I am writing this letter in September 2010, regretting the absence of a crystal ball.

We can anticipate bad news for the higher education sector in the government’s autumn Comprehensive Spending Review - but quite how bad is currently impossible to predict. We can only hope that government has listened to arguments that we and others have made about the importance of high-quality work in the arts, humanities and social sciences to the economic as well as the cultural well-being of the country. But I imagine we will have a fight on our hands.

In this ‘phoney war’ atmosphere of the summer of 2010 - which will have dissipated by the time this Newsletter is in the hands of readers - I would like to bring to your attention an issue which will occupy much less news-space than spending cuts but which may adversely affect an important feature of the research culture of History in this country. It is, happily, a problem that we can probably do something about: the funding of postgraduate research visits overseas.

In his recent book, *Cosmopolitan Islanders*, Richard Evans highlights the large proportion of colleagues in British universities engaged in research on non-British history. Sheaves of statistics in hand, he demonstrates how distinctive this focus on ‘non-native’ history is in Britain in comparison with other historical cultures in Europe and North America.

It is viewed as one of the strengths of History not only within but also outside this country. One thinks, for example, of the high reputation in their countries of choice enjoyed by scholars such as Denis Mack Smith, Richard Cobb, Raymond Carr, Denis Brogan, Ian Kershaw and others.

This distinctive feature of British historical culture depends on close and prolonged contact with other countries. Evans’s book provides eloquent testimony from practising historians of how important early, first-hand contact with their chosen country was.

For the most part, these overseas visits, made while they were research students, were funded primarily by our research councils. The AHRC, for example, has been consistently sympathetic in its dealings with students working on foreign cultures, providing additional funding to allow them to spend much of the second year of their studies overseas.
It is worrying therefore to note that this practice is now changing. This summer, the AHRC announced that it will devolve responsibility for the disbursement of sums for such visits onto HEIs which hold Studentships, including the holders of Postgraduate Block Grant Partnerships.

The amount provided for study visits is calculated on the basis of £200 per student per year, though it is not intended that the funding is allocated in this way to individual students. Rather, the AHRC expects the HEI to take the decision as to how the overall funding provided for research travel is allocated to students.

Even so, spread thinly, this would amount to a conference or two for all students - peanuts all round, then. It is only by not spreading it thinly that the considerable cost of a prolonged research visit in foreign archives can be protected for those whose work really depends on it.

The British PhD is already under international pressure because of our tough rules about dissertation completion. Failure to support students conducting research abroad at adequate financial levels will reduce the length of their contact time with foreign cultures - and adversely affect the international quality of their work.

There will be bigger battles to fight from autumn 2010, no doubt. But ensuring that the systems used to fund overseas research visits channel resources to those students whose work requires it is not an unimportant issue for the future health of high quality research in this country.

The Society will be making representations to the AHRC about such funding arrangements as the latter starts to look at its postgraduate regime beyond the tenure of the Block Grant Partnership contracts.

In the interim, I call on all colleagues who work in universities which benefit from AHRC postgraduate funding to do their level best to ensure rules are introduced within their institutions that protect quality in the ways indicated - all the more so at a time when quality will be generally under threat.

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**Society News**

**Vanessa Harding**  
Birkbeck College  
University of London  
Honorary Secretary

The President, the Honorary Secretary, and Vice-Presidents Professor Margot Finn and Professor George Bernard represented the Society at a lively symposium organised by the Centre for the Social History of Health and Healthcare of Glasgow Caledonian and Strathclyde Universities.

The symposium, on 14 April, entitled ‘Science and the Human Subject in History’, was supported by the Society as part of our programme of regional symposia and visits.

The Society sponsored the keynote lecture from Professor Hal Cook of Brown University on ‘Medical Specifics and the Reconfiguration of the Body in Early Modern Europe’. Professor Cook’s paper will be published in *Transactions* in 2011.

We were also able to meet and talk with academic and research staff associated with the Centre and postgraduate research students from both universities, and were later entertained to a reception and dinner on behalf of Glasgow Caledonian University.

This very successful combination of events underlined the importance for Council of maintaining and refreshing the Society’s links with historians and departments across the UK, and hearing directly about experiences, successes and concerns in different institutions.

