

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR THE PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND, 30th JUNE 2020

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Minutes of the Last Annual General Meeting, 6th June 2019, having been previously published in the *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, were taken as read, and there being no corrections, the Chairman proposed that the AGM accept them as a true record. The motion being carried, those Minutes were electronically signed by C. Strine, in anticipation of an ink signature being added in the future.

2. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND REPORT

The Chairman of the Fund, Casey Strine, welcomed members to the AGM. He began by asking for a moment of silence to remember all those who had suffered loss or hardship as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic was of course the reason for holding the AGM as an online meeting, in line with the very helpful guidance issued by the Charities Commission in response to the situation.

Report

Despite the extraordinary circumstances in which I write this report in late April 2020 during the Coronavirus pandemic, I am pleased to say that 2019 was a smooth and productive year for the Palestine Exploration Fund. Indeed, after the frenetic pace of 2018 resulting from the move to Greenwich and the hurried circumstances in which I took over from Philip Davies, this was by design. The aim from the outset of 2019 was to establish continuity at all levels, to bed the Fund into its new home, and to establish a strong foundation on which to build for the future.

One element of this was a strategic planning day conducted in April for the entire Board of Trustees and PEF staff. The result was the definition of seven priority areas for the Fund. Those areas are, in no particular order:

1. Enhancing the PEF Library and growing our reputation as a research institute
2. Increasing the amount of knowledge exchange with heritage organizations (research institutes, museums, archives, learned societies, etc...)
3. Strategically expanding our non-London based activities
4. Developing the PEF's online presence
5. Engaging with Middle Eastern communities in the UK and in the Middle East
6. Creating a program of activities for young people (at the PEF and outside our offices)
7. Curating a programme of public facing exhibitions

Since the fund is in a strong position financially with the proceeds of the 2 Hinde Mews sale now invested in the Walter Morrison Endowment, these aims can be pursued with patience, long term vision, and commitment to excellence. Already this year, the development of a new and improved website, work on museum accreditation, researching funding partnerships with the Albright Institute in Jerusalem, and increased connections with other heritage organisations around the UK and the world has occurred. I look forward to reporting on positive results in each area over the coming years.

Last year, I reported that the PEF staff grew to include a part-time Collections Assistant (Ava Clark) and a part-time Digital Media Officer (Yasmeen as-Khoudary). The Board remains cautious on the staffing front, but has been able to make the Collections Assistant a full-time post, increasing the capacity for the curation and research of our collections. The Digital Media Officer post was also extended

through 2019 (and now into 2020), supporting the development of our online presence. These strategic investments in staff are funded from the annual proceeds of the Walter Morrison Endowment, meaning they are financially sustainable for the Fund.

Finally, I want to thank my fellow Trustees for their hard work in 2019. They have been a joy to work with, a pleasure to lead, and a source of wisdom at a time of many decisions. Special thanks are due to John Bartlett and John Healey, who end their terms this year. I also want to register thanks to Linda Hulin, who has continued on with the Board, but stepped down as Editor of the Palestine Exploration Quarterly. During her tenure PEQ went from strength to strength—as I'm sure it will under the new editor, Bjørnar Storfjell.

Casey Strine

3. HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT

J. MacDermot expressed his regret that the pandemic had interrupted what was a very productive and positive time at the PEF. His report outlined the main points.

1. Highlights in a Year to Remember

An important step forward this year has been the progress made by Felicity Cobbing, Ava Clark and their enthusiastic volunteers in the organization of items from our collections in the dedicated exhibition area. The second highlight was the further organization by Elisabeth Sawerthal and John Ritzema of the working library and the rare books collection. The accessibility of the books and a quiet reading room in which to study them has been a major development for our readers and research workers. Our third triumph has been the progress on the lengthy and perhaps unending task led by Ava Clark that involved the sorting, organising, and recording of the huge documentary, map and photographic archives.

