The Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Sydney was founded in 1997 and is now in its eighth year of successful operation. The Newsletter is circulated to all Members, Honorary and Associate, and Student Members of the Centre, either electronically or in hard copy, depending upon whether members have e-mail addresses. It appears biannually, generally in March and August, and includes a programme of events for the coming semester as well as news of Centre activities, members’ research projects and publications, and teaching. We welcome members’ news items and contributions. Please send them, preferably electronically, to medieval.enquiries@arts.usyd.edu.au or directly to gabrielle.singleton@arts.usyd.edu.au, otherwise by fax (02) 9351 2434 or mail addressed to the Centre for Medieval Studies, John Woolley Building A20, University of Sydney, NSW 2006.
Hail . . .

We welcome another **Honorary Associate, Max Walkley**, recently retired from the University of Sydney’s Department of French.

Max Walkley’s interest in Old French studies was aroused by Keith Val Sinclair, Associate Professor in the Department of French during the 1960s. Holding a Commonwealth Post-Graduate Scholarship (1965 to 1967), he completed an M.A.(Hons) (Sydney) under Sinclair’s aegis, with a thesis on a fourteenth-century French translation by Jean Daudin of Vincent de Beauvais’s *de eruditione filiorum nobilium*, Max worked towards a doctorate at the Université de Neuchâtel (1967-68) under the guidance of Jean Rychner, preparing an edition of Robert Gaguin’s fifteenth-century rendering of Caesar’s *de bello gallico*.

Since his early days as a lecturer at the University of Sydney (1969-), Max has regularly presented his course “Introduction to Old French” which, in the University’s halcyon days, was a prerequisite for the Honours School. More recently, he has presented the Old French literature component of the Medieval Studies first-year course, “The Written Record”.

His principal domain of research has been in Old French language and literature, with a special leaning towards research into Middle French texts. More recently, as a corollary to his being the key figure in introducing Quebec and Suisse Romande authors into the Department of French Studies’ francophone programme (“Le français dans le monde”), he has published articles in this field too.

Max has continued his interest in Middle French translations from Latin, an interest first stimulated by his mentor Keith Sinclair. His list of publications shows articles on Jean Daudin, one of which was offered in an *hommage* volume to Keith Sinclair on his retirement (1994). Another author from this Middle French period who has Max’s ongoing attention is Robert Gaguin, fifteenth-century translator of Caesar. He continues to work on an edition of Gaguin’s *de bello gallico* text, having published in *Parergon* an article on his methods of translation, and having used his work on Gaguin to participate with the late Professor Kevin Lee in an undergraduate seminar held, in Professor Lee’s Department of Classics in 1997, on Caesar’s *Gallic Wars*.

Max’s important discovery, in a manuscript held by the New York Public Library, of a text by Jean Gerson, has led to his publishing several seminal articles in the field of Gerson studies. Gerson was an extremely important figure in France at the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries, so the uncovering of any new material of this former Chancellor of the University of Paris is extremely exciting. The six articles he has written on Gerson’s *L’Exemplaire des petits enfans*, and published in various journals, constitute, when taken together, a monograph. They represent the most important results of his research activity.

Other areas of *medievalia* have sparked in Max a research interest from time to time. Often he has developed his ideas as conference papers, amending and expanding them later to scholarly publications. Thus he draws attention to his articles on *fabliaux*, *farces*, and especially representing his continued research interest in Old Occitan - on the romance *Flamenca* (1996). He is often asked to write reviews of books in the field of medieval French and Occitan. These reviews have mainly been published in *AUMLA, Parergon*, and the *New Zealand Journal of French Studies*.

Acknowledgement of his scholarship qualities has not been lacking. During his tenure of a Senior Lectureship in the Department of French Studies at the University of Sydney, he has not only won two prestigious Canadian Faculty Enrichment Awards (1991 and 2000), but also had the great
honour of being chosen as a "Senior Research Scholar" in 1986 at Corpus Christi College in the University of Cambridge.

