



Volume 1, Issue 2

September 2008

### Highlights

- Next Society Conference to be held in Tokyo
- Business Historians Conference—Birmingham
- Report from the History of Economic Thought Society
- Journal information from Wiley-Blackwell

## Conference 18-20 February 2009 - Gakushuin University, Tokyo

### APEBH 2009

#### Asia-Pacific Economic and Business History Conference

(Organised by the Economic History Society of Australia and New Zealand,

Hosted by Gakushuin University)

18-20 February 2009, Gakushuin University, Tokyo (Japan)

#### “Asia-Pacific in International Economy and Business”

#### CALL FOR PAPERS

Papers and proposals for sessions are invited for the 2009 APEBH conference. The conference theme is ‘Asia-Pacific in International Economy and Business’, around which the conference programme committee expects to organise a number of sessions. As at past conferences, the 2009 APEBH programme committee welcomes contributions on other topics in economic, social, and business history. Early career researchers are encouraged to participate. Researchers across a range of disciplines are warmly welcomed, including economists and



historians of economic thought, business, society and management, as well as archivists. The conference organisers are particularly interested in attracting papers that examine developments within the Asia-Pacific region (broadly defined) and/or papers that provide an international comparative perspective.

Paper abstracts of one page may be submitted to the address below at any time up to 30th November 2008. A decision on proposals will be made within a month of submission. Session proposals of one page may be submitted up to the same date, outlining the main objectives of the session. Written papers must be submitted by 15 January 2009. There will be a refereed paper section for those interested.

A conference paper prize will be awarded, and a selection of papers

(subject to review) will be published in the Australian Economic History Review.

Further details about the conference can be found at the web page of the Economic History Society of Australia and New Zealand: <http://www.uow.edu.au/commerce/econ/ehsanz/>

Please send abstracts and session proposals to Dr Jim McAloon, Human Sciences Division, Lincoln University, PO Box 84 Canterbury, NEW ZEALAND. Email: [mcaloonj@lincoln.ac.nz](mailto:mcaloonj@lincoln.ac.nz)



We're on the web

[www.uow.edu.au/commerce/econ/ehsanz](http://www.uow.edu.au/commerce/econ/ehsanz)

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NEWSLETTER OF THE  
ECONOMIC HISTORY  
SOCIETY OF  
AUSTRALIA AND NEW  
ZEALAND

# From the President: Simon Ville

## A new ERA for research in Australia?

A new Australian government has brought with it a raft of new policy initiatives in higher education including countless reviews touching on what we do. One matter of particular interest is a new research assessment exercise – the Howard government's RQF (Research Quality Framework) has now been abandoned and trumped by Rudd's ERA (Excellence in Research for Australia). [See [www.arc.gov.au/era/default.htm](http://www.arc.gov.au/era/default.htm)]. There are many aspects to ERA and potentially a great deal of funding attached to research performance. One aspect of ERA that has attracted a lot of attention is the journal ranking list – around 21 000 journals across all disciplines have been ranked into 1 of 4 hierarchical tiers. Promotions, appointments, grant evaluations will all be influenced by the ranking of these journals. Perhaps not surprisingly, there is little agreement on the process itself let alone the ranking of specific journals. Traversing through this long list has been made easier, however, by one website: <http://lamp.infosys.deakin.edu.au/era/>. Two glaring omissions in our field that have been highlighted are Business History and Business History Review. Australian Economic History Review is again highly ranked as an A journal, which is a credit to its editors and the support of the Society. The editors, Martin Shanahan and

Stephen Morgan, are always keen to receive article submissions. More information is at:

<http://www.uow.edu.au/commerce/econ/ehsanz/review.html>

As indicated elsewhere in this newsletter, arrangements are currently afoot for APEBH 2009. This is the fourth in our series of Asia-Pacific conferences. As the first to be held outside Australia, it is an important development in fostering a genuinely international conference. This is an exciting opportunity to visit Tokyo and to network with economic and business historians from many nations.

