

Institute of Scottish Historical Research *Newsletter*



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Issue 2



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ISHR & St Andrews: Past & Future

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The New Face of ISHR: Interview with Malcolm Petrie

*Following the retirement of Prof Roger Mason, **Dr Malcolm Petrie** has taken over the running of the Institute of Scottish Historical Research. Malcolm received his MLitt (2010) and PhD (2014) from St Andrews working in Modern Scottish history. After a year at the University of Edinburgh, he returned to St Andrews as a lecturer in 2016. He is currently working on a project funded by the Leverhulme Trust.*

I sat down with Malcolm to find out more about the new head of ISHR.

Why is it important to have an institute dedicated to Scottish History?

This is the oldest Scottish university, and we should be promoting Scottish history. We are known internationally and have an international student body - we need to show them that Scottish history is worth studying.

Before stepping into this role, what was your own history with ISHR?

I was one of those students 'lured' into ISHR when I came in 2009 for the Modern History MLitt and ended up taking the Scottish options. I worked with Bill Knox for my dissertation in 20th century Scotland and came back to work again with Bill for my PhD. And that was it. From 2011 on, I was very much a part of the ISHR community. That sense of community and reading weekends are something that I appreciate. It's a community of like-minded souls that means you're never left sitting alone.



Malcolm Petrie

I used to come to the seminars from Edinburgh just to catch up with people (and hear the seminar, of course). I think it's something that makes St Andrews different from other places where one could do a PhD.

How do you feel becoming the head of ISHR?

Proud, though it's daunting to follow Roger. It's his legacy to the University, to have the institute. I would see my job as to keep attracting new students. ISHR is about giving postdoctoral students a platform and financial resources to do things I don't think they would get a chance to do at many universities. We have students speaking at seminars, putting together workshops.

(continued on next page)



Do you have any exciting plans for the future?

More students. I think that's the main thing. Thinking about how to draw in MLitts, continue to grow the community, getting the ISHR name out there. Maybe postgraduate essay prizes.

How was it transitioning from being a student member of ISHR to a staff member?

It's a difference experience, but it has been good. The community remains, and that continuity has been very beneficial. If I can praise Roger (Mason), that community has been his contribution. It lessens the formality of

the student-staff division, instead emphasizing a supportive space for students and staff to interact and share feedback. Welcoming, but critical. An opportunity to get proper feedback in a supportive environment.

What role do you see for the ISHR alumni community?

I think our alumni community is one of the real strengths of ISHR, and one of Roger's strongest legacies. You don't leave when you graduate. It is a group of people that keep in touch, are supportive, and talk about their research. They continue to come to the reading weekends. It's the whole point of ISHR to have that expansive community - to have it not just while you are here, but once you've left as well.

Where do you see ISHR in another ten years?

With an even larger community - could you imagine the reading weekends?

Any ideas for the next newsletter?

Do I get to rig it? If you made it about cricket, that's fine by me. It's my secret obsession.

- interview by Chelsea Reutcke,
University of St Andrews



The Alumni Check In: Happy Birthday ISHR

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of ISHR, we are checking in with former students. This time we asked: What are your fondest memories of the institute?

The first ever ISHR reading weekend was held in Arbroath, in a house akin to that of the Addams' family. On the first night, before presenting my PhD proposal to the institute, a member of staff said “just remember, the longer you talk the longer until we can all get to the bar.” This sense of fun combined with an openness and (joking aside) a genuine interest in research. The conversations held after seminars or at reading weekends were central to shaping my thesis, particularly those with Steve Murdoch and the other students working with him at the time. Indeed the institute welcomed me with open arms even though my research, which focussed on England, technically made me an interloper! I hope that the sense of community continues to this day and is enjoyed by students and staff for years to come.

- Dr Adam Marks (2013)

I joined ISHR in September 2009 when I arrived at St Andrews to undertake an MLitt in Scottish History. Five years later, I finally left St Andrews, having completed a PhD on the diplomacy of King James VI of Scotland. Throughout that time, ISHR always made me feel welcome, part of a community. The staff were great, especially Profs Murdoch and Mason. The reading weekends were a highlight of the year, and the weekly seminars and post-seminar pub sessions helped keep you sane. I hope it continues to thrive and support more scholars to discover the past, and themselves. Happy Birthday ISHR!