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The Department of French will be joined in August by Dr Andrea Williams, an Arthurian specialist from the University of Exeter, who will take up an appointment as a Lecturer in French Studies. From Exeter’s website (http://www.ex.ac.uk/french/staff/AW.html) we learn the following about Dr Williams:

Conference papers: 'Dreams and Visions in the Perlesvaus', paper given at International Medieval Congress, University of Western Michigan, USA, May 2000; 'Structure and Metaphor in the Old French Romance of Perlesvaus', paper read at the Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Bristol, February 2001; 'La Structure du Perlesvaus', paper read at International Arthurian Congress, University of Wales Bangor, July 2002.
Other scholarly activities: Treasurer, British Branch of the International Arthurian Society.
Current research projects: A comparative study of Joseph Bédier's 'Le Roman de Tristan et Iseut' and the Cocteau/Delannoy film 'L'Eternel Retour'.

... and Farewell

We are sorry to lose Helen Fulton, Associate Professor in the Department of English, University of Sydney. Helen has published widely in medieval Welsh and English literatures, and is currently finishing a book on the representation of towns and urban culture in medieval literatures. In September 2005, she will take up a Chair of English at the University of Wales, Swansea. We wish her all the very best.
Events Here

Lectures

The Centre continues to present lectures by local medievalists and visiting scholars on a variety of Medieval Studies topics. All members and their guests are welcome at these free lectures delivered by experts in a manner accessible to those without specialist knowledge of the topics.

Unless otherwise indicated (in this instance, note 11 August), lectures are given on the last Thursday of each month in the Common Room (N480), level four, John Woolley Building, A20, Science Road, in the University, at 5 for 5.30 p.m. with drinks and nibbles beforehand. Afterwards we generally take the speaker to dinner at a restaurant in Glebe and members are warmly invited to come along (approximately $30 a head). Please let us know by 12.00 noon latest on the day if you want to join us.

The Lecture Schedule for Second Semester is:

28 July 28
Ms Catherine England, postgraduate student, Department of History
The Stroke of Difference: Girls in Renaissance Florence

11 August
Dr John Seahill, Faculty of Humanities, Keio University
The modern reception of Middle English saints’ legends

22 September
Mrs Melanie Heyworth Brown, postgraduate student, Centre for Medieval Studies
Ælfric’s married saints: redefining marriage and living the ideal

20 October
Dr Dugald McLellan, Honorary Research Associate, Department of Italian
Antonio Mancinelli and Luca Signorelli: Interpreters of the Muses
The paper will focus on the rôle of the humanist educator Antonio Mancinelli in the development of the Last Judgement fresco (painted 1499-1504 by Luca Signorelli) programme in the cathedral of Orvieto.

Literary Luncheons

A literary lunch was held on Wednesday 20 April to celebrate (belatedly) two recent publications by Honorary Research Associates Jane Hardie and David Scott-Macnab. These are Jane's The Lamentations of Jeremiah. Ten Sixteenth-century Spanish Prints, The Institute of Medieval Music (Ottowa, 2003) and David's A Sporting Lexicon of the Fifteenth Century. The JB Treatise, Medium Aevum Monographs, New Series XXIII (Oxford, 2003).

The second literary lunch for 2005 was held on Wednesday 8 June to honour the 2004 publication of an innovative collection of essays edited by Louise D'Arcens and Juanita Feros Ruys, Maistresse of My Wit. Medieval Women, Modern Scholars, Making the Middle Ages 7 (Turnhout, 2004). This is the seventh volume to be published by Brepols in the Centre's series Making the Middle Ages, edited by Geraldine Barnes and Margaret Clunies Ross.
Symposium

In conjunction with the Meeting of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East at the International Congress of Historical Sciences at the University of New South Wales on Monday 4 July, we held an all-day Symposium on ‘From the West to the Holy Land in the Age of the Crusades’, with John Pryor as Co-Ordinator. Participants in the Symposium were members of the SSCLE who were participating in the ICHS. They were:

