

CCASNC's Brave New World

On 16 February, the department hosted its annual postgraduate conference, the Cambridge Colloquium in Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic (CCASNC) to great success. Organised by a committee of postgraduate students, we welcomed eleven speakers from institutions in the UK, USA and Canada. The theme of this year's conference was 'Brave New World', a theme with which we sought to scrutinise and problematise notions of 'the new' in the early medieval world. Our speakers engaged with this theme enthusiastically and throughout the day we were confronted with a variety of new perspectives on various aspects of the languages, history and literatures of the early medieval west. Papers covered such diverse topics as Gerald of Wales' use of classical sources in his *Topographia Hibernica*, the socio-linguistics of the *Íslendingarsögur*, and monastic patronage of manuscript production in tenth-century England.

We also had the pleasure of welcoming Barbara Yorke, Emeritus Professor in Early Medieval History at the University of Winchester and one of the country's leading Anglo-Saxon historians, as our keynote speaker. Prof Yorke chose a topic which has broad appeal and tied in perfectly with the conference's theme, as well as the department's on-going Leverhulme-funded project, 'Converting the Isles'. Entitled 'Ingeld and Christ: Some Problems in the Christianisation of the Anglo-Saxon Laity', Prof Yorke provided us with a wide-ranging and highly engaging talk on the lay experience of conversion which centred on the recurring presence of Weland in a variety of Christian cultural contexts. In doing so, Prof Yorke took the CCASNC delegates on a journey spanning the width and breadth of Anglo-Saxon England, meeting some well-known and not so well-known artefacts along the way, including the Franks Casket, the Old English Boethius, and the Leeds Cross. Meanwhile in true ASNC-style, Prof Yorke drew some tantalising parallels with comparable evidence in the Celtic and Norse worlds.

The conference was supported by a large, lively audience, who made the day's proceedings a truly enjoyable experience. The CCASNC committee and the ASNC department were delighted to host such a well-attended and well-received programme and we'd like to thank all the speakers, as well as all those who helped with the running of this year's conference, for all their efforts.