

SSFH Events Officer Report

Annual Conference

2021 Conference

The Society's annual conference, postponed from 2020 and moved fully online starts today. This huge undertaking consists of 75 pre-recorded papers, 27 live panels for Q&A with the presenters, three live keynotes, a roundtable on activism and academia in France, a 'getting published session' with a PGR/ECR social event, and three drop-in clinics offering advice for publishing books with MUP and/or journal articles with *French History*. Currently, 245 people have registered to attend, including speakers.

Enormous thanks go to Ludivine Broch and Itay Lotem (University of Westminster) for agreeing to remain as hosts, especially given all the other challenges of this past academic year. They deserve huge credit for embracing the radically different format and taking it in some many interesting directions. We also owe a great debt of thanks to Elena Rizzi (European University Institute) who, as conference bursar, has provided invaluable administrative support and generally kept everything running smoothly. David K. Smith and the H-France team have been incredibly generous with their time, enthusiasm and technical support. Without them, we wouldn't be able to run the conference in a very literal sense. Thanks also to the London-based conference organising team, especially for chairing the various live Q&A sessions.

While there are no explicit registration fees this year, we hope attendees will feel similarly grateful and appreciative of the time and effort it has taken to put this conference together and make liberal use of the 'donate' button. Any monies received will be split between the SSFH, to enhance the financial support we offer to PGR and ECR scholars, and H-France.

2022 Conference

Next year's, the conference will be hosted by Exeter College, University of Oxford from Sunday 10 to Tuesday 12 April. Local organisers will be Christina de Bellaigue and David Hopkin. We hope this will be an in-person gathering, but we will retain some hybrid elements to ensure accessibility and inclusivity. Contingency plans will be put in place in case the whole event needs to be moved online.

Future conferences:

We have received one promising enquiry about hosting in 2023, hopefully to be followed by a formal expression of interest.

Douglas Johnson Lecture

At the last committee meeting, several possible speakers were suggested for the January 2022 Douglas Johnson lecture. No final decision was taken at the time. In this June meeting, we need to decide on a speaker and what kind of event we want to run (in person, hybrid, online), not least because this might affect the choice of speaker.

Collaboration between Anglophone societies

Discussions remain ongoing. Alison Carrol has volunteered to join the ED&I group and the plan is to hold a series of meetings over the summer to move forward with collaboration in this area. To complement and extend this work, we are keen to develop ED&I initiatives specific to the SSFH. Please see the paper relating to ED&I suggestions for the Society that Alison and I have put together for further discussion at the committee meeting.

Suggestions for future events

As always, please send me any suggestions for events you would like to organise or see the Society run.

The last eighteen months has our sister societies launch a number of new initiatives that respond to the various pressing social and political issues that have arisen, to new ways of working and interacting imposed by COVID, and to the challenges COVID has posed to our profession. This seems like a good moment for the SSFH to reflect on our own activities, how we might want to develop these in the future, and how we see ourselves fitting into the broader landscape of Anglophone societies. As part of this discussion, we might want to consider creating an 'events team' out of existing committee members and trustees to enable us to expand what we currently do without creating too much additional work for any one person.

Claire Eldridge
25 June 2021

SSFH Membership and Comms Officer Annual Report

W. Jack Rhoden 23/6/21

Society News in *French History*

I have submitted two Society News entries for 2021 publication. The first had some good reports on work completed before and during the pandemic. However, the second did not contain any new entries. I decided with the editors to hold back the few submissions I received in the hope that there will be more research activity completed by the end of summer and thus more reports from PG students to include in issue 35.3.

Membership

With the assistance of OUP I now have regular, consistent access to the subscription reports:

We currently have 106 journal subscribers in one form or another; 58 online and 48 print. This is a reduction in print and rise in online from 2020 and a total slightly below 2020 figures. It represents 7 life members, 50 reg members, and 49 Student/Senior/Precariously employed/unwaged members

39 members from 2020 did not renew. I will email them ahead of the Conference to remind them of this one last time, and to promote the conference.

There are 27 new subscribers (though it is quite difficult to be sure of this on OUP's system)

I also have the emails of 17 students who have taken up the offer of free membership of the Society but have no journal access/subscription. The list of these names is easily provided to conference organisers and those inspecting funding bids, which is its main purpose.

In total that makes 123 active members of the Society.

Comms

The SSFH email list stands at over 200 contacts. I also hold a Google Doc with contacts for current members, including those who have taken advantage of the free membership in 2021. GDPR means that we will have to offer former members of the Society who remain on the mailing list the opportunity to opt out of being contacted.

The email list was used to successfully promote both the Annual Lecture and the Annual Conference, as well as French History special editions, and stands available for other relevant Society business.

