

Proceedings of the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies 2005–6

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at 2 pm on Saturday, 3 June 2006 in the Lecture Theatre of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, 17 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DR. The President, Professor M.G. Fulford, FBA, FSA, was in the chair and welcomed members and non-members.

Professor Fulford began by presenting to members the Report of the Council for 2005, which had been circulated in May, and commenting on the matters relating to the Library that were of serious concern to the Societies. At short notice the Library had had to move from the South Block of Senate House to temporary quarters in the North Block shortly before Christmas. It had been a major disruption for the staff and the members, and the new accommodation was considerably less attractive and convenient than that in the South Block. There was no news about when the Library might return to its previous home and exactly what that accommodation would be. As indicated on pp. 6–8 of the Report, the ICS Library's budget had been transferred to the University of London Research Library Services on 1 August 2005, and this, together with the removal of the Librarian's reporting line to the ICS Director, meant that the Societies were distanced from the management of the Library. Mrs C.L. Roberts proposed the adoption of the 2005 Report, seconded by Dr J.R.W. Prag; this was passed *nem. con.*

The Hon. Treasurer, Mr G.E.A. Kentfield, presented the accounts for 2005, his 15th set as the Society's Treasurer, and complimented the Secretary, Dr H.M. Cockle, on her careful oversight of the financial records and administration of the Society. The surplus of £5,000 in 2005 had been entirely adventitious, because of the delay in the publication of JRS Mono. 10; its publication during the summer would, however, lead to a deficit in 2006. There had been further unrealised gains on the Society's investments. There being no questions, the Accounts for 2005 were approved *nem. con.*, on the proposal of Dr R.D. Hackney, seconded by Dr J.M. Reynolds.

On the proposal of Miss A.E. Healey, seconded by Dr J.M. Reynolds, Council was authorised to agree the remuneration of the auditors. Mr Kentfield reminded the meeting that AGN Shipleys had been the Society's auditors for many years, but said that since the retirement of a long-standing partner their service had been less satisfactory. The Hellenic and Roman Societies and the Classical Association had together investigated other firms and favoured Larkings of Canterbury, a specialist firm of charity auditors whose fees were substantially cheaper than Shipleys. Mrs C.L. Roberts proposed and Dr R.P.J. Jackson seconded the appointment of Larkings as auditors for 2006. Professor J.J. Wilkes proposed, seconded by Mr J.W. Bradley, the following nominations for election: as Vice-Presidents for 2006–7 Professor A.K. Bowman, FBA, FSA, Dame Averil M. Cameron, CBE, FBA, FSA, and Rev. Professor J.S. Richardson, FRSE; as Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary for 2006–7 Mr G.E.A. Kentfield and Mrs E. Matthews respectively; and as Council members for 2006–9: Dr V. Arena, Dr J.D. Creighton, Dr A.N. Gardner, Dr B.J. Gibson, Dr K.M. Gilliver, Dr M.E. Harlow, Dr K. Lomas and Dr I. Sandwell. They were all declared elected *nem. con.*

Mr Kentfield drew attention to the fact that subscription rates had last been raised in 2003. Council had looked at the institutional rates for *JRS* and *Britannia* and concluded that they were considerably lower than for comparable journals such as *The Antiquaries Journal*; an increase in these rates would help increase the Society's income at a time when deficits would otherwise be inevitable. On the proposal of Dr Jackson, seconded by Professor J.F. Gardner, the meeting passed *nem. con.* the proposal that the institutional rate should be increased from £45 to £60 per journal from 1 January 2007.

Professor Fulford had already outlined to the meeting some of the problems relating to the Library. Although it seemed that progress had been made on resolving problems of space in the South Block, the question of how the Societies managed their assets was far from resolved. He reported that King's College London had made an offer of space in their Drury Lane Building and had proposed three options which had been discussed by Council at a meeting the previous

week and again that morning; they were that (a) the ICS and Combined Library should move as part of the SAS and ULRLS; that (b) the ICS should move with the Combined Library as an independent entity; that (c) the Societies and Combined Library (or Joint Library) should move, while the ICS remained in Senate House. After careful discussion Council had expressed a preference for option (b) as opposed to option (a). A key factor in all consideration of this complex issue was cost; the Societies contributed the greater part of the books for the Combined Library but a large part of the recurrent costs came from HEFCE via the University.

The President opened the matter to the meeting for discussion, during which a large number of members took part. He confirmed that the University was aware that the Societies were in discussions with KCL, and that willingness on the part of HEFCE to support the Library in KCL would be fundamentally important. Professor M.H. Crawford, Hon. Librarian, noted that the University had recently produced plans that would provide better space for the Library in the South Block than it had offered in autumn 2005, but that it was these 2005 plans that had been submitted to Camden Council for planning permission. Miss A.E. Healey, a former Librarian of the Societies, questioned to what extent the Societies would be independent of KCL should they move there, given the problems that they were experiencing in their current relationship with the UL. Professor Crawford reassured the members that KCL's wish was for an independent Classics institute under its aegis, and said that the long-term aim should be to make the Library financially independent. Miss A.C. Dionisotti, a member of the Dept of Classics at KCL, confirmed that the department in KCL was wholly supportive of the ICS and Societies forming an independent facility that would be available to all researchers. There was much support for Professor J.J. Wilkes's concern for protecting the future of the ICS and Library as a centre for postgraduate students. A number of current and recent postgraduate members expressed their concern about the impact that the turmoil in the Senate House and the uncertain future of the Library was having on their studies and the cohesion of the postgraduate community. Mrs Roberts, Secretary of the Classical Association, spoke of the concern shared by many members of staff for the position of the Librarian, Mr C.H. Annis, and urged the Society, together with the Hellenic Society, to press the University to withdraw the letter sent to Mr Annis by the Head of Human Resources, making him directly answerable to the Head of ULRLS and removing his reporting line to the Societies; the President told members that the Vice-Chancellor had agreed verbally that this letter should be withdrawn, and that both Presidents would pursue the matter again.

On the proposal of Dr Prag, seconded by Professor A.I. Wilson, the meeting approved unanimously the resolutions passed by the Council earlier in the day, namely:

that the Roman Society should move, in concert with the Hellenic Society, to substantive discussions with King's and the other interested parties about the options of a move to Drury Lane;

that it preferred KCL's Option 2 to Option 1;

that the negotiators on the Society's behalf should be the President, Treasurer, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Librarian, supported by the Secretary; and

that the negotiators should report to an extraordinary meeting of Council, which was authorised to take the final decision on behalf of the membership.

On the proposal of Professor D.W. Rathbone, the meeting also agreed unanimously that the two Presidents should write again to the Vice-Chancellor asking him to fulfil his promise to rescind the letter from the Director of HR to Mr Annis.

The President expressed thanks to the Secretary and the Library staff for their hard work during the past year and to those who had prepared the buffet lunch. A particular vote of thanks to the Library staff was passed at the suggestion of Professor Rathbone.

The AGM was followed by two very well-attended lectures: Professor Alison R. Sharrock on 'Gender and Genre, Heroism and Feminism in Latin Epic Poetry' and Mr Philip Crummy, FSA on 'The Roman Circus at Colchester'.