In announcing the presentation on 24 May 2005, the President said:

As many of you will recall, last year we celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Christopher Blunt. At our June meeting we heard five short papers about Christopher’s numismatic work and two personal responses from his daughter-in-law, Mrs Julia Blunt, and son-in-law, Prof. Karl Morrison. These brought out Christopher’s seminal contributions to British numismatics, and in particular his promotion of this Society; his support for younger scholars was also stressed. Out of that there developed an idea that it would be very appropriate to rename our Council Prize in Christopher Blunt’s memory. I sounded out the Blunt family to see if this suggestion appealed, and Christopher’s son, Simon Blunt, having consulted his sisters, responded enthusiastically. Indeed the three of them most generously pledged to support the Prize financially. Earlier this year, then, Council resolved to change the name of the Council Prize to the Blunt Prize, and increase its value from £150 to £300. I am delighted that Simon and Julia Blunt have joined us this evening and in a moment I will ask Mr Blunt to present the first Blunt Prize.

The Prize will continue to be awarded every three years, and the criteria for selecting the recipient remain the same. It is to be given to a younger person, preferably under thirty-five, whether a member of the Society or not, who has made a significant contribution to the study of coins, medals or tokens, struck or used by the peoples of the British Isles and Commonwealth and the United States of America, and of such territories as may at any time be or have been subject to their jurisdiction. When the Council came to consider the award this year it chose from a short-list of six strong candidates. The person chosen as the recipient of the first Blunt Prize emerged with a very clear majority, and represents others first too. He is the first scholar to have been recognised through an award of the Society for his work on the numismatics of one of the Commonwealth countries, and it is the first time we have made an award to a non-member of the Society, though we hope we may persuade him to join. This young scholar’s outstanding command of his subject, his inspired lectures and prolific publications left us in no doubt that he is a very worthy recipient.

Shailendra Bhandare, who is now 36, started as a coin collector and amateur enthusiast in Bombay (Mumbai). His first degree from the University of Mumbai was in Pharmacy (in 1991), but his growing interest in numismatics lead him to study part-time for an MA in History (1994) and for a PhD, on Coinage of the Satavahana era (first century AD), in 1999. His knowledge of Indian coinage is wide-ranging and deep, with publications spanning the earliest punch-marked coinages to modern banknotes and coins. He has taken a special interest in the monetary history of the Mughals, East India Company and Princely States, i.e. the period of British activity and rule in India. In 1999 he came to Britain on a Charles Wallace Visiting Fellowship for three months to study coins of the Princely States at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, preparing a catalogue of the collection. He subsequently obtained a scholarship to work on similar coins at the British Museum, before being appointed in 2002 to the post he currently holds at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, as Assistant Keeper of South Asian Numismatics.

He is the principal author of a book on Indian banknotes and has published many articles in Indian journals and elsewhere, including seventeen in the Oriental Numismatic Society Newsletter in the last five years. He is widely regarded as one of the most promising and talented numismatists India has ever produced. His contribution to the study of coinage during the British period in India has already been significant, and clearly much more is to come.

The President then invited Mr Simon Blunt to make the presentation to Dr Bhandare.
In the Spring of 2005 the President launched an appeal to establish a fund to support the John Sanford Saltus Medal, the Blunt Prize and any other prize that the Society may establish from time to time. By the close of the Appeal £8,295 (including reclaimed tax on donations under Gift Aid) had been raised from 97 donors. Contributors to the Fund included:

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