

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: CASA GENERAL MEETING: 2 JULY 2009, PRETORIA**

Many of the remarks that could have been included in this report have already or will be dealt with as part of the agenda.

Here I will mainly summarise, comment on or refer to the information included in some of the reports that you have received in your folders. Thank you to all of you who have contributed to and or submitted the reports.

I am sure we all share in the sense of loss and frustration emanating from Jo-Marie Claassen's report on the status of Latin in South African schools. I want to thank Jo-Marie for her continued efforts and hard work over many years and I do want to encourage eligible members of CASA to react on her request for finding a successor as moderator for Latin. This is such an important matter that I would like to ask the incoming Executive Committee to attend to it.

Apart from that, it seems that Classics is doing well at South African universities. This conference has again shown that high-quality research is being done in Classics and related fields in the country. Even more so, it was heartening to take note of quite a couple of colleagues who have been awarded by their respective universities for excellence in teaching or research, and also received NRF ratings or NRF grants for further research.

In this respect I should especially congratulate the formidable team of Louise Cilliers and Francois Retief from the University of the Free State for the 57 accredited articles that they have produced over the past 11 years.

At this point I also want to congratulate the conference organizer, Koos Kritzinger, through whose efforts (with the help of Hennie Stander) so many post-graduate students attended this conference and even presented papers.

Judging from the number of international visiting lecturers and post-doctoral research fellows at many of the departments, it is clear that high-quality academic discourse is also in a healthy state. This is further underlined by the many visits by colleagues to departments other than their own to present research seminars.

The research profile of Classicists in South Africa is surely strengthened by several series of colloquia and research seminars offered by several departments, involving graduate students, teaching staff as well as international scholars.

I am impressed by the wide range of topics presented at public lectures and lecture mornings which form part of the activities of local branches. I do however implore local branches to use these meetings to try and attract as many members of the public as possible. There are many people out there who are as laymen interested in the Classics and who could become members of CASA. We also need to involve more students in branch activities. Congratulations to the Western Cape branch who can boast with 17 of the 30 student members of the Association.

At the same time we also urgently need to recruit more black students for the Classics. All departments are under pressure to appoint members from the designated groups, but we all know that we simply do not have or cannot produce suitable candidates.

But let me end on a positive note and congratulate the Department of Ancient Studies in Stellenbosch who succeeded against many odds and through lots of red tape to get the loan of antiquities from the Iziko Museum in Cape Town renewed for another two years. The pieces are displayed in the Sasol Art Museum of the university and will continue to be available as a valuable resource for students from both Stellenbosch and UCT. You can read more about the display in Samantha Masters' *In the Museum* contribution in the latest *Akroterion*.

Classics in South African universities is surely alive and well and kicking. I thank all of you for your hard work, continued enthusiasm and loyalty to Classics and I wish you the best of luck for the next two years.