HGRG Newsletter, Spring 2005

In this issue:

- New HGRG committee, 2004/2005
- HGRG postgrad funding for RGS-IBG 2005
- Other upcoming conferences and events
- Conference reports and thesis abstracts

Copy for the HGRG newsletter should be sent to:

Dr. John Morrissey  
HGRG Honorary Publicity Officer  
Department of Geography  
National University of Ireland, Galway  
University Road  
Galway  
Ireland

Copy should be submitted either on floppy disc (PC or Mac, MS Word files preferred) or via e-mail to j.morrissey@nuigalway.ie.

Copy deadlines are: 1 February for the spring edition, 1 June for the summer edition, and 1 October for the autumn edition.

HGRG Electronic Mailing List: if you would you like to be added to this list, please contact the Membership Secretary, David Lambert, d.lambert@rhul.ac.uk.
Historical Geography Research Group Officers
2004/2005 Contact List

Dr. Hayden Lorimer
Honorary Chair
Department of Geography and Geomantics
University of Glasgow
University Avenue
Glasgow G12 8QQ
Scotland
Tel: +44 (0)141 3304782
Fax: +44 (0)141 3304894
E-mail: hlorimer@geog.gla.ac.uk

Dr. Catherine Brace
Honorary Secretary
Department of Geography
University of Exeter in Cornwall
Tremough Campus
Treliever Road
Penryn TR11 9EZ
England
Tel: +44 (0) 1326 371810
Fax: +44 (0) 1326 370721
E-mail: c.brace@exeter.ac.uk

Dr. Jon Stobart
Honorary Treasurer
School of Science and the Environment
Coventry University
Priory Street
Coventry CV1 5FB
England
Tel: +44 (0)24 76888376
Fax: +44 (0)24 76888702
E-mail: j_stobart@coventry.ac.uk

Dr. Alan Lester
Honorary Editor of the Research Series
Department of Geography
University of Sussex
Palm
Brighton BN1 9RQ
England
Tel: +44 (0) 1273 678473
Fax: +44 (0) 1273 678644
E-mail: a.j.lester@sussex.ac.uk

Dr. John Morrissey
Honorary Publicity Officer
Department of Geography
National University of Ireland, Galway
University Road
Galway
Ireland
Tel: +353 (0)91 492267
Fax: +353 (0)91 495505
E-mail: john.morrissey@nuigalway.ie

Dr. Yvonne Whelan
Honorary Conference Officer
School of Geographical Sciences
University of Bristol
University Road
Bristol BS8 1SS
England
Tel: +44 (0)117 9289107
Fax: +44 (0)117 9287878
E-mail: yvonne.whelan@bristol.ac.uk

Dr. David Lambert
Honorary Membership Secretary
Department of Geography
Royal Holloway, University of London
Egham
Surrey TW20 0EX
England
Tel: +44 (0)1784 443640
Fax: +44 (0)1784 472836
Email: d.lambert@rhul.ac.uk

Dr. Nicola Thomas
Honorary Newsletter Secretary
Department of Geography
University of Exeter
Rennes Drive
Exeter EX4 4RJ
England
Tel: +44 (0)1392 264449
Fax: +44 (0)1392 263342
E-mail: nicola.j.thomas@exeter.ac.uk

Mr. Diarmid Finnegan
Postgraduate Committee Member
Institute of Geography
University of Edinburgh
Drummond Street
Edinburgh EH8 9XP
Scotland
Tel: +44 (0)131 6502532
Fax: +44 (0)131 6502524
E-mail: daf@geo.ed.ac.uk

Dr. Elizabeth Gagen
Ordinary Member
Department of Geography
University of Hull
Cottingham Road
Hull HU6 7RX
England
Tel: +44 (0)1482 465353
Fax: +44 (0)1482 466340
E-mail: e.gagen@hull.ac.uk

Dr. Peter Merriman, Ordinary Member
Department of Geography, University of Reading,
Whiteknights, Reading RG6 6AB, England
Tel: +44 (0)118 3788739
Fax: +44 (0)118 9755565
E-mail: p.r.merriman@reading.ac.uk
**Forthcoming Conferences:**

**RGS-IBG Annual Conference 2005**

31 August - 2 September 2005  
at the RGS-IBG, London  
"Flows and spaces in a globalised world"

Chair of Conference: Allan Williams, University of Exeter

Deadline for early registration: 5 May 2005

For further information, visit [www.rgs.org/AC2005](http://www.rgs.org/AC2005) or e-mail AC2005@rgs.org.