I met with Claire Eldridge and Daniel Baker to discuss Twitter engagement and put into place some ideas in 2021 and there has been a semi-regular feature on Mondays and

Fridays **LundiLookback** and *JournalArticleJeudi* to promote past and present articles from *French History*. This has been paralleled on the Society Facebook site with moderate levels of engagement.

The hope is to use Twitter to 'live Tweet' the keynote lectures and panels for the Annual Conference and IHR seminar series.

Other good ideas were discussed but not put into operation yet, such as the scheduling of Tweets to promote SSFH Awards and events, promotion of reports from funding recipients (thereby promoting membership and the availability of said funding), and doing a series of profiles of the SSFH Committee for the website and Twitter account!

School Outreach

I have been able to meet with Beatrice Ivey from ASMCF to work on revamping the Schools' Liaison and Outreach Prize (<https://asmcf.org/funds-prizes-awards/schools-liaison-and-outreach-activities/>) after it was agreed that SSFH would participate pool funding with ASMCF to make a total pot of £3,000.

We have drawn up a draft of new Fund outlines with Aims, overview, eligibility, funding, criteria, etc., for the attention of ASMCF and SSFH committees (document attached as appendix). This would replace all the text content from the old web page in the hopes of providing a clearer, more accessible and approachable application form with slightly tweaked aims and outcomes.

We have also come up with a new name to replace the 'prize' for your consideration: **The Schools' Liaison Fund for French and French History, supported by SSFH and ASMCF**. Mutual agreement of the detail and wording would be followed by an update of the ASMCF site and application form (hosted on that site). It is proposed that ASMCF will continue to host the application form with SSFH website effectively copying the fund description on its page and providing a link to ASMCF site for applicants to follow to avoid duplication of processes.

Comments welcome.

Secretary's Report
July 2021

Notes on funding and grants:

We responded quickly to offer guidance on how funding could be modified or postponed as a result of the current crisis, offering all funded applicants the opportunity to defer for 12 months without need for any additional authorisation, and in some cases offered the opportunity to redeploy funding (in support of the same project). We have had some requests for further deferrals which we have accommodated given the situation.

We did not receive any funding requests in September 2020 for the deadlines for the Conference and Speaker Grant and the Conference Bursary. This was undoubtedly down to the situation faced with the ongoing pandemic including widespread travel restrictions.

We subsequently agreed to offer 2 rounds of a limited ECR Covid support grant (28 May and 2 July). In our first round, we received 9 applications from a range of institutions and trustees approved all applications.

We also saw a return to applications for our normal schemes, as travel began to normalise following widespread lockdowns as a result of the pandemic.

This means that our total funding granted since my January report is **£18,933.35** which represents an outstanding range of support during financially challenging times for the wider sector and our field.

Upcoming Deadlines for Society Funding Schemes

Research Grant: Friday 25 March 2022

Conference & Speaker Grant: Friday 17 September 2021, Friday 25 March 2022

Conference Bursary: Friday 17 September 2021, Friday 11 March 2022

Postgraduate Panels: Friday 11 March 2022

Ralph Gibson Bursary (Board of Assessors): Friday 29 April 2022

Undergraduate Dissertation Prize (Board of Assessors): Friday 30 July 2021 (and then Friday 29 July 2022)

Visiting Scholars: Friday 25 March 2022

Andrew Smith, July 2021.

March 2021 Applications	
<i>Conference and Speaker Grant</i>	
Laura O'Brien (Northumbria)	500
For a conference on <i>The Commune and its Others: An Outsider's History of 1871</i> held in Newcastle, Durham and the Bowes Museum, 3-4 June 2021	
<i>Research Grants</i>	
Glenn Wasson (QUB)	575
For archival research to support a project entitled research project, entitled 'Our most dear enemies: Franco-British relations from 1956 to 1973'	
Catriona Byers (KCL)	989
For archival research to support a project entitled 'Death as an institution: managing the anonymous dead at the morgues of Paris and New York, c. 1864- 1910.'	
Sian Hibbert (York)	1000
For archival research to support a project based on 1,569 cases of interpersonal violence, recorded in the criminal records of the Parlement of Toulouse between 1680 and 1720.	
Leon Hughes (ULIP)	1000
For archival research to support a project examining how Liberty Trees became affective sites, and objects, of intensity during the French Revolution.	
Irem Gulersonmez (Birkbeck)	1000
For archival research to support a project examining the history of France's missionary activities in the Middle East that played a key role in its relation to the Ottoman Empire, and the early formation of the Armenian Diaspora in France.	
<i>ECR COVID Support Grant (28 May deadline)</i>	
David Briscoe (TCD)	2,000
Austin Collins (Durham)	780
Cian Cooney (TCD)	2,000
Segolene Gence (Kent)	1,163.85
Sophie Horrocks (Durham)	1,562
Emma Kavanagh (Oxford)	1,200
Simon Lambe (London South Bank University)	1,723.5
Noah Smith (Kent)	1,440
Lillian Specker (Oxford)	2,000
GRAND TOTAL	18,933.35