Another conference appearing over the horizon is the fifteenth World Economic History Congress in Utrecht, the Netherlands, to be held 3-7 August 2009. The scientific programme of the congress will comprise approximately 100 sessions. Following the first call for session proposals, the Executive Committee of the International Economic History Association approved 51 sessions to be included; a preliminary [programme](http://www.wehc2009.org/programme.asp) is available at: <http://www.wehc2009.org/programme.asp>. Currently, there is a second call for session proposals. From submissions received before the 1st of October 2008, the Executive Committee of the IEHA will fill all but five of the remaining session slots, which will be filled by the Executive Committee with sessions on topics the committee feels should be on the pro-



gramme. A [guideline for session proposers](http://www.wehc2009.org/guidelines.asp) can be found at: <http://www.wehc2009.org/guidelines.asp>

The Cutler review of the National Innovation System has just been published with the promise of a full white paper by year's end. It provides some interesting recommendations regarding university research funding including that ARC grants be fully funded to include coverage of the indirect costs normally absorbed by the recipient's host university. It also suggests that research performance, rather than historic numbers of graduate students, be the basis for the future allocation of money to universities under the Research Training Scheme and the Australian Postgraduate Awards. The overall thrust is to move away from the notion of supporting the emergence of a few world class universities in Australia, rather to build many centres of research excellence which are frequently cross-disciplinary and cross-institutional. The full review, of over 200 pages and many annexes, can be found at:

<http://www.innovation.gov.au/innovationreview/Pages/home.aspx>

## Aluminium Industry—Calling Interested Persons

A group of economic historians in Europe are researching the aluminium industry in a range of countries.

Individual countries currently under study include: Norway, Russia, Italy, America, and the UK.

Other studies are examining the industry from an international perspective.

These researchers are keen to hear from anyone who has, or is studying any aspect of the aluminium industry in Australia.

If you are interested in making contact with an international network examining this area, please make contact with

Martin Shanahan at [martin.shanahan@unisa.edu.au](mailto:martin.shanahan@unisa.edu.au) who can provide more information.

## Association of Business Historians Conference

On 5-6 July the British-based Association of Business Historians held its annual conference at the University of Birmingham, the institution founded by Joseph Chamberlain, the champion of tariff reform. The conference organisation, presided over by Francesca Carnevali of the University of Birmingham, was excellent. The ABH tends to be a less formal group than its counterpart, the Economic History Society, yet the conference has now grown to such an extent that over seventy papers were offered in Birmingham. The standard was at least as high as at APEBH meetings. Topics covered extended beyond business history proper to include most aspects of economic history with the exception of cliometrics. The ABH attracts speakers from all parts of the globe including Australia and New Zealand, and I soon bumped into Gordon Boyce, Simon Ville and Graydon Henning.

The nominal theme was 'Business History after Chan-

dler'. Les Hannah, who now divides his time between Reading and the LSE, gave the keynote address on 'American Whigs and the Business History of Europe.' The American Whigs and Chandler in particular were given a thorough bashing. Chandler's star continues to fade, especially among UK business historians. The other major academic event was the presentation of the Coleman prize for the top British PhD thesis in business history. The winner was Valery Johnson of King's College London for a thesis on British multinationals, culture and empire in the early twentieth century. Last year's winner, Stephanie Decker, did her thesis on British business in West Africa after World War Two. Imperial business history is on the rise, and this is a trend to be welcomed. All three thesis presentations, the others being on decision-making at the Pilkington glass company and development policy in the Scottish Highlands after World War Two, were impressive.



As a city, Birmingham is still rather shabby, but the architecture of Chamberlain's original 'red brick' campus is imposing and the university grounds are spacious. On the second morning delegates had the sort of breakfast, courtesy of the university staff club, that I have not experienced since the late seventies, when I frequented the notorious Cartmel College 'grease pit' at Lancaster University. I recommend ABH conferences to anyone looking for a good economic history conference in the UK in early July.

John Singleton

Victoria University, Wellington

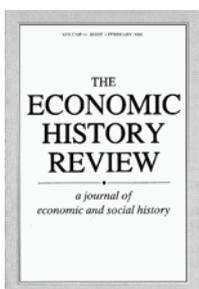
## *Australian Economic History Review*



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12 databases in chemistry and evidence based medicine as well as 10,000 laboratory protocols for the life sciences. Click [here](#) to read *Australian Economic History Review* online.



