told her cooks to mould the gingerbread pastry into the shapes of her favourite courtiers. She also liked to give VIP guests ginger "biscuits" that were edible caricatures. Whether it was a good strategy the trend gradually took hold outside the royal palace

Around the same time, it was believed that if a woman ate a "gingerbread husband" - gingerbread man -it might lead to marriage. Another theory relating them to Christmas is that the "men" are really more toddler-shaped than adult, they came to represent the baby Jesus at Christmas. And the spices involved are sometimes thought to represent the exotic gifts of the Magi.

CHASED THEN EATEN BY FOX

The fairy story behind the Gingerbread men is slightly grisly. The fairytale says the Gingerbread man, rans away from a cow, a horse, and a chicken but got eaten by a fox. This has delighted children at Christmas time since 1875, when it was published in St. Nicholas Magazine. The cookie's ancestors and cousins have been enjoyed for far longer.

Fairs in medieval France and England offered ginger-flavoured sweet treats called fairings. Knights received a piece for good luck in tournaments.

LEBKUCHEN

In Germany, gingerbread cookies called lebkuchen were heart-shaped and decorated with romantic messages. The city of Nuremberg became known as the "gingerbread capital of the world" in the 1600s, with master bakers creating elaborate works of art. There was a guild with strict regulations. Only those who owned their own "smoke," meaning an oven, could sell gingerbread. The oldest recorded gingerbread recipe, dating to the 16th century, is kept in the Germanic National Museum in Nuremberg. Gingerbread from that city has "protected geographical indication" from the European Union, like Parmigiano-Reggiano and champagne.

GINGERBREAD HOUSES

Houses made of gingerbread were possibly inspired by the Brothers Grimm, who, in the earl 1800's wrote about a witch's cottage made of candy and cookies in "Hansel and Gretel." Immigrants took gingerbread to America and the houses became particularly popular as Christmas decorations among the German population of Lancaster County, referred to as Pennsylvania Deutsch. Gingerbread was used to decorate the branches that they brought into their homes during the holiday a form of precursor to the Christmas tree.

Whatever shape or style, houses, the aroma of cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon, and ginger is as intoxicating in the kitchen now as it was for that clever fox.

Gingerbread as a ritual of love and the tale of St. Nicholas

The first to prepare gingerbread men in that same period were also practitioners of folk medicine of the time, often described as witches or wizards, who baked them for young women so that they could make future spouses fall in love with them. It was said that if men ate the gingerbread man, prepared especially for them, they would then fall madly in love. No one ever explained if it was with the cookie or a person.

GINGERBREAD

The most famous quote on gingerbread is Shakespeare's Love's Labor's Lost-"Had I had but one penny in the world, thou shouldst have it to buy gingerbread,". The widespread popularity of the gingerbread man is also accountable to the 1875 story of St Nicholas. The tale is also the story of two elderly people who desired to have a child. To console themselves, they prepared a human-like cookie which, once cooked, came to life and escaped from the oven, taking refuge in the neighbouring farm.

NO HAPPY ENDING

The folk tale was handed down differently depending on local traditions. Sadly non had a happy ending as the gingerbread man was chased by the farm animals and eaten by a fox. Beyond legends similar mixtures were present even before, albeit in different forms and variants. The world's largest gingerbread man was made by the staff of the a Norwegian IKA on 9 November 2009 It weighed 1435.2 pounds.

Ceramic gingerbread houses and men made by the editor and members of the Chelsea Pensioners pottery club as part of their 2023 Christmas display.

NOAH'S ARK BOAT OR CORACLE?

Among the many British Museum's collection of cuneiform tablets are two pre-biblical accounts of a person divinely commissioned to build an ark and so save the animals from a cosmic flood. In deciphering the text in the 1870s, George Smith identified the Epic of Gilgamesh for the first time after more than 2,000 years of oblivion.

EARLIEST FLOOD STORY

Then in 1985, Irving Finkel was 'more than taken aback' when he discovered a fragment of one of the earliest versions of the flood story among bric-a-brac gathered by an English airman Leonard Simmons in Iraq in 1948, while serving in the Middle East. He brought it home as an intriguing memento on his mantelpiece for decades. When he died, his son took it to an expert at the British Museum. It turns out that his 1,200 year old find was dated before the earliest recording of Noah's story, and contained a number of biblical revelations.