Even the challenge of returning home with airports closed on account of volcanic ash did not detract from the very positive experience!

The Gerald Aylmer Seminar for 2011 is provisionally scheduled for the afternoon of Friday 25 February.

As usual, it will be jointly organised by the Society and The National Archives, and this year will address the understanding of medieval and early modern archives and how this is transmitted to the next generation of archivists and historians. The venue has yet to be confirmed, but we hope that it can be held in central London.

Training new researchers in specific skills such as Latin and palaeography is only part of the question: the maintenance of skills and knowledge among archivists, and the availability of expert advice, are also crucial. We hope for a useful discussion on these topics and aim to involve both historians and archivists and to draw on the experience of a wide range of contributors.

The Honorary Secretary would welcome contacts and suggestions from interested parties, especially while the programme for the seminar is under development over the next few months.

Please address all correspondence to: V.Harding@bbk.ac.uk
The Learned Society of Wales: Cymdeithas Ddysgedig Cymru

Keith Robbins
Vice Chancellor Emeritus
University of Wales
Trinity St David

The Learned Society of Wales (LSW) came into existence in May 2010. Such a Society has been contemplated, off and on, for some years but has now come to fruition.

The establishment of the new Society, which aims to celebrate and publicise academic accomplishment in both the languages of Wales, has been greeted positively by the British Academy, the Royal Society and other learned bodies throughout the United Kingdom. It has received particular encouragement from the Royal Society of Edinburgh and its founding structures draw heavily upon that institution’s procedures and policies.

It is particularly appropriate in the new devolved context that there should be a body which will seek to benchmark the very highest standards of Welsh scholarship. Like the Edinburgh Society, the LSW aims to draw together scholars from different fields - the arts, humanities and social sciences alongside the natural sciences, medicine and engineering.

As an independent body, the Society determines its own fellowship, but it wishes, where possible and appropriate, to foster links between academia and other sectors of society. In particular, it will offer independent advice to the Welsh Assembly Government and foster public interest in both science and the arts and humanities.

To this end, a programme of public lectures, meetings, debates and conferences on topical issues has already been launched. One of its objectives is naturally to promote academic excellence and achievements in Wales, but it also wishes to marry this with a mission to disseminate Welsh research and scholarship in the United Kingdom and internationally.

The Founding President is Sir John Cadogan, the eminent chemist, and he is joined by a strong supporting cast from across the academic spectrum.

It so happens that historians in Wales, together with historians of Welsh birth or connection currently ‘abroad’, have been particularly conspicuous amongst the founding Fellowship: Sydney Anglo, Richard Cawardine, Thomas Charles-Edwards, Stuart Clark, Martin Daunton, Wendy Davies, Richard Evans, Robert Evans, Geraint Jenkins, Kenneth Morgan, Prys Morgan, Keith Thomas and this author have all joined the new Society.

Given the recent establishment of the “Institute for Historical Research for Wales”, discussed by Huw Bowen in the last edition of this Newsletter, we can be confident that the interests of History in Wales will be well served!

Members and Fellows of the Royal Historical Society, whose interest will be welcomed, can obtain further information from:

The Secretary, The Learned Society of Wales, PO Box 586, Cardiff CF11 1NU

Email: lsw@wales.ac.uk
Reconciling the Past: South African History after Apartheid

Saul Dubow
Professor of African History
University of Sussex

I began teaching at Sussex in autumn 1989. The surprise of the fall of the Berlin Wall was followed by the sudden announcement from the South African government that long-banned political organisations like the ANC were to be legalised and all political prisoners released.

Some students hastened to Berlin to share in the excitement. Euphoria was no less evident amongst students who had taken part in 'Free Mandela' campaigns, or participated in anti-apartheid consumer boycotts. Colleagues teased that I might cover all my teaching by offering courses in Mandela studies.

Twenty years later, the climate is very different. Surprisingly, perhaps, there is no fall-off in student demand for courses on South Africa, but the terms of student engagement have shifted. Today, I can presume little by way of background knowledge of modern South African history; scepticism towards the so-called 'miracle' of the country's transition to democracy is clearly evident - and with good reason.