2. Membership:

The overall subscription revenues to the PEF have increased slightly in the past year. There were 272 individual and 187 institutional members on 31st December 2018 and 279 individual and 187 institutional members on 31st December 2019

Our library maintains its hard copy subscriptions to journals through a journal exchange scheme. There were 69 institutional journal exchanges in 2019, an increase of 1 from 2018.

3. Lectures & Events from June 2019

The PEF lectures delivered at the British Museum during 2019 were co-hosted with the Middle East Department and are shown in the table below. From January 2020, the arrangement with the British Museum was revised. The scheduled time was changed and the PEF became the sole organisers. The first lecture at the British Museum at the new time went well, with an audience of around 100.

It had always been our intention to hold lectures and seminars in Greenwich, and our inaugural event on the 26th February 2020 was considered a success. The combination of a lecture venue with opportunities for a display was found to be really effective, and the option for a reception afterwards made for a most convivial evening. The CBRL event at SOAS was well attended, and we remain keen to host similar double events with them in the future.

Members will be aware that it became necessary close both the PEF and the British Museum in mid-March 2020 on account of the Covid-19 pandemic. Those lectures that were cancelled or postponed are listed below. We are hoping to re-schedule the planned lectures at the British Museum, and for those at other venues, we will liaise with our partners.

2019

Date 2019	Speaker	Subject
6 th JUNE - AGM (from 3pm)	Jonathan Phillips Royal Holloway, University of London	The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin
12 th September Iain Browning Memorial Lecture	Matt Adams Albright Institute, Jerusalem	Excavations at Solomon's Pools, Bethlehem, and the Water Supply to Jerusalem in Antiquity
7 th November In memory of Andrea Zerbini	Micaela Sinibaldi CBRL, Jerusalem	The Islamic Baydha Project: The Archaeology of Settlement in Post-urban Petra
5 th December Evans Memorial Lecture	Jane Taylor Independent	Pictures Painted by the Sun: Photographing Jordan 1985 – 2015

2020

Date & Time / Partnership	Venue	Title	Speaker
16 th January 2020 1:30pm	British Museum	Collecting Palestine	Omar Joseph Nasser- Khoury, PEF Grant Scholar
26 th February 2020. 6pm. CBRL	PEF, Greenwich	The Survey of Western Palestine Revisited: The Visible and the Hidden	Salman Abu Sitta, Palestine Land Society (PLANDS)
28 th February 2020. 5.30pm. CBRL	Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS	The Survey of Western Palestine Revisited: The Visible and the Hidden	Salman Abu Sitta, Palestine Land Society (PLANDS)

Lectures cancelled/postponed due to the COVID-19 crisis

Date & Time / Partnership	Venue	Title	Speaker
19th March 2020 6.00pm	PEF, Greenwich	Excavating at Tel el Hesi, Past and Present	Jeffrey Blakeley, University of Wisconsin
26th March 2020. 1.30pm.	British Museum	Workers, Overseers and Interpreters: finding Palestinians in the excavations of the PEF	Sarah Irving, Edge Hill University Lancashire
29th April 2020. 6pm. AIAS	Institute of Archaeology Lecture Theatre G6	Fishing on the Sea of Galilee in the Early Roman Period	Richard Bauckham, St Andrews University
4th June 2020. 4pm. AGM Lecture	British Museum	The Lost Fortress of Umm Tawabin, Jordan	Alexandra Ariotti, PEF Grant Scholar

It is hoped that the Covid-19 lock-down will have been lifted after the summer of 2020. The planned events from September to December 2020 are shown below:

- a. At the British Museum: 17th September 1.30 – 2.30 Jennifer Baird – *Remembering and Forgetting at Dura-Europos: A Story in Five Sculptures*
- b. At Greenwich: 24th September 2020 – Matt Adams – *Ancient Mendes – Reflections of Early Egypt in the Heart of the Delta.*
- c. Another Greenwich/SOAS event with CBRL?
- d. At the British Museum: 3rd December 1.30 – 2.30 Bettany Hughes, *Title to be confirmed.*

4. Visitors

Between June 2019 and March 2020, there were 293 visitors. Among them, we were particularly pleased and honoured to welcome Crown Prince Hassan bin Talal of Jordan on the 5th February. Our other guests included Dr Salman Abu Sitta, whose lectures are referred to above, and several groups, including the T.E. Lawrence Society, The Discover London Society, The London Appreciation Society, The City of London Archaeology Society, The Greenwich Royal Observatory, and the archaeologists participating in the British Museum's Iraq Emergency Heritage Management Training Scheme.

