Letter from the Director

Amidst the difficult economic times we now face – and in higher education we will continue to endure cuts for some years to come – it is good to know that life goes on as usual at the IHR. Since I came into post 18 months ago, the Institute has earned not far short of £1m in research income and donations, hosted an ever-increasing range of seminars, events and conferences, and continued to fly the flag for British history overseas.

Later this year I shall be returning to China and Japan to develop further our Asian network (which will soon include colleagues from South Korea), and we are scoping a series of fellowship programmes for visiting Russian, Indian and South African postgraduate students as well. At the same time we have had to tighten our belts. From autumn this year the IHR will be operating with a smaller staffing establishment. We shall be concentrating on our core mission activities of events, fellowships, research training, publications and e-services, and of course our unique open-access library.

As I write we are finalising some of the changes which will make this slimmed-down operation possible, and in the next newsletter I will set out more clearly how the IHR is going to operate after October 2010. I am pleased to say that our reconfiguration is being achieved without any substantial redundancies. That is a huge relief given the problems occurring in some parts of the sector.

Since last summer much has been happening. Pilot funding has been secured from a donor to trial new digital resource technology for historians (podcasts, internet training packages). New partnerships with the British Library, The National Archives and the Imperial War Museum are being developed. We are about to sign off on one of the most important multi-volume British history projects of recent times, to be edited by the IHR. And we have been working hard to enhance what we offer to our Friends and supporters at home and in North America.

There have been comings and goings amongst our senior staff. In December, after 37 years’ distinguished service, our librarian Robert Lyons took his retirement. We shall miss him very much – his bibliographical expertise, his careful custodianship of our premises, and his patient and paternal dealings with users and staff. With the retirement of Ross Woollard, the tireless Senate House Library history librarian, it is the end of an era. And also the dawn of the new, as we welcome Jennifer Higham, who joins the IHR as librarian, having previously worked at Lambeth Palace Library. In the VCH and England’s Past for Everyone we have said goodbye to Catherine Cavanagh, who brought such fantastic new entrepreneurial and organisational skills to the IHR, and also to Dr Chris Lewis, latterly of the Sussex VCH volumes, but for so long a vital part of VCH work up and down the country. We have been joined by new Senior Research Fellows as well: Dr Roland Quinault, Professor Cornelie Usborne and Dr Janet Waymark. Our events season is almost upon us, and environmental history is taking centre stage at the Anglo-American Conference at the beginning of July, with a host of other conferences and events being led by our research centres and development office. Who says historians don’t know how to make an impact?

As the IHR approaches its 90th year we are planning to refurbish how we look. Modernisation of our current space, with better meeting rooms and 21st-century library facilities remains our goal, and lies at the heart of the fundraising campaign we shall launch very soon (further details of which can be found elsewhere in this issue). In the meantime, we are changing our branding and website appearance, and I hope that you like what we have chosen. Rest assured, our famous logo remains the same!

Miles Taylor, February 2010
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Is England’s past for everyone?

In October the Victoria County History held a two-day conference to mark the conclusion of its England’s Past for Everyone project. Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage and the Council for British Archaeology, Is England’s Past for everyone? learning and outreach in the historic environment took place at Armada House in Bristol. The event was attended by more than 100 delegates from the university, local government, heritage and museum sectors. Keynotes were provided by Baroness Andrews, chair, English Heritage; film maker and author, Michael Wood; and chief curator, Historic Royal Palaces, Lucy Worsley.

A small exhibition was also held, with exhibitors including Bristol City Council and Hobnob Press. Publishers of the EPE series, Phillimore & Co. Ltd., were also in attendance. A full report is available from the EPE website (www.EnglandsPastforEveryone.org.uk/conference).

This project is linked to another initiative, currently being undertaken in collaboration with a number of the city’s livery companies. The Livery Companies Membership Database project seeks to collect and put online the details of apprenticeship and freedom records for thousands of Londoners from the middle ages to the 20th century. The Clothworkers’ Company has been the first to take part, and has funded the collection of more than 100,000 records.

For information on either project please contact Dr Matthew Davies, Director of the CMH: matthew.davies@sas.ac.uk.

Relaunching the Bibliography of British and Irish History

The Bibliography of British and Irish History (BBIH), which succeeds the Royal Historical Society Bibliography of British and Irish History, was successfully launched as a subscription service on 1 January 2010 with enhanced functionality and a thorough-going redesign. This is the fruit of a collaboration between the IHR, the Royal Historical Society and the international academic publisher Brepols. If your institution already has a subscription then you can go straight to the new Bibliography by visiting www.brepols.net/ and clicking on ‘Enter databases’. Otherwise, for information on individual and institutional subscriptions, please contact Brepols (brepolis@brepols.net). Feedback on the project is very welcome.

Among recent developments is a new website, European Historical Bibliographies (www.histbib.eu), the result of co-operation between 15 separate projects from 13 countries. It provides a useful gateway to the various bibliographies and includes the proceedings of the third conference bringing the various projects together, which was held at The Hague in December 2009.

Historical Research 2010: highlights on Early View

Online previews are available to subscribers via our Early View issue on the Wiley-Blackwell website, including:

‘Between king and pope: Thomas Wolsey and the Knight mission’

The early attempts to secure Henry VIII’s divorce from Catherine of Aragon saw a conflict in approach between the king and Thomas Wolsey. Jessica Sharkey explores what happened when the king went behind his minister’s back and dispatched his own secretary, William Knight, to Rome to secure papal permission to marry Anne Boleyn. This article was awarded the 2009 Sir John Neale prize in Tudor history.

www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/117979004/home
As the AHRC-funded project to complete the digitisation of the calendars of State Papers comes to an end, we have been adding the final series to British History Online. These include the Calendar of Treasury Books, the Papal Registers and Rymer’s Foedera.

You may have read about BHO’s annotation function in previous issues of Past and Future. We have now improved the feature to make it easier to use. You can click anywhere in the text of annotatable volumes to enter an annotation. Those that have been published are now visible as links in the flow of the texts (click on one and the annotation will pop up).

BHO continues to add to its excellent local history section, supplementing those counties for which there is currently no Victoria County History coverage with other multi-volume histories. Most recently added are all 11 volumes of Blomefield’s An Essay Towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk.

We have also made an important addition to the premium content section of BHO, by adding the full text of the Parliament Rolls of Medieval England (PROME). These volumes collect the surviving texts of parliaments held from the reign of Edward I to Henry VII, alongside modern English translations. PROME can be found at www.british-history.ac.uk/catalogue.aspx?gid=154&type=2 (subscription required for access).

Finally the BHO maps (one of the most popular parts of the site) now have a further modern element. You can view a modern Ordnance Survey map on the same page as the historical one, and see how much has changed. Try it here: www.british-history.ac.uk/map.aspx.

Recent developments at British History Online

To keep up to date with the IHR’s journal, you can sign up with our publisher Wiley-Blackwell for email alerts or RSS feeds, or follow the IHR’s Twitter account or blog where all newly published articles are listed. And for a glimpse into the future visit the journal’s ‘Forthcoming Articles’ page where articles are added as soon as they are accepted.

IHR blog: http://ihr-history.blogspot.com
IHR on Twitter: search ‘ihr_history’
Forthcoming articles: www.history.ac.uk/historical-research/forthcoming-articles

Call for papers: Blocked arteries: circulation and congestion in history

25–26 November 2010

A two-day conference examining the ways in which congestion has been, and continues to be, a problem as well as an inherent characteristic of the historical development of cities and regions worldwide, particularly in their relationship with commercial, financial, industrial, tourist and other networks. Our purpose is also to promote an exchange across disciplines and engage with current policy debates.

