

**ANNUAL REPORT 2023 ETHIOPIAN HERITAGE TRUST (UK)**

Conditions in Ethiopia continued to be somewhat unsettled, which inevitably impacted on the work of the Trust.

**ETHIOPIAN HERITAGE TRUST (UK)**

**STATUS**

1.We remain registered with the Charity Commission 1188689, with our data up to date. We continue to have Gift Aid status.

**THE BOARD**

1.The following Board Members were elected for a two year term at the 2022 Annual General Meeting: Christopher Sargent, Ensermu Workneh, Dr. Fatemeh Ahmadi, Dr. Jacke Phillips, Komeil Karimi, Luisa Tatoli, Makonnen Wodajeneh, Michael Sargent, Dr. Negusse Tewoldemedhin, Dr. Seife Ayele and Dr.Yonas Ghebremichael Weldeselassie. Their term of office has therefore just come to an end.

2.Dr. Dorothea McEwan joined the Board at the 2023 Annual General Meeting and has served one year.

3.The Trust’s Constitution allows for up to 12 Trustees so there will be an election during the AGM for the 11 vacant post.

4.Postholders on the Board continued as:

- Chairperson Michael Sargent
- Secretary Dr. Jacke Phillips
- Treasurer Dr. Yonas Ghebremichael Weldesellasie

5.The Board met four times during the year.

6.I would like to record again the Board’s gratitude to Ensermu Workneh, Dr. Negusse Tewoldemedhin, Dr. Seife Ayele and Dr. Yonas Gebremichael Weldeselassie for their continued advice and guidance on Ethiopian customs and social mores.

7.During the year Dr. Dorothea McEwan, Dr. Jacke Phillips, Dr. Negusse Tewoldemedhin and Dr. Seife Ayele visited Ethiopia and we are grateful that during their visits they had time for discussions with Board Members there. Particular thanks go to Dr. Negusse for making the difficult trip to Ankober-Zego.

8.During the year the following documents were revised and brought up-to-date:

- Website
- Data Protection Manual
- Operating Procedures
- Privacy Policy

9.Once again we are happy to record our thanks to Luisa Tatoli for her management of the website and for once again producing a striking Newsletter.

**MEMBERSHIP AND DONATIONS**

- 1.The Board did not consider it appropriate to launch a membership drive and so membership and donor numbers remained similar to previous years at 175.
- 2.We are very grateful to members who kindly pay by monthly or yearly standing order.

## **FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

- 1.Once again we proffer our thanks to Dr. Gebremichael Weldeselassie, our Treasurer for his management of the accounts and the membership data base.
- 2.And once more, we are indebted to John Bowthorpe for kindly auditing the Trust's accounts, and to Christopher Sargent who organises Gift Aid for us.
- 3.As always, no money was spent in the UK on administration; all Trustees give their time freely and claim no expenses.
- 4.As will be detailed in the Treasurer's Financial Report the Trust ended the year with a healthy balance of just over £43,000.
- 5.During the year no funds were transmitted to Ethiopia.
- 6.As reported in the previous year the balance is high because of the transport problem in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Trust's current vehicle is falling apart and repairs are very expensive and parts hard to get. So the Trust asked if we could help with the purchase of new Toyota truck, with a price of around £34,000. We agreed to assist.
- 7.Unfortunately the duty on the import of new vehicles to Ethiopia is 200%. The Trust in Addis Ababa has been trying its level best to obtain an exemption on the payment of duty but still has not managed to succeed. They are still trying.
- 8.We have also accepted a commitment to pay £1,500 for a professional survey of the Entoto Natural Park, which is necessary for legal reasons to protect the Trust's ownership.
- 9.Other areas where we have indicated our willingness to consider financial help include the recruitment of an Education Officer, the appointment of a Guide for Entoto Park, the formation of Ethiopian Heritage Trust Clubs and preliminary steps to identify a new Parks to be set up, one in Tigray and one on Mount Yerer, a beautiful extinct volcano some 15 miles from Addis Ababa.