5. Projects

Database: Our Trustee Sara Boutall has been working with our IT support providers, *LeftBrain*, to move our collection data to a new software package. The programme (*Notion*) has been chosen for reasons of (i) compatibility with our previous system and with Museum standards, (ii) cost, and (iii) ease of data transfer and maintenance.

The PEF Website: The new website is now up and running, and new information is currently being added. The website was designed by *Ninefoot Design* in partnership with the PEF. In the months ahead, the new

website will become increasingly functional, and we are confident that it will provide a much-improved online platform for the PEF.

Social Media: The PEF Social Media Officer, Yasmeen el-Khoudary, continues to enhance the presence of the PEF on the increasingly important digital stage. This has been demonstrated by the increased volume of traffic on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

Google Arts and Culture: Thanks to the efforts of our former Board member, Daniel Pett, and Yasmeen el-Khoudary, we have embarked on a project to digitise parts of the PEF collections to make them accessible online. Currently, we are transferring information to the Google database, in preparation for the time when we can scan and photograph these items. This project is especially useful for digitising those items in the collection that present us with difficulties on account of their size, fragility and other considerations.

Digital equipment: The PEF has invested substantially in new digital equipment, which includes new A3 and A4 flatbed scanners to digitise our photographic and documentary archives. We have also purchased an overhead scanner for bound archives and books and a digital camera for photographing our 3D collections.

Storage: The PEF has ordered additional drawers to be placed in our rolling shelves. These will enable us to store our object collections more efficiently and thus free up much needed shelf space for the documentary and photographic archives. The drawers were on order when the COVID-19 lock-down started, and will be installed at a later date.

Fire, Health and Safety, Human Resources, and Collections Management Policies:

Time and effort have been invested in making our internal policies and procedures compliant with current legislation and professional guidelines. This is essential for the PEF as it develops its public presence. Real progress has been made, and our most recent Health and Safety assessment gave us a clean bill of health, with low risks recorded in all areas.

6. Donations

Cash and legacies: The PEF is grateful once again for generous donations and legacies, which, with the associated gift aid, amounted to £3,425.

Library: Many donations were received, but special mention must be made of Peter Parr's generous donation of many valuable titles from his own library. Other important donations were received from Rupert Chapman, Omar Joseph Nasser-Khoury and Cathie Bryan.

Collections: The following generous gifts were received:

- a. The Tony Axe Photographic Archive, donated by Tony Axe. A large 35 mm slide collection of the Levant taken in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s.
- b. The John Rogerson Photographic & Film Archive, donated by Rosalind Rogerson. A large slide collection with film dating to the 1980s taken in the Middle East by John Rogerson and our late Chairman, Philip Davies.

- c. Garstang Lantern Slides. 128 Lantern Slides previously belonging to John Garstang. They were donated by Andrew Nicoll, Deputy Head of Archives at the Heritage Directorate, Historic Environment Scotland.
- d. The Tony Ball Photographic Archive, donated by Stuart Ball. Photos taken by Tony Ball at Kenyon's Jericho excavations in the 1950s.
- e. Belmont Archive and Pitt Archive – additional archival and photographic material transferred to the PEF by Denys Pringle

7. Loans and Exhibitions

For the “*Life at the Dead Sea*” exhibition at (i) The State Museum of Archaeology, Chemnitz (SMAC) and (ii) The LWL-Museum in der Kaiserpfalz at Paderbon. The PEF lent scientific equipment, comprising the smaller theodolite and tripod (PEF-SE-17), one of our Gunter measuring chains (PEF-SE-2), a compass (PEF-SE-12), a manuscript map of the Jericho and Dead Sea region from the Survey of Western Palestine (PEF-M-WV-116), and a watercolour of the Dead Sea by Claude R. Conder (PEF-PI-113). There were also several digital images from the PEF collections.

