On 8 July 1921, in a prefabricated building on Malet Street, the IHR first opened its doors for business. Ninety years later, the Institute enjoys a unique role in the world of history both at home and overseas, and it is, as ever, a pleasure to introduce *Past and Future* and to update our users, readers, friends and supporters on recent activities and future developments. Across all our operations – seminars and conferences, digital resource creation, books and guides, the Victoria County History, the Centre for Metropolitan History, the Library, training and teaching – we seem to combine the experience of age with the enthusiasm of youth. In our birthday year we have been celebrating with a programme of special events and exhibitions, described elsewhere in the magazine. We shall also be hosting an alumni and supporters’ summer party in Bloomsbury in July, and later in the year will join our American colleagues and friends at the North American Conference on British Studies in Denver to look back across the decades at our work and the development of our discipline. The Institute’s latest projects demonstrate how we remain as innovative as ever; for example, in our commitment to utilising the newest media and technology. In early March, IHR Digital ran a live webcast of one of our seminars for the first time. We are also about to launch the first phase of our new online research training modules, and the Victoria County History website has been upgraded, making it faster and easier to use by editors and researchers alike. At the same time, we remain committed to excellence in printed scholarship. At the VCH, we are on course to publish our next handful of ‘red book’ histories; the first volumes in our new conference series will appear later this year, followed shortly afterwards by a new research guide series co-published with Manchester University Press.

The IHR has always had a strong international profile, and to our special North American relationship we are now adding new and further collaborations in Russia and Asia. In May, I shall be taking a delegation of historians to a conference in Moscow sponsored by the Russian Academy of Sciences, and I am particularly pleased that our Russian hosts are welcoming several postgraduate and early career historians as part of our group. My visits to China and to Japan last year are reaping benefits. The proceedings from our recent joint conferences are now published, and student and staff exchanges are being planned. In turn, the IHR will play host to the international scholarly community this summer (29 June–1 July) when we stage one of the fullest Anglo-American conferences for some years, taking as our subject *Health in History*.

The health of history, and of the humanities more generally, has been the subject of constant concern in recent months, as the consequences of the coalition’s spending cuts and the review of higher education funding begin to be clearer. The IHR has been contributing to these discussions, along with our colleagues in the Royal Historical Society, the Historical Association and History UK, and across the museums and heritage sector. Some of the issues around the future of the humanities will inevitably be touched upon in this year’s John Coffin Memorial Lecture (3 May), to be given by Professor Stefan Collini FBA, which the IHR is especially proud to be organising. Whilst the future condition of our subject remains hard to predict – especially at the postgraduate level – I am continually impressed by the devotion, dedication and voluntary effort of so many people in trying to keep history alive for all ages.

One such steadfast supporter of our subject, and of the IHR, was Elaine Paintin, who sadly passed away just before Christmas. Elaine was Director of the Marc Fitch Fund and a founding member of the IHR Trust. Without Elaine, and without both Marc Fitch and the IHR Trust, much of what we currently do in the Institute would not have been made possible. It is a reflection of Elaine’s generosity that her family have set up a memorial fund in her name on behalf of the IHR. We will miss Elaine very much indeed and hope that those who wish to remember her incredible contribution to the arts and antiquities, to libraries and to local history will do so by supporting the Institute.

As I explained in my letter last autumn, the IHR is on the eve of major redevelopment. The University is expected shortly to sign off agreement for the next phase of the refurbishment of Senate House. Our plans for a temporary two-year relocation of the Institute are now very far advanced, and are being updated regularly on our website and via email. Our moves into the South Block of Senate House are scheduled to take place during August and September of this year. At the same time, I am in planning discussions with the University about how the IHR will look when it returns to a modernised space in 2013, and I shall be able to tell you more about that vision of a 21st-century Institute in the next issue of *Past and Future*.

Miles Taylor, March 2011
Contents

Past and Future

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Letter from the director

IHR news
The IHR @ 90
Library arrangements during the relocation
New acquisitions for IHR Library
Rebuilt VCH website goes live
History Online relaunches
Developments at British History Online
New faces at the IHR
ReScript: the collaborative editing of historical texts online
Early medieval law in context: 15–16 September 2011, Copenhagen
CMH Summer conference: ‘Shadow cities’
Podcasts now online
Online resources

‘History of medicine’ or ‘History of health?’
As the IHR gets ready for its largest Anglo-American conference for some
time, one of this year’s plenary speakers – Professor Monica Green of
Arizona State University – reflects on the history of health: what it is and
what it might become.

The IHR @ 90 – the early years of the Institute
Jane Winters

The Heinz Archive & Library at the National Portrait Gallery
Robin Francis, head of archive & library, National Portrait Gallery

Digital history: podcasting at the IHR
George Campbell Gosling, outgoing seminar convenor for the Voluntary
Action History Society, discusses the introduction of podcasting at the IHR

History SPOT: Seminar Podcasts and Online Training
Matt Phillpott, project officer, IHR Digital

Development news
Friends of the IHR, Annual General Meeting
IHR Annual Fund
Matched funding
Q&A with an IHR supporter
Sponsor a seminar!
A Friend remembers: the IHR then and now

The History PhD: past, present and future
Melodee Beals, academic co-ordinator, History Subject Centre

The director of the IHR visits China

Seminars at the IHR

Time well spent
Master’s student Kathleen McIlvenna reflects on her time so far at the IHR

Postgraduate research training courses 2010–11

Cover image:
Photo © Ernest Board. ‘Dr Jenner performing his first vaccination on a child, 1796’ 1910.
Wikimedia Commons
The IHR @ 90

To mark the Institute's birthday this year, we are hosting a year-long celebration of other notable milestones of 1921. In that year, the first PhDs in history were awarded in the UK; Marie Stopes opened her first birth control clinic; and Asa Briggs, one of the UK’s most distinguished historians, was born, as was the Duke of Edinburgh.

Our special IHR @ 90 events programme will be accompanied by an online exhibition and a display to be opened at the 80th Anglo-American Conference of Historians, ‘Health in history’, at the end of June. As part of sharing our 90th birthday with other personalities and organisations, we hosted ‘The history PhD: past, present and future’ and ‘The birth of the birth control clinic’ conferences earlier this year. We will also be hosting ‘Lord Asa Briggs: a celebration’ on 19 May and ‘The princes consort in history’ on 16 December.

Do come and join our celebrations! If you would like to take part in any of these events, or receive more information about them, please contact the IHR Events Office (Events@sas.ac.uk; 0207 862 8756; www.history.ac.uk/ihr90)

Asa Briggs: a celebration of one of the UK’s most distinguished historians takes place in May © University of Sussex

Library arrangements during the relocation

As outlined in the director’s letter, during the IHR’s forthcoming temporary relocation to the 3rd floor of the Senate House south block, only a third of the IHR Library will remain on open access.

The bulk of the remainder of the collection will be housed in the Senate House Library tower and available through a dedicated on-demand fetch service. A further proportion of material will be sent to the University Depository at Egham in Surrey, to be made available within 24 hours of being requested.

After the move, requests for closed access material can be made in person, or via telephone, email or the website. Those wishing to request material should contact the Library in advance of their visit wherever possible. Further details about the service will be available nearer the time.

The IHR has now agreed with the University which sections of the Library collection should take priority for open access. The usage level of each collection has been the main criterion for retention, amongst other considerations, such as growth rate, the needs of Institute staff and students, ease of requesting and fetching, type of shelving available, online availability, and availability elsewhere in other local libraries. The outcomes have been discussed and approved by both the IHR Library Committee and the IHR Advisory Council.

A full list of the collections, and further information, can be found on the IHR website at www.history.ac.uk/news/2011-02-14/library-arrangements-during-relocation.

Please be aware that there will be a period of closure in August to enable the move to take place. The moving schedule is yet to be agreed, but closure dates will be publicised as soon as they are known.

If you have any queries about these proposed changes, please contact the IHR librarian Jennifer Higham on jennifer.higham@london.ac.uk.

New acquisitions for IHR Library

The Library continues to purchase a wide variety of books, augmented by the generosity of the Friends. Recently ordered items include a work on the form and function of grave lettering, a directory of British ambassadors to the United States between 1939 and 1977, selected letters of 16th-century religious reformers in Alsace, and a history of the Scottish parliament.

Recently catalogued acquisitions by the library include:

- Alfred’s wars: sources and interpretations of Anglo-Saxon warfare in the Viking age | W.532
- David Laws, 22 days in May: the birth of the Lib Dem–Conservative coalition | B.852/Law
- The birth of modern Europe: culture and economy, 1400–1800: essays in honor of Jan de Vries | E.341/Cru
- André-François Ponchet, A palazzo Farnese: memorie di un ambasciatore a Roma: 1938–1940 | IR.721
Rebuilt VCH website goes live

The VCH communications site has also been totally overhauled and in addition to acting as the portal into the VCH's online materials, has also gained a range of new and exciting functionality including: a dedicated micro-site for each English county; improved structure and navigation; better styling; better integration with the Institute of Historical Research's site; improved functionality for contributors to the site and an online guide on how to write a complete VCH parish entry.

