

THE SOCIETY FOR OLD TESTAMENT STUDY

Minutes of the Business Meeting held on 5th Jan 2017

at Cripps Hall, Nottingham
under the presidency of Prof Paul Joyce

1. Welcome and Apologies

The President welcomed members to the Business Meeting of the Society. The Secretary noted that apologies had been received from the following: Graeme Auld, John Barton, Juan Cruz, Eryl Davies, Cheryl Exum, Nathan French, Anthony Frendo, Janet Fyffe, Anthony Gelston, John Job, Hilary Marlow, Hugh Pyper, Deborah Rooke, Francesca Stavrakopoulou, Simon Stocks, Jonathan Stökl, William Tooman and Kristin De Troyer.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the previous Business Meeting, which had been displayed and posted online, were approved by the meeting and signed by Prof Paul Joyce. The only matter arising which did not appear on the agenda related to Margaret Barker's querying of whether it was right that the Hospitality Secretary should be announcing that the bar was open but not announcing the optional prayer time for members. The President noted that the current practice of having prayers announced by an ordinary member of the Society was the result of a hard-won consensus and reflected the current views of the committee and a desire to facilitate the interests of members.

3. Notification of Any Other Business

There was no other business.

4. Reports from Officers

(a) The Retiring President, Dr Adrian Curtis reported as follows:

It was a privilege to preside over a well-attended Summer Meeting in Manchester in July 2016. I extend my gratitude to all who contributed in any way, and record thanks to the Centre for Biblical Studies, University of Manchester, and to the Journal of Semitic Studies for sponsoring receptions. In September I represented the Society at a meeting of TRS-UK, the body formerly known as AUDTRS (The Association of University Departments of Theology and Religious Studies) which has expanded its membership to include learned societies within the subject area. Being President makes one aware of the amount of work which is undertaken between meetings by the officers of the Society, and those who have taken on particular tasks on our behalf. This report once again provides an opportunity to pay tribute to their immense contribution.

(b) The Treasurer, Dr Alastair Hunter reported on the financial affairs of the Society as follows:

BANK & INVESTMENT ACCOUNT BALANCES at 19th December 2016

		(Dec 2015)
Barclays Current A/C	£ 19,033	£ 11,752
Barclays IAS (Business Premium) A/C	£102,169	£102,118
TOTAL	£121,202	£113,870

The final figure includes as usual income in respect of the Winter Meeting which will be paid out in due course. The apparent increase over the year is explained in part by the fact that we were not required to pay a deposit in advance for the Nottingham booking.

1. The cost of administrative support for the wiki project during the 2016 was £2587.50 (£2677 in 2015); other Centenary projects account so far for £451
2. Meetings made an operating surplus of £424, and the deficit on the Bursary Fund was £284, which is in line with the subscriptions outstanding from both underpayment and non-payment.

AUDITED ACCOUNTS

The audited accounts were presented, having been previously posted. The auditors did not identify any significant issues.

SUMMARY OF MEETINGS 2016

In consultation with the Hospitality Secretary I have prepared a summary of the finances relating to our meetings in Durham in January 2016 and in Manchester in July 2016. The overall surplus of £424 is a gratifying tribute to the Hospitality Secretary's efficiency!

WEBSITE AND METHODS OF PAYMENT

The website-based online payment facility is now in its trial phase; all being well it should be up and running later in 2017.

CENTENARY VOLUME

We received 43 individual orders for the Centenary Volume at the special price of £26, which was sufficient to underwrite the publication. In addition it was agreed to purchase 18 copies to be presented to our honorary members, 2 complimentary copies (for Duncan Burns and Corpus Christi), and 5 to have in reserve on a 'first-come-first-served' basis for attendees at the winter meeting who did not pre-order. The cost to the Society of the honorary and complimentary copies is £520, which will be attributed to the general centenary budget. The cost of the remaining copies (£130) will hopefully be recouped.

THANKS

My personal thanks to all who help to facilitate my duties as treasurer – in particular David Shepherd, James Patrick, and Viv Rowett, with a special recognition for Jonathan Stokl whose sterling efforts on behalf of the enhanced website are about to bear fruit! I will not be sorry to see the end of the credit card machine!

