

The Society for the Study of French History

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**Committee Meeting,**

**4.00 p.m., Thursday 10 July 2014**

**Tristram Room, St John’s College, Durham**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Malcolm Crook (Chair), David Andress, Tim Baycroft, Joseph Clarke, Máire Cross, Ellen Crabtree, David Hopkin, Claire Morton, Lori Oates, Noelle Plack, Dan Power, Penny Roberts, Andrew Smith, Joanna Warson, Sandy Wilkinson, & Julian Wright.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Malcolm Crook (MC) reported that apologies had been received from Claire Eldridge, Mark Greengrass, Stephen Tyre, Jessica Wardhaugh, Chris Warne and Karine Varley.

1. **Minutes of previous committee meeting**

Sandy Wilkinson (SW) reported – with apology - that he had forgotten to distribute the minutes from the January 2014 meeting. He agreed to do so forthwith.

1. **Matters arising**

MC noted that Bill Doyle and Pam Pilbeam had now stood down as Trustees as their terms of office had come to an end. He welcomed two new Trustees – David Andress and Penny Roberts.

SW noted that we had followed up on the proposition from Alison Carrol to commit £200 annually for a French seminar at the IHR - subject to the conditions set out by the committee in January 2014. SW reported that Alison Carrol had agreed to our terms.

1. **Report from the Secretary**

Ralph Gibson Bursary 2014

Following a discussion of the recommendations of the board of assessors which this year consisted of David Hopkin, Kevin Passmore & Sandy Wilkinson, the committee agreed – exceptionally - to award two bursaries in the current academic year, both worth £3000. The recipients of these bursaries were confirmed as Robin Macdonald (York) for her project entitled ‘Inhabiting New France: Sensing Bodies, Spaces, and the Sacred, c. 1632-1740’, and Fabio Morabito (King’s College London) for his project ‘Performing Sociability: Ideas of Authorship in Parisian Chamber Music Culture under the Bourbon Restoration’.

The committee ratified the recommendation of the undergraduate dissertation prize committee, which this year consisted of Claire Eldridge and Stephen Tyre. A first prize of £300 will be awarded to Craig Saunders (Edinburgh) for his dissertation on 'The Impact and Influence of French Socialism on the Paris Peace Conference, 1919'.

There was agreement that it was important to have a scholar with expertise in an earlier period in French History on the selection committee, and Noelle Plack kindly agreed to serve in this capacity. There was a suggestion, which found approval amongst the committee, that the nominating institution of the winning dissertation also be informed of the outcome of the prize so that it might publicise the award and perhaps link to the SSFH website. The committee also stressed the importance of publishing the winning dissertation on the Society’s website. It was also agreed that Irish HEIs be permitted to submit nominations for the dissertation prize.

SW will liaise with the Chair of the Selection Committee Stephen Tyre to agree a process of notification the successful applicant and institution and getting permission from the winner to publish the dissertation online, perhaps with a brief comment from the assessment panel.

In addition to the Ralph Gibson Bursary and undergraduate prize winners, SW provided a summary of awards made since 1 January 2014:

£6000 Ralph Gibson Bursary

£300 Undergraduate Prize

£250 French History Article Prize

£2000 Postgraduate Panel Scheme

£827 Conference Bursary Scheme

£1895 under conference grant scheme

£10,163 under research grant scheme

TOTAL: £21, 435 to date.

French History Article Prize (£250)

The board of assessors (Penny Roberts, Malcolm Crook and Julian Wright) recommended Ed Naylor 'Un âne dans l'ascenseur': late colonial welfare services and social housing in Marseille after decolonization’ as the winner of the French History Article Prize 2014.

