



## *The Australasian Society for Classical Studies*

### SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 2006

Membership stands at 427, though some 20-30 of these are unfinancial for 2006. Even if we don't get a subscription out of all of the latter, their number will be made up by new members joining as a result of attending this conference. The total represents a doubling of the membership over the last five years, thanks largely to the number of honours and postgraduate students who have joined – and their enthusiasm is evident from the large number who attend and give papers at our conferences. Payment of membership by the five-year discounted rate continues to be an attractive option, with some 25% of the membership taking advantage of it. Unfortunately there are still too many who have to be sent a reminder to pay their subscription (over 30% last year), involving an unnecessary expenditure on paper and postage (to say nothing of the Secretary's time!).

The conference and general meeting held at the University of Tasmania in Hobart in February was again a successful and enjoyable occasion [*especially the dinner, though the climb back up the hill after being dropped back at the university was a sobering experience for some!*]; all credit must go to the Convenor, A/Prof Peter Davis, and his team for this outstanding achievement. The practice of funding a keynote speaker continued, with Professor Barbara Gold, from Hamilton College, attending the Hobart conference, and with Professor David Braund, from the University of Exeter, attending the present conference. Subsidies for student travel to the conference were again made available, with AU\$3000 being divided between 17 honours and postgraduate students to enable them to attend this year's meeting.

A highlight of 2006 was the frequent appearance of the journal. While the distribution of four issues of the journal in the one year taxed the Secretary's energies, there were some significant "firsts". Vol. 39 moved into the digital era with the attachment of a CD to illustrate one of the articles, and Vol. 40 marked the 40th anniversary of the Society and its journal with the first thematic issue ("Catullus in Contemporary Perspective") and a specially designed cover. Vol. 40 also appeared *suo anno*, which was not a first, but it has been done only a couple of times before in the history of the journal. Vols 39 and 40 were also longer than normal – around 120 pp each compared to 100 pp in recent years. With the journal caught up to date, there is the prospect of a quick publication of accepted articles, so members are encouraged to think of submitting articles to it, rather than elsewhere, so that we have a good supply and can keep the momentum going. The Editors will be reporting on the journal more fully elsewhere, but it would not be inappropriate here to thank them most warmly for their efforts and guidance which has got the journal out and up-to-date.

The initiative begun in 2004 – the provision of grants to small departments to assist in the local promotion of the subject – was continued in 2006. Two grants were made: AU\$600 to the University of Tasmania to advertise in the *Hobart Mercury* the public lecture by Professor Gold during ASCS 27, and NZ\$1088 to Massey University to advertise its extramural courses in the *New Zealand Listener*. One grant has already been approved for 2007.

Three subsidies were provided for one-off conferences: AU\$1500 for the conference on "War, Culture and Democracy" at the University of Sydney in July; AU\$1500 for the conference on "Alexander the Great and his Successors" at the University of Otago in August; and AU\$1500 for the conference on "Close Relations: The 'Spaces' of Greek and Roman Theatre" at the University of Melbourne and Monash University in September. Three subsidies have already been approved for 2007.

Another initiative begun in 2005 was the setting up of an “Early Career” Award of AU\$2000. The inaugural recipient was Dr Anna Silvas, from the University of New England, who planned to use the award to travel to Uluköy (the site of ancient Annisa in the Roman province of Pontus) to explore the possible location nearby of the ascetic retreat of St Basil the Great. She reports that the trip successfully identified the location, an international “scoop” which we hope will be published in detail in *Antichthon*. An announcement on the 2006 winner will be made shortly.

The Australian student essay competition, finalised at the start of 2006, attracted 25 entries from eight universities; first prize of \$350 was awarded to Mark Siford (UWA), and there were two “highly commended” awards of \$50 each, to Kiera Trepka (UNewc) and Christopher Ranson (ANU). The 2006 New Zealand *Scholia* essay competition in honour of John Barsby attracted 24 entries; first prize of \$150 was awarded to Maree Cross (UAuck) and second place to Melanie Place (MasseyU). The prize for this competition is sponsored by ASCS.

The Greek and Latin translation competition, with prizes of \$250 in each section, due to be introduced in 2006, was postponed because of a lack of entries. It will be implemented in 2007, with more targeted advertising at potential teachers and entrants.

The Newsletter was sent out twice during the year, in April and October, and is welcomed as a means of keeping members in touch with what is happening with the subject in the various universities. Contacting members by email continues to be a convenient way of disseminating information: over 90% of members now receive communications in this format. This allows for the regular sending out of interesting or useful messages, as well as matters relevant to the running of the Society.

With the happy amalgamation with our New Zealand colleagues now well entrenched, there are now 20 university departments/centres/disciplines/programmes/programs/teaching units – *take your pick of these terms* – represented on the Executive Committee. The executive committee did not have a face-to-face meeting in 2006, but did have one email consultation.

I would like to pay tribute here to two members of the executive who work tirelessly and voluntarily behind the scenes, but whose work is not always visible. The Treasurer who not only keeps the books and writes the numerous cheques for the many schemes we now operate, but who also deals with the subscription payments of over 400 members (all those credit card slips take some time to write out and bank), and the Business Manager who deals with some 225 institutional subscriptions, handles the multitude of correspondence and invoices that they generate, and dispatches the copies of the journal to them. They really deserve the Society’s congratulations and thanks.

Bruce Marshall  
Honorary Secretary, ASCS  
6 February 2007



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#### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

- Membership is up to 427, with an increase expected from the present conference.
- ASCS 27 at the University of Tasmania a successful and enjoyable occasion.
- AU\$3000 available for subsidising student conference travel divided between 17 applicants.
- Vols 39 and 40 of *Antichthon* achieve significant “firsts”.
- Two grants totalling c. AU\$1800 were made under the scheme for the provision of grants to small departments to assist in the local promotion of the subject.
- “Early Career” Award of AU\$2000 continued.
- Essay Prize Competitions held Australia and New Zealand in 2006, with prize money totaling AU\$600.
- Greek and Latin Translation Competition postponed to 2007.
- Congratulations to Treasurer and Business Manager.