

# Proceedings of the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies 2007–8

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at 2 pm on Saturday, 7 June 2008 in Room 336, North Block, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU. The President, Professor M. G. Fulford, FBA, FSA, was in the chair and welcomed members and non-members.

Professor Fulford presented to members the Report of the Council for 2007, which had been circulated in May. He noted the highlights of the year including the Seventh Roman Archaeology Conference held at University College London, 29 March–1 April 2007, and the publication in December of two *Britannia* monographs, No. 23, W. S. Hanson *et al.*, *Elginhaugh, a Flavian Fort and its Annexe*, and No. 24, P. Crummy *et al.*, *Stanway, an Elite Burial Site at Camulodunum*, and paid tribute to the Publications Secretary, Dr L. F. Pitts, for her hard work and dedication. He also referred to the major change in the administration of the Society: the retirement of Dr H. M. Cockle after eighteen years as Secretary of the Society, and the appointment of Dr F. K. Haarer.

The Hon. Librarian, Professor M. H. Crawford, outlined the current situation regarding the ICS/Joint Library and the University of London. He noted the increased financial difficulties of Senate House Library, already in deficit, following the Crewe report which recommended the withdrawal of most of its HEFCE funding. He reported that planning permission had at last been submitted to Camden for listed building consent for the 3rd floor of the South Block, although this cast doubt on the validity of the draft service agreement between the Societies and the University in which the original deadline was November. He noted that the University was intending to implement a ratio of 8:1 open access space charges to closed access space charges. Since the Societies contributed such a large amount (£350,000 p/a) to non-space costs, Professor Crawford suggested that it would be unjust to also pay space costs. He cited the proposed rise from the current figure of £20,000 to £80,000 (for both Societies) and queried how the extra £30,000 (per Society) would be raised. Finally, he thanked the librarians for their continued dedication in the adverse circumstances.

The Hon. Treasurer, Mr G. E. A. Kentfield, presented the accounts for 2007. He explained that at the request of the auditors the library acquisitions from the years 2001–2007 had been capitalised and presented in the accounts as a tangible asset, amounting to a figure of approximately half a million (£220,000 per Society). He thanked the Librarian, Mr Annis, and his staff, for their hard work in producing the figures at short notice. He offered an apology for the financial report printed in the Annual Report since the tight timing had meant that although the deficit figure of £11,000 was accurate, the explanation was not quite correct. An erratum had been tabled. He also noted that the current presentation of the accounts was unhelpful in making it appear that the Society had a surplus of £33,000 when in fact the underlying position was a deficit of £11,000, and he undertook to discuss with the auditors how the accounts might be presented more helpfully next year. Finally, he noted that given the current downturn in the economy and the likelihood of increased accommodation costs in the future, the Society's financial position was not entirely comfortable, but he had no immediate plans to raise subscription rates further. The President thanked Mr Kentfield for his efforts over the last year.

Dr H. M. Cockle noted that Mr Paul Odgers, whose death had been reported in the Annual Report, had also been an Honorary Treasurer of the Society, as well as an Honorary Vice-President. She said that she was glad to hear Mr Kentfield's explanation of the accounts, since the current presentation had been confusing.

The Report and Accounts for 2007 were approved on the proposal of Dr A. Burnett, seconded by Professor J. F. Gardner, with three abstentions. The remuneration of the

auditors, Larkings, was approved *nem. con.* with no abstentions on the proposal of Dr A. Burnett and Professor B. C. Burnham, and Larkings were reappointed for 2008 on the proposal of Professor S. P. Oakley and seconded by Mr A. R. Wilmott, with two abstentions.

Professor J. A. North proposed and Miss A. E. Healey seconded the following nominations for election: as President for 2008–11 Dr A. Burnett, FBA, FSA; as Vice-Presidents for 2008–9 Professor A. K. Bowman, FBA, FSA, Professor M. G. Fulford, FBA, FSA, and Rev. Professor J. S. Richardson, FRSE; as Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary for 2008–9 Mr G. E. A. Kentfield and Mrs E. Matthews respectively; and as Council members for 2008–11: Professor B. Borg, Dr W. Bowden, Dr A. Cooley, Dr R. Cowan, Dr S. Green, Dr L. Grig, Dr M. Nicholls and Ms S. Worrell. They were all declared elected; there was one abstention.

The President reported that Dr S. R. F. Price had resigned as Chair of the Editorial Committee on grounds of ill health. In recognition of his support of the Society over many years, it was agreed that he should be elected an Honorary Vice-President.

The President paid tribute to the Secretary, Dr H. M. Cockle, who had retired in September after eighteen years in post, and a further eight as Assistant Editor of the *JRS*. He praised her dedicated work on behalf of the Society during that time, and presented her with a cheque. Dr Cockle responded by saying that she had greatly enjoyed working for the Society over the last twenty-six years and she thanked the members for their generous contributions to her leaving gift.

Finally, the Hon. Treasurer thanked the outgoing President, Professor Fulford, for his services to the Society over the last three years while continuing with his responsibilities at Reading and maintaining a high research profile, including publishing *Britannia Monograph 22, Life and Labour in Late Roman Silchester: Excavations in Insula IX since 1997*. Mr Kentfield praised the President for keeping a cool head throughout the difficult negotiations with the University of London over the future of the Joint Library.

The AGM was followed by two wide-ranging and stimulating lectures, Professor T. G. Parkin and Dr M. E. Harlow, ‘Where Would We Be Without Cicero? The Historiography of the Roman Family’ and Professor Fulford’s presidential address, ‘The Silchester Town Life Project: from Togidubnus to Tebicasos’.