

# 2016 Society for Neo-Latin Studies Annual General Meeting

## MINUTES

18 November 2016, 3 pm

London, Museum of London, Clore Learning Centre  
(Museum of London, 150 London Wall, London EC2Y 5HN)

Present: Gesine Manuwald, Victoria Moul, Luke Houghton, Elizabeth Sandis, Máté Vince, Sarah Knight, Brenda Hosington, Brian Bishop, Caroline Spearing, Sharon van Dijk, William Barton, Jill Woodberry, Lucy Nicholas

1. Apologies: Andrew Taylor, Valery Rees, Jacqueline Glomski, Ingrid De Smet, Paul White

2. Minutes of the last AGM (held on 27 November 2015) and matters arising  
The minutes were approved.

3. Report on SNLS activities in the past year

Gesine Manuwald thanked Máté Vince for his work updating the Society's website. GM reported on the quarterly newsletter and reminded members that contributions for the newsletter are always most welcome. There was a report on the SNLS events from the year, including the Society's continued presence at the Classical Association conference, the postgraduate event hosted by Elizabeth Sandis at Oxford and the early-career event put on by Victoria Moul and William Barton at King's College, London. Lizzy Sandis commented that it was a pleasure to see the variety of departments in which postgraduate Neo-Latinists are working and the lively exchange between them at the Oxford event. Victoria Moul congratulated ES on a lively and fun event and underlined that the short academic talk format was a success. There followed a report on the KCL early career event from VM in which the international character of the participants and the apparently high demand for such career focussed events was underlined. GM suggested keeping the rhythm of the postgraduate events at one a year and of the early-career events at one every two or three years. GM reported on the annual essay prize, which was awarded to Caroline Spearing after the AGM. There followed a report on the Society's growing list of connections to other learned societies, GM commented that the French Société d'Etudes Médio- et Néolatines is very lively and keen to engage. We are now associated with the SEMCR (Society for Early Modern Classical Reception) in the US. Following last year's AGM, GM has explored opportunities for official affiliation with the RSA, including the right to host panels at their annual conference. For the modest size of the Society, it was felt that the commitment levels of independent affiliation would be overreaching at the moment. So, after consulting with Ingrid De Smet, current president of the IANLS, it has been decided that we explore the possibility of competing for one of the IANLS' five panel slots at the RSA with SNLS panels treating specifically British topics. This arrangement will come into effect for the 2018 RSA conference. GM raised the possibility of organising panels at the Society for Renaissance Studies (SRS), perhaps better suited to smaller societies, which would give us the chance to strengthen our presence outside of Classics. GM next reported on the Society's affiliation to the Arts and Humanities Alliance (AHA),

which is proving fruitful. On the other hand, the Society's connection to the British Academy has proven less productive due to the BA's apparent internal organisational issues. GM finally commented on the Society's status as a charity and impressed on UK tax-paying members that Gift Aid is an easy way to maintain the Society's financial health. Questions on the year's overview followed: ES asked whether we might consider an internal process for putting together panels for bigger conferences. GM replied that there had been difficulties with this in the past. VM reminded members of the Society's mailing list which, would facilitate potential panel organisation. VM brought up the opportunities that the lively Facebook group might offer for such collaborations and commented that, in the past, theme-based panels have worked best for us at bigger conferences. Brian Bishop noted that happily the Society's mailing list is not subject to spam abuse. VM commented on the ever-vibrant London Neo-Latin reading group. She encouraged members to join the group's wide-reaching mailing list and to join this friendly community.

#### 4. Report on CSNLS activities in the past year

In the absence of Andrew Taylor, it was noted that the regular seminars at Cambridge had continued and Cambridge would host the SNLS conference planned for next year.

#### 5. Report on IANLS

Ingrid de Smet provided a written report of the IANLS' activities in her absence.

VM, GM and ES discussed plans for a Society panel at the IANLS 2018 meeting in Albacete, Spain.

IDS included in her report a note on the recently established Europa Renascens project, which could prove a useful network for the Society (<http://europarenascens.wordpress.com>).

#### 6. Reports by Postgraduate Representative and Early-Career Representative

ES reported on her work this year as postgraduate representative (see also the President's annual report under item 1). The Oxford event that she organised brought together a pleasingly wide range of people, on an international theme and built up a good pool of new, younger scholars.

William Barton reported on his work this year as early-career representative (see also the President's annual report under item 1). He echoed ES' comments in her postgraduate representative's report and added that the impact of Neo-Latin work happening in Britain appeared to be growing abroad.

#### 7. Report by Treasurer

Luke Houghton provided a comprehensive review of the Society's financial year as follows:

Once again, this has been a relatively quiet year for SNLS finances, without a major conference to fund. This will change in 2016-17, with the conference in Cambridge in September 2017. The main expenditure has been speakers' expenses for the early-career event held in London in September 2016, and the donation to the Inns of Court for the previous AGM in November 2016, the expense of which was partly defrayed by members' donations.

Our principal source of income continues to be members' subscriptions, and this has been a year of transition for our membership fees. At the 2015 AGM it was agreed to raise subscription fees from £10.00 to £15.00 in the case of the full subscription, and

from £5.00 to £7.50 in the case of reduced subscription for students and unwaged members. Because it took some time for the increase in subscriptions to appear on the Society's website, the treasurer has not been particularly severe in chasing up subscriptions paid at the former rate – but this will need to change in 2016-17. The vast majority of members who pay by standing order had not updated the amount to be paid when subscriptions came in at the start of October 2016, and consequently we have received considerably less than we would have done with a full set of subscriptions at the new rate. This will make an important difference over the coming year, when expenditure will be greater as a result of the September conference, and I urge all members here today who have not yet updated their standing orders to do so as soon as possible. Reminders of the new rates were sent out to members as part of the regular newsletters, including shortly before the start of the new subscription year in October, and this will continue in 2016-17; hopefully with time the message will sink in, but (as might have been expected) it has taken some time for this to take effect this year.