The audited accounts were approved by the Business Meeting as was the continued use of the current auditors.

c) The Secretary, Dr David Shepherd reported as follows:

I continue to be very grateful for the tireless work of many, especially the Officers, in ensuring that our Society continues to flourish. Sadly, since our last meeting, our Society has lost some longstanding members and friends including Miss Moyra McCallum, Dr Grace Emmerson, formerly visiting lecturer at Birmingham University and Reverend Gwynn ap Gwilym, who lectured part time in Hebrew and Old Testament at the United Theological College until 2002. On a happier note, I wish to offer congratulations, on behalf of the Society, to Madhavi Nevader, on her appointment as Lecturer in Hebrew Bible/Old Testament at St. Andrews University and Zoltan Schwab, on his appointment as tutor in Old Testament at Spurgeon's College.

The Secretary invited the business meeting to join him in offering congratulations to these members.

(d) The Secretary for Honorary Members, Prof Lester Grabbe reported as follows:

Johannes de Moor has been with us at this meeting. The Dutch version of *Adam, Eve, and the Devil* has appeared. It contains quite a number of further improvements, some of them derived from de Moor and Marjo Korpel, 'Creation and Fall in Canaanite Mythology', in A. Laato and L. Valve (eds), *Adam and Eve Story in the Hebrew Bible and in Ancient Jewish Writings Including the New Testament* (Studies in the Reception History of the Bible, 7; Turku: Abo Akademi University; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2016), 31-45. He is also preparing a commentary on the book of Micah for the Historical Commentary on the Old Testament, published by Peeters.

Walter Brueggemann has recently published *Money and Possessions in the Bible* in the Interpretation series at Westminster John Knox.

Kirsten Nielsen has been devoting a good deal of her time to the Danish hymnbook. She and a group of vicars and organists have published a new hymnbook: *100 salmer. Et salmebogstillæg* (Red. Morten Skovsted, Eva Holmegaard Larsen, Hans Dammeyer, Kirsten Nielsen, Mads Djernes, Ole Bjerglund Thomsen, Søren Kinch Hansen, Tine Lindhardt; Eksistensen 2016). Together with Morten Skovsted and Mads Djernes she also published a commentary to the hymnbook: Kirsten Nielsen, Morten Skovsted, Mads Djernes, *100 kommentarer til salmebogstillægget 100 salmer* (Syng Nyt 2016); Mads Djernes has written the commentaries to the melodies, while she and Morten Skovsted have produced the

commentaries to the texts of the hymns. In addition, she is involved in a project called 'Salmedatabasen.dk', a database with hymns and articles about hymns. Professor Nielsen was the editor of the articles.

I was privileged to share a session with Martti Nissinen at the recent SBL meeting in San Antonio, in the Prophetic Texts and their Ancient Context group. He read a paper entitled, 'The Ritual Aspect of Prophecy'. It is hoped that the papers from the session will be published.

Reinhard Kratz could not be with us at the present meeting, but he sends his best wishes to the meeting.

(e) The Membership Secretary, Dr Janet Tollington, thanked her predecessor, Viv Rowett for her excellent work and offered a summary of the following report, prepared by Viv:

The total membership now stands at 529, which is 9 more than at this time last year.

New Ordinary members in 2016: 23 (10M/13F)

Resignations in 2016: 4 (4M).

Deaths in 2016: 2, & 1 which occurred in 2015 but recorded this year. (3M)

Male/female ratio: 372M/157F, being 70.3%M/ 29.7%F.

Promoted to Life Membership in 2016: 0 . Strangely, records show no members being elected in 1987.

Members by country of residence: These figures are expressed in two forms, the 2016 version, and the "1917-style version", i.e. the latter includes the 12 current members in the Republic of Ireland in the UK total.

2016 version: UK:348 (65.8%) Europe: 68 (12.8%) N America: 66 (12.5%) Rest of world: 47 (8.9%)	1917-style version: UK:360 (68%) Europe: 56 (10.6%) N America: 66 (12.5%) Rest of world:47 (8.9%)
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Membership by type:

Ordinary members: 365

Life members: 146

Honorary members: 18

Thanks to there being a good number of new members this year, 23, Ordinary members make up 69% of the membership, an increase of 1% on last year when we gained 20 new members.

Book list mailing: 460 were sent out in the June mailing, and 10 in the Winter mailing.

Postal receivers of the Bulletin: Most members receive by email, with 132 paper copies sent out to Officers of the Society and those who have requested, as agreed.