History Online relaunches

We are launching a new version of the History Online database, in a new online location. It provides the most recent bibliographic updates (currently January 2011 and April 2011), automatic updates of the latest journal articles as well as new records, browse and search features. We hope you will like it! Visit the new History Online at this address: www.history.ac.uk/history-online.

Developments at British History Online (www.british-history.ac.uk)

Spring 2011 sees the completion on BHO of the series of monographs from the Survey of London. These 17 studies of individual buildings of particular interest provide a counterpart to the Survey's volumes on the buildings of London parishes, the first 45 of which are already available on BHO. The digitisation of both series was generously supported by English Heritage.

BHO is also making available the dataset of the AHRC London Hearth Tax project, a collaboration between the IHR, Birkbeck College and Roehampton University of London. It contains some 56,000 named individuals in the City, Westminster and Middlesex from the 1662, 1664 and 1666 collections of the tax. It complements the already considerable biographical holdings on BHO for the history of London in the 17th century.

The team has also been trying to find out more about how people use the site, and what new features they might like to see. As part of a JISC-funded project, we carried out interviews about the use of digital resources in teaching and research; analysed site feedback, referrings sites and citations of BHO; and undertook extensive quantitative analysis of site usage. Over 1,000 people took the time to fill in our online surveys, generating a great deal of usage information. Our preliminary findings are that we can enhance the site by adding:

- ‘cool URIs’ – stable and comprehensible URIs, which can be easily remembered and are less likely to be mistyped;
- extra citation formats – the ability to produce a citation in a form such as Chicago or MLA at the click of a button;
- video tutorials introducing important content and explaining key features;
- folksonomies and shared tagging – allowing users to see all the documents tagged with, say, ‘family life’ or ‘Francis Bacon’, that other users have chosen to make public.

A QR code for the CP40 dataset

Since April 2010, when the England’s Past for Everyone project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, came to an end, the VCH central office has been embracing the challenge of consolidating all of its websites and at the end of February launched its new, all encompassing VCH site.

The new site, which has been built using the Drupal content management system, retains the existing VCH communication web address www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk and houses within it: the individual microsites for each of the VCH counties; the EPE Schools Learning Zone resource site www.englandspastforeveryone.org.uk/schools; and the completely overhauled interactive VCH Explore site explore.englandspastforeveryone.org.uk. VCH Explore is now a genuinely national resource, which we look forward to expanding, in partnership with other organisations, both in areas of established VCH activity and in start-up counties.

The new site of the VCH communications site has also been totally overhauled and in addition to acting as the portal into the VCH's online materials, has also gained a range of new and exciting functionality including: a dedicated micro-site for each English county; improved structure and navigation; better styling; better integration with the Institute of Historical Research's site; improved functionality for contributors to the site and an online guide on how to write a complete VCH parish entry.

Inquisitors and heretics in thirteenth-century Languedoc: edition and translation of Toulouse inquisition depositions, 1273-1282 | FP578/Bil

Patrick Collinson, The history of a history man: or, the twentieth century viewed from a safe distance: the memoirs of Patrick Collinson | B.0955/Col
ReScript: the collaborative editing of historical texts online

The IHR is currently developing a new interface that will assist users in researching and editing historical texts: www.history.ac.uk/projects/ReScript. After assessing a survey, which has already received a great response, and a series of interviews with key stakeholders, the experienced British History Online team will be using, among other texts, Joseph Foster’s Alumni Oxonienses: the members of the University of Oxford, 1500–1886 and the St Botolph Aldgate Parish Clerk’s Memorandum Books for their forthcoming prototype interface. This interface will allow for a variety of approaches to editing, from crowdsourcing to controlled editorial teams, enriching the content via tagging and annotating, and researching these texts via a faceted browsing capability.

‘Early medieval law in context’
15–16 September 2011, Copenhagen, Denmark

The Early English Laws project is pleased to announce a two-day conference at the Carlsberg Academy in Copenhagen exploring laws, law-making and legal interpretation in Western Europe in the early middle ages. The conference, organised with funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council as part of the Early English Laws project, is a collaboration with the Nordic Medieval Laws project and will draw speakers from Britain, Europe and North America. For further information and details of how to register, please visit www.earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk

CMH Summer conference: ‘Shadow cities’

The programme is currently being finalised for our summer conference, ‘Shadow cities: realities and representations’, to be held on 6–7 July 2011 at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies. More than a billion people live in improvised dwellings or shanty towns. Whether in inner cities or on the outskirts of a metropolis, these settlements have been dubbed ‘shadow cities’ by Robert Neuwirth. The aim of this conference is to investigate and explain the historical existence of shadow cities, their varying nature in different historical and geographical circumstances, the living conditions and experiences of their inhabitants, and the perceptions or representations of such settlements. The full programme and online booking will be available from mid April at www.history.ac.uk/shadow-cities.

New faces at the IHR

The IHR welcomed two new members of staff to Publications in October. Emma Bohan is our new Publications and Administration Officer, working for both Publications and Academic Support, and Juan Garcés Perez is working on a new project for IHR Digital, which is developing a digital editing platform. Lisa McNeill also joined us as Individual Giving Officer in January, and will cover Michelle Waterman’s position in the Development team.

Podcasts now online

Podcasts of the majority of papers given at the 2010–11 Metropolitan History seminar series are now available: www.history.ac.uk/podcasts/metropolitan-history-seminar. The podcasts cover a wide variety of subjects, ranging from ‘gender and sociability in early modern London’ to ‘exploring the cultural history of Buenos Aires underground railways, 1886–1945’.

The plenary lectures and papers from several panel sessions given at the ‘Blocked arteries: circulation and congestion in history’ conference, held on 25–26 November 2010, can also now be accessed at www.history.ac.uk/podcasts/conferences.

Online resources

Three resources arising from the Centre’s research projects have recently been published online: records from the court of common pleas and London Hearth Tax 1662 and 1666 (see British History Online news for further detail), and interviews with stockjobbers. ‘Big Bang’ in 1986 signalled the end of the historic jobbing system of the London Stock Exchange. Jobbers were market-makers who acted as intermediaries between stockbrokers on the floor of the exchange. As jobbing firms left few records of their activities, the CMH undertook a series of interviews with former jobbers in 1990, to create a record of a distinctive part of the financial life of the City. The tapes and transcripts of the resulting 42 interviews were deposited at the British National Sound Archive (ref no. C463) for permanent archiving but they may now be accessed directly from the School of Advanced Study’s e-repository, SAS-Space: sas-space.sas.ac.uk/view/collections/lseoh.html.

Comments? Questions?
ihrpub@sas.ac.uk
‘History of medicine’ or ‘History of health’?

As the IHR gets ready for its largest Anglo-American conference for some time, one of this year’s plenary speakers – Professor Monica Green of Arizona State University – reflects on the history of health: what it is and what it might become.

There has been considerable soul-searching among historians of medicine in recent years as our particular subdiscipline of history, after a couple of decades of great popularity, has come under scrutiny with questions about its continued relevance. In a recent essay addressed to general historians, ‘The history of medicine: challenges and futures’, Robert Peckham has suggested that ‘it could be argued that the history of modern medicine that impacts and makes increasing demands upon health policy and national economies has a relatively brief trajectory. Although the antecedents of modern genetics stretch back to the 19th century, major technological developments cluster, for the most part, over the past few decades’.1 While Peckham calls for a more globally oriented and methodologically inclusive history of medicine, his programmatic prescriptions for a history of medicine situated at the institutional interstices of medical schools and faculties of arts and humanities seem to argue for a continued focus on recent history, a focus evident also in his own syllabi.

I actually found Peckham’s description of the University of Hong Kong’s history of medicine programme exciting. Where I diverge from Peckham’s perspective, however, is in wondering whether our field generally should continue to define itself as a history of medicine, or rather as a history of health. Even the latter designator is imprecise, of course. What most of us mean in speaking of the ‘history of health’ is the history of ill-health and the many ways in which human societies have engaged in health-seeking behaviours. The threats to health and the striving to restore equilibrium are what motivate people to act and therefore make up the stuff of history.

I don’t pretend to be impartial here. Not only am I the sole historian of medicine at my current institution and part of no medical institute or centre for ‘humanities in medicine’; I am a medievalist, and therefore far outside ‘the past few decades’ of history that Peckham identifies as relevant. Yet over the past dozen years, I have come to a radically new understanding of my obligations as a historian and, I think, to a new level of success in what I can do as a teacher of history. The arguments that follow come very much out of my own personal experience. But I hope I can begin to persuade other historians, whether they identify themselves as ‘historians of health’ or not, of two things: first, that a history of health is now being constructed, whether we participate in its construction or not; and second, that a focus on ‘health’ – threats to health and health-seeking behaviours (of which biomedicine is just one part) – forces us to ‘go deep’ as well as to go global.