Research Awards 2014

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sean Heath | £750 | 2 weeks | Cult of St Louis in 17-18 centuries | St Andrews |
| Alexander Collins | £1000 | 6 weeks | Missals | Edinburgh |
| Marc Jaffre | £503 | 3 weeks | Early Bourbon courts 1589 1643 | St Andrews |
| Ellen Crabtree | £1000 |  |  |  |
| Chris Jones | £750 | 2-3 weeks | Mitterrand and dissolution of Yugoslavia | UEA |
| George Roberts | £715 | 4 weeks | France Intelligence in Africa | Warwick |
| Roel Van der Velde | £961 | 4 weeks | France/South Africa relations in the light of French military/industrial strategies | Portsmouth |
| Jerome Greenfield | £860 | 5 months | France as fiscal military ruler of Algeria 1830 50 | Cambridge |
| Ben Rhode | £750 | 2 months | French attitudes to Spanish American War | Oxford |
| Charlotte Faucher | £710 | 6 days and 5 days | History of Fr institute in London | QML |
| Anna Peterson | £750 | 2 weeks | Medieval hospitals in Sienna and Narbonne | St Andrews |
| Daisy Gibbs | £113.57 | 1 month | Grain trade in French and British colonies | UCL |
| Iida Saarinen | £300 | 1 month | Scottish Catholic links to France | Edinburgh |
| Alexis Romano | £1000 | 1 month | Fashion history | Courtauld |

*Postgraduate Panel Scheme*

Charlotte Faucher, Postgraduate Panel Scheme £2000 to attend the SFHS conference in Montreal in April 2014.

*Conference Bursary Scheme*

John Condren was awarded £300  to help defray expenses associated with attending the SFHS Conference in Montreal to present a paper entitled '*C'est* *la nature des italiens d'etre lents dans ce qu'ils ne font pas pour* *eux*': the French missions in northern Italy in the early stages of the Nine Years War’ .

Benjamin Darnell was awarded £227 under the conference bursary scheme to attend a workshop at St Andrews on 10 May 2014 on ‘France and the Mediterranean World in the Reign of Louis XIV’.

Sarah Wood was awarded £300 under our Conference Bursary Scheme to attend the SFHS conference in Montreal to present a paper entitled ‘*An 'interior' war on the margins of France: the Surinamese Civil War and Guyane, 1986-1996’.*

*Conference Grant Scheme*

Dan Power extraordinary grant of £395.00 towards the cost of hosting Professor Matthew Strickland’s lecture on the Battle of Bouvines.

Fraser McNair £500 to be used towards a conference, The Carolingian frontier and its neighbours to be held on 4-6 July 2014

Braganca – £500 Conference Grant Application ‘France, Vichy and me’: workshop/talks on the intellectual pathways of 14 of the most influential

researchers of WWII French history and memories

Alex Fairfax-Cholmeley – £500 Conference Grant Application ‘Finding Order in a Revolution: Violence, Communication and Control in Revolutionary Cultures, from 1789 to the present day’

1. **Report from the Treasurer**

Chris Warne was unable to attend the committee meeting (but was present at the AGM). The following accounts were submitted for review.



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MC noted that CW’s term of office was coming to an end. The committee thanked CW in his absence for the work he had put in over the past five years into discharging his duties as Treasurer.

MC nominated Dr Noelle Plack as a candidate for his replacement. The committee approved this nomination unanimously [the nomination was subsequently ratified at the AGM on Saturday 12 July 2014].

It was resolved that:

the authorised signatories in the current mandate for the following accounts ("The Society for the Study of French History"; "Society for the Study of French History, Ralph Gibson Fund") be changed by the addition of Noelle Plack and the current mandate will continue as amended."

**Action Point (for Treasurer, President & Secretary):** All Charities with an income above 25k must an annual account, an annual Trustees’ report & and an independent examiner or auditor’s report.

1. **Financial Management of Society Awards**

MC advanced a proposal to put in place a robust and transparent financial plan for the Society.

The following proposal was circulated to the committee in advance of the meeting.

SSFH Budget: A proposal for steady reduction of the surplus

Whilst we have set our sights on reducing our surplus (currently almost £70k), we obviously do not wish to run it down too precipitously, while prudence would suggest that we should not rely on journal income from OUP continuing to rise inexorably year on year (we are informed of the ‘profit share’ by OUP halfway through our financial year) .

I think the first thing to do is agree on how much we should retain in the bank at the end of this agreed process of surplus reduction, and I would suggest a year’s expenditure (£25-30k): our current outgoings + £5k.

In 2013 we balanced the books at around £24/25k, so we might aim to overspend by roughly £5k each year for the next decade, before retrenching and aiming for a steady state.

