



**BRITISH ASSOCIATION
FOR
BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY
AND
OSTEOARCHAEOLOGY**

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
CAMBRIDGE, 18TH SEPTEMBER 2010

Item	
1	<p>Apologies from Committee Members Louise Loe, Rebecca Gowland, Mary Lewis.</p>
2	<p>Minutes of the last AGM Accepted as a true record. To go on website.</p>
3	<p>Chair's Report (Chris Knüsel)</p> <p>3.1 Research quality and standard of presentations at BABAO conference this year very high – those presenting at the podium and poster hall are congratulated.</p> <p>3.2 The conference proceedings are to be edited by Piers Mitchell and Jo Buckberry and published by Archaeopress.</p> <p><u>Activities of BABAO since the last AGM:</u></p> <p>3.3 The BABAO members' poll results have been placed on the website. This demonstrates that members strongly agree research on human skeletal remains and their retention for research is a sensible activity. Other polls undertaken by independent organisations have come to similar conclusions, showing that the general public feel the same way as members of BABAO. Links to these have been placed on the website.</p> <p>3.4 The organisation Honouring the Ancient Dead (HAD) held its first conference in Leicester, and was attended by Chris Knüsel and Piers Mitchell. A number of research papers were presented by social anthropologists and views of those from the pagan community expressed by the organisers. The view of HAD that all excavated human skeletal remains should be reburied is in contrast with the views of BABAO. BABAO encourages dialogue between organisations with differing opinions to improve understanding of other views, and this took part at the</p>

conference.

- 3.5 BABAO has contributed to a report by the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI) on the scientific quality of BBC programs on the field of anthropology. The key points included that 1) often the research and ideas of those specialists advising the program producers were given by the presenters without credit, as if the presenter thought of these themselves, and also 2) that there was also a tendency to be too simplistic and overly sensational, especially in the field of forensics.

John Robb (Cambridge) asked for advice regarding how to handle enquiries from TV producers to prevent this from happening. Chris Knüsel confirmed that such ethical advice would be part of the new BABAO code of practice, and the code of ethics currently being updated.

- 3.6 The BABAO database matching institutions able to curate more human skeletal remains collections with those unable to curate such remains any longer has been working successfully, with the transfer of archaeological human skeletal material from Gloucester Museum to a university. It is hoped that this database will be found useful by other museums with shortage of storage space and funding so that a suitable new home can be found for the remains.

3.7 Research Grant Competition 2010

Winner of the Commercial Unit Grant Competition (up to £1,500 each)

Orsolya Laszlo, Field Service for Cultural Heritage, Hungary: Isotope Analysis of Two Ottoman Period burials from Sólly, Hungary.

Winners of the Academic Grant Competition (up to £1,000 each)

1) Evilena Anastasiou, University of Cambridge: The Spread of Intestinal Parasites and Dysentery into Ancient Cyprus: Light Microscopy and ELISA.

2) Jo Appleby, University of Cambridge: Body Treatment and Chronology in Rich Cremations Burials from the East Anglian Early Bronze Age.

While there were 20 grant applications this year, only one was from the commercial sector. Those in the commercial section were encouraged to apply for the funding available.

3.8 The Future of Biological Anthropology in the UK

The Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI) is currently attempting to improve the funding process for biological anthropology research applications. At present different aspects of biological anthropology might fall under archaeology, anthropology, biology and medicine. There is no single committee or body that can assess all applications from the field of biological anthropology, due to the interdisciplinary nature of the field. The last department in the country to still call itself the department of biological anthropology is in the University of Cambridge. A meeting is being organised between academics in the field of biological anthropology where a consensus of opinion will be reached, and then a subsequent

	<p>meeting will be held with the major grant awarding bodies in the UK to discuss the problems and agree changes to improve the process.</p> <p>Holger Schutkowski (Bradford) commented that he felt the field of Biological Anthropology will disappear soon, and that we should join departments that match our field of research interest such as archaeology, anthropology and biology.</p> <p>It was also noted that not all fields within biological anthropology are equally represented at BABAO conferences, and those holding future conferences should make a special effort to encourage all groups with targeted sessions and personal invitations as took place this year. Next year it is hoped to hold sessions on primatology and forensics, which was agreed to be a good idea.</p> <p><u>International Journal of Paleopathology</u></p> <p>3.9 This new journal within the field of biological anthropology will take papers on the topic of disease in the past. It is to be published by Elsevier, have 100 pages per volume, have 4 volumes per year, and the first volume will come out in the spring of 2011.</p>
<p>4</p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p>	<p>Membership (Tina Jakob)</p> <p>There are now 501 members of BABAO, with 45% being students. The number of student members has been gradually increasing in recent years. Renewal rate is 67%, with the highest turnover being in this student group as many move on from the field of anthropology as their career develops.</p> <p>102 members are from abroad, with the vast majority having undertaken postgraduate degrees in biological anthropology in the UK at some stage. The number of overseas members has increased by 10% since last year, which may reflect the ease of paying subscription by online payment.</p>
<p>5</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p>	<p>Publicity (Martin Smith)</p> <p>We continue to receive plenty of enquires for advice as to which anthropological courses students might take, and these are directed to impartial websites that list all such course information.</p> <p>The BABAO logo has been used in two US anthropological textbooks this year, demonstrating the BABAO is regarded on the international stage as the organisation that best represents those undertaking biological anthropology and physical anthropology in Britain.</p> <p>Links to conferences on topics related to BABAO's field of interest have been added to the website, and continue to be updated.</p>