CIRCULAR ARK

An expert in deciphering cuneiform Finkel's major revelation, when examining the tablet, was that the ark was like a massive circular coracle. The text was unambiguous and include detailed instructions for building a giant 220 ft diameter coracle with walls 20-ft high out of more than 300 kilometres of coiled palm fibres, strengthening the structure with wooden ribs and decking, and coating everything in a waterproof mixture of pitch and lard. It was also in line with the Bible indicating that the animals entered two by two. It also referred to 'clean' animals which, by implication, is a distinction from 'unclean' ones and evidence related to the Jewish religious form.

CORACLE WEAVING

Also the flood story generated extraordinarily traditions that the tale probably originated in a world of real observation in ancient Mesopotamia, where vast, destructive floods were frequent. Not as some claim a folk memory of the effects of global warming after the 'Big Freeze', of cold climatic conditions some 12,000 years ago. Finally the tablet strengthens the case that the Bible version derives from Mesopotamian archetypes.

Finkel's painstaking investigation into coracle-weaving traditions on the Euphrates makes the concept intelligible. With knowledge of what life was like in the Euphrates valley 4,000 years and more ago, Finkel states that the tablet represents a fragment from the script or record of a version of the story for court performance, and that the arithmetical precision of the calculations involved in determining the ark's dimensions and assembling the materials for its construction derives from ancient Mesopotamian schoolroom exercises. He also states that the British Museum's famous Babylonian world map contains an allusion to the resting place of the ark.

CIRCULAR REED BOAT

The tablet states that the boat was circular in shape, made of reeds and bitumen, and designed to carry a large number of animals. It was in the form of a giant coracle made out of plant fibre bundles attached to a wooden frame, entirely covered in bitumen – to serve as a waterproofing seal. To prove the fat that such a craft was possible Dr Irving Finkel built a one fifth scale of the ark described in the tablet, as below. To do so he tracked down three boat-building experts who have experience in reconstructing ancient vessels like the 35 tonne, 12 metre diameter, reed, wood and bitumen ark, from texts and manuscripts. At the same time as the ark building landscape archaeologist, Professor Jenny Pournelle was engaged in a revolutionary coring project in Southern Iraq to learn more about the history of Iraq's landscape. She found evidence of many localised floods during different periods in antiquity and believes this persistent flooding environment created the flood myth that inspired the story of Noah's Ark.

FLOOD REASONS DIFFER

Although, as Finkel points out, this and Noah's Ark were similar in size, Noah's boat was glaringly different in shape, materials and construction. In Mesopotamian accounts, the gods unleash the flood for no declared reason, or to eliminate a distractingly, irritatingly 'noisy' world that was becoming uncontrollably overpopulated. By contrast the Jewish God acted justly, to punish evildoers and spare the only righteous people.

Noah, in other words, is a hero in a long literary transition which documents the rise of notions of a moral universe in place of a world of chaos and caprice. Early in the second millennium BC – at about the time Mesopotamian scribes arrested the development of the flood myth by writing it down.

Irvine Finkel –blue shirt—with men who built the 1/5th scale model reed raft to the specification on the 1,200 year old cuneiform tablet found by Leonard Simmons in 1948.

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GRAPHENE - FROM PENCIL TO WONDER MATERIAL

Before I start, the science behind graphene baffles me. All I know it is a wonder material which science has devised which size for size, is 200 times stronger than steel and being atom thick it is 1 millionth the thickness and 1,000 the weight of paper. It is a true super material. It is the thinnest material on earth. Therefore fear not as I will try to keep this simple.

A BIT OF BACKGROUND

In 1859, Benjamin Brodie noted the highly lamellar structure of thermally reduced graphite oxide. Then in 1916, Peter Debye and Paul Scherrer determined the structure of graphite. The theory of graphene was first explored by P. R. Wallace in 1947. In 2004, 150 years after Benjamin's notation, Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov from the University of Manchester, were "playing" with graphite. Like the material in the tip of a pencil which can easily be broken off. Curious about this material, they wondered if they could peel it down to a single layer. So, they used a most unscientific tool; sticky tape.!

The application of sticky tape on graphite or mica enables the top layer, to be peeled off. Then by folding the tape in half and stick it to the flakes on top it splits them again. A procedure which splits the flakes into thinner and thinner flakes. This results in very thin flakes attached to the tape then by dissolving the tape the flakes go into solution.