I think we should achieve this reduction of surplus in a planned fashion. The problem at the moment is that we are committed to a couple of open-ended schemes: conference grants to postgrads (up to £300) and conference awards to organisers (up to £500). Word has evidently got around regarding the latter, since we have recently been receiving an unprecedented number of requests. We can meet them at the moment, but it would be unwise to go on doing so willy-nilly.

I would propose, for discussion, the following annual pattern of expenditure where our various award schemes are concerned:

PG Research Bursaries (now up to £1k) £10k

Postgrad Panels (2x£2k) £4k

Ralph Gibson Award (1x3k; recently increased) £3k

PG Conference Bursaries (10x£300) £3k

Conference Grants (6x£500) £3k

Total £23k

In order to make awards for Postgrad panels, PG Conference Bursaries and Conference Grants in an equitable fashion I think we need to introduce two or three deadlines a year (perhaps two for panels and conference grants, and three for PG conference bursaries).

We do, of course, incur additional expenditure for committee expenses, the Johnson lecture in French History, the Postgrad Study Day, one or two prizes, and our annual conference (which this year is accompanied by a meeting of the journal’s editorial board that we agreed to support). This recurrent expenditure is hard to tease out of the accounts as they are currently presented; it is certainly £5k per annum. So my guess is that in 2014, as a result of funding conference and ed. board, as well as unregulated grants, our deficit will be somewhat in excess of £5k. I do not think that should be repeated and we need to budget carefully for a more steady reduction of our surplus in future. Precisely how we achieve this is a matter for discussion and I invite your opinion accordingly, before continuing the debate at committee in July.

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There was significant discussion around this proposal which was seen as prudent, transparent and necessary. It was approved as amended in the following ways:

1. That the total budget be increased to 25K per annum though with some flexibility for the Society particularly in light of need to be more conscious of spending down the Society’s surplus and that
2. Two cut off points be implemented for the conference bursary and conference grant schemes.
3. **Report from Website Editor**

Andrew Smith reported that the website was continuing to develop well, and that we were putting online more and more content, not least podcasts of the Johnson Lecture and conference plenaries. Some cosmetic tidying had been undertaken. There were around 1,200 visits a month to the site, and that it our search rankings were high in Google (giving the Society a high web visibility). He indicated that more was being done to reflect the diversity of the Society in the imagery being published. He asked that members of the committee and society forward any appropriate content for his attention.

Claire Morton indicated that she could provide an OUP widget which Andrew could integrate into the website.

1. **French History Network**

Andrew Smith advanced a proposal received from Alison Carrol and Ludivine Broch and circulated the following document.

We started the French History Network as a way to bring together doctoral and post-doctoral researchers and generate intellectual collaborations. We also wanted to create more exchanges amongst French and British academics.

**FHN: encouraging intellectual collaboration**

* In June 2013, we held **our first closed workshop** at the Maison Française d’Oxford, funded by the SSFH, SFS and RHS. Entitled ‘A Century Later : New Approaches to French History’, there were fifteen participants from French, UK and American institutions, and they all presented papers. It was a real success and a year later we have joined the contributions in an edited volume to be published by Palgrave Macmillan in October 2014: Ludivine Broch and Alison Carrol (eds) *France in the Era Global Wars, 1914-45: Occupation, Politics, Empire and Entanglements*. We will hold the book launch at the IHR.
* Our next intellectual collaboration will be funded by the Institut Français, and consists of inviting three young researchers from France to present their work in a seminar in London. There is a possibility of turning this into a bigger event.
* We want to continue holding workshops and helping young researchers get their work published. We are therefore hoping to organise another event in summer 2015, and would like to discuss the possibility of SSFH support for a regular afternoon for PhD/recent postdoc researchers as part of the IHR Modern French History Seminar programme. We would like to organise a podcast of these papers to allow this to reach the widest possible audience and to publicise the work of the researchers who attend.

FHN : supporting doctoral and post-doctoral researchers

We want the FHN to now focus on its aim of supporting young/early-career researchers. Indeed, we want the FHN to become, first and foremost, a support network which doctoral and postdoctoral researchers can turn to with questions and requests for information.

