

Classical News from Denny Hall

Volume 35 -- Autumn 1999

FROM THE CHAIR

The special purpose of this year's Newsletter is to commemorate and celebrate an extraordinary benefactor and friend of the Department of Classics. Back in May 1999 Meg Greenfield passed away, after a distinguished career which culminated in twenty years as editorial page editor of the *Washington Post*. Dan Harmon offers an obituary below, adding a departmental tribute to the many seen and heard in the national media last spring. As our readers know, Meg's great generosity had already for several years made possible our program of Jim Greenfield Scholarships. Nothing could have prepared us, however, for the news which first reached us confidentially in June, and which can only now, in this column, be made public.

In one of the largest gifts ever received by an individual unit in UW's College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of Classics has been named the major beneficiary of Meg Greenfield's estate. In a dramatic expansion of the Jim Greenfield Scholarships, Meg has posthumously established an endowment of approximately \$2 million to fund student scholars in the Classics at the University. A gift on this scale is truly transformative. We anticipate that the endowment will enable the Department to enhance substantially the year-long full-tuition scholarships open to undergraduate majors, to make a real start on a program of competitive graduate fellowships, and in the longer term to explore other creative ways of rewarding student excellence and initiative at every level.

The biggest surprise in Meg's will, however, is that she has also left to the Department her waterfront summer home on Bainbridge Island, along with a request that the house, which opens onto spectacular views of Puget Sound and the Olympic Peninsula, be used as a place of retreat and study. In Meg's lifetime, as Dan notes in his obituary, some of the nation's and region's most prominent figures in politics, business and journalism gathered under this roof to enjoy her hospitality, to exchange ideas, and to unwind. The implicit challenge to the Department is clear: to create a social and intellectual space worthy both of Meg's own Bainbridge conversations, and of the ancient Greek and Roman marketplaces of ideas which constitute the bond of interest between Meg, our students, and ourselves. **Stephen Hinds**

MEG GREENFIELD 1930-1999

Meg Greenfield, donor of the scholarship in Classics which she founded in memory of her late brother Jim Greenfield, died in her Georgetown, Washington, home on May 13, 1999. As the editorial page editor of *The Washington Post* for twenty years, she was at the top of her profession, one of the most accomplished and influential journalists of our age. In 1978 Meg was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing. She held honorary doctorates from Smith College (1978), Georgetown University (1979), Wesleyan University (1982), Williams College (1987) and Princeton University (1990).

Meg attended the Bush School in Seattle and was graduated *summa cum laude* in 1952 from Smith College. She spent the year 1952-53 at Newnham College, Cambridge University, as a Fulbright scholar studying the poetry of William Blake. She next lived in Rome for a while, studying and writing. After her death, friends and associates recalled her love of English literature and her genius for knowing exactly the right turn of phrase to express a thought. Few, however, are quite so aware that reading Latin was a form of relaxation for Meg. She was interested in Augustine and classical authors concerned with ethics, which is not surprising

since in her own writing Meg was concerned with the decline of ethics and civility in public life. But it was mostly the comic writer Plautus, especially his portrayal of life's ironies and absurdities, that captured her imagination. Meg delighted in the timeless quality of Plautus' humor and in his talent for word play, especially when it came at the expense of the pompous and self-important. Editorials have chronicled her own 'guff-free prose,' her wry, droll and sometimes mischievous wit, her sense of the ironies of life, and her contempt for phoniness.

Her dinner parties and social events in both Washingtons have become almost legendary. The Fourth of July celebrations at her Bainbridge Island home near Seattle brought some of the nation's and the region's most famous citizens together with us more ordinary folk. The ribbons for 'Most Improved Player' and for 'Second Place' that Meg herself won in the croquet contest, which was a highlight of the event, still lie with pride on her Bainbridge Island coffee table.

Mary Ellen (Meg) Greenfield was born in Seattle on December 27, 1930, the daughter of Lewis James and Lorraine Nathan Greenfield. Her father was owner of Seattle's Greenfield Galleries, which specialized in elegant antique furniture. Although in recent years she had returned to her Seattle roots, and planned to retire here, her distinguished career kept her mostly on the East coast. She wrote for *The Reporter* magazine from 1957 until 1968, when she joined *The Washington Post* editorial department, where she became deputy editor (1970) and then editor (1979) of the editorial page, a position which she still held at the time of her death. She also wrote a bi-weekly column for *Newsweek* from 1974 to 1999.

