

# NEWS OF THE PROFESSION

## *Time and the Construction of the Past*

The theme of the 1997 conference of the British Social History Society is: "Time and the Construction of the Past". The conference will be held on 3–5 January 1997 in and around the Royal King's Arms hotel in "Time-honoured Lancaster", England. Lancaster is on the M6 and the west coast main line, about three hours from London. Offers of papers are invited from historians and others. The following list of themes is offered as a guide but contributions outside these areas are welcome; there are no limits to period or place.

- The contest for time: work, gender, society. Time, work, leisure and economics. Time and gender. Transport and travel. Time and social class. Social uses, definitions and appropriations of time.
- Calendars: Religious, scientific and cultural development of the calendar. Calendars in different regions, nations and cultures.
- The ritual and leisure year: The religious calendar and the reformation. Secularisation of the calendar. Calendar customs. Seasonal patterns of recreation, leisure and holidays.
- Seasonality: Seasonal cycles as tools of historical analysis (e.g. agricultural patterns, the trade cycle, marriage patterns). Relationship between natural cycles and human activity.
- The concept of time: Scientific and religious concepts of time. Development and application of time measurement. Changing perceptions of time.
- The historical construction of "the past": Uses and discourses of "the past". National and local myths of the past, and the invention of tradition. The development of historical studies. Historical periodization: traditions and alternatives. The radical sense of the past. "The death of the past".
- Time, popular memory and nostalgia: Popular perceptions of the past. Change, nostalgia and heritage. Oral and written concepts of time. Popular memory and myth. Ageing and the life cycle.

Enquiries: all enquiries and offers of papers to Mrs Linda Persson, secretary, Social History Society, Dept. of History, Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 4YG, UK. Tel. 01524 592605; e-mail [L.Persson@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:L.Persson@lancaster.ac.uk). Those interested in offering papers should get in touch by the end of May 1996.