							2018	2019	2020	2021
Income										
Membership subscriptions							125.00	122.00	0	-
OUP profit-share							32,836.00	36,233.00	36,936.00	38,512.00
Other income							71.00			
Conference income (publishers etc)							-			
							33,032.00	36,355.00	36,936.00	38,512.00
Expenditure										
Prizes							6,100.00	3,300.00	12,800.00	-
Research/Conference Bursaries							3,600.00	17,553.98	5,030.00	5,009.00
Conference Grants							3,300.00	1,000.00	800.00	-
Conference Support (incl. Douglas Johnson Lecture)							6,651.26	7,072.37	2,612.12	2,984.38
French History expenses (incl. annual prize)							1,530.53	250.00	£996.76	-
Committee expenses							1,704.79	1,203.66	598.90	1,273.58
Audit fee							100.00	100.00	100.00	-
Bank charges							21.00	60.00	63.25	30.00
IHR project									£5,372.00	
Visiting scholar scheme							3,757.00	1,590.00	-	
Total							26,764.58	32,130.01	28,373.03	9,296.96
Cash in TSB account as at 25.06.21							£71,699.47			

Treasurer's Report

As ever, the Society's funds remain healthy. The amount received in OUP profit share rose by over £2000 in 2021. The accounts for the year ending 31 December 2019 were audited, signed off and submitted to the Charity Commission in October 2020. Total funds in the TSB account were at £71,699.47 on 25 June 2021. The balance in the investment account is £38,282, giving a current total of £109,981.47.

The relatively high amount held across the two bank accounts is due in part to the fall in spending due to the pandemic, with activities having moved online been postponed and conferences/research trips being postponed.

The donate button on the 2021 annual conference website has so far raised £250. This will be shared with H-France.

Karine Varley (Strathclyde)

The Editorial Team

Julian writes: I have now shared with David and Penny, and Joe, Claire and Jessica, that I hope to stand down as co-editor from December this year. I have been involved for a long time with the journal and it is time for someone else to come in to work alongside Joe as co-editor. I have learned a huge amount and benefited in many incalculable ways both from the breadth of scholarship I have had the opportunity to work with and from the collegiality, pluralism and openness of our editorial teams, our production teams and management at OUP and society trustees and committee, going back to Malcolm Crook's time as editor. I was his deputy editor from 2006 to 2008 and co-editor thereafter, so it is certainly time to move things on. I hope I can support the incoming co-editor during the autumn once the appointment process has worked its way through.

Editorial Board

A number of members of the editorial board have either reached or are approaching the end of their terms of office on the board, and the editorial team will be looking to recruit potential members with a view to furthering the journal's international reach and inclusivity. We would also like to seek the committee's views on the terms of office of former journal editors and officers of the Society on the editorial board, their duration and renewability.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The editorial team is developing various actions to enhance our relationships with, and encourage submissions from, under-represented scholars in the field. These involve, among other things, updating the journal's mission statement and author and reviewer guidelines, data collection (in co-operation with OUP) on journal submissions, and commissioning special issues, fora and reviews. Thanks in particular to Claire Eldridge for taking the lead on this.

The *French History* Article Prize

We delighted to announce that Oliver Cussen's article from the September special issue on capitalism in modern France, 'The lives of merchant capital: the frères Monneron and the legacy of old regime empire' has been awarded the annual article prize for 2020.

Congratulations to Oliver for a very fine article, which will soon be available on open access indefinitely on the journal website.

Special and Virtual Issues

FH published two very stimulating special issues in 2020, and our thanks are due to their guest editors, Alexia Yates and Erika Vause and Tom Hamilton and David van der Linden. There are several more in the works on topics ranging from the Capetian aristocracy to French Socialism in International Context and France and the First World War, and we're also hopeful that we might be able to mark the 450th anniversary of the Saint-Bartholomew's Day massacre with a special issue next year. As ever, we would welcome suggestions for special issues from colleagues.

To accompany the December special issue on the wars of religion, Tom Hamilton and David van der Linden also curated a virtual issue of the journal on 'Legacies of the Wars of Religion' which is free to view at <https://academic.oup.com/fh/pages/legacies-of-wars-of-religion>. Junko Takeda's very timely virtual collection on 'Plagues, Pandemics and Pathologies in French History' is just about to go live on the journal website; while Francesco Buscemi's virtual issue on 'The Passions in French Politics' is due to appear later this year.