* We believe that the best way of doing this would be by working in collaboration with SSFH and the postgraduate events they already have in place , and that one way of doing this would take the form of a French History **BLOG**.
* A blog would give FHN an official platform and affiliation ; likewise, the FHN blog would help the SSFH to increase its support for postgraduates:
  + the postgraduate reps could play a role which would allow them to develop their online presence,
  + the Postgraduate Conference could have a wider resonance.
* The SSFH Web Edito has informed us that the blog would be easy to install on the main SSFH website, and not generate any extra costs for the Society.
* It would initially be run but the FHN directors (Ludivine Broch and Alison Carrol) but it could also be co-managed by the SSFH PG reps (or other volunteers) if they are interested in developing this particular set of skills.
* In terms of **content**, the blog would have regular pieces (twice a month, or more) on :
* general career advice and strategies :
  + gender in academia
  + what is a JRF and how do you apply?
  + how do you advertise yourself as a French historian?
* advice on publishing :
  + what is a book proposal?
  + which publishers publish books/series on French History?
  + University Press or mainstream press?
  + When straight out of a PhD, do you focus on publishing articles or a monograph?
* SSFH Postgraduate conference:
  + A summary of the annual conference would be posted on the blog
  + Each presenter will be asked if s/he can submit a summary of their paper and share it on the blog
* Guest posts from senior academics
  + ‘What we look for in a cover letter’
  + ‘What we look for in an interview’

Ultimately, by creating an official and visible collaboration with SSFH, we believe that we could offer valuable support to doctoral and post-doctoral researchers who are entering an extremely difficult job market.

We hope that the SSFH will be interested in hosting our blog on their website, and in helping us develop stronger support for postgraduates and early-career researchers. Likewise, we hope that we could eventually begin discussing the regular (but reasonable!) funding of intellectual collaborative projects bringing together UK, French and American postgraduates and post-docs through closed workshop, conferences and seminars, some of which might result in publications.

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Andrew commented that the plan was to move responsibility for the blog increasingly to the postgraduate representatives of the Society.

The committee approved the establishment of a blog, but indicated the importance of this being updated on a regular basis.

1. **Report from the Social Media Officer**

Joanna Warson tabled a report (below), indicating that significant progress had been achieved in growing the Society’s social media presence. Profitable discussions had been had with OUP, and OUP had agreed to retweet some Society news. She asked that members of the committee/society send her information which can be posted on Facebook / Twitter.

Report:

Twitter:

* + Twitter followers (on 26 June 2014): 557
  + Majority of social media activity taking place on twitter  constant stream of new followers and lots of re-tweets (including by accounts with a very large number of followers, such as @OxfordJournals who have 14.8k followers) and favourites.
* Facebook
  + Facebook likes (on 26 June 2014): 278
  + Society and journal pages now combined into one, which has yielded some increase in activity.
  + Overall page remains fairly static, with only a small increase in “likes” of page and individual posts (and not always quality “likes”) compared to the twitter account, which is much more active. Probably due to fact that Facebook tends to be viewed as more personal so people less likely to use for work related activities.
* Using social media to promote annual conference, grants/ prizes and other society activities, as well as related events/ publication  request for committee members to continue to provide information that can be posted on twitter/ Facebook, particularly with regards to the latter, so as to keep our social media stream as active as possible.
* Very productive telephone conversation with Sarah Szatkowski (former Assistant Marketing Manager, Oxford Journals, OUP) on 31 January 2014
  + Advice on ways to increase social media following.
  + Oxford Journals willing to push posts on our behalf (and have subsequently done so on several occasions, notably for the PG travel grants & conference CFP)  link posts to @OxfordJournals or contact OUP directly with anything that we are particularly keen to promote via social media following Sarah’s departure, our main contact at OUP is Erin Ganley, Senior Marketing Manager.
  + Pay to promote on social media not worthwhile as, although it may yield a high quantity of likes/ clicks/ RTs, these likes/ clicks/ RTs are not necessarily “quality” following (i.e. from people who are actually interested in the society/ its activities/ French history)

1. **Report from the Membership Secretary**

Noelle Plack (NP) indicated membership was up on the last reporting point in January, standing at 168. She drew attention to the statistics forwarded by Julian Wright, the organizer of the SSFH conference in Durham, indicating the comparatively high number of registrations as a non-member despite the Society’s recent efforts to increase the cost of conference registrations for non-members to encourage joining the Society. There was a proposal that this be examined for future conferences with a recommendation to conference organisers.

NP indicated that membership was quite a difficult sell, given that many prospective members already had institutional access to the journal.

