

HISTORY & SOCIAL ACTION NEWS

Compiled by Sean Creighton, Agenda Services
Community, Cultural, Heritage & Organisational Projects
sean.creighton@btinternet.com
www.seancreighton.com

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AGENDA SERVICES BOOKSTALL WILL BE AT

FREETHINKERS BOOKFAIR
SAT 22 May 2010 10am- 5pm

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1
See www.conwayhall.org.uk for location map

Other stallholders:

Joint FHRG/Black Cat Press/Thomas Paine Society

British Humanist Association: www.humanism.org.uk

Cynric Books - booksellers specialising in left and radical politics, history, and social sciences. Contact: Jim Moody, sales@cynric.com

Socialist History Society: www.socialisthistorysociety.co.uk

London Atheist Meet-Up Group <http://www.meetup.com/London-Atheists>

Past Tense: see Publishers page at www.bookevents.webs.com

www.fhrg.bravehost.com

STOCK CLEARANCE

Email order to receive item and invoice

May Day. Solidarity, Celebration, Struggle. John Gorman. (Socialist Renewal pamphlet 1996) 50p.

South London Record 3. (South London History Workshop 1988). Gasworkers of S. London; Corriganza Boxmakers' Strike; Wandsworth's Working Women; Eddie Dare Journeyman Baker; Agnes Dawson socialist/TU teacher; plus more. £1.

Mary Seacole. Short story. Jason Young (History & Social Action Publications 2005) £1.

THE ELECTIONS

Now that Gordon Brown has announced that the General Election will take place on the same day as the local elections (6 May), many of us now have to decide on the tricky question of how to vote. Several people I know have tremendous reservations about voting Labour. What is the balance sheet since 1997? Pros: minimum wage, Sure Start, NHS and schools investment, expansion of higher education, improvements for some families and pensioners. Cons: the Iraq War; snouts in troughs - the New Corruption; the sell-out to developers at the expense of community regeneration; over bureaucratic control; the erosion of independence of the organisations of civil society; failure to reform Parliament; the slide into the Big Brother State and erosion of civil liberties; the sell-out to the City; student fees; the rising prison population; the decimation of adult learning; the Millennium Dome; the Olympics; the Private Finance Initiative, ID cards. Every former Labour activist has an issue which finally led to their resigning from renewing their membership. Not that former Labour activists could ever bring themselves to vote Tory. And the Tories talk about 'The Broken Society' is dishonest since it was Thatcherism that ensured its creation. If the General Election turnout is low, which usually works against Labour, then voting for a third party might help the Conservatives win in situations where Labour's majority is very low. I have not made my mind up what to do yet. It may be a case of voting for The Devil You Know, rather than risk letting in the Devil that reeked so much destruction and havoc from 1979-1997. But how can supporting Labour be turned to advantage to ensure that there is a fundamental change of direction away from Blair/Brown New Labourism?

THE POWER PLEDGE

Have you seen the five Power Pledge reforms being put forward by POWER2010 based on 4,000 ideas submitted by members of the public, and then voted for by over 100,000 people. POWER2010 is funded by Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust. They want candidates of all parties to sign up to five pledges:

- Introduce a proportional voting system
- Scrap ID cards and roll back the database state
- Replace the House of Lords with an elected chamber
- Allow only English MPs to vote on English laws
- Draw up a written constitution

It is a pity that they went for such specific pledges rather than more general ones. Yes to scrapping ID cards. But there are strong arguments against PR, that one lands up with someone who does not have strong popular support. Allowing only English MPs to vote on English laws does not solve the problem with the country-wide nature of House of Commons, and election the Lords simply lands us in a dilemma when the Lords and the Commons disagree with both claiming a democratic mandate. I have previously suggested turning the House of Commons into the English Parliament, and the House of Lords into the Parliament of Great Britain made up of representatives of four national Parliaments. Have written constitutions protected people elsewhere in the world when Governments decide to ignore them and use their powers to curb opposition, civil liberties and protest?

