

ANNUAL REPORT

of the Society's activities
including the Annual Accounts
for the Calendar Year 2010

c/o History Faculty, George Street, Oxford, OX1 2RL.
<http://mediumaevum.modhist.ox.ac.uk>
ssmll@history.ox.ac.uk

THE SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF MEDIEVAL LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

(Registered Charity, no. 1130022)

c/o History Faculty, George Street, Oxford, OX1 2RL

Members of the Executive Committee and Trustees of the Society:

Dr Anthony Lappin (University of Manchester), Hon. President and Monographs Editor

Dr Mishtooni Bose (Christ Church, Oxford), Vice-President

Dr Helen Swift (St Hilda's College, Oxford), Vice-President and, from 16th April 2010, Hon. Treasurer

Dr Simon Horobin (Magdalen College, Oxford), Hon. Secretary

Prof. Nigel F. Palmer (St Edmund Hall, Oxford), Editor

Prof. C. J. Saunders (Durham University), Editor

Prof. S. Huot (Pembroke College, Cambridge), Editor

Dr Kenneth P. Clarke (Pembroke College, Cambridge), co-opted member up to 16th April 2010, when elected to the Committee

Prof. Dame Jinty Nelson (King's College, London), elected to the Committee on 16th April 2010

Prof. Jane Roberts (Institute of English Studies, London), co-opted member up to 16th April 2010, when elected to the Committee

Dr Magnus Ryan (Peterhouse, Cambridge)

Dr Sethina Watson (University of York), elected to the Committee on 16th April 2010

Members of the Executive Committee retiring at the 2010 AGM:

Dr John Watts (Corpus Christi College, Oxford), retiring Hon. Treasurer

This Annual Report was accepted by the Trustees of the Society at the meeting of the Executive Committee on 5th February 2011. It is recommended to the Society at its Annual General Meeting on 12th April 2011.

The Report includes the Receipts and Payments Accounts for 2010, which have been independently examined by Mr Mark Luntley, CPFA.

All queries about this Annual Report or enquiries about the Society should be directed to the Executive Officer: ssmll@history.ox.ac.uk

Overview of 2010

Though the changes were not as substantial as in 2009, the year under review saw sustained – and sustainable – expansion by the Society. With the new governance structures as a registered charity firmly in place, and the website established, the Society has been able to build on its new profile and identity. With continuing good financial health, the Executive Committee has been determined to expand activities in support of the Society's charitable object; these initiatives are outlined below. At the same time, the Society has gained extra notice, as is reflected in its increasing membership.

The Executive Committee could not but be conscious that whilst medieval studies in Britain are on the whole flourishing, there are areas of pressure and concern. The Executive Committee is concerned to ensure that the Society does all in its power to support and promote medieval studies and is planning to be yet more active in 2011. It can, then, be predicted with some confidence that the Society's expansion is nowhere near an end.

Membership

Once again, the Society saw a substantial increase in its membership, rising by over a fifth to 233. A significant proportion of those took advantage of the ability to join via Paypal at the Society's website. Considering the Society's desire to support graduate medievalists, it is pleasing to report that just over 50 members are graduates, who benefit from the reduced rate for membership. The standard rate has been retained without increase: £16.50 / \$35.50 (£16 / \$35 if joining by Standing Order), with the addition of a new Euro rate (€21). The AGM also introduced a category of institutional membership at £25 / \$48 / €35.

Journal

Volume LXXIX of *Medium Ævum* was published during 2010 in the customary two issues. It was edited, as in the previous year, by Professors Sylvia Huot, Nigel F. Palmer and Corinne Saunders, who were ably assisted by Jackie Pritchard as Assistant Editor.

The articles in volume LXXIX covered, as usual, a wide range of subjects and languages, this year including Medieval Latin, Middle English and French, Italian, Castilian and German. Subscriptions to the journal remained healthy and, indeed, increased on the 2009 level.

Monographs

The main activity during 2010 was seeing the remaining sections of Weiss's *Humanism in England* mounted on the website. They were accompanied by an Introduction by David Rundle, and will be supplemented by an Appendix in 2011. A small print-run is planned so that this fourth edition will also have a hard-copy presence.

No hard-copy monograph was published during 2010. However, arrangements are in place for several volumes in the near future, with new initiatives including the publication of selected papers from the Graduate Medieval Conference, as well as a volume of essays developing from the Society's 2009 Conference on Humanism in Fifteenth-Century Europe.

