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The Australasian Society for Classical Studies

Annual General Meeting 2015

Secretary’s Report

# Membership

Membership of the Society currently stands at 2 Life Members and 419 Financial Members. 69 Members have not paid their subscription for 2014 and we had two official resignations.

During 2014, we successfully introduced a system of online payment with the help of Kit Morrell. The system is working well and has had an excellent take-up. However, the delay in its implementation meant that membership dues were collected later than normal and a considerable proportion of members have not paid for 2014. The efforts of neither the membership secretary nor the secretary have yet been successful in resolving this situation. Rest assured that there will be no public bullying of unfinancial members while I am secretary but the loss of membership dues has a considerable impact on the ability of the Society to meet its commitments, especially as we need to monitor the new conditions inherent in our decision to move the journal to Cambridge University Press. To this end, the Membership Secretary, Treasurer and I have taken and are taking measures to minimise this loss and to persuade as many unfinancial members as possible to update their membership.

Tim Scott, who acted as membership secretary for eighteen months, has now moved to a new position in Germany. Nathan Leber has served in the role and has offered to continue for the coming year.

# Antichthon

As the Antichthon Editors and Business Manager will report in detail, our negotiations concerning the future of Antichthon have concluded with the signing of a contract and the journal will appear with a new cover and with a new publisher in 2015. This is the end of a very long road and a lot of hard work from the principal architects of the move, especially John Penwill.

# Conference Program Review Committee

The process of submitting an abstract for ASCS meetings has now been streamlined. The new coversheet and guidelines for panels, archaeological reports and the dedicated email address have proved to be a wonderful advantage. Between this and the dropboxes which allow the committee to assess the anonymised proposals we now have a modus operandi which makes a complicated system work much more effectively. As coordinator of the committee, I checked all proposals to ensure that they complied with the guidelines and returned any which did not meet the technical requirements. The committee was then able to concentrate on the content. An overwhelming majority of proposals were accepted without need of change, a small number were asked to address the concerns of committee members and very few proposals were rejected (though some were). It is my hope that as the system becomes more familiar there will be less need for the amount of traffic we currently endure, but for the next year or two I think it is in the best interests of members and conveners to have as many good proposals as possible and if this means that there needs to be some discussion and tolerance then I am willing to bear the brunt.

My heartfelt thanks go to John Davidson who has chaired the committee for the last three years. John is stepping down from this role which he has filled with effectiveness and charm. He will be hard to replace but has deserved his release.

# Secretary@ascs.org.au

The experiment of using a role-based email account was so successful that I have asked our webmaster Kit Morrell to create a role-based email address for the secretary. I therefore ask that all ASCS-related business be sent to that address. The advantage for me is that it keeps all ASCS correspondence together and not mixed up in an account which can receive hundreds of other messages a day. It also allows me to choose the times I work on ASCS matters and to deal with them as a block. Finally, it means that handing over to a new secretary becomes easier because all the correspondence can be found in one place and s/he can simply take over the account. Rest assured it is still me answering the messages. The address, not the secretary, has changed.

# Prizes and Competitions

With the exception of the Optima prize, the ASCS-sponsored competitions for 2014-2015 have been concluded. Arlene Allen and Lara O’Sullivan have been respectively responsible for the NZ and Australian essay competitions.

For the New Zealand competition, first place was awarded to Katie Logan, for her essay entitled ‘In Defence of Heroides 1’; second place was given to Rose Crozier for her essay, ‘To Each Her Own: Electra and Matricide in Sophocles and Aeschylus’. Both winners this year were from UAuckland. Judges included Sean McConnell, Maxine Lewis and Gina Salapata.

Brennan Nicholson (University of Sydney) won the Australian competition with his essay ‘The Sight of Sound: On the Punctuation of the Prologue of Euripides’ Electra in Laurentianus 32.2’. First runner up was Miranda Gronow (University of Melbourne), for ‘Patchworks and Patroclus: Understanding the Homeric centos of Eudocia Augusta’. Second runner up was Natalie Mendes (University of Sydney), for ‘Quisquis faber suae fortunae est: Livy's Servius Tullius’. The judges were Graeme Bourke and Graeme Miles.

Patrick O’Sullivan once again oversaw the translation competition, with Jane Bellemore and Robin Bond acting as judges. Dane Drivas (3rd Year, University of Sydney) won the Latin completion for the second year running. Tom Hardman, University of Melbourne (3rd year); Ajantha Abey, University of Sydney (2nd Year); Neilson Brown, University of Sydney (3rd Year) were highly commended. Octavian Catrinei, University of Melbourne (2nd year) was declared the winner of the Greek competition. Tom Hardman, University of Melbourne (3rd year); Timothy Waugh, University of Melbourne (3rd year) were highly commended.

Alison Griffith organised the judging of the Early Career Award, with Gary Morrison and Jon Hall acting as judges. The award went to Dr Kit Morrell, which will use it to finance a period of research in Oxford. All concerned commented on the high quality of the applications and the difficulty in coming to a decision. Unsuccessful candidates are seriously asked to consider applying again.

# Executive Committee: proposals for fixed terms of some positions.

It is with great pleasure that I report that Professor Anne Mackay will stand for the position of President of the Society following the completion of Ron Ridley’s three years in this role. If Anne is elected, the presidency will return to New Zealand and the process of an Australian-based colleague and a New Zealand-based colleague serving in turn will continue. More significantly, perhaps, is the fact that the Society will have its second-ever female president, the first being the late Beryl Rawson. It has been a long-held aim of mine to address the lack of gender balance in the presidency of the Society and I am delighted that such a distinguished and effective colleague as Anne has agreed to take on the task.

At the beginning of the year I asked the Executive Committee to consider whether guidelines for the length of tenure of other positions besides the presidency should be introduced. There was broad agreement to the proposal but not to it being constitutionally mandated. Discussions have commenced and will continue at this meeting as to which positions should have suggested maximum periods of tenure and what those periods should be. For now, I would like to explain why I believe this should happen. First, it shares the burden of Society administration around the membership. Second, it prevents a position from becoming a particular person’s province. Third, there is the hope that involving more members for shorter periods will build up a large group of members who have a good understanding of how the Society functions and how much work it takes to keep it afloat.

Sadly, we were not able to find anyone to represent ASCS at the FIEC congress in Bordeaux, which can only be strong testament to how hard we are all working. We hope to do better next time.

I would like to congratulate Ron Ridley on reaching the end of his three years as President and to thank him for his efforts on behalf of the Society.

I would alsoo like to thank the organisers of this splendid conference.

Kathryn Welch

Honorary Secretary