

# ARCHAEOLOGY – IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT DIGGING

August 12, 2011 JJJ Day of Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2011 Academia, Archaeology, Board of Trustees, EES, Egypt, Egypt Exploration Society, Egyptology, finance, <http://www.ees.ac.uk/>, Institute of Archaeology, Italy, John J Johnston, Museology, UCL, University College, University College London, Vice Chair, York

I am a part-time post-graduate research student at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, and Vice Chair of the Egypt Exploration Society, a charitable organisation, which has been carrying out archaeological fieldwork and research in Egypt for the last 129 years

The Day of Archaeology 2011, happily, fell on the same date as a scheduled meeting of the EES' Board of Trustees: an excellent reason to take a day away from my largely non-archaeological 'day job' and to reflect upon my productivity on the day. Consequently, the morning started with some prep work for a forthcoming lecture and article before I travelled in to the Bloomsbury offices of the EES.

The Trustees, numbering fifteen and drawn from the worlds of Egyptology, academia and business, meet six times a year in order to govern the work of the Society and to consider and ratify the recommendations of the Society's various task groups.

Sadly, I am unable to discuss the detail or content of our considerations or, indeed the cut and thrust of our debate. I can report, however, that attendance was excellent, with Trustees travelling some distance to be there, with one joining us from Italy via Skype and that decisions were made in respect of fieldwork, research, finance, publications and future directions.

Although it was a fairly lengthy meeting, lasting from 13:30 to 17:30 with only a short break—tea but no biscuits—I was able to catch up, briefly, with a colleague, who was there to use our extensive library. I took the opportunity to make some arrangements in order to progress the Society's ongoing Oral History Project, which records the detailed reminiscences of senior Egyptologists for use by future researchers.

Directly following the meeting, there were some much-needed drinks in 'The Duke of York', the Society's closest watering-hole and, as might be expected, the talking continued. In fact, without the constraints of an agenda and a ticking clock, there was an even greater opportunity to discuss some interesting and exciting proposals for the future both as regards the Society and in the wider Egyptological milieu.

By 19:30, dinner in Soho awaited and I headed off into the evening sunlight, satisfied, although there was neither sand in my shoes nor dust under my nails, that I had made a small but real contribution to the academic progress and public understanding of the archaeology of Egypt: a day well spent.

Further details of the history, facilities, and ongoing work of the Egypt Exploration Society can be found at: <http://www.ees.ac.uk/>

John J Johnston