When history isn’t written by historians

What [this research] has shown us, firstly, is that it is possible under special...
conditions to reconstruct history from genetics for an epidemic bacterium, which has not been done at this level before. It’s showed us that you can use genomic information to reconstruct routes of spread on bacteria. And it’s allowed us to tie in historical records to modern genetic insights. This assessment of new contributions to history come from a genomicist, Mark Achtman of the University of Cork in Ireland, who is describing the significance of his international research team’s study, published in 2010, on the evolutionary history and geographic spread of *Yersinia pestis*, the bacterium that causes bubonic plague. I had read some of Achtman’s earlier work on *Y. pestis*, but I heard of this particular piece, not through any academic grapevine, but because it was written up in the *New York Times* as a great new scientific discovery.

That’s right: the key insights on the history of the most lethal pandemic in world history were being credited not to historians, but to genomicists. I was hardly surprised by this, since I have been collaborating for the past several years with colleagues at my own institution, Arizona State University (ASU), in the field of bioarchaeology—an emerging field that combines the traditional techniques of palaeopathology (itself a branch of archaeology and physical anthropology) with other techniques for reconstructing the evolutionary and epidemiological history of disease. Although much of this work in the historicist sciences focuses on infectious diseases, my own discovery of the importance of this field came in 1999, when I stumbled on the book *Sex and Gender in Paleopathological Perspective*. This collection of essays proved transformative by giving me hope that there was some way to reconstruct the physical aspects of women’s health, a field to which I had already devoted two decades, but on which I could say little concrete beyond the meagre hints offered by the pre-modern texts on women’s medicine.

It was, therefore, my good fortune to find at ASU a group of interested and generous colleagues in bioarchaeology, who were themselves ‘going global’ in the questions they were raising about the history of diseases such as tuberculosis and leprosy. I’m still in the process of learning more about these techniques, the science of genomics, the statistical tools that are used to interpret vast quantities of data and many other things. I have learned enough to develop a healthy scepticism of certain methods, to draw back the curtain on some extravagant claims. But I have become convinced of one truth: that these historicist sciences offer the best opportunity I will have to develop a global dimension in my teaching of what I am now willing to call ‘the history of health’.

**Towards a global history of health**

I have always identified myself as a historian of medicine. I trained in a history of science programme and drew from that milieu the sense that both history of science and history of medicine were linear narratives that stretched from Greco-Roman antiquity up to the present day. True, those narratives were being profoundly contested for a variety of reasons when I started in graduate school in 1979. But the narratives remained resolutely ‘western’, and I taught the history of medicine in that same framework when I went off on my own career as an academic.

What also happened in those years was the explosion of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. I don’t remember precisely when in the early 1980s I first heard of AIDS, but it was certainly on no syllabus of any
course I ever took or assisted in prior to taking my PhD in 1985. I did not teach the full chronological course in history of medicine initially, but when I did start teaching it in the mid-1990s, I knew I had to include AIDS in my narrative. This proved more difficult than I imagined, since the narrative I had in my head for the history of medicine stopped in the mid-20th century, the ‘golden age’ of biomedicine. Was AIDS the tragic coda to that story? My clumsiness didn’t resolve itself after the commercial introduction of highly active retrovirals in 1997, which rendered HIV/AIDS into a ‘chronic’ condition in the developed western world. Every year, I ended the course by citing the latest UNAIDS report, but that simply exposed the hole in my paradigm. ‘And then there’s Africa’. That’s how I would end the course, the question of continuing massive mortality and social catastrophe hanging as an open question.

‘And then there’s Africa’. I found this defensible neither as a moral citizen nor as a historian. But how was I to make sense of the AIDS pandemic in all its global horror? A couple of years before

Historians’ skills as weavers of the fabric of historical narrative have never been more necessary

I discovered palaeopathology, I had also discovered medical anthropology. I had devoured the work of Marcia Inhorn for the insights it gave me in thinking about women’s health in a feminist framework. But I consumed the work of Paul Farmer because it gave me a way to see how a historicised framework of analysis could help explain why infectious disease is where it is.  

So when, several years ago, the then-director of ASU’s nascent global health programme asked me to pair up with a colleague in bioarchaeology and develop a course, ‘Global history of health’, I jumped at the chance. By great good fortune, this colleague, Rachel Scott, is a medievalist, too, and we did not debate for a moment about including in our course the two great defining diseases of the medieval world: plague and leprosy. Nor was there any debate that the course would embrace the perspectives and insights of genomics and palaepathology as well as history. The course would be truly global in its ambitions, examining eight major infectious diseases as they made their way from the late Pleistocene up to the present day. ‘And then there’s Africa’ became ‘And there has always been Africa’. Africa was no longer an afterthought; it was the epicentre of the history of human health – as central for the history of malaria as it was for HIV/AIDS. In addition it was suddenly just as easy to bring in Asia, Australia, the Pacific Islands and all of the Americas. The eight diseases we had chosen as the ‘paradigmatic’ diseases for our narrative sooner or later affected every inhabited continent and every human culture. The patterns of co-morbidity now became crystal clear.

Keeping it relevant

Peckham’s view of the history of medicine is as spatially global as the history of health I have sketched here. One of the reasons he seems to suggest for keeping his history ‘shallow’ (on a short time-frame), however, is his belief that history should have something to offer contemporary policy.

Could a ‘deep’ history of health be relevant to current health policy as well? Certainly, both a shallow and a deep narrative, for example, would emphasise the importance of vaccination programmes in controlling infectious diseases. The dramatic story of smallpox’s eradication will always stand as the signal achievement of mid-20th century health policy. But our deep narrative also suggests that eradication of such ancient diseases as malaria or tuberculosis, if that is ever to be achieved, will have to involve more environmental and behavioural changes than drug development. Leprosy is nearly eliminated, but if we are to use it as a model for policy measures for other ‘neglected tropical diseases’ (which is how the WHO currently categorises it), it behoves us better to understand how this ancient, slow-moving Old World disease became a global scourge within a few hundred years, and not just how dapsonse or the other drugs now being used to treat it were developed in the past few decades.

A history of medicine as a history of medical science, pharmaceutics or institutions will never be irrelevant. But it is not the only history we need now. Humans have been ‘global’ for millennia and ‘emerging diseases’ are not a new phenomenon. Genomicists are reconstructing the histories that pathogens have left in their genomes, while palaeopathologists reconstruct their effects on human bodies. Historians’ skills as weavers of the fabric of historical narrative have never been more necessary if we are to make these fragile remnants of the past tell their full stories.

‘History of medicine’ or ‘History of health?’

Monica H. Green is professor of history at Arizona State University, where she holds affiliate appointments in Women and Gender Studies, and the Program in Global Health in the School of Human Evolution and Social Change. Her books include: The Trotula: a medieval compendium of women’s medicine (2001); and Making women’s medicine masculine: the rise of male authority in pre-modern gynaecology (Oxford University Press, 2008).

All illustrations: Wikimedia commons


6 The eight diseases are: tuberculosis, malaria, leprosy, smallpox, plague, syphilis, cholera, and HIV/AIDS.
The Institute of Historical Research opened its doors 90 years ago on 8 July 1921. It had been almost two decades in gestation. The man who would become the first director of the Institute, A. F. Pollard, first broached the idea of ‘a post-graduate school of Historical Research in London’ in 1903 in his inaugural lecture as professor of constitutional history at University College London. He outlined his reasoning at some length. First, ‘there is no competition; for there is no real school of research in History at any English university’, a situation which is now hard to imagine. Second, even if there had been competition it would not have mattered, for the special opportunities which London enjoys should enable it ‘... to outdistance its rivals with ease’. He confidently asserted that ‘graduates who aspire to research in Modern History are compelled to resort to London’. The focus on the capital is one which would sit rather uneasily today, but there is no doubt that its central location, in what might be called the Bloomsbury humanities hub, has been important for the IHR’s long-term success. In essence, Pollard concluded, ‘Here is a void clamouring to be filled; herein lies the unique opportunity for a post-graduate school of research in London University’.

Pollard went on to consider how such a school of research might function, what might be its guiding principles. It seemed ‘obvious’ that it should focus primarily on English history, and within this particularly on naval history, the history of war, the history of London and 19th-century history. This reflects the approach of a different age, with different historiographical concerns, but it is notable that in relation to London history Pollard was keen that ‘this should not exclude the most recent times’. In his view, studying the history of London would underpin ‘the scientific investigation of its present-day problems of local government’. Without wishing to impose modern concerns on the early 20th century, one might view here something of the ‘impact agenda’ which has loomed so large in recent discussions about assessing humanities research.

