

From the Alumni Development Committee

Most of the furniture in the wonderful and much-used ASNC common room was paid for thanks to kind donations – both large and small – from alumni, for which we are immensely grateful. You will have read elsewhere in this newsletter (p. 2) about the campaign to secure the future of teaching in Scandinavian history. Our other most pressing need is to build up funds in order to help ASNC students with the increasing cost of studying in Cambridge, by providing travel-grants, book-grants, and dissertation prizes. A further long-term aim, as funding by external bodies becomes ever more limited, is to establish bursaries for postgraduate students in ASNC. We also hope to find a donor willing to endow an annual composition prize, for original compositions in the languages taught in ASNC, an idea which came from the students, inspired by the continuing popularity of the yearly Clemeos Reading Prize.

If you would like to contribute in any way to ASNC's continuing development, there are various ways to do so (unfortunately we are not allowed to accept donations by credit card):

- By sending direct to ASNC a cheque payable to the University of Cambridge (NB this includes cheques in dollars or euros)
- By setting up a BACS electronic transfer*
- By donating online through the University Development Office website, at <http://www.foundation.cam.ac.uk/giving/> (in Step 1 you can specify ASNC as the destination for your gift)

* The Departmental Secretary (contact details below) can supply details of the IBAN and SWIFT codes to do this, on request, as we are not permitted by the University to publish its bank details.

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We aim to produce an ASNC newsletter on a regular basis, but as postage costs increase, we hope very much to use the Departmental website and email as the primary means of communicating with you about future events and ASNC news. If you are willing to receive occasional email notifications from us (exclusively about ASNC events), we would be grateful for a note of your email address, using this half of the page (or by email as below). We are always delighted to hear any information about changes of address or other news (particularly news that you would like to have reported in future newsletters), which can be posted to the Departmental Secretary, Victoria Lever, at the Department of ASNC, 9 West Road, Cambridge, CB3 9DP (telephone 01223 335079), or emailed to asnc@cam.ac.uk

I am happy for my email to be used for mailings about ASNC alumni news and events, and my email address is as follows:.....

NAME.....

University of Cambridge
Department of
**Anglo-Saxon,
Norse & Celtic**



NEWSLETTER 2008

Welcome to our relaunched newsletter which aims to keep ASNaCs past and present in touch with the Department (and one another).



The South Wing (second floor) of the English Faculty building will be familiar to recent graduates as the heart of the Department, with its wonderful Common Room and (in some weathers) inviting terrace. To those of you who have not yet visited us in the new 9 West Road, may we extend a warm welcome when you next visit Cambridge, whether for a departmental event or at

any point during the year. There will almost certainly be someone in to welcome you and show you around.

(Photo: James Appleton)

From the Head of Department

It is an exciting time of expansion and change for the Department. After peaking at 37 a few years ago, our annual undergraduate intake is now between 25 and 30, a level that allows us to manage *ab initio* language training properly. The MPhil programme attracts a large number of applicants with the 2007-8 intake, 17, reflecting the success of those admitted in securing competitive funding. PhD admissions similarly reflect the success of ASNC candidates in competing for local, national and international awards, though the recent reduction in government funding, and changes in the mechanism for distributing awards, are a cause for concern. To date, a remarkable number of our PhD students have been appointed to academic posts in the UK and elsewhere and we expect this to continue. Depth in each of the specialist subjects we offer and breadth across the disciplinary range continue to be the strengths of academic training in ASNC. These qualities also underpin the Department's research culture. Recently we submitted our return to the government's Research Assessment Exercise 2008, an exercise that will determine a substantial portion of university funding in coming years; results will be posted on the ASNC webpage as soon as they are released towards the end of this year.



With a record number of Junior Research Fellows at Cambridge colleges working in ASNC studies, a Leverhulme Early-Career Fellow and three grant-funded Research Associates all working in the Department, our numbers have been considerably augmented in recent years beyond our permanent establishment of seven University Teaching Officers. Since 2004, a combination of trust-fund income and donations has enabled us to continue to offer papers in Scandinavian History of the Viking Age, an area we are working hard to secure through the establishment of an eighth permanent post in the Department. The Department received a very favourable review by the General Board of the University in 2006, their report noting that 'there is a strong sense of intellectual and educational energy throughout the Department and the Review Committee regards ASNC as a very considerable asset to the University.' Our own review of the Tripos followed with changes underway in the assessment of Part I and the revamping of the Palaeography paper which now covers all the ASNC subject areas.

