

Researching Local History

Start date	09 th April 2017	Time	10.00am – 4.45pm
Venue	Madingley Hall Madingley Cambridge		
Tutor	Dr Jonathan Rodell	Course code:	1617NDX041

Director of Programmes Emma Jennings

For further information on this course, please contact Public Programme Coordinator, Clare Kerr
clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk or 01223 746237

To book See: www.ice.cam.ac.uk or telephone 01223 746262

Tutor biography

Dr Jonathan Rodell studied History at Pembroke College, Cambridge and received his doctorate for a thesis on popular religion in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The focus of his work is on grassroots history and the impact of religious ideas upon the lives of ordinary people. He is the author of *The Rise of Methodism: a study of Bedfordshire 1736-1851* and is currently engaged in a research project unpicking the decline of Nonconformity in the early twentieth century. He lectures for the Institute of Continuing Education on various aspects of the social history of Britain and America and was a Visiting Fellow of Southern Methodist University, Dallas.

Course programme

09:30	Terrace bar open for pre-course tea/coffee
10:00 – 11:15	Why 'local' history is, in fact, proper history!
11:15	Coffee
11:45 – 13:00	Economic and social history in church registers
13:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:15	Political history from account books
15:15	Tea
15:30 – 16:45	Cultural history from ephemera
16:45	Depart

Course syllabus

Aims:

- To introduce participants to the potential of local historical studies
- To explore the kinds of questions that commonly surviving documents can answer
- To give participants the confidence and skills to carry out their own research!

Content:

Local history has often been looked down on as the poor and distant cousin of historical writing that deals with larger geographic units, but in reality it provides the building blocks on which all good history is based. It tells us what was actually happening at the grass roots, away from the little, self-obsessed worlds of the elites whose distorting narratives so often colour our understanding of the past. This course will introduce you to some of the most commonly surviving records from local communities in England, raw historical evidence that can be found in any local records office. It will show you how seemingly unpromising documents – like baptism registers, account books and printed ephemera – can yield rich insights into the social, economic, cultural and political history of the people of England. From the progress of the Reformation to the rise of the middle class, from the fluctuating performance of the economy to the calendars that framed people's lives, local history is a window on to the past that everyone can open.

Presentation of the course:

The course will consist of series of mini-lectures, discussions, and group work analysing sources.

As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- describe the most commonly preserved local records available to historians and to discuss critically their potential and limitations as historical sources
- interpret a range of common historical sources critically and to set such observations in a historiographical context.

Reading and resources list

Listed below are a number of texts that might be of interest for future reference, but do not need to be bought (or consulted) for the course.

Author	Title	Publisher and date
J Beckett	<i>Writing Local History</i>	Manchester UP 2007
D Dymond	<i>Researching and writing local history: a practical guide</i>	British Association for Local History 2009
S Gunn	<i>Research methods for history</i>	Edinburgh UP 2011
D Hey	<i>The Oxford Companion to Local and Family History</i>	OUP 2010
J Rodell	<i>The Rise of Methodism: a study of Bedfordshire</i>	Boydell 2014
K. Tiller	<i>English Local History: an introduction</i>	Sutton 2001

Note Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

Additional information

Venue

Details of how to find Madingley Hall can be found on our website:
<http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/who-we-are/how-to-find-the-institute>

Refreshments

Tea and coffee and lunch will be provided. If you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies and have not already advised us, please inform our Admissions Team on ice.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk or +44 (0)1223 746262.

Information correct as of: 04 November 2016