Also crucial would be ‘competent instruction in the meaning and use of original sources’, which Pollard identified as being almost exclusively the remit of the Ecole des Chartes at the time. This concern with the training of early career researchers has remained central to the IHR’s strategic development, albeit extended from palaeography and diplomatic to include dealing with visual images, oral history, and born digital and digitised materials. One senses that Pollard would have approved of the online research training platform that is due to be launched at the end of March (see the History SPOT articles on pages 14 and 15).

Pollard concluded that it was not the role of the new institution simply to train historians, rather it had ‘an external duty to the nation’. It should ‘discover and spread historical truth’, thereby ‘expand[ing] the national mind’. With this in mind, ‘the nation … should provide it with funds’. Sixteen years later, in 1919, there was the first suggestion of state involvement, as the minister of education recommended that the University of London should consider ‘further provision for historical studies’ in the capital. A joint committee was appointed by UCL, King’s College London and the LSE to consider the way forward, and on 12 February 1920 it proposed establishing a centre for Advanced Historical Studies. This new institution would be paid for by launching an appeal for £20,000, which it was felt would be sufficient capital expenditure to maintain it for 10 years. The committee’s recommendations were approved by the University Senate on 25 February 1920. Many of the methods used to raise the required funding would be familiar to a modern-day university development office. An appeal committee, composed of the great and the good, was set up and the appeal was launched with a series of letters from its chair, the lord mayor of London, and the vice-chancellor of the University, a donors’ dinner was held at the Athenaeum to drum up support, and so on. The required funding was soon raised, with a single donor, Cecil Power, supplying the lion’s share, apparently enthused by the words of the minister of education, Herbert Fisher, at that original Athenaeum gathering.

The opening of the new Institute of Historical Research on Malet Street, in temporary ‘Tudor-style’ huts, was greeted with a fanfare of publicity. Herbert Fisher, now president of the board of trade, addressed assembled dignitaries and reports were carried by a wide range of newspapers, both national and local, from The Times to the Yorkshire Post. According to the report in the Morning Post, Fisher noted that, with the opening of the new facility, ‘The University of London ... would be recognised as a centre of historical training and education, richer in opportunities than Paris or Berlin’. Citing the example of Marshall Foch, he continued that ‘there was ... nothing more calculated to give confidence to a man who was called upon to handle great problems than a sound and thorough course of historical training’. The fledgling Institute had a lot to live up to.

It would not be long, however, before its future was threatened. In 1926 the government proposed to sell back to the original vendors, the Bedford trustees, the entire Bloomsbury site which had been set aside for a range of new University buildings. The IHR was given notice to quit and a vigorous press campaign followed. A memorandum produced by the Institute concluded forcefully that ‘it would ... be little short of a public scandal if an institution which already exists, and is full of life, should be involved in the failure of the wider [University of London] scheme’. The IHR was ultimately prevailed when the University took the decision instead to purchase the whole site. This move was announced on 11 May 1927, and welcomed by the Morning Post among
others: ‘Bloomsbury ... will become the academic centre of the Empire’. The acquisition paved the way for the building of the University Senate House, and in the summer of 1938 the Institute moved into temporary accommodation on the third floor, awaiting completion of the wing that it now occupies. Again there are contemporary resonances: in July of this year, the IHR will once more be moving to temporary quarters on the third floor of the south block, while its current home in the north block is renovated and refurbished.

Many of those activities with which the IHR is most closely associated date from the early years of its life. Perhaps most notably, the first Anglo-American Conference was held on 11–16 July 1921, just three days after the Institute itself came into existence. As with the discussions about the Institute’s founding, the conference attracted a level of press coverage of which we could only dream today. However, some very familiar themes emerged. The Daily Telegraph, for example put the gathering in the context of a recent delegation to the minister for education, during which H. G. Wells had observed ‘that the teaching of history, especially in elementary and secondary schools, was “thoroughly bad” and not educational in any sense’. Numbers of registered delegates would peak in 1967 at 759, but attendance in the pre-war period was very respectable. ‘Plenary’ conferences were held every five years, with four smaller, ‘interim’ meetings between each. The major conferences in 1926, 1931 and 1936 attracted 450, 550 and 655 registrations respectively.

The IHR’s renowned seminar series also began early. In 1924, Pollard described the ‘seventeen seminars on different aspects of medieval and modern, political and constitutional, social and economic, diplomatic, colonial, and American history’ already up and running. A glance at the list of convenors reveals such names as Eileen Power, R. H. Tawney and R. W. Seton-Watson.

The IHR’s house journal, Historical Research (then the Bulletin of the IHR), was launched similarly early, in 1923. In his introduction to the first issue, Pollard wrote that ‘[i]ts function is primarily, if not exclusively, to provide a record of the work done at the Institute itself, and of the various activities ... which it has called into existence, stimulated, or provided with a home ... This limitation of scope helps to avert competition with existing historical reviews. It would be of doubtful advantage to historical learning if each university attempted to establish an historical review of its own, and it is no part of the object of the Bulletin to publish work which already receives the hospitality of print elsewhere. It is not therefore proposed to include ... reviews of historical works’. Today, it is hard to imagine an approach more at odds with the sharing and republication of material that occurs online, to the undoubted benefit of academic research. It was, however, motivated by the admirable concern of a new organisation to collaborate and support rather than to dominate. The same introduction also includes an undertaking not to publish ‘historical articles except such as deal with the methods and means of historical research’. This was soon abandoned, and it is hard to see how the journal could have prospered otherwise, but the commitment not to publish reviews remained. The IHR only addressed this gap in its services to the profession with the launch of its online journal Reviews in History in 1996.

Finally, the IHR began the mammoth task of recording the development of the history profession, through the collection of information about historical research in progress and lecturers in UK universities. Lists of historical theses were printed in the Bulletin from 1930 onwards, before appearing as a separate publication in 1967. Information about university lecturers, ‘Teachers of History’, followed soon afterwards. In the Institute’s 90th year all of this information is being brought together, alongside details of digital research projects, new and forthcoming history books and journal articles and sources of funding for historians, in a relaunched History Online. As befits an organisation involved in the promotion of historical research, the IHR cherishes and makes use of its past.

*This essay owes a considerable debt to The History Laboratory: the Institute of Historical Research, 1921–96, comp. Debra J. Birch and Joyce M. Horn (1996), produced for the IHR’s 75th anniversary.
The Heinz Archive & Library at the National Portrait Gallery

Robin Francis, head of archive & library, National Portrait Gallery

During the House of Lords debate on 4 March 1856 about the 'expediency of forming a Gallery of the Portraits of the most eminent Persons in British History', Philip Henry Stanhope, 5th Earl Stanhope, read an extract from a letter by Thomas Carlyle. The eminent historian and biographer, whose book On heroes, hero-worship, and the heroic in history had appeared in 1841, wrote that for him 'It has been, and always is, one of the most primary wants to secure a bodily likeness of the personage inquired after – a good portrait if such exists; failing that, even an indifferent, if sincere one...' (Hansard, 4 March 1856, p. 1772). Leaving to one side the question of indifference, Carlyle's thinking about the relationship between biography and portraiture and between collective history and individual biography has influenced the course taken by the National Portrait Gallery from the time of its foundation in December 1856.

Stanhope's vision was achieved in an era of hero worship and emergent nationalism and the new Gallery took the form of an institution of public history. Subjects, or sitters, were considered on the grounds of their historical significance and celebrity and not on the artistic quality or character of a particular portrait. It fell to the first director, draughtsman and antiquary Sir George Scharf, to acquire authentic historical portraits of significant subjects for the collection, crucial to which was the establishment of an appropriate means of research. Scharf set about creating a resource specifically for the study of British portraiture. He travelled extensively, visiting country houses to catalogue their collections and search out potential acquisitions, and over the next 40 years he filled some 200 pocket sketchbooks with meticulous pencil drawings of portraits, each carefully annotated with precise details of colour and costume and extensively cross-referenced. His observations, however, were not confined just to portraits and he obsessively sketched and recorded everything that caught his eye. These materials, together with his journals, correspondence and annotated volumes from his personal library, are the bedrock of the Heinz Archive & Library, so-named because in 1993 it was able to move into refurbished accommodation adjacent to the Gallery thanks to the generous support of the Heinz Foundation. Sir George Scharf, first secretary and director of the National Portrait Gallery; oil on canvas by Walter William Ouless, 1885 (NPG 985)

Scharf's papers have recently been catalogued as part of a project funded by the National Cataloguing Grants Programme for Archives and a full-text searchable catalogue, including a selection of digital images, is available on the Gallery's website.