USE IN CONSTRUCTION

Graphene-enhanced concrete is 2.5 times stronger and 4 times less water permeable than standard concrete. For example by adding 1 gram of graphene to 5 kilo of cement increases its strength by 35 percent. Thereby b y using less cement it is expected to reduce CO2 emissions by 30 per cent.

USE IN PLASTIC

Ford began adding 0.5 percent graphene to plastic for its vehicles which increased the plastic's strength by 20 per cent

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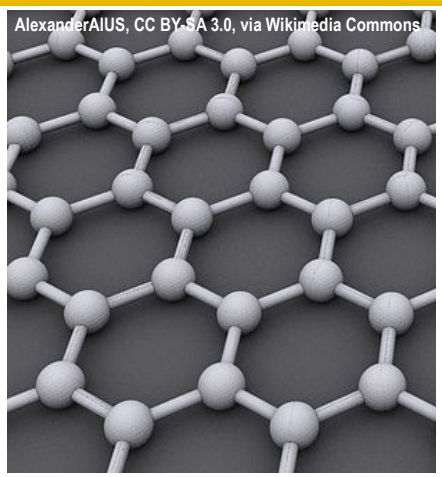
USE FOR STAB VESTS

Strong and several lightweight layers of graphene can become as hard as diamond, and impenetrable when



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Hexagonal lattice of graphene at the atomic-scale made of carbon atoms

struck. It performs twice as well as Kevlar and withstands 10 times the kinetic energy than steel.

USE IN MILITARY

The benefits of lightweight and exceptional protection enables the military to have many projects from ballistic protection, personal equipment like helmets and protection armour. The most important being robot suits designed to give them the potential to fight against any attack yet stay safe.

ELECTRICAL PROPERTIES

Graphene is an electrical superstar conducting electricity better than any other material at room temperature, as each carbon atom has an extra pi electron. This electron moves freely, allowing it to transmit electrical conductivity across the multilayer graphene with almost no resistance which makes graphene the fastest conductor of electricity at room temperature. Recent research at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology discovered that when two graphene layers are rotated by just 1.1 degree out of alignment, graphene becomes a superconductor. This means it conducts electricity with no resistance and no heat, opening up amazing future possibilities for room-temperature superconductivity.

Gabriel Hildebrand, Public domain, via Wikimedia Common

A lump of graphite, a graphene transistor, and tape dispenser. Donated to Stockholm's Nobel Museum by Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov in 2010.

MANY OTHER USES

Presently graphene is used in industries such as aircraft, transport, medicine, electronics, smart phones, solar panels, military, energy, defence, desalination; these are just some where graphene research is making a substantial impact. One of the most anticipated applications of graphene lies in batteries. Given the exceptional conductivity, graphene batteries that charge faster and last longer than our current lithium ion ones. But this is only the start. The potential of graphene is limited only by our imagination. Given the exceptional conductivity, graphene batteries charge faster and last longer than our current lithium-ion ones.

THE GRAPHENE FLAGSHIP

Part of the Horizon Project, of which the UK is a member, the Graphene Flagship, has brought together 118 academic and industrial partners in 12 research and innovation projects with 170 partners and more than 90 associated members in 21 countries.

This has enabled lightning-fast tec–hnology transfer from academia to industry helping to launch 20 spin-off companies, 108 products and 387 patent applications

Financial growth when graphene was launched the global market for was £7,072,136 in 2012, with most of the demand from research and development in semiconductor, electronics, electric batteries, and composites. The global market 14 years later is now £22,789,650,000!

NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

In 2010, Geim and Novoselov were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for their "groundbreaking experiments regarding the two-dimensional material graphene". High-quality graphene proved to be surprisingly easy to isolate.

In 2010, Geim and Novoselov shared the Nobel Prize in physics for their discovery of graphene.

Snowflakes are unique and one of winter's most recognisable symbols, creating an infinite number of possible shapes. When falling the tiny droplets of supercooled water freeze into ice crystals when temperatures are sufficiently cold usually −35 °C or lower where they can form around a nucleus such as a dust or pollen particle.

Once the ice crystal has formed, if the conditions are right it will begin to grow, as the water molecules in the air are deposited onto its surface as it falls through the air, clumping together to form a snowflake.

