**Report on the JACT Greek and Latin Summer School, held at St. John’s College Durham, 24th – 31st July 2021.**

I am pleased to report that our 27th Summer School was finally able to take place this year. Following a very emotional, troubling and disappointing year where the pandemic brought the country, and indeed the world, to a stand-still, all our efforts and hard work paid off. Much preparatory work was required by both the organisers and St John’s College to ensure that a reduced Summer School could take place.

While this year’s course was very different to previous ones, it was an absolute pleasure to welcome our students back and see them face-to-face again. This year, an intimate number of 45 people aged between 16 to 84 attended our course in person, while a further 7 students (also of various ages) undertook remote learning using our newly created teaching platform, Teams. With Covid cases on the rise in the North East during the summer, strict and vigilant steps were taken to ensure every student and member of staff was kept safe and healthy during the week.

**The College**

We received our usual warm welcome during our seventeenth year at the college. The conference assistants, as always, went out of their way to help and assist each and every one of us, despite there being two of them. We are most grateful to all St John’s staff for their contribution to the success of the week. The catering staff, as always, deserve a special thanks for keeping us so well fed and for taking the necessary precautions to spread any potential Covid cases we might encounter during the week. The cleaning staff were also magnificent, cleaning the main areas of the college regularly during the day, every day. The college also provided everyone and all of the teaching rooms with the necessary cleaning equipment and hand sanitisers to help keep us protected. Each teaching room was also set-up to be Covid-safe; because of this and the strict regulations put in place by the college and the course organisers, I am delighted to report that there were no Covid cases during the week.

Due to the reduced number of students and staff able to attend in person this year, we were unable to accommodate our usual “Intermediate Latin 1” group. Nevertheless, the Beginners’ and Intermediate groups were working from *Reading Latin* (2nd ed.) and *Reading Greek* (2nd ed.). This year, we had an Advanced Latin A & B group; the former studied Valerius Flaccus Argonautica VII and Cicero In Catilinam II, and the latter Juvenal Satires III and Livy XXII. Our Advanced Greek group read Iliad 24 and Iphigenia at Tauris.

We were fortunate to welcome back a number of the teaching staff in person this year (including Alan Beale, Lizzie Cooper, Seb Nichols, Janet Watson, Emma Nicholson, Gordon Cockburn, Peter Jones, Matthew Ellard and Joe Watson) but we were also delighted to also be joined by Justine Wolfenden who taught Intermediate Latin II. Our Director’s Assistant, Molly Orme, was also an invaluable member of staff, teaching Beginner’s Greek. While circumstances unfortunately prevented Davina Benstead-Cross and Terry Walsh from attending, they taught our remote learners Beginner’s Greek and Advanced Level Latin. We were also fortunate to be joined by Fergus Walsh, who very kindly offered to be a back-up tutor should the need arise. While he was not required for this, he did hold some lunchtime workshops in the spoken Latin language, which was attended very well. My thanks go to Fergus for all his help and support this year and I look forward to welcoming him back as one of our tutors next summer. I am immensely grateful to the staff for all their patience, hard work and flexibility; particularly as there were a number of last-minute decisions to be made! Yet again, they demonstrated their willingness to help their students and, indeed, their ability to turn their hand to almost anything. Through their enthusiasm, experience and willingness to support each other, they are the driving force that makes the Summer School the success it is today.

A special mention must go to Dr Peter Jones who sadly taught on our course for the last time this year. His years of service and dedication to the Summer School have been very much appreciated by all his students and the members of staff who have had the privilege of working alongside him. While we were sorry to see him leave, we are eternally grateful for the numerous times he enriched and entertained our lives with his teachings and stories. Unfortunately, this Summer we also had to say goodbye to a dearly loved and respected former member of staff, Mr Adrian Spooner. He had been a teacher on our course for many years and was a very close friend to us all. I personally was not only lucky enough to be taught by him as a former student on the course, but also to work alongside him as Director. His knowledge and teaching of the ancient world was formidable. He touched the lives of many and will be greatly missed by us all.

Alongside our lessons, we ran voluntary sessions in the afternoons, which were made available to both those who attended in person and our remote learners. Yet again our students provided their own lectures on either their studies or topics of interest, all of which were fascinating to hear. All talks were well attended and this is something we intend to continue for future years.

Kate Monks: “The Shadow of Cleopatra: The Aeneid’s Hidden Character”.

Rachel Jung: “The social hierarchy in the Iliad”.

Fergus Walsh: "loquamur: Active Latin Workshop".

Kiera Young: “Film Adaptations in the Classical World”.

**Lectures and Other Activities**

While the attendance of our evening lecturers were again dictated to by Covid, we were able to provide online lectures using our remote learning platform, Teams. I also owe a great debt of thanks to our lecturers for giving up their time; all their lectures were fascinating and inspirational.

Saturday 24th July Welcome talk and an opportunity to meet your tutor in person.

Sunday 25th July Sarah Miles, Comic Fragments.

Monday 26th July Micaela Langellotti, Living in Egypt under the Romans: Snapshots from the

Papyri.

Tuesday 27th July Cora Beth Knowles, Autism and Classics: Open Doors in the Labyrinth.

Wednesday 28th July Terry Walsh, Britannia: the personification of power.

Thursday 29th July Armand d’Angour, What we get wrong about Catullus.

Friday 30th July A musical and dramatic entertainment by members of the course.

