



October 22, 2012

# News Release

Contact:  
**Sue Bernard**  
Development and  
College Relations Office  
33 Edgemont Drive  
Presque Isle, ME 04769  
Phone: (207) 768-2808  
Fax: (207) 760-1101  
sbernard@nmcc.edu

## Mummies in Maine Presentation to be held at NMCC on October 26

**Aroostook County** - What better way to get into the Halloween spirit than a talk about mummies? The Haystack Historical Society will be holding a special presentation by one of the world's leading mummy experts on Friday, October 26, at 6:00 p.m. in the library at Northern Maine Community College. Members of the public are invited to attend this free presentation.

"Mummies in Maine?? Curiosities, Commodities and Cultural Connections" is a presentation by Su Wolfe, author of *Mummies in Nineteenth Century America*, *Ancient Egyptians as Artifacts*. Wolfe works as the senior cataloguer and serials specialist for the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts. She has written a number of papers and held numerous presentations on mummies over the years.

One of the more interesting bits of legend and folklore which teases and tantalizes both historians and lay people alike is the idea that mummy wrappings were once used to make paper in Maine. Bits and pieces of the story periodically surface in *Yankee Magazine*, *Maine Antiques Digest*, *Down East Magazine*, and even on the Discovery Channel.

While Egyptian mummies had been an amusement in America since the early 1800's, around the time of the Civil War, their focus shifted from that of being a passive object of curiosity to one which required a bit more "activity" on their parts – the use of their wrappings to make paper. While this may seem gruesome in the extreme, it follows a logical progression of viewing the ancient dead as curiosities, commodities, and cultural connections.

This illustrated talk will give an overview of the history of Egyptian mummies as artifacts in nineteenth-century America and provide some factual evidence for the Maine mummy papermaking business which is, as will be demonstrated, a lot more than just an urban legend.

Wolfe will also be holding a book signing in conjunction with the event, and copies of her book will be available to purchase.

#####



Su Wolfe – photo by Steve Lanava, T & G