

St. Olaf College Department of Classics

NEWSLETTER

July, 2004

The past academic year was packed with activity, from the department's self-study in the fall to the Second Annual Classical Ultimate Frisbee Battle (see photo below) in the spring.



Highlights of 2003-2004

The Class of 2004 included four Classics majors (Kathleen Burt, Hilary Lehmann, Katharine Monson [ΦBK], and David Schiedler), one Greek major (Karl Helvig), two Greek & Ancient Studies majors (Eric Debelak, Julia Kelto [ΦBK]), and seven Ancient Studies majors (James Abraham-Kurtz, Alexander Hontos, Eric Jessen, Andrew Johnson, Jennifer Rishavy, Matthew Van Slyke, and Michael Zahniser [ΦBK]).

Kathleen Burt and David Schiedler will begin the M.A.T. program in Latin at the University of Florida next fall. They both received Awards for Outstanding Accomplishment in Classical Studies from the Classical Association of the Middle West and South.



Thanks to a generous and timely donation from the Loomis family, Stephanie Walker '05 (pictured at left) and Kathleen Burt '04 were able to accompany Anne Groton to the national convention of Eta Sigma Phi (Classics honor society), held in New Orleans, March 19-21. While there, Stephanie was elected national president (Μεγάλη Πρύτανης), and St. Olaf was selected as the site of the 2005 convention--wow!

St. Olaf students won 3 of the 25 prizes awarded in the Eta Sigma Phi national translation contests: Julia Kelto '04 took second place in Advanced Classical Greek; Christopher Schifani '05 took second place in Latin Prose Composition; Kathleen Ess '05 earned honorable mention in Koine Greek.

Students competing for the Loomis Latin Award this spring had to translate an excerpt from a letter by the 5th-century Christian bishop Sidonius; an equally daunting passage from Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* (c. 200 A.D.) faced those who were vying for the Groton Greek Award. In the Latin contest first prize went to Jennifer Starkey '07, second to Lauren Gioe '06, third (a tie) to David Schiedler '04 and Stephanie Walker '05. In the Greek contest first prize went to Julia Kelto '04, second to Jason Zencka '06, third to Kathleen Ess '05.

The Delta Chi chapter of Eta Sigma Phi met regularly, sold T-shirts to raise money, showed Classics-related movies, read dramatically around a bonfire, re-enacted the Eleusinian Mysteries, and co-sponsored our annual Latin/Greek/German Christmas caroling, our spring Bacchanalia, and a well-attended guest lecture, "The Greeks Revolutionize the Alphabet," by Prof. John Peradotto (retired from SUNY-Buffalo but teaching at Carleton last fall).

Pictured below are some of our senior majors (Burt, Debelak, Helvig, Lehmann, Monson, Schiedler) at their graduation reception.



Program & Courses

This was the year of our self-study, which began with the writing of a detailed report; *kudos* to Jon Bruss for taking charge of this onerous task. A site visit by two outside evaluators, Helena Dettmer (University of Iowa) and Greg Daugherty (Randolph-Macon College), followed (Oct. 30-31); in January the department submitted a response to the evaluators' report. All three documents are posted on our web site. As a result of the self-study, we opted to make modest changes in our major requirements but not to alter any of our existing courses.

Once again we had huge enrollments in Beginning Latin (we could easily have filled a third section) and Intermediate Latin (an all-time high of 51 students this year). 26 students have already signed up for Beginning Greek next fall, and our upper-level Latin courses are in double digits. With a record number of declared majors (70 at the end of 2003-04), it is a challenge to figure out how to accommodate them all, without our having to teach multiple overloads. Our large Classics courses (Greek and Roman Myth, the Golden Age of Rome, the Golden Age of Greece) remain popular, but after experimenting with them in giant size for two years, we now think it best to leave it up to each instructor to decide whether to cap the class at 30 or to allow 40, 50, or even 60 students to register for it.

