

***Reports in preparation for the forthcoming SHoW committee meeting on 19 March 2020
and in advance of the Society's AGM on 20 March 2020***

President's Report, January 2020

It is now around five months since my last report and nearly a full year since the Society was formally inaugurated in January 2019. The Society remains a collective effort and, as acting president, I am both very conscious of this and grateful to all those who have put in many long hours maintaining the initial momentum and consolidating the necessary infrastructure to enable us to prosper and grow. A key aspect of this has been Gavin Rand's assumption of the duties of Equality and Diversity Officer and the preparation of an E and D policy. Guidelines for funding applications have also been prepared to enable us to provide some financial support to members' initiatives as our funds begin to allow. I hope that the forthcoming AGM in March 2020 will provide an opportunity to review and extend this process.

Our first major event took place on 12 July 2019 with the very successful 'New Voices in the History of War' postgraduate and early career conference, attracting 35 papers and over 70 participants. An exciting programme has just been announced for the Society's second event, 'Private Wars: legitimacy, finance and the social contract: A conference on the public/private boundary in warfare' to be held together with our AGM at Sciences Po, Reims, on 20-21 March 2020. Holding this event in France at this stage in the Society's development is a bold step, but signals our ambition to be a fully international body and to engage with scholarship beyond the Anglosphere. Preparations are now well advanced for the next 'New Voices' conference which will take place on 1-2 July 2021 at the National Army Museum, London, which is generously providing the facilities for this event. Looking further ahead, we have a conference on 'Civil Wars' planned with University College Dublin in 2021, and another on 'War and Medicine' in collaboration with the new Museum of Military Medicine to be timed with its opening in Cardiff in 2023.

Holding events has boosted membership which, as of last month, stood at 86. This is a respectable achievement, but we would like this to grow further and for the Society to engage more fully with those in the field. A positive sign is the proportion of members who already belong to other historical societies; a factor that bodes well for our goal of fostering collaboration across boundaries within and beyond history. Leighton James, our Membership Secretary, conducted the first poll of members which has provided valuable feedback and information for the Committee. The results indicate strong support for the Society's mission, as well as a welcome willingness to contribute to the development of our online presence and resources. The latter should be a key priority for the coming year, and include upgrading the website and enhancing its accessibility, as well as developing platforms and content for blogs, summaries of research and disseminating teaching materials.

Professor Peter H. Wilson, Oxford University

SHoW Secretary's Report, January 2020

This past year has involved a lot of getting to grips with how to organise the society and the work of the committee. I am very grateful to committee colleagues for committing their time and putting effort into keeping SHoW on the road.

It is fair to say that there have been some challenges along the way, most notably in keeping our website maintained and up to date. As part of an effort to increase our web-presence we are going to have to get better at the web side of things and to that end we've approached a couple of people who may be willing to offer us more support here. If members are interested in helping then please do get in touch.

Clearly our ability to grow and put on good events depends on our capacity to share information with members and get quick feedback on what they would like us to do. We've tried to do bridge these gaps through more frequent and open communications with our membership and through the membership survey. In addition, Erica Charters has kindly done some work on what the website should do for us going forwards and this will offer food for thought as we look to make better use of our website.

One of the committee's goals has been to put on events across the EU. In this respect, Brexit has presented additional challenges around collecting fees, maintaining bank accounts and the associated legal organisational structures beyond the UK. The Sciences Po event has been a case in point in this respect, offering good opportunities to understand the breadth of challenges associated with running an event in France. This has not only involved trying to keep costs to a minimum and avoiding extensive cross subsidy from the Society but it has also been good to understand different academic cultures around conferences. In this case, French colleagues expected the event to be free or at the expense of SHoW. At the same time, catering and ticket handling costs needed to be undertaken in Euros even as we accepted new members who had to pay in pounds. Going forwards we will have to keep a close eye on these challenges if we are to avoid significant additional costs.

Dr Matthew Ford, University of Sussex

SHoW Treasurer's Report, January 2020

I am pleased to report that at the end of its first year, SHoW is in a healthy financial position with funds in hand to underwrite the costs of planned activities in 2020. Thanks to the energies of the fundraising team and the decision by committee members to donate our own expenses to SHoW rather than claiming them back we made a surplus on the 2019 New Voices conference. We will now carry this forward, allowing us to provide more generous bursaries for future events as well as to offer small grants in support of members' own initiatives.

Income between 1 February 2019 and 31 January 2020 was as follows:

	£
Membership fees	2600
Conference fees	1129
Miscellaneous	21.01
Conference subsidies	998.19
TOTAL	4748.20

Expenditure between 1 February 2019 and 31 January 2020 was as follows:

PayPal charges	129.81
Conference bursaries	300
Conference costs	552.29
TOTAL	982.10

We have set aside the sum of £400 to cover website costs yet to be billed.

