The 2007–2008 academic year was a busy and exciting time for St Andrews Classics. Students in Greek and Latin benefited from the arrival of Dr Juan Coderch. Juan fills a newly-created post of ‘Senior Language Tutor’ and provides much-needed specialist teaching and support at all levels of our Greek and Latin provision. Dr Emma Gee also joined us this year. Emma has expertise in Latin poetry and Roman philosophical and scientific writing. Her skills complement those of Dr Alex Long, another new arrival. Students are rushing to sign up to Alex’s and Emma’s new Classical Studies modules on ancient science and Hellenistic philosophy as we speak.

Students with interests in art and material culture were given the opportunity to take summer schools and visit ancient sites in the Mediterranean throughout the year, thanks in part to existing and newly-established scholarships. Read on for news of an exciting new module for lovers of Classical archaeology.

Our postgraduate students reaped the benefits of a packed schedule of seminars, conferences and distinguished visiting speakers. Some of this activity was generated by two Leverhulme-funded research projects which we are currently hosting: ‘After Augustine’ and ‘Science and Empire.’

This is the first issue of an annual newsletter which is designed to keep our former students and staff more closely in touch with what is going on in the School. We welcome contact from anyone who has spent time in the School. Email news, comments and suggestions to classicsnews@st-andrews.ac.uk. For more information on all our activities plus news for our alumni and alumnae visit http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/classics/

Turn to the back page for information on our forthcoming REUNION!
In March 2006, twenty-two students and three staff travelled to Greece to undertake an intensive eleven-day schedule of visits to archaeological sites and museums. This ‘Learning Journey’ was a central element of a new ‘AN’ module called ‘In the Footsteps of the Ancients’. This innovative format was devised and run by Dr Rebecca Sweetman, who is a Senior Lecturer in Ancient History and Archaeology. Rebecca joined the School in 2003 and is currently writing a book about ancient mosaics as part of a project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Rebecca’s previous experience on archaeological digs and as assistant director of the British School at Athens meant that the course was always going to be a success. The module is partly funded by a grant from the Leventis Foundation. This grant subsidised the accommodation and travel costs for all the students but it also provided three full bursaries to students who would not have been able to take the module otherwise. The grant will last for another three years.

As our snapshots of the trip show, everyone had a great time. But this was no holiday. All students had to give on-site presentations which they had researched and submitted before the trip. They had to compile an assessed ‘learning diary’ which forced them to think about the issues that surround understanding art and architecture in context. Finally, they had to complete a site-based case study which aimed to integrate the lessons learned on the trip with their previous understanding of a particular archaeological location. The students’ feedback on the module was extremely positive with many remarking that they had gained confidence and unique insight from the on-site teaching and assessment. There were seven final year students on the module, six of whom later secured places to do postgraduate work. Four of these are continuing with archaeology.
Many readers of this newsletter will have been taught by Professor Harry Hine. Anyone who has had the good fortune of being one of his students or colleagues will know that he has always embodied ‘humanity’ as well as being a Professor of it. (Latin is often called ‘Humanity’ at Scottish Universities). He retires this summer after twenty-three years of outstanding service to the School, the University and British Classics as a whole. Harry has published countless scholarly books, essays and articles including an edition, a commentary and a monograph dealing with Seneca’s Natural Questions and a text, translation and commentary on Seneca’s Medea. He was Head of School from 1990 until 1999 and Head of Latin before that. He has been an editor of Classical Review and served as an assessor in two Research Assessment Exercises.

To mark Harry’s retirement and to celebrate his exceptional contribution to our School, we held a reception in the Class Library in June. Harry wanted the complete works of Wagner as a retirement gift and we duly obliged. Members of staff also entertained Harry and his wife Rosalind with a short comic play in the style of Terence. This had been composed for the occasion by Professor Adrian Gratwick who himself retired last December after forty years of distinguished teaching and research in the School. Adrian was celebrated in a Latin poem composed by Harry at his own retirement reception.

It has been fascinating to hear Harry’s thoughts on his time in the School, especially his reflections on the way in which teaching and research have been changed and challenged over the years. When he first arrived in 1985 there were ‘CL’ courses for first-year arts students but there was no proper Classical Studies degree. Alongside that degree, he has witnessed the introduction of the modular system and the rise of continuous assessment. He can even remember all undergraduate dissertation students having to undergo a viva! Classical Studies brought new life and increasing numbers of students into the School and although he is too modest to say so himself, Harry’s recent CL modules on Ancient Magic and the representation of Nero in post-Classical periods have been wonderful examples of the way in which this relatively young degree can provide students with fresh and inspiring angles on the ancient world.

As for Latin language and literature, Harry is delighted that in 2008-9 all four Latin honours modules will each contain between fifteen and twenty students: ‘That is one of the things that pleases me the most. We have better numbers in Latin honours now than at any time since I have been here. That is wonderful! Classical Studies did not push out Latin or Greek. All three are stronger than ever.’
How was it and what’s next?

We asked three recent graduates from our MA and MLitt programmes to tell us why they came to St Andrews, what they got out of it and what they hope to do in the future…

Ollie Passmore graduated with a degree in Classics this summer. This year he will be studying for the Common Professional Exam with a view to qualifying as a barrister. He was awarded a David Karmel Entrance Award from Gray’s Inn, London. ‘What I enjoyed the most about the Classics program at St Andrews was its distinctly modern approach. This allowed me to approach my studies with the confidence that they were relevant to the twenty-first century without sacrificing an appreciation of the antiquated quality of the literature that has made it so attractive to generations of scholars. There was also a distinctly personal feel to the department, with faculty always going above and beyond their duties in order to provide help and advice.’

Sian Salmon graduated with a degree in Classical Studies this summer. She is currently thinking about a career in publishing (‘educational or children’s fiction’). Her current job is doing publicity and PR for an online company: ‘I’ve already met with people from ‘Grazia’ and ‘She’ magazine!’. Sian feels very lucky to have been able to spend a lot of her study-time in Swallowgate; ‘it has beautiful views, and an ideal studying place in the Class library - a saving grace during essay deadlines and exams! I’m definitely missing the instant accessibility of St Andrews; friends and bars are always no more than a 15 minute walk away. I miss walking down a street and bumping into 5 people within 5 minutes’.

Joe Howley graduated with an MLitt in Ancient History last autumn and has stayed on to do a PhD with us. Joe had a good time on the MLitt: ‘faculty members helped me to pursue my own interests while ensuring that I had the necessary skills and instruction to pursue more advanced subjects. Ultimately, the variety and depth of the MLitt introduced me to topics and methodologies I had not even considered before. I found an MLitt dissertation topic in imperial Greek literature. My supervisor for that, Jason König, is now also supervising my doctoral research into related themes in the intellectual culture of the Roman empire. Now, I find myself working in an exciting and energetic subject area with which the School’s ‘Science and Empire’ project engages’. Joe is looking forward to teaching some Classical Studies and Latin tutorials for the School this year.

REUNION! REUNION! REUNION! REUNION! REUNION! REUNION! REUNION! There will be a reunion for former students of the School on the afternoon and evening of 27th June 2009. We are planning to hold an informal drinks reception and a dinner. There will be talks by staff and students on new and exciting topics in Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology. You will also get the chance to tour the recently refurbished Swallowgate and Craigard building. Come along and stir your memory! More details will be made available at http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/classics/alumni