---

**HGRG postgrad funding for RGS-IBG 2005**

**Guidelines**

Postgraduates may apply to HGRG for support up to a max. of £100 for travel to research sources or conferences. Priority may be given to those whose grants do not include provision for conference fees or travel.

**Funding regulations**

(i) those applying for financial support are HGRG members;  
(ii) that alternative sources of funding should be investigated;  
(iii) those who have received HGRG support are not eligible to make further applications.

**Application procedures**

Application forms are available from the Secretary and on the HGRG website in the ‘grants and prizes’ section.

**Deadline:** 1 April

---

**‘Geographies of Trans-National Political Networks’**

Department of Geography  
University of Liverpool  
May 26-27, 2005

**Call for Papers**

This two-day conference explores trans-national political networks drawing together perspectives from geography and cognate disciplines. It will address the ways in which trans-national networks are generative of new politics of culture and cultures of politics and the challenges of movements such as trans-Atlantic political radicalisms and contemporary counter-globalisation politics. The
conference seeks to encourage rich and theoretically inventive work grounded in empirical research on particular places/ networks and forms of political activity.

**Themes include:**

- How the trans-national challenges existing ways of thinking about space and politics.
- The relations between trans-national political networks and understandings of nations & nationalisms.
- The forms of agency and identity crafted through trans-national political networks.
- The commonalities and differences between contemporary and historical forms of the trans-national.
- The relations between place and the trans-national.
- How trans-national political networks are produced and reproduced.

**Speakers include:**

- John Urry
- Jane Wills
- Noel Castree
- Alison Blunt

**Invitation to participate**

Abstracts for 30 minute presentations should be sent by Friday 4th March. If you would like to submit an abstract or request further information on the conference, please contact either Dave Featherstone ([djfeath@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:djfeath@liverpool.ac.uk)) or Richard Phillips ([Richard.Phillips@liv.ac.uk](mailto:Richard.Phillips@liv.ac.uk)) at: Department of Geography, Roxby Building, University of Liverpool, Liverpool L69 7ZT, UK.

Three bursaries, funded by the Social and Cultural Geography Research Group of the RGS-IBG, will be awarded to postgraduate students to attend this conference. Application details on request from Dave Featherstone or Richard Phillips (as above).

---

design: sites and histories research group convenes

LOCATING DESIGN 2005

the design history society annual conference

**call for papers**

**deadline – 25th February 2005**

Design: Sites and Histories Research Group at Sir John Cass Department of Art, Media and Design at London Metropolitan University invite submissions for the annual, international Design History Society conference to be held 7-9 September 2005.

‘locating design’ is concerned with a consideration of design in/and place. It is also seeks to maintain an interdisciplinary approach to thinking about design and its place in cultural history. For, design and place are both material and imagined and both design and place are co-constitutive. The East End of London – where this conference is to be held – is instructive of these ideas, demonstrating the immense investment of design /material culture in the construction of place. We
invite participants to think of design as contingent upon place and of the networks and linkages between design in/and place as a complex that is affiliative and layered. In its inter-disciplinarity, 'locating design' invites papers from all areas of study or practice that engage with the inter-connection of design in/and place.

Participants are asked to consider: design as process and object, as material and as imagined in/and place as material, as imagined, as discourse

Thus sub-themes might include design in/and:
place as material: city, home, museum, body, landscape; place as imagined/ space: urban, rural, suburban, national, local, global, imperial, post-colonial; place as language and as discourse: archive, image, language, history, inter-/disciplinary methodologies. Papers that consider design in/and the East End of London are especially welcomed.