Adapting the five pledges it is possible to seek support from Parliamentary candidates for three:

- A fundamental public debate about the voting system and the nature of Parliamentary representation
- Scrapping ID cards and rolling back the database state
- A fundamental public debate about the reform of the roles of the Houses of Commons and Lords in the light of the existence of the Irish, Scottish and Welsh Parliaments and Assemblies

Power 2010 can be found at www.power2010.oorg.

THE NEW LOCALISM

There is one issue can be used at both local and national election levels, and that is the talk of a 'New Localism'.

A key element in the emerging Party political battle leading up to the local and national elections is over developing a new role for community and voluntary organisations in running services and in building local civil society. There is much talk about localism and mutuality and the Government is citing Lambeth as a good example of a Council that is developing being a 'co-operative Council'.

Many people active in community and voluntary organisations believe that Government and local government policies have severely damaged civil society, turned people from citizens into atomised individuals and consumers, and treated community and voluntary organisations with contempt, ignored them, or tried to erode their independence through the commissioning and contract culture and bureaucratic monitoring requirements which are tantamount to detailed control. The forthcoming elections enable local and Parliamentary candidates to be questioned about these issues.

In the days leading up to Easter I attended two meetings discussing the problems facing community organisations, their relation to central and local government, and the failure to adequately involve people in the decisions that affect their neighbourhoods. The first was the Assembly of the National Coalition for Independent Action, and the second was the Community Development Forum London.

Key Issues

- Most community organisations are small grassroots groups which receive little or no support from local or central government.
- Many of the minority of community and voluntary sector organisations which have opted to deliver central and local agendas have had their independence eroded.
- This has been partly achieved through over detailed monitoring and control of organisations with contracts.
- There is a lack of mechanisms for local people to be engaged in constructing the solutions to problems in their neighbourhoods.
- There is a lack of mechanisms for local people to engage meaningfully in the plans for their neighbourhoods being devised by central, regional and local government, landowners and developers.

How these issues are raised at ward and Parliamentary constituency level will vary according to the local situation. All Parties' candidates are committed to Manifestos so the room for them to give explicit commitments to suggestions from local people and their community groups is limited. But there is scope to put questions to candidates, especially when local hustings meetings are held, and by community groups asking candidates for responses and publicising the answers. Have a look at what SE5 Forum (Camberwell) is doing and its list of questions to Council candidates: www.se5forum.org/elections-2010.html.

Lambeth Labour's Manifesto. Labour is quoting Lambeth's "co-operative Council' approach. Lambeth Labour's manifesto tells us a little more about this, and can be seen in full on www.lambethlabour.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/manifesto2010.ppdf. The section: '**PUTTING PEOPLE IN CONTROL**' states: (with my questions in brackets)

- *'Labour introduced the first Lambeth town-centre expos to encourage local people to take control and make decisions about their own area.'* [These were day events with stalls and discussion. Do you think the expos achieved this?]

Labour says its commitments are:

- *'Let local people choose the priorities for their area with more neighbourhood decision making involving local residents.'* [How will this be done?]
- *'A neighbourhood summit in every neighbourhood so residents can quiz leaders responsible for local services.'* [How will this be done?]
- *'Make sure public services meet the needs of all groups in Lambeth including black and minority ethnic communities, the lesbian and gay community, women, and faith groups.'* [How will this be done?]
- *'Open a voluntary sector resource centre to help local groups run projects that support their community.'* [Where will this be to ensure ease of transport access from all parts of the Borough? Why not fund existing groups to provide decentralised resources around the Borough? If Labour had kept the Town Centre offices, could their premises have been used for this purpose?]
- *'Labour will protect and improve services by giving local communities and service-users more control over them. Instead of top-down control from the town hall, Labour will promote initiatives that hand more power to local people guided by the cooperative values of fairness, accountability and responsibility.'* [How will this be done? What will be the organisational models? What are co-operatives? They are 'mutuals'. There is talk of 'mutuals', but what are mutuals? They are non-profit-making member democratically controlled organisations. The mutuals were developed by the manual and white-collar working and lower middle-classes to provide services and protection for themselves when neither private enterprise or the state provided for their needs: inc. co-operative stories, co-operative farming and industrial producers, and building, friendly benefit insurance and loan societies. For an explanation of the Co-operative movement, its values and principles and its democracy see: the Co-operative Group: www.co-operative.coop/aboutus/ourvaluesandprinciples.]
- *'Labour believes local people should be in control. Make staff treat residents with professionalism, courtesy and respect at all times so Lambeth becomes a model of high-quality customer service'* [How will this be done? What re-training will staff be given? What mechanisms will be put in place for residents to complain against breaches of the policy?]