The lack of knowledge about South Africa on the part of British students is matched by a remarkable amnesia about the past on the part of South African youth. There, black as well as white students have limited comprehension about apartheid, other than that it was a "bad thing". Awareness of some of its most conspicuous evils - the pass laws for instance - is distinctly lacking.

In 1990 it was hard to find anyone in South Africa who would admit to having supported apartheid; now we are being joined by a public who aren't even sure what it was.

This is perhaps not so surprising. Just as holocaust survivors chose not to share their wartime experiences with their children, so many black South Africans who grew up under apartheid seek to protect their children from the humiliations to which they were subjected - and in some sense complicit. It is perfectly explicable that young South Africans prefer to move on, bury the past, and go shopping.

Yet, the legacies of apartheid have clearly outlasted its legislation; in time, this will surely make young South Africans more curious about the processes that have shaped their present.

From a teaching point of view, this offers new possibilities. Our distance from the immediate moment of apartheid offers the opportunity to reflect on a deeper history than the now familiar narrative of protest, resistance and liberation. If apartheid created one of the most unequal societies in the world, the post-apartheid South Africa is arguably even more so. Students are now as interested in asking what liberation meant and what it was for as they are in studying its political trajectory.

British students, brought up in a post-colonial society which remains conspicuously ignorant about its own history as an imperial nation, are often fascinated by the complexities of colonial society and imperial ideology. They may be discomfited by the notion that British ideas and administrative structures played a significant role in the origins of the apartheid system.

Films like the recent sci-fi blockbuster, District Nine, offer interesting possibilities to explore whether this apartheid allegory has global relevance. The complex interactions of race and class, ethnicity, and nationalism, which are so starkly evident in modern South African history, have broad historical resonance.

Many of the major conceptual breakthroughs in our understanding of apartheid were made in the 1970s and 1980s when history was, in the words of Norman Etherington, "the master tool of intellectual resistance to apartheid". This made history writing and teaching a most compelling activity. A generation on, there is in some quarters a sense of loss because socially "engaged" history has evidently lost political traction.

Others see this as an opportunity to rethink the established contours of South African history and to ask new questions of the past. South African historians continue to produce fine work, but we do not yet have a Friedlander who is able to apply the kind of "integrated" history (pioneered in the German context) that meshes the everyday experience of life under apartheid with overarching structural analysis.

Students at Sussex used to refer to (increasingly rare) lower second-class degrees as Tu-Tus. They continue to write their exams in Mandela Hall. When these token reminders of the worldwide anti-apartheid social movement lose their immediate points of reference, that may be an opportune moment to develop a new course on the mythology of Mandela.
The History of Parliament 1832-68

Philip Salmon

The House of Commons, 1832-68 is the latest research project in the History of Parliament’s series of publications charting the development, personnel and activities of the Westminster Parliament over the last 700 years.

Building on the work of the recently published 1820-32 volumes, the 1832-68 project is producing biographical profiles of all the 2,589 MPs who were elected between the first and second Reform Acts as well as accounts of all the 401 constituencies in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, providing a new resource for political and local historians and all those interested in the United Kingdom’s early democratic development. A survey volume, evaluating the findings of the research and examining the institutional operation of the Commons during this formative period, is also being prepared.

In an important departure for the History, the project is being made available in a new web-based layout, in which the text is supported by online links to original sources and factual data. Biographies, for example, have links to speeches, votes, committee work, archive collections and an extended bibliography.

The project is also being compiled far more rapidly than previous studies, partly owing to the proliferation of digital resources in nineteenth-century history, but also because of a greater reliance on external experts, drawn from universities and libraries around the world.

Expressions of interest from potential contributors are most welcome, and should be directed to psalmon@histparl.ac.uk

The research team is led by Dr Kathryn Rix, a specialist in mid to late-Victorian political culture, Dr Stephen Ball, Dr Henry Miller and Dr James Owen, and we aim to complete the project within half the time of the preceding study. Complementary research is also being undertaken by Seth Thevoz, as part of a PhD programme established with the University of Warwick.

