

# AHGBI AGM 2016 – Reports

## AHGBI Secretary's report: Northumbria 2016

- Annual return and report presented to the Charities Commission (June 2015) (interim report presented to AGM April 2015 in Exeter)
- Liaison with Charities Commission over changes to the Constitution for web-based polls – changes confirmed July 2015 and updated on AHGBI website
- Report presented to OCSA Spanish Embassy (June 2015) on annual AHGBI activities (June 2015)
- OCSA funding call application (October 2015) for funding for AHGBI activities: conference, publication prize, PG travel awards (awarded £2000 for conference)
- Collation of list of activities at Spanish universities for “convenio” application
- Liaison with AHA (Arts and Humanities Alliance – a group of Learned Societies of which the AHGBI is a member) – over the Comprehensive Spending Review (Green Paper), Open Access, Collated response to Green Paper on TEF (December 15/Jan 16); forthcoming 22 April - Strategies for Learned Societies in the Humanities and Social Sciences led by Michael Jubb for the AHRC and ESRC. There will also be updates on REF, TEF and AHRC, and on the threats to the British Academy Schools and Institutes (BASIS).
- Embassies contacts: we are building a list of contacts for future funding bids
- Official invitations to AHGBI conference (this year, Instituto Cervantes Manchester, Spanish Embassy)
- Attendance and representation at IMLR event on Modern Language research
- Assistance with Heads of Spanish meeting (open forum format for discussion of issues in current climate)

# Treasurer's Report Northumbria (3 April 2016)

## Membership subscription payments

- All figures exclude payments made since 29 February
- Move from payment by standing order and cheque to direct debit / Gift Aid has slowed down
- At present 254 members are set up for payment by direct debit (up from 224 last year; difference mostly due to new memberships) = £7,500 total for 2015-16 membership period
  - Chasing up of defaulting conference speakers is still necessary despite all speakers signing statement on conference form that they are fully paid up members at the time of booking => consider different strategy
- 144 (down from 205) members continue to pay their membership subscription by standing order or individual bank transfer (total: £3,650)
  - At least 100 of these have been underpaying their subscription for at least three years
  - 20-odd payments cannot be linked to membership database
- Payment by PayPal: £220 (Irish and some overseas members)
- Payment by cheque negligible
- Approximate paying membership (including those still not paid up): 410

## Gift Aid

- 66 declarations on record (up from 56) = c. £600 in tax returns once claimed (in addition to £500 pending from last year)
- First claim to HMRC to be made by my successor after collection of membership subscriptions for 2016-17 (due in May)

## Development Fund

- Currently 17 members pay monthly: £125
  - Breakdown:
    - 1 x £20
    - 5 x £10
    - 11 x £5
    - 1 x 40 p.a.
- Total additional income for 2015-16: £1,188

## Trustees Liability Insurance

- In place since November: cover £100,000; yearly premium: £109.50 p.a + £20 broker fee: £129.50

## Membership database

- Difficulties continue as described in Duncan's report

## Auditing of accounts

- Following last year's recommendation by the external auditor, we have reverted to having a detailed internal audit prior to the external audit
- Personal meeting with Rhian Davies (Sheffield) on 18 March
- Roger Wright (Liverpool): inspection of balance sheet
- Both have signed off the balance sheet
- Independent examiner's report on the accounts
  - No independent examination necessary up to £25,000 income p.a.
  - Kathryn Clark has carried out External Audit
    - Documents inspected: Balance sheet, complete breakdown of all movements in and out of AHGBI accounts, current account statements
  - Report follows procedures laid down in the Charities Act

## Detailed annual financial report (balance sheet with breakdown)

- Moderate surplus
- Unexpectedly high subsidy received from Spanish Embassy
- High level of support for anniversary conference Exeter 2015
- New position: 'Outward Representation': pulls together activities by different post holders (mainly president)
- PG expenditure has gone down, mainly due to pending subsidies that will be paid out in the next months (see Liabilities on Balance Sheet)

## AHGBI Conference Secretary's Annual Report : Northumbria 2016

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### **The Northumbria Conference**

