

The Egypt Exploration Society

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY SEVENTH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING OF THE EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY (THE HUNDRED AND FORTIETH SINCE THE FOUNDATION OF THE FUND IN 1882) HELD ONLINE ON SATURDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2024 AT 4.00 PM.

The Chair of the Board of Trustees, Dr Campbell Price, opened the meeting at 4.00 pm and welcomed members to the online event. Dr Price began by acknowledging the online format of the meeting; a format approved by members in the 2022 AGM, which allowed members outside of the London area easier access to attend the meeting. The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm.

The Director noted that 70 members were in attendance at the meeting and thus a quorum had been reached (the minimum being 30 according to Article 15.2a) – altogether 73 attended the meeting. 5 proxy forms had been returned.

0. Annual General Meeting

The Chair began the meeting by thanking his fellow Trustees, the staff, and volunteers of the Society for their hard work and support. Before commencing with the formal business of the meeting, he wished to make those attending aware of how they could vote during the meeting.

(a) Voting

The platform used allowed those attending to share their webcam and audio, should they wish, but he urged everyone to follow the Society's guidance on attending online events so as not to disrupt the meeting. The Chair thanked all those that had mailed proxy forms in advance of the meeting and noted that these forms would prove crucial if a consensus was not reached in the meeting.

The Chair reported that 5 proxy forms were returned to the EES London Office before the deadline of 4.00 pm on 28th November 2024. 5 proxy votes were counted, and 0 proxy forms were received spoiled. The Chair asked that anyone in attendance who had also submitted a proxy form should not vote in the electronic polls or should write to the panellists to check whether their form had been counted. The Director confirmed that only one person in attendance had submitted a proxy form in advance and was asked not to vote.

The online platform allowed for the usual show of hands required according to Article 19.1. This would be done using the online 'poll' facility which would be launched for each of the eight resolutions and would offer the options of 'for', 'against', and 'abstain'.

The Chair announced that he would be exercising the proxy votes in his discretion in favour of the eight resolutions. To reassure members, the Chair noted that in any instance where a consensus was not reached from the show of hands or there was 10% or less between the options selected, then the votes and proxies would be scrutinised, and the results published on the Society's website within a week of the meeting.

As would be normal practice, during the meeting the Chair would propose each of the resolutions in the order set out in the agenda. Accordingly, as each resolution is proposed, the Chair would seek a seconder and then ask for a virtual show of hands.

(b) Asking questions

The Chair noted that this AGM was being held on a 'meeting platform' which allowed all in attendance to use their webcams and audio if desired. Questions could therefore be asked verbally by using the 'raise hand' function available after the Treasurer's and Director's reports. Questions could also be put into the chat and the panel would endeavour to answer all questions raised. The Chair asked that the questions were kept concise and clear and, if typed in the chat, requested that members include their name with their questions so that they could be identified for the purposes of the minutes.

I. To receive the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting

Minutes were available on the Society's website in advance of the meeting and web-links shared with members attending via the website.

The Chair proposed that the minutes were received. Richard Ayre and Hilary McGowan seconded the resolution which was duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
56 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
5	0	0

2. Treasurer's Report

The Chair invited the Treasurer, Yvette Dzumaga, to give her report.

The Treasurer started by reminding the meeting that figures presented in the Annual Report and Accounts reflected the reporting year 2023-24.

Over the year, the Society reported a negative movement in funds of £34,000 (2023: £66,000 surplus). This was made up of a surplus in restricted funds (£60,000; 2023: £46,000) and an unrestricted deficit (£95,000; 2023 surplus of £38,000). £48,000 was received in legacies over the reporting year. The overall deficit is a result of a change in accounting in how legacies are reported and the Society expects to receive substantial legacies in subsequent years. It also reflects the spending of funds received in prior years to support its Building the Future Campaign which has included the expenditure on new systems to support membership and engagement.

