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PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF HELLENIC STUDIES 2019–2020

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at 3pm on Saturday 13 June 2020 at the Orchard Car Park, Didcot OX11 7ND. Due to the social-distancing constraints in place as a consequence of the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, only two members were present. Mr Peter Lennon, the Honorary Treasurer, took the chair. The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting were accepted as a correct record. The President, Professor Judith Mossman, had provided the annual report on the Society's activities which is reproduced here.

We began the academic year on Wednesday 16 October, with a very successful event on Homer, held to benefit the Hellenic and Roman Library in collaboration with Classics For All, at which Edith Hall (King's College London), Nicoletta Momigliano (Bristol) and A.E. Stallings (fresh from the success of her wonderful translation of Hesiod's *Works and Days*) spoke about Homer in all his aspects, chaired by Martha Kearney of the BBC. The event was very well attended and benefited the cause handsomely.

The Autumn Lecture, on Thursday 21 November, was given by Patrick Finglass (Bristol) on 'Passionate lacunae: towards a new edition of Sappho'. This was a very wide-ranging talk, including textual and literary criticism, and the methodological problems and delights of dealing with fragments, and whetted the audience's appetite for his projected new text and commentary. We were also able to arrange a Society visit, with a lecture, to the Troy exhibition (*Troy – Myth and Reality*) at the British Museum in January. The Spring Lecture took place on Tuesday 18 February, delivered by Calum Maciver (Edinburgh), on 'Generic games: the ending of Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*, again', a highly enjoyable insight into the world of the ancient novel. On Tuesday 10 March we held a joint event with the Roman Society on *Animals in the Ancient World*, with contributions on animal language ('Not all beasts are dumb: language, communication and Aristotle's animals') from Malcolm Heath (Leeds), on Oppian ('Human and non-human animals: a view from the sea') from Emily Kneebone (Nottingham) and on Roman hunting ('The Roman art of hunting') from John Pearce (London).

Subsequently, the coronavirus crisis supervened, forcing us to postpone our Summer Lecture, which was to have been given by Leslie Brubaker (Birmingham) on 7 May, on 'Dancing in the streets: urban life in medieval Constantinople'. We also had to postpone the Presidential Lecture scheduled for 13 June, on 'The colours on the wings of the Sphinx: imagery and metaphor in Plutarch'. It is hoped that both these events will take place no later than the early part of 2021.

During the lockdown, the Library has continued to provide remote support to readers, by, for example, negotiating an increased range of ebooks from publishers including Cambridge University Press, Brepols and De Gruyter. At the time of writing, it is hoped that Senate House will soon reopen to staff. We hope and plan that, when it does, we may expand the Library's services as and when it is practicable to do so.

We are acutely aware that many of our members, and others who work in higher education, especially postgraduate students and early-career staff on temporary contracts, have been and will continue to be severely affected by this crisis and the consequent contraction in university positions and temporary teaching opportunities. We are planning, therefore, a temporary system of hardship grants to support those in need as a result of COVID-19. This will be reviewed at November's Council meeting.

We hope that the postponed events from this year, and any we may need to postpone in the Autumn of 2020, will take place soon. But, as the Chorus in A.E. Housman's fragment of a Greek tragedy have it: 'In speculation | I would not willingly acquire a name | for ill-digested thought; But after pondering much | To this conclusion I at last have come: | Life is uncertain.'

Mr Lennon introduced and proposed the adoption of the 2019 Financial Statements, and Dr Fiona Haarer seconded the motion. Mr Lennon proposed that the subscription rates for 2021 remain the same, and Dr Haarer seconded.

Mr Lennon proposed, and Dr Haarer seconded, the following motions:

Professor Paul Cartledge for election as President;

Professor Judith Mossman for election as Vice-President;

Professor Pat Easterling, Mr Brian Gilmore, Mr George Lemos, Dr Pantelis Michelakis, Professor Robin Osborne, Professor Christopher Rowe, Professor Malcolm Schofield, Professor Brian Sparkes and Dr David Thomas for re-election as Vice-Presidents;

Professor Katherine Harloe, Professor Polly Low, Professor Lynette Mitchell, Dr Christine Plastow, Professor Michael Squire, Professor Rosalind Thomas and Professor Phiroze Vasunia for election as members of Council to serve 2020–2023.

The sad death in April of Professor Ken Saunders MD, DSc, FRCP, whose re-election as Vice-President had been listed on the AGM notice sent to members, was noted.

Mr Lennon proposed, and Dr Haarer seconded, the re-election of Buzzacott LLP as auditors for 2020.

There was no other business, and the meeting closed at 3.05pm.

SOCIETY EVENTS 2019–2020

Wednesday 16 October 2019, Senate House: *Homer Today*, a HARL fundraising event with Professor Edith Hall (King's College London), Professor Nicoletta Momigliano (University of Bristol) and A.E. Stallings (poet and translator); chaired by Martha Kearney (BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme).

Tuesday 21 November 2019, Hellenic Centre: Professor Patrick Finglass (University of Bristol): 'Passionate lacunae: towards a new edition of Sappho'.

Thursday 16 January 2020: visit to the British Museum exhibition *Troy – Myth and Reality*, preceded by a lecture by one of the curators, Dr Lesley Fitton.

Tuesday 18 February 2020, Hellenic Centre: Dr Calum Maciver (University of Edinburgh): 'Generic games: the ending of Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*, again'.

Tuesday 10 March 2020, Senate House: *Animals in the Ancient World*, a joint event with the Roman Society: Professor Malcolm Heath (University of Leeds): 'Not all beasts are dumb: language, communication, and Aristotle's animals'; Dr Emily Kneebone (University of Nottingham): 'Human and non-human animals: a view from the sea'; and Dr John Pearce (King's College London): 'The Roman art of hunting'.

The remainder of the planned programme was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.