Papers proposed may be single papers, or a whole panel of 3 papers. Proposals must follow strictly, all the guidelines given below.

Proposal types:

1. proposal for a 25 minute paper: title, suggested theme, no more than 350 word abstract clearly communicating structure and argument, 50-100 word biography of proposer with full professional/institutional affiliation and contact email or address.

2. proposal for a full panel of 3 x 25 minute papers: include convener’s name, panel title, an abstract of no more than 150 words for the full panel clearly outlining its thematic interrogation, titles and 350 word abstracts for each paper clearly communicating structure and argument, and 50-100 word biography of each speaker with full professional/institutional affiliation and contact email or address.

All session chairs will be arranged by conference conveners. All proposals must be received by 25th February, 2005. Please send all proposals to dipti bhagat at d.bhagat@londonmet.ac.uk. See also: http://locatingdesign2005.londonmet.ac.uk/.

All attachments must be saved as a Word.doc, by proposer’s name and be formatted in 12 point Times font.

---

Conference Reports:

10th HGRG Practising Historical Geography Conference, 3 November 2004

Innes M. Keighren, University of Edinburgh, sent this report:

Stephen Daniels’s keynote lecture, Exhibiting historical geography, served not only as an excellent introduction to the day’s proceedings, but also as a useful metaphor for the conference itself: an exhibition of current work in historical geography. Reflecting on exhibitions as both objects of study, and as tools of geographical research, Daniels (University of Nottingham) considered the ways in which these distinctive modes of display act to reframe historical geography by narrowing the distance between past and present, and by redrawing the boundaries between formal and informal knowledge. Drawing on his experience as an exhibition curator, Daniels considered his own position within what Tony Bennet (1995) has described as the “exhibitionary complex”.

---
Describing his work on *Art of the garden* for Tate Britain, Daniels revealed how the practicalities of exhibition design conspired with more abstract issues of memory, enactment, and space to influence communication of ideas, the production of knowledge, and the making of meaning.

Notions of enactment and of space were apparent too in the historical geography workshops which bookended the lunch break. In his discussion on Weimar-era Berlin, for example, Alex Vasudevan (University of Nottingham) explored the application of performative theory to the analysis of various textual and aural sources. In so doing, he pointed to novel ways of engaging with archival material, and revealed how performance and enactment might be recovered from otherwise inert historical sources. In their informative workshop on *Planning the fashion city*, David Gilbert and Bronwen Edwards (Royal Holloway, University of London) outlined a new cultural narrative for 1960s London. In describing the interaction of fashion and metropolitan cultures during this period, Gilbert and Edwards revealed how ideas of the city were differently conceived and constructed by consumers and by planners, and explained how narrowly Piccadilly Circus and Regent Street avoided the vicissitudes of 1960s urban regeneration.

Caitlin DeSilvey (Open University) began her talk with reference to a famous image: M. C. Escher’s *Puddle*. For DeSilvey, the image served as a useful metaphor for her postgraduate experience: the puddle suggesting the clear, calm, intellectual reflection which she believed she ought to pursue, and the muddy, rutted track in which the puddle was located, representing the complex, negotiated, conflicted ‘real’ world with which she was less keen to become engaged. Detailing her time as a postgraduate, from studying the historical geography of Edinburgh’s allotments as a Master’s student, to her current Ph.D. studies concerned with a cultural analysis of material artefacts recovered from a Montana homestead, DeSilvey explained that her initial aspiration to avoid the ‘mud’, and to focus on the ‘reflection’, had gradually given way to a desire to integrate the two—to combine the more active and situated aspects of research with the more overtly contemplative, and in so doing to achieve a more holistic engagement with historical geography.

In the day’s penultimate session, Sefton Lang (formerly of the University of Edinburgh) took his audience to the “highest office in the United Kingdom” for a discussion on his undergraduate study of the Ben Nevis Observatory. Lang’s work, for which he was awarded the 2003 HGRG Undergraduate Dissertation Prize, was concerned with the social history of a unique site of scientific inquiry. Lang explained how the panoptic perspective of the desolate mountain summit, combined with Victorian positivist confidence, rendered the Observatory a site of heroic endeavour and of scientific novelty.

