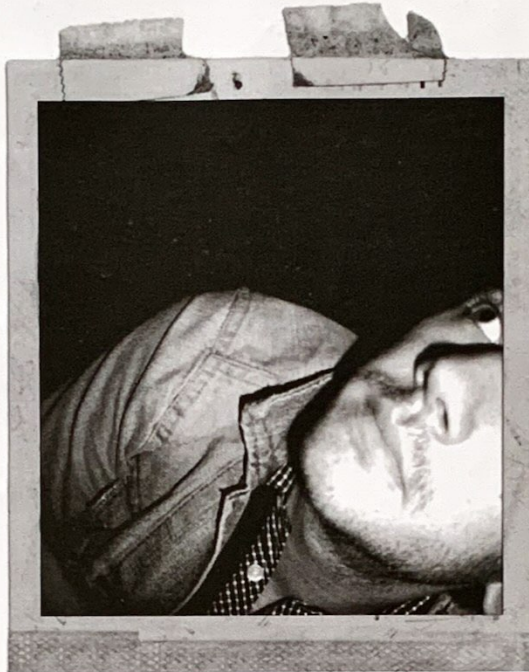


HST

HISTORY STUDENT TIMES



Note From the Editor.



Hello again! Welcome to the 3rd volume of the History Student Times for the 2009/10 academic year. If you're confused and not quite sure what you've got your hands on at the moment, the HST is a bi-monthly magazine written by history students for fellow history students. It has and always will be free to pick up and it's completely free to join. So, if you've got something to write about or want to get a bit of experience writing for a publication, get in touch – it's your magazine!

In this first edition we mostly look at that historically nebulous story of the Gun Powder Plot with Jocelyn Payne, on page ____, separating the proverbial wood from the trees on Guy Fawkes in her Mythbuster's article. Meanwhile Sarah Kocianski recounts her experiences at Coughton Court, one of the National Trust's most impressive and historically intriguing houses. On page ____ Sian Ballett gets to meet one of the newest recruits to join the School of History – an academic fresher as it were – in our popular Meet the Department interview. Whilst Ellie Davies unearths an interesting story of Nazi Berlin on page _____. Plus, if you're stuck for stuff to do in Leeds – not that that's ever likely but... still – if you're stuck and you still need an historical buzz, HisSoc President Heather Bodle and Emily Dewhurst have compiled an array of interesting studenty-accessible sites where you can go and throw caution to the wind and talk openly about historical things in public. Oh, and that's on page _____.

Thanks to everyone who contributed in some way to this first edition – you made it what it is. Hope you all enjoy.

Jack.

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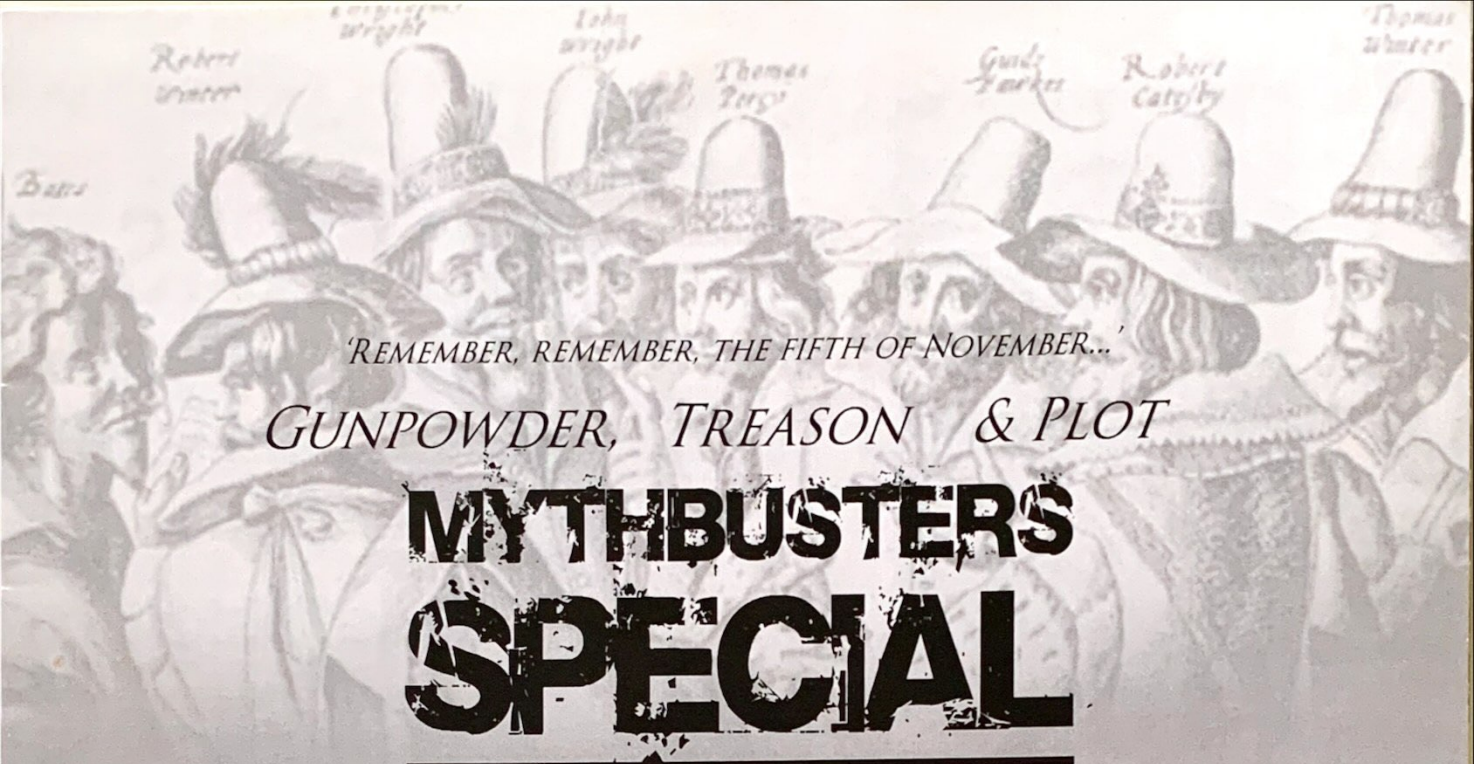
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'REMEMBER, REMEMBER, THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER...'

GUNPOWDER, TREASON & PLOT

MYTHBUSTERS SPECIAL

EVER DOUBTED THE STORY BEHIND GUY FAWKES NIGHT? YOU HAVEN'T? WELL, YOU SHOULD'VE. IN A MYTHBUSTERS SPECIAL, JOCELYN PAYNE SETS OUT TO SEPARATE THE FACTS FROM THE FALLACY. FOR A START, WE DON'T EVEN CALL THE GUY BY HIS REAL NAME...