Staff: Old & New

After two years of devoted service to St. Olaf, Jon Bruss is off to a tenure-track position at the University of the South-Sewanee, where we know he will flourish. We will miss you, Jon. Chris Brunelle has made us happy by agreeing to stay on for another two years while Jim May continues as Provost and Dean. Jim will be kind enough to teach one course for us in the fall. Steve Reece will lead the Classics interim to Greece in January; then he will have a semester off from teaching, thanks to a St. Olaf faculty development grant--congratulations!

We are happy to announce that alumnus Paul Moran, Class of 2000, has accepted our invitation to fill in for Steve. Paul is a Ph.D. candidate in Classics at the University of Virginia; he and his wife Jenny and their baby Evan will relocate to Minnesota for spring, 2005. Here is how they looked when they visited us back in May.



Professional Activities

Last November Chris Brunelle, Jon Bruss, Anne Groton, Jim May, and Steve Reece all attended the annual meeting of the Classical Association of Minnesota. Anne and Jon completed their terms as CAM President and Treasurer, respectively. At the annual meeting of the American Philological Association in San Francisco, Jan. 2-5, Jon gave a paper; Anne, Steve, and Jim presided over panels; and Jim was elected to the Board of Directors.

Jim and Anne also attended the 100th meeting of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South in St. Louis, Apr. 14-17. Jim received a surprise award, delivered a paper, and presented his annual *ovationes*, delighting the crowd at the banquet with his Latin rendition of "Meet Me in St. Louis." Anne chaired a session and was elected Secretary-Treasurer; CAMWS will be headquartered at St. Olaf for the next five years.

Scholarly highlights of the year included Steve's winning a McIntosh Fellowship from the Woodrow Wilson Foundation and publishing an article in *Oral Tradition*, Jon's garnering not one but two book contracts, and Chris's having a chapter accepted in an edited volume.

Anne enjoyed her spring-semester sabbatical, during which she gave two invited talks, one at the University of Iowa, the other in New York City. While she was on leave, Steve showed great promise in his *début* as department chair.

Jim and Donna May and a band of intrepid co-travelers spent the last half of June exploring Venetian sites in Greece and marveling at the wonders in Venice, Ravenna, Verona, and Milan. It was Jim's ninth summer study program for St. Olaf alumni and friends; better sign up soon for the trip in 2006.

While the Mays were touring the Mediterranean Sea with their group, Chris Brunelle, Serena Zabin, and their one-year-old son Julian (pictured at right) were frolicking at a wedding in France and visiting relatives in Switzerland. Rumor has it that Julian has become fluent in French and German as well as English and Latin.



Classics Endowment Funds

As always, we would welcome donations to any of our four endowment funds:

- The Loomis Endowment supports annual prizes in Latin.
- The Groton Endowment supports annual prizes in Greek.
- The Scarseth Endowment supports an annual scholarship for a student majoring in Classics, Greek, or Latin (based on good citizenship, need, and scholastic ability). In 2003-04 two Scarseth Scholarships were awarded; one went to Hilary Lehmann '04, the other to David Schiedler '04.
- The Grimsrud Endowment supports an annual scholarship for a student majoring in Latin or in Classics with a Latin emphasis (based on financial need and scholastic achievement). The first Grimsrud Scholarship will be awarded in 2004-05.

Last year an anonymous donor contributed more than \$500 to our Eta Sigma Phi account and specified that it be used to augment the department's skimpy reference library. So far we have purchased *The Oxford Latin Dictionary*, Liddell & Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon*, Danker's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament & Other Early Christian Literature*, Nestle-Aland's *Novum Testamentum Graece*, and *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. Many thanks to our donor for a gift that will benefit not only our current students but future generations of Oles as well.

SEND US YOUR NEWS!



Profs. Bruss, May, Groton, Reece, and Brunelle (kneeling) surround Julie Kelto '04 on Commencement Day. Ingrid Bruss (age 5) holds her favorite stuffed animal.

We have room for alumni news on our web site: <http://www.stolaf.edu/depts/classics/>. Photos would be especially nice; mail them to Dept. of Classics, St. Olaf College, 1520 St. Olaf Ave., Northfield, MN 55057-1098 (we will return them to you) or send them electronically to groton@stolaf.edu. And if ever you are in the neighborhood, please drop by and say hi.

Best wishes from the top floor of Old Main!