While we encouraged everyone to take daily tests and remain as close to the college as possible during the week, we were still able to run our annual excursion to Hadrian’s Wall. On Tuesday we visited Housesteads, and Chesters, for which I must thank Alan Beale for leading the excursion and the English Heritage for granting us free admission to both sites.

Unfortunately, the Hellenic Bookservice was unable to visit us this year. However, we advertised the business on our website and made regular mention of Monicas’ and Fred’s friendly and formidable service on the course. We wish them all the best and look forward to arranging their next visit soon.

Friday night’s entertainment by students and staff was graced by some splendid performances. A variety of singing, music playing, readings, poems, plays and monologues (serious or comic) were all performed with the right degree of gravitas, humour or appropriately ridiculous incompetence (a notable feature of the staff performance).

**Recruitment**

Our main advertising was through our own website [www.greeklatinsummerschooldurham.org/index.html](about:blank) to which the JACT website offers a link. I owe a particular debt of thanks to the consultancy which built our website and hosts it. Without that vital help, we would have found recruitment much harder. We continue to discuss ways of how to improve our administrative systems further, to make acknowledgement of application and payment process easier. The course was widely advertised on Facebook via a number of Classical related groups and the Classics Library. Details of the JSST summer schools were sent to the CA, which were later found in its monthly e-newsletter. The CA’s Home Page [http://www.classicalassociation.org](about:blank) has a news section where it is easy to sign up for the e-newsletter. I would like to thank all those teachers and lecturers who encouraged their students to apply and I hope we can continue to get information to schools. Our twitter page (@JsstgL) was also another invaluable source of advertisement, particularly when regular updates were required on the status of the running of the course. Dr Peter Jones’s connections with Classics for All, enabled us to advertise the running of our course by publishing our blurb in their newsletter.

Of the 45 students, 8 were from maintained schools, while 14 came from the independent sector.

In my last report, I wrote that we hoped to attract more 16-18 year old students and I was delighted to see that our numbers remained healthy (23) this year. Hopefully, as the Covid situation improves, these numbers will continue to increase. We will endeavour to reach out to as many school-aged students as possible next year.

There were a total of 12 university students who attended the course this year, both undergraduates and postgraduates. The OU and classes run by Alan Beale at the Lit & Phil in Newcastle, are the most significant providers of access to the languages for mature students but it was also lovely to read that our mature students came to us from a range of other Universities too, including UWTSD, Liverpool, Cambridge and Oxford. The reduced number of students this year did, however, encourage our age groups (see appendix) to socialise more. While Government restrictions prevented our students from travelling from far and wide, a small number joined us in person from Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and a couple were able to join us remotely from Asia. We were delighted to welcome back a number of our regular students and our positive feedback shows that we can continue to expect more to follow suit.

**Financial Support for Bursaries**

The Summer School’s bursary fund continues to be dependent on the generous financial support of various bodies. Grants were provided by the Gilbert Murray Trust, Jowett-Copyright Trust Fund, the Classical Association, Cambridge University as well as the Hellenic Society. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to these funding bodies for making it possible for 4 of our students to attend the Summer School.

**2022:** We hope to hold the Summer School again at St. John’s College between 23rd and 30th July 2022.

Finally, I would like to thank the many friends and supporters of the Summer School who have helped to make everything run smoothly. Newcastle University Classics Department (especially Prof. Wisse) has given us considerable support. My thanks and appreciation also go to Mrs Jane Gilhespie (our Course Secretary) and Dr Seb Nichols (our Director of Studies) for their help, advice, support and administrative work throughout the year and in the lead up to the course. A special mention must also go to the staff at the college, particularly to Mrs Alison Bradshaw and Mrs Susan Hobson, for ensuring that a Covid-safe and smooth-running course could take place. Mr Derek Gilhespie, also continues to be a valuable asset, not only undertaking our annual accounts but also being on hand to help students with their luggage on the first day of the course.

Kate Addison-Baylis

Course Director 2021

**Appendix 1**

**Number of students at the college**  **45**

School pupils (from maintained schools) 8

School pupils (independent schools) 14

Undergraduates 3

Postgraduates 4

Classics Teachers 3

Other 13

**Age range** **16-84**

16-17 18

18-22 8

23-29 2

30-59 10

Over 60 14

**Appendix 2**

Teaching groups: Beginners Greek (4) and Beginners Latin (2). Under normal circumstances we would have accommodated two Intermediate and Advanced classes in each language. However, due to a reduced number of students, staff and strict Covid regulations in place, we were prevented from doing so. We were also forced to restrict the movement of students between different teaching groups, to reduce the risk of spreading Covid. We therefore took the decision to ask students to choose between studying Greek or Latin. We continue to work on devising a slicker process of advising students which level is best suited to their needs and abilities. Next year, our Director of Studies, Seb Nichols, will be looking into potentially introducing a third Intermediate group for both languages following some constructive feedback at the end of the course. Depending on the circumstances we face next summer, remote teaching may also be offered to students. This is currently under discussion as we start to prepare for the 2022 course.

|  | Greek | Latin |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Beginners | 4 (including 1 remote learner) | 2 |
| Post beginners | 2 | 2 |
| Intermediate 1 | 3 | - |
| Intermediate 2 | 8 | 6 |
| Advanced | 6 | A: 7  B: 6  Remote learners: 6 |
| Total | 23 | 29 |