General Questions

Community Action. Please explain your view of the importance of community action in your Ward and outline your approach to supporting it.

Community Groups. Please explain what you understand as being the role of grassroots community groups in your Ward.

Strengthening Community Action and Groups. What should the Council be doing to strengthen community action and groups without undermining their independence and their role in challenging Council policies and service delivery?

Redevelopment. What methods do you propose to advocate for improving the way the Council engages local people and community groups in overseeing the development of overall development planning frameworks and the planning applications submitted under them?

Community Engagement. Do you support the establishment of neighbourhood forums at which you would be required to take part?

Community Engagement. How would you ensure that the views of local people, who cannot attend meetings and who do not have access to the internet, can be taken into account at meetings of neighbourhood and area forums?

Planning Consultation. How would you improve the way the Planning Department runs its consultations?

Relationship with CVS. How would you ensure that Council Departments cease to ignore or marginalise local community and voluntary organisations, or treat them as off-shoots of the Council to be subject to detailed bureaucratic control?

Relationship with CVS. Will you propose that the Scrutiny Committee review the way in which Council Departments work with community and voluntary organisations to ensure the development of meaningful engagement and partnership on an equal footing and reduce the number of bureaucratic requirements and the degree of bureaucratic control?

Participation in Area Forum. Will you give a commitment to attending at least 60% of the meetings of the area forum, and ensure that at least you or one of your Ward colleagues are in attendance at every meeting?

Developing an Overview of the Needs of Your Ward. Will you convene a meeting of all community and voluntary organisations in your Ward within 4 weeks of the local elections to discuss their concerns about the way Council Departments treat them and their views on the local issues, with a view to compiling an agenda of matters you will take up with Council officers, at Committees, in your Party group, and through questions at full Council meetings, and to agree with those organisations the regularity with which you will hold progress review meetings with them?

Local Businesses. What are your proposals for working with local businesses to strengthen their economic viability, and their contribution to meeting the needs of local residents, including protecting them from the pressures on them from unreasonable increases in rent and from the activities of the giant supermarkets?

Sustainable Communities Act. What are your proposals for ensuring that a greater number of local residents can contribute their views to funding priorities in their neighbourhoods under the Sustainable Communities Act?

Section 106. How would you ensure that the Council's demands on developers for Section 106 contributions be drawn up with local residents, local community and voluntary groups and businesses to give more priority to building community and local business support, and less to general Council and Transport for London's activities?

Further Reading

To see some of the issues under debate have a look at:

- *Unseen Unequal, Untapped, Unleashed. The potential for community action at the grassroots* (Community Sector Coalition) on www.communitysectorcoalition.org.uk/downloads/pdf/Unleashing%20the%20Potential.pdf. The Coalition members include Advice UK (non-CAB/Law Centre advice groups), British Association of Settlements & Social Action Centres), British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, Churches' Community Work Alliance, Community Matters (community associations/centres), Development Trusts Association, Faith Based Regeneration Network, Federation of City Farms & Community Gardens, MIND, and Voluntary Arts Network.
- National Coalition for Independent Action: www.independentaction.net. A statement of concerns to be raised during the election will be posted shortly.
- The Community Development Network London (project of London Civic Forum) will be posting up a list of questions to be put to Council and Parliamentary candidates shortly on: www.londoncivicforum.org.uk/our-projects/project-details/project/community-development-network-london.

EVENTS

Note: IHR Seminars: unless otherwise stated these take place at the Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

Saturday 10 April. 2.30pm. 1830-3: Captain Swing and the Rising of the Agricultural Labourers in Southern England and Sam Sharpe and the largest British slave revolt in Montego Bay, Jamaica: Free and slave labour - a case of mistaken identity. Dr Bob Bushaway. Essex Historical Association branch. The Link, Trinity Methodist Church, Chelmsford. Visitors and prospective members warmly welcome - a £2 donation is requested. For further details please contact: Essex Branch Secretary Mrs D Creswell. Telephone 01245 355409.

Monday 12 April. 6-7pm. South London Anti-Fascist Group General Meeting, PCS HQ, 160 Falcon Road, SW11.

Monday 12 April. 7.30pm. The Situation in Iran. Battersea & Wadsworth Trades Council meeting. PCS union HQ, 160 Falcon rd, Clapham Junction, London, SW11. Speakers: Mac Urata, Secretary of the International Transport Federations Inland Transport Section and a campaigner for the rights of Iranian workers, and Shane Enright, Amnesty International's Trade Union Campaigns Manager.

17 April. Love Music Hate Racism. See HSAN 21.

18 April. 2pm. Larkin's Unions: a centenary of the Irish Transport & General Workers Union' and Workers' Union of Ireland and its North West Connections. Francis Devine (Irish Labour History Society), author of *Organising History: a Centenary of SIPTU, 1909 - 2009* (Gill & Macmillan, 2009). He is currently working on a history of the Communications Workers' Union. Working Class Movement Library, 51 The Crescent, Salford.

Tuesday 20 April. 5.30pm. Managing the 'Royal Road: The Development and Failings of Managerial Structure on the London and South Western Railway 1836-1900. David Turner (York). IHR Postgraduate Seminar.

Wednesday 21 April. 9am-7pm. 'Diverse Histories - One Archive'. National Archives/Royal Historical Society event at Wilkins Old Refectory, Ground Floor, South Cloisters, University College, Gower St, London.

Wednesday 21 April. 5pm. Family History, Archives and War: Constructing Lives and Creating Stories. See HSAN 21.

Friday 23 April. 10am-3.30pm. Once More Unto The Breach? Adult Education in a New Era. See HSAN 21.

Friday 23 April. Historical Perspectives on the Family. See HSAN 21.

Saturday 1 May. 2pm. Till the Struggle is O'er: The Poetry of Chartism. Dr Mike Sanders. Chartist poems will be read by Maxine Peake and a selection of Chartist songs sung by Corista. Working Class Movement Library event at the Conference Room, Old Fire Station, The Crescent, Salford. Between 1837 and 1852, the leading Chartist newspaper *The Northern Star* published over 1,000 poems by more than 350 poets, most of whom were ordinary working class people. The sheer volume of verse produced by individual Chartists demonstrates the importance of poetry to the movement. Published in newspapers, recited at meetings and even sung in prison, poetry was everywhere in the Chartist movement. Sanders will talk about the importance of Chartist poetry as an outlet for working class creativity, and as a vital part of Chartism's struggle for fundamental democratic rights. He is Senior Lecturer in Victorian Literature at the University of Manchester, and the author of *The Poetry of Chartism: Politics, Aesthetics, History*

(Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Wednesday 5 May. 5pm. The Great British Cat and Dog Massacre of World War Two. See HSAN 21.

Saturday 8 May. 10am-4pm. "Family and Friends: tracing your Quaker ancestors" Talks will be given by members of Library staff and of the Quaker Family History Society, and there will be an opportunity to see the resources the Library can offer the family historian. The cost will be £10 for members of the QFHS and/or the Society of Friends, or £15 for others. Friends House, Euston Rd, London. A full programme and booking form are available at www.quaker.org.uk/library-events

Monday 10 May. 5.15pm. Cultural representations of London, c. 1900-1914: Music, literature, film, historiography. Alain Frogley (University of Connecticut), Kate Macdonald (University of Ghent), Ian Christie & Jerry White (Birkbeck, University of London). IHR Music in Britain Seminar.

Wednesday 12 May. 6pm. White Women and Black History: the case of Catherine Impey. Caroline Bressey. ICS/BASA Seminar. Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

Monday 17 May. 5.30pm. Roundtable: 1910-2010 A century since the Great Labour Unrest, histories and present day implications. Prof Ralph Darlington & Keith Flett. IHR Socialist History Seminar.

Friday 21 May. 12-7pm. "Post-Slavery and Culture". One day seminar on the cultural legacies of slavery organised by the Committee of the Centre for the Study of International Slavery and the School of Journalism, Media and Communication at UCLAN (University of Central Lancashire). University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN), Preston, UK. The seminar will explore some of the myriad legacies of slavery and abolitionism in the realm of culture from the 19th century to today. Contributions come from a range of countries, including the UK, the US and the Netherlands, and discuss questions of commemoration, visual arts and museums; abolitionism and slavery's impact on political thought and theory formation as well as issues of "race/racialization" in popular culture. Programme:

Prof. Lubaina Himid (UCLAN, Preston, UK), "Jelly Mould Pavilions for Liverpool: How to commemorate contribution"

Prof. Sabine Broeck (University of Bremen, Germany), "Beauvoir and Hegelian Allegory"

Dr. Daniel Williams (University of Swansea, Wales), "'Our Right to Travel': Paul Robeson, Internationalism and the Legacies of Abolitionism."

Prof. Lisa Merrill (HOFSTRA, New York, US), "Intermingling Images: Seeing and Acting (Out of) Categories of Racialized identities."

Dr. Aspha Bijnaar (NiNsee, Amsterdam, NL), "Child in Chains. Growing Up in Slavery, then and now."; Film screening at the Mitchell & Kenyon Cinema: "Frederick Douglass and the White Negro."

Further information and the full programme are available from: www.uclan.ac.uk/postslavery. The seminar is free, but please register your attendance with Anne Eichmann (AEichmann@uclan.ac.uk) by 3 May 2010 latest to be guaranteed a place.

Friday 21 May. 5.30pm. The New Spring Gardens: a Patriot Elysium at Vauxhall 1732-1751. Suzannah Fleming, (The Temple Trust). IHR History of Gardens & Landscapes Seminar.

Wednesday 26 May. 5pm. Black Political Activism in Britain, 1900-1965. Marika Sherwood (Black and Asian Studies Association). IHR Contemporary British History Seminar.

Wednesday 26 May. 5pm. "Soldiers from the War returning": Comradeship and Ex-Servicemen's Organisations after the First World War. See HSAN 21.

Wednesday 26 May. 5.15pm. The Origins of a Coming Ideal: Meritocracy in Britain 1750-

1850. Penny Corfield. IHR Britain in the Long Eighteenth Century Seminar. Room STB3/6, Basement, Stewart House, Russell Square, London, WC1.

Sunday 30 May. Start of Wandsworth Heritage Festival. Full details available later.

Wednesday 2 June. 6pm. Black West Indians in Britain and the politics of empire, c. 1931-1948. ICS/BASA Seminar. Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

Sunday 13 June. Last day of Wandsworth Heritage Festival.

Friday 18 June. 4pm. Wales and the British Overseas Empire 1650-1830. Professor Huw Bowen. Swansea Historical Association branch. National Waterfront Museum, Swansea. Free. www.haswansea.org.uk.

Monday 21 June. 5.30pm. To Create Community: Some Contrasting Interwar Initiatives in the UK. Lesley Hall (Wellcome Library, London). IHR Voluntary Action History Seminar.

Wednesday 23 June. 5.15pm. Britain's Lost Revolution: Remembering the Gordon Riots on their 230th anniversary. IHR Britain in the Long 18thC symposium with Ian Haywood and John Seed (Roehampton), Tim Hitchcock and Matthew White (Herts). IHR, Senate House, Malet St/Russell Square, London, WC1.

Thursday 24 & Friday 25 June. Identity and the Other British Isles Conference. For further information see www2.hhhhud.ac.uk/asb/identity_and_other_british_isles.php. Conference organiser(s): Daniel Travers & Jodie Matthews: d.travers@hud.ac.uk; jodie.matthews@hud.ac.uk. Venue: University of Huddersfield, Queensgate, Huddersfield, HD1 3DH.

Saturday 26 June. 7.30pm. Coleridge-Taylor's Hiawatha's Wedding Feast. Croydon Bach Choir, plus Vaughan Williams's Serenade to Music at St Matthew's Church, Chichester Road, East Croydon, CR0 5NQ. www.croydonbachchoir.org/Future%20Concerts%20Page%204.html.

Friday 2 - Saturday 4 July. Chartism Conference. Annual international Chartism Conference is organised by the Society of Labour History, the Chartist Study Group and the South Wales Centre for History and Interdisciplinary Research (SWCHIR). The Sorbonne, Paris. Speakers include:
Malcolm Chase (University of Leeds), "What next for Chartist Studies?"
Greg Varco (Columbia University, New York) : "Outworkers of the citadel of corruption": The Chartist press reports the Empire
Eugenio Biagini (Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge): "Chartism, Reynolds's Newspaper and the enduring relevance of Chartism, 1848-1906"
Michael Sanders (University of Manchester): Chartist Hymn Books Lost and Found: the case of the "National Chartist Hymn Book"
Joan Allen (University of Newcastle): "George Julian Harney and the Democratic Review"
Benoît Agnès (Université Paris1- Panthéon Sorbonne): « Une singularité chartiste ? Les mobilisations pétitionnaires britanniques et françaises pour la démocratie, 1838-1848. On Sunday morning 4 July French historian of the 1848 revolution Louis Hincker will guide an outdoor tour on the traces of revolutionary Paris.
For further details see http://education.newport.ac.uk/displayPage.aspx?object_id=12979&type=PAG.

Thursday 8 - Saturday 10 July. Locating the Hidden Diaspora: The English in the Anglo-Phone World. Further details: www.northumbria.ac.uk/sd/academic/sass/about/humanities/history/seminars_conferences/hiddendiaspora/?view=Standard. Venue: Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne. Contact details: Dr Tanja Bueltmann, az.englishdiaspora@northumbria.ac.uk;

Wednesday 15 September. Journalism and History: Dialogues. See HSAN 21.

HISTORY & SOCIAL ACTION NEWS

LinkedIn. I have signed up to LinkedIn the work sphere network. I did so at the invitation of Gill Thompson, a former Solon architect now based in Brighton. Almost immediately I was invited to link with BASA member Sancha Alaisa. To find out more about it have a look at www.linkedin.com. But don't get confused between and my namesake in Hemel Hempstead and the 7 in the USA and Canada!

Legacies of British Slavery/Slave Compensation. I will be one of the people helping at the 3 July London and 25 September Newcastle events being organised by the UCL Slavery Compensation Project. See details below.

LEGACIES OF BRITISH SLAVERY/SLAVE COMPENSATION WORKSHOPS

Id you interested in slave compensation awarded to slave owners as part of the emancipation of slaves in the West Indies and some other British colonies, who received it and what it was spent on, these workshops are a must. Each one will include a presentation by the Legacies of British Slavery team at University College London outlining the scope of the LBS project and a presentation on slave-ownership relevant to each regional audience. Members of local communities will discuss their work and their plans for future research, and material previously solicited from the audience will be presented. There will be invitations for the audience to respond through structured Q&A sessions and we will ask for feedback from each day.

London: 3 July

Glasgow: 4 September

Newcastle: 25 September

Birmingham: 9 October

Liverpool: 23 October

Bristol: 27 November

Each event will run between 11am and 5pm.

The London event will take place in the Wilkins Old Refectory at UCL, Gower Street, WC1E 6BT.

Due to restrictions on space and on the LBS budget for refreshments, the numbers at each venue will be limited to 40 or 50 people. Anyone who would like to attend should contact Rachel Evans on lbs@ucl.ac.uk).

Highly Recommended: The Price of Emancipation. Slave-ownership, compensation and British Society at the end of Slavery. (Cambridge University Press. 2010. www.cambridge.org.) This book is based on Nicholas Draper's PhD thesis, and is all the richer in analysis because of his experience in the finance world of the City. Nick is a member of the LBS team.

HISTORY NEWS AND INFORMATION

BASA Newsletter 56. The new issue of the BASA (Black & Asian Studies Association) contains: Dr Carl Hylton. Positive African Self-Identity and the 2007 Bi-centenary Year. A thoughtful explanation and analysis of the work carried out in Leeds.

Stephen Bourne. The Search for Billy Brooks. ('Aunt' Esther's half-brother).

Lesley Richmond. Glasgow University, Slavery and Abolition: An Untold Story. This includes details about the African-American emancipation activist and Glasgow educated Dr James McCune Smith

Howard Falksohn. Ed Francis, His Master's Poisoner. This discusses the case of the alleged attempted poisoning of Thomas Dymock, the Keeper of the Lions at the Tower of London, by his

black slave Edward Francis in 1692.

BASA News and Activities

Reviews

If you are not a member of BASA and want a copy of the Newsletter please email me your order. You will then be sent a copy with invoice for £3. plus postage.

NESAG Newsletter. The latest issue is now available from me. Contents: Consuming the Past: Library Resources for Postgraduate Students; Captain James Wilson; Rev. James Grahame; Slavery Compensation; Anthony Morris Storer, Morpeth's MP 1780-84; Black Military Musicians at Alnwick; Newcastle Radicals and Thomas Hardy; Abolition and Missionary Supporters; Algiers and White Slaves; Newcastle and Slave Insurrections; *The Northern Tribune* 1854-55; Parish Records; Charles Duncan O'Neal.

Wandsworth Historian. The Spring issue of *Wandsworth Historian* (No. 89) contains the following articles: Neil Robson 'The Wandsworth Borough News in Retrospect'; Pamela Taylor 'Wandsworth, Putney and Wimbledon: the Battersea bounds west of the Wandle'; George Tomes 'A Battersea Childhood'; Dermot Jones 'The Royal Masonic Institution for Girls - 1852-1934', and reviews of *Battersea's Global Reach & Putney & Roehampton*, a new edition of Scott MacRobert's Putney Society publication. £3. Copies are available from the Editor ngrobson@tiscali.co.uk

Fabian Tracts. The Archives Department at the LSE Library has had the Fabian tracts digitised.

[They are freely available on the internet.](#)

www2.lse.ac.uk/library/archive/online_resources/fabianarchive/home.aspx.

More of CRFF at Sheffield. With the publication of the first issue of the *Journal for Research into Freemasonry and Fraternalism* in January 2010 the activities of the Centre for Research into Freemasonry and Fraternalism at the University of Sheffield, established in 2000, have come to a preliminary end. On March 8, faculty administration put following message on the Center's website: "The Faculty of Arts and Humanities regrets that, with effect from 1 January 2010, the activities of the Centre for Research for Freemasonry and Fraternalism are suspended for the time being. [...]" The outgoing Director Andrea Onnefors has written: 'The CRF(F) has over the past ten years contributed considerably to the vitalization of academic research into freemasonry and related fraternal organizations both in Britain and abroad. We are in this respect deeply indebted to the efforts of founding director, prof Andrew Prescott. It is intended to publish a chronological overview over "Ten Years of Research into Freemasonry at the University of Sheffield" later this spring. As it so far only has been advertised internally within the university, I will leave the university at the end of June 2010, but there is currently no new position or engagement that follows thereafter. The Academic Society for Research into Freemasonry and Fraternalism (ASRFF) will immediately take over some core functions from the CRFF, such as the publication of a newsletter or the edition of the academic journal JRFF. The Society is under formation and experienced already a serious blow with the tragic death of its intermediary president, prof Malcolm Davies, who passed away unexpectedly in February 2010. With the Leiden chair empty and the CRFF in hibernation, academic research at the moment and for the foreseeable future will be carried out by single academics based at single universities across the world. This increases the need for cooperation of various initiatives such as the organization of conferences, e.g. the next International Conference on the History of Freemasonry that will take place in Alexandria, VA in late May 2011 and to which we currently are recruiting the Academic Committee. The ASRFF has created a temporary website that will be continually updated: <http://asrff.blogspot.com/>. We hope sincerely that this new initiative will meet your strong support. Please join our society and subscribe to the journal! For the ASRFF, Dr. Andreas Önnfors, Secretary pro tempore.
www.equinoxjournals.com/ojs/index.php/JRFF/index.'

Export Ban on Thomas Walker Archive. A temporary export ban on an archive of correspondence addressed to the British political radical Thomas Walker has provided a last chance to raise the money to keep the archive in the UK. The anti-slavery campaigner's letters

are of outstanding significance for the study of political history in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The ruling, by Culture Minister Margaret Hodge, follows a recommendation by the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest, administered by the MLA. The Committee recommended that the export decision be deferred on the grounds that the archive is of outstanding significance for the study of British political history in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Lord Inglewood, Chairman of the Reviewing Committee said: "This fascinating archive is significant for study because it provides an insight into how the themes of liberty were being explored in Britain at this time." More: www.mla.gov.uk/news_and_views/press/releases/2010/Walker_archive

William Morris Gallery. Supported by The Friends, the Gallery in Walthamstow which was threatened with closure, is currently drawing up plans for a major development project to extend and refurbish the gallery. When the project is complete in 2012, more works of art will be on display, galleries will have been renovated and all facilities will have been improved and made fully accessible. There will be a dedicated space for school groups, a new study area and an excellent shop and tearoom, plus a more active programme of events and activities www.walthamforest.gov.uk/william-morris

BOOKS ETC

New Books:

Aphrodite's Island. The European Discovery of Tahiti. Anne Salmond. University of California Press. www.ucpress.edu

In The Shadow Of Slavery. Africa's Botanical Legacy in the Atlantic World. Judith A. Carney & Richard Nicholas Rosomoff. University of California Press. www.ucpress.edu.

Water Music. Making Music in the Spas of Europe and North America. Ian Bradley. Oxford University Press. www.oup.com/uk.

Rival Queens. Actresses, Performance and the Eighteenth Century British Theater. Felicity Nussbaum. University of Pennsylvania Press. www.pennpress.org.

Dead Woman Pinckney. A Memoir of Childhood in Jamaica. (1943-1965). Yvonne Shorter Brown. Wilfred Laurier University Press. To order in UK Tel: 01524 687 65.

Ralph Russell Autobiographies. Ralph Russell (1918-2008) was a Marxist and Urdu scholar. His two autobiographical books have been published in India by Three Essays Collective, and are available from Marion Molteno in Battersea.

Part 1: *Findings, Keepings* describes his personal development and political consciousness from a Yorkshire country childhood in the 1920s - to communist student in 1930s Cambridge - to being a junior officer in the Indian Army in World War II.

Part 2. *Losses, Gains* takes the story up to 1958 setting out his disillusionment with the leaders of the Communist movement first in Britain and then world-wide, and describing the beginnings of his scholarly career.

Part 1 is available at £10.50 and Part 2 at £12 (discount £2 off if you order both) plus £2.50p p&p. Send cheque payable to Marion Molteno at 19 Barnard Rd, London, SW11 1QT.

The University of Hyderabad held a 3 day Conference to celebrate Russell's life and work in February. Marion Molteno has written a short account of it available from her:

marion.molteno@googlemail.com.

Sustainability First - Two New Reports. Household Smart Tariffs and Smart PrePay by Gill Owen and Judith Ward. Gill Owen, who is Chair of Public Utilities Forum (which I used to be Secretary of), and Judith Ward, have completed two reports on smart meters for Sustainability First: *Smart Tariffs and Household Demand Response for Great Britain*, and *Smart Pre-Payment in Great Britain*. See www.sustainabilityfirst.org.uk.