<p>6</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p>	<p>Finance (Tim Thompson on behalf of Rebecca Gowland)</p> <p><u>Current and Reserve Account Balance</u></p> <p>Sep 2009: £14,873.71</p> <p>Sep 2010: £15,869.47</p> <p>However, this should be £2,409.37 more than this as the BABAO account has been used by criminals as part of an on-line fraud operation. This fraud is being investigated by the NatWest Fraud Investigation Branch, and BABAO will have its money returned.</p> <p><u>Income (for Sep 09 – Sep 10)</u></p> <p>Membership fees + bank interest: £6102.91</p> <p><u>Expenditure (for Sep 09 – Sep 10)</u></p> <p>Annual review: £0 (but approx £1600.00 to be paid out once invoice received)</p> <p>Grants: £1984.00 (although a further £1000 is to be paid out shortly)</p> <p>Contributions to committee travel expenses: £100</p> <p>Conference Gift to Organiser: £58.78</p> <p>Presentation Prizes: £150</p> <p>Membership fee overpayment: £50</p> <p>Web Integrations fees: £355</p> <p>Total: £3527.78</p> <p>Sonia Zakrzewski (Southampton) asked why so little travel expenses had been claimed by the committee. This is the maximum amount each committee member is currently allowed to claim each year for travel expenses. Piers Mitchell (Cambridge) explained that this amount only covered half the typical cost of the train fare to one committee meeting, so it was hardly large enough to bother claiming. It was then proposed that the full cost of second-class travel expenses for committee members could be claimed, up to a maximum of £3,000 for the entire committee each year. The entire membership present voted on this issue, and it was unanimously agreed.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Report on the BABAO Code of Practice (Rebecca Redfern)</p>
<p>7.1</p>	<p>Currently the BABAO code of ethics provides guidance to members, and is also used by a range of museums across the country to optimize the ethical use of human skeletal remains for education and research.</p> <p>To complement the code of ethics, we are developing a code of practice to help guide members and others dealing with biological anthropology and human skeletal remains. This has been created after study of comparable guidelines in place in other countries.</p> <p>The language used has been chosen to ensure respect and equality for human remains originating from all parts of the world. The code of practice is being created to be relevant to collections currently in the UK, so may not be as applicable to</p>

	<p>collections abroad where laws and ethical considerations may be different.</p> <p>The draft version of the code of practice has been sent round to all members for their evaluation. This draft should not be sent out to those outside BABAO until it has been finalized and agreed. A period of consultation within BABAO opens on 19th September and runs until 10th October. Opinions and suggested improvements can be submitted via an online consultation process that can be accessed on www.surveymonkey.com</p>
8	Appointments to the Committee
8.1	<p>A number of committee posts were due for renewal as the three year long posts came to an end. New appointments were made following a competitive vote managed via the on-line anonymous voting system. The results were as follows:</p> <p>Treasurer: Gundula Müldner Membership Secretary: Stephanie Vincent Publicity Secretary: Tim Thompson Representative from a Museum: Jelena Bekvalac Representative from a Professional Organisation: Simon Mays Student Representative: Evilena Anastasiou Congratulations to them all.</p>
8.2	<p>BABAO would like to thank the outgoing committee members for their efforts and commitment during the last few years (Martin Smith [publicity secretary], Rebecca Redfern [representative from a museum], Rebecca Gowland [treasurer], Kirsty McCarrison [student representative]).</p>
9	Any Other Business
9.1	<p>The 2011 BABAO conference is to be held at the University of Edinburgh by Kath McSweeney and Elena Kranioti.</p>
9.2	<p>The next meeting of the executive committee of BABAO will take place at the Leverhulme Centre for Human Evolutionary Studies, University of Cambridge on Wednesday 6th October, 2.30pm</p>