Every year we celebrate 'Guy Fawkes Night' on November 5th, with bonfires on which we burn a 'Guy', fantastic firework displays – and since coming to Uni, no doubt using it as another excuse for a knees-up. But how many of our 'traditions' are actually founded in fact?

The 'Guy Fawkes' Night: Nope! The Gunpowder Plot was actually the brainchild of Robert Catesby, who had been a prominent member of Queen Elizabeth's household before her death in 1603, which is surprising given his open Catholicism. Other instrumental conspirators included Thomas Percy – who was responsible for securing the famous cellar under Westminster through which they planned to blow up Parliament, this due to his family links with the Earl of Northumberland – Thomas Wintour, Jack Wright, and of course Fawkes. Guy (or Guido) Fawkes had been a mercenary in the armies of the Netherlands, where his special skill had been... explosives. Others were later recruited.

'The plot was discovered just in time' Oops, sorry but wrong again! In fact as early as 26th October 1605, Catholic peer Lord Monteagle received a letter from a 'mysterious, tall, dark man' warning of a 'terrible blow' that Parliament would suffer, though that it may have hidden benefits for those such as Monteagle (i.e. Catholics). This was brought to the attention of James I, who, according to reports, guessed right away that it involved an attempt to blow up Parliament. How far this is true is debatable, but in any case a search of the area surrounding Westminster was ordered. Strangely there was a lack of urgency – perhaps the threat wasn't taken seriously – as it didn't take place until 4th November, the day before Parliament was due to open. The 'dainty' searches revealed a suspiciously large pile of firewood in the cellar of... Thomas Percy. The king was incredulous – why hadn't a proper investigation been carried out? His men just hadn't wanted to cast aspersions on such a prominent family as that of Percy and Northumberland! A second more thorough look exposed a hell of a lot of gunpowder concealed by the wood and so the servant in attendance, a 'mysterious, tall, dark man' giving his name as 'John Johnson' was arrested.

Fawkes gave away his identity and then betrayed his fellow plotters before being sentenced to death by burning. Sort of. 'Johnson' admitted his true identity, as well as his part in the plot after 3 days of 'interrogation' (ahem), and only gave away the others on 9th November, having endured 4 days of torture on the rack in the Tower of London. This is pretty resilient really! Fawkes, and the other 7 surviving conspirators were tried and sentenced to death by being hung, drawn and quartered (a particularly nasty way to go!) in January 1606. The bonfires came from the fires lit by Londoners to celebrate the safety of the King after the discovery of the plot. Some even burned effigies of the Pope in a demonstration of their hatred of Catholicism – so next time someone asks you for a 'penny for the Guy', tell them to f*** off and save your cash for a toffee apple. Admittedly though, it's not very p.c. these days to go around burning effigies of the Pope...

What about the other conspirators I hear you say? Unsurprisingly, as soon as they learned their plot had been foiled, they legged it. Seeking safety at Holbeach House just inside Staffordshire, they soon found themselves besieged by the King's men. In preparation for a mini battle, they had to dry out some gunpowder which had got wet by the fire. Mistake. It set alight, causing massive explosions and a house fire, killing some conspirators and maiming others. Evidently they ignored the firework-safety precautions! The survivors surrendered, pronto, and were tried with Fawkes in January.

So, were they 'Terrorists' or freedom-fighters? Well, probably a bit of both. The plotters planned to kill the King and the Parliamentary government, and impose a Catholic regime on England using James' ten-year old daughter Elizabeth – the kidnap of whom was a later part of the plot – as a puppet Queen. The use of gunpowder and, indeed, terror shows this to be a bloody and violent act of resistance. However, after years of repression and persecution under Elizabeth I, it is no wonder that with a new monarch English Catholics held high hopes for change – especially since James' parents were Catholics and he had hinted at some religious reforms back in 1602 before he acquired the English throne. This had been misinterpreted by Percy as a promise for greater toleration for Catholics, although realistically it was simply a political ploy by James to gain support. The view of the plotters as good men striving for a fair treatment for Catholics is misleading, and perpetuated by nineteenth-century novelists such as William Harrison Ainsworth and his 1890 publication 'Guy Fawkes, or The Gunpowder Treason: An Historical Romance'.

Conspiracy buffs read on... There is a theory that perhaps James' life was never at risk at all. Some believe that the plot was orchestrated by Robert Cecil – a prominent royal minister believed to be acting as a mole amongst the conspirators – in order to generate anti-Catholic feelings and increase James' popularity. This would've then aided a smooth passage for the 1606 Canons (a piece of religious legislation) and make the anti-Catholic clauses much more acceptable. Machiavellian politics at its finest... perhaps Gordon Brown could learn something here!

A picture of the main conspirators, published not long after the trial in January 1606

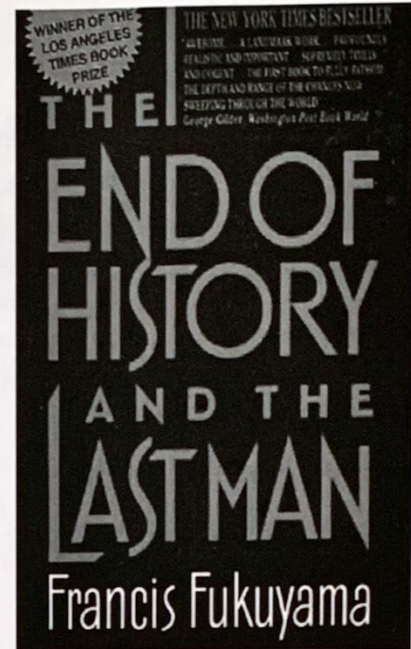
Francis Fukuyama

The End of History and the Last Man

It's been 20 years since Francis Fukuyama's thought provoking essay 'The End of History?' first appeared in the American Journal The National Interest in 1989 and with the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall just around the corner – the event which acted as the historical milieu for Fukuyama's theories – Joe Derry-Malone –takes a fresh look at Fukuyama's argument.

Fukuyama contends that History, as a human record of progress, is over. The end result of this progress, gained through education and the modern development of the global political sphere, is the finality of liberal democracy. With the growth of liberal democracy over the previous centuries and the fall of its alternatives used as the empirical foundation, Fukuyama uses philosophical justification, through references to the platonic tripartite soul, to endorse his theory that liberal democracy, and theoretically western political thought, is the only remaining viable political system. Similar to Marx in his linear, directional and primarily economic view of historical development, Fukuyama reaches a vastly different conclusion, though emphasising no less the inevitability of his theory. According to Fukuyama, those countries not already liberal democracies exist solely in a period of transition in which the destination and the 'end point of mankind's ideological evolution' is one based on liberalism both in economics and politics, creating the only system that remains 'free from fundamental internal contradictions'.





Fukuyama, educated in America, names the Islamic world as the only global sector not accepting liberal democracy's claim as the most rational form of governance. Fukuyama's justification for this distinction is both arrogant and patronising. He explains how Islamic countries, through a lack of Western imports, have not benefited from the technologies enjoyed by liberal democracies in a convincing way, unlike Japan for example, causing a frustration and nostalgic reversion to Islamic fundamentalism that results in the rejection of a political system connected so heavily to the West. Whilst backed by a clever use of empirical evidence, this explanation is oversimplified and dismisses cultural, religious and sociological reasons behind political change, hugely overemphasising economics.

Fukuyama uses the part of the human soul identified as 'Thymos' by Plato (essentially the inherent human desire to be recognised) as a means of explaining how liberal democracy satisfies society. Whilst in theory a desire to be seen as equal to, or even better, than others could justify a more Machiavellian interpretation of political rule, the meritocracy that exists within market driven capitalism provides balance. Human thymotic pride can be satisfied within the economic sphere, leaving society satisfied by the political equality of democracy. Still being recognised as important politically, with a perceived influence over governance, people prove themselves as 'better' economically rather than politically. This argument appears to me contradictory. Firstly it praises economic liberalism in its ability to create winners and satisfy human thymos, but ignores the inequality this simultaneously creates and with this disregards an obvious reason for a desire to revolutionise – an unequal social structure. Secondly, thymos in its very nature is necessary for the progress of society, if not politics. A complete satisfaction of this desire would in theory stunt achievement, personal betterment and would ultimately prove counter beneficial.

Fukuyama's work appears a piece of polemic in both its justifications and ethnocentricity. In order to crown liberal democracy supreme, Fukuyama attempts to explain why liberal democracy is not yet universal and in the process isolates the Islamic world.

Fukuyama's theory appears contradictory in another sense. He criticises the ignorance of theorists who used the development of fascism and communism in the twentieth century as proof that alternative means of governance can satisfy societies and thrive within them, whilst implementing this same ignorance in his own theory. By assessing a snapshot of history in which liberal democracy appears strong, Fukuyama disregards the possibility of any dramatic reversion to past systems, or the possibility of emerging systems that could provide an answer to the problems that undoubtedly exist within Western political systems and the societies beneath them.

Whilst providing an insightful and thought provoking view of the future of global politics, the deterministic nature of Fukuyama's theory and its blatant ethnocentric nature both undermine convincing arguments and justify the assertion that Western arrogance blinds theorists to the possibility of alternatives to liberal democracy.

THE NATIONAL TRUST

AND ITS TERRORIST LINKS TO THE PAST

In keeping with the season, Sarah Kocianski reviews one of the National Trust's most important houses and its fascinating connection to the Gun Powder Plot before arguing for a greater need of appreciation across the public domain for historical sites like this.



Few later "improvements" mean Coughton is still a fine example of a rural recusant home.

Coughton Court is the 600-year-old Warwickshire home of the Throckmorton family. Gifted to the National Trust in 1946, the Throckmortons still inhabit parts of the building - a fact visitors are very much aware of thanks to the family photographs littering occasional tables and sideboards throughout. So far, so classically National Trust. What makes this place just that little bit more interesting is that these people are related to the men responsible for the festivities in which we still indulge on 5th November. And they're proud of it.

Most people can tell you a bit:

"Guy Fawkes was hung and drawn and quartered (why do we love the gory details?) and there was some guy called Robert Catesby"

"They wanted to blow up the King?"

"Yeah."

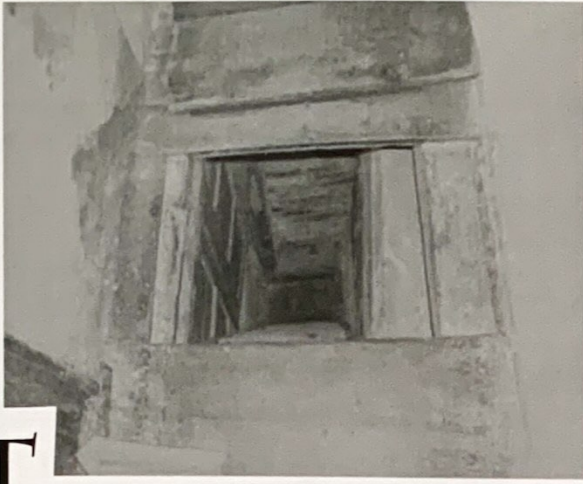
"Which King?"

"Oh... one of the James'." Invariably said with a mouth full of toffee apple in the depths of a fun fair.

Well, Coughton will furnish you with a lot more information than that. A quick tour of the old stable block in its prime location next to the NT coffee shop will help you realise that the events of November 5th 1605 were not just a ham-fisted murder attempt but that a lot of people had a lot to lose in its failure. Some lost their lives, others their fortunes and others the last hope they had of being able to worship freely as they genuinely believed. You learn names: Anne Throckmorton and her sister Muriel, the granddaughters of the original builder of Coughton, were the mothers of Robert Catesby and Francis Thresham (another major player in the plot) respectively. You can put faces to them in family portraits and see maps and personal letters which fill in the details - items which help you understand the motives behind these people's actions.

However, all this would be largely irrelevant and makes much less of an impact if not combined with the physical interaction the house provides. Standing on the first floor of the stone gatehouse, peering out through permanently cold windows where nervous Jesuit priests, the famous priest-hole maker Nicholas Owen and the family of Everard Digby all waited anxiously, it's hard not to strain your own ears for the sound of a desperately tired horse's hooves.

The atmosphere, which is still palpable and real, is only heightened when you gaze at the tiny, dark hole where the priests hid during the regular searches of the house. As known recusants, the Throckmorton family suffered greatly but yet they still refused to give up their faith to the extent that even today Coughton houses a fine collection of associated artefacts. These include such morbid items as the undershirt Mary Queen of Scots reportedly wore to her execution plus locks of hair from the heads of the "Old Pretender" James III and Bonnie Prince Charlie. For those with more delicate tastes there is a garter ribbon which once graced the leg of the latter and a beautifully embroidered Bishop's Cope supposedly worked on by Catherine of Aragon and her ladies.



The priest hole at Coughton is so well hidden (it was only rediscovered in the 1940s) it doesn't lend itself to photography. However, this example of a priest hole at Harvington Hall, also designed by the infamous Nicholas Owen, serves just as well to highlight what the priests suffered – and the fear that necessitated it.

It is these details, stories and intrigues that get people interested in history and being able to experience them outside of a classroom, seminar or lecture can only make them more real. This is a facility the National Trust, English Heritage and some private owners have provided for many years. However, a continued association with old ladies in tea rooms, rainy bank holidays and the boredom of national curriculum history has marred them for many a person under the age of 30

These organisations have suffered even more in recent times and membership has seriously declined. It is not expensive, £16.13 a year for National Trust membership won't break the bank and entitles you to free use of coastal paths, car parks all over the country and of course, access to hundreds of historic buildings. Not least, it grants you access to the internationally renowned tearooms and the bountiful cake.

It is hard to believe that many people know so little about the general history of England. This is something that should be rectified, if only to prevent past mistakes being repeated over and over again. I am not suggesting that we get rid of Gordon Brown by blowing up Parliament. In fact, that very sentence will probably get me arrested! But if more people knew the history of this country's politics then perhaps they would be more willing to participate constructively. I am not proposing we force them to suffer through lectures and learn dates, but rather to use the materials we already have. Popular history books about the Tudors have always been bestsellers; Phillipa Gregory's novels are even Hollywood films. No doubt these are good beginnings, but we need to encourage a more general acceptance of and willingness to study history. How many times have you heard someone say 'I wish I knew more about....'

About what? Well, whatever it is, it's out there and the historic buildings of England are one way to get people to hear and remember the stories that can serve them well – if only in a pub quiz.

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THE ROSENSTRAÙE PROTEST

Ellie Davies sheds light on one of those unusual stories that crop up in history now and then: the tale of how Nazi political expediency ended up saving the lives of 1700 Jewish Berliners.

The act of protest has proven time and time again to be a successful tool to make both the public and the state aware of the plight of those when they become dissatisfied or alienated from the system. Protests large and small have made history and have occasionally changed the political direction of the country they've occurred in. However, in times of war for example, or when the press is subject to censorship, they don't always receive the extensive coverage that our bin men, to use one illustration, have had lately. However, lack of coverage and/or documenting by no means equates to futility or failure.

One such less-known yet incredibly brave and remarkably successful demonstration took place on the streets of Berlin from 27th February until 6th March 1943. In that same year saw the initial steps taken towards the Final Solution – the ultimate removal and liquidation of Germany's Jewish population. However, up until then the Nazis racial policy had proved inconsistent when concerning 'Mischlinge', that is the children produced from partnerships between Jews and German-Nationals, or 'Aryans', as well as the treatment of inter-married Jews themselves. The experience of these people within The Third Reich seems to reveal random and situational results dependent mainly on the social position of the family in question, any connections they might have had within the Gestapo or failures in the Nazi racial policy to identify who did and did not classify as a Jew.

As it stood, there was no clear policy on the treatment and removal of these 'half Jews' or inter-married Jews, a surprising missing cog in the National Socialist extermination machine.

The final roundup for the deportation of Berlin's Jews began on February 27th under the orders of Dr. Goebbels, the notorious Propaganda Minister and, by that point, the Nazi Party Director. As the SS stormed into Berlin's factories, making mass arrests and causing the all-too familiar atmosphere of terror, hundreds of inter-married Jews were rounded up and kept inside Rosenstraße 2-4. Now at a time when all protests and acts of public discontent were banned, with life-threatening consequences, the unthinkable happened. At the end of the second day of arrests, women and children of the prisoners gathered at the Rosenstraße chanting 'give us our husbands back!' By the 6th March around 1,000 (predominantly) women had joined the protest, despite SS threats (which were more than often carried out) to shoot them down. The determination and despair of these women, at a time of mass terror, reveals the desperation as well as the remarkable bravery and loyalty that German Nationals felt towards their Jewish family members. Choosing to face the SS machine guns themselves, than to see their loved ones deported and murdered.

The Rosenstraße protest itself gives an amazing insight into the nature of German resistance. Yet, there is more to this heroic tale to come. The National Socialists rose to power on the back of mass public support, consolidated by the terror tactics of the SS. Goebbels' propaganda machine churned out images and supposed evidence of a united 'Volk' of the German people, working together to fight world Jewry, Bolshevism and to consolidate a German empire, at the expense of land in the east. Yet when faced with the women at Rosenstraße, displaying obvious public discontent and contempt towards his extremism, the Propaganda Minister ordered the release of 1,700 Jews including those from Rosenstraße and some that had already been deported! Although planning to have these Jews deported at a later date, Goebbels in fact let them continue to live and work in Berlin, until the end of the war. This surprising order issued by Goebbels, a raging anti-Semite, highlights the importance the National Socialists attributed to the appearance of public support on the streets of Berlin, to deter attention away from their plans of mass extermination and reign of terror conducted towards Germany's 'enemies'. The protest conducted by the women at Rosenstraße defied the Nazis Jewish 'solution' in Berlin and saw the victory of public discontent, over a murderous dictatorship.

Protests, in all situations, under all conditions and governments can produce remarkable results and are a powerful tool for conveying the emotion of those determined to fight for their rights and freedom. They are always worth listening too, if only to understand the plight of others, just or unjust.





A HISTORY GEEKS GUIDE TO LEEDS

*Heather Bodle
and Emily Dewhurst*

After two years of near-continuous clubbing and bar-hopping, Heather Bodle and Emily Dewhurst decided to get their kicks from some of Leeds' more refined cultural haunts. Here, they investigate some of the best (and least) known historical and arty hotspots across the city, so you don't have to.

Audrey Burton Gallery.

Our very own art gallery here in the Parkinson building at Leeds Uni has a permanent collection of modern art particularly from the abstract expressionist movement as well as hosting special exhibitions throughout the year – the current one being, of course, about Marks and Spencer's. If you haven't done so already, get down and have a peek. Oh, and did we mention that it's completely free?



Harewood House



For those with a penchant for country houses, an easy bus ride away from the city centre (use No. 36) will take you to Harewood House – a 'St. Petersburg palace on a Yorkshire Hill.' From the stunning landscaped gardens, complete with bird collections, to the fabulously ornate colour themed rooms, the house has plenty to keep the eyes entertained.

Highlights include conserved Chinese wallpaper, probably dating from 1769, hoards of exquisite (and much of it Chippendale) furniture, and a gallery hung from wall to ceiling in mirrors and paintings - including examples from Old Masters such as Titian, Bellini and El Greco. Elsewhere there are also collections from other famous artists, including Turner. If you head down into the kitchens, they often have homemade produce on offer (to sample for free), whilst the roast pork sandwich available from the café comes highly recommended! Curiously enough, there's even a penguin reserve.



Leeds City Museum

Apart from the real life (pun intended) resident mummy 'Nessy', there isn't much going for the Leeds City Museum in Millennium Square. Despite a £26m redevelopment across 2 years, you wouldn't need more than 30 minutes to see what the place has to offer even if the website advises between 1-3 hours.

Still, the collector's exhibition is mildly stimulating and the Leeds Story is worth seeing as it does illuminate a few interesting facts about the city you decided to study in!

Tel: 0113 2243732

Admission: FREE

Royal Armouries

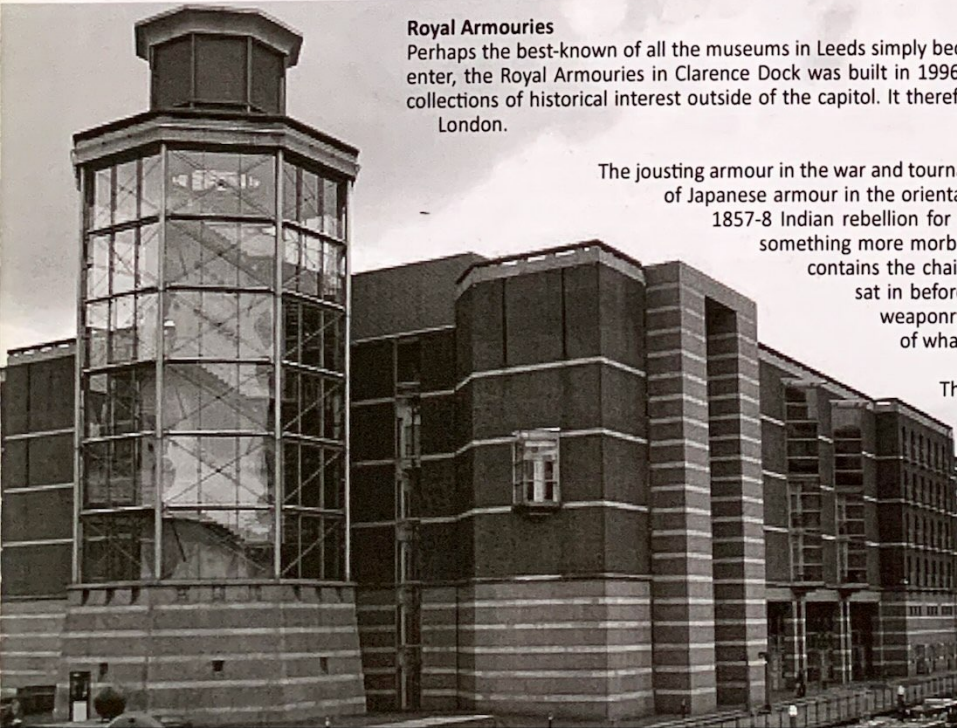
Perhaps the best-known of all the museums in Leeds simply because you can't fail to notice all the road signs as you enter, the Royal Armouries in Clarence Dock was built in 1996 as part of an attempt to locate important national collections of historical interest outside of the capitol. It therefore houses the collection surplus from the Tower of London.

The jousting armour in the war and tournament gallery is a must, and there's a great collection of Japanese armour in the oriental gallery. There's also a rather tiny exhibition on the 1857-8 Indian rebellion for anyone interested in the British Indian Empire. For something more morbid, the new exhibition – 'Tower Tales and Traitors' – contains the chair that the last person killed in the Tower of London sat in before a firing squad. The museum also looks at modern weaponry and its impact – including a lovely representation of what a bullet would do to soft tissue! Yummy...

There are a lot of interactive features too – normally related to shooting guns, but occasionally the odd crossbow pops up. Running at various points throughout the day, the museum also has short plays or 'interpretations' whose theme changes on a daily bases. The events that occur in the tiltyard are definitely worth a peek too, and usually include jousting and/or falconry displays if you're lucky – plus it only costs around £1 with your student card, although these do stop running over winter.

Tel: 0113 220 1800

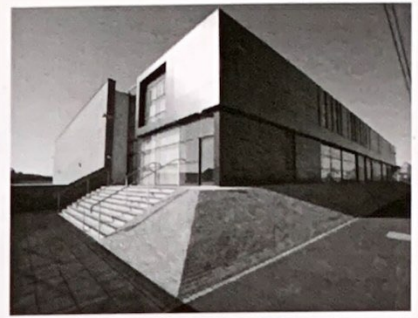
Admission: FREE





The Thackray Museum – “Telling the story of medicine”

The multi-award winning Thackray Museum is one of the leading medical museums in the United Kingdom and is most definitely worth the £4.40 plus the short bus ride (numbers 50/51) from town. The museum covers both the history of health and medicine in an imaginative and exciting way, including exhibitions on “Pain, Pus and Blood” and the “New Frontiers of Surgery” in the Wilkinson Gallery. There are many interactive exhibitions designed to appeal to the child in all of us including mock environments, such as the replica Leeds city centre from 1842 (with added revolting smells) plus a mildly disturbing demonstration of Victorian surgery (not with live people...). You can even try on a pregnant belly – again, not real. On the whole, an utterly gruesome place yet still thoroughly amazing.
Tel: 0113 205 6521



Discovery Centre

Never heard of this hidden gem? Well, we’re not surprised. Due to a supposed popularity, the Discovery Centre doesn’t advertise to the public event though it’s open to us (though by appointment only mind). Even the website doesn’t fully explain what the Centre holds.

Anyway, the Centre is a purpose built storage facility for all the collections not on display in the various Leeds Council run museums. If you need to trawl through countless racks of fossils in the name of research, or have a particular desire to see a collection of antique chairs and stuffed animals, then this is the place for you! They also run a multitude of programmes within the community, including with the homeless and young offenders, which opens up the opportunity of possible voluntary work to any keen history undergrads looking to expand their CVs.
Tel: 0113 284 3884

Leeds Art Gallery

It doesn’t have the largest of collections, but what is included is, for the most part, worth seeing. For those studying Chris Prior’s Empire modules, General Gordon’s Last Stand (George William Joy, 1885), the infamous painting romanticising General Gordon’s final moments during a battle with Mahdi warriors, will be of interest. It also contains Scotland Forever (Lady Butler, 1881) – a painting depicting the charge of the Royal North Dragoons. Supposedly, Lady Butler got them to do a mock charge beforehand so she could capture the moment. There are also a few surprise famous additions, including pieces by Tissot, Rodin and Turner. They also put on interesting temporary exhibitions – the current one focusing on British Surrealism.

To end your visit, head into the tiled hall café and enjoy amazing (though expensive) homemade pork pies and a selection of cakes in gorgeous surroundings. Or perhaps have a game of giant chess outside the library next door.
Tel: 0113 247 8248
Admission: FREE

Henry Moore Institute

The Henry Moore is a privately funded contemporary art institute, concentrating on modern sculpture – though at the moment they have their first exhibition which comprises solely of paintings. Still, the exhibition title is ‘Sculpture in Painting’, so you can guess the link. The Henry Moore institute is privately funded by the Henry Moore Foundation, and so – perhaps not feeling the need to appeal to every part of the community – does have the white-roomed feel of a proper, professional art gallery. It is definitely worth a look, and certainly doesn’t take much time due to the small size even if most of the concepts behind the pieces do appear slightly baffling!
Tel: 0113 246 7467/3158 (recorded information).
Admission: FREE



Meet the History Department:

Dr. Andrea Major

After giving a stimulating lecture on depictions of Hindu religious rites to a packed Grant Room earlier this term, Sian Ballett talks to the History Department's latest recruit about Michelle Obama, publishing and infanticide whilst managing to infer that Muhatma Gandhi was a bit of a killjoy at dinner parties!