The themes of exhibition and of display were returned to by Nuala Johnson (Queen’s University Belfast) in her keynote lecture, which considered two distinct aspects of her research: public memory and botanical gardens. Focusing first on the role of the Great War in Irish popular memory, Johnson noted the various ways in which the War was understood by the contemporary populace, and the extent to which these understanding came to be rehearsed and reinforced through acts of commemoration and memorialisation. Shifting focus to her work on botanical gardens in Belfast, Dublin, and Cambridge, Johnson explored the different ways in which nature was displayed, communicated, and understood. As sites of display, Johnson revealed botanical gardens to be contested spaces—at once venues of research and of display, of collection and of communication, and of scientific understanding and aesthetic contemplation. In her closing comments, Johnson reminded her audience that to practise historical geography is to practise theory, it is to engage in an inherently hermeneutic act, and, ultimately, to perform.
**Thesis Abstracts:**

HGRG are keen to provide a forum for disseminating abstracts of recently completed doctoral theses in historical geography. We encourage all completed doctoral postgraduates in geography and related disciplines to consider submitting for publication in our tri-annual newsletter (there are no temporal or spatial limitations). Abstracts of no more than 250 words (with relevant contact details), as set out in the submitted format below, should be sent via e-mail to the HGRG Publicity Officer, John Morrissey, john.morrissey@nuigalway.ie.


The production of knowledge about natural history in the eighteenth century often went hand in hand with the elaboration of an ideology of imperial improvement. Voyages of discovery yielded an abundance of new species, which were collected, studied and classified. Natural history knowledge was accumulated through various practices of collecting undertaken at particular sites, sites that were subject to projects of ‘improvement’, involving the ordering of both land and people.

Through a focus on Henry Smeathman (1742-1786), this thesis aims to provide insights into the production, circulation and use of natural history knowledge in the late eighteenth century. Particular attention is paid to the connections between natural history, improvement and colonial settlement. Smeathman’s dual role in the worlds of natural history and colonialism is reflected in his unpublished and published writings on entomology in Sierra Leone and the Caribbean. The research addresses aspects of eighteenth-century natural history, collecting networks, and practical aspects of the accumulation of specimens. Smeathman’s entomological networks, his sponsors and his work in the field are examined, as well as his major entomological work and the significance of his pictorial representations of termites and termite colonies. The research considers how trans-Atlantic networks of trade facilitated exploration and natural history collecting at particular sites, including Sierra Leone, and shows how the sciences of natural history and slavery were linked on the African coast in the eighteenth century.

**Contact details:** Dr. Starr Douglas, 3 Great College Street, Brighton BN2 1HJ, UK. Tel: +44 (0)1273 698893. E-mail: starr@douglas22.fsnet.co.uk.

Andrew Law, **The Built Heritage Conservation Movement: Landscapes of Englishness and Social Class.** Abstract of PhD thesis submitted to the School of Geography, Politics and Sociology, University of Newcastle upon Tyne. May 2004.

This study will investigate the Built Heritage Conservation Movement in Britain. Including archival analysis, I build a comparative study of conservationists in York and Leeds through sixty-three semi-structured interviews, participant observation and visual research. Through history and
contemporary issues I argue that conservationists construct an organic Englishness. I suggest that the process of constructing this identity takes place in the production of ‘townscape aesthetics’ and ‘nostalgia for a pre-intellectual spirit of creativity’. Moreover I suggest that the formation of this Englishness rests on the construction of ‘inorganic others’ enabling a normalisation of an organic identity. Thus, conservationists discuss ‘modernist others’ (landscapes and agents) as symptoms of an increasingly devolved world which lacks taste, style and is a threat to a ‘natural order’. In this positioning conservationists enforce nostalgia for ‘organic landscapes’ and the idea of an ‘organic community’ aware of its own ‘creativity’ and ‘independence’. Furthermore, I assert that an organic discourse of Englishness is established through cultural capital and symbolic violence. Thus through capitals of populism and symbolic performances of outrage, conservationists position the ‘industrial’ and the ‘modern’ with the intention of constructing an image of self-authority and patriotism. By positioning these landscapes and cultures as spaces and identities of bad taste and vandalism, conservationists enact a construction of a ‘moralistic and patriotic self’ which legitimises their organic vision. Furthermore, through the forging of this ‘self’ conservationists deliver their vision, not simply as an expression of their own views, but as the ‘aesthetic tastes and identities of the people’. In this way I understand that the construction of power is forged through processes of disidentification where conservationists understand themselves simultaneously as both authorities and populists.

