

MEGAN BRIERS

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EDUCATION

- 2023 – PhD, History of Science
Max Planck Institute of History of Science (MPIWG), TU Berlin
 “Women and Gender in British Nineteenth-Century Astronomical Fieldwork”
- Member of the “Knowledge and Its Resources” Graduate School
 - Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Christine von Oerzten, Prof. Dr. Friedrich Steinle
- 2022 – 23 MPhil, History and Philosophy of Science and Medicine
 Grade: Distinction
Lucy Cavendish College, University of Cambridge
- Dissertation: “The development of the Scottish scientific instrument trade and transferable skills in the Industrial Revolutions”
 - Awards
 - Margaret Spufford Memorial Prize for Distinction results in a historical related subject
- 2018 – 22 BSc (Hons), Computer Science and Mathematics
 Grade: First Class
University of St Andrews
- Dissertation: “Network Analysis of 19th-century Mathematicians and Philosophers”
 - Awards
 - Dean's list for Academic Excellence (awarded every year in undergraduate)

PUBLICATIONS

PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES/BOOK CHAPTERS

1. Briers, Megan. “The disappearance of Richarda Airy: Gender, Domesticity and Archives at the Royal Observatory Greenwich”. *Isis: A Journal of the History of Science Society*. (accepted, pending revisions).
2. Kent, Deborah, Jesse Garrison, Megan Briers, Ileana Chinnici, Frédéric Soulu, and Daniel Belteki. ‘Towards a Global History of the 1860 Total Solar Eclipse’. *HoST - Journal of History of Science and Technology* 19, no. 1 (2025): 8–38. <https://doi.org/10.2478/host-2025-0002>.
3. Briers, Megan. ‘Wikipedia and the Portrayal of Collaborative Networks of Nineteenth-Century British Mathematicians’. In *Research in History and Philosophy of Mathematics: The CSHPM 2022 Volume*, edited by Maria Zack and David Waszek. Springer Nature Switzerland, 2024. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-46193-4_3.
4. Briers, Megan, Mixie Billina, and Deborah Kent. ‘Chasing Change: The Lasting Legacy of India’s 1871 Eclipse’. *Astronomy & Geophysics* 63, no. 1 (2022): 1.24-1.29. <https://doi.org/10.1093/astrogeo/atac010>.

BOOK REVIEWS

1. Briers, Megan. 'Simon Naylor, *The Observatory Experiment: Meteorology in Britain and Its Empire* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024. Pp. 275. ISBN 978-1-009-20723-2. £85.00 (Hardback).' *The British Journal for the History of Science*, 28 August 2025, 1–2.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007087425000330>.
2. Briers, Megan. "The "How" of the History of Science. A Book Review of *Debating Contemporary Approaches to the History of Science* Edited by Lukas M Verburgt. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2024, 376pp, ISBN: 978-1-3503- 2622-4, £75.00. Hardback.' *Endeavour* 48, no. 2 (2024): 100936.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.endeavour.2024.100936>.

WRITING FOR A BROADER AUDIENCE

1. Briers, Megan and Lena Kasten, "Revisiting Nineteenth-Century Photographic Practices: A Workshop with Maximilian Zeitler", *Max Planck Institute for the History of Science*, June 2026.
<https://www.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/news/revisiting-nineteenth-century-photographic-practices-workshop-maximilian-zeitler>
2. Briers, Megan. "A Day in the life at the Royal Observatory Greenwich: Behind the scenes with the Airy family", *The British Society for the History of Mathematics* (blog), January 2026.
<https://bshm.ac.uk/greenwich-with-the-airys/>
3. Briers, Megan. "Historical Notes: Photographing Coronal Streamers", *Mathematics Today* (December 2025): 162-164.

PRESENTATIONS

INVITED ACADEMIC

2025

- **"Mrs Maunder with her tiny lens has beaten all the big instruments": Expeditions and the status of women and amateurs in late Victorian astronomy** (ARCHIFLAMM Seminar, IMJ-PRG, Paris, October 22)
- **Managing the stars, a national institute and a family: the Airys and the RGO archives** (SIGMA Seminar, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, July 11)
- **Greenwich as a home and observatory: the Airy family and the RGO collections** (Modern History of Mathematics: Looking Ahead, INI, Cambridge, April 28)

2024

- **Controversy over Correspondence: Richarda Airy and the Discovery of Neptune** (HU Gender Colloquium, Humbolt Universität, Berlin, October 25)
- **"The aspect of things was the most fearful that I ever saw": Emotions and Victorian eclipse observations** (Global Eclipse Reckoning, Edinburgh, November 20)

2022

- **Wikipedia and the Representation of Collaboration between Mathematicians** (History of Mathematics Forum, University of Oxford, Oxford, September)

PEER REVIEWED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2026

- (two-part panel, co-organised with Jesse Garrison) **“even if the other man is a lady or a camera”: Women and the British Astronomical Association Expeditions** (HSS/ESHS 2026 Joint Meeting, Edinburgh, July 16)
- **Greenwich as a home and observatory: the Airy family and the RGO collections** (Observatory Networks Revisited, Royal Museums Greenwich, London, March 26)
- **Gender, Observers’ Bodies and Nineteenth-Century Measurements of the Distance to the Sun** (BSHM Research in Progress, Queen’s College Oxford, March 7)