One significant development this year has been our successful application to register SNLS for charity status, and we are now a Registered Charity in England and Wales (no. EW41377). This is very good news for our finances, since it means that we shall be able to claim 25 pence in Gift Aid for every £1 donated (although this does not count towards subscriptions paid in cash). In the new year I shall investigate the mechanism for claiming Gift Aid, but for now I very strongly encourage all members who are UK taxpayers to complete a Gift Aid form for their Society subscription (it can work in retrospect, so please do this even if you've already paid your subscription for this year). I've brought some copies of the form with me, and it is also available to download from the Society's website. If you pay income tax in the UK, please do complete the form and pass it on as soon as you can – your support is much appreciated.

Membership continues at a comfortable level, although we have not received any long-term subscriptions as we did following the introduction of these membership categories last year, which made our finances look very buoyant in 2014-15. I think we should expect the kind of figures we see on this year's statement to be more typical in years without a major conference. Income remains above expenditure, but only by a double-digit margin; there is thus no room for complacency. Members' help in updating their standing orders will go a long way to improve this situation, but we also need to recruit new members (the conference will no doubt provide one occasion for this), and one area in which we could usefully and realistically increase recruitment is among students. We received only 6 subscriptions at the reduced rate in 2015-16, and yet interest in Neo-Latin is high among postgraduate students in particular. If you supervise PhD or Masters students on Neo-Latin topics, please do encourage them to attend our events and to consider joining SNLS – our success in attracting new members, particularly among younger scholars, will be crucial to ensuring that SNLS remains able to provide a full programme of activities in the future.

GM thanked LH for his work especially on helping the Society to achieve charity status. In this context, the importance of Gift Aid for the Society's finances was again underlined.

LH also reported on his exploration of the possibilities for gaining interest on the Society's bank balance in response to a question from Brian Bishop on the

Treasurer's report from 2015 (see last year's minutes). It is not possible for accounts of bodies with charitable status to earn special interest on their funds.

ES asked, given the financial issues raised by the awarding of the essay prize to a non-UK bank account holder last year, whether it might be a good idea to award the essay prize as a voucher. This will be considered an option for next year if the winner does not have a UK bank account, but it was expected that this would be the exception.

#### 8. Elections of officers (Article 4 of the SNLS Statutes)

All officers stood for re-election with the following changes and additions: Elizabeth Sandis stood for early career representative. Sharon van Dijk stood for ES' previous role as postgraduate representative. William Barton stood for the newly created role of public engagement representative, considered to be a necessary addition to the executive committee following the practice of most other learned societies. SK seconded the above. All officers were elected unanimously.

#### 9. Plans for the future

GM raised the idea of changing the date for the essay prize to allow more time for submissions.

Máté Vince commented on the current limitations of the Society's website due to its being hosted on the Warwick website and asked for any suggestions for changes or improvements to be made known to him.

ES raised the suggestion of a password protected section of the website for members (which already exists, but could be expanded).

SK outlined her plans for the 2017 annual postgraduate event to be held on the 17th March at the Birmingham and Midland Institute just before the annual conference of the British Milton Society. It was hoped that the chance to attend the two events in the same place on the same weekend would open up the event to a broader public. SK noted that she was collecting suggestions and ideas for the event and had already been in contact with the Society's members who had been involved in organising a postgraduate or early-career event in 2016. For the 2017 postgraduate event, SK will be applying to SRS concerning the possibility of providing bursaries to cover attendance costs. SK also commented on the opportunities for expanding the Society's membership at the event.

ES outlined the plans currently underway for holding the 2017 AGM at the Globe Theatre, London. She will be meeting with the 'Read not Dead' project organisers to discuss the possibilities for such an event. If there are any members who have specific requirements as regards the date already, they should contact ES as early as possible. SK and GM noted that the traditional formula of holding the Society's AGM on Friday afternoons is working.

GM suggested that in line with other societies of our size and interest, an up-to-date list of PhD topics and monographs should be maintained. It was asked that members please send in relevant information. VM commented that in the past SurveyMonkey forms have worked well in collecting such information. In this context members were reminded that contributions for the online teaching anthology are always welcome.

GM outlined the plans for the Society's 2017 conference in cooperation with the CSNLS organised by AT at Churchill College, Cambridge. The CFP and a preliminary programme are now available. VM and SK were thanked for their work towards realising this project. Applications for funding for the conference's various

expenses are in the process of being submitted. BB inquired as to the number of papers there would be at the conference, to which the answer was 15. SK commented that organisers have been pleased by the response to the conference plans so far and the number of exciting topics and new faces that have come out because of it.

WB outlined the plans for the Society's continued presence at the Classical Association's annual conference. A panel has just been accepted for the CA's 2017 meeting in Canterbury.

LH reminded members of the Neo-Latin Symposium to be held in Cork 6-8th April 2017 on behalf of the event's organisers. Brenda Hosington underlined the importance of this event. The deadline for submission of abstracts is the 9th January 2017.

Caroline Spearing informed members of the up-coming London Renaissance Seminar event 'In search of Early Modern Bees' to be held on the 10th December at Birkbeck College, London.

BB passed on the request for a Latinist to contribute to the on-going translation of the Wonderful Wizard of Oz into Latin under the direction of C. J. Hinke.

The meeting ended at 4:19pm.