The call for papers document can be viewed online at www.history.ac.uk/events/conferences/1160, and proposals should reach the organisers by 14 May.

For more information, contact Carlos Lopez Galviz (psv7@ymail.com) or Dhan Zunino Singh (dhan.zuninosingh@sas.ac.uk).
Call for papers: Restoration London

22–23 September 2010

A two-day international conference organised by the Centre for Hearth Tax Research in collaboration with the Centre for Metropolitan History, Institute of Historical Research, and Birkbeck, University of London, to be held at the IHR on 22–23 September 2010. The aim of this conference will be to reassess life and living in later Stuart London, drawing on the unique array of sources for the period, such as parish records, taxation returns, and the recently collated data from the London and Middlesex 1666 hearth tax return. All those attending the conference as speakers will be given priority access to the hearth tax data.

Proposals are welcomed from established and early-career academics for research papers of 40 minutes and from postgraduate students for papers of 20 minutes. Papers on any aspect of life and living in restoration London are welcomed but the following themes are particularly encouraged: London and its hinterlands; crime; employment; European and wider comparisons; health; housing and the built environment; hearths in domestic and work contexts; and religious observance. Submissions comprising an abstract of 400 words and any other enquiries should be sent by 31 May 2010 to John Price (j.price@roehampton.ac.uk) or Andrew Wareham (a.wareham@roehampton.ac.uk).

New digital projects officer

Congratulations are due to Dr Mark Merry on his appointment, from 1 January 2010, as IHR digital projects and training officer. Although Mark will continue to lend his expertise to the Centre for Metropolitan History’s ‘Life in the suburbs’ project, we are delighted to welcome his replacement as research officer, Dr Mark Latham. Mark joins us from the Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester, where he recently completed his PhD on ‘The London Bridge Improvement Act of 1756: a study of early modern urban finance and administration’.

Special event: Visit to Lambeth Palace Library and the Museum of Garden History

Join us on 5 July for a tour of Lambeth Palace Library and afternoon tea at the Museum of Garden History. At 2.15pm, a Lambeth Palace curator will give a private talk followed by a tour of the temporary exhibition ‘Treasures of Lambeth Palace Library’. This exciting exhibition celebrates the Library’s 400th anniversary by looking at some of the intriguing items in the Library’s care. Items on show include a Gutenberg Bible, the first book printed in western Europe using movable metal type; a collection of witchcraft tracts focusing on demonic possession and exorcism; and a 15th-century set of the works of Aristotle owned by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

At 4.00pm, we will move on to the Museum of Garden History for afternoon tea and a museum tour. The Museum charts the development of British gardens and gardening, with collections examining improvised tools, ceramics, the garden in art and the use of the garden in government campaigns such as ‘Dig for Victory’. After browsing the collections, the Museum’s stunning 17th-century style knot garden or diverse ‘wild garden’, offer the perfect place to relax at the end of the day.

Tickets are £20 and include entry to Lambeth Palace Library, the Museum of Garden History and afternoon tea. To reserve your place, please contact the Development Office on 020 7862 8791/8809, email ihr.development@sas.ac.uk, or pop in to the office on the ground floor of the IHR.
In December 2009, the V&A opened the doors of its ambitious new Medieval and Renaissance Galleries, a flagship redevelopment project that is one of the largest ever undertaken by the institution. The new galleries are the culmination of years of work on Phase One of FuturePlan, the museum’s ongoing strategy for improvement and renewal.

I have been lucky enough to have worked on the new galleries as the lead medieval curator since the inception of the project in 2002. People are often surprised to discover that projects of this sort have such a long gestation, but a gallery of this kind is not simply made by throwing a few objects into display cases. The new galleries cover 10 spaces, some of them vast in dimensions, including an entirely new-build area created from a dead space between older parts of the building. What fills these spaces is just as impressive – a 12th-century window from the first floor of a house in Trie-Château, near Beauvais; a complete high altar chapel from a Florentine convent of Poor Clares; six huge tapestries, one of which took over five years of conservation work to render it stable enough to display; an area filled with monumental carved and painted altarpieces; and large reconstructed stained glass windows from a variety of French, German and Netherlandish churches. The galleries are planned to present the V&A’s permanent collection for at least the next 25 years, and it was therefore important to plan carefully every aspect of the new displays.

One of the main aims of the galleries is to broaden access to our collections to the widest possible range of visitors. As a medievalist, I knew that we had our work cut out. Initial visitor research showed all too clearly that even regular visitors to the museum were ‘turned off’ by the idea of the middle ages. They had little idea of when the medieval period was, or any of the things that had happened in Europe during that time. What they did know was conditioned both by Hollywood stereotypes, and an urge to view ‘medieval’ and ‘Renaissance’ as polar opposites, the one negative and the other positive. We were convinced that we could throw new light on the medieval world in more than one way, and convince a new generation of visitors to the V&A of the interest and worth of our world-class collections.

Visitors to museum galleries are often confronted with a lot of text. But a gallery is not the same as a book, and visitors cannot be expected to read everything put in front of them. It was crucial, therefore, to make many of our most important points in a subtler way, through design and juxtaposition. Thus, the new medieval galleries have been designed...
to feel clean, light and airy – a far cry from the mud, rain and blood of many visitors’ preconceptions. Some of the displays deliberately combined objects in quite different styles: for instance, the Reliquaries 1300–1500 display includes a late 13th-century figure of the Virgin and Child alongside Italian 15th-century reliquaries in a Renaissance style. We felt that the stylistic differences in this display were less important than the cultural continuities. The jumbled effect of the group of reliquaries is an accurate reflection of the church relic collections that would have greeted medieval and Renaissance pilgrims.

One of the things that makes a permanent gallery different from a temporary exhibition is that the collection itself dictates the kind of story that the curators can tell. The galleries must highlight the star objects in the collection, and it is important that the narrative does not overpower the displays. For this reason, we reluctantly concluded that some stories would have to remain on the sidelines of the new displays. One obvious casualty of this is the story of the Byzantine Empire. The V&A possesses a number of very important Byzantine objects, but the collection is far too small to tell anything like a representative story of Byzantine art and culture. Instead, many of the Byzantine objects appear to have been acquired by the museum’s early curators more for their perceived influence on Italian art than for any intrinsic qualities of their own. We chose actively to capitalise on this ambiguity in a display called Venice and Byzantium 800–1204. The display includes a number of objects of disputed status, which may have been made in either Venice or Constantinople, such as the famous ivory of the Last Judgement, which is similar to mosaics at Torcello but which the museum now presents as Byzantine. Other Byzantine objects survived in Venice, having been looted during the Fourth Crusade in 1204.

Preparations for the new galleries involved the cataloguing of around 2,000 pieces prior to their installation. In many cases, this meant re-assessing the literature from scratch, and for a young curator this was a golden opportunity. A number of new discoveries have resulted from this process, such as the realisation that the inside of the famous Gloucester Candlestick, made for the abbot of Gloucester Abbey in the early 12th century, contains assembly guidelines indicating how the three pieces fit together. Other discoveries resulted from conservation work, such as the matching of punch marks on a 14th-century triptych with scenes from the Book of Revelation to punches known to have been used by Master Bertram, the leading painter in Hamburg in the 1380s.