As well as providing fresh perspectives on the key themes of this period - electoral reform, party development, radicalism and the threat of revolution, religious and economic controversies - the editors are paying particular attention to the changing culture of representation, both within and outside the Commons, and its broader impact and legacy for the UK and the growing number of colonial elected bodies.

Parliament dealt with an unprecedented range of social, economic and local issues during the 1832-68 period, and in many respects this was the ‘golden age’ of the Commons and the backbencher, unsullied by the gagging and guillotine restrictions of subsequent years.

As well as presenting comprehensive profiles for MPs and constituencies in which online links help to unburden the text of data, it is hoped that the new format will provide vital gateways into the ever-expanding corpus of nineteenth-century digital material now available, creating a hub for researchers working across a variety of different disciplines.

In November CUP will also publish The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1604-29, edited by Andrew Thrush and John P. Ferris. The six new volumes include, as usual, biographies of the 1,782 Members who were elected to the House of Commons over the period concerned, 260 constituency articles, and an introductory survey, by Andrew Thrush, which includes a comprehensive account, based on new research, of the development of Parliament as an institution.

The publication of these volumes means that historians can now revisit one of the most troubled periods in the Commons’ history, and one of the most historiographically controversial, armed with a vast store of new information. For publication details see www.cambridge.org

The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1820-32, edited by D.R. Fisher, is currently available from Cambridge University Press, and all other History of Parliament volumes are still available from Boydell and Brewer: www.boydell.co.uk/HISNT.HTM.

Our website, www.histparl.ac.uk, has regular updates on the History’s current activities.
Sarah Richardson
History Subject Centre

The History Subject Centre, funded by the Higher Education Academy, moved to the University of Warwick in 2008. The Centre is part of the Subject Centre Network which supports discipline-specific teaching and learning at HE level in the UK. In August 2009 the Centre was rebranded and launched with a new website, publication series, funding and events programme.

“Supporting teaching and learning” is a broad remit and thus the History Subject Centre operates on a number of levels. As Director, I represent the discipline in various strategic discussions - for example with the QAA on contact hours or UUK on external examiners. I also meet regularly with the heads of History subject associations and sit on the Teaching Policy Committee of the Royal Historical Society.

The Centre also provides an evidence-base for the health of History teaching and learning. Thus our recent report analysing the National Student Satisfaction survey scores for History demonstrated that the subject was performing well above the average in most areas. We support the work of PVCs, Deans and Heads of Department and last year made visits to Queen’s University Belfast, the University of Lincoln and Oxford University.

Most of our work is with academic practitioners at the sharp end of the teaching and learning experience. The Centre supports a number of regional and subject-based networks. The North-West region, for instance, ran a highly successful workshop last year on teaching visual sources.

We also fund small grants for teaching development projects. The materials that these produce are then placed in our e-library as open access educational resources.

We are currently funding projects as diverse as Maps for Early Modernists (Glamorgan), Measuring the Miraculous (Sheffield), Creative Writing in Level 3 Assessment (Keele) and Second Life® Medical History (Warwick).

Many of these projects promote student engagement in the creation of teaching resources or the development of the curriculum. The Centre has collaborated with the NUS on a student engagement toolkit to provide templates and examples of best practice in this area.

Our activities also support undergraduate student researchers, most recently on the “Spaces and Stories in Higher Education” project.

Three student researchers collected and analysed archival and oral history sources on university architecture and teaching space. Their findings were displayed in an exhibition, ‘The Idea of a University’, at the University of Warwick in June 2010.

An important strand of work in this area also involves collaborations with other bodies. At present the History Subject Centre is involved in a range of projects including:

**Teaching International Students (TIS).** The TIS project, launched in October 2009 by the UK Council for International Student Affairs, with funding from the Prime Minister’s Initiative, aims to make a major contribution to strengthening the UK international student experience - and by extension the international horizons of all students in the UK.

**It’s Good to Talk: Feedback, Dialogue and Learning** (with the National Teaching Fellowships Scheme), looks at ways to improve feedback to students through an examination of the current state of pedagogic research on the subject followed by exploration of possible new approaches to delivering feedback. The project focuses especially on the development of more structured, strategic approaches.

