

## *A few words from the new director*

The New Chaucer Society has completed its transition to Missouri. *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* is safely in Frank Grady's hands in the University of Missouri, St Louis, with Emma Lipton as review editor ninety

DAVID  
LAWTON

◆  
Incoming  
Executive  
Director

minutes' drive away in the University of Missouri, Columbia. The Society's records are next to my office in Washington University, and we're looking forward to the next five years. I'm sorry that we are off to a slightly late start, though I assume most members may not object to holding on to your dues money for a month longer than usual. Now please mail it.

I want to thank Susan Crane, the Society's outgoing executive director, for the huge amount of work she undertook (as I'm now in a position to see, with some awe), and for her brilliant tending of the Society's finances. I shall do my best to follow her.

At Washington University we have already hosted the president, Pete Wetherbee, the program committee chair, Alcuin Blamires, and the rest of the program committee (Graham Caie, Karla Taylor, Stephanie Trigg and Liz Scala) for a successful program committee meeting in October. (The next newsletter, in early spring, will include the call for participants for the Glasgow congress in 2004.)

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As one term of support ends and another begins,  
the Society's success reflects the commitment of its members

## A smooth transition

As the New Chaucer Society's term of support from Rutgers University ends and the term at Washington University and the University of Missouri begins, the society's financial picture is excellent. Our finances consist of two distinct parts, the endowment and the operating budget. Bequests and annual gifts from members constitute the endowment, which provides long-term security for the society, for example, in case we were to find ourselves without university sponsorship for a time. Income from the endowment is currently used to support travel expenses of graduate student members attending the biennial congresses. Building up this long-term security has been my priority during the term at

SUSAN  
CRANE

◆  
Outgoing  
Executive  
Director

Rutgers, and I am happy to report that the endowment has more than doubled in size during this term, from an opening balance of \$81,935 to a current total of over \$175,000. At present, about two thirds of the endowment is invested with Vanguard in short-term bonds and one third in stocks.

The second part of our financial picture is the operating budget made up of members' dues and university support. During the term of support from Rutgers, the university has contributed more than \$70,000 toward expenses for all aspects of daily operations, from postage for newsletters to copyediting for *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*.

This support totals about \$25 per member per year. We owe thanks to Washington University and the University of Missouri for their even more generous support, which

should make it possible to hold dues at their current level of \$45 for regular members and \$25 for retired, part-time, and student members. As of July 5, our membership for 2002 was 560 in all. Student membership stands at 11%, 9% of members are retired, and 4% are unsalaried or on part-time salary. Most members work in the United States, but about a third are non-U.S. members: 67 in the United Kingdom, 22 in Japan, 20 in Canada, 10 in Germany, and somewhat fewer than 10 in Austria, Australia, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Israel, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, and Switzerland.

President Helen Cooper's term ends with the 2002 congress, as do the terms of Trustees David Benson, Carolyn Dinshaw, and Robert Hanning. After this meeting, current Trustees Julia Boffey, Anthony Edwards, Stephen Knight, and Toshiyuki Takamiya were joined by newly elected Trustees Christopher Baswell, Rita Copeland, and James Simpson. Our next president, Winthrop Wetherbee, took office at the end of the congress.

As the society moves from Rutgers University, I would like to express my admiration and gratitude to our two graduate assistants, Susan Arvay and Nicole Smith. Their good will and resourcefulness were crucial to daily operations.

The superb editorial work of Larry Scanlon and Chris Chism speaks for itself, but I want to add that it's been an honor to watch them shaping *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* into a resource for English medieval studies that is both innovative and indispensable. SAC is the society's most lasting legacy, and Rutgers has fostered that legacy with particular success.

## OBITUARIES

*Emerson L. Brown, Junior*  
1934-2002

Emerson Brown was born in 1934. He was educated at Hamilton College in Clinton, NY, where he received his BA in 1956. He went on to earn an MA at Syracuse University and a PhD at Cornell University. He taught at the Inter American University in Puerto Rico from 1958-61, the University of Puerto Rico from 1961-69, Stanford University from 1969-75, and Vanderbilt University from 1975-97.

At Vanderbilt Emerson taught courses in Chaucer, King Arthur and his Knights, the Medieval Dawn Song, and, cross-listed with French and Italian, Dante. He received the Jeffrey Nordhaus Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching in 1992. He was a member of the Medieval Academy, the Dante Society, the International Arthurian Society, the New Chaucer Society, and the Southeastern Medieval Association. His tireless support of and participation in the last will be recognized at the SEMA meeting at Florida State University in October, when two special sessions on Chaucer will be dedicated to his memory.

Emerson's publications, appearing in the most prestigious journals of medieval studies and English philology, were meticulously and expansively researched. He was deeply interested by and expert in medieval literary, biblical, and classical allusion, intertextuality, and rewritings. His essays "Epicurus and Voluptas in Late Antiquity: The Curious Testimony of Martianus Capella" (*Traditio*, 1982), and "Hortus Inconclusus: The Significance of Priapus and Pyramus and Thisbe in The Merchant's Tale" (*Chaucer Review*, 1969-70), which illuminated Chaucer's use of the Song of Songs (and medieval commentary on it) and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in one garden, are two good examples. Emerson was a founding member of the scholarly team that produces the *Variorum Chaucer* editions. He argued consistently that students and scholars alike have been poorly served by modern editions. He made this argument most pointedly in his 1986 article entitled "The Knight's Tale, 2639: Guilt by Punctuation."

A skilled and enthusiastic performer of Middle English verse, Emerson took part in several recordings for the Chaucer Studio. His roles included that of Narrator for the Merchant's tale, a text that his own essays had done so much to illuminate. His last published piece, "The Joy of Chaucer's Lydgate Lines" (in Alan Gaylord's collection, *Essays on the Art of Chaucer's Verse*), was on versification.

He also published essays on William Carlos Williams, Thomas Hardy, and, in one article, Shakespeare, Zeffirelli, Monty Python, and the Medieval Dawn Song. Emerson was the Vanderbilt faculty advisor for Teach for America. During the 1980s he took part in many workshops on teaching for high school teachers in Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi. Music played a big part in Emerson's life. While still an undergraduate, he organized a jazz band at Hamilton College that toured Europe during summer vacation after graduation, playing Dixieland jazz for the passage back and forth on an ocean liner. Jazz clarinet was a passion that rekindled later in his life and for many years he played with bands both in Nashville and in upstate New York, where he had been educated and where he later built a cabin on the shore of Lake Cayuga, mostly with his own hands. His bands were a fixture at Hamilton College reunions. He also performed in Nashville with various local bands, including Louis Brown's Firehouse Jazz Band, which broadcast live on station WAMB during the 90s. For many years he and a group made up of academics named "The Impaired Faculties" played for the cocktail party given each May for graduating seniors by Vanderbilt's English Department.

An avid outdoorsman, Emerson enjoyed mountain-hiking and kayaking almost to the last. After a teaching stint at Stanford's overseas campus at Tours, he had become particularly devoted to cycling, and for his 25th class reunion he rode his bicycle from Nashville, Tennessee to Clinton, New York—a distance of over 950 miles. Emerson's illness forced early retirement upon him in 1997. He died on 19 March 2002 of prostate cancer at the Alive Hospice, Nashville, Tennessee. He was 67. A jazz memorial service was held for him at the First Unitarian Church in Nashville at 2 pm on 6 April.

His friends and students will remember

with gratitude his boundless energy and enthusiasm, his warmth and generosity, his devotion to teaching and learning, and his joy in literature and life. Chaucerians who would like to contribute an essay or a note to a volume in Emerson's memory are invited to contact one of the editors, Tom Burton ([tom.burton@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:tom.burton@adelaide.edu.au)), or John Plummer ([john.f.plummer@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:john.f.plummer@vanderbilt.edu)).

*Robert P. apRoberts*  
1914-2002

Robert P. apRoberts, a charter member of the NCS and a personal friend to many Chaucerians and other scholars around the world, passed away on December 4, 2002, in Riverside, California. Because illness left him unable to walk for over a year before his death, the NCS congress in Boulder was one of the very few he could not attend. This last year was especially hard because even in his 80s, Bob was a tremendously vital and energetic traveler, and with his wife, Ruth, the distinguished Victorianist and professor emerita at the University of California, Riverside, always one of the social centers of many scholarly gatherings. Bob is survived by Ruth, his son Evan, and three daughters, Lucy, Alison apRoberts-Warren and Mary West, and two grandchildren. Memorial contributions may be made to the Robert apRoberts Essay Prize, Department of English, California State University, Northridge, Northridge, CA, 91330.

Bob's translation of and introduction to Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato*, with Anna Seldis, published in 1986 by Garland, is widely used by Chaucer students and scholars. He was also well-known for a series of articles on Chaucer, among the most frequently consulted of which are "The Growth of Criseyde's Love," published in the proceedings of the Medieval Studies Conference Aachen 1983, ed. W.-D. Bald, et. al. (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1984), pp. 131-41; "The Boethian God and the Audience of the Troilus," *JEGP* 69 (1970): 425-36; "Love in the Filostrato," *Chaucer Review* 7 (1972): 1-26; "Criseyde's Infidelity and the Moral of the Troilus," *Speculum* 44 (1969): 383-402; and "The Central Episode in Chaucer's Troilus,"

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## OBITUARIES

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*PMLA* 77 (1962): 373-85. His 1950 Berkeley dissertation was one of the first full-scale defenses of Criseyde, and he was especially proud of his arguments against incest accusations, in a wittily titled essay, "A Contribution to the Thirteenth Labour: Purging the Troilus of Incest," in J. Bakker et al., eds. *Essays on English and American Literature* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1987), pp. 11-25. As elegant and cordial as was his professional presence, many of us will remember his impassioned objections from the floor of many conference sessions to what he took to be arguments that flew in the face of common sense and Chaucer's intentions.

Bob was born in Winnipeg, Canada, and graduated from the University of British Columbia. He served in the Canadian armed forces from 1941 until 1945, and proudly wore his regimental blazer at important events. He received a doctorate in English from the University of California at Berkeley in 1949, before accepting a position at New York University. When the California State University system began expanding in the 1960s, he joined the faculty at California State University, Northridge, then known as San Fernando State College, where he taught for twenty years. In 1969-70, he was a Fulbright professor at the University of Ankara in Turkey.

In matters of personal style, Bob exhibited a sprezzatura that is probably only possible within his passing generation. He combined a worldly social sophistication with an egalitarian social democratic politics. A fine athlete with even finer sportsmanship, he could consistently trounce an unnamed Chaucerian tennis partner thirty years his junior and still not make you feel as if you had really lost. A faultless dresser, and, with Ruth as hostess, a legendary host, he would greet his guests in his smoking jacket and ascot, and offer them a perfect martini. Cheers, Bob.

## STUDIES IN THE AGE OF CHAUCER

## A note about editorial policy

The trustees of the New Chaucer Society have encouraged me to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the Society's change of venue and the change of editorial staff for *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* to

FRANK GRADY

◆  
Yearbook  
editor

restate the editorial policy of our yearbook. At present, each issue of *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* consists of four parts: articles, book reviews, an annual bibliography of Chaucer scholarship, and a colloquium on an issue of current interest to Chaucer and Middle English studies. Contributions to the bibliography come from volunteers under the supervision of the bibliographer, Mark Allen, and the assistant bibliographer, Bege K. Bowers. Reviews are assigned by the review editor, Emma Lipton, in consultation with the editor. The colloquium topic is chosen by the editor and all participants are invited.

In general, articles are processed according to a policy of double-blind submissions.

After an initial examination by the editor, all identifying marks are removed, and each submission is forwarded to two readers, whose identities are also kept confidential. (Submissions which clearly do not fit the journal's requirements – usually because they are too brief – are typically returned without being sent out to readers.) Articles are accepted, returned for revision, or rejected on the basis of the two readers' reports; in the case of a disagreement between reports, the final decision rests with the editor.

On rare occasions, an article may be solicited, either to bring to the journal a prominent scholar who has not already published in it, or to bring to it an essay on an important topic that has not been adequately covered by unsolicited submissions. But the strength of *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* has always rested, and will continue to rest, on the strength of the contributions of the Society's members, on their willingness to send their best work and their willingness to employ their best judgment as readers and reviewers.

## OF NOTE

## SAC wins CELJ Award

The Council of Editors of Learned Journals has chosen Larry Scanlon, editor of *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* from 1999 through 2002, as the runner up for this year's Phoenix Award for Significant Editorial Achievement. His award will be presented at the Modern Language Association meeting in New York, on Friday December 27 at 7:00 p.m. in the Hilton Concourse B.

Members of the New Chaucer Society will recognize how richly *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* deserves this recognition. Volumes 21-23, and Volume 24 now in press, have featured innovative work on late medieval culture from both the most prominent and the most promising scholars in the field.

Congratulations to Larry on winning this recognition for his editorship.

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We would like to become a genuine hub for Chaucerians in North America. If you're anywhere nearby, please call in – you'll be made very welcome. Contact the Chaucer server here ([chaucer@artsci.wustl.edu](mailto:chaucer@artsci.wustl.edu)), and I or the Society's graduate fellow Jessica Lawrence, or my assistant, Marie Lay, will reply. I would particularly welcome ideas about extra things we might plan here during our time as the Society's headquarters to promote the Society, our work, and public interest in medieval literature. Washington University is generous in its support of our Society, and I would love to be able to facilitate innovative activities to supplement *SAC* and the biennial congress. Please send us your suggestions.

## ACTIONS OF THE TRUSTEES, JULY 2002

At their meeting in Boulder in conjunction with the biennial congress of the New Chaucer Society, the Trustees accepted a proposal from the University of Glasgow to host the 2004 congress.

A motion of thanks for the impressively detailed proposal was unanimously approved.

After hearing reports on *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* from editor Larry Scanlon and bibliographer Mark Allen, the Trustees approved a motion that the society should continue to support the entry of bibliography data into the on-line database at the rate of \$1.00 per entry.

Permission was also granted in advance for modest legal fees to clarify the copyright situation of authors and the society when articles are reprinted from *SAC*.

The Trustees discussed conflicting wording in the society's constitution, printed at the back of each membership directory, particularly between Article X (d) and Article XI (c). Concluding that the

constitution may need reviewing for further anomalies as well, the Trustees agreed to form a constitutional review committee of Helen Cooper, David Benson, and Tony Edwards (convenor); the committee will report to the Trustees on their findings within one year. Susan Crane reported that the society's finances are sufficiently strong to obviate the need for any increase in dues or in the nonmember prices for *SAC*.

The Trustees approved a motion that the Executive Director should provide annually to the Trustees a complete report on the society's finances.

In subsequent discussion, the Trustees further agreed that this annual mailing or e-mailing should include an initial consultation from the President on the membership of the next Program Committee.

The Trustees gave their approval to a new Nominating Committee: Robert Hanning, Karma Lochrie, Corinne Saunders, James Simpson (convenor), and Anna Torti.

### Revisiting Chaucer and Christianity

July 21-23, 2003  
Canterbury Cathedral  
International Study Centre

This interdisciplinary conference will explore fresh perspectives on the Christian content and context of Chaucer's writings in a way which will inform both research and teaching. Conference sessions will be held at the new International Study Centre within the precincts of Canterbury Cathedral. The programme will include an evening event at the Cathedral.

Speakers will include David Aers, Margaret Aston, Peter Beidler, Tom Bestul, Santha Bhattachargi, Alcuin Blamires, Derek Brewer, Andrew Butcher, Graham Caie, Helen Cooper, Eamon Duffy, Rosalind Field, Tom Hanks, John Hirsch, Laura Hodges, H. A. Kelly, Alastair Minnis, Richard Newhauser, Helen Phillips, David Raybin, Sherry Reames, Elizabeth Robertson, Miri Rubin, Wendy Scase, John Shinnars, Sarah Stanbury, Paul Szarmach, Julian Wasserman, and Diana Webb.

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