Our newly re-developed website (<http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/>) provides details of all our activities, including departmental events and lectures, which all alumni are most welcome to attend.

Dr Judy Quinn

Forthcoming Events

Cambridge Festival of Ideas in Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Building on the success of the annual University-organised Science Festival, the first Festival of Ideas in the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences will take place from 22nd October to 2nd November 2008. Free events for all ages are planned across the University; the ASNC department will be putting on a number of activities on the afternoon of Saturday 25th October aimed at children aged between 5 and 10 years. The ASNC event will be called 'Vikings, Celts, and Anglo-Saxons: Busting the Myths' - all are welcome! Learn about Viking Age explorations! Sample some authentic Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic fare! Watch clips from your favourite ASNC-related films! Further details will be put up on the website shortly.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2008-2009

Cambridge Colloquium in ASNC (CCASNC)	Saturday 17 th May English Faculty Building, 9 West Rd
ASNC Garden Party 2008	Wednesday 18 th June 2008, Newnham College
ASNC Alumni Event	Saturday 27 th September 2008 ASNC Dept, 9 West Rd
Festival of Ideas	22 nd October-2 nd November 2008; ASNC event 25 th October, ASNC Dept, 9 West Rd
Quiggin lecture	Thursday 4 th December 2008 English Faculty Building, 9 West Rd
Chadwick lecture	Thursday 11 th March 2009 English Faculty Building, 9 West Rd

Alumni News

The inaugural **ASNC alumni event** took place on Saturday 22nd September in the Department. This was the first time many alumni had had the opportunity to see our new home and enjoy the ambience and the 'ASNC terrace'.

(photo below: Emma Connolly).

The next alumni event will be held on Saturday 27th September, to coincide with the University Alumni weekend. We will be hosting informal drinks from 5pm in the Department, to the accompaniment of ASNC-inspired/performed music – all are welcome. There will also be the chance to see some remarkable photographs of Scandinavia taken by James Appleton, which is sure to be an unmissable highlight. To be informed of this event and similar, make sure to check the departmental website's Alumni pages regularly (<http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/alumni/index.htm>) and – if you are a user of Facebook – join the open group 'ASNC Alumni Event 27/09/08'.

We are still working to build up our alumni database – please do get in touch, if you haven't already, to update your contact details and to let us know how life has treated you since your ASNC days! We have recently had updates from **Scott Gwara** (Corpus Christi, 1984; now at the Center for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto), **Hérolf Pétiau** (Girton, 1995; now at the University of Luxembourg), and **Beth Duncan** (St John's, 2000; currently completing a PhD in Aberdeen), and others: thank you all. We would also welcome suggestions regarding the alumni section on the website.



The ASNC Society Black-Tie Dinner, January 2007. From left to right: Nick Miere (Selwyn, 2004), Simon Keynes, Rebecca Wagner (Trinity, 2004), Rosalind Love, Rich Booth (Clare, 2004), and Richard Dance. (Photo: James Appleton)

Student News

ASNaC Society: Recent Activities

2007-8 has already seen two excursions for ASNaC society members. In the reconstructed village of West Stow near Bury St Edmunds, we met 'real' Anglo-Saxons and enjoyed their 'genuinely historic' play-area and 'traditional' music, as well as their mead. Our Anglo-Saxon adventure behind us, twenty-one of us set sail for Dublin's fair city, to sample the delights of all things Celtic – and Scandinavian! Highlights of the trip were visits to *Dublinia*, where we experienced the sights, sounds and clothing (!) of Viking and medieval Dublin, Christchurch Cathedral, the Book of Kells and the reconstructed Viking long-ship *Havhingsten fra Glendalough* (The Sea Stallion from Glendalough). A trip to the Guinness factory was also deemed entirely appropriate to an ASNaC itinerary.

In Cambridge, we had an interesting talk from Dr. Mateusz Bogucki on Viking

Age ports of the south-east Baltic coast. Our annual black-tie dinner was held in St John's Hall, and attended by seventy-five ASNaCs. The dinner saw the year's second publication of *Gesta Asnacorum*, full of the usual puns, quotations that never should have



been written down and fine interpretations of modern society from the likes of Gildas and Wulfstan. Thanks to Matthias Ammon (Robinson, matric. 2001), several ASNaC Film Nights have been held. We sampled several interpretations of *Beowulf* on DVD and several of us also saw the newly released film. We may have chortled somewhat more than the rest of the audience at Hrothgar 'boyo' Scylding, Beowulf, apparently fresh from a role in Eastenders, and the rather unusual interpretation of Grendel's mother! The weekly excursions to the Castle have continued and the tradition of Monday ASNaC lunch has been upheld, thanks to the Catering Officers and Chris Milliken (Christ's, 2006). Thank you to them and all who have made the year's events a success.