- Exceptionally, the conference venue was politicised during the phase of preparations by developments in Modern Languages at Northumbria. A proposal to move the conference off campus while staying in Newcastle was considered. At the unanimous request of the host team of academics this proposal was not pursued. However, no senior management representatives were invited to join members at the Monday reception or at the Tuesday conference dinner.
- There were 24 parallel sessions with 84 papers and 3 plenary sessions plus a Film Director's preview (Helena Taberna, *Acantilado*) and a PGR Masterclass. A total of 115 delegates attended plus 9 publishers.
- The Spanish Embassy generously provided £2000 even though no contribution was anticipated in 2016. Sponsorship was also provided by Santander and, locally, by Majestic Wines and La casa delicatessen.
- The Northumbria Host Team were thanked most warmly for their excellent work: Dr Lesley Twomey (Lead Organiser), Jack Grummit-Carel (Events Coordinator), Dr Jacky Collins, Dr Carlos Conde Solares, Stefanie Allum, Inmaculada Sánchez García, Jill Dixon, Ana Benevenuto-González, Jin Wang, Alejandra Vicencio.

### **Operational Issues: Frequently Asked Questions**

- The issue of having a paper read by another member arose in two separate instances. In both cases the protocol applied was this: such delivery is not normally permitted by the AHGBI but may exceptionally be authorised by the Executive Committee in a case such as illness at the last moment.
- The issue of guest panellists arose in a number of different situations. The protocol is as follows: a maximum of one non-member guest panellist, from outside of the UK and Ireland, is allowed to participate per pre-formed panel at the discretion of the Executive Committee. A brief case for the guest's inclusion must be made to the Conference Secretary and the guest must attend. Skyped participation is not allowed. Non-members pay a proportionately higher registration fee.
- The issue of eligibility to speak at the conference arose in relation to being a fully paid-up member. For the first time, a full check was run three weeks prior to the conference opening and delegates who were not fully paid up at that point were contacted and invited to make any outstanding payments before the conference began. Further checks were made through to one week prior to the conference. This work was carried out by the

Conference Secretary and Treasurer. That said, the fact that all delegates at Northumbria without exception are fully paid-up members represents a success based on years of hard work by Dr Tilmann Altenberg whose contributions to AHGBI deserve the highest praise and recognition as he steps down from the Treasurer role.

- The issue of academics paying a registration fee at the hosting institution arose. The norm is that members of staff at the host institution do pay a registration fee.

### **Strategic Issues**

- The third plenary on the Wednesday, in addition to the President's Guest and the Host Team's Guest, was continued from Exeter 2015 on an experimental basis. In light of the additional costs involved, from Cardiff 2017 onwards (Leeds 2018; Durham 2019) the host institution may optionally add a third plenary if they raise funding for it.
- The issue of a Lusophone presence at the annual conference emerged. All members were urged to ensure that staff in their home Departments are aware that Lusophone papers are warmly welcomed as an integral part of the annual conference. The Conference Secretary informed the meeting that he is now UCML's representative for Hispanic and Lusophone Studies and welcomes ideas to promote the health of our disciplines plus regular contact with AHGBI and other national bodies representing our scholarly community.
- The idea of inviting retired members to act as respondents in panels as a support for PGRs and ECRs will be continued even though implementation has not yet begun. Members are reminded that there is funding to subsidise the conference costs of a retired member who wishes to participate in this way. PGRs and ECRs who propose whole panels for 2017 and beyond may wish to approach potential respondents.

## **Webmaster's report for AGM Apr 2016**

### **1. Website**

Small improvements have been made to the website over the past year, including the addition of a polling facility and a listing of Departments with weblinks. Fairly regular updating is done on the news display and on the listings of conferences, jobs and studentships; details of new books by members and new research projects are posted from time to time. A new section for publicizing all AHGBI awards and prizes (separate from the Early Career section) will be added soon. More work still needs to be done on displaying webpages translated into Spanish, Portuguese and Catalan. Basque and Galician to be added.

### **2. Member profiles**

Many members have still not added research interests to their profiles on the website, which limits the usefulness of the search facility. A few users have had trouble logging on: it is not clear why this happens, but it is easy for the Webmaster to reset passwords manually on request, which has so far resolved this problem. Our request for permanent ID numbers to be used as usernames instead of e-mail addresses is still being investigated by the developers.