SNOWFLAKES HEXAGONAL

All snowflakes are six sided. As the molecules in the ice crystals join to one another they form a hexagonal structure, an arrangement which allows water molecules - each with one oxygen and two hydrogen atoms - to form in the most efficient way.

Snowflakes are unique and part of their enduring appeal is their intricate appearance and virtually infinite variation, often leading to the assertion that all snowflakes are unique.

To check this assumption is impossible it is accepted to be entirely true as the number of possibilities of changes in temperature and humidity, as the snowflake falls to the ground is limitless. If you look closely at a snowflake you will see countless individual features, all of which could have formed ever so slightly differently in direction or shape owing to the slightest change in the environment in which it formed.

While the variation of snowflake shapes are infinite, they can be broadly categorised into groups to give an indication as to what conditions the snowflake formed in.

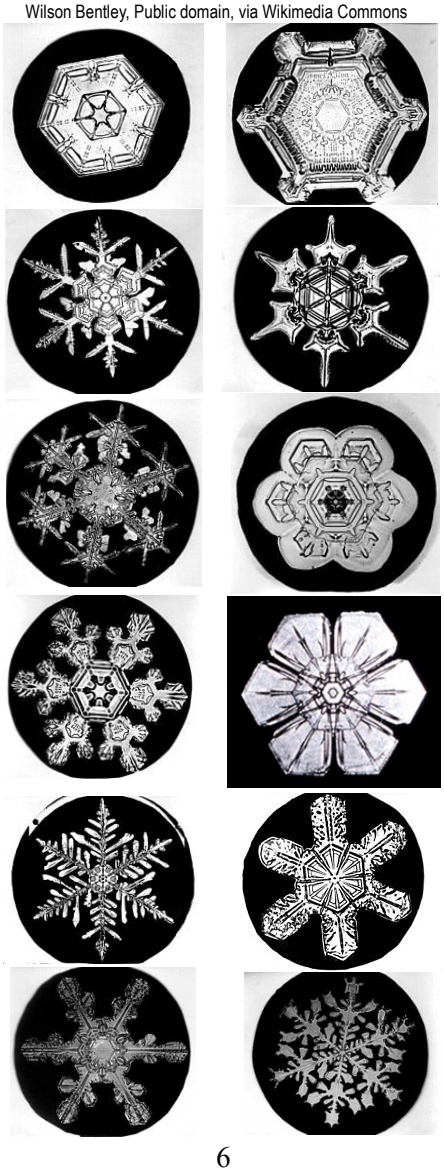
SNOWFLAKE BENTLEY

Born 1865 Wilson Alwyn Bentley he was known as Snowflake Bentley who took the snowflake photos below. An American meteorologist and photographer, he was the first person to take photographs of snowflakes, categorise and record their features. He perfected a process of catching flakes, on black velvet sothat he could photograph their images before they melted. From his work he elaborated the theory that no two snowflakes are alike.

TECHNICAL LIMITATIONS

His techniques were basically the same as those used today. The quality of his photographs reflects the technical limitations of the equipment of the era. He did so well that no one bothered photographing snowflakes for about 100 years. His collection of photographs is held by the Jericho Historical Society in his home town, Jericho, Vermont. He donated his collection of original glass-plate photomicrographs of snow crystals to the Buffalo Museum of Science. A portion of this collection has been digitized and organized into a digital library.

Wilson Bentley, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



MADE OVER 5,000 IMAGES

He became interested in snow crystals as a teenager. From the beginning he was fascinated by snowflakes. People dreaded winter, but he was supremely happy. He tried to draw what he saw using an old microscope given to him by his mother when he was fifteen. As the snowflakes were too complex to record before they melted he attached a bellows camera to a compound microscope and, after much experimentation, photographed his first snowflake on January 15, 1885 and captured more than 5,000 images of crystals in his lifetime.

TINY MIRACLES OF BEAUTY

He pioneered the study of atmospheric ice crystal formation and snowflake photography in which he described snowflakes as "tiny miracles of beauty" and snow crystals as "ice flowers." Despite these poetic descriptions, he brought an empirical method to his work. In collaboration with George Henry Perkins, professor of natural history at the University of Vermont, he published an article in which he stated that no two snow crystals were alike. This caught the public imagination. He published articles in magazines, including National Geographic, Nature, Popular Science, and Scientific American. His photographs have been requested by academic institutions worldwide.