The exhibition has been running in Chemnitz since September 2019, and was due to move to Paderborn on the 26th April 2020. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the exhibition will remain in Chemnitz until November 2020, at which point it is hoped that it will move to Paderborn.

8. Staff and Volunteers:

Those working at the PEF are listed below:

Staff: Ava Clark and Felicity Cobbing.

Consultants: Yasmeen el-Khoudary, Ivona Lloyd-Jones, John Ritzema and Elisabeth Sawerthal.

Volunteers: Melody Abbott (UCL), Rafaele Bellino (UCL), Maryann Bowen, Penelope Butler, Anne Caldwell (University of Kent), Oliver Clark (University of Manchester), Jack Freese (UNC Chapel Hill), Gabrielle Fyjis-Walker, Beeza Habeeb (UCL), Naimeh Kamal (University of Greenwich), Monika Kumar (British Museum) and John MacDermot.

Numerous projects were undertaken by the PEF volunteers under the direction of the staff. They included:

- a. Indexing the PEF's Minute Books.
- b. Assessing and photographing the PEF's ethnographic collections
- c. Sorting and cataloguing the Nigel Hepper Archive.
- d. Scanning the *Survey of Western Palestine* architectural plans and drawings.
- e. Re-numbering existing digital images from the Tufnell archive.
- f. Continuing to sort the BSAJ material (incl. the Paddy de Courcey-Ireland material).
- g. Continuing to sort the PEQ archive.
- h. Sorting the PEF Centenary Exhibition Archive
- i. Sorting the Iain Browning Archive.

Lastly, I wish to thank all our staff and volunteers on behalf of the Trustees for their exemplary work during the year, and also to add my personal thanks to Felicity Cobbing and Ivona Lloyd-Jones for their help with the preparation of this report.

John MacDermot.

4. HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT

Were it not for the Covid-19 pandemic the Hon Treasurer's report this year would strike a positive and optimistic note. The second full year of operation in our new premises in Greenwich gives us every assurance that our activities are on a sound commercial and financial basis: we are living within our income and our financial situation is strong. All the indications are that this fortunate situation would be likely to continue. However, the extraordinary and unprecedented crisis measures to deal with the pandemic have upended such conventional theorising.

At this juncture the consequences of these measures—both at home and abroad--can only be guessed at. We do know, however, that they are likely to have a significant impact on all our arrangements. Thus, turbulence in stock markets around the world is likely to affect the value of our portfolio of investments. Mercifully, our income from the investment portfolio is likely to be stable in the short to medium term. Furthermore, the high level of liquidity which we enjoy gives us the flexibility to meet these challenges—a flexibility which we lacked when all our assets were in bricks and mortar. In the PEF's long history there have been difficult and extraordinary times. We survived them then; we can do so now.

Christopher Glover

5. HONORARY EDITOR'S REPORT ON THE *PALESTINE EXPLORATION QUARTERLY*

The membership of the PEF which is also the number of subscribers to the *PEQ*, has made some modest increases over the last year. Individual subscribers were 272 as of 31 December 2018 and this number increased to 279 by 31 December 2019, an increase of 7. The institutional subscribers have remained the same at 187, of these 75 are electronic subscriptions only and the remaining 112 are both print and electronic subscriptions. Among the institutional subscriptions 69 were journal exchanges, a gain of one over the previous year. Taylor and Francis are confident the journal is doing well, and the income from royalties from the journal remains stable.

Submissions continue to arrive at a regular pace making it difficult to significantly reduce the backlog of accepted articles. As before, the rejection rate remains at about 25–30% (this includes submissions that have been withdrawn). About the same percentage of submissions are returned for rewrites—mostly major, but some minor—which demonstrates the high quality of our reviewers.