(f) The Hospitality Secretary, Dr James Patrick, began by apologizing for any inconvenience associated with being in a new venue and expressed thanks to Carly Crouch for facilitating our meeting in Nottingham, to both her and Casey Strine for arranging the drinks reception sponsored by the Universities of Nottingham and Sheffield and to Cambridge University Press for sponsoring the other drinks reception. James asked for members to offer feedback regarding the accommodation and arrangements and to leave their nametags and lanyards with him and return any which they may have at home. He concluded by thanking others within the Society for their work and support and kind words.

(g) The Book List Editor, Dr John Jarick, reported as follows:

The 2017 edition of the *Book List* is now taking shape, with assorted reviews having come in by the time of this Winter Meeting, though regrettably an unsettling number of books distributed in the Spring, Summer, and Autumn distributions have nonetheless not yet been reported upon by the members to whom those books were assigned. More books have of course been available for potential reviewers at this Meeting, but only in this case to reviewers who have felt able to commit themselves to completing their review to a speedier deadline of 25th January (which also becomes the absolute deadline for earlier-commissioned reviews as well). I am grateful to everyone who has completed an earlier review, or who has committed to reviewing a book that was available at this Meeting, and I look forward to a comprehensive issue of the *Book List* in due course.

Members will know that for a number of years now one of the past Editors of the *Book List*, George Brooke, has very kindly continued as custodian of back copies of the *Book List* from the time when it was published by the Continuum Publishing Group, and has made these back copies available to members at a bargain-basement price, as advertised on the Society's website and noted at various Meetings over the years. But now, as announced at the previous Winter Meeting, one of the consequences of George retiring from his post at Manchester and having to clear his university office in 2016 is that it is no longer possible for him to continue that service to the Society. I would like to thank George for having so kindly operated that scheme on the Society's behalf for a full decade, and to wish him well for his retirement. Members may wish to note, if they have not done so already, that back copies of more recent issues of the *Book List*, as published under the current arrangements with Sage Publications,

are not generally available more than one year after publication. Should anyone wish to obtain a copy of the most recent issue of the *Book List*, in addition to the copy they receive as a member of the Society, then details of how to do so through the Customer Services department of Sage Publications can be found on the *Book List* page of the Society's website.

In my capacity as Convener of the Publications Sub-Committee it is my happy duty to place on record the publication of several new works under the Society's auspices. The volume *SOTS at 100: Centennial Essays of the Society for Old Testament Study* has been published by Bloomsbury T&T Clark, and was launched at the end of the Wednesday morning session of the Winter Meeting, with copies distributed at that time to the members who had taken advantage of the special pre-publication offer on the volume. The monograph *Marriage by Capture in the Book of Judges* by Katherine Southwood, the first volume in the new SOTS Monographs series, is about to be published by Cambridge University Press, and was launched (in pre-publication form) at a panel-review session and then celebrated at a reception sponsored by the publisher on the Wednesday evening of the Meeting. And the study guide *1 & 2 Kings: History and Story in Ancient Israel* by Lester Grabbe, the first volume of the Society's current series of Old Testament Guides to be published by the new publisher Bloomsbury T&T Clark (who have taken up the project following the withdrawal from publishing activity of Sheffield Phoenix Press), has also now been published, and has been available for purchase during this Meeting. All in all, then, the Society's publishing ventures seem in robust health as the Centenary dawns.

Regarding the first of those items just mentioned, the *Centennial Essays* volume, I understand that a members' discount price, though understandably not as generous as the pre-publication offer, will be available to members throughout the Centenary year; I do not have details of that to hand at this time, but they will be announced to members in due course. Regarding the second item, the new Monographs series, I can report that two further monographs are well advanced, and others are in earlier stages of development or negotiation. And so too regarding the third item, the Old Testament Guides, it can be confidently noted that further guides are on course for emergence in due course, the whole enterprise having recently been enhanced by the signing of a formal Agreement between the Society and the new publisher for the publication of the series; and members will have noticed at the Bloomsbury table during the Meeting that the volumes of Guides earlier published by Sheffield Phoenix Press have now been reissued under the new publisher.