PUBLISHED MANY BOOKS

In 1931 he worked with William Humphreys of the U.S. Weather Bureau publishing Snow Crystals, a monograph illustrated with 2,500 of his photographs. Other publications included the entry on "snow" in the fourteenth edition of Encyclopaedia Britannica. He photographed forms of ice and natural water formations including clouds and fog. He was the first American to record raindrop sizes, and was one of the first cloud physicists.

He died of pneumonia, which he may have contracted while walking home in the snow, at his farm on December 23, 1931. His book Snow Crystals was published by McGraw-Hill shortly before his death, and is still in

THE QUERTY KEYBOARD

The QWERTY keyboard layout was devised and created in the early 1870's by newspaper editor Christopher Latham Sholes, who lived in Kenosha, Wisconsin. In 1867, he filed a patent application for a writing machine he developed with the assistance of Carlos Glidden and Samuel W. Soulé.

For the next 5 years Sholes struggled to perfect his invention, making many rearrangements of the original machine's alphabetical key arrangement. One claim is that the study of bigram (letter-pair) frequency by educator Amos Densmore is believed to have influenced the order of the letters.

Others suggest instead that the letter groupings evolved from telegraph operators feedback.

SOLD TO REMINGTON

In 1868 Sholes changed the arrangement of the latter half of the alphabet, N to Z. In 1870 he arrived at a four-row, upper case keyboard approaching the modern QWERTY standard, moving six vowel letters, A, E, I, O, U, and Y, to the upper row.

In 1873 Sholes's backer, James Densmore, sold the manufacturing rights to E. Remington and Sons who created the modern QWERTY layout of

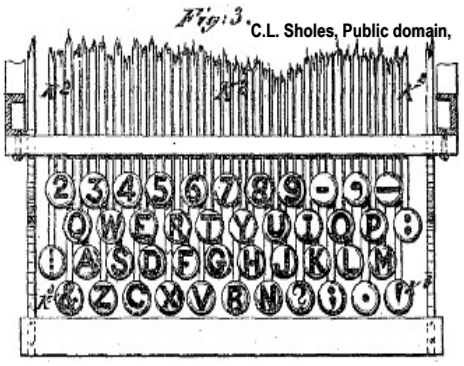
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 - =
**Q W E R T Y U I O P [ ] **
A S D F G H J K L ; '
Z X C V B N M , . /

This layout became popular with the success of the Remington No. 2 in 1878 which was the first typewriter to include both upper and lower case letters, using a Shift key.

REDUCE TYPEBAR CLASH

One popular explanation for the QWERTY arrangement is that it was designed to reduce the likelihood of internal clashing of typebars by placing commonly used combinations of letters farther from each other inside the machine.

The QWERTY layout depicted in Sholes's 1878 patent is slightly different from the modern layout, most notably in the absence of the numerals 0 and 1, with each of the remaining numerals shifted one position to the left of their modern counterparts. The letter M is located at the end of the third



Christopher Latham Sholes's 1878 QWERTY keyboard layout

row to the right of the letter L rather than on the fourth row to the right of the N, the letters X and C are reversed, and most punctuation marks are in different positions or are missing entirely. 0 and 1 were originally omitted to simplify the design and reduce the manufacturing and maintenance costs and could be recreated using other keys. Typists who learnt on these machines learnt the habit of using the uppercase letter I (or lowercase letter L) for the digit one, and the uppercase O for the zero.

A big benefit of the qwerty keyboard is that while one hand types a letter, the other hand can prepare to type the next letter, making the process faster and more efficient.