Contact details: Dr. Andrew Law, University of Wales, Swansea, Department of Geography, Wallace Building, Singleton Park, Swansea, SA2 8PP, UK. E-mail: a.law@swansea.ac.uk.
J B Harley Research Fellowships

The Harley Fellowships - the only one of their kind in Europe - provide support of up to four weeks (normally at GBP 250 per week) for those, from any discipline, doing the equivalent of post-graduate level work in the map collections of the London area.

For details of past applications and awards, and comments from previous fellows see:

http://ihr.sas.ac.uk/maps/harley.html

The closing date for applications is 1st November 2005.

Information about applying may be obtained from:

Tony Campbell
Hon. Sec. J B Harley Trust Fund
76 Ockendon Road
London N1 3NW
UK

Tel.: +44 (0)20 7359 6477.
E-mail: t.campbell@ockendon.clara.co.uk.

Please indicate where you saw this announcement.

_____________________________________________________________________________________

Seminars Series in the History of Gardens and Landscapes

Institute of Historical Research

Senate House, London

All are welcome at the summer term’s series of seminars, which are held on Fridays at 5.30 in the Wolfson Room. The theme of this series is ‘Architecture in the Garden’. Join us afterwards in the Common Room for a glass of wine (£1).

2005

6 May  Shifting Conceptions of the Italianate Garden, 1840-1914
        Patricia White, Institute of Education

20 May  'Edifices' in the Walled Kitchen Garden'
        Susan Campbell

27 May  Follies in the time of Functionalism: Garden Buildings in the Twentieth Century
        Dr Alan Powers, University of Greenwich

For further information (and about the MA Garden History at Birkbeck), contact Dr. Janet Waymark (janetwaymark@yahoo.co.uk) or Dr. Alan Powers (pasquito@aol.com). More information can be found about seminars at the IHR at: www.history.ac.uk/ihrseminars/fardens.htm.
LONDON GROUP OF HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHERS

Seminar Programme, Spring Term 2005

MAKING THE PAST PRESENT

18th January 2005  
Gerry Kearns (Cambridge University)  
*Immigration, terrorism and the echoes of the Irish-British past*

1st February 2005  
Alex Cook (Cambridge University)  
*The use and abuse of re-enactment in television history: A survivor’s guide*

15th February 2005  
Karen Till (Royal Holloway, University of London)  
*Digging in Berlin’s memory district: Hauntings, hypervisibility, and hungry tourists*

1st March 2005  
Mimi Sheller (Lancaster University)  
*Measures of silence: Writing histories of gender and slavery*

15th March 2005  
Nick Thomas (Goldsmiths College, University of London)  
*The uses of Captain Cook: First encounters and public histories in Australia, Hawaii, and New Zealand*

These seminars are held on **Tuesdays at 5pm** in the Wolfson Room at the Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, University of London. For further details, contact David Lambert, Royal Holloway (01784 443640), Miles Ogborn, Queen Mary (020 7882 5407) or Jenny Robinson, Open University (01908 654522). We are grateful to Queen Mary, Royal Holloway, Kings, UCL, the Open University, Sussex University, the Historical Geography Research Group and the IHR for supporting this series.

---

Change of HGRG membership details?

To all members who have recently changed institution or contact details: please let the Membership Secretary, David Lambert (d.lambert@rhul.ac.uk) know in order ensure receipt of HGRG material and notices.