

## **Report by the Director and Director of Studies on the JACT Greek Summer School, held at Bryanston School 30<sup>th</sup> July – 12<sup>th</sup> August 2017**

The 50<sup>th</sup> Greek Summer School had 337 students, which included people educated in Australia, Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Iceland, Italy, Ireland, the Netherlands, Singapore, Turkey and the USA, as well as in the UK; 92 had attended maintained schools in the UK.

There were 73 Beginners in 10 groups, 57 Intermediates (i.e. pre-GCSE) in 8 groups, and 207 Advanced students (from immediately post-GCSE up to university level) in 27 groups. No group had more than ten students; the Beginners groups were kept particularly small thanks to a special grant from the Cambridge Classics Faculty. The Beginners used the JACT Reading Greek textbooks, as did most of the Intermediates, though some of the latter used Taylor's Greek to GCSE if that was what they had used previously. Extra grammar clinics were laid on for students who needed extra support or consolidation; these proved a useful forum both for exploring minutiae and for revising fundamentals. Favourite authors and texts read by Advanced groups included: among many different books of Homer, Iliad 3, 9 and 22, and Odyssey 5, 6 and 7; of prose authors, Plato, Lysias, and Demosthenes; for the drama text six groups read Sophocles' *Electra* (to prepare them for the production of that play in Greek at the end of the course), with Euripides' *Electra* proving almost as popular - this was the summer of the revenge tragedy.

There were 45 tutors, including seventeen from universities (Cambridge, Cologne, Durham, Glasgow, Kings College London, Liverpool, Manchester, Oxford, Reading and Roehampton) and ten teaching at the Summer School for the first time. One tutorship was again generously supported by Trinity College, Cambridge. Heather Sanger was our matron and the Director's Assistants were Lucy Emanuel, Will Johnson and Abbas Khan. Visiting lecturers were Adrian Kelly on the Homeric hero, Karen Ni-Mheallaigh on the moon in Greek literature and culture, Peter Thonemann on religion and politics in classical Athens and Paul Millett on literacy in Greece. There were also lectures by John Penney on Lycia, Kathryn Stevens on Babylonia, Angus Bowie on Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, Costas Panayotakis on Greek literature in Petronius' *Satyricon* and John Taylor on Sophocles' *Electra*. There was in addition a daily programme of afternoon seminars covering a range of linguistic, literary, historical and philosophical topics.

Academic work was supplemented by a stimulating choice of extra-curricular activities. Eleanor Dickey and Philomen Probert dodged heavy rain to lead a walk to the Iron Age and Roman site at Hod Hill, and there was a coach excursion to Salisbury. Emma Woolerton devised and compèred a challenging quiz on the middle Saturday, and the concert featured performances by the course orchestra (conducted by Keith Maclennan) and choir (conducted by Rosalind Aczel) as well as a diverse selection of chamber and solo pieces. On the middle Sunday there was a sparkling and very funny performance, in English, of Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, directed by a team led by James Thorne. Rain interfered with the final performance, in Greek, of Sophocles' *Electra* and we could not use the Greek theatre; under the director Tom Ford's expert guidance cast and crew responded magnificently in the Coade Hall with a driven and gripping interpretation. The costumes and props for both performances were provided by a large team of students and tutors under the guidance of Clare Sharp.

We celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> iteration of the Summer School on the middle Saturday with a number of guests, including former Summer School Directors and Directors of Studies; after lunch, at which we enjoyed Keith Maclennan's ode, written for the occasion, David Raeburn lectured on *The Sound of Greek*. Fundraising and outreach activities to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary are in development for 2018.

167 students (49%) returned questionnaires, with almost all their feedback extremely positive. The great majority felt that they had made more progress with their Greek than they had expected, and almost all the rest that they had achieved at least as much as they had hoped. It was, as usual, an impressively industrious Summer School: in addition to the contact time in lessons, students on average devoted four or five hours per day to independent study (this was spent doing language exercises, preparing texts, learning accidence, etc.); almost every respondent had spent at least three hours per day working independently. Time and again the students reported that they found the pace of the course challenging but rewarding, the teaching clear, and the environment supportive. Almost everyone had, in addition to their language work, attended many of the lectures and seminars on offer; plenty had also found the time to participate in musical, dramatic or sporting activities. The Summer School continues to attract students who like to be busy and are keen to make the most of the opportunities on offer. As in previous years, there was great praise both for individual tutors and for the course as a whole, and there were comments thanking all of our visiting and 'home team' lecturers.

We gratefully acknowledge support from the Cambridge Classics Faculty, the Oxford Faculty Board of Classics, the Craven Committee (Oxford), the Jowett Copyright Trust, the Classical Association for a substantial contribution to the combined Summer Schools of JSST and for continuing the support separately offered to the Greek Summer School by the JACT Greek Project, Trinity College Cambridge, the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, the JACT Greek Project, the Gilbert Murray/Cromer Trust, private benefactors, and the Classics Academy for granting us a share in the distribution of their funds. Their generosity ensures that the Summer School continues to be able to offer bursaries to all students who need financial assistance to attend the course.

The Summer School is, as always, very grateful to Bryanston School, whose facilities make possible a residential summer school and all the opportunities which arise from that. Its activities take place under the guidance of its Management Committee and depend very heavily on the support and advice of the committee's members, particularly its Secretary, Helen van Noorden, the Sponsorship Secretary, Keith Maclennan, the Treasurer, Julian Spencer, and above all its Chair: we are very grateful to Elizabeth Warren, who demitted in August after three years in the role, for her tireless work on behalf of the Summer School and JSST, and to our incoming Chair, Chris Burnand. The Summer School simply could not take place without the work of the Course Secretary, Cathy Bothwell, who manages arrangements with Bryanston School, works throughout the year to publicise the Summer School, handles applications, organises travel and accommodation, and finally ensures that once we gather in Dorset the course runs like clockwork. We are all deeply in her debt.

Catherine Steel, Director  
Henry Cullen, Director of Studies