A view of the gallery called Faiths and Empires 300–1250, with the 9th-century cross from Easby Abbey, Yorkshire, visible in the foreground. © V&A Images. Photography by Alan Williams.
Alongside all these responsibilities, I was also researching and co-authoring the large book accompanying the new displays, *Medieval and Renaissance Art: People and Possessions.* The scholarly resources available at the IHR, Senate House Library and the Warburg Institute meant that I was a frequent visitor to Bloomsbury for several months! I'm sometimes asked why we did not produce a catalogue, but opted instead for a series of thematic essays taking the collections as their starting point. The reason is straightforward: the museum produces scholarly catalogues of the permanent collection on a media by media basis. There is simply no place in the publishing programme for what would effectively be an exhibition catalogue for a permanent gallery. Scholarly catalogues are indeed forthcoming – later this year, the museum will publish a catalogue of the early medieval ivories in the collection. It will be followed in three years' time by a catalogue of the gothic ivories, which number around 350. In the meantime, detailed discussions and bibliographies for all the objects in the galleries are accessible on the 'Search the Collections' area of our website. Users can also freely download images for research and scholarly publication, a service that is already revolutionising the way research is carried out on our collections.

‘Handling these objects is sometimes as alarming as it is exciting’

In February of this year, the opening of the new galleries was celebrated at the museum with an international scholarly conference, ‘Revealing medieval and Renaissance Europe: makers and markets’. In three days of lively sessions and debates, it became clear both how much new information the galleries had brought to light, and the extent to which they are acting as a summation of scholarly achievement in this area in the last 20 or 30 years. In the final session of the conference, four distinguished speakers were asked to react to the galleries, and to speculate about the influence that they may have on future research into the arts of the period. One of the most stimulating aspects of the debate that followed was the extent to which the concentration on Renaissance consumerism had become problematic, and a number of contributors raised the possibility of a 'return to the object'. At the same time, Paul Binski, the only medievalist on the panel, suggested that while a concentration on the object was welcome, the world of medieval studies has yet to fully engage with an approach to the period driven by economic factors. For me, as a medievalist working in the V&A, this rang true, and suggested at least one way in which the dialogue between scholars of medieval art and those of the Renaissance can be a fruitful and stimulating one. Medievalists are used to working with a wide range of media and object types, rather than just the ‘major arts’, and this is an approach that the study of the Renaissance can benefit from. Medievalists can gain from realising that it is just as possible to research the material culture of 13th-century England as it is to talk of the material culture of 15th-century Florence. For me, the new displays at the V&A provide pointers as to how such research might be conducted.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege for me to work on this project. I have had the good fortune to be able to work with the whole range of the V&A’s extraordinary collections. This is somewhat unusual, given the museum’s division into different media-based departments. I have also been able to examine closely, and even to handle, extraordinary works of art.

Handling these objects is sometimes as alarming as it is exciting! It fell to me to install the 13th-century glass goblet known as the Luck of Edenhall into its display case. The glass is in perfect condition, despite its age, and it was a nerve-wracking experience to be handling such a fragile object. The glass got its name because it was said that if the glass ever broke, the fortunes of its owners would fail. As one of the emblems of the new galleries, I hope that the glass brings luck to the displays. It will certainly be safe for generations to come.

On 15 January 1957, the Soviet of Ministers approved a proposal to establish a theatre studio within the All-Russian Society of the Deaf. The studio was to train young deaf actors in all aspects of theatre craft, in order to found Soviet Russia’s first professional deaf theatre. Despite its rather inauspicious beginnings – in the early years there were no premises, and the young collective was forced to rehearse in a ticket office two metres square – the Theatre of Sign and Gesture (Teatr Mimiki i Zhesta) was officially registered with the state in 1963. In the years that followed, the Theatre staged performances throughout the Soviet Union, establishing its central role in the lives and cultural identities of Soviet deaf individuals.

This article is a brief extract from a wider research project examining the history of the deaf in Soviet Russia, from the revolution of 1917 to the 1980s, with particular focus on deaf people’s engagement with the broader ‘Soviet project’ to remake man and society. The Theatre’s foundation represented part of a golden age of Soviet deaf culture that developed from the late 1940s and continued well into the 1960s. A huge influx of money from factories belonging to the Deaf Society, and a wave of initiatives and state legislation, saw the deaf gain improved access to all forms of art and culture: from poetry to dance, from fine art to cinema. What marked this period out, however, was not just an increased consumption of culture by the deaf; rather, it was the development of cultural forms in which the deaf actively participated and through which they increasingly defined themselves. In the theoretical discussions following its creation, and through its professional performances, the Theatre provided a focus for debate on the goals and parameters of deaf engagement with theatre in particular, and with art and culture in general, in the post-war and Khrushchev eras.

Russian deaf theatre has a long history. From the earliest years of pre-revolutionary deaf clubs, sign-language skits featured in evening concerts and social events. Shortly after the revolution, the first Theatre of Deaf Mutes was registered with the state in Moscow. Although this theatre closed in the 1920s, a tradition of amateur deaf theatre grew in popularity over the following decades: by 1958 over 4,500 deaf individuals took part in amateur dramatics in their local social clubs. In engaging with theatre, therefore, the deaf could assert their claim to a vibrant amateur artistic tradition. Yet for deaf artists and activists, the foundation of the Theatre Studio in 1957 represented an opportunity not only to build on this tradition, but also to challenge existing conventions to develop a self-consciously ‘new’ art form. The year 1957 had also seen the re-launch of the Deaf Society’s magazine, Life of the Deaf (Zhizn’ glukikh), and it became the forum for a wide-reaching debate into the nature of deaf theatrical forms. An article from 1958 stated that:

’all those who are interested in the birth of, in principle, a new deaf theatre, must make a great effort, in order that, through creative discussions and practical experiments, the essence and forms of the Theatre of Silence can be found. The first step in this matter is to carry out an impartial discussion of this question on the pages of our magazine.’

This collaborative process of analysis and debate stressed the agency and creativity of deaf people in the formation of a new, unique theatrical tradition.

This desire for the new was equally a rejection of the old. Until this point, deaf theatre had been based on the translation of written plays into sign language, and their performance in the ‘natural’ style in keeping with the norms of Socialist Realism. In 1957, however, these conventions were being questioned. One article stated bluntly that ‘the limited “deaf method” of expressing thoughts and feelings on the stage has aged [and] is not achieving its goals.’ The problem, it seemed, lay in the incompatibility of traditional, dialogue-driven plays with the bodily nature of sign language. By literally rendering the dialogue into sign, such plays effectively tied the hands of their actors, hindering any other form of action or gesticulation.

According to deaf theatre specialists, therefore, the attempt to replicate ‘hearing forms’ on the deaf stage ‘narrow[ed] and weaken[ed] the composition and execution of stage works.’ Instead, they argued, deaf
Deaf artists thus looked to mime as a means to create a new form of theatre. Yet, whilst they stressed the essential nature of deaf expression through silence and gesture, specialists emphasised that the attributes of ‘silent theatre’ were in fact innate to theatre in general. In her article, ‘The theatre of silence’, T. Smolenskaia insisted that all theatre collections ‘acknowledge the value of the expressive, plastic gesture, the significance and dramatic weight of stage pauses, the strength of the impact of animated mimicry’. By emphasising the ways in which ‘silent theatre’ and ‘normal theatre’ drew on the same artistic techniques, Smolenskaia underlined one of the central desires inherent in deaf theatre: the desire for inclusion and recognition in the universal world of true art. Making a feature of the silent gesture was not a question of adapting theatre to suit the exclusive needs of the deaf, she argued; on the contrary, through mime, members of the deaf theatre sought to show how their art was already a vital part of theatre, and that they were merely drawing out certain of its fundamental qualities. In its emphasis on the plasticity of the body as a means of conveying meaning, mime theatre was seen to hark back to the very roots of theatre itself. Critics referenced ancient Greek mime in order to demonstrate the solid foundations of this experiment in silent theatre: the critic Labunskii stated that ‘Long ago, in ancient Ellada, mime theatre eclipsed ordinary, spoken theatre in the perfection of its expression.’ Such accounts often contained such barely-veiled snubs to spoken theatre; in its essential silence, it seemed, deaf theatre alone was able to approach the purity of the original art form.