2025

- **‘It would of course be an entire novelty to appoint a lady as an official eclipse observer’: Annie Maunder’s eclipse expeditions** (Women in Science: Historical Perspectives, Royal Society, London, November 18)
- **Gender and the construction of nineteenth-century British eclipse expeditions** (AIP Early Career Conference for Historians of the Physical Sciences, Salvador, August 7)
- **‘I anxiously hope that it may be my good fortune to again be his “companion” on such an occasion’: Richarda Airy and the British solar eclipse expeditions** (BSHS 2025, Cambridge, July 10)
- **Controversy over Correspondence: Richarda Airy and the Discovery of Neptune** (BSHM Research in Progress, Queen’s College Oxford, February 22)

2024

- **The Scottish scientific instrument trade: insights into its development from a digital humanities approach** (BSHS 2024, Aberystwyth, July 12)
- **Shifting positions: Women in Late Victorian Astronomy expeditions** (Women and Worlds of Learning, Oxford and Virtual, April 13)

2023

- **The Value of Women as Observers in the 1870 Eclipse Expedition** (BSHM Research in Progress, Queen’s College Oxford, February 25)

BROADER AUDIENCE

2026

- **Women Who Chased the Sun: Hidden Figures of 19th-Century Astronomy Expeditions** (Brewing Minds, Berlin, March 18)
- **Photographing the coronal streamers: Annie Maunder and the amateur/professional eclipse expeditions** (MPI for Solar System Research, Göttingen, January 27)

2025

- **Nineteenth Century Solar Eclipse Investigations** (Visit of the MPI for Solar Systems Research, Berlin, September 5)

2024

- **Women in Victorian astronomy expeditions** (Pint of Science, Berlin, May 14)
- **Astronomie-Expedition Ressourcen** (MPIWG Retreat, Berlin, Feb 15)

ORGANISED EVENTS

November 2025 -	IMPRS Colloquium Co-organised the IMPRS colloquium with Po-Yuan Cheng (MPIWG/TU), managing timetables, recruiting speakers and arranging the logistical details
July 2026	Panel ‘Emerging from the Shadow: New Perspectives on Solar Eclipse Expeditions’ (<i>History of Science Society/ European Society for the History of Science Meeting, Edinburgh</i>) Co-organised with Jesse Garrison (UCL)
March 2026	Workshop, 19 th -Century Photographic Practices (<i>MPIWG, Berlin</i>) Two-day workshop, led by Maximilian Zeitler consisting of a theoretical overview and practical session using wet plate collodion and gelatine dry plate techniques Co-organised with Lena Kasten (MPIWG/HU) and Jonathan Haid (MPIWG/HU)
November 2024	Session, Astronomy expeditions and material resources (<i>Archenhold Observatory, Berlin</i>) Co-organised with Archenhold Observatory, Berlin as part of the IMPRS Colloquium
September 2023	Conference, Novembertagung: Interactions between History and Philosophy of Mathematics (<i>University of Rijeka, Rijeka</i>) Co-organised with Saša Popović, Hala Khassiba, Clément Bonvoisin and Benjamin Zayton Funding from BSHM, ICHM, CNRS, Archives Henri-Poincaré among others

TEACHING

2023 – 2024	Teaching assistant for “Knowledge and Its Resources: Concepts, Methods, Historiographies” graduate seminar (<i>MPIWG, Berlin</i>)
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GRANTS

Oct – Nov 2025	Procope Mobilität Scholarship for visit to French research institution (1700 euros)
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Nov 2024 International Commission on the History of Mathematics Grant for International Research-Related Activity (300 euros)

VISITING POSITIONS

Oct – Nov 2025 Visiting PhD student
Histoire des sciences mathématiques group
Institut de Mathématiques de Jussieu - Paris Rive Gauche

Jan – May 2025 Invited Participant in “Modern History of Mathematics” Conference
Isaac Newton Institute for Mathematical Sciences, Cambridge

ADMINISTRATION AND ACADEMIC SERVICE

2024 – present Web Administrator for the **British Society of the History of Mathematics**
Key Responsibilities:
Overseeing a WordPress build, regularly updated with activities of society
Managing the technical systems for our competitions and grants
Running and editing the BSHM blog
Addressing technical questions or problems for the BSHM

2023 – 2024 IMPRS-KIR Student Representative
Key Responsibilities:
Acting as an intermediary between students and teaching staff
Involved in the recruitment of a new cohort of PhD students

SOCIETY AFFILIATIONS

2019 – present Member (and Committee, since 2024) of the **British Society for the History of Mathematics**

2024 – present Member of the **British Society for the History of Science**

2025 – present Member of the **British Astronomical Association**

2025 – present Fellow of the **Royal Astronomical Society**

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Languages: English (native speaker), German (B2), Welsh (A2)

Technologies: Python, Java, R

References available on request.