

# 25 years of the Journal

**T**HIS ISSUE OF the *Journal of Liberal History*, number 100, marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication originally known as the *Liberal Democrat History Group Newsletter*, then the *Journal of Liberal Democrat History* and, since 2003, as our current title.

I think it is true to say that those of us involved in launching the Liberal Democrat History Group in 1988 – inspired by the Liberal History Group in the pre-merger Liberal Party – had no idea that we would end up where we are now.

Our original intention was simply to organise fringe meetings at the Liberal Democrat autumn party conferences. Slightly to our surprise, many of them turned out to be extremely popular, and we gradually accumulated a group of people willing to help out with other tasks. So, in 1994, we started to organise meetings both at the spring party conferences, and also in London, usually at the National Liberal Club, for the benefit of non-conference attendees.

And in September 1993, we produced the first issue of the Group's *Newsletter*, designed simply to publicise our activities and to publish reports of our meetings and a few book reviews of interest to students of Liberal history.

We managed to stick to a (more or less) regular quarterly publication, and twenty-five years on we can look back at one hundred issues, including twenty special themed issues, six books (published with the help of our friends at Politico's and Biteback), six shorter booklets, a rapidly developing website, and an expanding range of contributors and helpers. (Which is not to say that we wouldn't welcome more contributions and help!)

Our underlying aim has never changed, though – to promote the study and research of Liberal history, whether relating to the Liberal Party, SDP, Liberal Democrats or, more

broadly, British (and sometimes foreign) Liberalism. We wanted both to remind political Liberals (members and

## **Journal of Liberal History special issues**

The Liberal commitment to Europe (98, spring 2018)

Liberal Democrats and the coalition: the policy record (92, autumn 2016)

Coalition and the Liberal Democrats (88, autumn 2015)

The Liberal Party and the First World War (87, summer 2015)

The first 25 years of the Liberal Democrats (83, summer 2014)

David Lloyd George (77, winter 2012–13)

The Liberal experience of coalition government (72, autumn 2011)

Liberals and the left (67, summer 2010)

Women and Liberalism (62, spring 2009)

The 1906 landslide – the legacy (54, spring 2007)

Liberals and the right (47, spring 2005)

Liberals and international policy (42, spring 2004)

A short history of political virginity (the SDP) (39, summer 2003)

Liberals and Ireland (33, winter 2001–02)

Crossing the floor (political defections) (25, winter 1999–2000)

Liberals and Nationalists (22, spring 1999)

William Ewart Gladstone (20, autumn 1998)

The legacy of the Liberal-SDP Alliance and merger (18, spring 1998)

The Liberal revival (14, spring 1997)

The Liberal Party and the Great War (10, spring 1996)

non-members of the Liberal Democrats alike) of the history of their political beliefs, and to promote the study and research of political Liberalism – generally a neglected topic – amongst all those interested, whether academics or not, and to provide a platform for its publication.

We hope you find the *Journal of Liberal History* helps you in one or both of these aims, and manages to be a stimulating and enjoyable read at the same time.

I cannot thank enough all those who have made the *Journal* possible over the last twenty-five years. Here's to the next quarter-century!

*Duncan Brack (Editor)*

## **Liberal Democrat History Group books**

*British Liberal Leaders* (2015)

*Dictionary of Liberal Quotations* (2nd edn 2013, 1st edn 1999)

*Peace, Reform and Liberation: A History of Liberal Politics in Britain, 1679–2011* (2011)

*Dictionary of Liberal Thought* (2007)

*Great Liberal Speeches* (2001)

*Dictionary of Liberal Biography* (1998)

## **Liberal Democrat History Group booklets**

*Liberal History: A concise history of the Liberal Party, SDP and Liberal Democrats* (2017, 2016, 2010, 2005)

*Liberal Thinkers* (2018, 2014)

*Liberalism* (2017, 2015)

*Mothers of Liberty: Women who built British Liberalism* (2017, 2012)

*Liberal Leaders: Leaders of the Liberal Party, SDP and Liberal Democrats since 1900* (2013, 2009)

*Liberal Leaders: Leaders of the Liberal Party from 1828 to 1899* (2010)