The Treasurer reported that free reserves currently stand at £161,000 (2023: £178,000) which is within the Trustee's target range of £150,000-£175,000. The Board have also designated £50,000 of reserves into the Development Fund to support the Society's future.

This year, the Board commissioned an Independent Audit as we expect to generate substantial income over the coming years in support of the Building the Future Campaign. This would require comparative figures from previous reporting years. The Audit was performed in 2024 by Sayer Vincent. No concerns were raised, and the process was carried out both in the office and remotely.

The Treasurer announced that the Society was expecting a surplus in the current year owing to legacy income and a successful application for a Development Phase application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (£61,000).

The Treasurer ended by thanking the staff again for their ongoing hard work to ensure that the Society is operationally sustainable during the ambitious Building the Future Campaign.

Questions

There were no questions from the audience.

The Chair thanked the Treasurer for her presentation.

3. Director's Report

The Chair invited Dr Carl Graves, as Director of the Society, to present the Director's report for 2023-24.

Dr Graves began by thanking all those who had contributed to the work of the Society in the previous year including the Board and Committees, volunteers, members, and his staff team. He also noted the sad passing of several members over the previous year including Prof Barry Kemp, Prof Harry Smith, and Dr Morris Bierbrier. He thanked those members who had remembered the Society in their Will by leaving generous bequests which are crucial for the Society to invest in its sustainable future. Dr Graves acknowledged the very generous bequest of Martin Davies, a late Vice-President of the Society, of £250,000, but reiterated that legacies of any size were gratefully received and contributed to the success of the Society.

Dr Graves' presentation gave an overview of the Society's work in five key areas: Research, Publications, Collections, Education, and Outreach & Engagement before ending with some reflections of its future. He began by reiterating the aims of the Business Plan, begun in 2022, and which will soon be replaced by a new, forward-focused plan that includes the Building the Future Campaign:

- To make the EES' high-quality facilities and programmes a world-class destination for engaging diverse audiences with Egyptian cultural heritage.
- To be the centre of a UK-wide research network for projects focusing on the heritage of Egypt.
- To pioneer a sustainable method for sharing research in-print and/or online.

The Director noted that much had been achieved over the previous year, alongside ambitious plans for redevelopment.

(a) Research

Three Centenary Awards were granted in the year:

- Towards Ethical Exploration and Academic Discourse: An Investigation into the Unpublished Archaeological Collections of "Yassa Adraous Pasha" and "Zaki Ghali", *Moamen Saad (a former EES visiting scholar, 2014)*
- Handling bureaucracy: The identity of Egyptian administration as seen through fingerprint analysis in sealings from the Early Dynastic Period, *Pablo Barba (a former alumnus of the EES Egyptian Archaeology Skills School, 2023)*
- Conservation of monuments and sites in Sudan during the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium period (1898-1956), *Tomomi Fushiya (a regular EES archive user)*

Thanks to generous donations by members to the Society's Research Fund, one EES Research Grant was also awarded in 2023-24. These were only made available to projects affiliated to the Society and it was given to:

- Project Amunet, *Angela Tooley and Maarten Praet*

(b) Publications

EES Publications Manager, Julia Thorne, launched two new publications in 2023-24:

- *Archaeological Sites of the Nile Delta of Egypt: A Gazetteer* by Jeffrey Spencer.
- *Statuary from Royal Buildings at Amarna: Its creation and contexts* by Kristin Thompson and Marsha Hill.

The latter was an impressive hardback, two volume collectors' editions in a presentation slipcase. It received positive testimonials from Prof Barry Kemp, Prof Aidan Dodson, Dr Marianne Eaton-Krauss. Julia has also set up a new distribution agreement with ISD International which will enable the Society to release e-books and produce volumes on short-run-digital-printing in the future.