**The HumBox Project** (JISC and HEA funded: successfully completed in April) was a collaboration
between four Humanities Subject Centres (including the History team) and ten partner institutions, and showcased UK Higher Education by encouraging teachers within HE to publish excellent teaching and learning resources in an open access repository. The website (www.humbox.ac.uk) continues to expand and attract new users.

Perhaps the most important group of people the Centre engages with are early career and postgraduate teachers. We run regular workshops across the country providing advice, support and resources for those starting out on an academic career. Our events are aligned to the Professional Standards Framework and may thus provide credit towards the award of a postgraduate certificate in Higher Education.

In this area we work closely with History Lab and History Lab+ (organisations of early career historians affiliated with the Institute of Historical Research). This year postgraduate workshops are planned for Bristol, London and Newcastle with an early career day at Loughborough. These events are regularly oversubscribed as they focus on the particular challenges of teaching History at HE level, thus providing discipline-specific training that many institutions are unable to match.

The History Subject Centre disseminates its work on teaching and learning in a variety of formats. In 2009 we launched two new publication series: Historical Insights: Focus on Teaching and Historical Insights: Focus on Research (the latter with the Institute of Historical Research).

These short guides provide advice and resources on aspects of teaching research in history as diverse as Medieval Castles, Hollywood and Quantitative Research Methods.

The Centre publishes a monthly e-bulletin to update the community on news, resources and events as well as a twice-yearly newsletter. Our blog, which feeds into our Twitter and Facebook sites, reaches a wide international audience.

We also publish reports and briefing papers. Last year we issued Building Inclusive Academic Communities: Case Studies in History, Classics and Archaeology edited by Kimm Curran and Lisa Lavender, and History in Schools and Higher Education by Lisa Lavender. Our next report will be the culmination of a year-long research project on international students and first year transition by Melodee Beals.

Our richest resource is the Subject Centre website www.historysubjectcentre.ac.uk. The website provides downloadable copies of all our print publications, an events diary and news feed.

There is a comprehensive e-library which is searchable by theme, historical period, topic, resource type or keyword. Our ‘theme browser’ pulls together events, publications and resources on particular areas such as “assessment”.

The site features a History Pedagogy Bibliography with annotated entries on works associated with the scholarship of teaching and learning in our discipline. There is the facility to comment and annotate resources making the site a dynamic community resource.

As we enter the 2010-11 academic year the Higher Education Academy is undergoing a measure of organisational change. It is unclear how the changes will affect the work of the History Subject Centre and the wider Subject Centre Network. The Academy is committed to continuing its work at the disciplinary level but wants to rationalise its offer to the sector.

However, the Subject Centre has a full programme of research and activities planned for the coming year including a flagship project on ‘History Graduates with Impact’ promoting the study (and continuing resourcing) of History at HE level.

Details of the year’s events, as well as regular updates regarding the Subject Centre, can be found on our website: www.historysubjectcentre.ac.uk
Writing History, Making Policy

Fiona Holland
History & Policy
King’s College London

When the then Secretary of State for the Environment, David Miliband, raised the spectre of individual carbon rationing to reduce CO2 emissions, Dr Mark Roodhouse, Lecturer in History, University of York, realised his research into consumer rationing during the 1940s offered interesting and potentially useful parallels. Dr Roodhouse is one of the 247 historians involved in the History & Policy network interested in engaging with policy makers and journalists in order to improve current policy through a better understanding of the past.

History & Policy seeks to make historians’ research accessible to those formulating policy through dissemination of accessible briefing papers, seminars bringing together policy makers and historians, and media coverage. It provides a unique resource to historians, equipping them to identify the policy implications of their research, offering training to engage with the media, and enabling their input into policy-making forums.

The varied impacts of the initiative can be illustrated by Dr Roodhouse’s experience. In 2007 he contributed a History & Policy briefing paper “Rationing returns: a solution to global warming” and wrote a Financial Times op-ed “Enlist the Blitz spirit; get out the carbon ration book”, which were timed to coincide with the publication of the UK government’s draft Climate Change Bill.

