

THE HARRISON-JEBB MEMORIAL FUND

The Harrison-Jebb Memorial Fund is an important part of the overall funding strategy of the British School at Athens (BSA), which will provide valuable, long-lasting financial support to all aspects of its work.

Named in memory of Jane Ellen Harrison (1850-1928) and Sir Richard Jebb (1841-1905), two outstanding British classical scholars and both central in raising the funds to establish the BSA in 1886, the BSA was proud to launch this fund in the year which marked the 200th anniversary of the foundation of the modern Greek state.

The Harrison-Jebb Fund is an unrestricted fund which over time will have a powerful impact on the BSA's activities. It gives the charity the flexibility to apply resources where need is greatest and to respond with agility to changing external circumstances. As the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated, charities need to be able to adapt to changing times and to have flexible sources of funding to meet pressing needs. A gift to the fund will help ensure financial stability especially at a time when traditional sources of funding are less secure than ever.

Grants from the Fund will support all the BSA's key objects including (without limitation):

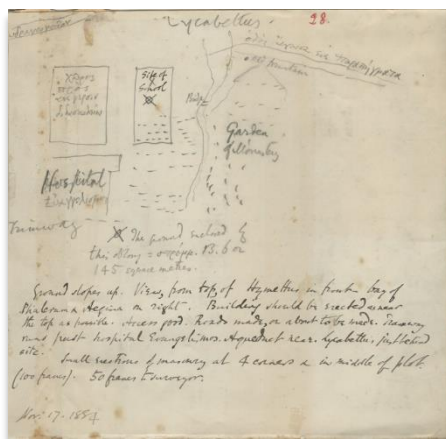
- Fellowships
- Scholarships
- Library and other research resources
- Publications
- Excavations
- Research collections
- The maintenance of buildings and equipment
- Laboratory research, resources, and equipment.

An important aspect of the Fund is its ability to support the key research infrastructure provided by the BSA to its research community whether through its historic buildings in Athens or Knossos, its people or its investment in new research, laboratory, and communications technologies. The BSA has always prided itself on both its cutting-edge scientific research and the preservation and expansion of its rich collection of archive material.

We very much welcome donations and legacies from supporters who share our conviction that building the Harrison-Jebb Memorial Fund will help to secure the BSA's future. The first gift to the Fund was a generous legacy from Mr Sinclair Hood, FBA (1917-2021), the School's Director from 1954-1962.



Above: Dr Elizabeth Foley, Dr Michael Loy and Dr Tulsi Parikh, Nov. 2022



Above: Sketch by Richard Jebb

JANE ELLEN HARRISON

Jane Ellen Harrison (1850–1928) was a British classical scholar, linguist and a pioneering supporter of the BSA. She was one of the founders of modern studies in Ancient Greek religion and mythology. She applied 19th century archaeological developments to the interpretation of ancient Greek religion in ways that have now become standard.

Harrison was born in Cottingham, Yorkshire on 9th September 1850. Her mother died of puerperal fever shortly after her birth and she was educated by a series of governesses. They taught her German, Latin, Ancient Greek and Hebrew, but she later expanded her knowledge to about sixteen languages, including Russian.

She was educated at Cheltenham Ladies' College and obtained honours in the London University examination for women in 1870. In 1874, Harrison won a scholarship to Newnham College, the progressive, recently established college for women at Cambridge. She became one of the first generation of university-educated women and was to spend most of her professional life at Newnham College. Between 1880 and 1897 Harrison studied Greek art and archaeology at the British Museum under Sir Charles Newton, another supporter of the BSA who donated the funds from his 1889 testimonial to found a BSA studentship.



Above: Jane Harrison, from the archives of the BSA (BSAA-7_37)

During the 1880s Harrison worked as a journalist in London and delivered many lectures. She became an academic celebrity and a popular guide to antiquities at the British Museum. She also developed a reputation as a flamboyant and engaging lecturer, attracting large crowds and making use of ingenious sound effects and gas-powered lantern slides. Fellow classicist Gilbert Murray vividly described her talent as ‘a force of historical imagination and an infectious interest which amounted to genius’.

It was mass entertainment, and her lectures were wildly popular: 1,600 people once turned out in Glasgow to hear her talk on Athenian gravestones. Through her public lectures, she raised the enormous sum of “£190, 3 shillings” towards the £4,000 needed to found the BSA. This was a huge contribution and the fourth biggest donation – and the largest from a woman.

“ ... the first woman in England to become an academic, in the fully professional sense – an ambitious, full-time, salaried, university researcher and lecturer... She changed the way we think about ancient Greek culture – peeling back that calm, white marble exterior to reveal something much more violent, messy and ecstatic underneath (‘bloody Jane’ they called her, for more reasons than one, I suspect). ”

- Professor Mary Beard

She travelled widely and regularly visited Italy, Greece, and Crete where Sir Arthur Evans showed her his first discoveries in 1901. Her academic achievements were recognised by honorary degrees

from the universities of Aberdeen (1895) and Durham (1897). In 1898 Harrison went back to a fellowship in Cambridge and her position was renewed continuously until she retired in 1922.

