



**THE ETHIOPIAN HERITAGE  
TRUST (UK)**

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**ANNUAL REPORT 2019 ETHIOPIAN HERITAGE TRUST (UK)**

I am happy to report that the Ethiopian Heritage Trust (UK) made good progress through the year from 1 January to 31 December 2019; it was a satisfactory year.

**STATUS**

1. We are a charity, but not recognised as such by the Charity Commission as they do not consider any application for recognition by a charity whose income is less than £5,000 per year. Our income for the year 2018 was £11,000 so we applied in 2019 for recognition from the Charity Commission. After an exchange of correspondence they requested us to change our Constitution; when this is done no problem is foreseen in registering the Trust as a charity. Approval of a proposed new Constitution is therefore on the agenda for this meeting.

2. I would like to mention that we are greatly indebted to Chris Rowse, solicitor, who advised us in exemplary fashion in our negotiations with the Charity Commission.

3. We are already recognised for Gift Aid by HMRC.

**THE BOARD**

1. The Board through the year comprised Ensermu Workneh, Dr. Fatemeh Ahmadi, Dr. Jacke Phillips, Jonathan Darwall-Smith, Dr. Negusse Tewoldemedhin Michael Sargent and Dr. Yonas Ghebremichael Weldeselassie. Christopher Sargent was co-opted.

2. I should like to record here that particularly for the members of the Board who have not been to Ethiopia or did so long ago, we are grateful to Ensermu Workneh, Dr. Yonas Ghebremichael and Dr. Negusse Tewoldemedhin for their advice and guidance on Ethiopian customs and on recent social developments.

3. As laid down by the Constitution the Board met 4 times during the year. The Board met twice in Blackheath and twice, very kindly, at the home of Dr. Fatemeh Ahmadi.

4. The year has been a busy one, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Board for their contributions. We are fortunate that we have a Board with a variety of talents.



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**MEMBERSHIP AND DONATIONS**

1. In terms of fund-raising, our members and donors are generous and 2019 has been a very successful year. £13,000 was sent to the Trust in Addis Ababa, an increase of £2,000 on the previous year.
2. However we have not been as successful as we would wish in recruitment of members and donors. We have 90 current members and 21 donors.
3. Our intention had been to launch a membership drive based on a new website, using social media and having as the launching pad a reception at the Ethiopian Embassy. In the event these initiatives were delayed and will be launched this year. The website will be ready within the month, and our goal of reaching 200 members remains.
4. The number of Ethiopian members of the Trust is still disappointing and we aim to remedy this in the coming year.
5. Amongst our members we list the Ethiopian Ambassador HE Fesseha Shawel Gebre and the Deputy Head of Mission Ababi Demissie (Amb), Jeremy Lefroy who was Conservative MP for Stafford and the Prime Minister's Business Envoy to Ethiopia until the last election and the Labour MP for Lewisham East Mrs Janet Daby.
6. The Board felt that the membership fees had been initially set too low and these have been raised to £20 for Individual Membership and £40 for Annual Membership, with corresponding raises for the Life Membership categories.
7. During the year members were encouraged to set up Standing Orders, and this has had some success.
8. As undertaken in our literature no funds at all were spent in the UK on administration. The Trustees absorb all the costs inevitable to running a charity, whether it is legal fees, printing costs, or travel costs to attend meetings.

**FINANCE**

1. Our thanks go to Dr. Yonas Gebremichael, our Treasurer. Despite a full and demanding job at Warwick University he has found the time to transfer our accounts and membership database from Access to Excel and to successfully manage the accounts.
2. Once again we were made busy by the Compliance Department of Lloyds who ran the rule over us a second time.



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3. Gift Aid, kindly managed by Christopher Sargent brought in £2,429.29, a very welcome addition to our funds. The system works very smoothly.

#### **ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATION**

1. We were advised that it is necessary for us to register our symbol as a trademark; this process is virtually complete.

2. We can now accept payments via Paypal.

3. During the year we printed two greetings cards. Both are attractive, and the second one – a painting of Ethiopian indigenous flora and fauna by Eric Robson has been particularly appreciated. We are grateful to Jonathan Darwall-Smith for his help with all Trust printing matters.

4. Our Privacy Policy has been professionally written.

5. The draft for the proposed new Constitution has been finalised.

#### **VISITS TO ETHIOPIA**

1. We were fortunate that this year several members of the Board were able to visit Ethiopia and have discussion with the Trust there and see the work on the ground.

2. Michael and Patsy Sargent spent 3 weeks in February and March in discussions and meetings with the Trust and supporters. Dr. Negusse Tewoldemedhin kindly found time for 3 days cooperation with the Trust during a personal visit to Ethiopia and successfully resolved some outstanding issues. Dr. Yonas Ghebremichael also found time for a day's consultation during an academic trip to Ethiopia. Ensermu Workneh spent 2 days working with the Trust and kindly arranged for wonderful photos of the Park to be taken.