In a new departure, we are also working with a sister journal, *German History*, to produce a collaborative virtual issue on the Franco-Prussian War under Karine Varley's direction and this is due to appear this autumn. In another collaborative initiative, Jessica Wardhaugh has been discussing the potential for joint online fora with Carol Harrison at *French Historical Studies*, and we would welcome suggestions from colleagues for other ventures in this vein. Thanks are especially due to Jessica and Claire for guiding these virtual issues through production and promoting them via interviews with their guest editors.

Reviews

With publishers wrestling with production and distribution problems arising from the global pandemic, the flow of new works into our reviews section has been significantly disrupted over the past year. Stewart McCain is working closely with publishers to ensure reviewers receive the works they have agreed to review, and it is to be hoped that the difficulties we've experienced recently will be resolved in line with the wider public health situation. More generally, as the pandemic has accelerated publishers' recourse to e-publishing, some academic publishers, our own included, are moving towards 'digital first' or 'digital only' policies in distributing review copies. While this has obvious environmental attractions, it can prove problematic when securing reviewers' agreement to review texts as e-books.

Partly in view of these issues, and partly to better embrace all the forms of scholarly activity that might be of interest to our readers, we are planning to expand our reviewing remit to encompass a wider range of outputs - exhibitions, digital works and other media - in place of its present, exclusive focus on books. This should help to ensure a regular flow of review copy while also reflecting a fuller range of research activity in the field.

Readership, Impact and Subscriptions

Although visits to the journal website dropped somewhat during the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic, traffic on the journal website has picked up steadily since then with a peak of approximately 5,000 visits with content engagement during March this year. On average, the total number of visits to the *FH* website over the past twelve months is about 50% higher than it was five years ago. The journal's impact factor is also rising year-on-year, as are the figures for those following *FH* on social media. *FH* had an 8% increase in consortia subscriptions in 2020, which more than compensates for a slight decline in institutional subscriptions over the past year as the pandemic's effect upon library budgets begins to take its toll.

Changes to the Production Format

As noted in our January report, OUP is introducing minor changes to standardise formatting across its journal output. We have aimed to accommodate these while ensuring that they respect the journal's ethos and traditions. These will begin to be rolled out from 2022 onwards.

Production Delays

As you will have doubtless noticed, we have experienced some unavoidable publication delays over the past twelve months. While the processing and publication of articles online continues on schedule, our production team's transition to remote working following the pandemic's second wave in India has understandably resulted in some delays in the production of print copies this spring. Given the very difficult circumstances our colleagues have been working under in India these past months, we hope our subscribers will bear with us if print copies of the journal are arriving later than scheduled and we encourage readers to continue to access new content via the journal's advanced access webpage.

The Global Pandemic and Copy Flow

Inevitably, copy flow has dropped over the past twelve months on foot of the global pandemic. While the number of submissions coming into the journal has risen steadily every year up to 2020, and this has allowed us to build up a substantial cushion of material in production, copy flow has decreased significantly since the global pandemic struck. This was only to be expected. However, it is unclear how lasting the effects of the past year and a half's turmoil will be on research, so the editorial team is working with OUP to both encourage the flow of new research articles and to look at ways of diversifying our content with more in the way of conversation and opinion pieces, roundtables, and fora dealing with new research directions and topical themes. *French History* has always published these kinds of pieces, but we would like to facilitate more of them over the coming year, so we would encourage colleagues to contact the editorial team with any ideas they would like to explore.

The global pandemic has affected all our lives, professionally as well as personally, and its long-term implications for academic publishing remain uncertain. We are working closely with the team at OUP to keep this disruption to a minimum and to ensure that the pandemic's budgetary impact on the journal is mitigated as much as possible.

Open Access

The discussion on Open Access continues, but the chief points of note here concern the ongoing roll-out of institutional Read & Publish agreements and OA's potential financial implications. In discussion with Katie Pryce at OUP, she noted that the press is preparing for a potential drop in journal revenue of up to 16% over the next four years as the OA environment evolves, so this may have a significant impact upon the Society's chief source of income.

Joseph Clarke,
Claire Eldridge,
Jessica Wardhaugh,
Julian Wright
June 2021

Web Editor's report

The website continues to enjoy modest traffic, the majority of which is generated by the French History Network blog. If you do have suggestions for content or corrections, please get in touch with me directly at william.pooley@bristol.ac.uk

The site is showing its age a bit, and it may soon be time to commission a redesign. Until then, I'm happy to continue updating it as directed.

Will Pooley, 23.06.2021