Welcome to the Department’s 2013 newsletter

This newsletter (issued once a year) keeps you in touch with what’s going on at the Department. You’ll find much more at our [website](#) or on our [Facebook](#) page.

If you’ve got any questions, or would like to get in touch, then please do drop us a line: history@sheffield.ac.uk or, the old-fashioned way, write to the Department of History, Jessop West, Sheffield, S3 7RA. We’re particularly interested in news from alumni: and we reserve the right to print any letters received in subsequent editions!

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**News in Brief**

History and History and Politics offers for 2014 are now AAB. Full entry requirements for each of our degrees are available on our [website](#).

The Department blog, History Matters, is now up and running, with posts on current affairs and recent research.

The Department has started an [internship scheme with Ernst and Young](#) for our History students.

Professor Mike Braddick has been elected a Fellow of the British Academy, and Professor David Luscombe has been awarded an honorary LittD by the University.

Dr Mike Foley has been revealed as a historical consultant for the TV show Mad Men. Meanwhile, Dr Charles West and Dr Phil McCluskey have published books, on the Feudal Revolution and on Louis XIV’s France respectively, and Dr Abdel Takriti’s book on the Monsoon revolution in Oman is imminent!

Some of our students participated in a new outreach scheme, Hands on History. “I really believe that having materials and projects like this will help spark an interest in history” - Jennifer Wright (2nd-year student). More details on our [schools activities](#).

A warm welcome to Dr Caoimhe Nic Dhaibheid, who’ll be joining the department in September. She’ll be teaching a course on modern terrorism, and a Special Subject on the Irish Revolution. For an interview with Caoimhe, see below.

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**Study Abroad — Rich Dawson**

We’re often asked what the Study Abroad scheme is really like. Here’s the thoughts of one of our History students who took up the opportunity:

“I spent my second year at the University of Oklahoma, deep in the heart of America. I’ve been asked to talk about my most treasured memory, but I simply can’t single out just one that sums up the value of my year. Instead I picked a few which demonstrate the breadth of experiences study abroad gives you.

One is attending my first “college football” game. The campus had a stadium holding 85,000 people, not much less than the entire town’s population – not bad for the uni team! Spending Christmas in New York City was pretty unforgettable; doing a road trip to the Rocky Mountains, which in terms of miles was the same as Sheffield to Moscow, in a single weekend, is another great memory. And finally, going to the “frat parties”, which in all honesty made me think I was in the set of American Pie.

To History students thinking about studying abroad, I’d say without doubt do it. The opportunity to spend a year at one of Sheffield’s partner institutions across the world means so much more than simply going there to study. Study abroad opens so many doors, it allows you experience life – from everyday normalities like doing the shopping to academic work – from a completely different perspective, it gives you the chance to travel, and naturally as an exchange student you befriend some amazing, like-minded people from all corners of the globe. It’s a cliché, but it really is a once in a lifetime opportunity.”

More details about Study Abroad.
Profile - Dr Caoimhe Nic Dháibheid

Your first book was about Sean MacBride, the former chief of staff of the IRA who won a Nobel peace prize and became a prominent politician in Ireland and internationally. What led you to write about him?

“Serendipity! I was interested in writing about the Irish Revolution, and its after-effects, and what happens when a revolutionary movement - the IRA - fades to irrelevance, as happened in the 1930s in Ireland. When I was thinking about how exactly to focus my research, MacBride’s memoir That Day’s Struggle was published. Although his political career spanned seven decades, and brought him from Dublin during the War of Independence to Amnesty International headquarters in Geneva to the UN High Commissioner’s office in Namibia, he had not been the subject of a serious biography.”

What’s it like to work on a topic that still stirs up so much feeling?

“One of the wonderful things about working on Irish history is the very high level of interest of the general public in Ireland. Put simply, history matters there. All of these issues - whether the Irish Revolution was democratic or not, the role of violence in the foundation of the state, the partition of the island and how the Revolution is remembered - are attracting even more public attention now that the decade of centenaries is upon us. This is great for historians of Ireland, and the dialogue between those inside the academy and out is one of the most rewarding aspects of doing this type of research.”

What are you working on currently?

“Right now I’m working on a study of individual engagement with political violence from the late 1800s to the present day, through a series of case studies including anarchism, Zionism, republicanism and jihadism. The project looks at the entire arc of a ‘terrorist’s’ life, from family backgrounds, initial radicalisation, mobilisation, disengagement (or not), and, potentially, re-engagement. Although terrorism studies is a booming academic discipline, the relative absence of historians from the current debate - with some eminent exceptions - is striking. It’s been a fascinating and challenging journey going from researching the IRA in a historical perspective to grappling with the ideologies underpinning Islamist extremism and communist anarchism: it has certainly broadened my horizons as a historian!”

Module in Focus: History Workshop (HST 120). Dr Adrian Bingham:

“The History Workshop is designed to help our first-year students learn the craft of the historian and to enable them to make the step up from history at school to history at university. How do professional historians go about their work? What skills do they need? How do they develop them? This module will offer some answers to these questions, by engaging with real historical questions.

Each lecturer teaching this course will focus on an area of his or her research. In my classes, students will examine the impact of Margaret Thatcher’s administrations on British politics, society and culture. We shall explore the growing historical literature on Thatcher and Thatcherism, discuss the opportunities and difficulties of studying such a recent period of history, and study a range of written, visual and aural primary sources. You are encouraged to learn as much as you can about the period, but the emphasis throughout the module will be on learning the skills that will help you throughout your degree.”

Find out more.