Discussions of silent theatre also drew comparisons with the Soviet theatrical tradition. Zvenigorskii, an artist of the Moscow Arts Theatre, suggested that silent theatre was in fact the ultimate embodiment of Stanislavskii’s famous ‘fourth wall’ theory: ‘the actor must be expressive enough on stage that, if he were divided from the viewer by a glass wall, the viewer, seeing but not hearing the actor, would understand what was happening on stage.’ Reference to Stanislavskii, the so-called ‘father of the Russian theatre’, supported deaf theatre’s claim to inclusion within the larger Soviet tradition. Yet these articles also drew explicit links with avant-garde proponents of physical theatre: the directors Evgenii Vakhtangov and Vsevolod Meierkhol’d. Meierkhol’d’s theory of biomechanics – essentially the reduction of theatre to a limited number of perfected physical movements – was described as a fundamental influence on the mime of Marcel Marceau and, by extension, the deaf. This engagement with the experimental forms of the avant-garde reflected broader preoccupations of the ‘fifth period: Meierkhol’d was famously purged in 1940, and revival of official interest in his work in 1964 is seen as one of the key moments in the renewal of creative practice during this period. Despite their insistence on inclusion and tradition, therefore, deaf engagement with mime theatre also represented an experimental break with traditional forms which reflected the particular cultural climate of the thaw.

In their experimentation with theatrical forms, the Soviet deaf community claimed their place as producers and consumers of an art that both embodied and transcended the specifics of deafness. Mime theatre, in its silence and bodily gesture, was represented as the natural art form of the deaf. Yet at the same time, silent theatre was depicted as a facet of a universal art form, whose value was no less (or possibly even more) than that of the dialogue-driven performances of the ‘normal’ stage. In bridging the gap between hearing and deaf creative practices and communication, deaf mime theatre was seen to transcend the limits of deafness: as an article by V. Ivanov concluded, ‘deprived of hearing, [the deaf] were given the opportunity to speak in the most difficult and complex language – the language of art.’

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3 Ibid, p. 23.
5 Ibid, p. 23.
10 V. Ivanov, ‘The theatre steps on to the screen’, Zhizn’ glukhikh, 3 (1965), inside back page.

Images for this article are taken from N. Dairedzhieva (ed.), Moskovskii teatr-studii mimiki i zhesta (Moscow, 1966). All reasonable efforts have been made to secure permission to use these images. If you are the copyright holder, please contact us so that we may acknowledge you in a future issue.
Bringing local history to life

In previous editions of Past and Future we have reported on the progress of the Victoria County History’s community project, England’s Past for Everyone (EPE). With the project due for completion in April 2010, EPE Communications Manager, Mel Hackett, looks at the achievements of the project and considers why ‘every town should have one’. *

In 2005 the Victoria County History (based at the Institute of Historical Research) received a £3.3m grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, to bring its traditional local history research to a wider audience. With a further £1.8m matched funding provided by local partners, including universities and local authorities, the England’s Past for Everyone project was developed, resulting in 15 unique projects across 10 English counties. Locally-based team leaders were appointed to each project, and supported by a team of specialist staff based at the IHR. Each of the 15 projects was tasked with producing one illustrated paperback volume, web materials and school and volunteer projects.

Our Learning Programme
The Learning Programme is a key element of the project and has included school, volunteer and outreach activities across the country.

Volunteers
Over 270 volunteers were recruited through local archive and record centres, articles in the local press and a series of open events. Volunteers received training in a variety of skills including palaeography, building and archaeological survey, photography, ICT, archive research, and Latin transcription. Volunteer research has contributed directly to our published outputs.

A volunteer project on Exmoor
The Exmoor project looked at the history of both landscape and community in 11 parishes straddling Devon and Somerset, and was run in partnership with Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA) and Somerset County Council. The volunteers were supervised by a volunteer group leader who organised training days, workshops and lectures by locally-based specialists. Volunteers recorded details of 30 farmsteads on Exmoor, which were input into a database of historic and deserted farmsteads, managed by the ENPA. From this work four farmsteads were identified for further research. A series of English Heritage reconstruction paintings were also commissioned, showing how the farmsteads had operated. The resulting paperback, Exmoor: the Making of an English Upland, was launched in summer 2009 at an event in Dulverton Village Hall.

Schools
More than 700 pupils have been involved in our school projects and taken part in a wide range of activities including

‘I’ve photographed and measured and I’ve filled in forms. I’ve seen parts of Exmoor that I wouldn’t normally see and I’ve met some great co-volunteers.’

(EPE volunteer)

field trips, photography, oral history, web development, model making, map reading, role play and much more. The projects were cross-curricular, providing benefits across all areas of the pupils’ learning.

A school project in Kent
Our Kent school project was run in partnership with Holy Family Primary School, the Centre for Kentish Studies, and a local education consultant. Year 5 pupils looked at the history of the papermaking industry in the county and discovered how their locality fits into the bigger picture of industrialisation in 19th-century England. Pupils also explored the lives of children who worked in the papermaking industry and visited the Aylesford paper factory where they learned about the importance of recycling.

Outreach
EPE has supported a number of outreach projects over the past five years including:

- a creative outreach project with Penlee Museum and Art Gallery and the University of the Third Age in Cornwall;
- a history of Ledbury ‘street names’ booklet, produced by volunteers in Herefordshire and available from local libraries and tourist information venues;
- a woodland walk in Frith Wood, Herefordshire, produced in

*(Christopher Catling, Society of Antiquaries)
Bringing local history to life

partnership with local council archaeology services;

• an oral history project with Exmoor farmers in partnership with English Heritage and archived in Somerset Record Office;

• a diversity calendar produced in partnership with Bristol Black Archives Partnership and distributed to thousands of individuals and organisations across the city;

• sponsorship of the Scarsdale Local History Fair, Derbyshire, in 2007 and 2008.

Paperback books
The project has produced a series of 15 paperback books. The series provides an insight into the resources and methods used by local historians and is a valuable tool for those inspired to research their own locality. Titles include Burford: Buildings and People in a Cotswold Town; Sunderland and its Origins: Monks to Mariners; and Parham: An Elizabethan House and its Restoration. Books have included forewords by such noted individuals as Sir Roy Strong, Bill Bryson, Michael Wood, Kate Adie and Sir Ranulph Fiennes. Two titles have been reprinted due to popular demand and all the books are available to purchase from the SAS bookshop or the publishers’ website: www.phillimore.co.uk.

Local history online
In 2007 we launched our Explore website at an event at the Houses of Parliament. Explore (www.ExploreEnglandsPast.org.uk) provides free access to thousands of local history resources collected by our volunteers and researchers over the past five years. Images, historical documents and audio files can be searched by location, time period, person, building type and theme. Key materials include: a trail around sites in Bristol linked to the slave trade; hundreds of transcribed wills and probate records from our Herefordshire and Oxfordshire projects; a record of all the buildings in Burford; and a parish-by-parish survey of religious sites in Cornwall. The website also includes panels taken from our paperbacks which provide guidance on how to study local history.

In early 2009 we launched our Schools Learning Zone (www.EnglandsPastforEveryone.org.uk/schools) at the renowned technology in education exhibition, BETT. The Schools Learning Zone provides free access to learning materials developed following our successful school projects, and explores themes such as the Tudors, agriculture, industry and migration. All of the resources are linked to the National Curriculum, have been trialled in schools and support learning both in and outside the classroom.

The future
The EPE project has been successful in its efforts to bring the local history research of the VCH to a wider audience and to provide a sustainable future for the organisation. The project has developed new ways of working, including: a greater focus on online publication; the production of a more accessible paperback series, in addition to the traditional red volumes; and funding partnerships in new localities.

