

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY RESEARCH GROUP

Agenda of the Annual General Meeting August, RGS/IBG Annual Conference, 2010

1. Apologies for absence

David Nally, Lois Jones, Keith Lilley, Diarmid Finnegan, Carl Griffin, Heidi Scott, Isla Forsyth, Franklin Ginn, Lloyd Jenkins.

Members attending

Anne-Flore Laloe, Susan Seymour, Charlotte Jones, Dean Bond, Valerie Vichoff, Mary Beth Kitzel, Stephanie Wyse, David Wood, David Lambert, Felix Driver, Kate Brace, Harriet Hawkins, Nicola Thomas

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted.

3. Matters arising not on the agenda

Felix Driver encouraged all members of HGRG to consider becoming members of the AHRC Peer Review College.

David Lambert asked about the possible alliance with the AAG Historical Geography Speciality Group. This was mentioned at the AAG annual conference in Washington DC in April 2010 but has not been pursued and nothing further has been heard from HGSG.

4. Chair's Business

Report on activities

Nicola Thomas (Chair) reported that the 15th Practising Historical Geography Postgraduate Conference at Royal Holloway in October, attended by 35 students and supported by staff from RHUL. The day was organised by Heidi Scott and Briony McDonagh with support from Isla Forsyth, David Gilbert and the Department of Geography, Royal Holloway. Participants enjoyed guest lectures from Luciana Martins and Keith Lilly; workshops by Alasdair Pinkerton and Ruth Craggs, and a Lowri Jones (RHUL) presented a 'postgraduate voice'.

HGRG's Small Conference Scheme continues to operate on an annual basis. This year we have allocated £500 to support postgraduate bursaries at the following conferences:

- Correspondence: Travel, Writing and Literatures of Exploration, c.1750-c. 1850, 7-10 April 2010, University of Edinburgh and National Library of Scotland

- ‘Salty’ Geographies: Subaltern maritime spaces, networks and practices, 10–12 June 2010, University of Glasgow

HGRG Postgraduate Funding was given to Anyaa Anim-Addo (Royal Holloway, University of London), David Paton (University of Exeter) and Sarah Thomas (University of Sydney). Each has received £100 and their reports will be in the autumn newsletter.

HGRG sponsoring 6 sessions at the conference: ‘Terra Incognita’? Making space for medieval geographies; What are surfaces? (with HPGRG) ‘Places without a place’: The geographies of ships (with SCGRG); Narrating the stories of travel and tourism (with GLTRG); New and Emerging Research in Historical Geography and ‘There is no place like home!’ – Why historians would want to use GIS

HGRG were pleased to welcome the following people as group guests to the RGS-IBG annual conference: Prof David Wood (York University, Canada), Dr Thomas Smith (University of Nevada), Professor Susan Pennybacker (Trinity College, Connecticut), Ms Galia Halpern (NYU, Institute of Fine Arts)

Professor Wood expressed his thanks for his invitation to the conference and he indicated that he had greatly enjoyed the conference.

Teaching Historical Geographies Conference, 19th May 2011

NT explained the purpose of a conference focused on Teaching and appealed to the AGM for ideas on how to develop the day to make it useful for the community of historical geographers. NT will send out a call for suggestions for the day. It is likely that applications will be made to GEES and RGS/IBG for funding to support the day. It is hoped that an edition of the monograph series will be produced from the day.

Medals and Awards

In their otherwise very complimentary review of HGRG activities in 2010, the RGS/IBG has noted that HGRG do not frequently nominate people for medals and awards. NT explained the scope and purpose of the medals and awards system run by RGS/IBG. She suggested that if HGRG are going to take this opportunity seriously, HGRG should develop a list of people whom HGRG could nominate. She sought the meeting’s views on:

1. Should HGRG be putting people forward for medals?
2. If yes, how should this be achieved?

Felix Driver noted that Alan Baker received a prestigious medal last year and noted that the RGS/IBG seem to be encouraging groups to participate in this process rather than suggesting that historical geographers are under-represented as award winners. It was suggested that HGRG could be more proactive in sending round the call for nominations every year in January.

RGS-IBG and the research series

Catherine Souch has been in touch with the group regarding the holdings of the HGRG Research Series as the RGS does not have a complete run in their library. The meeting agreed that HGRG should supply missing copies to the Society free of charge. The Society have agreed to pay postage if required. The Society have also agreed to scan any copies of the monograph that are now out of print. This was warmly welcomed. It was noted that as a category A member the Society now received new copies of the monograph.

Maintaining an HGRG archive

NT reported that she is accumulating items for the HGRG online archive.