1. **Annual French History Lecture in honour of Douglas Johnson 2015**

MC Confirmed that the Annual French History Lecture in honour of Douglas Johnson would be given by Professor John Horne (Trinity College Dublin) on 14 January 2015. The title is yet to be confirmed.

The committee was asked to submit nominations for future Douglas Johnson speakers to the Secretary or to the incoming President, Professor Máire Cross. The committee agreed that it was important that future speakers include specialists in earlier periods of French history.

1. **Report from the editors of *French History* & Society News (Penny Roberts, Julian Wright & Jessica Wardhaugh)**

Julian Wright (JW) and Penny Roberts (PR) reported on an earlier editorial board meeting for *French History* which took place immediately prior to the committee meeting. There was considerable reflection on the core objectives and scope of the journal, as well as to how the reach of the journal could be extended, especially in France. JW reflected on discussions around new forms of material that might be published, either in the printed journal or online (or both) including the prospect of a review article which focused on articles rather than books, and dedicated podcasts. There was also a good deal of reflection on the importance of ‘new blood’, especially trying to attract younger talented French scholars in the 30-45 age bracket to serve on the editorial board.

There was some discussion around promoting the journal to medieval scholars – it was suggested that a member of the editorial board attend Leeds/Kalamazoo.

Reflecting on the journal’s article prize, it was resolved to change the eligibility requirements from a scholar under 40, to a scholar up to 15 years after completing their PhD.

Jessica Wardhaugh (Society News Editor) who sent her apologies for the meeting, tabled the following report

‘Society News’ has been proceeding smoothly this year, with a very good flow of copy from postgraduates. Following discussions at previous SSFH committee meetings, this section of the journal now includes reports on a wider range of grants (and in one recent issue I featured a complete list of research and conference grants available from the Society, hoping to raise awareness of what is available).

1. **Conferences**

Karine Varley (KV) tabled the following report:

2015 Conference at St Andrews – 28-30 June 2015 – organiser: Guy Rowlands. The theme will be ‘turning-points’ in French history – focusing on key anniversaries –eg 1415, 1715, 1815 etc. This will be a residential conference, organised along similar lines to the 2007 conference.

2016 Conference – the venue has been confirmed as Chichester University – Hugo Frey will be the organiser. The proposed theme is 'High and Low Culture/Elite and Popular Politics' – feedback from the committee would be most welcome. The organisers propose to link the theme to Pallant House Gallery to bring in art history panels.

2017 Conference – no venue as yet confirmed. I would like to propose the University of Strathclyde in the first instance. Strathclyde is in central Glasgow so would be relatively easy to get to. The proposed organisers – myself and Rogelia Pastor-Castro - would work with colleagues at Glasgow University, where there is a strong concentration of French historians (including Peter Jackson, Mike Rapport, Jackie Clarke). Other possibilities for 2017 would be to try Oxford again or see if there are other willing organisers elsewhere.

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The committee accepted gratefully KV’s proposal to hold the 2017 conference at Strathclyde in 2017.

Penny Roberts proposed Warwick as a venue for the 2018 conference, which was also accepted gratefully by the committee.

Julian Wright (JW) had indicated that the guidance pack provided by the Society needed some updating. There was also a request for greater oversight by the Society – asking for updates / supervising budgetary spends &c. KV agreed to look at the issues raised by JW.

Julian Wright wished to put on record his gratitude for the support of the Society in funding the reception at the Durham 2014 conference. He stressed the importance of organizing a high impact first night event to encourage participants to come early, and the advantage of being able to emphasise that the medieval canapé reception was free and did not come out of delegates’ conference subscription fees.

1. **Postgraduate representatives**

The following report was tabled by the Society’s postgraduate representatives, Ellen Crabtree and Lori Oates.

**French PG Study Day report, 1st March 2014**

The third joint SSFH-ASMCF postgraduate study day took place at the Great North Museum: Hancock, Newcastle on Saturday 1st March 2014. Over 40 postgraduate students and scholars – one of the highest turnouts yet – met for a full programme including talks on professional development as well as a broad range of papers from postgraduates from institutions across the UK. The theme of the day was ‘commemoration’, chosen for its contemporary pertinence. Notably, 2014 sees the start of the centenary of the First World War and the commemorations on both sides of the Channel has led to a reflection on how events are remembered and used in France today. However, the notion of commemoration covers all facets of French research, not just politics and history, as the range of excellent speakers demonstrated.