INDUSTRIOUS LEFT HAND

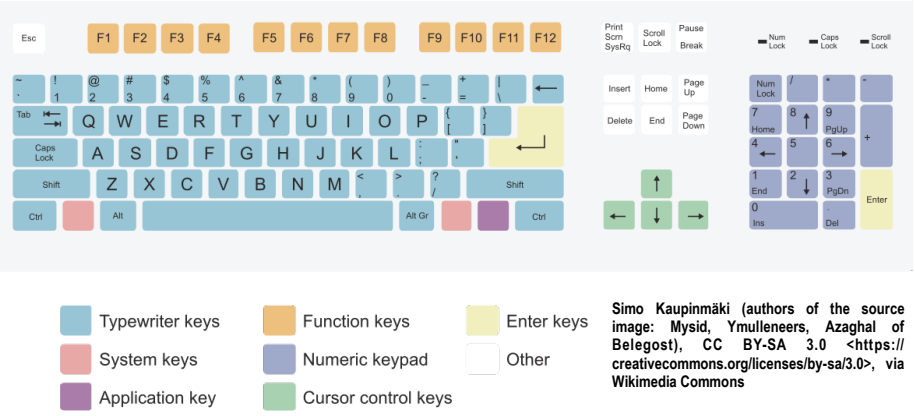
In the QWERTY layout more words can be typed using only the left hand than the right hand. In fact, thousands of English words can be spelt using only the left hand, while only a couple of hundred words can be typed using only the right hand. The three most frequent letters in the English language, ETA, are all typed with the left hand. In addition, more typing strokes are done with the left hand in the QWERTY layout. Helpful for left-handed people but disadvantageous for right-handed people.

Minor changes to the arrangement are made for other languages. There are a large number of different keyboard layouts used for different languages written in Latin script. They can be divided into three main families according to where the Q, A, Z, M, and Y keys are on the keyboard. These are usually named after the first six letters, for example the AZERTY layout.

DIFFERENT LAYOUTS

Contrary to popular belief, the QWERTY layout was not designed to slow the typist down, but rather to speed up typing. Indeed, there is evidence that, aside from the issue of jamming, placing often-used keys farther apart, increases typing speed, because it encourages alternation between the hands. On the other hand, in the German keyboard the Z has been moved between the T and the U to help type the frequent digraphs TZ and ZU in that language. Almost every word in the English language contains at least one vowel letter, but on the QWERTY keyboard only the vowel letter A is on the home row, which requires the typist's fingers to leave the home row for most words.

A feature much less commented-on than the order of the keys is that the keys do not form a rectangular grid, This is because of the mechanical linkages – each key is attached to a lever, and hence the offset prevents the levers from running into each other – and has been retained in most electronic keyboards.



Simo Kaupinmäki (authors of the source image: Mysid, Ymulleneers, Azaghal of Belegost), CC BY-SA 3.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>, via Wikimedia Commons

A QWERTY keyboard layout variant that is used in the USA. Some countries, such as the UK and Canada, use a slightly different QWERTY (the @ and ")are switched in the UK and both have an AltGr ("alternate graphic") key rather than a right-hand Alt key – as do most non-English language keyboards. The computer keyboard still retains its offset key arrangement.

TOTALLY UNCONVENTIONAL OR MAKING A STATEMENT?

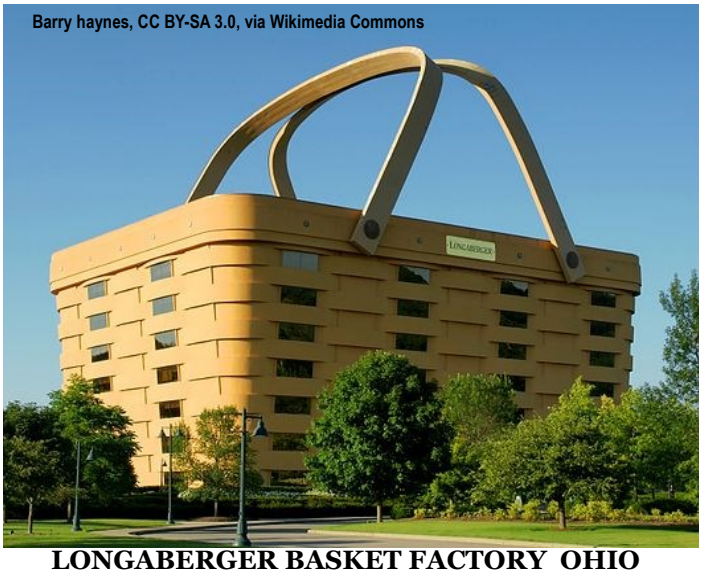
Some of the reason for th style of the buildings, like the Longaberger basket factory, the National Fisheries Development board and the Shell Service station are fairly obvious. The Mother Goose, the Dancing House, Toby and Sweet and the upside down house are less obvious. But whatever the reason they create an interest and stretch the ability of architects to use their imagination to fulfil their client's requirement.

FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT BOARD , HYDERABAD.

MOTHER GOOSE HOUSE, HAZARD, KENTUCKY

HUASHAN UPSIDE DOWN HOUSE CHINA

DANCING HOUSE PRAGUE, CZECHOSLOVAKIA



LONGABERGER BASKET FACTORY OHIO

A Shell Service Station the only one to survive from eight built in the Winston-Salem, North Carolina,

TOBY AND SWEET WILLIE DOG BARK PARK INN

Version 1 by Nohat (concept by Paullusmagnus); Wikimedia., CC BY-SA 3.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>, via Wikimedia Commons

WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

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A free-content online encyclopaedia, Wikipedia is written and maintained by a community of volunteers, known as Wikipedians, The largest and most-read reference work in history, at 7th it has been ranked consistently one of the world's 10 most popular and most visited websites in the world. In 2023, it was ranked as the 4th most viewed website. Founded by Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger, on January 15, 2001, it is hosted by the Wikimedia Foundation, an American nonprofit organisation employing 700 people.

Initially it was only available in English, but now there are 326 language editions. Presently the six largest, in order of article count, are English, Cebuano, (an Austronesian language spoken in the southern Philippines), German French, Swedish, and Dutch. In addition Russian, Spanish, Italian, Egyptian, Arabic, Polish, Japanese, Chinese, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Waray, Arabic and P ortuguese have more than 1 million articles. Twelve other Wikipedias have over a million articles each and Persian, Catalan, Serbian, Korean Indonesian, Norwegian and Chechen have over 500,000 articles.

The English version receives over 48 per cent of Wikipedia's cumulative traffic. The top 10 editions represent approximately 85 per cent of the total traffic. Internationally Wikipedia, has than 300 languages versions, including 6,769,289 articles in English, with 115,329 active contributors in the past month. Wikipedia's editions, when combined, comprise more than 62 million articles, attracting around 2 billion unique visits per month and more than 14 million edits per month.

Founder Jimmy Wales described Wikipedia as "an effort to create and distribute a free encyclopaedia of the highest possible quality to every single person on the planet in their own language

THE WIKIVERSITY

Among the wide array of sister projects to Wikipedia is the Wikiversity one of the newest. It is a site dedicated to collaborative learning, where teachers can create and revise materials for helping other people learn. While you won't get a degree from it, anyone can either take or teach a course.

CONSERVAPEDIA

US Conservatives believe that Wikipedia has a liberal bias, If you reject the scientific consensus on climate change, dislike gun control or feel safe in the knowledge that the Universe was created by a supernatural being, no problem. Conservapedia will welcome you with open arms.

Wikipedia has been praised for its enablement of the democratisation of knowledge, extent of coverage, unique structure, and culture. But it has been criticised for exhibiting systemic bias, particularly gender bias against women and geographical bias against the Global South. While the reliability of Wikipedia was frequently critcised in the 2000's, it has improved receiving greater praise in the early 2020's, becoming an important fact-checking site.

Larry Sanger, CC BY-SA 2.5, via Wikimedia Common

Zachary McCune / Wikimedia Foundation, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

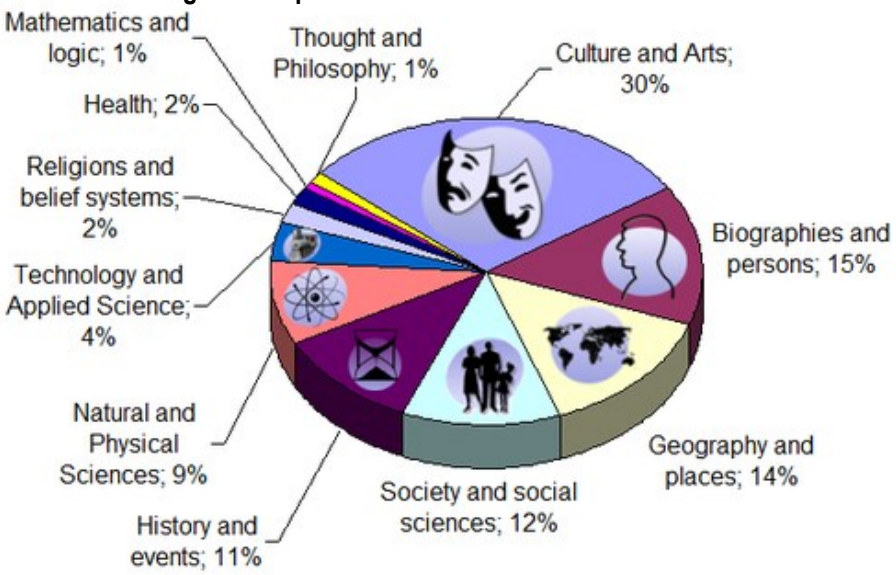
Wikipedia founders Jimmy Wales (right) and Larry Sanger (left)