Ellie Rye (St John's, 2005) and **Sarah Preece** (Clare, 2005)
ASNaC Society Presidents

Student News

Individual Achievements

Several junior members of the Department have distinguished themselves as University sportsmen and women recently. The last few years have seen a number of Blues in the Department, among them **Rebecca Dowbiggin** (Emmanuel, 2001) who coxed the Blue Boats in the 2007 and 2008 University Boat Races, steering it to victory in 2007. Her counterpart in the 2007 Women's Boat, also victorious, was **James Appleton** (Girton, 2004). In other sports, **Ben Yates** (Trinity, 2005) shot for the University Rifle Club, and **David Woodman** (Trinity, 2000) collected his fifth Real Tennis blue, and captained the Great Britain team at the Bathurst Cup tournament, played in Paris.

Natalia Petrovskaia (Peterhouse, 2004) saw her second play 'Flesh and Red-Hot Mint Sauce' performed at the Corpus Playroom in March 2007 as part of the Smorgasbord New Writing Festival run by the Fletcher Players. She also presented a paper (in Japanese!) to the Cambridge Japanese Interdisciplinary Forum.

Congratulations to **Betsie Cleworth** (Newnham, 2007) who has been awarded Newnham's Wood-Whistler prize for her

Durham University undergraduate dissertation on Old Norse literature.

ASNC graduates have represented the department at a number of prestigious national and international conferences, including the International Medieval Congress, Leeds; the Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies conference; the Cambridge-Oxford-London Symposium for Old English and Old Norse literature; the Oxford-Cambridge Celtic Colloquium; the Cambridge-Bergen Graduate Symposium; the International Saga Conference, Durham; the British Association for Irish Studies conference; the International Congress of Celtic Studies, Bonn; and the International Medieval Congress, Kalamazoo, Michigan. **Rosa Fera** (St Catharine's, 2004), who spoke in New York, chose the most glamorous conference destination.

2007-8 has seen a number of PhD students complete their dissertations – **Emily Lethbridge** (Emmanuel, 1998), **David Woodman**, **Alderik Blom** (Peterhouse, 2002) and **Elizabeth Boyle** (Corpus Christi, 2002) among them. Congratulations to all!



Left:
The Beloved
ASNC
Common
Room

(Photo: James
Appleton)

Departmental Events 2007-8

As ever, a number of lectures from guest speakers on a wide range of Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic topics, as well as long-established annual events such as the Peter Clemons Reading Prize and the Garden Party, have made for a customarily busy timetable.

There were numerous guest lectures this year, among them two by alumni, **Martha Bayless** (Lucy Cavendish, 1982) and **Anthony Harvey** (St Catharine's, 1977).



Oliver Padel (photo above: G. Hemprich) returned to deliver the **Kathleen Hughes lecture** for 2008 ('The Bodmin Manumissions: Slavery in Saxon Cornwall'). The **E.C. Quiggin lecture** was given by **Henrik Williams**, University of Uppsala ('Rune-stone Inscriptions and Queer Theory'); and the **H.M. Chadwick lecture** by **Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe**, University of Notre Dame ('Stealing Obedience: Narratives of Agency in Later Anglo-Saxon England').

At the 2007 **Annual ASNC Garden Party**, held in Newnham College, the sun shone, refreshments of various kinds were plentiful, and a fine time was had by all. (Photo right: Judy Quinn)

The 2008 **Clemons Reading Prize** was awarded to Shem Jarrold (Pembroke, 2007) for his rendition of a lament for a pet goose, *A Mór Maigne Moige Síuil*, in Medieval Irish. Supplementary awards went to Hannah Dyson (Peterhouse, 2005), who sang *Wulf and Eadwacer* to her own harp accompaniment, and to Alex Whiscombe (Pembroke, 2006), who read from the earliest Latin Life of St Samson of Dol. The first ever winner of this prize (for two years running, in fact), **Dan Starkey** (Trinity Hall, 1996), has recently appeared as a monster (or rather a Sontaran commander!) in two episodes of Dr Who on BBC1 (April 26 and May 3) – living testimony to the wonderful variety of things ASNaCs go on to do after graduating.