### **3. Membership database**

A new membership display allowing the Treasurer and Membership Secretary to track subscription payments more easily has been installed but is not yet working entirely satisfactorily. The developers have been asked to ensure that the mechanism to filter by year works properly.

### **4. Page for Northumbria conference**

Podcasts of plenaries will be posted on the website, along with photographs from the conference.

### **5. Hispanists list**

The list currently has 609 subscribers and is used very regularly. At some point in 2016, people whose AHGBI subscription is not up to date will be removed from the list.

# PGR Officer's Report

## 1. PGR Awards 2015-2016

### 1. £250 x 8 for the AHGBI conference award (deadline 16 October 2015)

Elisabetta Perra (Kent)  
Sophie Stevens (KCL)  
Mary Farrelly (Manchester)  
Elsabeth Bolorinos Allard (Oxford)  
Rachel Scott (KCL)  
Ivan Kenny (NUI Galway)  
Diana Berruezo-Sanchez (Oxford)  
Rhiannon McGlade (QM)  
(PLUS the cost of their meal to be waived at £45 x 8)

### 2. AHGBI/Embassy Postgraduate Conference Grant: £500 for a conference other than AHGBI (deadline 1 December 2015)

Deirdre Dunlevy (Trinity)  
Miranda Lickert (Reading)  
NB: They are NOT attending the meal or AHBGI conference.

### 3. Annual AHGBI Research Travel Award (deadline 1 December 2015)

There were no applicants.

## 2. PGR master class 2016: Advice on how to publish the first article.

## 3. A PGR survey will be distributed at the end of the master class, so as to pool together suggestions for future master classes.

## 4. Points for discussion:

- Should the Annual Research Travel Award be re-advertised, given that there were no takers?
- Can we reduce the price of the AHGBI conference further for postgraduate students?
- Can we agree from now on that holders of the AHGBI conference award have the cost of the dinner waived (in addition to the £250)?
- I'd like to make it clearer on the website if the awards are also available to Early Career Researchers. Until now, I have said that they are available to ECRs, but only to those who are without a post. Are we happy for this to be made clear on the website?
- New certificates will need to be printed for 2016-2017.

## Awards and Fellowships (MB)

- The AHGBI Doctoral Publication Prize had 11 applicants. The decision was made at the Executive Committee in Belfast (Nov. 2015) to extend the original deadline to January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016;
- The three prizewinners are the following:
  - (1) Legenda – **Dr Anna Kendrick** (Cambridge) - 'The World of the Child: Holism and Education in Spain, 1918-1936';
  - (2) Tamesis – **Dr Rachel Scott** (King's College London) - 'Meaning in Movement: Celestina and the Human Condition in Early Modern Spain and Italy';
  - (3) Runner-up (decision to be made by winner on whether to approach Legenda or Tamesis) – **Dr Daniel Gutiérrez Trápaga** (Cambridge) - "'Aquella aventura interminable': Rewritings, Sequels, and Cycles in Sixteenth-Century Castilian Romances of Chivalry"
- Kendrick and Scott are each awarded £1000 towards publishing costs; Trápaga is awarded £500.

### Some questions for discussion:

- There have already been queries regarding the awarding of prizes for the current academic year – are we in a position to confirm that the prizes will be awarded again for dissertations completed up to October 2016?
- Two unsuccessful candidates sought feedback – the nature of the process may militate against being able to give concrete feedback (divergence in ranking resulting from individual editorial board member decisions). Any suggestions on how we might give feedback for this/future years?
- Should we have a requirement that prizewinners give a paper at an upcoming conference, similar to the Dorothy S Severin/WISPS/AHGBI prize?
- If a prizewinner chooses to go with a different publisher, can we award the prize to another candidate? Is there a time frame within which we can decide on this, or expect a prize winner to do this? We are still awaiting official confirmation from one of the prizewinners.
- Only one of the prizewinners will be attending the Conference Dinner (two attending the conferences as speakers) – should we work on having candidates informed of decisions earlier in the year (for example, a deadline for completed applications of early December, with a view to having results released in late January)? Reviewers would have from early December to mid-January to make judgements.
- Incomplete applications – if only one referee provides a reference, and the reference is not a joint one, on behalf of the second referee, should these applications still be forwarded to the board, or are they deemed ineligible?
- Should prizewinners be affiliated with AHGBI as members?