NETSÊHESENÊSTSEHE

Netsêhesenêstsehe? Unlikely, but if you do, then you should be editing the Cheyenne-language Wikipedia, which has just 57 articles and only 10 active users. Smaller alternate-language Wikipedias do exist, but they are locked from editing and in the process of being shut down.

English, German and French are the three most popular languages, unsurprisingly, but the Catalan Wikipedia -- which has just 13 million speakers -- is more than twice as popular than the Indonesian Wikipedia, which has 165 million speakers worldwide. The least popular, but still active, alternate-language Wikipedia is Cheyenne. Almost 7 million people supported Wikipedia with a donation last year. Over 60,000 participants from over 40 countries have contributed over 1.7 million photos of cultural heritage since 2010

Pie chart of English Wikipedia content



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JEWELLERY OF ANCIENT EGYPT

Ancient Egyptian jewellery was to both beautify the wearer, serve as a talisman of power an show wealth. It was believed to provide power protection, good luck, guidance through the afterlife and ward off bad luck or the evil eye. The makers had minimal tools but possessed terrific skills to create such beautiful, sophisticated and detailed jewellery. Each symbol is like a piece of art. They were the first people to translate abstract art, using a range of wide range of materials into jewellery.

PECTORAL OF KING SENWOSRET II

This pectoral was found among the jewellery of Princess Sithathoryunet Hieroglyphic signs read: "The god of the rising sun grants life and dominion over all that the sun encircles for one million one hundred thousand years. This cloisonné pectoral is inlaid with 372 carefully cut pieces of semiprecious stones. Each of the falcons, symbols of the sun god, clasps a circular hieroglyph declaring the solar deity's supreme power over the universe. Flanking the king's name are two ankh hieroglyphs suspended from cobras whose tails are wound around the sun disk on the falcons' heads. Jewellery imbued a royal woman with superhuman powers enabling her to support the king in his role as guarantor of divine order on earth. It was essentially the king who benefited from the magical powers inherent in the jewellery worn by female family members.

PECTORAL OF HORUS WITH SUN DISK-

The magnificent Pectoral jewel, right, depicts Horus as a falcon with outspread wings around the sun disk, holding shen rings, the symbols of eternal protection in his claws. Made out of gold, carnelian and inlaid with coloured glass paste and other semiprecious stones. Horus was one of the most significant ancient Egyptian deities, worshipped from almost the late prehistoric period in Egypt until the Ptolemaic Kingdom and the Roman conquest. Horus, being a god of the sky, war and hunting, was most often depicted as a falcon though representations of him as a man with a falcon head are equally frequent. The Pyramid Texts, ancient Egyptian religious texts dated between 2400 and 2300 BC, describe the nature of the pharaoh as both Horus and Osiris with the pharaoh in life being Horus and becoming Osiris in death. New incarnations of Horus succeeded the deceased pharaoh on earth in the form of new pharaohs.

TUTANKHAMUN'S BREASTPLATE

The Pectoral of Tutankhamun with solar and lunar emblem and scarab. Abounding with symbolism, each amulet was meticulously selected with the purpose of ensuring the King's safe passage to the afterlife. Made of gold, and silver with inlays of carnelian, lapis lazuli, turquoise, and scarab which was super-heated fused sand created by a meteorite hitting desert sand the breastplate depicts the god Ra as a winged scarab carrying the sun and moon into the sky. The greenish-yellow scarab thought to be a translucent variety of quartz is actually Libyan desert silicate glass formed about 28 million years ago when a meteorite crashed into the desert and heated the sand to a temperature of 3,600 deg F. It is among the earth's rarest minerals.

The Pharaoh Tutankhamun is depicted in the disk flanked by the moon god Thoth and by the sun god Ra-Horakhty in a protective pose.