So, why History?

Actually, I didn't start off doing History, I took it for GCSE but I didn't take it for A-Level. Six weeks into my A-Levels I was sitting in my French class, so bored, that I decided to swap courses and do History! My A-Level teacher was much more inspiring than my GCSE one had been. He always used to say you should study History so as you can read a good newspaper intelligently! I like History because of its creativity, but it is still grounded in reality.

What period do you specialise in?

I suppose mainly 19th Century India. But I have studied social and gender issues in India, so the early 20th Century as well, and my work on Sati actually spans from 1500 right through to 1830.

Why Leeds?

A mixture of it being a fantastic city and a fantastic University – but also the job market! I worked at the University of Edinburgh for a long time, but I live in the North East, so Leeds is much more convenient.

Can you give us a brief summary of your career since University?

I did my undergraduate degree and my PHD at Edinburgh, and then I stayed on there and did a year long ESRC postdoctoral fellowship, which is like a year long fellowship that you use to write up and publish your PHD research. Then I spent six months working on the 'Mutiny at the Margins' grant project in Edinburgh. Then I left that because I got a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship which is what I am working on at the moment. I'm working on slavery in British India. In between that I have had two kids!

Have you had any work published?

I have had my PHD thesis published in a book called 'Pious Flames'. While I was doing that I put together an anthology of sources on sati that was published as well. I have got another book hopefully coming out with Routledge in the new year, which will again be based on some of the work done during my PHD, and some more that I did after. It's such an amazing thing when they send copies to you, and you actually get to hold them!

If you could have three historical dinner party guests, who would they be?

Probably Oscar Wilde, because I think he would be funny. He would be witty and entertaining, but an erudite. Just interesting and a laugh! Jawaharlal Nehru, father of Indira Gandhi, because he was one of the leaders of the independence struggle, India's first Prime Minister, and I think he might be a bit more fun than Mahatma Gandhi! Fanny Parks, she was a British woman who was married to an officer in the East India Company, and unlike most British women who were over there at the time who really didn't venture outside the confines of British society, she went off on horseback and explored everywhere and went to dinners in local Indian houses. She really was quite a formidable character!

Complete this sentence: "During my History lectures, I want to..."

...Not see anybody asleep! I like it when people look interested and you can see they are taking in what you say.

“I like it when people look interested and you can see they are taking in what you say.”

If you could be one historical figure for one day, who would you be and when would you be them?

I would have to say Michelle Obama the night Barack was elected president. I wouldn't normally go for a supporting role like that (and I would not want her job the rest of the time), but the sense of pride, achievement and the sheer sense of history of that moment must have been overwhelming - it would be amazing to be part of.

What's your favourite place to go out in Leeds?

I haven't really been out in Leeds very much. But when my husband came here we did go to the HaHa Bar And Grill for a meal and we went to Spice bar for cocktails before, which were both very nice. That whole Electric Press area I quite like.

In your recent talk 'Sati and Sensibility' you talked about how the depiction of gruesome rituals had become almost pornographic in the sense that they seemed to be aiming to titillate a population who was in demand for such material. Do you feel it is human nature to be interested in such things?

Oh absolutely. There is an argument that pain as a sort of sexual thing becomes more important as we get into the 18th Century. Before that, in the middle ages, pain was just a natural part of life it was inescapable and accepted. In the 18th and 19th Century, when they get past that and have things like anaesthetic and an understanding of pain as something that can be got rid of, then it becomes unacceptable and a bit more taboo. We think of an aversion from pain as being natural but actually it is a relatively modern construction because it's only been in the last sort of 100 years that we have been able to try and avoid in any meaningful way.

You spoke about infanticide, would this have been portrayed as a religious practice, instead of related to the need for dowry for girls due to the fact that women were also worth less in Britain?

The infanticide that existed definitely was connected to dowry, there was a difference between a male and female child's worth to the family, so it is a socio-economic thing in that sense. James Mills said, 'Among the rude people, the women are generally degraded; among civilized people they are exalted'. And there was a very, very, clear idea that the treatment of women in Britain, and the treatment of women in India is miles apart. Even though, looking back on it, we can see a lot of resonances, and they are both patriarchal societies, and we can see a lot of connections, they were very clear that British women had this kind of exalted place through Christianity and through British civilisation, and they were nurtured and protected, and the angel in the house. They were the complete antithesis of degraded Indian women, and the missionaries used this to call British women to help their sisters.

You stress the importance of the role of women in colonial history, do you feel that women are underrepresented in history in general? Are you a bit of a feminist, fighting that corner in history?!

I don't know if I'm a feminist. I probably am, my dad says I am, but then again he's a dinosaur! Maybe a post-feminist! I think there's been an awful lot of good work done, I think the need now is to try to re-insert women's history into mainstream history, rather than have it as a sub-section, as something separate, it's just beginning to get to the place where we teach women's history as integral to history in general. In terms of the demographics of history departments, it's getting so much better, twenty, thirty, forty years ago it was very difficult to have a family and a career, now it has become a lot more family friendly.

Any as of yet unfilled ambitions?

No, not really, getting a permanent lectureship was the big thing, and I'm happily married with kids. I always want to travel and I've got books that I'm working on that I need to see published but I don't need any more big things to make me happy.

MYTHBUSTERS

KING ARTHUR

NOT CONTENT WITH RUMBLING OUR TIME-HONoured ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT BONFIRE NIGHT, JOCELYN PAYNE SETS OUT TO DEMYTH ANOTHER OF OUR FAVOURITE, IF AGAIN SLIGHTLY COLOURFUL, HISTORICAL CHARACTERS JUST FOR THE SHEER FUN OF IT...

There are various versions of King Arthur that we all know about, such as Wart in Disney's *The Sword in the Stone* accompanied by the expected obligatory moral messages, cute woodland creatures and catchy songs. Or how about Monty Python's *Holy Grail*, where Arthur, King of the Britons, is repeatedly ridiculed for his claim to kingship 'because some watery tart threw a sword at him'? But there are equally those who believe in Arthur as an actual historical character. Some argue he originated as King of the legendary Atlantis—the city that sank beneath the sea. Some say he pulled Excalibur from a stone; whereas others believe the Lady of the Lake awarded him it. And if that wasn't enough, he allegedly single-handedly killed 960 men at the battle of Mount Badon. Even those of us who aren't aware of the extensive Arthur legends, are conscious that he was the original British hero who protected England against the marauding Saxons - and those tales of the Knights of the Round Table are well known.