(c) Collections

Dr Stephanie Boonstra, the Society's Collections Manager, continued conservation projects in the collections thanks to funds donated by members in 2022. Projects included the cleaning, restoration, and re-glazing of the large oil painting of Amelia B Edwards by Florence Blakiston Attwood-Mathews (EES.ART.ABE), the cleaning, stabilisation, and re-glazing of the Society's largest papyrus (P.Oxy.LV 3804-3805), and the cleaning of two 1930s replicas of artefacts from Amarna. The large watercolour by Howard Carter (EES.ART.212), conserved in 2022, was also sent on loan to the Egypt Centre at Swansea University in February 2024. There is has been used in teaching and Dr Graves offered his thanks to Dr Ken Griffin and his team for their support and accommodation during the loan period.

(d) Education and training

The Society's Egyptian Archaeology Skills School continued this year with nine scholars visiting the London Office to receive an introduction to archaeological practice. Unfortunately, the School is now on a hiatus while the structural issues in the London Office are resolved. Charlotte Jordan, EES Engagement Manager, will work to migrate as many skill-based training sessions online as possible during this time.

Essam Nagy, Engagement and Fieldwork Manager, ran several educational workshops in Cairo over the year including a week-long school focusing on 'Enhancing management of Egyptian cultural heritage' in September 2023.

Stephanie continued to build upon the success of the Society's 2022 Egyptological Archives Skills School, by working with the ten scholars involved to curate the first walking trail exhibition in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo in January 2024. This exhibition included 12 panels placed around the galleries close to artefacts uncovered during the excavations of the EES. The scholars wrote their panels, using archives at the Society, in English and Arabic which were designed by Charlotte. The exhibition was launched on 31st January 2024 by Dr Ali Ali Abdelhalim (Director of the Museum), and HE Gareth Bayley (British Ambassador to Egypt). Essam was also able to have large display banners presented on the façade of the Museum from January until September 2024 which were designed by Charlotte and included the Society's logo and images from the archives.

(e) Outreach and Engagement

An EES-members-only tour to Egypt began in Cairo in February 2024 with a visit to the new exhibition at the Egyptian Museum. Dr Graves then travelled with the group 'In the footsteps of Amelia Edwards' to sites around Cairo, and then south to Aswan and Lake Nasser. The group were able to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Amelia's journey by visiting Abu Simbel on the anniversary of the discovery of the small chapel by Amelia and 'the Painter' (Andrew MacCallum). The Society was also humbled to support Amany Abd el Hameed with a Centenary Award in 2022-23 to organise 'Uncovering Abydos'. This two-day conference explored the hidden narratives of discovery at Abydos by surfacing the Egyptian stories

of excavation. Amany subsequently visited London for six months in 2024 to work in the Society’s archives relating to the site of Abydos for her PhD research, thanks to the support of the Society and the Robert Anderon Charitable Trust.

Charlotte maintained the Society’s online event programme and continued to expand its provision of on-demand videos of previous events on YouTube. She also continued a regular in-person or hybrid offering by organising a study day at the Society of Antiquaries focusing on the reign of Ramesses the Great, as well as a successful open day in partnership with Open House London which attracted over 100 visitors in a single day to the London Office.

(f) Membership

The Director reported that membership had seen a slow decrease since the global pandemic in 2021-22 and now stood at 1671 (1744 for the reporting year). However, the numbers of new recruits remained high and the numbers now choosing to pay by Direct Debit had increased. Charlotte will run a new membership drive in 2025-26 to build these figures even higher. Dr Graves implored members to recruit at least one more member to the Society in the coming year.

(g) Building the Future Campaign

Dr Graves reminded members of the Building the Future Campaign, a once in a generation opportunity to transform the Society’s London premises to make them accessible, innovative, and sustainable. This is the single-most important thing for the Society over the next five years.

Edward Scrivens, Development Manager, continued to write grant applications and had been successful in receiving a Development Phase grant from the National Lottery Fund which will support a further Delivery Phase application that could secure up to two-thirds of the target amount. Various Campaign Champions, including Dan Snow, Mary Beard, and Bettany Hughes have supported the Campaign and continue to raise awareness of it within their networks.