### AHGBI Visiting International Fellowship

- The deadline for this fellowship was Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016;
- Only one applicant had been received for the fellowship by 29<sup>th</sup> March.



## **ACLAIR report to AGM, AHGBI, 05/04/2016**

ACLAIR, the Hispanic Studies Library group in UK, continues to hold events centred around research trends, methodologies and resources in Hispanic Studies, aimed at postgraduates and early career researchers.

Since the last AGM at Exeter we held our AGM and seminar at the British Library (22/06/15) on trends in research and resources needs in Portuguese African Studies.

Jointly with PiLAS, we also held our annual introduction to resources in Latin American Studies for beginning postgraduates at the British Library on Friday 13 November 2015. And we would remind you that ACLAIR continues to be willing to offer similar introductions to Peninsular studies.

The next AGM and annual seminar will be held on Monday 27 June at Cambridge University Library. The focus of the seminar will be Hispanic research projects employing Digital Humanities methodologies.

## UCML report

EU referendum: Extraordinary plenary, Friday 6 May, 10 am start (10am to 2pm), European Commission Smith Square

A debate about the future of HE inside or outside the EU: 'The EU referendum and HE languages disciplines'

Confirmed speakers:

Mary Honeyball MEP: *title tbc*

Professor Regine Hampel (Open University): 'The Power of Europe: Benefits of European funding opportunities for academic activity in the UK'

Professor Karen Pratt (KCL): 'HERA Project on the Dynamics of the Medieval Manuscript, including collaboration with the Universities of Utrecht and Vienna'

Ruth Sinclair-Jones (British Council): 'Erasmus+ and UK language study'

Anne Marie Graham (Head of Outward Student Mobility Programme, UK HE International Unit): 'The impact of EU membership on the UK HE strategy for Outward Mobility'

UCML July plenary: July 1<sup>st</sup>

Starting at 11 am with the Business meeting and workshop starting at 1.15 pm, Europe House, Smith Square

Impact and Modern Languages: Devising successful impact case studies

Further details to follow

New Hispanic and Lusophone representative on UCML Executive:

Prof Chris Harris [c.harris@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:c.harris@liverpool.ac.uk)

Hon Secretary role, UCML Steering group

This job specification is on the web and the call for nominations is open to 11 April. It is an important role with an opportunity to steer UCML. The Secretary's key role is organizing the plenaries and liaising with member departments. <http://www.ucml.ac.uk/news/300>

UCML campaign:

The UCML grass roots pro-Europe #loveEU campaign launched Friday 1 April.

Please take a look at the news item <http://www.ucml.ac.uk/news/304> and retweet.

Other news:

Born Global, British Academy report. 31/03/2016 Important report with data on why study a language. <http://www.ucml.ac.uk/news/303>

OWRI funding winners: <http://www.ucml.ac.uk/news/302>

## Membership Secretary's Report

There is relatively little to report as membership secretary. There have been less applications for membership (5) than there were to be approved at the last meetings of the Trustees, but this is to be expected given the fact that the deadline for submitting abstracts for the conference generally prompts people to apply for membership. Following the meeting between Tilmann, Mike and myself in Belfast, progress has been made in relation to the database (for which I am very grateful to Mike). There are still occasional hiccups (e.g. certain new members had issues accessing their records etc., although I believe this has been resolved), and the database is still counter-intuitive (at least to me) in certain respects, but I do believe we are reaching a stage where it does at least allow Tilmann to carry out our duties. I will leave Tilmann to comment on this in more detail at the meeting if he feels appropriate. With this in mind, I would ask if any progress has been made about approaching someone to take over from Mike's duties after our initial call for interest didn't yield any results. I mention this more than anything because, as my time as Membership Secretary approaches the end, we want to avoid new people taking on roles simultaneously.

