



New Cloud Based Portal Provides Access to Historic Egyptological Material & Collections



EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY CHOOSE SOUTRON FOR COMBINED LIBRARY & ARCHIVE SOLUTION

CHALLENGE

With a mission largely unchanged since its foundation, the Egypt Exploration Society (EES) continues to explore Egyptian sites and monuments, to create a lasting record of the remains and to increase knowledge and understanding of Egypt's past. As a result, the Society is now home to one of the UK's leading Egyptological libraries and archives containing material dating back to its establishment in 1882.



With around 20,000 volumes on its shelves and open to the public five days a week, the Ricardo Caminos Memorial Library provides a haven for researchers, students, scholars and those interested in the history of Egypt and Egyptology.



Hazel Gray, Office Manager at the EES chose Soutron to replace an old Windows library system (Alice) in 2014 and persuaded colleagues Carl Graves (Archivist) and Maria Rodriguez

Rubin (Archive Intern) to consider the potential of using Soutron to make the archive catalogue available online too.

The Society's Lucy Gura Archive had previously been catalogued in a FilemakerPro database which included over 5000 records, though without any hierarchical structure or digitised material connected to it.



Soutron offered an opportunity to restructure the archive holdings in order to reflect the arrangement of records in the Society's care. With flexible templates designed using ISAD (G) guidelines, and with additions based on the unique history of the EES, the Soutron catalogue has provided the Society with the tools to make its archive holdings searchable online for the first time.

SOLUTION

Before embarking on the enormous task of migrating all of the original library data and restructuring the archive records, EES staff visited the nearby Foundling Museum to see how they were using Soutron. The combination of ease of use and the flexibility of the Soutron database to manage different types of records, physical as well as digital and the ease of making it available to search on-line was a major selling point.

There are only six full time members of staff in the EES so the investment in any IT system is quite a major undertaking.

The fact that the system is hosted and managed by Soutron at their UK data centre removed the need to call on any internal IT resources and was a large point in Soutron's favour.

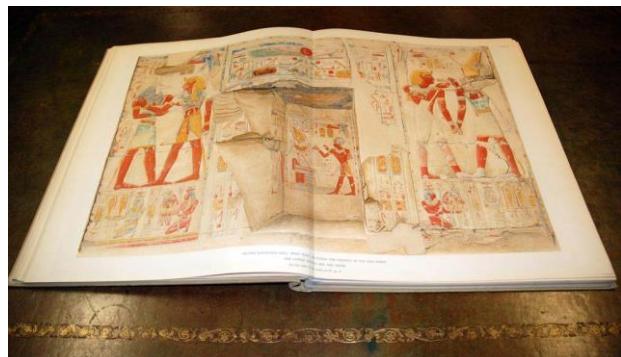
RESULTS

The Society's library and archive today share the same Soutron database but there are different acquisition and cataloguing processes depending on whether the material is destined for the library or the archive. In addition, the small library collection held in the Society's Cairo office is also being integrated, as well as archive material currently held in Oxford with the Society's collection of ancient papyri.



The potential is for the EES to become the UK's first fully integrated Egyptological library and archive with external references to related holdings around the world.

After showing the solution to Egyptological colleagues in Egypt, Carl Graves commented "The possibilities offered by the new combined Library and Archive solution means that we can explore collaborations with institutions, archives and museum collections across the world, aiding access to research collections and related materials in more ways than we ever expected."



The Society's collection of record cards, reporting objects discovered on archaeological sites during the 1930s, has already been linked with museum collections around the globe and library holdings within the Society where they have been published.

"Users love the search and attributed search features. The end result, we now have a solution without compromise!"

Hazel Gray,
Office Manager,
EES

Hazel Gray said "We now have callers who are no longer asking if we have a particular publication. They are now requesting more detailed information using the portal to carry out their own research, prior to calling."

Soutron's upgrades and enhancements have demonstrated the merits of being on a supported product, as features and functions have been introduced that have perfectly suited the needs of the library and archive.

The EES now has a single system instead of two, with a more intuitive search across the entire collection. A new search portal is in preparation to be released soon so that wherever users are in the world they can look in on the collections and accumulated knowledge of the Society.



On the new portal Hazel said, "Feedback has been great, thanks to a user friendly design. Users love the search and attributed search features. The end result, we now have a solution without compromise!"

Learn more about the Egypt Exploration Society:
<http://www.ees.ac.uk>

Find out how your library and archive can benefit from a single cloud based solution, start a conversation with Soutron today:
www.soutron.com