The Classics Department felt great pride when Meg delivered the University of Washington Commencement Address in 1997. It was always a special day when Meg contacted us. We deeply miss those rare occasions. But her influence and inspiration will continue to grow in our Department during the years to come. *Obiit heu citius!* **Daniel P. Harmon**

JIM GREENFIELD SCHOLARS

The Jim Greenfield Scholars for 1999-2000, standing between two eras in the history of the competition, are **Brian Frazer, Karena Hatfield-Grytting** and **Kimberly Trimiew**.

FACULTY NOTES

Professor Lawrence Bliquez continues as President of the Society for Ancient Medicine, and has recent and forthcoming articles on surgical tools.

Professor Ruby Blondell was a Royalty Research Fund Scholar for Winter 1999. In Spring 1999 she ran a Plato seminar as a Teaching Fellow in our Humanities Center. Her speaking engagements spanned the country from Binghamton to Tucson.

Professor James Clauss continues as chair of the APA Committee on Minority Scholarships. Internationally, he lectured on myth and film at Guelph, and on Apollonius at the Università di Firenze.

Professor Sheila Colwell is serving a term on the Faculty Senate. In Spring 1999 she devised the evening of conviviality (see below) which brought together Homer, Greg Nagy, faculty, students and area alumni.

Professor Joy Connolly was a Humanities Center Scholar for 1998-99, and is in Stanford for 1999-2000 as a Postdoctoral Fellow. She has an article on Roman erotic elegy forthcoming in the next *Arethusa*.

Professor Catherine Connors introduced Petronius to his medieval successor 'Petronius Redivivus' for an

article in *Latin Fiction*, ed. H. Hofmann (Routledge 1999).

Professor Alain Gowing was summoned to Wales to participate in a conference on Sextus Pompey. Meanwhile a previous trip to Britain yielded an article on Cassius Dio's Cicero in *Papers of the Leeds Latin Seminar*.

Professor Michael Halleran continues as the College's Divisional Dean of Arts and Humanities. Keeping his hand in, he taught a graduate course on Greek tragedy in 1999.

Professor Daniel Harmon continues as Co-Director of the University's Rome Center, and also led our own 1999 Classical Seminar in Rome. This year's undergraduate and graduate cohort enjoyed trips to the Naples region, to Verona, Mantova and Bologna.

Professor Stephen Hinds was Visiting Professor at the University of Texas, Austin, for March 1999. In a Cambridge volume honoring E.J. Kenney, he published a paper on the exiled Ovid's poetry to his wife.

Professor Merle Langdon is now in Athens as Mellon Professor at the American School.

Professor Susan Lape is beginning her second year. Her paper 'Reproducing the body politic: New Comedy and the ideology of Athenian democratic citizenship' has been accepted for an issue of *European Studies Journal* entitled "Performing the politics of European comic drama."

EMERITI

Professors John McDiarmid, Paul Pascal and **Pierre MacKay** are all thriving; Pierre teaches two quarters each year. Paul was profiled in the UW magazine *Columns* in a feature called "Class Acts", in which former students recalled their favorite professors.

MARK BUCHAN AND PAUL SCOTTON

In Autumn 1999 we welcomed **Professors Mark Buchan** and **Paul Scotton** to the faculty in three-year acting positions, filling in for (respectively) Michael Halleran and Merle Langdon. Mark has a 1996 PhD from Michigan, and was a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at Northwestern from 1997 to 1999: he brings to us interests in Greek tragedy, epic, Marxist and psychoanalytic literary theory. Paul has a 1997 PhD from Penn, where he also taught as a Lecturer from 1996 to 1999: he lists interests in Classical archaeology, Greek and Roman architecture, Greece and Asia Minor.

DEGREES

Three graduate students received their PhDs in Classics in 1998-99: **Daniel Curley** ("Metatheater: Heroines and Ephebes in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*;" Stephen Hinds supervisor), **Owen Ewald** ("The Livian Historiographical Tradition;" Alain Gowing supervisor), and **James Tolf** ("Patterns of Imagery in Ciceronian Invective;" Alain Gowing supervisor). Dan continues in his three-year position at Skidmore College, and Owen is combining a lectureship here at UW with part-time faculty positions at University of Puget Sound and Seattle Pacific.

Six students took their MA degrees in 1998-99: **Ethan Adams, Donald Conolly, Erika Nesholm, Rodman Reynolds, Brad Savage** and **Marco Zangari**.