A volunteer toolkit developed by the project has been successfully used by a new VCH project in Hampshire, and lessons learnt through the EPE Learning Programme will contribute to new training procedures for use by staff and volunteers.

We are pleased to announce that publishers Phillimore & Co. Ltd are keen to continue publishing the new paperback series, with the first title based on our successful continuation project in Kent, looking at the history of the Medway towns.

For further information on the England’s Past for Everyone project visit www.EnglandsPastforEveryone.org.uk.

The EPE projects
Bristol
Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City 1000–2001
Cornwall
Cornwall and the Coast: Mousehole, Newlyn and Paul
Cornwall and the Cross: Christianity 500–1560
Derbyshire
Bolsover: Castle, Town and Colliery
Hardwick Hall: Estate and Village
County Durham
Sunderland Origins: Monks to Mariners
Sunderland: Building a City
Exmoor
Exmoor: The Making of an English Upland
Herefordshire
Ledbury Pre-1558
Ledbury Post-1558
Kent
People and Work in the Lower Medway Valley 1750–1900
Kent: Medway Towns (continuation project)
Oxfordshire
The Origins and Growth of Henley-on-Thames
Burford: Buildings and People in a Cotswold Town
Sussex
Parham: A Sussex House and its Restoration
Wiltshire
Codford: Wool and War in Wiltshire
London on display

PhD student Joanna Marchant reflects on her time at the IHR

On reflection my presence at the IHR is, if I am honest, an unexpected thing. Although I have a background in history, I had never considered that undertaking a PhD in the subject would be a practical possibility. It had fully been my intention to pursue a career in the museum sector and accordingly I had embarked on an MA in Art Gallery and Museum Studies. Even though my interest in museums was, and is, fervent, my break with history was reluctant and gave me cause for regret. Fortunately, the IHR resolved this for me. In 2008 the Centre for Metropolitan History, having been awarded an AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award project in partnership with the Museum of London, took me on as the project’s third research student. I am now in my second year of carrying out research under the CMH and Museum of London’s umbrella project entitled ‘London on display: culture, industry and civic identity’. My own studies focus upon London’s museum environments and their impact on the formation of civic identities between 1851 and 1914.

The nature of the collaboration between these two institutions has proved hugely beneficial. Having access to staff expertise at both the IHR and in the Museum of London is invaluable, as is the unparalleled access to essential research resources. Together, the museum’s collections, particularly its vast array of photographic images, and the IHR library’s extensive holdings of maps, guidebooks and directories, form a vital reference point for me on London history and its contemporary representations. Furthermore, from the outset having two other students working within the same research framework has helped to negate a sense of being overwhelmed by the enormity of the task in hand. The fact the three of us are able to discuss the problems and solutions involved in grappling with the somewhat intangible concept of ‘London identity’ has assisted me in clarifying my own ideas in a way I suspect I could not have done without that shared experience. Being part of a small body of research students at the IHR is one of the most idiosyncratic benefits I have come across. Having History Lab and our own common room, which I like to make prolific use of, provides a friendly community of familiar faces and contributes significantly to mitigating the PhD student’s classic encounter with loneliness and stress.

Since coming to the IHR I have tried to make the most of the extensive training programme on offer. Of particular help has been the course on Databases for Historians which not only dispelled my complete ignorance of Microsoft Access but has given me a vital research aid. I am also very much looking forward to continuing with a new training course for urban historians run by the CMH. This course kick-started the academic year with source-based skills and promises to end with teaching me how to master geographical information systems!

I am convinced that the plethora of ways in which the IHR has moulded my experience of research has generated an experience unique amongst institutions. I only hope that once I have completed my PhD, my association with the IHR continues long into my career.
The IHR library – bringing the past into the future

When the IHR was founded in 1921, its first Director, the Tudor historian A. F. Pollard, saw it as a ‘history laboratory’, experimenting with new ideas and methodologies and leading the history profession in innovative and exciting directions. A unique culture of seminars, conferences and training facilities grew around an unparalleled open-access library – a 180,000-volume collection of printed primary sources – and today the IHR has become an indispensable part of the fabric of the history community in the UK and overseas. As one of our frequent users, the TV broadcaster Dr David Starkey, recently remarked, the library is ‘a pearl beyond price’.

Since 1993, when its first website was launched, the IHR has also been at the forefront in the use of innovative digital technology to support scholars and the wider public. We have successfully migrated many of the listings and database services including those for events, teacher directories, theses indexes, bibliographies and reviews – traditionally carried in a print format – to online delivery, and with British History Online we have developed a unique portal enabling a large proportion of the printed primary sources in our library to be made available via the internet.

Now we are ready for a new challenge. With the opportunities offered by Web 2.0, social networking and advanced audio and video transmission, we aim to transport even more of the activity which the IHR has been running for nearly 90 years into the virtual environment. We also plan to modernise and develop our library in keeping with the ‘history laboratory’ ethos, in order to deliver a first-class history collection alongside the latest training techniques in historical research.

Our plans include a suite of services encompassing research training and continuing professional development in digital technology for historians, live streaming of seminars, further digitisation projects, and a new programme for collaborative online editing. As we recreate much of what the IHR does in the new digital environment, we will be able to ensure that the IHR’s collections are freely available to a much broader and international audience.

As part of our redevelopment we shall be taking in the Senate House Library history collection. We also plan to create new spaces for events and exhibitions so that our tradition of showcasing historical scholarship for the academic community and the public is developed even further.

I hope that the completed project will reveal our ‘pearl’ of a collection for what it truly is – an essential resource that underpins the vital part played by history in our national culture.

To fund our ambitious plans, we are launching a new Campaign for History, which will centre on this project but also include an enhanced Visiting Fellowship programme, expanded events programme and more. We have secured roughly one third of what we require for the library and hope that you may wish to help us reach our goal of raising a total of £3m over the next four years. Further information on the work of the development office is contained in the next few pages, and of course we are always eager to discuss our plans further if you would like to get in touch.

Professor Miles Taylor, Director
Development news

Supporting the IHR
The IHR has been the beneficiary of philanthropic gifts and legacies since its inception, and we are grateful to our alumni, Friends, trusts, companies and other donors who continue this tradition of generosity and engagement. Our annual turnover is £3m and we receive about 30% of our income from the government – down from nearly 60% 10 years ago. Now, more than ever, major gifts, regular annual giving and gifts of endowment are critical to our future financial security.

There are many ways in which donors can become involved in the life of the IHR, whether your interest lies in supporting our library and resources, academic fellowship, events or other activities – and depending on the level of the gift being considered.

Annual Fund
This year we are launching an Annual Fund which will provide the IHR with a steady stream of vital unrestricted income. By supporting the IHR Annual Fund you will be investing in leading research and world-class resources, as well as helping the IHR to build a vital endowment for the future. Gifts of all sizes are important, and all donors will receive recognition.

The Fund will support all that we do – from bursaries to the major library refurbishment – thereby making a difference to students, academics and the wider community of enthusiasts alike. Below are some examples:

- £25 contributes to the cost of conserving or binding a book in need of repair
- £50 helps purchase a book for our unique open-access library
- £100 covers the cost of attending a two-day national conference
- £250 allows someone to attend one of our specialist research training courses
- £500 pays for a subscription to an important digital resource
- £1,000 supports a one-day conference presenting groundbreaking research, such as ‘London, the Thames and Water: new historical perspectives’
- £5,000 funds 10 student bursaries
- £10,000 equips a seminar room with state-of-the-art recording equipment
- £25,000 sponsors the fees and maintenance of an international student for a full year.

If you are eligible for Gift Aid your donation will be increased by a further 28% and, as you may know by now, the IHR is participating in two matched funding schemes which provide further leverage for donations. There truly has never been a better time to support the IHR!

