

## St Hilda's ASM - Chair's Report 2020

When I thought about writing this article in January, having just been elected as the new ASM Committee Chair, I certainly didn't expect to be writing it from home, connecting with the College only virtually by the summer. It has been a year of unexpected change, with lots of us adapting in our personal and professional lives, and finding new ways to stay in touch as the pandemic affects us all. The College seems to have also adapt quickly to the difficult circumstances, including keeping us connected via free access to previous music events hosted at the Jaqueline Du Pré building now online, and of course the Online 2020 Alumnae Events Programme starting with the summer garden party on 27 June. Thank you so much to Triona, Fran and everyone working so hard and with such creativity.

2020 has also seen some changes to the ASM committee. Huge thanks is due to Ruth Fuller-Sessions (Classics, 1986) who came to the end of her term as our Chair in 2019, and to Jan Archer (English, 1966) who also recently came to the end of her extended role as Vice Chair (and most recently Acting Chair) and Jan remains a dedicated committee member. At our January meeting, we also elected Rebecca Walker (English, 1982) as our new Vice Chair, and Henry Cosh (English, 2013) has taken on responsibility for ASM relationship with the JCR in addition to his role as Secretary. We were also delighted to welcome new member Leen Van Broeck (Classics, 2003). We will soon have three new vacancies on the committee so please do think about coming forward or think about nominating someone (with their permission!) to be a part of how we "foster dialogue and continuity of contact between individual members of the ASM and the College for the benefit of both; and to enhance and promote the profile of and the ongoing success of the College".

I'll do a quick rundown of the last year's events, most of which have been spearheaded – brilliantly – by our Alumnae Events Manager Triona Adams (English, 1993):

***Garden Party 29 June 2019*** – the College lawns were transformed into a celebration of the 1969 moon landings with a galaxy of games, and Senior Member Dr Luke Jew (Physics, 2009) gave a 'Brief Tour of The Universe'. There were also special reunions celebrating 20 (1999), 30 (1989) and 60 (1959) years since coming up to College.

***Gaudy 19-20 September 2019*** – this year's theme was St Hilda's and the Performing Arts. As well as reunions, and of course the Gaudy Dinner, a glittering array of alumnae spoke and performed, including award-winning, Oscar-nominated film producer, Celine Rattray (Mathematics, 1993), stage and screen actor and writer, Pooky Quesnel (English, 1982), and composer and performer, Ruth Chan (Music, 1997).

***Autumn Drinks 7 November 2019*** – Daisy Dunn (Classics, 2005) gave a fascinating talk at the University Women's Club, discussing the course of the eruption of Vesuvius and impact it had upon the Plinys – two of the most interesting characters of the Roman Empire.

***Hilda's10 Drinks 6 December 2019*** – Hilda's10 is a group for alumnae up to 10 years after graduation, helping graduates stay connected, get support and advice as they embark on their careers. The festive season started with drinks at Bow Street Tavern (Covent Garden).

**Twelfth Night Drinks 10 January 2020** – the Media Network closed the festive season, and kicking off the new year award-winning musical comedian, actor, improviser and presenter Rachel Parris (Music, 2002) hosted drinks, canapes and set the world to rights at The London Review Bookshop, Bloomsbury.

**St Hilda's Virtual Literary Festival 28 March 2020** – as with so many events and occasions, this had to be postponed due to Covid-19. However, specially recorded films as well articles, reviews and links, were all made available online to enjoy from the comfort of your own home.

It seems like a long time since we have been able to attend social events, so it's lovely to look back and I hope to look forward to the programme of future events laid on by the ASM Committee and the College Development Office.

**Publications** – you will soon receive your latest *Chronicle*. We are very grateful to Margaret Ellis (English, 1963) of the ASM and to Fran Woodcock (Classics, 2004) of the Development Office, our co-editors.

**Finally** – thank you to all the ASM Committee. To Jan (outgoing Vice Chair), Rebecca (new Vice Chair) Catherine Hamilton (Treasurer) and Henry (Secretary) for doing a lot of work behind the scenes. And may I say again a huge thank you to Bronwyn, Triona, Fran and all in the Development and Alumnae Relations team. They work extremely hard – especially under the extreme and unforeseen challenges of this year – to come up with compelling events for Senior Members.

I hope you all stay safe and well.

**Jessica Monaghan (Archaeology & Anthropology, 2002)**  
**June 2020**