



UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

SCHOOL OF ADVANCED STUDY  
INSTITUTE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

# CMH *news*

The Newsletter of the Centre for Metropolitan History

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Six months have passed since our 1994–5 Annual Report was published and there have been many developments at the Centre, so it is time to give you some up to date information about recent work and activities in our annual Newsletter. We have eleven on the staff now, stretching our office space to the full. Fortunately we can now make occasional use of the seminar room at the Institute of Romance Studies, just upstairs from our premises, to hold conferences or meetings that are too large to fit in our own offices.

## NEWS OF PROJECTS

### *Market Networks and the Metropolis*

Jim Galloway and Margaret Murphy have continued with the analysis and mapping of the data they have collected on markets in the London region around 1400, and will soon start writing up the project's findings for a book. Jim has given papers at the recent History and Computing Conference, and at the Centre's study day on medieval London and Paris. He is going to San Francisco in September, to speak at the Economic History Association of the USA's annual conference. Jim and Margaret's schedule has been even busier than usual this year, for in May their son, Patrick, was born. He has already attended his first workshop at the Centre to hear his parents give papers on the project at a successful all day workshop on 'Market systems in the metropolitan region of medieval England'.

Further medieval work is now under way at the Centre, as we have received funding from the Aurelius Trust for a brief survey of borough market privileges in medieval England. Hannes Kleinecke has joined us for a short period to collect and collate this information and produce a database. The project is self-contained, but the data it yields will be of great value to the 'Market networks' study.

### *Mortality in the Metropolis*

The 'Mortality' team has made good progress with its investigation into causes of death in London between 1860 and 1920, identifying hospital and other records, entering data from these and other sources and preparing to analyse the results. Two very useful advisers' meetings have been held, and three staff from the project made a major contribution to the Centre's first study day for postgraduate students, held in March (see below). Andrea Tanner joined Bill Luckin and Graham

Mooney on the project in January and her knowledge of the workings of the London poor law has proved very useful.

In the course of his work for this project, Graham discovered a detailed body of data on deaths in the 1866 cholera epidemic. The Wellcome Trust budget for the study permitted us to employ a data inputter for a few weeks. Patsy Tuck is with us over the summer, entering this valuable information for later analysis.

### *London and the Second World War*

Heather Creaton has continued to collect information about London during the war years and now has a sizeable bibliography on the subject as well as reams of notes from a wide variety of repositories. The quantity of surviving material is enormous, some of it of very high quality and largely underused. Historians, archivists and other colleagues have been very helpful in suggesting fresh sources; a talk she gave to the staff of the Museum of London's Later London department recently produced a further crop of useful ideas. Heather is now writing up her findings and negotiating for a publisher. Her new, annotated general bibliography of London is due from Clio Press in September.

### *English Merchant Culture, 1660–1720*

Perry Gauci is examining the political influence and activities of 850 merchants, mainly based in London. He has spent the last few months researching their business relationships and family links as background to their political interests. The database generated by our previous 'London in the 1690s' project has proved invaluable, and its computer maps helped him to plot the areas in which groups of merchants clustered. The way in which they used associations to minimise risk, formed pressure groups and organised petitions is proving significant. Perry's book, *Politics and society in Great Yarmouth, 1660–1722* was published by OUP in January.

### *Image Database of Early Modern London*

Michael Berlin, who has worked on several Centre projects, has rejoined us to prepare this experimental database, which is being developed as a teaching and research resource. Images of objects made in London — clothing, furniture, maps, scientific instruments and many others — appear on screen and can be compared and studied in depth. The work continues some of the

themes of our former project on the development of the skilled workforce in London. Michael is using slides from the Museum of London's vast collection to provide the images, and the database will be tested on students at Birkbeck College next term, with the help of Dr Vanessa Harding. The test site work is funded by the Renaissance Trust, using software developed in Cambridge as part of the 'Virtual Teaching Collection' project.

## TRAINING DAY

Our work at the Centre breaks new ground in many subjects, and we think it is very important to disseminate and discuss our findings as widely as possible. We decided therefore to organise a series of study days, designed to make our research better known, offering postgraduate students a chance to hear about the latest developments. In March we held our first such day. Titled 'Demography, environment and social change' this new venture attracted an interested group of students who heard a series of papers about Victorian London and joined in the enthusiastic discussions afterwards. 'Mortality' team members Bill Luckin, Graham Mooney and Andrea Tanner gave papers, and were joined by Ruth Richardson who talked about cemeteries and memorials.

We were pleased with the day's results and hope to offer a similar course for medievalists, based on our 'Market networks' project, during the autumn term.

## VISITORS

It has been a pleasure to welcome visitors to the Centre from all over the world, as usual this year. Recent arrivals have come from the United States, Japan, Germany and Russia.

## CONFERENCES

### *Archives and the Metropolis*

The international conference we organised in co-operation with the Corporation of London's three record offices took place at the Barbican Conference Centre in July and was a great success. The conference looked at the provision and cultural significance of archives and record keeping in great cities from antiquity to the present. It united academic historians and archivists from all over the world, and the quality of their papers was very high. We hope that they will appear in published form before too long.

### *Study day on medieval London and Paris.*

The third annual meeting of the Anglo-French study group on medieval London and Paris met in June for a very productive day's papers and discussion. We are pleased that this group has evolved into such a regular and fruitful gathering, and have already made plans for further meetings up to 1999.

## *Gli stranieri e lo spazio urbano*

The Centre contributed to organising this primarily Franco-Italian conference held in Venice in June (following an earlier meeting in Paris). The English papers made a fine contribution to the lively and growing international network on this theme.

## SEMINARS

Last term's seminars explored the theme 'Views of metropolitan history', which included papers on Chicago and Rome as well as London. In the autumn and spring terms of 1996-7 we shall be looking at 'metropolitan attractions', a wide-ranging topic covering all sorts of interesting phenomena. See the enclosed programme!

## PUBLICATIONS

Martha Carlin's list of *Extents for debt for London and Southwark, 1316-1615* is due for publication this autumn.

## PLANS

Among several themes for future exploration we are considering 'London and the Americas 1600-1900' (informally dubbed 'from Jamestown to Selfridges'), envisaged as a series of projects, seminars, etc devoted to London's economic, social, political and cultural role in the Atlantic world.

## ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

The Institute of Historical Research, our parent body, celebrated its 75th birthday this summer. The Centre contributed a section to the Institute's informal history *The History Laboratory: the Institute of Historical Research 1921-96* (available from IHR's Publications Department at £12), added display material about our activities and publications to the Institute's celebratory exhibition in the University Library, and attended the Institute's reception for the Princess Royal, Chancellor of the University of London. Several members of staff were presented to the Princess, who took a lively interest in our work.

## RESEARCH STUDENTS

Three postgraduate students are now working for their degrees through the Centre, with Derek Keene as their supervisor. Lien Bich Luu has nearly finished her thesis on skill and innovation in London, 1550-1600; Paula Marber is studying office work and its architectural setting in the late Victorian city; and Stephen Priestley is working on piety and charity in 12th century London.

## MAILING LIST

We hope you find our mailings interesting, but if you would prefer to be taken off our list, please let us know!