## **ETHIOPIAN HERITAGE TRUST IN ETHIOPIA**

### **ORGANISATION AND PERSONNEL**

- 1.As readers of our Newsletter will know it is with sadness that we record the resignation of Liqe Kahenat Abayneh Abebe, who has been the President of the Ethiopian Heritage Trust for the last six years. A man of complete probity and moral strength he has been a pillar for the Trust. We wish him all the best in his retirement.
- 2.At the same time we are very happy to welcome his successor D. Tsedke Abate, an agricultural expert with a national and international reputation. His career has included the post of Director of the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research 2003-7 and the leadership of the Drought Tolerant Maize for Africa 2012-17, working from Nairobi. He is also the founder of Homegrown Vision, a charitable think tank on agricultural research.
- 3.The General Manager remained Ato Mekoya Mamo; the post of Head of Natural Heritage Development, Conservation and Monitoring is currently vacant.
- 4.There are 51 staff members, of whom 43 are Park Guards.

## DEVELOPMENTS

### Ankober-Zego Natural Forest

1.This is the Trust's first ever project outside Addis Ababa. It is a 1 square kilometre site, which has been leased to the Trust for 99 years. It is a degraded mountain forest area and was acquired in 2022. It is being developed in conjunction with local farmers.

2.2022 saw the planting of 3,000 indigenous trees and 2,500 fruit trees. This year saw the planting of a further 3,800 native forest trees –

- Millettia ferruginea (birbira)

- Hagenia abyssinica (kosso)

- Acacia abyssinica (Ethiopian acacia)

- Prunus africana (African cherry)

- Juniperus procera (African juniper – which can reach to over 100 feet tall)

3.The trees were planted for free by the local community.

4.A tree nursery was revived and provided half of the seedlings. The remainder were provided by local government.

### Entoto Natural Park

1.During the planting season of July and August 13,164 seedlings were planted. This was a little disappointing, given that both 2021 and 2022 saw the planting of 24,000 seedlings, but is still a reasonable result.

2.The trees planted were all indigenous trees and included:

- Hagenia abyssinica (kosso)

- Olea europaea (olive – indigenous despite its name)

- Ficus sycamorus (sycamore fig)

- Prunus africana (African cherry)

- Erythrina abyssinica (flame tree)

- Millettia ferruginea (bibira)

3. Organisations that contributed to the planting operation included:

- Dashen Bank

- Ethiopian Development Bank

- Marriott Hotel

- Hilton Hotel

- Sheraton Hotel

- Ministry of Tourism

- Ethiopian Heritage Authority

- Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority

### Dessie Museum

1.This project, funded by the British Council in partnership with the UK Government Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and with the Ethiopian Heritage Trust as lead partner was to have begun in November 2022. Its aim is the renovation of the Dessie Museum. Progress has necessarily been slow - FCO travel advice currently advises against all travel to Dessie.

## **Trust Headquarters**

1.The Trust's headquarters is a historic building which the Trust believed had been donated to it some years ago. The Trust has looked after it well, and carried out extensive restoration.

2.However, during the year the Ethiopian Housing Authority ruled that it belonged to them and asked for a high rent, which the Trust could not afford.

3.After considerable negotiations the Trust was allowed to stay on a yearly basis, paying a small sum this year. During the coming year the Trust will continue to negotiate to improve the situation any way it can.

## **Membership and Website**

1.The Trust has, to date, lacked both a functioning website and a working data-base for membership. This will now be remedied; work has begun on both projects.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

1.It is a pleasure, as always, to thank all our members and donors. Their constancy and generosity is what keeps us going.

2.And, once again, thanks go to all Board Members for giving freely of their time, effort and money. They are a group with whom it is a pleasure to work.

3.One Board Member who we will miss greatly in the coming year is Dr. Farah Altenberg (previously known as Dr. Fatemeh Ahmadi). She has served with energy and commitment for more than 5 years and the Trust owes her a big debt of gratitude.