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# From the History of Economic Thought Society of Australia

HETSA recently held its 21<sup>st</sup> Conference at the University of Western Sydney. It was held in Parramatta at the Rydges Motel but under the auspices of the Faculty of Economics and Finance at the University of Western Sydney. The Dean of the Faculty there, John Lodewijks was the organizer of the conference. There were 45 attendees and some 25 papers given. All were of publishable quality. The guest speaker was Robert Leonard who is a professor at the University du Quebec who gave a paper on one of the pioneers of game theory, Von Neumann. The HETSA website hosted by the University of Western Sydney (Google 'HETSA 2008' to access it) has the conference program, abstracts and full papers.

At the conference dinner there was a special session commemorating the life of the economic historian and celebrated economic journalist, David Clark who had died in late May at the age of 61. Clark had attended the inaugural HETSA conference in 1981 and had written a dissertation on the origins of growth theory under the supervision of Peter Groenewegen. Clark was a senior lecturer in economics at the University of NSW and had turned to economic journalism however his training had been in economic history and the history of economic thought. There will be forth-

coming obituaries of the enfant terrible of the Australian economic profession published in *Agenda* and the *History of Economics Review*.

At the conference there was a special symposium on the trouble the history of economics thought had last year with the Australian Bureau of Statistics in their bid to reclassify research classification. In an opening paper Alex Millmow and Steve Kates recalled the events of the case. John Lodewijks, Tony Aspromourgos, William Coleman John King and Peter Kriesler and discussed the paper and gave their own interpretation of events since they had been on an informal committee to deal with the crisis. Each had something constructive to say about the incident and the lessons to be drawn from it. King and Kriesler offered their views on how the discipline and its handful of journals would rank under the new research framework (ERA) being put up by the Rudd Government. This paper can be accessed from the conference website. A number of strategies to deal with any likely reoccurrence was also discussed. There was also a plenary discussion about expanding the membership of HETSA and the suggestion was made of having the HETSA and economic history conferences held back to back or concurrently, at the one venue. Lodewijks recalled that in the past the two associations had collaborated and that a united

front would be fruitful. Alex Millmow recalled that while protesting at the ABS's decision to relocate Economic history and HET from the broad economics classification that he and Simon Ville did prepare joint statement for the Higher Education Supplement of The Australian. Unfortunately it was never published. There followed general discussion about why and how the ABS proposal had got past the gatekeepers or representative bodies ostensibly there to defend the interests of the two disciplines. While the ABS proposal was overturned following the vociferous reaction from economic historians and historians of economic thought, the issue of research classification would return in the next ten years. The HETSA general meeting discussed funding, membership and promotion and then, lastly, the themes of the next conference. It will be held at Notre Dame University in Fremantle in the second week of July 2009 and feature three themes. First a symposium on the history of Austrian economics, second a session on the history of economics in Western Australia. Lastly there would be a session on 'Australian contributions to modeling the small open economy'.

Alex Millmow is President of HETSA

## Economic History Society Annual Conference - 3-5 April 2009

The 2009 annual conference of the Economic History Society will be hosted by the University of Warwick from 3 to 5 April 2009. Enquiries should be directed (by e-mail or via the Society's website) to Maureen Galbraith:

Email: [ehsocsec@arts.gla.ac.uk](mailto:ehsocsec@arts.gla.ac.uk)

Website: [www.ehs.org.uk](http://www.ehs.org.uk)

## What is economic history?

Economic history is the study of our past development, particularly in relation to economics, labour, and business. It includes, for example, the economic development of nations, the growth of business enterprise, and the organisation of work.

While economic history draws extensively on its close relationships with the disciplines of economics and history, its ultimate strength lies in its broad inter-disciplinary connections across a wide range of social science and business subjects. It encourages diverse but rigorous approaches to understanding our economic past, which draw upon theories, concepts, and a wide range of historical information sources.



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