Dr Roodhouse also wrote an article for History Today. Subsequently, he was invited to submit evidence to the Environmental Audit Select Committee and to talk about the past, present and future of food security and rationing at the World Health Organization in 2011.

Dr Roodhouse’s interaction with the media and policy-making bodies exemplifies History & Policy’s effectiveness in promoting history as a strategic tool of analysis, providing the historical background to current issues, and opportunities for historians to engage in policy debates.

‘Personally, I found the experience a rewarding one,’ says Dr Roodhouse. ‘Momentarily, my research had direct social relevance. It also prompted me to view my research from a different angle which generated at least one new line of inquiry. Without the help of History & Policy my voice wouldn’t have been heard.’

Enabling historians to input into select committee inquiries, all-party parliamentary groups and other official bodies, is one strand of our work. Currently 105 briefing papers, as well as historians’ responses to topical issues, are available on our website, which has become the first port of call for anyone seeking input into a historical issue.

We also bring together historians and civil servants in expert seminars focused on current areas of policy concern, such as that held in June 2010 at the invitation of the Cabinet Office Strategy Unit on ‘the Big Society’ agenda. Exploring the changing relationship between the state and voluntary sector, historians presented case studies that informed the historical assumptions underlying the ‘big society’ concept and provided ideas that could feed into policy development. Such was the positive response that History & Policy is exploring a seminar series with various departments across Whitehall.

As well as enabling policy makers at national and local government levels to understand the historical dimensions of their work, we are committed to equipping future historians with knowledge transfer skills. To that end we have collaborated with The National Archives on workshops for postdoctoral students and this October launched the first History & Policy modules of their kind, as part of the new MA in Contemporary British History at King’s.

Aware of the institutional barriers that may deter historians from engaging with policy makers and the media, History & Policy has submitted responses to HEFCE consultations and taken part in workshops on ‘impact.’ We continue to stress the value and importance of excellent historical research in public life.

To put this into practice, we seek coverage for historians’ research in specialist and mainstream media, which has resulted in more than 100 articles and interviews to date, including ongoing series in BBC History and Open Democracy.

And we keep our 2,000+ subscribers up to date with relevant events, publications and opportunities via a monthly newsletter. To subscribe to our newsletter, please register: www.historyandpolicy.org/register.html

History & Policy is based at the Centre for Contemporary British History @ King’s, Institute for Contemporary History, King’s College London

For the H&P External Relations Office, contact Fiona.Holland@kcl.ac.uk Tel: 0207 848 7047
What’s new at The National Archives?

Welcome to our regular update on developments and initiatives at The National Archives [TNA].

We have recently created a new area on our website to test fresh ideas and resources, and trial improvements to our existing services. The National Archives Labs (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/labs) allows users to influence the development of our services. Feedback forms are available online, and all comments and suggestions are welcome.

One of the first resources published here is the Dixon Scott collection of photographs [INF 9], which we have digitised and ‘geotagged’. It contains around 13,000 photographs, taken around the British Isles and Ireland in the 1930s and 1940s.

Geotagging involves linking records to online maps; it also makes it possible to search for documents by place name or Ordnance Survey grid reference.

We plan to make further use of this technology in future to make it easier to search for records in our collection.

The Labs web resource also features a blog by David Thomas, TNA Director of Technology, which contains updates on our plans for improving services, and commentary on some of the challenges we face in opening up access to our records.

August saw the completion of the 18-month project ‘Living the Poor Life’, to make thousands of pages of Victorian workhouse and poor law records available online. More than 200 volunteer editors across the country researched and catalogued the digitised correspondence of 21 Poor Law Unions [MH12].

Once difficult to research due to their size and limited indexing, these records now have detailed catalogue entries and a keyword search facility. The result is an invaluable resource for those studying Victorian life, offering detailed insights into the workhouse system, industrial strikes, Chartist, wages, the treatment of children and much more.

More than 115,000 scanned images of letters, reports and memos from 108 volumes of Poor Law Union records are now accessible through our website, searchable by place, name and subject matter.

These can be accessed at: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/livingthepoorlife.