E-Newsletter

The HGRG transferred to an electronic version of the newsletter last year, which has been very successful thanks to Harriet Hawkins, however the implementation of the electronic newsletter has been partial. Some members have expressed their preference to receive a hardcopy which HGRG are very happy to do, however a further 150 members expressed no preference when asked. As such they are continuing to receive a hard copy. As HGRG has diminishing funds and it was deemed preferable to channel all available funds into supporting core funding schemes it was proposed at the AGM that the Autumn 2010 newsletter would be the last sent out to members (unless members have expressly requested a hard copy which they will continue to receive). It was agreed that the Autumn newsletter will be accompanied by a notification to the effect that it will be the last newsletter a member will receive unless they contact the membership secretary with electronic address details or express their wish to continue to receive a hard copy of the newsletter and confirm their address details. This was agreed.

5. Reports

Nicola Thomas thanked all committee members for their support through the year and thanked those who were standing down.

Hon. Secretary

Heidi supported the work of the group this year liaising with the RGS-IBG regarding grant applications, the annual conference organisation, supporting the conference officer for the Practising Historical Geography workshop at Royal Holloway. The AGM thanked Heidi for this work over the last year.

Hon. Treasurer

There was no report from the Treasurer*, Jon Stobart, but the AGM wished to thank him for his work over the last several years as he is standing down this year.

David Lambert asked whether the dues for membership of HGRG should be raised, having been £8 for a very long time. There are still a small number of people on the old rate of £4.50. NT indicated that work was being undertaken to reconcile the membership lists as a first step.

Hon. Editor

David Nally presented a written report indicating that the research series is currently sustained by (a) initiatives directly led by HGRG e.g. 'The Practising the Archive' venture (b) and festschrift publications. There was limited interest or scholars coming forward to publish in the research series. The next edition of the research series is a collection of essays in memory of Denis Cosgrove, edited by Veronica della Dora. Harriet Hawkins suggested that the Denis Cosgrove commemorative volume could be a popular edition and provide an opportunity for advertising the series and promote submissions to it. There has been an intention to form an editorial board to guide the future direction of the Research Series. Suggestions at the AGM included developing the website to make the research series more professional, collaborating with a professional publisher and ensuring it was higher profile through increased advertising. NT wondered if support for the marketing of the monograph could be provided by RGS/IBG. Stephanie Wyse (RGS-IBG RHED) agreed to look into this.

Hon. Conference Secretary

Briony McDonagh was congratulated on the arrival of her baby girl. Briony reported by email that the plans are in hand for the postgrad conference on Nov 3rd in Nottingham. Dave Matless and Caroline Bressey are giving the keynotes and Susanne Seymour and George Revill are running the workshops. Lucy Veale of Nottingham will run the postgrad voices session. Rebecca Ford has kindly agreed to help with organisation while I'm on maternity leave and I have admin help from the admin staff at Nottingham. Suggestion that we raise the price of the postgraduate conference from £8 to £10. This was agreed.

Postgraduate Committee Members

Lois and Isla were thanked for their convening of the very successful emerging historical geographies sessions. Isla was also thanked for stuffing the envelopes for the newsletter this year. Franklin has offered David Nally excellent support with the newsletter – particularly over the launch and advertising. Franklin gave his resignation as he has completed his PhD. This was accepted. Rebecca will be supporting Briony in the Practising Historical Geography conference. Franklin has provided great support to David Nally – particularly with the launch of the last monograph.

A suggestion that has emerged is how to further support PG students and it is suggested to hold a session at the next RGS-IBG conference, perhaps in a lunch hour, on academic publishing in historical geography. This was approved.

Membership Secretary

Lloyd Jenkins reported by email that the overall membership (as of 30/3/2010) stands at 416. The breakdown is as follows: Cat A = 223; Cat B = 27; Cat B (overseas) = 48; PG Cat A = 64; PG Cat B = 54. Inquiries into membership increase are currently about 4/5 a month, predominantly from postgraduates, which reflects the efforts that are made in promoting the group at conferences and other events.

Ordinary Member (newsletter)

Harriet Hawkins reported in person that there has been the usual compliment of newsletters this past year. 245 are sent electronically, with the rest going by post. Thanks to Kate back issues are also available on the website. Following discussion at this year's e-committee meeting the recent newsletter included a call for content for a new section of the newsletter. Entitled 'Work in progress' this section will feature short pieces by members about their current research projects. This complements the newsletters' existing sections on completed PhD theses and the occasional sections celebrating members' research grant and research prize successes. If anyone has any ideas for new sections they want to instigate or seminar series they want advertised if they could pass them onto me that would be great.

Ordinary Member (web)

Catherine Leyshon reported that the website has been maintained through the year. We are on the way to getting our own domain name.