3. These visits strengthened bonds and helped understanding in both directions.

4. We were also helped by visits to Addis Ababa by supporters of the Trust. These visits included one by Dr. Dorothea McEwan, Honorary Fellow of the University of London, who kindly wrote a report on her visit.

#### **THE MAGIC AND MYSTERIES TOUR OF ETHIOPIA**



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1.This will take place in September 2020. This will be run by Ethiopian Quadrants, who will donate £150 to the Trust for each participant. So far we have three people signed up, and would welcome any help in publicising the trip.

2.Dr. Jacke Phillips is the Board Member dealing with this project. She is an academic expert on Ethiopia, who frequently lectures on tours of Ethiopia. She will do so this time and has most kindly agreed to waive her fee.

### **ETHIOPIAN HERITAGE TRUST IN ETHIOPIA**

1.First of all I would like to pay tribute to Dr. Agadew Redie who sadly passed away during the year. He was one of the original founders of the Ethiopian Heritage Trust, and for many years till his death he was Vice President of the Board, serving with honesty and distinction. He will be much missed.

2.It is pleasing to say that relations with the Trust have remained excellent throughout the year, helped by the visits referred to above.

3.Our thanks particularly go to the Board of the Ethiopian Heritage Trust, led by Lik Kahinat Abayneh, for all their efforts in steering the operations of the Trust and for their constant support for the joint work on which we are involved.

4.We are also very grateful to the staff of the Trust for their welcome to all Board members who visited; in particular Michael and Patsy wish to record their thanks for all the kind help they received. Our special thanks go to the General Manager of the Trust, Mesobework Ketawe and to the Head of Communication and Public Relations, Emebet Teferra who bore the brunt of our correspondence throughout the year.

5.During the year the Trust in Ethiopia continued to be under financial pressure and resources were in short supply. They did, however, increase significantly their income, which is a much to their credit.

6.The funds collected here were channelled in three ways. Firstly, we supported the recruitment and employment of a Park Guide. Unfortunately, this was not successful, as the person employed resigned after 3 months, for personal family reasons. We hope the Trust will have better success in the coming year, as the post is essential for the Park. Secondly, we funded the making of two signs to be erected on the road past the Entoto Natural Park. They replace two rusting and ill-spelt signs, which were put up in 1997. Finally, and most importantly, we contributed towards the cost of the tree planting operation.

7.In terms of public perception of the Trust in Ethiopia it was clear from various sources, including my own visit to Ethiopia, that when the aims and goals of the Trust are explained to Ethiopians, whether inside or outside Addis Ababa, there is almost universal sympathy with its work. Now that the Trust is beginning to feel more confident it needs to harvest this goodwill.



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8. I am pleased to be able to report that the British Ambassador and his Deputy in Addis Ababa both became members of the Trust during the year.

10. It was also good news for the Trust that during the year the Prime Minister of Ethiopia launched two major environmental initiatives. The first one was for a Green Valley River Project in Addis Ababa, which is a wonderful counterpart to the Entoto Natural Park Project. The second was a major Project to plant over 4 billion trees in Ethiopia. This priority for the environment helps create a climate of opinion in which the Trust can flourish.

11. Unfortunately the claim originating from Oromiya for half for the Entoto Natural Park still remains. Efforts to resolve this issue continue.

12. It is pleasing to report that the claim by a church for part of the Park land has been solved. However, the Trust still waits for permission from Addis Ababa Municipality to harvest the eucalyptus trees.

13. The real success of the year was the tree planting operation, which takes place in July and August. In 2018 7,000 indigenous trees were planted in Entoto Natural Park. This year over 25,000 were planted, which is a seriously good achievement. 17 organisations took part, with the staff of Awash Bank and Awash Insurance leading the field; their staff planted 10,000 seedlings. Altogether more than 700 volunteers took part.

14. Nine species of indigenous trees were planted, including Acacia Abyssinia, Olea African (African olive), Phoenix reclinata (wild date palm), Dovyalis abyssinica (Abyssinian gooseberry) and Cordia Africana (Wanza).

## **VOLUNTARY HELP**

1. I would like to thank, on behalf of the Board, all those people who have generously given voluntary assistance to the Trust:

Maintenance of the website	Masoud Ahanchian
Design of the new website	Komeil Karimi
Privacy Policy	Reza Alavi
Advice on application to the Charity Commission	Carsten Piggott
Inspecting and Certifying the accounts	John Bowthorpe
Production of Membership Cards	Teri Sargent



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Advice on legal matters Stuart Yeung

Report on her visit to the Trust in Addis Ababa Dr. Dorothea McEwan

Design of Trust's poster Kosar Movahedi

Support throughout the year Patsy Sargent

2. Finally, I would like to thank St. Margaret's Church for the use of their crypt. They kindly allow us to hold our meeting here at a greatly reduced rate.

Michael Sargent

Chairperson

30.1.20