

THE BRITISH NUMISMATIC SOCIETY



Newsletter

Summer 2011

**From the President
Dr Robin Eaglen**

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Dear Member

Nostalgically, this is the last Newsletter I shall address to you as President. When, in my early 70s, I took up the role at the end of 2008, I decided that owing to age and other commitments three years would be an appropriate term in which to devote the time and energy needed to do the role justice. In my review at the Anniversary Meeting I will try to present a dispassionate appraisal of how far the Society has met, or begun to tackle, the objectives I identified at the outset. It scarcely needs saying that whatever success we may have had would have been totally unthinkable without the loyalty, dedication and expertise of our Officers and Council.

Finance matters

In the autumn of 2008 the world financial crisis had just enveloped us and ushered in a potentially uncomfortable time for the Society. 2009 was nevertheless a satisfactory year, with the net assets of the Society increasing from £177,000 to £180,000. 2010 has shown a further advance to £188,000 and Council expects that 2011 should see this asset base virtually maintained, despite exceptional expenditure on digitising the *BNJ* and the appearance of several Special Publications, the sales of which are likely to benefit 2012 more than this year (see below).

Subscriptions

As you all know, the rates of subscription to the Society have remained unchanged for many years. This is intended to encourage a healthy membership, without which the Society could not prosper, or even survive in its present form. The membership currently hovers around 600 and 500 subscriptions are needed to fund the production and distribution costs of the *BNJ* alone. Each year, however, our Treasurer has sleepless nights because as many as 30% of members fail to pay their dues until well into the year. If, therefore, you have not yet paid your subscription for 2011 may I please ask you to do so without delay, in compassion for the Treasurer and the Society. If you cannot recall whether you have already paid, please check with Philip Mernick (treasurer@britnumsoc.org).

Electronic membership/programme cards

To save on administration and costs, Council has agreed to invite those members who receive this Newsletter by e-mail to agree henceforward to receive their membership/programme card as an e-card. If needed for identification purposes at meetings, the e-card may then be printed off and signed by the member. If you are not happy with this proposal would you please email our Secretary, Peter Preston-Morley (secretary@britnumsoc.org), to that effect. Peter will obviously continue to send a printed card in the post to any member so wishing.

Summer Meeting

The Summer Meeting this year will be held at the National Museum Wales, Cardiff, on Saturday 2 July 2011. The theme will be The Value of Money. The speakers will include Matt Bonaccorsi, on the relationship between coin design and value, Amelia Dowler on the cost of living in Roman times and today, Dr Anne Murphy on the Bank of England as guardian of public credit, Professor Peter Spufford on debasement in Medieval Europe and myself, offering thoughts on the coin market.

The registration fee (including lunch and refreshments) is £30. For further information, contact Jenni Adam on 020 7601 5793 or by e-mail at jennifer.adam@bankofengland.co.uk.

Prizes

The Society is privileged to have been able to honour two outstanding numismatists this year, one in his 70s and the other still in his 20s. In January I presented Lord Stewartby with the North Book Prize for 2010 for his *English Coins 1180- 1551*, an eloquent and masterly synthesis of his lifetime study of the coinage, a work destined to endure. In May, I presented the Blunt Prize, intended to recognise the contribution of numismatists under the age of 35, to Dr Rory Naismith. His abilities are already enormously benefitting early Anglo-Saxon numismatics and history, the *Sylloge* series and key projects of the Society.



The President presents Dr Rory Naismith with the Blunt Prize on 24 May.



Lord Stewartby following his receipt of the North Book Prize for 2010 from the President, Dr Eaglen, on 25 January.

Website

The Society's independent website is now fully functioning and anyone who has not yet consulted it should visit www.britnumsoc.org. Any member who has ideas on improving or expanding the content of the site should get in touch with either Rory Naismith (rn242@cam.ac.uk) or Andrew Woods (arw66@cam.ac.uk).

Digitised BNJs

The project to digitise past copies of the *BNJ* has now been commissioned. The cost of the project is approximately £7,000, over £1,000 of which has been generously donated by members. All volumes up to the five most recently published should be freely accessible on the Society's website from this autumn.

Special Publications

Following publication of Derek Chick's *The Coinage of Offa and his Contemporaries*, rapid progress is being made towards two further titles: Mark Blackburn's *Viking Coinage and Currency in the British Isles*, which will include additional material and comments by Mark to accompany his previously published papers, and Rory Naismith's *The Coinage of Southern England 796- 865*. Both should be available from Spink by or before the autumn. Edward Baldwin also informs me that finishing touches to *The Brussels Hoard and the Long Cross Coinage*, by Ron Churchill and Bob Thomas, to be published jointly by Baldwin and the Society, are being made and that the work will appear towards the end of 2011.

By-Laws

The By-Laws were amended in 2008, mainly to streamline a number of somewhat cumbersome administrative processes. Among the more important changes, a procedure was introduced to make it easier for members to propose alternative nominations for Office and Council membership to those proposed by Council itself. This, however, involves two sets of ballot forms being sent out, even when no alternative nominations are put forward. To eliminate this unnecessary duplication a change to the By-Laws will be proposed in the autumn. At the same time the opportunity will be taken to suggest improved wording in other areas without altering their basic intent.

Money and Medals

Those of you who receive the *CCNB Newsletter* will have seen that it has been rebranded as *Money and Medals*, the Newsletter for Numismatists in Britain. It continues to be edited by our former Secretary, Richard Kelleher, and to receive financial support from the Society.

With best wishes,

Robin Gagli