The premise behind the Archive & Library is relatively simple and although its collections fall into discrete categories, as described below, they serve a shared core purpose and are closely interwoven. The principal group of material forms an iconographical resource and, in its present form, has resolved itself into a dual system of portrait reproductions, one sequence arranged by sitter and the other by artist, which records British portraits in all media held in public and private collections around the world. The range of material is diverse and includes engraved and other printed versions, record photographs, assorted reproductions, illustrations snipped mainly from auction catalogues and photographs of contemporary subjects cut from newspapers and magazines. Over the years the resource has responded to the impact of photography, celebrity and the broadening base of achievement. Supplementing this is a vast index that provides references to portraits illustrated or recorded elsewhere in the Archive & Library. All the Royal Academy catalogues have been

Archives © Philip Waterman – Public Study Room of the Heinz Archive & Library. © Philip Waterman
indexed, for example, as has the whole of the *Illustrated London News*. These resources are estimated to contain over 1.6 million records and expand at a rate of 10,000 a year, tracking the whereabouts as well as recording the existence of portraits. The Gallery has pursued this task relentlessly for more than a century and among its records are images of portraits that are untraceable or no longer exist. Accessible to visitors in the Archive & Library study room, one of the main challenges for the future will be to make this unique resource digitally available to the wider research community.

A reference collection of 80,000 engraved portraits and portrait drawings augments the sitter and artist boxes. Acquired for iconographical research purposes, they are regularly drawn upon for exhibition and display and complement a separate collection of some 240,000 original photographic negatives and prints. These collections record likenesses of notable figures (and others) in British history who may not be eligible for the primary collection. They also allow the Gallery to represent specific aspects of portraiture. Within the Archive & Library, sets of prints, such as those of 17th-century mezzotint publishers Alexander Browne and John Smith, reflect the work of significant printmakers and provide evidence for the history of the portrait print. Making portraits is documented by means of preparatory studies and working drawings. The sketches of early 19th-century enamel painter Henry Bone serve as record copies of painted portraits and, squared for transfer, illustrate the process by which larger images were rendered in miniature. Silhouettes, including those of 20th-century Brighton-based cutter Hubert Leslie, reflect a particular fashion at the more affordable end of the market and the place of the amateur artist is represented by the likes of Lynton Strachey’s sister-in-law Ray (Rachel) Strachey. Caricature forms an important strand, providing contemporary commentary and valuable counterpoint to more conventional likenesses of the great and good. One of the finest discrete named collections in the Archive & Library is a handsomely bound eight-volume set of 900 hand-coloured etchings covering the period 1777-1811 by James Gillray. Fifty per cent of the reference collection has been catalogued and can be searched online; a hand list of named collections can be viewed through the Gallery’s website.

Archival materials are divided between those created by the Gallery and those acquired from external sources. The Gallery’s own records date back to its foundation in 1856 and document the history and provenance of its primary collection portraits and all of the business with which it is engaged, including its exhibitions and educational activities. With the explosion of born digital material, these records are now held in electronic as well as traditional formats and work is ongoing to ensure that all material of historical value is preserved for research purposes. In the meantime, as part of an ongoing cataloguing programme, approximately one third of the Gallery’s institutional records have been catalogued and can be searched online.

Manuscripts and archives are acquired from other sources when they have specific relevance to the study of British portraiture as evidence for the existence and provenance of portraits or the studio practice of artists and photographers. They fall into three main groups: artists’ account books, studio ledgers, sitter books, photographs, and correspondence; research papers of important scholars; and autograph letters and albums of autographs assembled by collectors. Notable among these are the account books of 18th-century artists Joseph Wright of Derby and George Romney; the studio correspondence of George Frederic Watts and Philip Alexius de László; and research papers belonging to early Hogarth scholars, John Nichols father and son. Although not yet catalogued, a complete hand list of Collected Archives held by the Gallery can be viewed online.

A working library supports these collections with some 35,000 books and 70 current periodicals titles and access to electronic resources, including the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, *JSTOR* and *Early English Books Online*. Its particular strengths include works about artists and photographers represented in the Gallery’s own collection and other significant figurative artists, monographs in the history of art and photography, exhibition catalogues, saleroom catalogues dating back to the 18th century and biographical reference materials. Books are arranged according to a simple subject-based classification scheme and the majority are on open shelves. Published materials acquired after 1994, representing about a fifth of the holdings, can be searched online through the Gallery website and, since January 2011, via the national electronic union catalogue of national, academic and specialist library collections COPAC.

It was said in the past that if there was no record of a particular portrait in the Archive & Library then it would probably be fairly difficult to trace. The internet may have changed this to some extent but it is still true that the resources of the Archive & Library form the largest and most comprehensive survey of British portraiture anywhere in the world. Few significant portraits have been entirely missed and, while their current whereabouts may not always be known, researchers should be able to find some record or reproduction of them. The thoroughness with which the Archive & Library continues to record portraits, and increasingly to reflect contemporary issues such as diversity, identity and new forms of representation, is crucial to the work of the Gallery. At the same time, portraits provide more than likeness: they denote status, power and wealth; they are a valuable source of information for dress and fashion and give insight into personality and psychology. They may be subject to artistic interpretation (and ability) but by their very nature and composition, combined with the codes, constraints and demography of historical portraiture, they are a rich source of visual evidence for historical research.

The Heinz Archive & Library is located in Orange Street and is open to the public free of charge four days a week (Tuesday to Friday) by appointment (tel: 020 7321 6617; email: archive@npg.org.uk). An enquiry service is provided by letter and email (archiveenquiry@npg.org.uk). For more information please visit the National Portrait Gallery website: www.npg.org.uk/research/archive.
Digital history: podcasting at the IHR

George Campbell Gosling, outgoing seminar convenor for the Voluntary Action History Society, discusses the introduction of podcasting at the IHR

Two years ago I was a first-year research student and had recently become organiser of the Voluntary Action History Society’s monthly seminars at the IHR. At the annual meeting of seminar convenors, the possibility was raised that some of the IHR’s seminars might be recorded and made available to online listeners as podcasts.

Immediately this struck me as a great idea. At the time I was living in London, studying in Oxford and doing most of my research in Bristol. So I know only too well the annoyance of not being able to get to all the seminars, workshops and conferences taking place. Moreover, the IHR is the national centre for the advanced study of history. Few are likely to travel to London from Durham or Aberdeen to hear a 45-minute paper, however good the speaker.

The VAHS had the same problem. Our biennial conferences attract speakers from across the UK, as well as notable numbers from Canada and Australia. Both our conferences and our regular themed New Researcher workshops are held at various locations around the country. Our monthly seminars, however, are held in London at the IHR. By offering seminars as podcasts online, we could offer our members around the country and the globe a much-improved service in research dissemination.

From the perspective of both the IHR and the VAHS, we wanted to get our excellent programme of research seminars out to as wide an audience as possible. Yet I was surprised to find that no seminar group had volunteered to pilot the IHR’s podcasting scheme. We gladly obliged.

In September 2009, working closely with the publications team, we became the first of the IHR’s seminar series to offer podcasts. These found an audience immediately, and our collection of podcasts on the IHR website receives more than 60 visitors each month on average. This is more than treble the number attending the seminars in person, and since they are only in term-time amounts to more than a five-fold increase in our audience.

This is, of course, not only an advantage for us as an organisation, but an opportunity for the speaker. Most of us are familiar with the delays involved in publishing our research in journals, not to mention edited volumes. Meanwhile, budgetary constraints mean university library collections are restricted both in print and online. In this climate, research dissemination by these traditional means is an ever-harder task. Put simply, podcasting makes sense.

This is not simply a matter of convenience today, but an opportunity to build an archive for future generations, as has been pointed out by the VAHS chair, Peter Grant: “The podcasts have been a great addition to the VAHS seminars. They’ve enabled people from all over the UK and abroad to hear papers that would have been impossible for them to attend in person. It also provides a valuable archive for future generations; just imagine how it would be for us to be able to hear the great historians of the past give ‘live’ lectures.”

This is all the more important for an organisation like the VAHS, which aims to build an academic community around research in a particular field of history. Many of those researching in this area come from policy backgrounds or are voluntary sector practitioners. For them to be able to access an audio archive of themed historical research and debate is no small advance.

None of this is to say that there are not difficulties in setting up and running such a scheme; however, these have been made all the easier by working with the IHR’s team. The necessary paperwork has been drawn up and equipment provided. Where there have been any concerns, we have favoured the simplest solution. So we do not edit the recordings unless the speaker specifically asks us to do so. And, for a number of reasons, we decided not to record the questions at the end of the seminar, only the paper itself. All in all, it has been a remarkably pain-free business and has been much-appreciated by our speakers and members.

Two years on, I am handing over to a new VAHS seminar convenor, but the podcasts have proved their worth and will continue. In the meantime, a number of other IHR seminar groups have begun offering podcasts as well. With the piloting of the IHR’s History SPOT (Seminar Podcasts and Online Training) programme, we can expect a lot more advances in the next two years.
In March 2011 the IHR will be launching a new online platform to host its research seminar podcasts. History SPOT (Seminar Podcasts and Online Training) will bring together two of the IHR’s core areas of expertise, its research seminar and research training programmes. We believe that this is an exciting development not only because for the first time our research seminars and training materials will be accessible to a worldwide audience but because we will have a custom-built platform to make better use of these resources.