Legacies
An important role of the IHR is to provide the historical context for activities that are key to the functioning of modern society. Leaving a legacy to the IHR is one of the best ways to play a part in ensuring that this perspective is preserved for future generations.

Past legacies have been a major contributing factor towards helping the IHR to flourish and are a way of leaving a lasting memory for friends and families to treasure.

If you are a UK resident, your legacy to the IHR will be entirely free of tax and may reduce your inheritance tax bill.

If you are considering leaving a legacy, we recommend that this is discussed with the IHR to ensure that both your gift intentions and the IHR’s needs are met. Your enquiry is confidential and of course places you under no obligation.

Endowment
The IHR requires a major endowment which can release a substantial and reliable flow of funds to the operating budget in order to ensure its future sustainability. In support of this goal, the IHR was made a recipient of a prestigious $1m Challenge Grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in New York. The total sum is available to the IHR for use as a permanent endowment to be matched on a two-to-one basis. Any unrestricted gift of any size is eligible to unlock this crucial funding, and a donation to endowment enables you to make a gift that will support the IHR annually for years to come.

In addition, major donors may choose to make restricted gifts of endowment to support regular activities such as an academic chair. If you are interested in finding out more about current opportunities, please get in touch.
The IHR 60 years ago

Susan Reynolds, VCH 1952–9, Chair of the Friends 2002–8, shares some memories

In some ways the IHR was much the same in the early 50s as it is now: a wonderful open-access library of sources, helpful librarians, and rooms nicely named ‘England’, ‘France’ etc. rather than ‘English History’ and so on, so that one could say: ‘I shall be in Italy this afternoon’, which sounds more exciting than ‘in the Italian history room’. In some ways it was different: fewer seminars; far fewer staff and rooms. The present Local History, Pollard and Wolfson rooms were not part of the IHR, and nor, of course, were the offices one now gets to through the Upper Hall. But the difference that strikes me most, and is most interesting to a social historian, concerns status.

People addressed each other in different ways according to their relative status. Young people like the VCH or History of Parliament staff or the secretaries used first names, but we called our bosses by their surnames or titles. Initials were very useful if one was uncertain what to call someone or how to sign a note or memo: they did not commit one to which name or what title. Ralph Pugh, the editor of the VCH, was referred to in his absence by his assistants, of whom I was one, as ‘the Editor’. What we called him face to face I don’t remember, but I suspect we avoided the problem by just saying ‘you’. I was his first female assistant and until my arrival he had called the others by their surnames, with no Mr. He called me ‘Miss Reynolds’ until one occasion when he and Peter Tillott (the senior assistant) and I were discussing something, and Peter referred to me as Susan. Ralph (as I later came to call him) was visibly stuck for a moment and then called me ‘Susan’ too. Soon afterwards he began to call Peter by his first name. Things were just beginning to loosen up.

But the most shocking thing, when I look back on it now, was that the two men known as ‘the porters’, who did much the same as the present reception staff, were called by their surnames, with no Mr – by everyone. They wore uniforms and called other people ‘Sir’ or ‘Miss’. Until I started they had been accustomed to answering the telephone to VCH assistants by saying ‘Yes, sir’ and at first thought it was funny when it was me at the other end. The switchboard they managed was in the little cupboard just inside the entrance where the staff letterboxes are now. It was the only place where they could sit down, though it could, I think, accommodate only one of them at once.

Gradually things altered, just as they were changing in the world outside. But not everyone got used at first to universal first names. Soon after Patrick O’Brien came to the IHR as director in 1990, his secretary, who was near to retirement, told me that she had said to him: ‘Please may I ask you something?’ When he said yes, she said: ‘May I call you Professor O’Brien?’

Other things have improved since the 50s: more books; more space; more seminars; security tags in books; reclassification of the library in progress; and, of course, computer catalogues. To my mind, however, the more egalitarian informality is maybe the best improvement, even if it flummoxes some foreign visitors.

New IHR events

The IHR has begun to plan a new series of special events throughout the year open to everyone, but Friends will be given advance notice and priority booking. The first such event was a film evening held on 15 March and featured a screening of Mrs Brown accompanied by a talk by Professor Miles Taylor on Queen Victoria, the subject of the film. The event was enjoyed by all, monies were raised for the Institute and new Friends were recruited, making it a resounding success. A number of people have suggested films and speakers for future events. If you have a favourite you would like to see, please let us know, and please try to join us!

Our next scheduled event is a visit to Lambeth Palace Library and the Museum of Garden History on 5 July (see page 6).

Improvements to the Friends programme

We have been hard at work behind the scenes to make the Friends programme better than ever before.

The IHR is planning a new annual programme of events to which the Friends will be invited. You will receive advanced notice and priority booking opportunities via our regular email updates.

We are in the process of re-designing the Friends of the IHR web pages in conjunction with an overall IHR rebranding.

We will be offering a direct debit facility which will make it easier to become a Friend and maintain your support of the IHR. This facility will be available through the Development section of the website and directly from the Development Office.

The subscription year will now be on a rolling one-year term which will provide you with more flexibility.
Making legal history

Early English Laws project officer, Dr Jenny Benham, speaks to Professor Bruce O’Brien about the development of the Early English Laws website

Attending the memorial conference for the late Patrick Wormald in the summer of 2006, Professor Bruce O’Brien came up with an idea that is now the basis of a major new project at the IHR. ‘Everyone who had an interest in the laws of the period, up to the end of the 12th century, was there giving papers in Patrick’s memory or participating and it just seemed like a fitting tribute for us to create a centralised project to produce new editions, translations and commentaries.’

Early English Laws is a project to publish online and in print new editions and translations of all English legal codes, edicts, and treatises produced up to the issuance of Magna Carta in 1215. ‘English laws have remained largely ignored as a body of sources by editors’, explains Bruce O’Brien, Professor of History at the University of Mary Washington and Visiting Fellow at the IHR. ‘The last grand collection of these laws was edited by the German historian Felix Liebermann at the beginning of the 20th century. The editing work that was being done for all English legal texts before 1215 was being done independently of work on other codes and these editions weren’t ending up in the same place, but were scattered through many different publications serving different academic disciplines.’

Apart from new editions and translations of the main texts, the online publication will also include Liebermann’s edition of the legal texts of the period, William Stubbs’s work on assizes and other legislative texts from the 12th and early 13th centuries, and digitised images of all manuscript folios produced before the early 13th century. One of the main advantages of putting all materials together in a new online publication is search ability. ‘You will be able to move from one text to another with relative ease and follow trains of thought concerning developments in language, institutions, and practices,’ says O’Brien. ‘It will also be easier to find the participation of certain kinds of individuals or groups, such as reeves or merchants.’

O’Brien insists that the project is very much meant for everyone: students, professionals and anyone with a general interest in early legal history. ‘I think there are various levels of the project that will be of interest to different groups. At one level, someone like me is the intended user. Who else would want the manuscripts, transcriptions and the commentary and so on?’ However, O’Brien is quick to point out that everything will be provided with a translation. Liebermann’s original edition contained a translation that was, unsurprisingly, in German and the readership he expected would be Germans. But this is not useful to those students and amateur historians who cannot read German. In part, the English translation and commentary will be responding to the needs of students and the types of questions they might have, such as ‘what is an ordeal?’ Then they can travel through ordeal documents in English translation to actually find out.’