Conferences

The Society's support for, and organisation of, conferences saw significant development in 2010. The Graduate Medieval Conference, held each year in Oxford in the spring, has become an established high-point in the Society's calendar. In 2010, the event, organised by Sarah Baccianti and Robert Avis, took as its theme 'Error'; the Society provided a grant and advertising space for the Conference and, in addition, arranged a plenary lecture, which was also the Society's Annual Lecture, given by Prof. M. Michèle Mulchahey.

As reported in the last Annual Report, the Executive Committee was keen, following the success of the Humanism Conference, to make a regular fixture of a one-day event organised by the Society. This became a reality in 2010 with a conference on the 'Medieval Library' held in the impressive seating of Durham's Castle and co-hosted with the University's Institute for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. It proved popular, and attendees were full of praise for the event. The Society's support included assisting graduate attendance for both those travelling and local delegates. It is intended that a volume on the topic will develop out of the day and be published in the Society's Monograph series.

In addition to these events, the Society provided increased sponsorship for relevant conferences and workshops. Six events during 2010 received funding: several of these were based in Ireland, another in Wales, and one each in Cambridge and in Oxford.

Assisting Research in Medieval Studies

In attempting to support medieval studies, the Executive Committee has investigated what ways it can assist scholars. One of those is already in place and it is the annual Essay Prize, which is open to graduate students and those recently graduated with a higher degree. The competition closes each December and the winner is announced at the AGM the following year, so, in 2010, the 2009 winner was decided. It was Dr Thomas Hinton (Jesus College, Oxford) for his piece on 'New Beginnings and False Dawns: A Reappraisal of the *Elucidation* Prologue to the *Conte del Graal* Cycle'. His essay is due to appear in the journal during 2011. In addition, for the first time, a *proxime accessit* was appointed: it was Eliza Zingesser (Princeton University) for 'Speaking as One: Linguistic Diversity and Moral Unity in Troubadour Chansonier Y (Bibliothèque Nationale de France MS. fr. 795)'.

A new initiative for 2010 was the introduction of a competition for Travel Bursaries. These are open to all relevant scholars, with the intention that they should, in the first place, assist those who do not have other sources of funding. The first round of the competition resulted in two awards being made to Drs Denis Casey and Deborah Hayden (Cambridge), both of whose projects will take them to Dublin. The success of this competition has led the Executive Committee to increase its frequency to two rounds a year.

Promotion of Medieval Studies

The Executive Committee recognises that part of its role must be to be a standard-bearer for Medieval Studies in the British Isles. As such, it has made submissions in relation to specific cuts

in medievalist posts, and has had a representative at the British Academy's Forum for Learned Societies.

Governance of the Society

As explained in the constitution, the Society's activities are overseen by the Executive Committee. Its membership is listed at the front of this Annual Report. During 2010, the Executive Committee met on three occasions, under the chairmanship of the President; its activities including reviewing the Society's existing Policies and adopting, on the basis of Charity Commission guidelines, an Expenses Policy. As part of that policy, it was agreed no longer to pay the small honoraria to the Society's four editors. The expenses which all Trustees can claim have been clarified and it has been agreed that the overall figure will be noted annually to ensure there is no excessive impact on finances. As the Accounts show, in 2010, expenses payments to Trustees of the Society totalled £583.05.

The Executive Committee provides a review of the Society's activities through its Annual Report which is presented to the Annual General Meeting. The AGM in 2010 was, as in the previous year, held at the Graduate Medieval Conference; it took place on Friday 16th April and was chaired by one of the Vice-Presidents, Dr Bose. The AGM accepted the Annual Report and Accounts which were subsequently submitted, as required, to the Charity Commission.

At the AGM, Dr John Watts stood down as Hon. Treasurer. In that role, he had been instrumental in putting in place the structures that have allowed the Society's expansion, and the Executive Committee wishes to record its thanks to him. The role of Hon. Treasurer is now taken by Dr Helen Swift, who continues also to be one of the Society's two Vice-Presidents. It was also a pleasure to welcome to new faces to the Executive Committee: at the AGM, Prof. Dame Janet Nelson and Dr Sethina Watson were elected as Trustees.

As in 2009, the day-to-day running of the Society was looked after by the Executive Officer, Dr David Rundle.

Financial Review

In some respects, the year under review was a quiet one, financially, as there was no hard-copy monograph published nor any significant one-off capital expenditure, like the website in 2009. As in the previous year, interest on investments remained very low, but in a contracting market, the Society can be pleased with the notably robust performance of the journal.