Each seminar group will have a space where they can expand upon their seminars; discuss and collaborate with researchers from across the globe; and update interested parties on forthcoming events or items of interest. Users will be able to search across podcasts and draw them together on their own profile pages, enabling them easily to find useful resources and others to recognise similarity of interests. A paper given at the IHR can receive not only global exposure but can lead to increased input and discussion of benefit to everyone involved. We believe that the future of seminar podcasting needs to be more interactive if it is to become a truly useful means for spreading knowledge.

As George Gosling has explained (see p. 14) the Voluntary Action History seminar group was the first seminar recorded by the IHR back in September 2009. They have since become one of our most regular contributors to our podcast series. However, other groups have since also taken part. So far we have podcasts from Sports and Leisure History; Military History; British History in the Long 18th Century; Psychoanalysis and History; Philosophy of History; Metropolitan History; and the History of Libraries seminar groups. As of 1 April 2011 we have uploaded podcasts of 59 seminar sessions, two lectures and two conferences. We have also run two highly successful live streamed video events: one for the Metropolitan History and British History in the Long 18th Century joint seminar and one for the Archives & Society seminar. In these sessions those watching live were able to ask questions of the speaker in the post-paper discussion. We continue to grow and in the future we will add additional live events and screen cast editions of several seminar podcasts (where audio and slide show presentations are synched together).

In addition, History SPOT presents elements from our postgraduate research training courses available, for free, in the form of research training handbooks (HRH). Each handbook covers an element of digital research training and can be used as a guide or as a learning aid. These handbooks include interactive elements, exercises and links to other resources.

To my knowledge the IHR is the only UK institution (and possibly worldwide) that is offering these types of resources together intended for an academic audience rather than as a means for undergraduate tuition. It is our belief that History SPOT can help to make research training materials and podcasted seminars a more useful resource for historians.

We hope that these developments will provide greater exposure for the IHR research seminars and training courses allowing them to play an even more important role in the discipline as a whole.

For further details, see the project blog: http://ihrprojects.wordpress.com where, amongst other updates, I provide a brief summary of all our latest podcasts in the SPOT Newsletter.

Matt Phillpott is project officer for the IHR Digital project History SPOT
Friends of the IHR, Annual General Meeting

At their Annual General Meeting, held on 29 September 2010, the Friends welcomed guest speaker Dr Lawrence Goldman of St Peter’s College, University of Oxford. His topic was ‘Who are the British? The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography and national identity’. The 80 Friends who attended unanimously agreed to support four areas of IHR activity, dispersing funds totalling £40,000:

- £5,000 was allocated for ‘the IHR at 90’ series of events and exhibition;
- £12,500 for the second phase of Making History;
- £12,500 for the Anglo-American conference series;
- £10,000 for endowment.

Dr Linda Clark, an editor of the History of Parliament project and associate fellow of the IHR, was elected as a new member of the Friends Committee, while Dr Roland Quinault, senior fellow of the IHR, is on sabbatical this year as Fulbright-Robertson visiting professor in British history at Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri. Committee chair, Professor Caroline Barron, has also joined the IHR Trust board. Professor Barron will be representing Friends’ interests, as well as assisting the Trust more generally with her broad academic, administrative and fundraising experience.

IHR Annual Fund

2010 marked the first year of the IHR Annual Fund, which was set up to provide a steady stream of much-needed unrestricted income. Our inaugural year turned out to be a great success as the Fund raised over £30,000 and helped support numerous projects around the Institute.

As 2011 marks the IHR’s 90th anniversary, we are running a special appeal with the aim of reaching a target of £90,000. To encourage new donors and warmly thank all who have already given, IHR director Professor Miles Taylor will be hosting a special reception on Friday 8 July in the grand setting of the Chancellor’s Hall. The day marks the IHR’s actual birthday - the day on which doors opened for the very first time in 1921. Also in attendance will be some very special guests who will reflect on the IHR and what it means to them.

It is not too late to give and receive your special invitation! Gifts of any size are welcome and greatly appreciated.

Matched funding

Time is running out to have your gifts enhanced by the government’s special matched funding scheme. The programme, which adds 50 per cent to all donations, finishes at the end of July 2011. There has never been a better time to give and help us to make the most of this opportunity.

Q&A with an IHR supporter

We will be featuring supporters of the IHR in future editions of Past and Future, in order to learn more about why they feel supporting the IHR is worthwhile. One of our major donors, Conor Kehoe, has kindly agreed to get the ball rolling for us. If you would like to participate in the future, please get in touch with Heather Dwyer.

How did you first hear about the IHR?

When my wife was doing her MA in Contemporary British History, six or seven years ago.

What first made you decide to give to the IHR?

My country (Ireland) is steeped in history and, indeed, history is called upon to justify many dubious acts. Indeed, not only to justify such acts, but to provide the motivation and emotion to execute them. I have always seen history as one of the more potent tools of power. Not surprisingly, those in power, or hoping to gain power, will often distort history to support their ends. Accurate, thoughtful and balanced historical research is vital for the health of democracies - if only to avoid it being hijacked! This motivated my giving.

Why do you continue to support the IHR?

For the same reason that I started, and for the delightful dinners the IHR organises with leading historians.

Biography

Conor Kehoe is a senior partner at McKinsey and Company, the international management consultancy. He was previously chairman of one of Granada Group Plc’s four divisions. An engineering graduate of Trinity College in his native Dublin, he studied business administration at INSEAD and has lived in France, Ireland and the UK.

Sponsor a seminar!

The IHR is well known for hosting some 60 seminars covering a wide variety of historical periods, places and topics, a number which is consistently growing. However, over the past 10 years the amount of funding available for the IHR to disburse to seminars has reduced by 50 per cent.

Despite this, we have managed to maintain the level of funding awarded to each seminar, although of course these funds are worth less today than they were 10 years ago. This funding is not nearly enough to cover travel costs for guest speakers and other incidental expenses, and so we are seeking additional support to ensure that convenors are able to deliver the best possible programmes in the future.

To fully sponsor a seminar costs £1,000 per annum. Crediting is available on the IHR website, noticeboard, and at the seminars themselves. For more information, please contact Heather Dwyer in the Development Office: 020 7862 8807 heather.dwyer@sas.ac.uk.

The Royal Historical Society International Historical Congress in 1913: a pre-cursor to the Anglo-American.
A Friend remembers: the IHR then and now

Maria Perry, a Friend of the IHR, entered Somerville College, Oxford to read history. Maria has written two books on Tudor history and is currently researching a biography of Queen Charlotte.

Geoffrey Elton made me join the Institute in 1985. He was regius professor of modern history at the University of Cambridge and later knighted. As the doyen of 16th-century studies, he was revered for England under the Tudors. Almost everyone who did O-Level history had read it. It was a time when history was taught automatically to undergraduates, the topic was well understood that there had been a ‘Tudor revolution’ in government, due to the increasing importance of parliamentary statute. Described by Trevor-Roper as ‘a historian of formidable erudition and emphatic views’, Elton had ‘upset old orthodoxies and generated active controversies’. Those controversies were to rage for the remainder of the 20th century and when they gave rise to debate in the IHR common room, the ladies joined battle.

‘Post-feminist feminism’ in its present form was not particularly rampant. Some ladies still changed for dinner, but I was too shy to voice opinions at the IHR, until Elton’s dashing young pupil Dr David Starkey bade me not to fear ‘the Harpies of the Tea Room’. Their bark, he said, was worse than their bite. ‘The tea room’ did not then serve cooked lunches or hot breakfast, though by the 1990s, sandwiches and flapjacks had appeared. Many people lunched in the Senate House restaurant, meeting luminaries from other disciplines. Institute members were also allowed to borrow books from the Senate House Library, but as Dr Judith Rowbotham, reader in historical criminal justice studies at Nottingham Trent University, recalls, ‘the atmosphere of that tea room of shabby memory was so enriching’. It was always full of senior research fellows instructing their doctoral pupils. Judith, then at SOAS, marvelled too at ‘the sheer approachability’ of the Institute’s pipe-smoking director, Michael Thompson. ‘You saw the staff every tea-time; the common room was alive with the spirit of debate’.

Conrad Russell, grandson of the philosopher Bertrand, chaired the Tudor seminars. Professor of British history at King’s College London, he inherited the unwieldy title ‘Professor the Earl’ when his half-brother died. Conrad immediately took his seat as a hereditary peer, dividing his time between debates in the upper house and his pupils at King’s. His wife, Elizabeth, organised seminars at the IHR and together they endowed the Conrad and Elizabeth Russell Postgraduate Fund. Starkey was by then veering towards a career in the media. He was captivated by ‘court studies’. Fashions in history change and the old orthodoxies were refreshingly challenged.

