



**BRITISH ASSOCIATION
FOR
BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY
AND
OSTEOARCHAEOLOGY**

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, 3RD SEPTEMBER 2011

Item		Action
1	Apologies	
	Committee members: Simon Mays, Jacqueline McKinley John Cooper passed on his apologies for his absence at the AGM to the President.	
2	Minutes of the last AGM Accepted as a true record. To go on website.	
3	Matters Arising	
3.1	<u>Web List Submissions</u> Stefanie Vincent (Membership Secretary) has sent out a guideline document for web list submissions.	
4	Chair's Report (Chris Knüsel) Activities since the last AGM 4.a <u>New BABAO Committee Posts</u> Three committee posts were due for renewal. New appointments were made without a vote, as there was only one candidate for each post. Representative from the Commercial Sector: Nicholas Márquez-Grant Secretary: Linda Fibiger Non-Executive Member: Piers Mitchell BABAO would like to thank the outgoing holders of the posts (Piers Mitchell – Secretary; Jacqui McKinley - Representative from the commercial sector; Mary Lewis – Non-executive member) for their efforts and commitment over the last few years.	

4.b	<p><u>Title for the Head of BABAO</u></p> <p>After a brief discussion and an almost unanimous vote, the title of the head of BABAO was changed from ‘Chair’ to ‘President’ to reflect the more common use of ‘President’ in other professional bodies and associations. Only one member voted against the proposal.</p>	
4.c	<p><u>New Publication Series</u> (Tina Jacob)</p> <p>Jacqui McKinley has negotiated with Oxbow to publish the annual conference proceedings as a monograph series, <i>Trends in Biological Anthropology</i>. The publisher’s most cost effective offer involves a three-year contract. The best option for financing the publication is a slight rise in membership fees to cover printing and postage.</p> <p>After a brief discussion the membership voted to increase the membership fee by £7.50. The new membership fees are £17.50 for students/unwaged and £27.50 for full members. A reminder will be sent out to the membership to amend existing direct debit orders. This new monograph series will help to raise the profile of the organisation, as well as to provide a peer-reviewed venue for the dissemination of research.</p>	
	<p>The possibility of sending out the BABAO Annual Review as pdf only was also raised by one member, as this would save a considerable amount on printing and postal costs. No decision was made at this meeting, and the issue can be revisited in the future.</p>	CJK TT
4.d	<p><u>Receiving Skeletal Collections</u></p> <p>A museum curator had contacted BABAO requested a change of the wording for the website section on institutions receiving skeletal collections. This has now been done to reflect that the option of depositing skeletal remains with willing host institutions should not be seen to relieve councils of their responsibility to care for collections. Members can e-mail CK with any further suggestions for improvement of the wording in this section of the website guidance.</p> <p><u>Ministry of Justice and Reburial/Retention of Archaeological Skeletal remains:</u></p> <p>BABAO is taking in part in ongoing discussions with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) over the recent confusion in relation to the 2-year timeframe for the reburial of archaeological human skeletal remains. The MoJ and English Heritage are currently producing a document that will clarify the issue. A new license application form, excluding the clause for reburial, will be tested within the next few months and subsequently replace the current form. Although a change in legislation would be the most desirable outcome, recent budget cuts and a very full parliamentary agenda mean that there is neither time nor room to achieve this, so the current revisions are the best outcome at present.</p> <p>Jo Buckberry (University of Bradford) raised the issue of whether remains excavated under the old license would be covered. CK stated that these should hopefully be covered through longer extensions for retention.</p>	CJK

4.e	<p><u>Database of British Collections</u></p> <p>The BABAO committee has had ongoing discussions with Prof. Charlotte Roberts (Durham University) about financial support for a database of human skeletal collections in Britain. CR has collated such a database and would like to fuse it with an older one collated by Simon Mays (English Heritage). She has asked BABAO for financial support (approx. £1,500). CR envisions that this database would not be generally accessible to the membership, but hosted at Durham University, with access facilitated through CR. Her reasons for restricting access is the issue of publicising the location and contact details for a number of collections. Information on some of these collections was only provided to her by curators with the understanding that this information would not be made publicly accessible on the internet.</p> <p>The proposal was put to the membership, and during an animated discussion, the following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - While it is understood that certain collections are ‘sensitive’ (particularly in the current climate of requests for reburial), museums are repositories that should be accessible to bona fide researchers. -It is unlikely that the availability of such a database would result in a ‘flood’ of requests to curators; on the contrary, it would reduce their workload. Researchers, rather than sending multiple email queries to a wide number of institutions during their search for skeletal material, could target relevant collections. - Curators still have the option to refuse a request for access as they see appropriate - Anything financed by BABAO needs to benefit its entire membership. It was generally agreed that the database would have to be accessible to all paid-up BABAO members. <p>The BABAO committee will inform CR of the membership’s views and propose that financial support would be a possibility only if all bona fide BABAO members had access to the database. This access could be password-restricted to current, paid-up members.</p>	TJ CJK
4.f	<p><u>Palaeopathology Short Course</u></p> <p>Since the popular Palaeopathology Short Course will not be running in Bradford anymore (as a result of rising costs related to University charges) negotiations with the Museum of London (MoL) have been taking place to run it there. The Institute of Bioarchaeology was unsuccessfully approached for supportive funding.</p> <p>As the membership made clear that there is still a market for the course, efforts will continue to set up the course at the MoL with the help of Jelena Bekvalac.</p>	JB CJK
5	<p>Grant Report (Piers Mitchell)</p>	
	<p><i>Winner of the Commercial Unit Grant Competition (£1,485.00)</i> Gaynor Western, Ossafreelance.</p>	