One other matter that I would like to draw to members' attention is to remind everyone of the productive relationship that the Society has with the Oudtestamentische Studiën (OTS) series. This series regularly publishes the proceedings of our joint meetings with our Dutch and Flemish counterparts, of course, but it also welcomes individual monographs from members of the three societies associated with the series (OTW, OTSSA, and SOTS). Accordingly, I encourage members of SOTS to keep OTS in mind, alongside our own SOTS Monographs series, as a possible venue for the publication of their research. Those who seek publication of their doctoral thesis should especially consider OTS, since the SOTS Monographs series is

not geared to the publication of theses. The SOTS representative on the OTS Editorial Board, Hugh Williamson, is always happy to field enquiries from scholars considering contributing to the series, just as the Editor of the SOTS Monographs, Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, is similarly keen to hear from members of the Society who wish to explore the possibility of publishing their work in the latter series.

(h) The Information Officer, Dr Jonathan Stökl, reported as follows (read on his behalf by the Secretary):

In this, our centenary year, progress on the web presence of the Society is noticeable. As I write these lines, I have just trialed the first online payment through the website, which appears to have gone through all right. The appearance and usability of the website is also currently receiving a much needed upgrade. There is also some hope that we may be able to return to the previous web address (www.sots.ac.uk) in the future—I will keep the Society updated about any changes. In the past two months we have, on average, had a little more than 40 people look at the site, which is pretty good.

The two web-based centenary projects (the Jerusalem exhibition and the SOTS wiki) are also making good progress. As and when appropriate, we will use the website to advertise both of these (and link back to our website from them).

I would like to thank the various members and officers of the Society who have helped me over the past 6 months in improving the website, especially the Secretary, Treasurer and Hospitality Secretary.

(i) The Archivist, Professor Eryl Davies, reported via the President that he had nothing to report at the present time.

The President welcomed new members to the business meeting and invited them to stand and introduce themselves.

5. Centennial Celebrations

SOTS Wiki – Dr Walter Houston reported as follows:

We are now in the centenary year, during which we expect the Wiki to begin to be publicized widely (the site has always been live), which will demand a thorough coverage. How close are we to that happy state?

Since I imposed a deadline of Jan. 31 on currently outstanding contributions, they have been coming in quite fast, and I expect them to come in even faster during January. Regrettably, there are still three gaps in the line-up of books of the Hebrew Bible, but I am confident that at least two of them will be filled by the deadline. However, we now have several

apocryphal/deuterocanonical books covered, and there are dozens of subsidiary articles, including some long and important ones.

I am now making plans for an extension of the Wiki to include major articles on broad topics of interest in the Old Testament, such as the theology of the OT, or law in the OT, which I will ask selected members to undertake or suggest alternatives.

I am once again grateful for the efforts of all our contributors, but will mention here only the invaluable technical support of Jonathan Stökl, and the equally invaluable editorial assistance of Hedy Hung: not to mention the support of the Committee, for which I am grateful and which I trust will be continued.

I wish to take this opportunity of announcing that I intend to step down from this position at the end of this year, when I will have served for four years. The Wiki will always need an editor, since by its nature a wiki is never finished, and even if the coverage of subjects is notionally complete, the advance of scholarship requires continuous updating; therefore consideration should be given to the appointment of a successor.

Walter offered a brief demonstration of how to edit an article on the Wiki and encouraged members to add content, which he will be editing. Hedy Hung noted that she would take care of any technical issues arising. Martin MacNamara asked where he might find guidance for setting up other sorts of Wikis and Walter encouraged him to consult ‘wikispaces’.

6. Proposed changes to the Rules of the Society

Alastair Hunter notified the Society of changes to the rules which would be formally proposed to the Business meeting in July for its approval. He advised members that these rules changes would also be circulated to members following this Business meeting for their consideration in advance of the July meeting.

7. Proposals for New Members

The Business meeting elected the following into membership: Rev Dr Matthew Ayars, Dr Teófilo Correa, Rev Nathan Eddy, Ms Olga Fabrikantova, Rev Isabelle Hamley, Ms Allison Harmon, Mr Peter Ho, Dr Paul Jones, Mr Neill Morrison, Rev Aboseh Ngwana, Ms Kate Oxsen, Mr Néstor Petruk and Ms Lucy Skerratt.

8. AOB

Margaret Barker indicated that there is interest in holding a multifaith service of thanksgiving for SOTS at the centennial meeting in July and invited those interested in this proposal to email her at the address in the SOTS member list. The President noted that this will be handled in the same way as prayers.

9. Future Meetings

The next Summer Meeting will be held from the 17th to the 20th of July 2017 at King's College London and the following Winter Meeting will be held from the 2nd to the 4th of January 2018, at Cripps Hall in Nottingham.

There being no further business, the President declared the Business Meeting closed.

Signed: Date: