

Welcome to the ASAA Newsletter for October-December 2008. The Newsletter is an informal quarterly report about the workings of the ASAA Council and other issues of interest to our members. If you have something you'd like to be considered for inclusion in future newsletters (or if you wish to be removed from the mailing list), please contact the Association's Secretary, Michele Ford (michele.ford@usyd.edu.au).

We'd also like to take this opportunity to remind you that the ASAA represents the interests of the Asian Studies community on a shoestring budget. **If you are behind in your dues, you can become financial again by paying your membership dues by credit card online at <https://www.registernow.com.au/secure/Register.aspx?ID=594>** or by downloading the membership form on the website.

From the Outgoing President (Dr Robert Cribb)

First, congratulations to the new ASAA Council, which will take office at the beginning of 2009. We have a strong and dedicated team who will lead the association through the challenges of the next two years. I would like to thank my colleagues on the council, and especially the members of the executive, for their support and enthusiastic contributions to the work of the association during my term as president.

One of the great challenges for the new council will be managing the transition to the ERA (Excellence in Research for Australia). At the moment, it appears that Asian Studies will be dispersed within the various disciplines for the purposes of assessment. This dispersal presents two potential problems: that we will be judged by colleagues with an orientation to western studies who do not appreciate either the importance or the character of Asian Studies; and that institutional strength in Asian Studies will be made invisible.

Managing this last issue will be particularly important in managing the transition to new generations of Asia scholars in Australia. The strong participation at the ASAA postgraduate workshop just before the biennial conference in Melbourne in July shows that there is a healthy cohort of capable young scholars across a broad range of disciplines and regions. It will take, however, imagination and vigilance to ensure that universities continue to advertise posts that they can apply for during the spate of retirements predicted for the next decade.

Congratulations also to the many winners of ARC grants, who have contributed to ensuring that Australia will continue to have a reputation as a major centre for Asian Studies in the world. Nonetheless, I sense that a lot more could be done to strengthen Asian Studies applications in the ARC process. There is anecdotal evidence that many Asian Studies applications rest too heavily on the 'national interest' criterion and do not present as strong a case in significance, innovation and methodology as they should. As competition grows we cannot afford to assume that national interest alone will carry us through.

I'd like to thank all the members of the association (except one or two) for their support during the last two years and wish my successor Kathy Robinson every success in the two years to come.

ASAA Elections 2008

We would like to welcome new and returning members of the ASAA Council:

President	Kathryn Robinson (ANU)
Vice President	Peter Mayer (Adelaide)
Secretary	Michele Ford (Sydney)
Treasurer	Lenore Lyons (Wollongong)
Japan & NE Asia	Seiko Yasumoto (Sydney)
China	Elaine Jeffreys (UTS)
South Asia	Kama Maclean (UNSW)
Southeast Asia	Kate McGregor (Melbourne)
West, Central and Inner Asia	Vacant
General Councillors	Devleena Ghosh (UTS) Deborah Henderson (QUT) David Hill (Murdoch)
Teachers' Rep.	Penelope Coutas (Murdoch)
Postgraduate Rep.	Thushara Dibley (Sydney)
Coopted members	Mina Roces, Maila Stivens, Peter Jackson, Sally Burdon, Maureen Walsh

Appointments and Promotions

Adam Clulow has taken up a lectureship in Japanese history at Monash University. Adam's field is early Tokugawa Japan.

Caroline Hughes, a Cambodia specialist, has been appointed Associate Professor of Government Studies at Murdoch University.

Kate McGregor, who specialises in the history of Indonesia, has been promoted to Senior Lecturer in History in the latest promotions round at Melbourne.

Krishna Sen has been appointed Dean of Arts at the University of Western Australia.