The topics covered in the submissions are primarily archaeological in nature, but there are also submissions dealing with historical, anthropological, biblical, linguistic, and geographical topics.

This year also saw a change of the editor of the *PEQ* as Linda Hulin stepped down after the publication of the double issue 151.3–4, and Bjørnar Storfjell took over with the publication of issue 152.1.

Bjørnar Storfjell.

6. REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

James A. Fraser's *Dolmens in the Levant*, PEF Annual no. 14, has been awarded with the G. Ernest Wright Award by the American School of Oriental Research. The award is given to the author of the most substantial volume dealing with archaeological material, excavation reports and material culture from the Ancient Near East and eastern Mediterranean.

Annual no. 15 (2019), *Roman-Period and Byzantine Nazareth and its Hinterland*, by Ken Dark has been published and is now available at a generous 20% discount for PEF members (see flyer attached). By the end of this year (2020), a second volume by the same author, PEF Annual no. 16 (2020), titled *The Sisters of Nazareth Convent, a Roman-period, Byzantine and Crusader site in central Nazareth* should be published and available. An official event for the launch of both volumes will be organised by the end of the year in the new Greenwich PEF premises.

Annual no. 17 (2021) will be *Ancient Landscapes of Zoara I: Surveys and Excavations at Ghor es-Sāfi in Jordan, 1997–2015*, edited by Konstantinos Politis.

Chiara Fiaccavento

7. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE GRANTS COMMITTEE

1. PEF Research Grants

The Grants Committee met on 12 March 2020. A total of £12,000 was allocated for this round of grants. After a careful review of applications, the committee identified £11,844 in grants to make.

Fifteen applications were received, indicating strong interest in the PEF's grant making programme. A total of nine applicants were granted funding.

Project titles and awards given are as follows:

1. Angelos Papadopoulos (£750), Cypriot and Mycenaean pottery at Tel el Hesi – A Comparative Study
2. Claudine Dauphin (£1,500), Sacred Landscapes: The Ummayyad Syro-Jordanian Hajj Roads to Mecca and their Pilgrim Camps
3. Chris Wilson (£1,033), Palestinian Psychiatric Patients in Lebanon during the Mandate Period
4. Diederik Halbertsma (£500), Episodic Labour Mobilisation During the Levant's 'Dark Ages': The View from Khirbet al-Mudayna al-'Aliya
5. Emanuel Pfoh (£1,500), The Ethnographic Construction of Palestine in the Works of Claude Reignier Conder
6. James Fraser (£2,350), The Khirbet Ghozlan Excavation Project: Investigating Bronze Age Horticulture in the Jordan Valley Escarpment
7. Mahmoud Hawari (£711), Khirbat al-Mafjar Archaeological Project, Jericho
8. Omar Joseph Nasser-Khoury (£1,500), Phase III: Documentation of the British Museum's Palestine Textile Collection: A Knowledge Exchange Fellowship
9. Will. M. Kennedy (£2,000), The Petra Hinterland Social Landscapes Project

Full abstracts for this year's projects will be published on the PEF blog, and short posts on grant work will be published there when they are received. The blog continues to be the first port of call for all up-to-date news on our grant recipients. The Grants Committee is also still receiving formal reports for grants, these will be published in PEQ.

2. The Joint Albright-PEF Fellowship.

The PEF has entered into an annual joint fellowship scheme with the Albright Institute in Jerusalem, in which £3,000 is awarded to a scholar undertaking research which involves a stay in Jerusalem (at very reduced rates at the Albright) and in London, using the collections of the PEF. The money would be to fund board and lodging and would be provided by the PEF. For the year 2019-2020, 8 applications were received which were assessed by both the Albright and the PEF. The award was made to Dr. Jon Ross, University of Manitoba, for his project 'Fingerprint evidence for the division of labour and learning: a longitudinal study on pre-Classical pottery-making in the western southern Levant'. It will be decided on a yearly basis whether we wish to take part on this fellowship.