At the beginning of the year, reserves remained high and, as will be clear from the preceding paragraphs, the Committee consciously planned for a sustainable reduction in surpluses by increasing financial support for its charitable aims. This was achieved but was partially off-set by a modest decrease in costs, so there has only been a small loss in the year.

It should be emphasised that a larger decrease in reserves, appearing as a loss on the balance sheet, is expected next year. In July 2008, when office space was first occupied in the History Faculty, a single payment of £10,000 for 2.5 years was paid. It has now been agreed that, from 2011, the rent will be made twice yearly, and so the annual accounts will be able to provide a truer reflection of this significant expenditure. At the same time, another cost has been removed:

the remaining small storage space rented by the Society was cleared and vacated on 31st December 2010, with an anticipated saving of something in the region of £1,000. The net result, therefore, is that there will be an annual pressure of £3,000 from 2011; such a figure is manageable.

Plans for 2011

It will be clear that the Society is in good shape and keen to develop its activities further. The Executive Committee has already put in place plans for 2011 which include the rounds of the Travel Bursaries and Essay Prize, as well as a conference on changing responses to the Bible in Liverpool in October 2011. The Committee is also actively developing further initiatives and collaborations so that the Society can become even more effective in its support and promotion of medieval studies. As these plans develop, the membership will be kept informed by announcements in the journal and by e-bulletins. At the same time, the Executive Committee always encourages responses, comments and suggestions from the Society's membership and would welcome hearing from any member directed to the e-mail address at the front of this report.

The 2009 report concluded by describing that year as one of significant success; the Executive Committee believes a similar conclusion can be drawn for the Society's life in 2010. It approaches 2011 confident it can help medieval studies meet the challenges they face.

Society for the Study of Medieval Languages and Literature
(registered charity no. 1130022)

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS for CALENDAR YEAR 2010

	2010	2009
Summary of Accounts	£	£
Balance by Activity		
<i>Medium Aevum</i>	10,043.11	10,209.34
Monographs	264.60	1,191.78
Conferences and Events	-4,396.55	-2,915.84
Society	-9,156.16	-10,374.07
Interest	1,346.00	1,438.67
Surplus to Reserves	-1,899.00	-450.12
Accumulated funds		
Carried forward	148,257.83	148,708.88
Surplus for year	-1,899.00	-450.12
Reconciliation	0.00	-0.93
Total to carry forward	146,358.83	148,257.83
Represented by:		
National Savings Income Bond	50,000.00	50,000.00
National Savings Investment (designated funds)	80,851.86	80,610.73
At Bank	15,506.27	17,647.10
	146,358.13	148,257.83
Individual Activities		
<i>Medium Aevum</i>		
Receipts		
Subscriptions to <i>ME</i> 2010	18,683.68	19,352.63
Sales of back copies	144.90	177.67
Electronic Royalties	4,141.55	3,756.48
Adverts and Permissions	540.88	420.00
Total	23,511.01	23,706.78
Payments		
Production	-8,791.94	-9,198.52
Postage	-555.96	-600.62
Honoraria to Editors		-300.00
Assistant Editor	-3,120.00	-3,220.00
Editorial help	-1,000.00	
Editorial expenses		-178.30
Total	-13,467.90	-13,497.44
Surplus	10,043.11	10,209.34

Monographs

		£
Receipts		
Sales	326.95	2,243.86
Credit from uncashed cheques	107.65	
Total	434.60	2,243.86
Payments		
Readers	-150.00	
Postage / Production Costs	-20.00	-952.08
Honorarium to Editor		-100.00
Total	-170.00	-1,052.08
Surplus	264.60	1,191.78

Conferences and Events

Payments		
Sponsorship of Events	-2,893.95	-1,221.97
Graduate Conference	-947.44	-820.00
Net Cost of Library Conference	-555.16	
Net Cost of Humanism Conference		-786.97
Costs of AGM		-86.90
Total	-4,396.55	-2,915.84
Surplus	-4,396.55	-2,915.84

Society

Receipts		
Membership	3,293.58	3,101.45
Total	3,293.58	3,101.45
Payments		
Expenses to Trustees	-583.05	
Expenses to non-trustees	-529.90	-740.03
Charitable Donation	-100.00	
Executive Officer	-8,512.00	-9,038.00
Office Costs	-1,027.24	-1,489.03
Essay prize	-433.50	-250.00
Post Office forwarding		-78.10
Publicity	-264.05	-545.36
Website		-1,335.00
Travel Bursaries	-1,000.00	
Total	-12,449.74	-13,475.52
Surplus	-9,156.16	-10,374.07