

The autumn and winter of 2008-2009 has been an exciting time for IMEMS, with many projects and activities launched which demonstrate the real value of scholarly collaboration between disciplines and institutions in the study of the medieval and early modern worlds. One IMEMS research fellow, Dr Stewart Mottram, began his Leverhulme sponsored project on pastoralism and Britishness in Tudor and Stuart writing; and a joint Aber-Bangor team – including Professor Phillipp Scofield, Dr Sue Johns, and Dr Elisabeth New, another IMEMS research fellow - won a large grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council to catalogue and analyse the cultural meaning of the fascinating collection of personal seals in the National Library of Wales.

At the same time, IMEMS launched major projects in collaboration with outside bodies. These include plans (co-ordinated by our third fellow, Dr Sue Niebrzdowski) for a website to allow the direct comparison between the two earliest manuscripts of Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. – manuscripts which are held by the National Library in Aberystwyth, and by the Huntington Library in California: and potential plans for an exhibition to inform the public about the world of the scribe who produced both works. This scribe has recently been identified by Professor Linne Mooney of York University. Professor Mooney gave a paper to IMEMS' regular video-linked research seminar, this seminar – though its co-operation with the Universities of Swansea and Lampeter - remains one of the UK's largest, most diverse, and most lively, forums for debate and discussion of the medieval and early modern period. Another project centres on the enormous cultural, political, literary and economic impact of the Mostyn family of North Wales from the middle ages to the industrial revolution. Benefitting from the generous support of the modern Mostyn estate, and drawing on extensive documents in the Bangor University Archive and the National Library, this 'Mostyn Project' will generate a series of cutting-edge researches into such varied themes as the cultural construction of the gentry, the development of medieval land law, the meaning of bardic patronage in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the nature of social and economic networks, and provincial news culture in the early modern period.

Elsewhere, projects are planned across the research strands and centres (including the third meeting of the world-famous Bangor Conference on the Restoration, which reaches the 1680s in its decade-at-a-time survey of the period in late July 2009), and scholars and members of the public browsing the web-pages can find details of these there. Publications working their way through the press include collections based on the highly successful conferences in 2007-8: collections on middle-aged women in the medieval ages; the 1670s in Britain and Ireland; and the literary construction of Wales from 1500-1800. With this record of success behind us, IMEMS members are making a major impact on our understanding of the pre-modern world, and we look forward to an exciting 2009-2010.

Professor Tony Claydon  
Director