Harrison was an atheist, a humanist, a feminist and, at least ideologically, a moderate suffragist: she applied her scholarship in anthropology to defend women's right to vote. She enjoyed being a troublemaker. As a student, she even faced down William Gladstone (another supporter of the BSA), by claiming that her favourite Greek writer was the sceptical playwright Euripides, not, as the Prime Minister had hoped, the pious Homer. Gladstone was so taken aback, he stuttered and then walked away.

“[Professor C.T. Newton, in the chair] spoke with admiration of those who, in a short time had raised £4,000 for the School; but unless a properly endowed institution was set on foot, no permanent good would be effected. In one of Lucian's witty stories it was said that the statues of the gods always held out their right hand because they expected their votaries to give. That was their position generation after generation, and in that respect, he hoped supporters of the School would imitate the Greeks, if in nothing else. In conclusion, he could not but refer to the noble example set by Miss Jane Harrison, who had given to the School the product of her lectures on archaeology, to which he had listened with the greatest pleasure, and which had brought in the substantial sum of £190 and 3 shillings.”



Above: Jane Harrison as Alcestis in 1887. Courtesy of The Principal and Fellows, Newnham College, Cambridge

- Meeting of the BSA held on 19th October 1886 in the rooms of the Asiatic Society, 22 Albemarle Street, London.

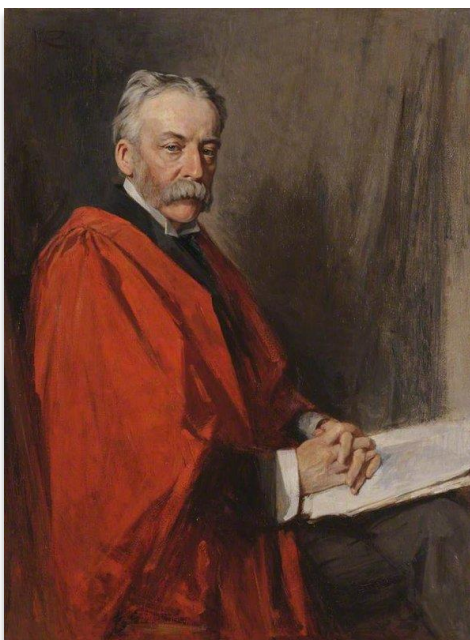
SIR RICHARD JEBB, OM, FBA, FRSE

Sir Richard Jebb (1841–1905) was an outstanding British classical scholar of his day. Born in Dundee, Jebb was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he established his reputation as a Greek scholar. In 1863 he became a Fellow and Tutor of his college and between 1869 and 1875 was the University's Public Orator. From 1875 to 1889, he was Professor of Greek at the University of Glasgow, where he lectured on modern as well as classical Greek. Finally, he was appointed Regius Professor of Greek at the University of Cambridge from 1889 until his death.

Chiefly remembered today for his editions of the plays of Sophocles, he was also instrumental in founding the British School at Athens [as well as the British School at Rome] and the British Academy. Jebb was acknowledged to be one of the most brilliant classical scholars of his time, a humanist and an unsurpassed translator from and into the classical languages. His work on modern Greece and Greek earned him the Order of the Saviour from the King of Greece. As a Member of Parliament (1891-95) for the University of Cambridge, he played a significant part in the politics of his day, especially in educational reform at both school and university level. He was knighted in 1900 and made a member of the Order of Merit in 1905.



Above: Sir Richard Jebb, from the archives of the BSA (BSAA-7_29)



Above: Portrait of Sir Richard Jebb by George Reid, Trinity College

He played a central role in planning and raising funds for the establishment of the British School at Athens in 1886. Professor Jebb, always active in the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, had visited Athens in 1878. He entered into an extensive correspondence with the Greek Foreign Minister, Charilaos Trikoupis, who was enthusiastically in favour of the establishment of a British School.

The first definite impetus towards the foundation of the BSA was then given by Professor Jebb's "A plea for a British Institute at Athens" which appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* for May 1883. The article came to the notice of the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, who summoned a meeting at Marlborough House in June. This was attended by many distinguished figures including Mr Gladstone (the Prime Minister), Lord Salisbury (Leader of the Opposition) and Lord Rosebery – all of whom donated. A fundraising committee was formed, with Jebb as Honorary Secretary, which went on to raise the £4,000 needed to found the BSA.

“ A man who gave £20,000 to fund a British School of Classical Studies at Athens would have secured a place of unique honour in the regard of all for whom the study of the past has anywhere a charm or a meaning, and would have perpetuated his name, both at home and in Greece, by a living monument of the most splendid and enduring kind. ”

- Professor Richard Jebb

A plea for a British Institute at Athens, The Fortnightly Review, May 1883

“ English Scholars would never forget the prompt and sympathetic munificence with which the Government of Greece presented the School with a site in a most favourable position, and he might be permitted to express the hope that the existence of the School on soil which was a gift, while it tended to promote archaeology and scholarship, would also tend to confirm the traditional sympathies which united England and Greece. ”

- Professor Richard Jebb

Meeting of the BSA held on 19th October 1886 in the rooms of the Asiatic Society, 22 Albemarle Street, London.

If you would like to discuss a gift or legacy to the BSA – please contact the Director at director@bsa.ac.uk.



Above: Caricature by *Spy* of Sir Richard Jebb, the “Ajax M.P.” published in *Vanity fair* in 1904