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## DSS Fellowship Report

1. 2014-15 Fellowship awarded to Dr Óscar Salgado Suárez (Birkbeck), mentored by Dr Stuart Davies (Cambridge) for a project entitled: 'Representing "Crisis" in 21st Century Spain: Cultural Imaginaries and Ethics'. Report and expense claims received by SF and TA.
2. 2015-16 Fellowship was awarded to Dr Paul Lennon, previously of the University of Exeter and currently of the University of Cambridge, mentored by Prof. Jeremy Robbins (Edinburgh) for a project entitled: 'Echoes of Future-Past Juan Boscán and his Greco-Roman Influences'.
3. 2016-17 Fellowship. Deadline 1 April 2016 with decision in May 2016. Exec agreed at November Exec meeting to reduce the award from £1500 to £1250, and offer to cover the costs of attendance at AHGBI or WISPS either during the academic year of the award or during the following academic year. (In other words we would hold back that £250 and let Fellows -with the advice of their mentors -decide whether to present work in progress at either conference during the year of the award, OR finished work during the year following the award.)

## **Spring 2016 Report to AHGBI Executive Committee from Luso-Brazilian Rep**

### **1 Health of the subject area of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies**

In a general sense, the subject area appears to be buoyant and continuing to grow, with new and/or replacement posts being announced. There is no guarantee, however, that the subject-area will be immune from the threatened downsizing in some institutions (for example at Nottingham and Birmingham, both traditionally very strong centres for Luso-Brazilian Studies).

Despite a seeming growth in posts, some early-career Luso-Brazilianists have expressed concern regarding the high ratio of qualified candidates to jobs in this area, while others have reported instances of institutions failing to appoint because of unrealistic expectations regarding ability to restructure entire undergraduate programmes, teach Portuguese language at all levels, including postgraduate, and produce 4\* work for REF.

Some concern has also been expressed regarding the future of funding of cultural events, given the scaling back of support from the Instituto Camões and the Brazilian Embassy.

### **2 British and Irish Association of Lusitanists (ABIL)**

ABIL continues to grow, with membership now over 130 and even more Luso-Brazilianists supporting the Association's activities and attending the regular conferences (the last, at Exeter in September 2015, was deemed a success: the next will take place in 2017 in Sheffield).

ABIL now has web and social media presence:

<http://www.abil-lusitanists.org/>

(Please add this link to AHGBI website)

### **3 REBRAC (Rede Europeia de Brazilianistas de Análise Cultural)**

REBRAC is a research network for Europe-based Brazilianists working in cultural studies. It was founded in 2015 and organised a successful conference, with funding from ILAS, in September (50 participants). The network has a social media presence:

<https://rebracweb.wordpress.com/>

(Please add link to AHGBI website)

REBRAC was set up to provide space for both established and postgraduate/early career scholars working in Brazilian cultural studies/cultural analysis in the UK and mainland Europe to network. Its aim is to provide scholars with a forum to exchange ideas and raise

their profiles online and in person, to share information on developments in Brazilian cultural affairs, on academic activities in Europe, Brazil and elsewhere linked to cultural studies, and to forge and develop potential links and collaborations between Brazilianists based in Europe. It is a network, rather than an association, and as such it was perceived as working in conjunction with associations such as the AHGBI. At the network launch conference, for example, participants were encouraged to look to both the ABIL and the AHGBI conferences as opportunities for networking and panel organisation: it is hoped that REBRAC will have a significant presence at the AHGBI 2018 conference at the University of Leeds, for example. In order to build on momentum, the REBRAC network intends to organise a follow-up dedicated conference in November 2016 at Queen's University, Belfast. Some funding has been secured from QUB and the University of Leeds, totalling £900, but a bid to the MHRA conference fund (for £1,500) was unsuccessful. In recognition of the real potential for co-operation and increased participation by Luso-Brazilianists at AHGBI conferences, REBRAC wishes to make a one-off request for support from the AHGBI of £250, with which the network will be able to go ahead with the organisation of the conference.

#### 4 Handover to new Luso-Brazilian Rep

Dr Antonio Márcio da Silva (University of Kent) has been appointed, in consultation with ABIL to the post from April 2016. The outgoing postholder will liaise with Dr da Silva regarding his role within the AHGBI Executive Committee.

Contact details: A.M.Da-Silva@kent.ac.uk