The Covid-19 pandemic has meant there are delays in the fulfilment of the PEF research grants and the Joint Albright-PEF Fellowship. We hope that all recipients can carry out their research when it becomes possible and safe to do so.

The Routledge Philip Davies Early Career Researcher Publication Award 2019

This award, generously funded by our publishers in memory of Philip Davies, was awarded this year to Dr Matthew Susnow of the Hebrew University for his paper 'Liminality and Canaanite Cultic Spaces: Temple Entrances, Status Transformations and Ritual in Threshold Contexts'. The winner is awarded £750, and their paper will be considered for publication in PEQ, pending peer review. The runner up was Dr Michael Zellmann-Rohrer, Ioannou Centre – LGPN, University of Oxford for his paper entry 'Something borrowed, something new? Semitic loanwords and transcriptions in the Greek epigraphy of Palestine and Arabia'. The award for the runner up is £350, and again the opportunity for their paper to be published in PEQ, subject to peer review.

Casey Strine (Acting Grants Chair)

9. RATIFICATION OF APPOINTMENT OF EDITOR OF PEQ AND TWO ORDINARY BOARD MEMBERS, TO SERVE FROM 2020 TO 2025, RATIFICATION OF RE-APPOINTMENT OF STEPHEN SUTTON FOR A FURTHER 5 YEARS, FROM 2020 TO 2025

J. MacDermot announced the results of the returned ballots. There was overwhelming approval for all appointments: Bjørnar Storfjell as Editor of PEQ, John Ritzema and Zeina Klink-Hoppe as Ordinary Board Members, and the re-appointment of Stephen Sutton as Ordinary Board Member.

C. Strine welcomed Bjørnar Storfjell officially as Editor of PEQ, and thanked Stephen Sutton for his willingness to server a further term as a Board member. He also officially welcomed John Ritzema and Zeina Klink-Hoppe to the Board and congratulated all on their appointments.

C. Strine also gave his formal thanks to John Bartlett and John Healey, who were both retiring from the Board at this AGM. John Healey had very kindly agreed to an extension of his term on the Board at the last AGM. He had provided much needed continuity during a time of considerable change, and had contributed a great deal through his wisdom and professional experience. John Bartlett has been connected with the PEF since the 1960's and had served on the Board as an ordinary member, and also as Editor of PEQ, and

Chairman. His exceptional contribution was profound and of lasting value to the PEF. Both would be very much missed. C. Strine wished them both the very best for the future.

9. APPROVAL OF ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2019

The Chairman referred the members to the Annual Report and Accounts for 2019, copies of which had been sent by email to the membership in advance. This document is also available for consultation at the PEF office.

The members present **Approved** the Report and Accounts for 2019.

10. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS FOR JUNE 2019- JUNE 2020

The Chairman proposed the appointment of Messrs Hartley Fowler as Auditors for the year June 2020 – June 2021. The proposal was **Approved** by the Membership.

11: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Vanessa Lee-Miller asked a question regarding events at the British Musuem. Firstly, she asked what the reason was for the move to the new time slot for 1.30pm and the arrangements concerning paid and free tickets. F. Cobbing replied that this was the result of a whole reorganization of the events program at the British Museum. The concession of 20 free seats for PEF members was very generous, as this was the British Museum's prime time events slot. Concerning this year's events, it was now understood that the Briitsh Museum would not be opening for events for the rest of the year, and we would be looking to holding this year's scheduled events in 2021 instead.

C. Strine also referred to the PEF's efforts to develop interesting material online as some sort of substitute for the live lectures. We had spent some time making the PEF fit to cope with the circumstances of lockdown, and we were now focusing our attention on this important area.

12. DATE OF THE NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The date of the next Annual General Meeting would be set when the British Museum's events calendar for 2021 was clear. The membership would be informed as soon as possible.

Casey Strine
Chairman, PEF