

Member journeys

Simon Harrison joined the HA in 1994. He is now the head teacher of Crofton School in Hampshire. Here, Simon shares his HA member journey, from new teacher to head teacher.

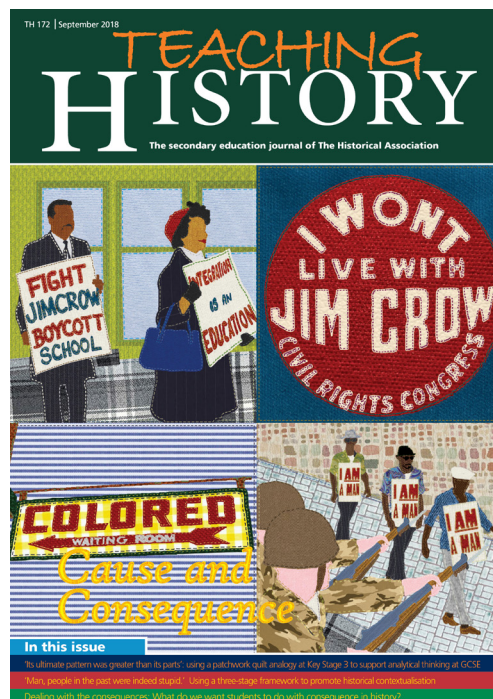


As a trainee and early career history teacher, my HA membership was invaluable to me. Not only was I learning my craft, but I was also in at the deep end – a feeling that trainees and new teachers will know and understand very well. *Teaching History* journal provided an invaluable support to help to develop both my subject knowledge and my understanding of history pedagogy. As an early career teacher, the journal consistently hooked into debates about approaches to history teaching that I was interested in developing in my classroom, and it still supports me now as a head teacher. As a senior leader, I teach history far less often now than in the past, and I find membership of the HA the best way of keeping both my knowledge and my skills up to date. It also helps me to ensure that my history department are the best they can be. In fact,

one of my first acts as head teacher was to buy them a corporate membership! I know that my school's membership of the HA helps my history department to be hooked into the same mix of practical guidance and pedagogical thinking, which, in a landscape where the importance of subject seems to be gathering renewed emphasis in terms of accountability, means that I know that my team are well supported.

As a head of department, the journal continued to support my team and me with the latest thinking and cutting-edge debate, ensuring that we were always at the forefront of things. Both the HA website's range of helpful guides to developing my department and online CPD units helped me to focus departmental time effectively. It was also of vital support to me as a mentor of new trainees and, later on, working with other history departments in the area. Membership provided me not only with access to the same support that I had found in my HA membership in my early career, but also with support as a mentor too. For this, the 'Move Me On' section of *Teaching History* and the online access to guidance for mentors were both invaluable.

The HA has been there to support me at every stage of my career, keeping me at the heart of the subject community whatever my role. I have enjoyed and felt empowered by the professional development that the HA provides. I have regularly attended the HA annual conference – two great days of history-focused CPD with likeminded people. I have also enjoyed the opportunities that the HA has afforded me, such as writing for *Teaching History* and becoming a member of the HA's secondary committee, who help to drive HA secondary provision.



Simon Harrison