Research Projects in the Department

Early Irish Glossaries Project Early Irish glossaries are encyclopaedic collections of notes on Irish words, originating in the eighth century. Although valuable sources for the scholars interested in poetics, law, traditional history and the study of language and languages in early Ireland, these texts have not yet been critically edited. Established by Paul Russell in 2006, the project aims to edit these texts and provide translations and commentary (<http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/irishglossaries/>).

Celtic Personal Names of Roman Britain In November 2007, Paul Russell and Alex Mullen (Classics Faculty), launched an on-line resource collecting personal names from Roman Britain thought to contain Celtic elements (<http://asnc.cam.ac.uk/personalnames/>). It should provide a valuable tool for scholars of Roman Britain and of personal names more generally.

Fontes Anglo-Saxonici Since the last newsletter, Fontes has seen its last full-time Research Associate, Augustine Casiday, come and go. In 2007 the project formally ended its active phase. Its most visible end-product is an online database of sources used in Latin and Old English writings produced in Anglo-Saxon England (<http://fontes.english.ox.ac.uk/>), now established as an indispensable research tool.

Boethius in Early Medieval Europe is a new five-year project funded by the Leverhulme Trust, run jointly with the Faculty of English in Oxford (<http://www.english.ox.ac.uk/boethius/index.html>). Following Malcolm Godden's AHRC-funded project on the Alfredian translation of Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, it aims to edit the complex body of commentary and glosses that gathered around the text from the ninth to the eleventh centuries, in scores of manuscripts. The material opens fascinating windows on how the *Consolation* was being used, and on the astounding variety of philological, literary, and historical explanation (and mis-explanation!) which the text elicited. The Leverhulme Trust's grant will enable Rosalind Love to take a year's leave in 2008-9 to work on the commentary material.

PASE This project (initiated in 2000) is creating a comprehensive, systematic, analytical and searchable register of all persons recorded in Anglo-Saxon England, in contemporary and later (mainly twelfth-century) sources; and it takes the form of an online database, linked to several other e-projects. It is carried out in association with the Department of History, King's College London, and the Centre of Computing in the Humanities, KCL, and has been funded since 2000 by the AHRC.

Revised Sawyer An AHRC-funded project to revise Sawyer's definitive catalogue of Anglo-Saxon charters began in July 2003, with Rebecca Rushforth as Research Associate. The catalogue is being revised and updated, for publication in book-form and also as part of the 'Electronic Sawyer' (<http://www.esawyer.org.uk/>).

CCASNC 2007

The Eighth Cambridge Colloquium in Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic was held on Saturday 5 May 2007 in Trinity College. The keynote speaker was Professor Janet Nelson (King's College London) who addressed the Colloquium's theme of 'Knowledge and Power'. Nine papers showcased the research of graduate students (and one undergraduate) from the Universities of Cambridge, King's College London, Manchester, Oxford and York. The departmental speakers were Helen Forbes (Trinity, 2001), Natalia Petrovskaja, Abigail Queen (St Catharine's, 2005), and Ben Snook (Girton, 2001). Erik Niblaeus (Sidney Sussex, 2002), represented King's College London. The day culminated in a formal dinner, also held in Trinity, for all participants. In all, it was a great success, with many interesting new ideas and approaches discussed, new friendships and connections made and plans laid for future work. The proceedings of the eighth CCASNC are already being prepared for publication, and the committee for the ninth CCASNC has put together an exciting two-day programme, about to take place as we go to press, with the theme 'Metamorphosis' (see <http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/ccasnc.htm>).

Rory Naismith (Trinity, 2002)
CCASNC Committee 2007

Modern Languages

November 2006 saw the start of Modern Irish language teaching in the Department, courtesy of a generous grant from the Irish government. The course was officially launched by the Irish Ambassador to the Court of St James, His Excellency Dáithí Ó Ceallaigh, in the presence of the distinguished Irish-language poet, Dr Louis de Paor. This initiative sparked the nearest thing yet to a media frenzy experienced in ASNC: Máire Ní Mhaonaigh became a familiar voice and name to the consumers of the Irish media, as national radio stations and newspapers carried the story. Dr Kaarina Hollo is responsible for the teaching. Her classes – at beginners', intermediate and advanced levels – are open not just to members of the Department but to the whole University. As well as an enormous asset to ASNC, therefore, her classes are a resource for the wider University community.

The Irish government was following the lead of its Icelandic counterpart, which has funded successful courses in Modern Icelandic in the Department for a number of years. They are taught by Vicky Cribb (Newnham, 1984), now a professional translator.

Current ASNCs have still more, new, opportunities to pursue their interests in the modern ASNC languages, as for the first time, they now have access to University vacation study grants to enable them to take summer courses in any of the modern ASNC languages.