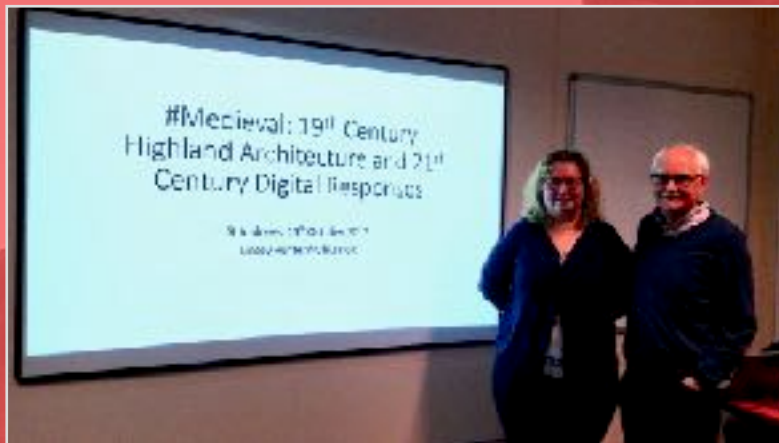
- Dr Cynthia Fry (2014)

Send us your own Alumni stories (and photos) to
ishrmail@st-andrews.ac.uk!



Alumni Seminars Speakers

The 2017-2018 Institute Seminar Series has featured many St Andrews alum and current students. In addition to those below, we also heard from Paul Malgrati, Perin Westerhof Nyman, and Chelsea Reutcke, continuing the tradition of second-year doctoral papers.



Dr Linsey Hunter



Dr Neil McGuigan



Dr Adam Grimshaw



Digital St Andrews - St Salvator's Reconstruction



Image Credits: Smart History / Open Virtual Worlds



Researchers from the Institute for Scottish Historical Research (in collaboration with scholars from Computer Science and Art History) have recently released a preview of their new digital reconstruction of St Salvator's College. The video shows St Salvator's in the mid-sixteenth century, just before the upheavals of the Scottish Reformation permanently transformed the townscape of St Andrews.

The reconstruction was informed by written records and drawings from the University of St Andrews' Special Collections, as well study of the remains of the medieval college buildings. Although key elements of the medieval college, such as St Salvator's Tower and Chapel, have survived to the present day, the majority of the original buildings were demolished in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to create the modern Quadrangle. The new reconstruction shows the much more crowded site that late medieval and early modern students at St Andrews would have known.

The reconstruction was unveiled to the public at the end of October 2017 as part of the University's commemorations of the five hundredth anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. However, the St Salvator's model is only the first phase in a wider project led by Professor Michael Brown and Dr Alan Miller to digitally rebuild the entirety of the PreReformation burgh of St Andrews. To explore the St Salvator's reconstruction go to: <https://vimeo.com/240629953>

- Dr Bess Rhodes, University of St Andrews

Recent Events Cont.

Immortalized Memory: Iterations and adaptations of the work of Robert Burns



Burnsomnia by Calum Colvin (copyright of the artist)

On January 25, 2018, marking the anniversary of Robert Burns, the *Institute of Scottish Historical Research* sponsored an interdisciplinary afternoon workshop focusing on the memorialisation of Scotland's most celebrated poet. Hosted at the University of St Andrews, the event dissected the issue of the "immortalised memory" of Burns, and speakers discussed a range of fascinating aspects of the poet's legacy. A particular highlight was an assertion of Burns as an icon of popular opposition to dogmatism within the Church of Scotland in the mid-nineteenth century, presented by Professor Christopher Whatley of the University of Dundee. Other papers focused on the politicisation of Burns's poetry within Britain in the mid twentieth century, and assessed the significance of Scots-language poets in the United States writing shortly after Burns's death.

The workshop concluded with a colourful poetry reading by Professor Robert Crawford of the University of St Andrews. Drawing upon the recent media furore surrounding Burns and accusations of sexual violence, Professor Crawford provided an insightful and highly relevant mediation on the darker aspects of Burns's work, biography, and legacy within the 21st century.

- Dr Sean Murphy, University of St Andrews
co-organized with Paul Malgrati, University of St Andrews



Recent Events

Scotland and Ireland: A Conference

On 30 September 2017, we launched the first event in our **“Scotland and Ireland”** conference series, generously supported by the *Royal Historical Society*, the *School of History* at the University of St Andrews, and the *St Andrews Institute of Scottish Historical Research* as part of their 10th anniversary celebrations. Prompted by current political divisions over devolution in Northern Ireland, Scottish independence, and the British departure from the European Union, the conference sought to explore the historical interconnections between Scotland and Ireland, attempting to offer a more nuanced view of nationalism in the modern period.