The number and variety of IHR seminars in the 1980s and 1990s was prodigious. Every aspect of history seemed accessible. On the European side, the late Robert Oresko’s classes on Italian history and culture won with Dr Roger Mettam’s ‘Fridays’, encompassing the broader sweep of European history. Judith Rowbotham – always arriving in a hat, as though en route for Ascot – remembers another incipient eminence: ‘A young man called Cannadine’, observed ‘sitting at Michael Thompson’s feet’ and remarking, ‘I should like to be director of this place one day’. He was – from 1998 to 2003, when he founded, and occupied, the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother chair of British history. The seminars also engendered romance. Alice Prochaska met her husband, Frank, when attending Professor Christie’s 18th-century history series. Frank was a research fellow from Northwestern University in Illinois. Alice later ran her own IHR seminars on 20th-century British history. Now principal of Somerville College, Oxford, and a trustee of the IHR Trust, she has treasured memories of inviting politicians and protagonists to the Institute. On one occasion the ‘fighters’, both communist and fascist, from the 1936 ‘Battle of Cable Street’ assembled, recalling how Oswald Mosley’s blackshirts provoked riots and affrays, marching through the East End, while residents erected barricades.

The Institute’s librarians did (and do) valiant work. It was rare to find a volume misplaced in the days when card indexes preceded computers. Many people felt the retirement of Robert Lyons marked the end of an era, but kind Kate Wilcox continues to cherish dinosaurs like myself, against IT allergies. Private research was greatly respected. Joan Henderson, who worked with Neale on Elizabeth’s parliaments, made an extensive study of Robert Beale, an under-publicised Tudor privy councillor. Always ‘Miss Henderson’, scorning the ‘vulgar Ms’, she was a gentle, incisive voice to be reckoned with. No ‘Harpy’; just indisputably right.

The cast of IHR characters seems inexhaustible, likewise the eras spanned. The distinguished medievalist David Bates succeeded Professor Cannadine as director, stretching our memories back to Domesday and 1066, while the present director Miles Taylor plans (with Victorian breadth of vision) to catapult us further into the 21st century, athenwart an impressive development project. £3.5 million is needed to modernise the buildings and enhance study programmes. A lecture theatre, IT suite and exhibition gallery are envisaged. Most fitting of all in the heart of Bloomsbury, there may one day be a chair in the history of London.
The History PhD: past, present and future

Melodee Beals, academic co-ordinator, History Subject Centre

As part of the IHR @ 90 celebrations, the IHR and the History Subject Centre co-hosted a conference on the history PhD.

It has been 90 years since the first PhDs in history were awarded in the UK and a great deal has changed in higher education in the time. This one-day conference therefore offered a welcome respite from busy academic lives to contemplate and discuss these changes and the future paths the doctorate might yet take.

The event was well attended by a wide range of individuals including established academics, early career researchers and representatives from research councils and other partners in UK higher education. But of most importance, perhaps, was the significant number of current postgraduates, full- and part-time, self- and council-funded, who had come to the event to learn more about their place in the wider academic universe.

The day was divided into three main sessions – The Past, the Present and the Future – concluding with a roundtable discussion on the present condition of postgraduate training and its future paths the doctorate might yet take.

The event was capped off by a closing session full circle, Gestrich again brought our attention to comparisons with German postgraduate programmes. The role of the supervisor, he argued, was fundamentally different in the two nations, and this had a profound impact on the nature of the training and scholarly outputs of the students. As we develop new modes and methods of postgraduate training, the roles of supervision and external examining are to be carefully considered. Newman, on the other hand, focused on the traditional research and emerging digital skills that future postgraduates would have to obtain. Students, she argued, are very good at using the internet, but still lack the necessary acumen to research with the internet because of issues of immediacy and information overload; they cannot imagine a world where information is not immediately accessible and authoritative. Paul Meller closed with a discussion of the future of ESRC funding and the creation of pathways and postgraduate training units, which would hopefully promote interdisciplinary work and inter-university collaboration. This engendered a vigorous discussion on the relative benefits, social as well as financial, of concentrating funding into key locales.

The final session, The Future of the History PhD, was undertaken by Andreas Gestrich (German Historical Institute), Joanna Newman (British Library) and Paul Meller (ESRC). Bringing the day’s discussion full circle, Gestrich again brought our attention to comparisons with German postgraduate programmes. The role of the supervisor, he argued, was fundamentally different in the two nations, and this had a profound impact on the nature of the training and scholarly outputs of the students. As we develop new modes and methods of postgraduate training, the roles of supervision and external examining are to be carefully considered. Newman, on the other hand, focused on the traditional research and emerging digital skills that future postgraduates would have to obtain. Students, she argued, are very good at using the internet, but still lack the necessary acumen to research with the internet because of issues of immediacy and information overload; they cannot imagine a world where information is not immediately accessible and authoritative. Paul Meller closed with a discussion of the future of ESRC funding and the creation of pathways and postgraduate training units, which would hopefully promote interdisciplinary work and inter-university collaboration. This engendered a vigorous discussion on the relative benefits, social as well as financial, of concentrating funding into key locales.

The event was capped off by a closing roundtable, which brought together several of the points from the day for further discussion. Most important of these was the idea that the discussion was far from over; more research, perhaps even scholarly research, should be done into the history of the PhD and its role in the future of academia.
For UK universities all roads seem to lead to China these days. Whilst we are falling on hard times in the West, the Chinese economy, together with its higher education system, are experiencing unprecedented growth. Enterprising British universities have set up campuses in China, and many programmes in the UK – in economics, engineering and computer science – are seeing record enrolment from Chinese students, especially at the Master’s level. Since arriving at the IHR in 2008, I have been keen to develop our profile in Asian universities. So it was with great pleasure that I accepted the invitation to spend part of last October guest lecturing in Nanjing University, Fudan (Shanghai) and the PKU (Beijing’s main university).

Seldom have I taught such interesting and interested students. I spent a particularly memorable week in the late autumnal warmth of Nanjing, enjoying the local cuisine (delicious duck and lotus roots) and daily tours around the city. Like every modern Chinese city, Nanjing is in the wave of a construction boom. Morning birdsong competed with the noise of cranes winching into place and the dull thud of the first pile-drive of the day. But Nanjing is an old city too: an economic powerhouse some 400 years ago, and over the last millennium a centre of Confucian learning. More recently, the city was forever scarred by the terrible ordeal of the Japanese occupation in the 1930s.

Nanjing’s history department is situated in a leafy, older campus in the town centre. It has a programme of 18 faculty and 60 Master’s students taking world and British history, and their appetite for modern British history was typical of what I experienced elsewhere. The younger generation of Chinese scholars have good English language skills, a thirst for empirical research, and a huge respect for the Anglophone historical tradition. I found the humanities library at Nanjing remarkably well-stocked with key and up-to-date English-language monographs and surveys. I felt curiously at home, and didn’t have to ponder too hard to find the reason. Britain presents an optic through which modern China can understand its own fast growth and its changing global role. The British industrial revolution and the growth of towns and large cities, the Victorian expansion of empire both by annexation and by trade, the spread of the rule of law and the rolling out of democracy after 1832, and the struggles between religion and science in the age of Darwin all seem instructive to Chinese teachers and students as they seek to locate their own present within a typology from the past.

Surprisingly, I found less interest – even in the great former imperial capital of Nanjing – in a historical phenomenon that has exercised Western scholars for the last decade or so, that is, the ‘great divergence’ between China and the West which set in around the 17th century. I was also struck by how little, for a technologically proficient people, Chinese faculty and students knew about internet resources for historians. Clearly, we need to learn more about our different historiographies and ways of teaching and doing research. And with that in mind, I was delighted to come away from all three Chinese universities with collaboration agreements with the IHR: for future staff and student exchange, a joint research project, and a joint Master’s programme (Nanjing), an annual summer school teaching modern history (Fudan), and a second conference of Chinese and British historians (PKU) to follow on from our successful event in Beijing in 2009.

Seventy-five years ago, Jiang Mengyin, one of the first and finest scholars of Anglo-Chinese history, studied in the IHR, before returning to a distinguished professorial career at Nanjing. It is so very gratifying to know that those links are now re-established, and I look forward to updating readers on the progress of these collaborations in future issues.
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.