To make some of the more difficult material accessible to everyone, the website will also contain introductory essays on a range of topics. ‘The idea is to have introductory essays that can cut through the material in different ways. You can have an essay, for example, on archaeology and law. There you could look at execution pits – sites that are dateable – then compare these to the legal material and see that the law was quite draconian.’ O’Brien anticipates that there will be essays available on different doctrines, institutions, the extent of state power, and certain procedures such as the murder fine, all written by experts in the field. There will also be essays on the actual evidence for the law – the more than 70 manuscripts that preserve it. In short, if you wanted to know something about early English laws, the website should be your first port of call.
However, the project is not all about creating a body of fixed knowledge. ‘The Early English Laws interactive web space will produce knowledge that can be revised by the scholarship that produced it, as well as being challenged from the outside’, confirms O’Brien. ‘It will serve as a dissidents’ commentary. People could look at Alfred’s law and then at the commentary by whoever it is writes the commentary that might state that the code was a very important thing for Alfred and this is what it meant. Another scholar might then write in and say that’s not entirely correct because there are words misunderstood by the editor, words which can have a different meaning, and based on that this other scholar offers a different interpretation.’ According to O’Brien some discretion would have to be exercised so that the space is not just a board to post things. Yet, he emphasises that anyone with an opinion or an argument to make would be able to submit it; relevant submissions would then be posted once they had been considered by the project board. ‘It’s not something that historians are known for participating in, but I think that it will be a good thing because people can see dissent. This interactive space will serve as a secondary commentary on all aspects of the legal texts.’

With the online aspect having such a wide-ranging scope, it is no surprise to find that the Early English Laws project is collaborative at all levels. For instance, the technical lead is taken by the Centre for Computing in Humanities (CCH) at King’s College, London. ‘I thought it would be good to involve King’s College’, continues O’Brien, ‘because the CCH is one of the most renowned institutions for digital humanities. They have a lot of experience of dealing with Old English text online and as the CCH already has several similar projects, this one can build on the department’s strengths.’

O’Brien says that he was also intrigued by the idea of doing something involving the collaboration of many scholars. Apart from the participating institutions, the IHR and CCH, he has also assembled a literary board with scholars from the UK, Europe and the United States. ‘The scope of the project made me recognise that if I wanted to produce editions for this collection – including about 150 different texts – participation by other scholars was going to have to be quite large’, says O’Brien. ‘In 1995, I got a grant from the NEH in the United States. It gave me $80,000 to edit all of the codes produced between the Domesday Book and Magna Carta, which was ridiculous because, although I ended up doing a fair amount of the groundwork, I only had time to fully edit two texts and partially edit a handful more. There is no way for one person to tackle so much material without significant funding and a lot of time. This time, there are so many people either already editing or considering new editions that I felt we could actually get it done. The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) agreed. The council gave the project funding for the initial three years.’

‘Liebermann, when he produced his collection over several decades, could afford to support himself independently and was able to just spend most of his time working on these laws. He was his own language specialist, palaeographer, codicologist, textual critic, historian and legal expert. That model of individual achievement is not, I think, a useful one any more for scholars to emulate.’ In its conception the project also goes beyond the work of Liebermann. ‘It goes all the way to Magna Carta’, continues O’Brien, ‘and there I’ve built in an argument of Patrick Wormald, who made the case that the foundation of the law established under the Anglo-Saxons remained in some key areas the foundation of the law after the Norman conquest, eventually known as the common law, and the only way to see this continuity, as well as the many discontinuities, is to compare materials on either side of the conquest, all the way through the 12th century up until 1215.’ The completion of the project will take 10 years, but at the end of that time, O’Brien hopes there will be something that lasts for a very long time: all the material put together, easily accessible and comparable. ‘I think it’s worth putting it all out there for folks to work with.’

The project website can be visited at www.earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk.
Obituary: Christopher Elrington

John Beckett

Professor Christopher Robin Elrington (1930–2009) died on 3 August 2009. Professor Elrington was a familiar figure around the IHR, first as a member of the VCH staff from 1954 to 1960 and then, following a spell as VCH County Editor in Gloucester (1960–68), as Deputy Editor (1968–77) and General Editor (1977–94). During his time as General Editor, 40 red books were published on 12 different English counties.

Elrington was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1964 and of the Royal Historical Society in 1969. He served as President of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, and was Editor of the Gloucestershire Record series from 1995. He was also General Editor of the Wiltshire Record Society 1962–72. For Wiltshire, he edited part of the register of the early 14th-century Bishop Roger Martival of Salisbury (1972) and the Wiltshire final concords of the reign of Edward III (1974). Subsequently, he edited the Gloucestershire final concords in 1994, and continued to research and write Sussex parish histories, the last two of which appeared posthumously when VCH Sussex V, 2: Littlehampton, was published at the end of 2009. In 1989 he led celebrations in conjunction with the publication of the 200th VCH red book. As well as editing text he oversaw the transition from typewriters and carbon copies to word processors and digital files. He remained interested in the methods of production, even making attempts to imitate the layout of VCH text using Microsoft Word to reduce typesetting costs.

It was a mark of both Elrington’s scholarship and the respect in which he was held by VCH staff across the country that to mark his retirement Christopher Currie – who succeeded him as General Editor – and Christopher Lewis edited a book of essays about the history of county history in England, with many VCH staff past and present among the 48 contributors.

Christopher was a lovely man, always supportive of the VCH but never wishing to interfere with the work being undertaken by those who had succeeded him in the central office. He regularly attended VCH events such as the annual Marc Fitch Lecture, and he showed his approval for the Heritage Lottery Fund project, England’s Past for Everyone, by attending the launch of the first paperback, on Codford, Wiltshire, in 2006. Christopher will be much missed among the staff and supporters of the VCH but his initiative through the County History Trust will live on beyond his time to remind us all of a man who spent a lifetime working for one of the IHR’s great research projects.

The sun never shines on the lower room of the Bordesley and Deritend school: HMI report, 1841.
Excerpt from a poem by Christopher Elrington

The rich man sits in his castle, eating his chicken and chips, The luxury holiday cruises go down to the sea in ships, The days are bright for the wealthy wise and for the fortunate fool, But the sun never shines on the lower room Of Bordesley and Deritend school.

Oh rich men keep your pleasures, so long as the air is free, But spare a thought for the murky gloom beside the river Rea, And remember, in Paris or Monte, or in Rome or in Kitzbühl, That the sun never shines on the lower room Of Bordesley and Deritend school.
The IHR's world-renowned programme of seminars continues to go from strength to strength. Seminars meet weekly during term time and all are welcome. Please note not all seminars meet each term. An up-to-date programme for each seminar can be found on the IHR’s website at www.history.ac.uk/ihrseminars/ and is also displayed within the IHR.

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<td>London Group of Historical Geographers</td>
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<td>London Society for Medieval Studies</td>
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<td>Low Countries</td>
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<td>Marxism in culture</td>
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<td>Medieval and Tudor London</td>
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<td>Metropolitan history</td>
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<td>Modern religious history</td>
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<td>Music in Britain</td>
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<td>Parliaments, representation and society</td>
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<td>Philosophy of history</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>Postgraduate seminar</td>
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<td>Psychoanalysis and history</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
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<td>Reconfiguring the British: nation, empire, world 1600–1900</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>Religious history of Britain 1500–1800</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>Rethinking modern Europe</td>
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<td>Socialist history</td>
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<td>Society, culture and belief 1500–1800</td>
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<td>Sport and leisure history</td>
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<td>Tudor and Stuart history</td>
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<td>Women’s history</td>
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Research training at the IHR

Archival research skills

Methods and sources for historical research
12–16 April 2010/5–9 July 2010
This long-standing course is an introduction to finding and using primary sources for research in modern British, Irish and colonial history. The course will include visits to the British Library, the National Archives, the Wellcome Institute and the House of Lords Record Office, amongst others. Fee £185.

