Haigh named 1999-2000 Tomash Fellow

Thomas Haigh, a Ph.D. candidate in the History and Sociology of Science Program at the University of Pennsylvania, has been selected as the 1999-2000 Adelle and Erwin Tomash Fellow of the Charles Babbage Institute.

Born in Birmingham, England, Thomas spent a year working at a local personal computer assembly company prior to attending the University of Manchester, where he received B.S. and M.Eng. degrees with honors in Systems Integration from the Department of Computer Science. He wrote his thesis on University/Industry research collaboration in computer science, and received funding from the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) for his work.

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CBI Director Bob Seidel Makes Final Report

Five years ago, in cooperation with the Institute of Technology (IT), the Chair and the President of the Charles Babbage Foundation (CBF), and other CBI constituencies, I formulated a vision statement immediately after becoming Director of CBI. Much of that vision has and is being accomplished. I have reported this to you in the past, and will not dwell on it here. Instead, upon completing my term as Director, I would like to point to those parts of the vision that have not yet been realized.

Publications of CBI

In 1994, I instituted talks with publishers regarding the CBI Reprint Series. After discussions with Gordon & Breach, MIT Press, and the University of Minnesota Press, I concluded that there was not a market for the kind of reprint series that we had sponsored in the past. Although various other formulations have been considered, ranging from web-sites to proceedings of meetings, none has been marketable. Nevertheless, this is a question that goes begging.

I made a bid to secure the editorship of the Annals of the History of Computing when it became available in 1996. The former assistant editor was successful in his bid, in part because we could not count on support from the University for the effort, and it was therefore too costly to undertake given the very small subscription the IEEE makes to the editor.

CBI staff turnover, like that of most non-profit organizations, has been high, but replacements for critical clerical positions at the University of Minnesota have been impossible since 1996 due to the extremely tight labor market. Since CBI remains a small organization, some solution to this problem must be found. Similarly, the two CBI archivists who left last summer for a professional post at a substantially higher salary and to head the digital library initiative at the request of the University Librarian could expect no further advancement while at CBI, where one had been in the same position 13 years. In this area, we have been fortunate to have the services of Pat Hemmis as Acting Archivist for the past seven months, and we have completed the search for a permanent replacement, which will soon be announced.

Fund-raising

In 1994, the IT and the Chairman and the President of CBF, agreed that an attempt to raise $10 million for an endowment for CBI would be made. Without active support by the Vice-President for Academic Affairs or the

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Recent Publications


Haigh...

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for this study from the Royal Academy of Engineering.

Supported by a Fulbright and a four year William Penn Fellowship, Thomas continued his studies in information processing at Pennsylvania. His dissertation examines how claimed expertise in information processing was used to construct different types of authority within the social world of corporations. The study focuses on the development and management of large-scale, operational information processing systems by corporate computing staffs since the 1950s.

Thomas will be visiting the Charles Babbage Institute to conduct archival research during the academic year.

The Adele and Erwin Tomash Fellowship is named in honor of the founders of the Charles Babbage Foundation and Charles Babbage Institute. The Fellowship provides a stipend of $1,000 per month in addition to an allowance for research expenses.


Moving?

Don't forget to send your change of address to CBI, 103 Walter Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455
Thanks to Friends of CBI

CBI acknowledges the following individuals and organizations for their support of CBI through their membership in the 1999 CBI Friends Program.

We invite our readers to join them by becoming "Friends of CBI." Information about the program can be found in the Fall Newsletter or by contacting the Institute.

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Seidel's Final Report...

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University of Minnesota Foundation, we attempted to raise funds from those individuals whom he identified as potential donors, and I met numerous times with committees and individuals who expressed interest in CBI and its work. Although a small amount of money has been received, and pledges an order of magnitude larger have been made, these efforts have not yet borne fruit. I have succeeded in raising $50,000 for the 1996 celebrations of ENIAC and ERA 50th anniversaries, and over $50,000 for the Charles Babbage Foundation since I have been in this position. I have not been able to devote all of my time to this effort. Perhaps a professional fund-raiser should be hired to support the endowment campaign as was done in the mid-1980s.

Accounting and Administration

During the past decade, CBI has sought to accomplish its purposes without an administrative assistant by placing the burden on the Associate Director and the secretary. One of the objects of our endowment campaign has been to recreate this position within CBI in order to insure compliance with the expectations of our trustees and university requirements, both of which have become more demanding as time has gone on. We need to rethink our priorities so that our personnel can devote their time to the history of information processing, rather than accounting and administrative tasks that require large staffs in other centers and departments of the university.

When I signed on for my three-to-five year appointment as CBI Director, the reinvigoration of the research program and the campaign for a new archives center were the top priorities. We have succeeded in both, and so I believe that CBI will continue to fulfill an important function. As provided for by a 1996 agreement between the Foundation and the University, this responsibility will now pass to another member of the

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History of Science and Technology Program (announced elsewhere in this issue). I will assume a greater teaching and research responsibility as a member of the Chemical Engineering Department and the History of Science and Technology Program, but I hope to continue to contribute my bit to the ongoing programs of research that I have launched.

I am most grateful to those members of the faculty of the University of Minnesota, the staff of CBI, the trustees and others who have supported our activities over that past five years, and I feel confident that this support will continue in the next millennium. I am proud of what the Tomash Fellows have accomplished during this time, and pleased with the support of corporate and government sponsors for our expanded program. Although I leave with some regrets, I am glad that CBI has survived some real threats to its existence and that it will continue to provide support, service, and guidance to the history of information processing.

In 1969, the Honeywell H316 "Computer on a Pedestal" was one of three versions of a very small scientific and control machine introduced by the Honeywell Computer Control Division. In its smallest design this mini-computer measured only 19 by 24.5 by 14 inches. The unit weighed only 115 pounds and sold for $9700.