Alongside the improvements we are making to our online services, we are working to make sure that facilities on site at Kew continue to meet the needs of researchers.

We will be making changes to our Map and Large Document Reading Room to improve the working environment for visitors consulting maps, large documents and our older records.

Work will take place from October to December 2010, and wherever possible will be done outside our public opening hours. However, it will be necessary for us to close the room from 17:00 on Saturday 27 November to 09:00 on Tuesday 14 December.

We advise all researchers wishing to consult large documents, maps or records dating from before 1688 to avoid visiting during this time.

Our first-floor reading rooms may be busier than usual during the closure period, and visitors may experience some noise, although we will work to minimise any disruption. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

We will also be changing the layout of the first-floor Open Reading Room (to be completed on Sundays and Mondays when we are closed to the public). A new ‘Start Here’ zone will provide first-time visitors with basic help and guidance. There will also be two enquiry desks for general guidance, technical support and specialist records advice, as well as a larger, separate ‘quiet’ area.

For more information, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/visit/reading-room-changes.htm

More details on our work to support academic research can be found in our quarterly e-newsletter, available on our website at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/research/news.htm. You can sign up to receive future editions by emailing research@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.
RHS Prizes & Awards

The Royal Historical Society’s summer meeting is always one of the most keenly anticipated events on the calendar, offering as it does a ‘double-helping’ of good things: first, the annual Prothero Lecture, and second, the announcement of those who have carried off prizes in the Society’s annual round of awards.

In June, a large audience gathered at UCL to hear Professor Dror Wahrman’s impressive discourse on “The Media Revolution in Early Modern England: An Artist’s Perspective”, and then moved on to the Reception where the following prizes were awarded.

The Alexander Prize, for the best published scholarly journal article or essay in a collective volume based upon original historical research, was awarded to George Molyneaux (All Souls College, Oxford) for his article, ‘The Old English Bede: English Ideology or Christian Instruction?’, English Historical Review, 124 (2009). Described by the judges as ‘learned, penetrating and unfailingly lucid’, Molyneaux’s article re-examines the Old English translation of Bede’s Historia Ecclesiastica. Focussing on what the translator chose to omit or abbreviate, he reveals much that is new about the intellectual development of Bede and his contemporaries. The book offers a highly original perspective on late Georgian British society.

The David Berry Prize for the best scholarly journal article or essay on Scottish history was awarded to Dr. Sandip Hazareesingh (Open University) for his article ‘Interconnected synchronicities: the production of Glasgow and Bombay as modern global ports c. 1850 – 1880’, Journal of Global History, 4 (2009), pp. 7-31. Hazareesingh, in a piece of ‘impressive intellectual breadth’, argues that imperialism was not necessarily focused on the city of London, as Cain and Hopkins have suggested, but could involve ‘a far wider range of networked commercial actors interacting with both the imperial and the colonial state’.

The Gladstone Prize 2009 for a first individually authored book on a historical subject not primarily related to British History, and published in the UK, was awarded to Dr. Alice Rio (King’s College, London) for Legal Practice and the Written Word in the Early Middle Ages. Frankish Formulae, c.500-1000 (Cambridge University Press, 2009). The judges described the book as ‘a formidable achievement on many levels’, which transcended its time period and was ‘highly reflective about the practice of history as a whole’. The book focuses on the legal formulae, the compilations made by scribes in which data about historical context were stripped out to create instructive case studies for contemporaries or later generations. By relating these to the study of early medieval slavery or ‘unfreedom’, Rio offers a new means of understanding medieval Merovingian and Carolingian society.

The proxime accessit was Dr. Maurizio Isabella (Queen Mary, University of London) for Risorgimento in Exile. Italian Émigrés and the Liberal International in the Post-Napoleonic Era (Oxford University Press, 2009), an impressive case study of the intellectual development of Italian exiles in the period 1815-35.

The Whitfield Prize for a first individually authored book, on a subject within a field of British History, and published in the UK, was awarded to Dr. Nicholas Draper (UCL) for The Price of Emancipation: Slave-ownership, Compensation and British Society at the End of Slavery (Cambridge University Press, 2009). The judges praised this ‘broadly conceived, empirically dense yet lucid study’ for being ‘at once hard headed and humane’ in its treatment of so emotive a topic. The book uses the compensation payments made by the British government to slave owners after emancipation in 1833 to unravel who precisely the British slave owners were, and how they represented themselves and their interests. The book offers a highly original perspective on late Georgian British society.

