

➤ **Panechates' Story**



TIMELINE

- Approximately 300AD – Panechates dies**
- Approximately 1915 – The mummy is found and sold to Dr. Kidd.**
- 1920 – Dr. Kidd brings the mummy to Vancouver and keeps him in his closet, bringing it out occasionally to show interested people.**
- 1922 – Dr. Kidd donates the mummy to the Vancouver Museum after many people keep coming to his house to see the mummy.**
- 1920s – The mummy's name is translated as a Greek girl's name Diana.**
- 1945 – The mummy's name is translated as Panechates daughter of Hatres.**
- 1951 – The mummy is x rayed and found to be a 10 years old boy.**
- 1967 – Vancouver Museum moves from the Carnegie Centre and Panechates rarely displayed to public until 1992.**
- 1992 – After suffering from poor storage, funds are raised to build a better display case to help preserve the remains.**
- 2004 – On the way to the Egypt exhibit at the BC Royal Museum, Panechates gets a CT scan.**

Article 1: Personal Account of the Acquisition of the Mummy

By Dr. George Kidd

In the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings, which lies across the River Nile from the site of ancient Thebes, and the present village of Luxor, none but Royal personages were buried. The lesser nobility and more wealthy citizens sought to have their mortal remains interred as near as possible to the hallowed ground of the Royal necropolis. Hence we find the surrounding cliffs honeycombed with tombs of all descriptions, some almost as elaborate as those of the kings themselves, others simply undecorated chambers hewn in the rock.

It was from one of these latter that the mummy of the child now in the museum was taken. During a stay at Luxor in 1915, one of the numerous natives who make their living searching for relics and selling them to travelers approached me and told me in a mysterious whisper that he had a very fine curio in his hut across the river, which he wished to show me. Standing in the corner of his mud house, I found the mummy of a child, of about five years of age, which the native had found in a tomb cut in the rock about a mile from the entrance of the valley of the Tombs of the Kings. Unfortunately the wooden coffin had been claimed by his partner and was unavailable, I purchased it for small sum, and taking it to Cairo, had it examined by the Professor of Anatomy in the Egyptian Medical School. He declared it to be an excellent specimen, mummies of children being rather rare. He set

the date of burial as being in the 5th or 6th century BC. This conclusion was based upon two things; first pitch which was not used in embalming in the earlier dynasties, was found underneath the wrappings of this specimen. Secondly, on the breast is seen some Greek lettering, and it was in these centuries that the Greeks first began to filter into Egypt; adopting its religion and burial customs. This lettering has been variously interpreted by Greek scholars. It was said by one in Cairo to be the name of a Greek girl. Others said that it is the signature of the embalmer, a sort of seal, declaring the work to have been completed in a satisfactory manner. The mummy was x-rayed to make sure that no jewels were concealed under the wrappings. Scarabs, for example, were commonly inserted in the place from which the heart was taken in the process of embalming. Nothing was found. I later removed the wrappings from the head and neck. These were of linen, layer after layer, over an inch in thickness. The outer ones were finely woven, but became coarser farther in. All were brown with age and so decayed that one could grind a fragment to dust in the palm of the hand.

The hair is reddish brown in colour, cut short, except behind, where there was a long tuft. This was matted with pitch to such an extent that it was necessary to remove it.

From: *The Museum Monthly Journal*, Oct. 1925

Article 2: The Murdered Mummy By Unknown Author

It was a brutal crime. The murderer seized the ten-year-old child by the legs, and smashed its head against a stone pillar. The skull was shattered, the right eye was knocked out and there was a deep cut across the lower lip. Both legs were broken at the thigh and the left knee was dislocated. Then the murderer set out to prove that the crime was all an unfortunate accident.

No attempt was made to hide the child's death. The body was beautifully embalmed after the expensive fashion of the upper classes. Wrapped in the best flaxen cloth and smeared with gum, its name inscribed on the breast bandages, it was given a noble burial near the ancient Egyptian city of Thebes. Some 1,700 years later, the murderer safe from any temporal justice, the body turned up as a well-preserved mummy in British Columbia's Vancouver City Museum.

For nearly 30 years the little mummy lay in the museum on a bed of naphthalene crystals in a cheap, brown-stained wooden box. Its rusted cloth wrappings were worm-eaten and frayed with age. The exposed face and head were blackened by the embalming process. Because the name was translated as Diana, Vancouver's schoolchildren were led to believe that their favorite exhibition was once a young girl.