However, like so many popular myths and legends there are a few problems. The Arthur of legend, who was reported to have partaken in numerous sixth-century battles, is curiously absent from any surviving sources dating from between the fourth and eighth centuries. Indeed, he features in the *Historia Brittonum* and the *Welsh Annales Cambriae*, but those weren't composed until the tenth century and they all refer to him as *dux* (leader) not *rex* (king). The genealogies of the Dark Ages are equally empty of any King Arthur. So how do we explain this?

The name 'Arthur' is derived from the Latin 'Artorius', and interestingly there was a leader who went by this name. A Dalmatian official, Lucius Artorius Castus was a Roman who earned great renown as a battle leader in second century England. Perhaps our great British hero wasn't even British! This seems plausible since Artorius was referred to as *dux*, so this may have been the starting point for the Arthurian legend. 'Arthur' is also a derivative of the ancient Welsh word for 'bear', and there are many traditional folk myths associated with 'bear-men'. There is a possibility that a combination of the Roman Artorius and the Welsh bear-man may have been where our legend originated.

Records show that in the late sixth century many secular elites were named Arthur, which is often in reaction to an extraordinary figure that lived long enough ago to be considered legendary, which fits well with this idea. Also, it is likely that any heroic deeds of these later Arthurs may have eventually been attributed to the mythological construct that first appeared in tenth-century chronicles



Alternatively, one of these Arthurs may have been the starting point. There was a Celtic tradition by which the best warrior of the tribe was given not a crown but a sword to signify his leadership, which was picked up by him off a stone. Perhaps the idea of the sword in the stone to prove Arthur's right to rule derived from that of the sword on the stone, and so a sixth-century Celtic war-lord named Arthur could be the 'true' one.

This surprisingly is the only evidence we have for a real Arthur. The rest, the Knights of the Round Table, Guinevere and Lancelot, and Camelot, are all twelfth-century constructs. We can blame the French writer Chrétien de Troyes for this, as at this time the romantic notion of chivalrous knights was very fashionable. It was this version of Arthur which was idolized by many late-medieval Kings such as Edward III who in 1344 decided to recreate the Order of the Round Table - despite the fact it had never existed!

The difficulty many historians have with believing in a truly historical Arthur is the lack not only of documentary but of material proof. Such a great King would presumably have had a magnificent tomb, yet the only 'proof' is a shrine uncovered in Glastonbury in 1191, in which the monks who found it allegedly found Arthur and Guinevere's remains, although this is likely to be fraudulent. However, folklore says that Arthur never died, just retired to the Isle of Avalon to recover from wounds received at the Battle of Camlann, and would return whenever Britain was in peril... Has he returned? Who knows!

The legend of Arthur is one riddled with mystery, yet one which has endured more than a millennium in western culture, from Lancelot and Guinevere to Monty Python and the *Holy Grail*. It looks like this is one myth I am unable to bust, but actually I think the uncertainty that surrounds Arthur is an important part of his Dark-Age background, that the myth is not supposed to be broken anyway. So was King Arthur a real person, a patriotic literary construct or a folkloric hero? Maybe one or the other - maybe all of them! It could well be that that's the entire point of the Arthurian legend.

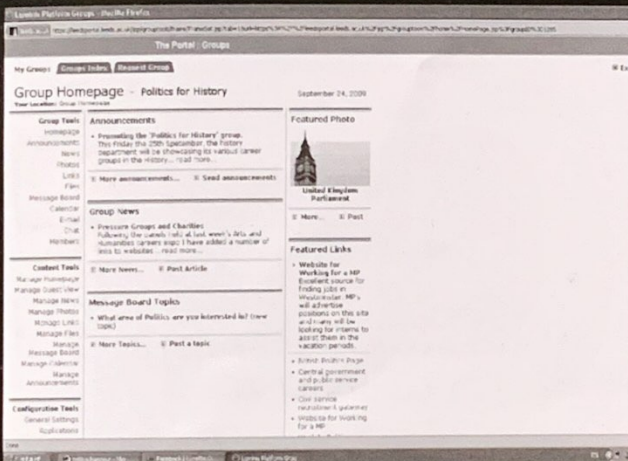


CONSIDERING A CAREER IN POLITICS?



Check out the 'politics for history' group on the Leeds University Portal. The history department has set up this career groups specifically for history students who might be interested in perusing a career somewhere within the political arena. The portal group provides you with useful information and links for a whole variety of jobs: from working for an MP or Party professional agents, to local councils and Non-governmental organisations and charities.

WHAT CAN THE POLITICS FOR HISTORY GROUP DO FOR YOU?



- Provide you with links to useful websites relating to careers in politics.
- Present you with up to date information about volunteering and internship opportunities.
- Provide you with a forum where you can enquire about any specific career related questions.
- Inform you about work experience opportunities in the local area.
- Alert you to any career fairs or events which you should attend.



The portal group is quick and easy to access, just follow these 3 simple steps:

- (1) Click on the 'groups' icon on the top right hand corner of portal homepage;
- (2) click on 'group index' and type 'history' into the search box;
- (3) click on the 'politics for history' link and request to join.

Lynette from the politics group

A FEW EXAMPLES OF SOME OF THE WEBSITES WHICH PROVIDE EXCELLENT SOURCES FOR FINDING JOBS IN POLITICS:

<http://www.w4mp.org>

An excellent source for finding jobs in Westminster. MP's will advertise positions on this site and many will be looking for interns to assist them in the vacation periods.

<http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/jobs/index.aspx>

This gateway provides all the information for recruitment opportunities with the civil service, as well as job vacancies.

<http://www.electus-start.com/>

Electus Start is the essential guide to a career in politics and public affairs in the UK and European Union.

DON'T MISS OUT!

If you are thinking about applying for an undergraduate internship next summer be sure not to miss out. Many of the government departments (like the foreign office) as well as NGOs and big charities have an early deadline for applications. So look out because in the next few weeks and months the Politics for History portal group will be informing you of a number of internship opportunities and advice on your application. Good luck!

WANT A CAREER IN LAW?



HI! I'M SIAN AND I'M THE LEADER OF THE
LAW CAREERS PORTAL GROUP THIS YEAR.

What is this group?

A community group for History students interested in a career in Law after they graduate. It provides information virtually via the portal as well as actual group social and career events.

What will this group offer me?

The portal site offers a variety of information on careers in law and the steps to take to achieve this. In addition to this it provides a forum for discussion with others, which is then taken outside of the portal to events such as careers fairs and group meetings.

We want to make this group less virtual this year so will be organising regular meetings which will create the opportunity for you to learn more about law as a career but also have some fun. Here's a taster of what's coming up:

Wednesday 28th October: 5pm:

Movie Meeting : Grant Room (History department in Michael Sadler Building). We will be watching 'To Kill a Mockingbird' to inspire us, and there will be wine provided.

Wednesday 4th November: 12.30pm:

Trip to court: To see the law in action! Meet at the Parkinson steps at 12.30pm, we will be heading to Leeds Magistrates Court.

