

MEGAN BRIERS

IMPRS-KIR, MPIWG, Boltzmannstr. 22, Berlin, 14195 | mrbriers@mpwig-berlin.mpg.de

EDUCATION

- 2023 – PhD, History of Science
Max Planck Institute of History of Science (MPIWG), TU Berlin
 “Women in Nineteenth-Century British 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. 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>.
2. 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.
3. 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. ‘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), 27 January 2026.
<https://bshm.ac.uk/greenwich-with-the-airys/>
2. 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 22nd)
- **Managing the stars, a national institute and a family: the Airys and the RGO archives** (SIGMA Seminar, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, July 11th)
- **Greenwich as a home and observatory: the Airy family and the RGO collections** (Modern History of Mathematics: Looking Ahead, INI, Cambridge, April 28th)

2024

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

2022

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

PEER REVIEWED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2026

- (accepted as part of a 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 2026)
- **Greenwich as a home and observatory: the Airy family and the RGO collections** (Observatory Networks Revisited, Royal Museums Greenwich, London, March 26th)
- **Gender, Observers’ Bodies and Nineteenth-Century Measurements of the Distance to the Sun** (BSHM Research in Progress, Queen’s College Oxford, March 7th)

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 18th)
- **Gender and the construction of nineteenth-century British eclipse expeditions** (AIP Early Career Conference for Historians of the Physical Sciences, Salvador, August 7th)
- **‘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 10th)
- **Controversy over Correspondence: Richarda Airy and the Discovery of Neptune** (BSHM Research in Progress, Queen’s College Oxford, February 22nd)

2024

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

2023

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

BROADER AUDIENCE

2026

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

2025

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

2024

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

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’ (*History of Science Society/European Society for the History of Science Meeting, Edinburgh*)
Co-organised with Jesse Garrison (UCL)
- March 2026 Workshop, 19th-Century Photographic Practices (*MPIWG, Berlin*)
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 (*Archenhold Observatory, Berlin*)
Co-organised with Archenhold Observatory, Berlin as part of the IMPRS Colloquium
- September 2023 Conference, Novembertagung: Interactions between History and Philosophy of Mathematics (*University of Rijeka, Rijeka*)
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 (*MPIWG, Berlin*)

GRANTS

- Oct – Nov 2025 Procope Mobilität Scholarship for visit to French research institution (1700 euros)
- 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.