Funds in hand at 31 January 2020: £3766.10

Minus anticipated website costs: **£3366.10**

Professor Catherine Fletcher, Manchester Metropolitan University

SHoW Membership Report & Survey Results, January 2020

Membership:

Since its launch in January 2019 the membership of the Society for the History of War has grown to 90 members. The majority of the membership (52) is UK based. The next largest group (16) are based in the US, followed by France (9). The Society also has members based in Australia (6), Ireland (3), New Zealand (1), Italy (1), Germany (1) and the Netherlands (1). Around 61 per cent of our membership is male, 35 per cent female.

The membership grew at an average rate of 7 to 8 new member per month across the year. A little less half of the existing membership (41) joined the Society in February 2019, however. The growth rate declined thereafter before increasing in the run up to the *New Voices* conference in July 2019. This highlights the importance of the Society's events in attracting new members.

Members Survey:

In the autumn of 2019, the Society conducted a survey of its members that aimed to discover what our membership would like from the society. The survey was conducted using SurveyMonkey and consisted of nine questions. We had a total of 35 respondents.

News of the new society has mainly been spread via Twitter and word of mouth. Only a small number of the respondents heard of us via our website, suggesting that our web presence requires further development.

The three top activities that members would like to see from the Society were: support for conferences and workshops, book reviews on the website, PGR training and support for funding bids.

Most of the respondents were already members of other history societies. The Society for Military History was well represented, but the list includes a range of international, national and local societies. This bodes well for collaboration with other societies on future workshops and conferences.

A majority of respondents were willing to provide book reviews should we choose to adopt a book review section on the website. A majority also stated that they were willing to share teaching resources with other members of the society via the website.

The vast majority of respondents are also willing to participate in the organization of future conferences, workshops and talks.

In terms of academic position, the majority of respondents were either PhD or post-doctoral students or Senior Lecturers/Associate Professors or above.

Respondents were asked how they would like the society to evolve. Most responses indicated that our members place a premium on the development of a supportive academic research community with a strong online presence. Several respondents also indicated that they would like the society to grow into an international organization. Some pointed to the International Society for the First World War Studies as a potential model for future development.

Dr Leighton James, Swansea University

Report on content creation and web management for the SHoW website, January 2020

Following discussions at the July 2019 SHoW Committee Meeting as to how to grow membership via content displayed on the website, I was tasked with conducting preliminary research and offer thoughts on website content and its provision.

1. Existing models

I did a brief survey of relevant societies and their web content, and have some examples.

- a. H-Net, particularly H-War (<https://networks.h-net.org/h-war>): as many of you will know, H-Net groups provide free access to listings of academic events and high-quality reviews, mostly in English but also in other languages. H-Net is a non-profit organization run by academics; all of its editors are volunteers. Editors work in groups so that they share out the task of monitoring, updating, and editing according to a rota. Editors apply for the role (all appear to be professional academics), and after undertaking a training course, commit to an average of 2 hours / week volunteer editing.
- b. Society for Military History (<https://www.smh-hq.org/index.html>): the SMH posts events and relevant CfPs, but does not host online content. However, it has recently established a designated SMH Fellowship in Social Media, designed for advanced-stage PhD students. The Fellow works with c. 4 other academics to identify and curate social media content; it comes with a \$2,000/year stipend, and takes formal applications.
- c. Navy Records Society (<https://www.navyrecords.org.uk/>): this UK society bases its membership not on events, but around an annual publication on naval history. Annual subscription rate is £40 (£20 student); this provides a hard-copy of the annual volume as well as electronic access to all previous publications. The Society advertises the publications through a monthly web publication, called an Online Magazine. This is curated and edited (though not written) by a professional historian who is paid £5000/year (this also includes responsibilities for social media). The Online Magazine is only available to subscribers: you can subscribe only to the Magazine for £20/year, or get both the hard copy publication and the Magazine for the full £40 rate. The Society has at least 700 full members. There are currently no Magazine-only members.
- d. I coordinate a project that involves sourcing student historical research to post online (<https://oxfordandempire.web.ox.ac.uk/home>). Although the project has hourly RA built in, conducted by advanced doctoral students, it requires a significant amount of time to edit, check, and source student and ECR posts (average 5 hours / post).