But despite the name and what was left of the face, the museum's experts were never quite convinced of the identification. Madame Erna von Engel-Baiersdorf, head of the museum's anthropological society, agreed that they ought to investigate

further. Last summer they lugged their mummy across the street to a chiropractor's office and asked for a full set of x rays. "Heavy" x rays showed what had happened to the bones. "Lighter" rays showed the condition of the skin that by now is like tanned hide. And the x rays also showed the typical narrow hips and pelvic girdle of a small boy in astonishing detail.



X-RAYS BY DR. DANGERFIELD revealed the murder. The left knee was dislocated, both thigh bones and the skull were fractured.

At the British Museum in London, Dr. T. C. Skeat studied the X-ray pictures and agreed that "Diana" had probably been murdered, had certainly been misnamed. Skeat retranslated the inked inscription on the mummy's chest wrappings, announced that the boy's name was Panechates, son of Hatres. Undoubtedly of noble birth, the unlucky child may have been liquidated by an

ambitious rival. Burial took place some time in the 3rd century A.D.

Last week, when news of the crime became public, Panechates, his vicious murder unavenged, was back in his usual box in an archway outside an exhibition of Chinese art. All that could be done was to change the sign above his bier and restore to him his rightful name.

From: *Time Magazine*, Dec. 24, 1951

Article 3: A Peek into Mummy's Past

By Lora Grindlay

He's been tightly bound with sheets of linen for more than 1,700 years, but yesterday modern technology provided a phenomenal glimpse into the life and death of Vancouver's resident mummy.

Panechates, the mummified boy believed to have been roughly 10 when he died in about 300 AD in Egypt, was given a CT — computed tomography — scan at Canada Diagnostic Centres on West 12th Avenue.

The mummy, a jewel in the Vancouver Museum's collection, stopped at the clinic for the scan on its way back to the museum from Victoria, where it was on loan to the Royal B.C. Museum for the Eternal Egypt show. It rode to its appointment on a dolly and wrapped in acid-free tissue paper.

"Fabulous," said Carol Brynjolfson, the museum's conservator, as she viewed three-dimensional images of the boy's body for the first time.

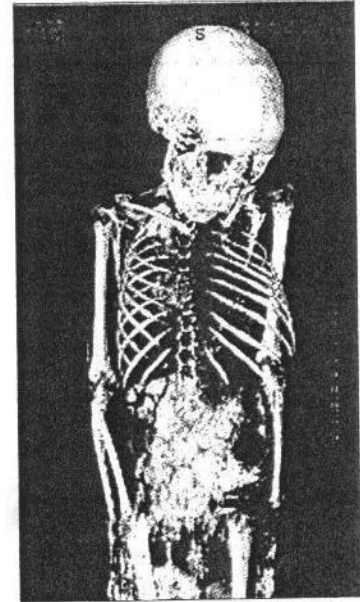
From previous X-rays, Brynjolfson and museum curator Lynn Maranda knew the boy had suffered some trauma. He had a skull fracture, a broken leg and a dislocated knee. He was plainly wrapped, with his name and "Son of Hatres" written on his chest.

But yesterday, they discovered much more. The fracture to his skull was severe. "He was really bashed or hit himself on top of the head or something," said Brynjolfson, while viewing a clear image of the cracked skull.

The boy had healthy-looking teeth. "That could indicate he had good nutrition," she said. Because Panechates was mummified toward the end of the mummification period, it wasn't known if his organs were removed — the usual practice — or if some remained. But the scan, provided free by the clinic, showed that his skeleton is basically hollow. His skull is empty and his chest and abdomen are stuffed full of linens. There was an incision on his left side above the pelvis, where his organs would have been pulled out before he was preserved.

Brynjolfson was thrilled with the scan because the museum, she said, would never unwrap him. "This is a way for us to tell something about his internal structure without having to destroy his wrappings. Once you unwrap him you can't redo it," she said.

The mummy made headlines in the '50s when some claimed his injuries proved he was murdered, perhaps by some relative whose quest for power was blocked by the boy. But it could have just been an accident, Brynjolfson said.



A scan by Canada Diagnostic Centres shows full skeleton of mummified 10-year-old boy.