General historical skills

An introduction to oral history
Mondays, 18 January – 29 March 2010
This course addresses theoretical and practical issues in oral history through workshop sessions and participants’ own interviewing work. It deals with the historiographical emergence and uses of oral history, with particular reference to the investigation of voices and stories not always accessible to other historical approaches. Fee £200.

Interviewing for researchers
10 May 2010
For those who wish to investigate the recent past, collecting the testimony of relevant individuals is a vital resource. This course offers practical information and training on how to interview and how to use interviews for the purposes of research. Fee £70.

Freedom of Information: a practical guide for historians
19 April 2010
A practical guide to using the Freedom of Information Act to find and obtain historical source material, using a mixture of lectures and seminar discussions. The course will help researchers to make the most of the act, explaining its terms, scope and application and demonstrating how to set about making requests for information under FoI. Fee £70.

Working with maps and geographical information
Date TBA: see website for details
An introduction for historians, archivists, etc., to working with maps and geographical information defined very broadly: any historical source containing a lot of place names. The course covers appraising sources and different strategies for developing projects, mainly computer-based but not necessarily using Geographical Information Systems software. This is not a hands-on course, but will help you decide what to learn. Fee £50–£100.

Explanatory paradigms: an introduction to historical theory
Thursdays, 22 April – 24 June 2010
A critical introduction to current approaches to historical explanation, taught by Prof John Tosh, Dr John Seed and Prof Sally Alexander. The contrasting explanatory frameworks offered by Marxism, psychoanalysis, gender analysis and Paul Ricoeur’s work on narrative form the central discussion points of the course, equipping students to form their own judgements on the schools of thought most influential in the modern discipline. Fee £200.

Information technology courses

Databases for historians
15–18 June 2010
This four-day course introduces the theory and practice of constructing and using databases. Through a mixture of lectures and practical, hands-on, sessions, students will be taught both how to use and adapt existing databases, and how to design and build their own. No previous specialist knowledge apart from an understanding of historical analysis is needed. The software used is MS Access, but the techniques demonstrated can easily be adapted to any package. This course is open to postgraduate students, lecturers and all who are interested in using databases in their historical research. Fee £185.

Databases for historians II: practical database tools
14–16 July 2010
The aim of this course is to develop the practical skills necessary for constructing and fully exploiting a database for use in historical research. Assuming a basic understanding of the conceptual issues in digitally managing information from historical sources, the course aims to introduce the specific tools and techniques required for improving the utility of the database from the data entry stage, through to the generation and presentation of analysis. Fee £160.

Internet sources for historical research
8 June 2010
This course provides an intensive introduction to the use of the internet as a tool for serious historical research. It includes sessions on academic mailing lists, usage of gateways, search engines and other finding aids, and on effective searching using Boolean operators and compound search terms, together with advice on winnowing useful matter from the vast mass of unsorted data available, and on the proper caution to be applied in making use of online information. Fee £70.

Statistics for historians
Date TBA: see website for details
A theoretical and practical introduction to statistics, quantitative analysis and all uses of numbers for historians. Unlike general-purpose statistical tuition, this course will concentrate on the particular problems encountered by historians in using their often insubstantial data sets. Full instruction in the leading computer statistics software will be included. Fee £200.

For further information and application forms see www.history.ac.uk/training/ or contact Dr Simon Trafford, Institute of Historical Research, University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU, or by email at ihr.training@sas.ac.uk.
All events will take place at the Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, unless otherwise stated. There is a fee for some events. Please check the IHR website for more information and details of events both at the IHR and elsewhere.

**Cities and Nationalisms**
17–18 June 2010
A two-day international conference organised by the Centre for Metropolitan History and supported by the Leverhulme Trust, held at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, 17 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DR.

Cities have been intimately connected with nationalisms of many kinds. The architecture and spatial design of cities have commonly been intended to bolster national pride. So have the nationalist ceremonies that cities have staged. Yet cities have also been places of contending nationalisms or counter nationalisms in which urban territorial divides have helped shape and maintain competing or actively hostile group loyalties. Cities have also sometimes promoted themselves as cosmopolitan and hospitable to all nations. So this conference will explore the nature and rich variety of connections between nationalisms and cities in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. Cities explored include Alexandria, Belfast, Buenos Aires, Budapest, Cape Town, Cork, Cracow, Hong Kong, Kinshasa, Kirkuk, London, Montreal, Paris, Prague, Shanghai, Tel Aviv and Washington. Speakers include Robert Bickers (Bristol), Iain Black (Cambridge), Bill Freund (Kwa-Zulu Natal), Tim Harper (Cambridge), and Paul-André Linteau (Québec).

Programme and booking details available from: Olwen Myhill, CMH, IHR, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU; email: ihrcmh@sas.ac.uk; tel: 020 7862 8790; or www.history.ac.uk/events/conference/941.

**Anglo-American Conference of Historians 2010: Environments**
1–2 July 2010
This July the Institute of Historical Research’s flagship annual event, the Anglo-American Conference of Historians, is taking as its theme ‘Environments’. Over the last two decades environmental history has developed at an amazing pace, broadening and deepening our understanding of human interaction with nature, climate, landscape and resources across two millennia of historical time. Our conference will explore where environmental history has been and where it is going, its relationship to other scholarly disciplines, and the ways in which historians of the environment can inform global green awareness today.

Our keynote speakers are William Beinart, Alfred Crosby, John McNeill, Harriet Ritvo and Donald Worster.

For more information visit the conference website at www.history.ac.uk/aac2010, or email environments@lon.ac.uk.

**IHR Winter Conference: Going to War, 1939–45: Film and History in Wartime Britain**
22–23 October 2010
The Second World War remains the most filmed historical phenomenon of modern times. The world at war at mid-century is a defining moment in our modernity, and film has become one of the main media through which we locate ourselves in relation to the recent past. The Second World War was also the heyday of cinemagoing in societies throughout Europe and North America, and the war itself brought about major changes in the technologies and uses of film, from the amateur camera to the official government newsreel and short. The latest IHR Winter Conference has assembled a distinguished cast of film directors and film historians to discuss, debate and view the war on screen.

‘Going to War, 1939–45’ brings together two major institutions – the Imperial War Museum and the IHR – to explore new angles, new resources, and new ideas about the filmed experience and the experience of film in wartime Britain. Confirmed speakers include John Boorman, Terence Davies, Kevin Brownlow, Annette Kuhn, Mark Glancy and Penny Summerfield.

For more information, please contact the Events Office (ihr.events@sas.ac.uk).
Cities and Nationalisms

A two-day international conference

Thursday 17 June–Friday 18 June 2010

Institute of Advanced Legal Studies
Charles Clore House, 17 Russell Square
London WC1B 5DR

This conference will explore the nature and rich variety of connections between nationalisms and cities in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. Cities explored include Alexandria, Belfast, Buenos Aires, Budapest, Cape Town, Cork, Cracow, Hong Kong, Kinshasa, Kirkuk, London, Montreal, Paris, Prague, Shanghai, Tel Aviv and Washington.

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http://www.history.ac.uk/events/conferences/941

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environments
79th Anglo-American Conference of Historians
1–2 July 2010
Senate House, University of London

Over the last two decades environmental history has developed at an amazing pace, broadening and deepening our understanding of human interaction with nature, climate, landscape and resources across two millennia. This conference, the flagship annual event of the Institute of Historical Research, will explore where environmental history has been and where it is going, its relationship to other scholarly disciplines, and the ways in which historians of the environment can inform global green awareness today.

Plenary speakers include William Beinart, Alfred Crosby, John McNeill, Harriet Ritvo and Donald Worster.

There will also be a policy discussion panel featuring English Heritage, the Royal Geographical Society and the Royal Society.

For more information please contact environments@lon.ac.uk.

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