Seminars at the IHR

- American history
  - Thursday, 5.30pm
- Archives and society
  - Tuesday, 5.30pm
- British history 1815–1945
  - Thursday, 5.00pm
- British history in the 17th century
  - Thursday, 5.15pm
- British history in the long 18th century
  - Wednesday, 5.15pm
- British maritime history
  - Tuesday, 5.15pm
- Christian missions in global history
  - Tuesday, 5.30pm
- Collecting & display (100 BC to AD 1700)
  - Monday, 6.00pm
- Colonial science and its histories
  - Friday, 5.00pm
- Comparative histories of Asia
  - Thursday, 5.30pm
- Contemporary British history
  - Wednesday, 5.00pm
- Conversations and disputation
  - TBC, 4.30pm
- Crusades and the Latin East
  - Monday, 5.00pm
- Earlier Middle Ages
  - Wednesday, 5.30pm
- Early modern material cultures
  - Wednesday, 5.00pm
- Economic and social history of the pre-modern world, 1500–1800
  - Friday, 5.15pm
- Education in the long 18th century
  - Saturday, 2.00pm
- European history 1150–1550
  - Thursday, 5.30pm
- European history 1500–1800
  - Monday, 5.00pm
- Film history
  - Thursday, 5.30pm
- History of education
  - Thursday, 5.30pm
- History of gardens and landscapes
  - Friday, 5.30pm
- History of libraries
  - Tuesday, 5.30pm
- History of political ideas
  - Wednesday, 5.00pm
- Imperial and world history
  - Monday, 5.00pm
- International history
  - Tuesday, 6.00pm
- Jewish history
  - Tuesday, 5.00pm
- Knowledge and society
  - Tuesday, 4.00pm
- Late medieval and early modern Italy
  - Thursday, 5.00pm
- Late medieval seminar
  - Friday, 5.30pm
- Life-cycles
  - Tuesday, 5.15pm
- Locality and region
  - Tuesday, 5.15pm
- London Group of Historical Geographers
  - Tuesday, 5.00pm
- London Society for Medieval Studies
  - Tuesday, 7.00pm
- Low Countries history
  - Friday, 5.00pm
- Marxism in culture
  - Friday, 5.30pm
- Medieval and Tudor London
  - Thursday, 5.15pm
- Metropolitan history
  - Wednesday, 5.30pm
- Modern German history
  - Thursday, 5.30pm
- Modern Italian history
  - Wednesday, 5.30pm
- Modern religious history
  - Wednesday, 5.15pm
- Music in Britain
  - Monday, 5.15pm
- Parliaments, representation and society
  - Tuesday, 5.15pm
- Philosophy of history
  - Thursday, 5.30pm
- Postgraduate seminar
  - Thursday, 5.30pm
- Psychoanalysis and history
  - Wednesday, 5.30pm
- Reconfiguring the British: nation, empire, world 1600–1900
  - Thursday, 5.30pm
- Religious history of Britain 1500–1800
  - Tuesday, 5.00pm
- Rethinking modern Europe
  - Wednesday, 5.30pm
- Socialist history
  - Monday, 5.30pm
- Society, culture and belief 1500–1800
  - Thursday, 5.30pm
- Sport and leisure history
  - Monday, 5.15pm
- Tudor and Stuart history
  - Monday, 5.15pm
- Voluntary action history
  - Monday, 5.30pm
- Women's history
  - Friday, 5.15pm
Past and Future

Time well spent

Master’s student Kathleen McIlvenna reflects on her time so far at the IHR

Deciding to undertake a Master’s degree was quite a difficult decision. Considering the time and money involved, I was determined to choose the right course for me: a course that would enable me to explore the areas of history I was most interested in and also help me to develop skills that could further a career, preferably in the museum sector.

I had toyed with the idea of doing a Master’s since graduating with my BA in History from the University of Liverpool in 2005, but it was really the competition in the job market and finding the MA in Historical Research at the IHR that made me take the leap. I liked the look of this Master’s course as there was a focus on investigation and developing historical research skills through the two taught modules, and also a freedom of choice over the topics for the research project and dissertation. Being at the IHR, I would have access to the expertise and the training programmes, of which enrolment in at least one was part of the course. It sounded perfect, so I applied and started my full-time course in October 2010.

At first it was difficult to get back into the discipline of reading for hours at a time, and I had forgotten how tiring just thinking could be! Five months later I am relishing the opportunity to learn how historians have been researching their subject over the years, and to examine the more recent developments and techniques. I found our seminar on maps particularly interesting, and am constantly fascinated by how historians can use and engage with the internet and social media.

As the IHR is also the base for the Victoria County History and the Centre for Metropolitan History, I have been furthering my knowledge of local history and that of London in particular. In my spare time I volunteer for a local history society, and it is wonderful to learn both about its origins and those of small organisations or individuals simply interested in the history that surrounded them.

Another part of my course that I particularly enjoy is the field trips. They give me and my fellow students a chance to learn on our feet, opening up alternative archives and avenues of study. Having previously worked in a museum, I have really enjoyed visiting the Wellcome Collection and the V&A, which have helped me think more deeply about institutions which collect objects, asking why they assemble certain artefacts and why they lay out their collections in a particular way.

Visual sources and how they are used really interest me, and I look forward to the IHR training course on this topic later this year. I have decided to take full advantage of the training courses on offer and am particularly excited about attending the ‘Visual sources in landscape and townscape’ at the University of Leicester.

One benefit of studying at the IHR that I hadn’t considered before starting here is the evening seminars. I admit that I haven’t gone to as many as I would have liked, but I was astounded at the number held and breadth of topics covered. It’s a brilliant opportunity to learn more about areas that are currently being studied and I have found that more than one has been helpful for my seminars as well as inspirational for future work. I wish all could be made into podcasts, and then I’d never miss any ever again!

I have only been in the world of academic history and part of the IHR for five months, but I already feel like I have learnt so much. Being here has already thrown up many opportunities to learn more about the craft of history as well as the academic world itself. But I have to remember that I am not even half way through, and with deadlines in sight, I have to start making decisions about topics for my future research project and dissertation. This is when the IHR really come into its own as a base for study. I am only starting to discover the extent of the sources available in the IHR library, and the wealth of knowledge that has been accumulated through past projects and collaborations. With the guidance and advice of the staff at the IHR, I am sure that I’ll find the right topics to investigate. I hope to exercise my new skills and knowledge and finish a better historian. In any case, I know that I’ve got some especially exciting months of discovery ahead of me and I can’t wait!
Postgraduate research training courses 2010-11

Each year the IHR runs a wide-ranging and extensive programme of training in skills for historical researchers from universities throughout the UK. Using a range of teaching approaches (workshops, seminars, lectures, hands-on practicals and visits), important and specialised skills are explained and explored by expert practitioners. Courses are short (from one day to one term), cover the whole range of necessary skills - from archival use and languages to databases and the internet - and are priced to be within students' means.

Archival research skills

Methods and sources for historical research
11-15 April 2011 / 4-8 July 2011
This long-standing course is an introduction to finding and using primary sources for research in modern British, Irish and colonial history. It will include visits to the British Library, the National Archives, the Wellcome Institute and the House of Lords Record Office, amongst others. Fee: £200

Information technology courses

Databases for historians
14-17 June 2011
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 is needed apart from an understanding of historical analysis. 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

Visual sources for historians

 Tuesdays, 3-31 May 2011
An introduction to the use of art, photography, film and other visual sources by historians (post-1500). Through lectures, discussion and visits, the course will explore films, paintings, photographs, architecture and design as historical sources, as well as provide an introduction to particular items both in situ and held in archives and libraries. Fee: £200

General historical skills

Dealing with the media
Spring 2011: TBC
Historians are increasingly called upon by print and broadcast media for expert comment and opinion. This course throws open the enormous range of opportunities offered by the mass media's interest in history and teaches the skills and techniques academics need to make the most of it. Fee: £300

Explanatory paradigms: an introduction to historical theory

Thursdays, 5 May-14 July 2011
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

Internet sources for historical Research
7 March 2011 / 7 June 2011
This course provides an intensive introduction to using 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 the 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

Qualitative data analysis workshop
16 May 2011: TBC
Researchers in the social sciences and humanities are increasingly using computers to manage, organise and analyse non-numerical data from textual sources. This one-day workshop introduces historians to this rapidly growing field and will furnish participants with a good working grasp of the NVivo 8 software package and its uses for all historical research projects. Fee: £120

GIS for historians

3-6 May 2011
A four-day practical course in using Geographical Information Systems for historical projects. Students will gain both a strong working knowledge of the software and a good theoretical understanding of the issues involved in applying GIS to historical problems. Fee: £300

For further information and application forms, see www.history.ac.uk/research-training or contact Dr Simon Trafford, Institute of Historical Research, University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU (ihr.training@sas.ac.uk).
Anglo-American Conference 2011: 
*Health in History*

29th June - 1st July 2011 
Brunei Gallery, SOAS

Plenary lecturers include David Arnold, Joanna Bourke, Samuel Cohn, Mary Fissell, Monica Green, Helen King and Paul Starr.

The Conference will also feature a Publishers’ Fair and a Policy Forum with key academic and professional health experts.

Registrations open on 1st March 2011. For more information please contact healthinhistory@sas.ac.uk or visit www.history.ac.uk/aac2011.
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