The morning kicked off with a panel on professional development. Dr Julian Wright, editor of *French History*, gave practical advice on how to successfully have journal articles published; Dr Imogen Long (Hull) offered some valuable yet reassuring insights into securing a permanent academic position. Postgraduate David Lees (Warwick) highlighted the importance of teaching for an academic career, along with some practical tips for developing teaching skills. This was followed by a research methods panel which outlined different approaches that can be taken within French Studies and French History: Abigail Taylor (Sheffield) spoke about using interviews for her social policy research, Natalia Bremner (Leeds) explored participatory research in the Indian Ocean and Tom Cubillas (Durham) outlined how to effectively navigate France’s archive cataloguing system, at national, regional and local levels. The final morning session was led by Dr Matt Perry, Reader in Labour History at Newcastle. Dr Perry’s superb keynote, ‘Memory, Commemoration and Consciousness: some Reflections on Contested French Pasts’ deconstructed and analysed concepts of commemoration and led to much discussion over lunch.

The afternoon was dedicated to hearing about postgraduate research, with twelve papers, split into four sessions which ran in parallel. Forms of political commemoration began with Clare Siviter (Warwick) looking at Napoleon’s theatrical commemoration, Alex Paulin-Booth (Oxford) shared her research on Ferdinand Pelloutier’s *musées du travail* whilst Christopher Leffler (Sheffield) continued the museological theme with an analysis of the *Mémorial Charles de Gaulle.* Meanwhile, the second panel ‘legacies of colonialism’ heard three excellent papers: David Cummings (QUB) discussed the impossibility of commemoration within the colonial chronotope, Hannah Grayson (Warwick) considered literary commemoration in Rwanda and Tom Martin (Leeds) highlighted the ambivalent relationship of French anti-racist organisations with the country’s colonial past.

Refreshed after a coffee break, the final two panels investigated more diverse forms of commemoration. ‘Literary commemoration’ was explored through a number of different perspectives. Thea Petrou (UCL) spoke about Paris tramways before Anaïs Fusaro (St Andrews) explored Serge Doubrovsky’s *Le Livre brisé*. Avril Tynan (RHUL) concluded with commemoration and the un-dead. Meanwhile ‘commemorating conflict’ focussed on representations of war in Yugoslavia, Italian-occupied France and French Guiana, with thought-provoking papers from Chris Jones (UEA), Niall McGalloway (St Andrews) and Sarah Wood (Manchester). Following the official programme, discussions continued over some well-earned drinks in the Northern Stage in Newcastle.

The conference organisers would like to thank everyone who attended, gave a paper and helped make the event such a success. We would also like to thank Newcastle University for hosting the study day and their support with practical arrangements. Special thanks go to Society for the Study of French History and the Association for the Study of Modern and Contemporary France for their generous financial sponsorship of the day.

Ellen Crabtree (SSFH, Newcastle), Lori Lee Oates (SSFH, Exeter) and Abigail Taylor (ASMCF, Sheffield)

*NB: For photographs from the event, please see the online album* [*Photographic album of the day*](http://on.fb.me/MTYkFq)*(Photographs taken by Morgane Mazan, French Section Intern at Newcastle).*

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A provisional date for the next event has been set for 7 March 2015 at Exeter.

1. **Date of the next committee meeting**

14 January 2015 at Senate House in London.

1. **AOB**

The committee congratulated Joanna Warson on the award of the 2014 Pollard prize from the IHR for best research paper by a scholar within one year of completing their PhD. Her paper was entitled ‘Beyond cooperation and competition: Anglo-French relations, connected histories of decolonisation and Rhodesia’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence, 1965-1980’.

MC noted that John Strachan had stepped down from the committee. The committee expressed its thanks for his contribution.

MC proposed that Claire Eldridge take over as membership secretary. This nomination was approved unanimously by the committee (and subsequently at the AGM on 12 July 2014).

MC welcomed Professor Máire Cross as the incoming President of the Society. Máire and the committee wished to put on record their immense gratitude to MC for his diligence and industry over the past few years in promoting the society and managing its work.