	<p>Historical and medical contextualisation of skeletal surgical waste from the 19th century Worcester Royal Infirmary.</p> <p><i>Winner of the Academic Grant Competition (£1,000.00)</i> Åshild Vågene, University of Durham.</p> <p>Non-metric trait and mtDNA relatedness in a documented skeletal sample from Fewston, Yorkshire.</p> <p>The number of total applications for the BABAO grants continues to rise, from 17 in 2009, 21 in 2010, and 23 in 2011. However, despite the overall increase, only 2 were from the commercial sector this year. Those in the commercial sector were encouraged to apply for the funding available.</p>	
6	<p>Membership (Stefanie Vincent)</p> <p>There are now 512 members of BABAO, including 232 waged, 239 students and 40 unemployed/retired. The current renewal rate is 56%, with many members now renewing via Paypal. SV reminded everybody to cancel their standing orders in good time if they wanted to make use of the Paypal facility.</p> <p>101 members are from abroad, including 61 from Europe, 30 from the Americas and 10 from the rest of the world, including Japan. Many of the overseas members join after coming to Britain to work on skeletal collections.</p>	
7	<p>Publicity/IT (Tim Thompson)</p> <p>Over the past year a steady stream of enquiries from the public and from professional organisations were dealt with.</p> <p>The first phase of the website update has now been completed. This involved simplifying its organisation and improving its appearance. Phase II will involve the introduction of new content, including a Student Hub and a facility to upload and search grey literature (e.g. specialist reports). Members will be updated on progress in due course.</p> <p>TT called on the membership to let him know what they would like to see on the website as he aims to make it a useful tool members will return to over the year, rather than just to renew their membership fees or register for conferences.</p> <p>BABAO is now on Twitter: http://twitter.com/#!/BABAO_info</p>	
8	<p>Finance (Gundula Müldner)</p>	
8.1	<p>Fraud on BABAO account was resolved by outgoing Treasurer (RG) and accounts settled before handover to GM.</p>	

8.2 **BABAO Accounts**

The BABAO account balances are as follows:

Reserve Account Balance: **£13, 437.64**

Current Account Balance (includes cheques not yet cleared): **£1,297.39**

Paypal Account: **£10.43**

Total Funds: £14,745.46

8.3 **Income and Expenditure (Sept 23rd 2010 – Aug 30th 2011)**

Income:

Membership subscriptions: **£7,302.82**

Interest: **£5.29**

Total Income: £7,308.11

Expenditure:

BABAO Grants (Commercial 2010+2011, Academic 2011, includes £20 bank fees for international transfer): **£4,020**

Conference Presentation Prizes 2010: **£150**

Annual Review (Printing & Postage): £2,101.21 (2010) + £2,581.20 (2011) = **4,682.41**

Committee Travel (for three meetings: October 2010, February and July 2011): **£936.55**

Website Maintenance 2010: **£364.25**

Total Expenditure: £10,153.21

Income-Expenditure

-£2,765.10

The size of the deficit for the Sep 10 to Sep 11 period is mainly due to the unusually late payment of the costs for the 2010 Review and the 2010 Commercial Grant (total £3,621.21) which are normally paid out before September and would therefore not usually part be counted towards expenditure.

Our income since January (2011 subscriptions so far: £6,442.65) minus estimated expenditure for 2011 (i.e. expenditure as above minus costs for 2010 Review and Commercial Grant =£6,532.00) suggest that any deficit will be relatively small (if estimated by method above, currently = **-£89.35**).

9 **2012 Annual Conference**

Next year's conference will be held at the University of Bournemouth, hosted by Holger Schutkowski and Martin Smith.

10 **Any Other Business**

Next Committee Meeting

The next meeting of the executive committee of BABAO will take place at the Museum of London on Thursday, 10th November, 2.00 pm.