Comments:

1. Consideration of other models of information on the website:
 - a. Membership/research directory: Society for Military History has a membership directory, including research interests. I don't think I am alone in never having used it. It is doubtful that directories are still necessary or useful in the age of Google. If we did want to focus on developing an online research network, we would need to make use of a better web-platform (something that resembles LinkedIn, for example - the SMH Directory is with Event Rebels); we would also need to ensure that it is updated constantly otherwise it would no longer be of use.
 - b. Teaching resources: this is an innovative idea in part because I do not think this exists as a web resource already, ever since the US-site that provided syllabi was

taken down due to copyright issues (which is something that might need to be investigated). There is a logistical question about keeping this behind paywall. Many teaching resources are also now freely available online, although not collected in one location.

2. Time: website content needs to be updated and refreshed regularly, otherwise it risks quickly becoming outdated. At the same time, since website content is the same as all published content, it needs carefully editing and proofing – whether written by professional academics or by early career researchers or doctoral students. I urge careful and realistic consideration of editing time by a professional academic.
3. Finances: there is plenty of high-quality research freely available online; indeed, it is unusual to have blog entries behind a paywall, especially when educational. We need to consider whether students and academics would consider a blog entry to compelling that they would be willing to pay for it. Most online content is an add-on, rather than the sole draw, of a financial transaction. We would need to be able to make a strong case if our web resources were therefore for members only; at the same time, if they were available more generally there is the question of whether such activity will substantially expand and maintain membership.
4. Aim: I would suggest we need more information on what type of historian we are seeking to attract with web content, given that its ultimate aim is expansion of membership. At the moment our membership (via events) is focused on PG students and early career researchers; but this will continue only if they feel they are being taken seriously and can network alongside established scholars. As a result, our online content would need to attract established scholars as well.
5. Committee use: although there is enthusiasm on the Committee for web activities, it is noticeable that none of us has offered to write a blog entry or review; similarly we have only had one offer of a blog entry by a member. I think we would do well to carefully consider our own use of web activities, and especially those that would require payment and membership.

A possible trial would be to recruit bursary recipients to write blogs on some portion of their conference presentation or research more generally, and to assess time and labour invested in those, as well as analytics of the website as a result.

Dr Eric Charters, University of Oxford

SHoW Equality and Diversity Statement, January 2020

The Society for the History of War is committed to promoting and developing equality and diversity through all aspects of its work and activities. The Society seeks to provide a welcoming, supportive and collegiate environment for its officers and members, as well as for those who attend, participate or otherwise contribute to our events.

We recognise that there are significant inequalities in the teaching and practice of History in the United Kingdom and we recognise our responsibility to contribute to tackling these inequalities. To this end, the Society seeks to actively promote equality of opportunity by:

- Communicating our commitment to equality and diversity to those who engage with us and our work;
- Communicating where responsibilities lie for equality;
- Providing training and support for our officers;
- Taking positive action to engage, and to support the engagement of, under-represented groups;
- Encouraging *speaking up* as a way of promoting and effecting cultural change.

All officers of the Society are responsible for promoting equality and diversity, and for challenging or reporting behaviour which is discriminatory or inappropriate.

As Equality and Diversity officer I will be responsible for ensuring that the SHoW Committee is informed of all developments in this area and for ensuring that SHoW officers are aware of their responsibilities in organising and leading SHoW events.

Dr Gavin Rand, University of Greenwich

Sciences Po Conference, January 2020

You will recall that the conference is scheduled for 20/21 March and will be held at the Reims campus of Sciences Po (44 minutes from Paris, or from Roissy airport, by TGV).

The title of the conference is: **Private Wars: Legitimacy, Finance and the Social Contract – A conference on the public/private boundary in warfare.**

The initial team of 6 people organising the event has been extended: a third undergraduate student, Benoît Piketty joined.

In September, decision was made to formally involve the Service historique de la Défense (SHD, Vincennes) into the organization of the conference. A budget of 1,000 euros was allocated by the SHD. The network of the Service was used in the service of the conference. Lastly Paul Lenormand's and Geraud Letang's situation was greatly simplified as they now both are post-docs and chargé de recherche at the SHD.

During the fall, the venue has been organized on Sciences Po Reims campus, as well as the meals and accommodations. Contact was made by Benoît Piketty with Pommery for a visit of the wine cellar and a drink. An option has been taken for a festive meal at Pommery's to be held on 21 March evening (to be confirmed depending on the number of participants).

Society for the History of War

In order to deal more easily with the practicalities of the conference, a French section of the SHoW was created. Officially linked with the ShoW, the SHoW SF has the status of an association under French law and thus can have a bank account.

Professor Guillaume Piketty, Sciences Po

2021 conference

Contact was made with Professor Robert Gerwarth and the Centre for War Studies at University College Dublin. Following their very positive reaction, an agreement was found about a conference on “Civil War” to be held at UCD in May 2021.

Professor Guillaume Piketty, Sciences Po