Dissertation Coordinator

The judging for the dissertations is underway with 8 dissertations submitted for the prize. Judges this year are Miles Ogborn, Nicola Thomas and Diarmid Finnegan. Diarmid was thanked for his work for the committee and his resignation was accepted.

E-Circulation Officer

Carl Griffin was thanked for his prompt circulation of notices throughout the year.

6. Elections for committee members

Nominations for the following posts had been advertised via the HGRG circulation list: Treasurer, Dissertation Coordinator and E-Circulation Officer.

Nicola reported that the position for PG Editorial Assistant to the Research Series was also available.

Treasurer – Carl Griffin was nominated by Nicola and seconded by Kate Leyshon. Passed

PG Editorial Assistant – Charlotte Jones (UCL) – nominated by David Lambert and seconded by Felix Driver. Passed. Their role includes:

- (a) promoting and advertising new monographs in the series
- (b) final proof reading of manuscripts prior to the print run to ensure the editor has not overlooked any errors
- (c) assistance with packaging and distribution

These positions remain open: Dissertation Prize Coordinator and E-Circulation officer. It was agreed that Catherine Leyshon would stand in as e-circulation officer as a short-term measure.

7. Forthcoming meetings

- a. HGRG Practising Historical Geography Conference, November 3rd 2010
- b. Teaching Historical Geographies – May 19th 2011
- c. RGS-IBG Annual. NT asked if there are any sessions that are being planned. These were proposed: Revisiting Orientalism (Mike Crang and Divya Tolia-Kelly); New Geographies of Empire (David Lambert and Steve Legg). NT will also issue a call for sessions in due course.
- d. RGS-IBG Annual Conference 2012 – London. It was felt important that the RGS-IBG should not clash with the ICGH conference that will be held in Prague. The committee had no view on changed timings or locations.
- e. NT reported that she had attended the organisational meeting at the ICHG in Kyoto and that the next ICHG would be in Prague 2012. At this meeting NT had indicated, following discussion with HGRG members, that the UK would offer to host the ICHG in 2015. It was recognised at the AGM that hosting the ICHG represents a significant undertaking and we will need to be prepared by the ICHG in 2012 to demonstrate that our plans are advanced. As there is only one more AGM (2011) before the 2012 ICHG we need to advance our plans over the next year to ensure that we have the capacity to host this conference. Discussion is needed amongst those interested in bringing the ICHG to the UK to discuss whether there is a single University willing to host the ICHG in 2015, or if there is more interest in forming a 'national' organising committee, possibly led through HGRG to coordinate the conference. It is recognised that the ICHG required significant staff support in the form of fieldtrips (during the conference and post conference) meaning that a single department would always need support from other members of the historical geography

community. NT will start the conversations about how it might work and who wants to be involved.

8. Any other business

David Lambert promoted the London Group of Historical Geography schedule for 2011.

Nominations for REF

HGRG currently compiling a list of people that we would like nominated to the REF panel. We are going to present the RGS-IBG a long list, recognising that it is important to get strong representation on the REF panel for Historical Geography and that the way the REF panel works is that suggesting a long list of potential members is likely to be more successful. This will be undertaken by 21st September.

9. Date of next AGM

Some time during the Annual Conference 2011.

Nicola Thomas
September 2010

*The financial report has subsequently been supplied:

RGS-IBG *Historical Geography Research Group*

Treasurers report to AGM, 2010

1) Balance:

<i>Account</i>	<i>Balance Dec 2008</i>	<i>Balance Dec 2009</i>
Treasurer	£3614.88	£3099.79
Deposit	£2790.20	£2792.37
Total	£6405.08	£5892.16

2) Major income:

RGS subvention	£500
Publications	£563
Subscriptions	£1709

3) Major expenditure:

Newsletters	- £443
Committee expenses	- £0 (meetings held via email)
HGRG Postgraduate Conference expenses	- £444 – but with some bills outstanding)
Post-graduate and conference support	- £1500
Publication costs	- £1060

4) Key points

As in previous years, HGRG funds continue to be healthy, but reserves continue to diminish. Some of the traditional draws on our resources are reducing, with the newsletter being largely published in virtual form and the PG conference being put on a rather more sustainable footing by including a small charge for participants.

Our major areas of expenditure are increasingly: [a] the support offered to post-grads for conference attendance; [b] producing the HGRG research series. Both of these are areas that I feel we should continue to prioritise.

Income from subscriptions remains healthy (thanks David) and we are now enjoying a good income from sales of our recent volumes in the research series.

Overall, I am pleased to be able to report a much healthier position going forwards than has been the case in recent years

Prof Jon Stobart, HGRG Hon. Treasurer
16 September 2010