

FIVE FAMOUS PH

Today, Egyptians clash over who should lead them. In ancient times, Egyptians

Here's some news fit for a king: British archeologists say Ancient Egypt's first **pharaoh** ruled 500 years later than previously thought. Researchers say King Aha reigned between 3111 B.C. to 3045 B.C. They used mathematical models and conducted tests on samples from his tomb to determine the dates.

Pharaohs ruled Egypt for more than 3,000 years. Egyptians considered their kings to be the sky god in human form, as well as the son of Ra, the sun god. That gave pharaohs immense power. Hundreds of pharaohs have been lost to history. Of those we know about, a few tower above the others in terms of power or fame. Here are five of the most notable. —Kathy Wilmore

WORDS TO KNOW

- **pharaoh** (FAIR-oh) (n): a ruler of ancient Egypt; a king
- **monotheistic** (adj): believing in only one god
- **artifact** (n): an object, such as a tool or a weapon, that was made by people in the past

THE PYRAMID KING

REIGN NAME

KHUFU
(KOO-foo); aka Cheops (KEE-ops)

Historians believe that he ruled **sometime in the 25th century B.C.**

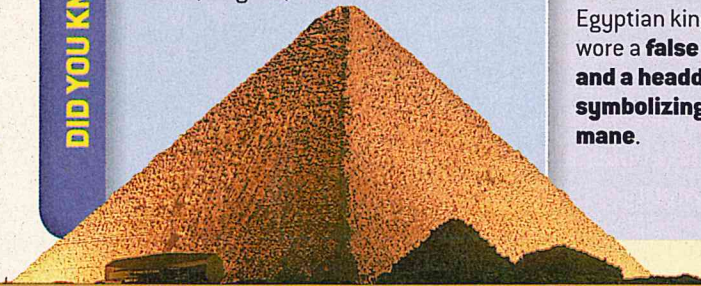
THE BIG DEAL

Very little is known about **Khufu**. He earned everlasting fame for being the pharaoh responsible for the **Great Pyramid at Giza**, which he built to serve as his tomb. It is 451 feet high (originally 481 feet), with each side about 755 feet long at the base. Khufu's son Khafre, a later pharaoh, is responsible for another world-famous symbol of Egypt, the **Great Sphinx** (pictured above right).



DID YOU KNOW?

Hundreds of thousands of slaves cut, moved, and placed the Great Pyramid's 2.3 million limestone blocks, about 2.5 tons each, without the benefit of horses, wagons, or cranes.



HER MAJESTY THE KING

HATSHEPSUT
(hat-SHEP-soot)

c. 1479 B.C. to c. 1458 B.C.

Hatshepsut wasn't the first woman to rule Egypt, but she was the **first to rule as king, not queen**. She was the daughter of one pharaoh and the wife of another. When her husband died, the throne should have gone to her infant stepson, Thutmose III, with Hatshepsut ruling as queen until he was old enough. Instead, **she declared herself king—and became one of ancient Egypt's most influential rulers.**



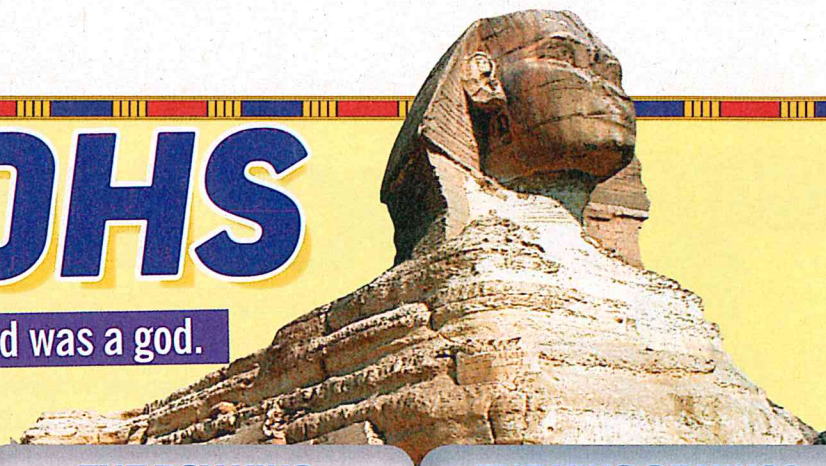
Some sculptures and masks of Hatshepsut show her with a beard. For official ceremonies, Egyptian kings wore a **false beard and a headdress symbolizing a lion's mane.**



NOTES: IN DATES, C. STANDS FOR CIRCA, WHICH MEANS "APPROXIMATELY." AKA IS SHORT FOR "ALSO KNOWN AS."

PHARAOHS

were led by a king they believed was a god.



THE ONE-GOD KING

AKHENATON

(ahk-NAH-tun), aka Amenhotep IV

1353 B.C. to 1336 B.C.

Ancient Egyptians had many gods, but **Akhenaton worshipped only one—Aton**. Soon after inheriting the throne, Amenhotep IV set about transforming Egypt into a **monotheistic** society. He decreed that everyone was to worship only Aton and **called for new temples and rituals**. He even changed his name to Akhenaton, which means “Beneficial to Aton.” After he died, however, most people went back to their old ways of worship.



Akhenaton's wife, **Nefertiti, is today better known than he is**. Famous for her beauty, she ruled alongside her husband as both queen and high priestess.



THE BOY KING

TUTANKHAMEN

(TOO-tan-KAH-muhn), aka King Tut

1333 B.C. to 1323 B.C.

Tutankhamen **was only about 9 when he followed his father, Akhenaton, to the throne**, and was pharaoh only 10 years. Unlike the other pharaohs we've mentioned here, Tut isn't remembered for what he did. He's famous for being **the only pharaoh whose tomb remained hidden and nearly intact until modern times**. In 1922, Howard Carter, a British archaeologist, found Tut's long-lost tomb, which was filled with riches and fascinating **artifacts**.



Tut's tomb held so much treasure—an estimated 3,500 items—that **it took archaeologists 10 years of careful work to remove it all**.



THE KING OF KINGS

RAMSES II

(RAM-seez), aka Ramses the Great

1279 B.C. to 1213 B.C.

Ramses II isn't known as Ramses the Great for nothing. During his 66-year reign (which began when he was 14), he waged war and promoted peace. His empire extended south into what is now Sudan and stretched into present-day Syria. **He built more monuments, temples, and statues than any other pharaoh**—most of them glorifying himself.



In 1976, **a team of scientists worked to save Ramses II's mummy**, which was being ravaged by a fungus. From the many tests experts did on his body, they learned a great deal about how mummies were made.



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