



The Australasian Society for Classical Studies

SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 2011

As usual, I begin my report with membership. Membership has dropped this year, from 488 to 466. There is a reason: the censors for 2011 (i.e. the Secretary and the Treasurer) completed a severe *Iustrum*, marking with a *nota* many members who, having squandered the patrimonies, no doubt, had become impecunious for a year or two and so failed to pay their subscription. They were deemed unworthy therefore to remain on the rolls.

ASCS 32 in Auckland was a great success – perhaps too great a success, to judge by the number of papers offered. There were 150 papers and 180 in attendance (a performance rate of 83%). Some concern was expressed about the crowded program – and the joint-convenors, A/Prof Anne Mackay and Dr Jeremy Armstrong, struggled to draw up the program and did very well to fit them all in. Thanks were expressed to them for their hard work and to their team of helpers. The great initiative started by Neil O'Sullivan the year before to produce the *Proceedings* of the conference in electronic format was followed, and 30 selected papers were accepted for the second set of *Proceedings*. I understand that the convenors of the present conference are planning to follow the example, so there are hopes that it may become a regular production.

The major decision of the Annual General Meeting was to endorse the new Constitution for ASCS which was a necessary basis for an application for incorporation, which was subsequently completed through the Victorian Department of Consumer Affairs. Another decision of that meeting, subsequently developed by the Committee, was to establish a conference program review committee to look at all offers of papers for future conferences. This committee worked conscientiously to review (anonymously) all offers of papers for the present conference; although it did not recommend any great change in the policy which has been in operation since time immemorial, i.e. all offers were accepted in the end, several members were asked to rewrite their proposal. The Committee has recently decided that this program review committee would continue its operation again for next year's conference, and it could be that it will be taking a more stringent line next time.

Congratulations again to the Editors for bringing out the latest issue of *Antichthon*, Vol 45, *suo anno*. Vol 46 for 2011 is well under way at this stage, and is likely to be around 220 pages in length (which partly explains a particular item later on the agenda).

Again a good number of one-off conference received subsidies this past year: [I have put up a list of them on the overhead]. The total amount of ASCS funds provided in support was \$5,200, of which about \$650 was repaid.

July	USyd	Silius and Flavian Cultures	\$1000
July	UMelb/MonashU	Text, Illustration, Revival	\$1000
September	ANU	The Gruen Transfer/	\$1000
September	MacqU	Amphora(e) 5 (postgraduate)	\$2000
December	UMelb	Reception Studies (postgraduate)	\$200

The increased amount for Amphora(e) 5 was part of a deliberate policy to provide travel subsidies to encourage postgraduate students to attend and give their first public presentation at a conference like it, rather than at "big" ASCS. The policy seems to have worked, because there was a record number of 56 papers given by students at it, out of 76 who attended. All credit goes to the convenor, Miriam Gillett, and her team for the conference's outstanding success. The next postgraduate conference is to be held at the University of Auckland in July this year.

I flagged in my report last year what I saw as a serious problem for our own postgraduate studies programs: the number of overseas appointments to Australian academic positions (and to a lesser degree, New Zealand ones). I think it a concern which the Society could consider further this year by undertaking a more detailed and accurate survey. On the other hand, an encouraging sign has been the number of positions which have been filled, including no less than three chairs; it was nice to see the named Hughes chair restored at the University of Adelaide. Another investigation I would like to

undertake is developing links with other associations around the Pacific and the Southern Hemisphere, another matter which I flagged last year.

The usual range of prize and award competitions was conducted in 2011, for a total prizemoney of \$3600 or more. I will be reporting the various results later. The Newsletter was, as usual, sent out twice during the year, in April and September. John Penwill and Marguerite Johnson continue their good work in putting the Newsletter together and formatting it, and John took on the unenviable task of collating a publications list. This list will now be collated annually and placed in the April Newsletter, as well as archived on the website. Thank you to both of them. Regular messages are also sent out by email to around 440 members (or 90%) who have opted to receive communications in this format, though it is a hassle sometimes to keep up with all the changes to email addresses.

The executive committee had four email consultations during the year; while not ideal, there is a lot of email discussion backwards and forwards, and it is a convenient way to involve the larger number of committee members on both sides of the Ditch.

Before I close I would like to thank all those people who give voluntarily of their time to assist the Society: the co-ordinators and assessors for the two essay competitions, the markers for the two translation competitions, the two assessors for the early career award, and the co-ordinator and panel for the Optima Prize. We owe them a debt of thanks for giving up their time, usually in the summer vacation, to carry out these tasks.

To finish on a personal note: If I am re-elected to the position of Secretary later in this meeting, I announce my intention of not standing again for the position at the AGM in 2013. After (then) twenty years as the Secretary, I think it is time for a younger person to take it on who will have fresher ideas – and be less of a grumpy old fart like me.

Bruce Marshall
Honorary Secretary, ASCS
20th January 2012