

CMH NEWS

The Newsletter of the Centre for Metropolitan History

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This Newsletter is a new venture on the part of the CMH, and one we hope you will find of use and interest. It is designed to bridge the gap between our Annual Reports (which appear at the turn of the year) by keeping you up to date with our work. We welcome comments and suggestions for future issues, but for reasons of economy the Newsletter must remain brief and easy to produce. It will cover the progress of current projects, the development of our other services and our plans for the future. We have a staff of ten at present. Here is some news of their recent activities...

NEWS OF PROJECTS AND PEOPLE

Feeding the city

This very productive three year project finished at the end of August. Margaret Murphy, Jim Galloway and Bruce Campbell have written up their findings in a series of articles which will come out soon in the *London Journal*, *Agricultural History Review*, and *Anthropozoologica*. Jim and Margaret crowned the success of the enterprise by getting married in March! The ESRC has made an award to extend the study into the later fourteenth century, and the new phase of the work, which will last three years, begins this October. It will make possible many valuable comparisons with the earlier study period. Margaret and Jim have been asked to give a paper at the International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan, next year.

Jobbers jobbed...

The archive of taped interviews with former stock jobbers, 42 of them, is now complete and is in the safe keeping of the National Sound Archive. There are full transcripts of all the tapes and Bernard Attard is writing two articles based on the project's findings, which it is hoped will appear soon in *Oral History* and the *London Journal*. Bernard, whose Oxford D.Phil. on the Australian High Commissioner's Office, 1901-39, was completed earlier this year, left the staff at the end of July and has now returned to Australia where he is applying for research fellowships. His departure was celebrated (and lamented) in fine style by the entire staff, and his entertaining company is already much missed around the office.

Textile marketing and Financial headquarters in the City of London

Iain Black has now finished the first stage of his work on the development of the textile district around

Wood Street from the late eighteenth to nineteenth centuries, and is writing an article which will give a portrait of the area at that period. He is moving on to study the origins of several large bank and insurance headquarters buildings in the City. Iain's Cambridge Ph.D., on Money, information and space: an historical geography of banking in the Industrial Revolution, was awarded in the spring. He has been invited to give a paper at the International Historical Conference of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and is looking forward to his first visit to Sarospatak in September. The theme of the conference is Regions and Regional Development.

Metropolitan London in the 1690s

Janet Barnes and Craig Spence began work on this project earlier this year and have been entering details from the 4/- in the £ tax assessments on their database. They began with the outer London area and are about to start dealing with the sources for the City.

Parish registers and other records that provide occupational information will be linked with the tax records, enabling comparisons of property values and holdings, and occupational zones, to be made. Another element of the project has been the production of an accurate digitised map of late seventeenth-century London showing the contemporary administrative boundaries. When all the data has been entered, it will be analysed and directly mapped using PC MAPICS software.

Janet and Craig find the routine of inputting is enlivened by some of the taxpayers' names - one parish contained a Jekyll and a Hyde, while another listed Mr Pye and Mr Mash as neighbours...

Bibliography of London History

All the entries for the bibliography are now on the database, and Heather Creaton and Tony Trowles feel they could write a separate book on suburban travels with a laptop computer, having visited all the London borough local history libraries in turn. Editing work on the 23,000-plus items has now started, queries are being checked, and we hope that the Library Association will publish the resulting volumes in 1993. The database is being kept up to date, and is in frequent use to provide booklists for enquirers on any aspect of London history. We have recently been asked about the history of the bakery trade in London, about Jewish education in the East End before the First World War and about the Clink Prison. This autumn Tony will submit his Oxford D.Phil. thesis on the English ode, 1660-1800 for examination.

FORMER STAFF

Justin Champion, who was a researcher on our recent 'Plague' project, has spent a busy academic year lecturing at Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, launching a new journal, *Early Modern History*, the first issue of which will be published in September, as well as completing the final stages of the study of the Plague of 1665. This autumn he will be taking up an appointment as history lecturer at La Sainte Union College Southampton. His book on the English Enlightenment is forthcoming.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

The Centre's database of work currently in progress on the history of London grows larger week by week as more questionnaires are returned. It is good to know that so much useful work is under way across the broadest possible range of subjects and periods. A supplement to the previously published list will appear soon in the *London Journal*, but we are always willing to check for individual enquirers whether a particular subject is being worked on at present.

LISTS OF LONDONERS

Publication of the Centre's guide to holdings of unpublished indexes of Londoners was regrettably delayed last year, but the Federation of Family History Societies has promised that it will appear in their pamphlet series before the end of 1991. It should be of use to historians seeking biographical details of elusive London inhabitants of the past.

NEW PROJECT

The Renaissance Trust has promised the CMH £300,000 for a three-year investigation of the development of craft skills in London in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It will focus on such crafts as gold and silversmithing, clock and watch making, scientific and musical instrument making, glass, china and the book trade. A preliminary conference on this topic in May was very useful in planning the approach to this new undertaking, which is part of a network of projects studying creative achievement. Posts will be advertised in September, and we hope that work will start early in 1992.

CONFERENCES

The CMH has had a lively conference programme this year, covering a variety of subjects. They included Newspapers and Metropolitan Culture, Metropolitan Folklore (with the Folklore Society); The Design and Setting of St. Paul's (which coincided with the Royal Academy's Wren exhibition) and the Skilled Workforce in London.

At the Institute's Anglo-American Conference this summer the CMH organised two sessions on Capital Cities and the State, covering a wide range of

periods, from ancient Athens and Sparta, via medieval Lübeck to 1930s Paris and Berlin, with plenty on London in between.

In the autumn we are helping to run the first ever conference on The Future of Jewish Monuments in the British Isles (jointly with YAKAR on October 13th). Plans for the future include a conference on Anglo-American Publishing in the late twentieth century (in July 1992), Metropolises and European Culture, and The Aristocratic Town House in London, 1400-1930. We hope that the latter will be appropriately staged in the splendid, newly restored Spencer House.

SEMINARS

The Centre's seminars start again on October 16th, and the theme for the autumn and winter terms will be 'Food' and 'Transport' in the metropolis. A list of speakers is enclosed with this mailing.

NEW PATRON

We are very pleased that Mr Richard Gibbs, Chairman of the Wellcome Trust, has agreed to become one of our Patrons, and are looking forward to meeting him at the Centre.

DIRECTOR'S TRAVELS

Derek Keene has had a busy travel programme this year. On a trip to the United States he lectured on medieval shopping, and on 1000 years of making a metropolis: London 700-1700, at Fordham and New York Universities. While in New York he also met many non-medieval scholars working on cultural, architectural and planning history, got to know the city better, and had to buy an extra suitcase to bring all his book purchases home. In Lübeck he spoke at a lively German conference of historians of the Hanse, and in Amsterdam he gave a paper on continuity and change in London's financial district, 1300-1871, at the International Conference on Cities of Finance at the Dutch Academy of Sciences.

He has also visited Devon for a field meeting of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments. This autumn he is off to Meissen for a meeting of the International Commission for the History of Towns.

He is working hard on the London grain trade, as a contribution to a 'Feeding the City' paper.

MAILING LIST

The cost of free mailings twice a year to our list of 500 names has unfortunately become too much for our limited budget. We are therefore introducing a subscription charge of £5 p.a. from this autumn for those who wish to continue to receive our Annual Report, conference and seminar details and so on. You will find a subscription form enclosed.

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