The proxime accessit was Dr. Guy Ortolano (New York University) for The Two Cultures Controversy: Science, Literature and Cultural Politics in Postwar Britain (Cambridge University Press, 2009), an ‘imaginative and beautifully written’ re-examination of the iconic clash between the scientist C.P. Snow and the literary scholar F.R. Leavis.

The Society also announced the winners of its annual Fellowships competition.

The RHS Marshall Fellowship 2010 was awarded jointly to Robert Priest (New College, Oxford) for research on “The Production, Reception and Legacy of Ernest Renan’s ‘Vie de Jésus’ in France” and Johannes Machielsen (Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford) for research on “Demons & Letters: the Life and Works of Martin Delrio (1551-1608)”.

The RHS Centenary Fellowship 2010 was awarded jointly to Katheryna Ihnat (Queen Mary, University of London) for research on “The Marian miracle collections and the Jews in post-Conquest England” and Alexander Russell (Jesus College, Oxford) for research on “England and the general councils (1409-1562)”. For details of the Society’s prizes, please visit: www.royalhistoricalsociety.org/prizes.htm
Volume 36: THE LIFE OF JOHN RASTRICK, 1650-1727, ed. Andrew Cambers

This volume makes available in print for the first time an edition of the manuscript autobiography of John Rastrick, a Lincolnshire clergyman known chiefly for leaving the Church of England at the late date of 1687 to become minister to a succession of nonconformist congregations in Spalding, Rotherham, and King’s Lynn.

Despite his relative obscurity, Rastrick’s engaging and entertaining autobiography illuminates many of the central issues in the religion and politics of the half-century after the Restoration, offering a uniquely personal perspective upon both national and local events. Along the way, it provides a distinctly individual account of a minister’s understanding of science and the natural world; education, reading practices, and intellectual culture; marriage, family life, feuds, and friendships. At once a pearl of nonconformist writing and a treasure-trove of information, Rastrick’s autobiography is an essential resource for those interested in the religion, politics, and culture of the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries.


Volume 37: BRITISH ENVOYS TO GERMANY 1816-1866, VOLUME IV: 1851-1866, eds. Markus Mössling, Chris Manias and Torsten Riote

This volume of British Envoys to Germany presents official reports sent from the British missions in Frankfurt, Berlin, Hamburg, Hanover, Dresden, Stuttgart, Munich, and Vienna. The diplomatic correspondence selected for volume IV provides strong evidence that the period between the Dresden Conferences of 1851 and the Austro-Prussian war of 1866 should be seen as more than just a time of transition between the revolution of 1848 and German unification. In addition to international affairs and Anglo-German relations, the dispatches cover the federal dimensions of German politics and the policies and societies of the federal states.

The multifaceted views and perceptions of British diplomatic representatives illustrate the importance of the last sixteen years of the German Confederation in their own right. All dispatches are transcribed and annotated for the first time. A comprehensive, annotated index of names and a subject index complete the volume.

Markus Mössling is a fellow of the German Historical Institute London; Chris Manias is a research assistant at the University of Bristol; Torsten Riote is a lecturer in History at the University of Frankfurt am Main.
Forthcoming Events

Friday 29 October 2010
Venue: University of York
“Troubling Memories: Nineteenth-century Histories of the Slave Trade and Slavery”
Professor Catherine Hall

Thursday 11 November 2010 at 5.45 for 6.00 p.m.
Venue: Cruciform Lecture Theatre 1, UCL
The Colin Matthew Memorial Lecture for the Public Understanding of History
in co-operation with Gresham College, London
“Fashion, Time and Place in Georgian England”
Professor Amanda Vickery

President Address

Friday 26 November 2010 at 5.45 p.m.
Venue: Gustave Tuck Lecture Theatre, UCL
“French Crossings. II: Laughing over Boundaries”
Professor Colin Jones