Staff News

The departmental staff now comprises 10 people: Dr Richard Dance, Dr Fiona Edmonds, Dr Jonathan Grove (Trinity, 1990), Dr Kaarina Hollo, Prof Simon Keynes (Trinity, 1970), Dr Rosalind Love (St John's, 1984), Dr Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, Dr Judy Quinn, Dr Paul Russell, and Mrs Victoria Lever (née Mould) as secretary. Jonathan and Fiona are relatively recent appointments, made in 2004 and 2006 respectively: They replaced Dr Haki Antonsson, now at University College, London, and Prof David Dumville (Emmanuel, 1967), now at the University of Aberdeen.

Recent Publications

Details of all staff publications and research interests can be found on the departmental website (www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/people/senior/index.htm).

Simon Keynes, Elrington and Bosworth Professor of Anglo-Saxon, has written most recently about the impact of the Viking invasions on the English people during the reign of Aethelred the Unready. Northumbria continues to be a primary focus of **Fiona Edmonds'** research, as evidenced in her recent examination of early medieval transport there and **Jonathan Grove** has written on Old Norse poetry. Recent books produced include **Richard Dance's** weighty tome, *Words Derived from Old Norse in Early Middle English: Studies in the Vocabulary of the South-West Midland Texts* (Tempe Arizona, 2003); **Máire Ní Mhaonaigh's** volume posing the question *Brian Boru: Ireland's Greatest King?* (Stroud, 2007; cover image pictured); and **Judy Quinn's** collection of essays (edited with Kate Heslop and Tarrin Wills), *Learning and Understanding in the Old Norse World* (Turnhout, 2007). Both **Rosalind Love** and **Paul Russell** have been awarded prizes for their recent 'biographies' entitled *Goscelin of Saint-Bertin: the Hagiography of the Female Saints of Ely* (Oxford, 2004) and *Vita Griffini filii Conani* (Cardiff, 2005).



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Research in the Department

Sharon Arbuthnot and **Pádraic Moran** are among several new departmental research associates. They are working full-time on the Early Irish Glossaries Project (report overleaf). Sharon was formerly a British Academy postdoctoral researcher at the University of Aberdeen, where her research focused on the working practices of medieval Irish compilers. Pádraic has come to us from the National University of Ireland, Galway, where he undertook research (funded by the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences) as part of 'The Foundations of the Irish Culture AD 600-850' project.

Juliana Dresvina is working on the second phase of the PASE project (report overleaf). She completed her PhD (on the Cult of St Margaret of Antioch in Medieval England) in the English Faculty in 2007.

Amongst other things, **Oliver Padel** (Peterhouse, 1967), Honorary Research Fellow, has produced a grammar and handbook of Middle Cornish. He remains president of the English Place-Name Society.

Alderik Blom, **Emily Lethbridge**, **Max Lieberman**, and **Geraldine Parsons** (Trinity, 1998), all currently hold research fellowships at Girton, Emmanuel, Wolfson, and Trinity respectively. **Peter Stokes** (Corpus Christi, 2001) holds a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship. We are delighted to report news that **Emily Thornbury** (Trinity, 1999), who has just completed a fellowship at Churchill, has been appointed to teach Old English at the University of California, Berkeley.

Other Departmental News:

Debby Banham (Lucy Cavendish, 1983) has been involved in growing ancient varieties of cereals at West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village in Suffolk. One of the aims of this research is to find out how these old crops differ from modern ones in their growing requirements (sowing and harvesting dates, weeding, harvesting methods, and in particular, keeping the birds from eating them!).

Last year, both **Richard Dance** and **Rebecca Rushforth** (Trinity, 1994) hit the airwaves, Rebecca talking about St Margaret's Gospel-Book on BBC Radio 4's Women's Hour, and Richard reading extracts from 'The Battle of Maldon' in Old English for BBC Radio 4's programme 'The Poetry of History'. Richard was also interviewed about Robert Zemeckis's film of 'Beowulf' on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire and in *The Guardian*; *The Guardian* also mentioned **Geraldine Parsons's** outreach work. She has recently collaborated with the composer Tarik O'Regan on his choral setting of part of the Middle Irish text *Acallam na Senórach*, commissioned by the Irish National Chamber Choir.

Current Honorary Research Associates visiting the Department are **Sharon Rowley** (Dept of English, Christopher Newport University, Virginia, USA), and **Kathryn Powell** (Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies, University of Manchester).



(Photo: Frank Goodingham)