

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY RESEARCH GROUP

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 16th August 2004, IGU Glasgow

1. Apologies for absence
Apologies were received from Dr Alan Lester, Dr Georgina Gowans, Dr John Morrissey, Dr Yvonne Whelan, Dr David Lambert, Dr Craig Young.
2. Minutes of last meeting
Minutes were published in the October 2003 newsletter and were accepted as an accurate reflection of the last meeting.
3. Matters arising not on the agenda
There were none.
4. Chair's Business
 - a. Report on activities (September 2003 – August 2004)
Dr McEwan presented the following report to the AGM:

Over the past 12 months the HGRG committee and members continued to be active in a number of different areas, organising meetings and supporting research in historical geography. This includes the work of the committee and members in organising the ninth annual undergraduate and postgraduate conference in historical geography, *Practising Historical Geography*, which was held in the Department of Geography, UCL in November 2003. The conference was funded by HGRG and a grant (£300) from the Research and Higher Education Division of RGS-IBG. HGRG was able to maintain a policy of keeping the conference (including lunch and refreshments) free of charge to those in attendance. There were over 30 delegates, and students and staff participating commented positively on the success and usefulness of the conference. A report was been included in the February Newsletter.

The committee has been actively involved in the organization of the RGS-IBG Annual Conference at the IGU 2004 meeting, and the group will be strongly represented there. In addition to our usual Postgraduate Research sessions organised by the Committee, sessions sponsored by HGRG are:

- Historical Geographies of Morality and Leisure (convenors: Elizabeth Gagen and Fiona Smyth)
- Historical Geographies of Art and the Environment (convenors: Sarah Cant and Nina Morris)
- Geographies of Collecting (convenors: Pippa Biltcliffe, Starr Douglas and Jude Hill)

The Committee was also successful in its application to RGS-IBG for a grant of £300 to support postgraduate attendance at the conference.

Two applications were received for the Small Conference and Seminar Funding scheme in 2003. A grant of £250 was given to the *London Group of Historical Geographers* Seminar Programme. The funds were used to support postgraduate attendance.

As always, much of the work of the committee this year has been in administering postgraduate support and supporting undergraduate and postgraduate work in historical geography. In addition to the £300 from RGS-IBG, HGRG also made £300 available to fund postgraduate attendance at IGU. Four awards of £150 were made to: Briony McDonagh (University of Nottingham), Claire Townsend (University of Leicester), Pippa Biltcliffe (Royal Holloway, University of London), Charles Travis (Trinity College Dublin). We hope to be able to publish their conference reports in forthcoming issues of the newsletter.

The Historical Geography Research Series continues. HGRG 38 was published in September 2003; this was John Morrissey's "Negotiating colonialism", a more substantial monograph than is usual thanks to the Publications Fund of National University of Ireland, Galway that gave a subvention to cover additional publication costs.

There was an unfortunate delay in awarding the 2003 Cambridge University Press and HGRG annual Undergraduate Dissertation Prize in Historical Geography, which meant that a final decision could not be made until January 2004. Eight entries were received. The prize was awarded to Sefton Laing (University of Edinburgh), for a dissertation entitled 'Late Victorian Science at the 'highest office in the United Kingdom': a contextual investigation of the Ben Nevis Observatory, 1883-1904'. HGRG is grateful to Dr Richard Dennis for chairing the adjudication again in 2003; the Committee judge was Dr Dan Knox. Six entries were received for the 2004 prize, which was awarded to Jennifer Scott (Oxford) for a dissertation entitled "Edinburgh's Lower East Side: Evaluating the Rhetoric of Sanitary Reform, 1861-1881". The entry by Alistair Gates (UCL) was also highly commended. HGRG is grateful to Dr Alan Baker for chairing the adjudication; the other judges were Dr Cheryl McEwan and Dr Alan Lester.

The Chair of HGRG was able to be present at most of the Research Division meetings of the RGS-IBG (except the one scheduled for 10am) and the work of the Committee has proceeded as usual without interruption. Three newsletters were circulated to members in March, June and October; hard copy is still essential for non-academic and independent members. The HGRG web-site continues to work effectively from Galway (<http://hgrg.nuigalway.ie/events.html>) and is an excellent source of information for members and other interested parties. The Committee also makes regular use of its email distribution list to consult members, particularly regarding matters arising from RGS-IBG.

b. Committee positions

The following nominations were approved by the AGM:

Chair:	Hayden Lorimer (nominated, by CM, seconded by AL)
Secretary:	Kate Brace (nominated by CM, seconded by GG)
Treasurer:	Jon Stobart (nominated by CY, seconded by CM)
Publicity Officer:	John Morrissey (nominated by CM, seconded by DL) – one year extension
Newsletter Secretary:	Nicola Thomas (nominated KB, seconded GG)
Membership Secretary:	David Lambert (nominated AL, seconded HL)
Conference Officer:	Yvonne Whelan (nominated GG, seconded CM)
Ordinary Member:	Pete Merriman (nominated by AL, seconded by HL)
Ordinary Member:	Liz Gagen (nominated by CM, seconded by GG)
Postgrad Member:	Diarmid Finnegan (unopposed; extension for 1 year)

The handover of posts will be on September 1st 2004 and full contact details will be recorded in the October newsletter and on the HGRG website.

c. RAE 2008 – nominations for panel members

In response to advice from members, HGRG nominated Professor David Livingstone a sub-panel member to represent historical/humanities-based side of the discipline.

5. Forthcoming meetings

a. HGRG conference, November 2004

Dr McEwan reported that the annual conference is due to be held at Nottingham University on Wednesday 3rd November. Progress is well underway in putting together a program of speakers.

b. RGS-IBG Annual Conference 2005

The RGS-IBG Annual Conference will be held at the RGS in London (31st Aug-2nd September 2005). An email request has been sent to HGRG members requesting suggestions for session bids. The deadline for these is November 15th.

6. Reports

a. Hon. Secretary

Nothing further to report, but the AGM formally recorded thanks to Dr Georgina Gowans for her work over the years on the Committee and best wishes for her future in Australia.

b. Hon. Treasurer

Accounts to July were circulated. There were no anomalies and the budget is balanced again for 2004. The AGM formally recorded thanks to Dr Craig Young for his work as Treasurer.

c. Hon. Editor

Dr Lester sent a written report. Volume 39, Alan Baker (ed) 'Home and Colonial: essays on landscape, environment and empire in celebration of Robin Butlin's contribution to historical geography', is currently in press and should be published and distributed to members by the end of October.

d. Hon. Publicity Secretary
Nothing further to report.

e. Hon. Conference Secretary
Nothing further to report. The AGM formally recorded thanks to Dr Dan Knox for his work on the Committee and for handing over (with the assistance of Mr Diarmid Finnegan) an almost complete schedule for the November conference.

f. Postgraduate Committee Member
Nothing further to report.

g. Membership Secretary
Dr Lorimer reported that membership currently stands at 391, which is slightly down on previous years, primarily due to retirements. However, postgraduate membership remains buoyant and numbers are expected to rise again in October.

h. Ordinary Member
Nothing further to report.

7. Any other business

Dr Lorimer formally thanked Dr McEwan for her work on the Committee over the past 10 years. Dr McEwan, in turn, formally thanked the Committee members during her term as Chair for their hard work and commitment, and wished the new Committee well.

8. Date of next AGM

Some time between 31st August and 3rd September 2005

Dr Cheryl McEwan
Chair (outgoing) HGRG