The inaugural event was a huge success, bringing together a remarkable number of leading scholars from Ireland and the UK. With a wide selection of papers, ranging from an assessment of the role of Irish women in Dundee politics in the late nineteenth century to a socio-linguistic analysis of contemporary attitudes towards Irish and Scots Gaelic, the conference brought a wealth of provocative, interdisciplinary research to light. The event began with a discussion of the vagaries and varieties of unionism and nationalism in Scotland and Ulster by one of two keynote speakers, Professor Colin Kidd of the University of St Andrews. As the conference drew to a close, participants took their seats for a timely concluding paper entitled “Scottish Politics and Northern Ireland” by Professor Graham Walker of Queen’s University Belfast. In addition to our opening and closing keynotes we were pleased to host Dr. Mark Hanniffy, Consul General of Ireland to Scotland, whose opening remarks had helped to set the tone for our exploration of the close social and political ties existing between the nations.

Plans for our next event in June 2018 are well underway with a proposed theme looking at English nationalism and its impact in both Ireland and Scotland (*see page 10*). We look forward to seeing you there.

- Dr Piotr Potocki and Dr Sean Murphy, University of St Andrews
<https://scotirelandconference.wordpress.com/>



Calum Cameron-White, PhD student (University of Glasgow) presents at the conference
Photo Credit - Piotr Potocki



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Services

Face to Face: Stories from the Asylum
**An exhibition on the lives of Victorian
patients at Dundee Royal Lunatic Asylum**

23 March – 9 June 2018: Mon – Fri 09:30 – 19:00
Sat 13:00 – 17:00
Admission free

Currently on display at the University of Dundee, *Face to Face: Stories from the Asylum* is a new exhibition exploring the lives of nine patients admitted to Dundee Royal Lunatic Asylum around the turn of the twentieth century. Researched and curated by **St Andrews PhD student Morag Allan Campbell**, the exhibition aims to promote awareness and discussion about present day mental health issues by uncovering the experience of mental illness in the past, and is a collaboration between the University of St Andrews and University of Dundee Archive Services.

Using photographs and information from their case notes, the exhibition tells each patient's story – where they came from, the circumstances that brought them to the asylum and the dilemmas faced by their families. Their diagnoses

and treatment are explained within the context of how mental illness was understood during that period, and their stories are also placed within the local historical background of late nineteenth/early twentieth century Dundee.

The exhibition is one strand of a wider project, Promoting Mental Health through the Lessons of History, based at the University of St Andrews and led by Prof. Rab Houston of the School of History. The project also includes Rab's highly successful podcast series exploring the history of psychiatry in Britain and Ireland since 1500, currently available on SoundCloud and now into a third series.

Face to Face: Stories from the Asylum, will be on display in the Tower Foyer Gallery from March 23 until June 9th, and a number of associated events are planned, including talks, a panel discussion and a creative writing workshop.

Further information is available on the exhibition website:

<https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/facetoface/>



ISHR Spring 2018 Seminar Dates

5:30pm in the New Seminar Room, St John's House, 71 South St, St Andrews

Friday 6 April - Sunday 8 April
ISHR reading weekend, The Burn

Thursday 12 April (week 9)
ISHR seminar, New Seminar Room, 5.30pm
Dr Lizzie Swarbrick (University of Edinburgh) '“Tickled by charm and sweetness”:
Music and Devotion in Pre-Reformation Scotland'

Thursday 26 April (week 11)
ISHR seminar, New Seminar Room, 5.30 pm
Dr Gary Hutchison (University of Edinburgh) 'Scottish Conservatism and Political
Culture in the Age of Reform'

Other Events

Friday 27 April 2018
Scotland and the European Referendums: Context and Consequences
Parliament Hall, 9.30am - 5.00pm
Speakers include Dr Robert Saunders (QMUL), Neal Ascherson, Jim Sillars and
Catherine Stihler MEP

Thursday 31 May - Friday 1 June 2018
[Scotland and Ireland: A Conference, Part 2](#)
University of St Andrews

23 March - 9 June 2018
[Face to Face: Stories from the Asylum](#)
Tower Foyer Gallery, University of Glasgow

Contact Information

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