Monday 9th & Tuesday 10th November : 1-4pm:

Law Fair: Parkinson Court. The Leeds Law Fair is open to all students and graduates of any discipline. Around 60 law firms will be attending over the 2 days - Mon 9th and Tues 10th November. Please note that it is very important to attend both days if at all possible.

Wednesday 11th November: 2-3pm:

How to get a career in law: A talk by Angela Wilcox, the head of law in the careers department, in the Grant room. This is a great opportunity due to the small group setting. She will be covering all aspects of gaining a career in law, from how you get into law after doing a history degree to how to make a great application. Please let me know if there is anything you would specifically like Angela to talk about as she wishes to tailor it to your needs.

Wednesday 18th November: EXPO '09 -

Careers in Arts, Humanities & Languages: Parkinson Court: An extravaganza of careers fair, workshops, drop-in surgeries, alumni panels and keynote speakers all rolled into one hectic and informative afternoon. This event will provide an excellent means to meet organisations specifically targeting students from Arts, Humanities, Modern Languages, Performance, Visual Arts and Communications. Will highlight the graduate and work experience opportunities on offer in an informal setting.



How can I join?

3 easy steps to join:

1. Log into the portal and click on the 'groups' icon in the right hand corner.
2. Click on 'Groups Index' and type 'Law in History' into the group search field.
3. Click on the 'Law in History' result and then click on 'request membership'.

For the social side of things we have a facebook group which is really for you guys to use:

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=142699471916> or 'I want to be a lawyer...But I do History.'

I look forward to meeting you all, and please don't hesitate to contact me about anything,

Sian.
hy07sb@leeds.ac.uk;

It's the HisSoc's Page!

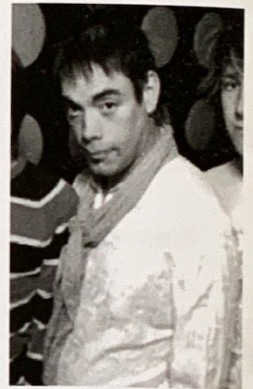
HISSOC has returned, and we're bigger and better than ever! This year we're also getting involved with more societies from the University – including JSoc, POLIS, Cutting Edge (the Surgical Society), and the English Society: particularly useful for those studying a Joint Honours programme, but also a great way to meet new people. We have a huge range of events - from informal talks, weekly drinks, walking tours, big socials, the Christmas Ball, day trips, film nights... Whatever you're interested in, we'll have something for you!

We sell History Society hoodies (perfect for those feeling the Leeds winter approaching) with the logo embroidered on the front and History Society on the back, in black and silver. We'll be running stalls throughout the run up to Christmas, where people can sign up to various events, and a £5 deposit will secure a hoodie for you – in whatever colour or size you'd like!

And don't forget, we hold our weekly drinks 5pm-8pm every Thursday in the Faversham Pub; we have a room booked called the White Lounge (the one with red curtains!) Come along to meet other people who are interested in History or study History, or even just to take advantage of the cheap drinks: £1.95 for a pint of Amstel, £6.96 for a bottle of house wine and £6.95 for two cocktails!



Ben Fraiss



Scott La Chance



Lauren Wolper



Jack Madden

Forthcoming events:

Tuesday, 3rd November:

Dr. Mark Smith is hosting an informal lecture on 'Nikita Krushchev: Hero, Villain and Hooligan', Baines Wing 1.14, 5.30pm-6.30pm – refreshments provided!

Thursday, 12th November:

We are joining with Cutting Edge (the Surgical Society) to run a talk fronted by Dr. Adrian Wilson, from the school of History of Philosophy – who will give an informal lecture entitled "When is a Surgeon not a Surgeon? Reflections on 17th century emergency midwifery." This will be held at the Medical Lecture Theatre in the Worsley Building – 5pm-5.45pm (of course, refreshments will be provided!) Afterwards, Cutting Edge will join us for weekly drinks at the Faversham.

Tuesday, 17th November:

Angus Donald is coming all the way from Kent to talk about his debut novel, *Outlaw* - a story with a difference on the tales of Robin Hood, 6pm onwards at the Faversham. We're having dinner afterwards - the Faversham have offered us 50% off, so you can get a main meal for about £3! The menu is available from the History notice board (or you can check it out in the Faversham) All menu choices and payment has to be made by the end of October.

For more information: <http://www.angus-donald.com/>

Monday, 23rd November:

We're having a joint social with POLIS (the Politics Society) at Chilliwites. If you enjoyed our last big social, then kept an eye out for more details – coming soon!

Wednesday, 9th December:

The History Society Christmas Ball! Tickets are on sale NOW - £30 for members, £35 for non members. This year we are having a change of scene and holding the ball at the Marriott Hotel, but don't worry, it'll still be as grand (if not grander!) and the dress code will still be black tie! Your ticket will include a drinks reception, a three-course meal (with three options per course), at least half a bottle of wine per person, a band playing during supper and a DJ for after. The Christmas Ball is one of the biggest events run by the History Society and is always well received, so look out for notices telling you when and where we'll be selling tickets... Watch this space!

Get in contact! For all queries (or if you just want to say hi):

Email: hissoc@leeds.ac.uk

Facebook: Leeds University History Society

Twitter: LeedsUniHisSoc

Looking to Work in *Business* or Finance?

In a recent online article, the BBC offered advice to students regarding entering the job market in a recession. Amongst the recommendations were a positive attitude and resisting the urge to panic, but the overriding message was to be prepared. If you are considering a career in big business, finance or are thinking of starting up on your own, then this idea has never been more appropriate. With 7.9% of the population unemployed at the time of going to press, and the UK economy forecast to remain in recession until at least the new year, it is easy to become despondent about your prospects for the future.

However, thankfully it is not all bad news! Just a brief browse of a few well-known graduate recruitment websites is enough to show that the opportunities are out there, and that the rewards for those who are successful are as attractive as ever. A History degree from the University of Leeds is of course, an excellent start, but what else can you do? Well, that's where the Portal comes in! Membership of the Business and Finance Career Group could be just the resource you need to help you on your way. As well as providing an online space for people to exchange ideas and share resources, I hope to turn the community into something as 'real' as it is 'virtual' through guest speakers and more social events. To do this, I need you! Joining is simple, and can be done in one of two ways:

Via the Portal:

1. Log on to the Portal.
2. Click on 'Groups Index' and type 'business enterprise history' in the search field
3. Click on the 'Business and Enterprise for History' result and click on 'request membership.'

Via email:

1. Simply email me, Naomi Thorne, at hy07nt@leeds.ac.uk from your University of Leeds email address. Please put 'Portal group membership request' in the subject box and I'll add you as soon as I can!

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to get in touch. I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Naomi Thorne



HST

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 1

historystudenttimes@leeds.ac.uk