Fourteen majors took their BA degrees: **Spencer Forhart** (Classical Studies), **Michele Guiao** (Classical

Studies, Latin Minor), **Paige Hamlin** (Classical Studies and Anthropology), **Mary Hickey** (Classical Studies and English), **Bradley Horton** (Classical Studies), **Alexandra Hoyt** (Greek), **Joel Kalvesmaki** (Classics and Philosophy), **Ian Logan** (Classics), **Sharon Meyerhoff** (Latin), **Cam-Van Nguyen** (Latin and Sociology), **Stephanie Reed** (Classical Studies), **Kimberly Schertzer** (Latin and Psychology), **John Spiger** (Classical Studies), and **Chiara Sulprizio** (Classics).

DEAN'S MEDAL TO KALVESMAKI

For the second year in a row, one of our majors won the 1999 Dean's medal as best graduating senior in the Humanities. **Joel Kalvesmaki** (who inherits this mantle from **Aislinn Melchior**) has taken up a fellowship in the PhD program in medieval studies and religion at Catholic University. Like Aislinn, Joel is a past Jim Greenfield winner.

GRADUATE PROGRAM NOTES

Our population of Canadian graduate students rose in 1999 to four, with the arrival of **Jackie Murray**, who has degrees from Guelph and Western Ontario. Jackie also brings to three our Departmental tally of Canadian SSHRCC fellowships. **Don Conolly** won (by examination) a fellowship to the American School in Athens. **Brad Levett** gave a paper at an international conference on Euripides in Banff last May.

RHETORIC IN PRACTICE

In May 1999 **Joy Connolly** and **Catherine Connors** planned and staged for us the one-day conference *Rhetoric in Practice: Perspectives from Antiquity and the Renaissance*, with contributing support from other units on campus. As with our 1995 event on literary allusion, the topic was selected to showcase an area of major and growing research interest within the Department itself, with the program putting together three visitors and two locals: **Anthony Corbeill** (Kansas), **Josiah Ober** (Princeton), and **Patricia Parker** (Stanford, English) joined **Connolly** and **Alain Gowing** on the speakers' rostrum. The audience was mainly local, but we had attendees from Berkeley and USC, and inquiries from as far afield as Germany.

VISITING SPEAKERS

Besides our guests at the rhetoric conference, we welcomed the following visiting speakers in 1998-99: John Pedley (Michigan, also the AIA's Ridgway Lecturer), Don Lateiner (Ohio Wesleyan), Keith Bradley (Victoria), David Halperin (New South Wales), Richard Hunter (Cambridge), Sander Goldberg (UCLA), Karla Pollmann (St. Andrews), Gregory Nagy (Harvard) and Josiah Ober (Princeton). As Walker-Ames Professors, Greg and Josh each worked a full week in the Department.

K-12 CONTACTS

In April 1999, our annual Conference on Teaching Classics in the Schools featured talks by **Paul Pascal** on classical motifs in Seattle architecture and by **Chris Hallett** (UW Art History) on his work at Aphrodisias. Classics graduate student **Kirsten Grace** gave a botanical tour of ancient Rome -- on the UW campus. In February the Department again participated in UW's annual World Languages Day for high school students.

ALUMNI

Nora MacDonald (MA 1986), who runs and teaches the impressive Latin program at Roosevelt High School, was one of three Seattle teachers honored with a 1999 Christa McAuliffe Award for Excellence in Education in the public schools.

In May 1999 the Department hosted an informal early evening reception to bring together faculty, students and area alumni. The guest of honor was visiting Homerist **Greg Nagy** (Harvard). We hope that this event will inaugurate a new tradition.

CONTRIBUTIONS

We invite friends and alumni to contribute to our funds :

***Friends of Classics**

***Classics Endowment Fund**

These are funds for general use, which reach where state dollars cannot reach, and allow us to promote excellence and collegiality. Donations to "Friends" give us short-term flexibility; donations to "Endowment" help us to build up capital.

***Classics in Rome Fund:** adds enhancements to our Rome Seminar.

***Densmore Fund:** rewards distinguished undergraduate students of Greek.

***Classics Fellowship Fund:** subsidizes research and professional expenses of graduate students, especially travel.

Contributions designated for any of these funds, and/or simply made out to "University of Washington," can be mailed to the Department. In an extraordinary year like this, it is worth reemphasizing that every single gift makes a real difference to the Department. The numerical strength of our community of donors is important to us, irrespective of the size of each donation.

Some donors have already asked us about ways to direct gifts in memory of **Meg Greenfield**. Donations to the **Jim Greenfield Endowed Classics Scholarship** are very appropriate here. We are also thinking about other ways to honor Meg's memory, and would gladly include any of her friends and admirers in our conversation.

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