Dr Graves reminded members of the need to demonstrate our commitment to the plans for redevelopment by contributing to the Campaign. Donations of any amount will make a difference and Dr Graves encouraged members to consider setting up a regular monthly donation where possible (for example, a regular monthly donation of £5 from all members could generate up to £500,000 in three years).

Dr Graves thanks Edward and Neville Leslie, Finance & Administration Manager, for their efforts in generating funds for the Campaign and managing them on top of the Society’s other finances.

(h) Thanks

The Director ended by thanking his staff team and Board of Trustees again, as well as the members and supporters who continue to attend so many events and make such transformative gifts to the Society.

Questions

There were no questions from the audience.

4. To receive the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 2023-24

The Chair proposed the meeting received the Annual Report and Accounts for 2023-24. Antoinette Maynard and Richard Ayre seconded the resolution which was duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
60 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
5	0	0

5. To approve the appointment of Sayer Vincent LLP as Independent Auditors until the end of the next AGM and to authorise the Board of Trustees to fix their remuneration

The resolution for the appointment of Sayer Vincent LLP as Independent Auditors until the next AGM and for the Board of Trustees to fix their remuneration was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Emma Curryer and Mechthild Burton, and duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
58 (98%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
5	0	0

6. To elect members of the Board of Trustees of the Society

The Chair noted that Sue Preston would retire from the Board having served 7 years, and therefore not eligible for re-election. The Chair expressed his and the Board's sincere gratitude to Sue for her guidance and enthusiasm as Treasurer for the Society during her term on the Board. He expressed that the Society was in such a good financial position now, largely thanks to the work of Sue. Jenny Chong, Lizzie Glithero-West, and James Potts will retire by rotation and stand for re-election. Dr Omniya Abdel Barr resigned during the year. The Board has decided to extend his own (Dr Campbell Price's) term of office for a final year under Article 37A in order to maintain continuity on current projects and to provide an adequate hand-over to an incoming Chair. The Board recommend Dr Leire Olabarria and Dr Tobias Stone to fill two vacancies arising. In recommending them for election, the Board has taken into account their knowledge and skills and where applicable their contribution to date, as well as the overall balance of skills and experience that the Board requires.

Details of candidates had been circulated with the notice of meeting and more details on the candidates had been available on the website since August.

6.1 The resolution for the re-election of **Jenny Chong** was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Emma Curryer and Antoinette Maynard and duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
57 (98%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
5	0	0

6.2 The resolution for the re-election of **Lizzie Glithero-West FSA** was proposed by the Chair, seconded by David Hibbert, Hillary McGowan, and Emma Curryer and duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
61 (98%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
5	0	0

6.3 The resolution for the election of **Dr Leire Olabarria** was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Mechthild Burton and duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
61 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
5	0	0

6.4 The resolution for the re-election of **James Potts** was proposed by the Chair, seconded by David Hibbert and duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
62 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
5	0	0

6.5 The resolution for the election of **Dr Tobias Stone** was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Ralph Wilkes and duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
63 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
5	0	0

7. Any other business

Harry Parkes asked for an update on the resolution of the two London Plane trees affecting 4 Doughty Mews. CG reported that Camden Council has renewed their approval for the removal of the trees by their owners, Riverside (formerly One Housing Group). They had provided a tentative date for this to be carried out in early 2025. The Board had enlisted the Society's legal representatives at DAC Beachcroft to put further pressure on the owners to carry out the removal.

Douglas Hopper asked when *Ancient Egypt in 50 Discoveries* would be available. CP announced that it should be available by September 2025. The volume contains entries from authors across the world and about artefacts in global collections which had caused some delays. However, the volume will be a landmark in EES productions and we look forward to sharing it in 2025.

The Chair thanked members for attending the meeting. The Chair closed the meeting at 5.11 pm.