Professor Karl Borchardt, Stadtarchiv Rothenburg ob der Tauber & Institut für Geschichte, Universität Würzburg, speaking on ‘Germany, Poland, and the Crimea: a late medieval overland trade route between Europe and Asia’;
Dr Adrian J. Boas, Department of Archaeology, Haifa University, on ‘Archaeological evidence for Frankish rural administration in the Holy Land’;
Professor B. Z. Kedar, The Institute for Advanced Study, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, on ‘Mediterranean sea currents: recent oceanographic research and its implications for Crusader studies’;
Professor Yvonne Friedman, Department of General History, Bar-Ilan University, on ‘Gestures of conciliation? Peacemaking endeavours and cultural consequences in the Latin East’;
Dr Brenda M. Bolton, Department of History, Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London, on ‘Mission or Crusade: Sicard of Cremona in the Holy Land’;
Professor Richard Divall on ‘Two relics of the Order of St John of the Hospital in Constantinople’;
Professor Michel Balard, University of Paris, Sorbonne, on ‘Orientals in Cyprus at the beginning of the 14th century according to Genoese notaries’;
Assoc. Prof. Alexander Beihammer, Department of History and Archaeology, University of Cyprus, on ‘Greek identity and self-image in early Frankish Cyprus’;
Dr Christopher Schabel, Department of History and Archaeology, University of Cyprus, on ‘Antelmus the Nasty (1205-32): New information on the first Archbishop of Patras’;
Assoc. Professor Yaacov Lev, Department of Middle Eastern Studies, Bar-Ilan University, on ‘Greek Fire in Muslim warfare during the Crusades’.

We are planning a Colloquium next year on

THE CLASSICS IN THE CLASSROOM : MANUSCRIPT, INCUNABLE and CINQUECENTINE RELICTS AND PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE IN THE EUROPEAN CLASSROOM (1000 – 1600 A.D.)
27-29 July 2006

This major academic gathering is currently sponsored privately and by the Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Sydney, and is part of a much larger venture, involving an ARC International Linkage project entitled ‘Multidisciplinarity, communities of learning, the written record and the search for harmony, 1100-1450 AD’. The other major institutions connected with this are Monash University, Victoria (contact Professor Constant Mews), Texas A and M University (contact Professor Cary Nederman), and Claremont Graduate University, California (contact Professor Nancy Van Deusen).

This Sydney colloquium will be immediately followed by a conference entitled ‘Communities of Learning and the Written Record 1100-1450 AD’ scheduled for 30 July – 2 August 2006 in Melbourne.

Intended for discussion at the Sydney Colloquium is the relationship between extant manuscripts/incunables/cinquecentini of works written for classroom use in Graeco-Roman,
medieval and Renaissance times (and commentaries/notes upon them), and the actual procedure/format/content of the classrooms that used/produced them. There may be a concentration upon the trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic) and the place of the Graeco-Roman works relevant to these studies in the medieval and Renaissance classrooms, but anyone who wants to contribute on other, related, topics will be welcome. We do not know precisely at this stage what actually went on in the medieval classroom and we do not know how what is in our surviving manuscripts/incunables/cinquencentini came to be written, how it was used and for what kinds of audiences/learning environments, or even for what kind of envisaged practice in the world outside the classroom. These are aspects of manuscript/ incunable/cinquencentine studies that have come to receive increasing scholarly attention nowadays and, because the modern humanities classroom is currently so universally under threat, it seems an appropriate time to try and sum up the problems and possible solutions.

It is proposed to hold the colloquium at the University of Sydney, between Thursday afternoon/evening 27 July 2006 (arrival, registration, reception, inaugural lecture, etc.) with the main body of the presentations throughout Friday 28 (with the evening free) and Saturday 29 (with a colloquium dinner that evening). To register your interest in attending or reading a paper, please contact gabrielle.singleton@arts.usyd.edu.au or the Centre for Medieval Studies, Woolley Building A20, University of Sydney.

Events Elsewhere

**Calls for papers** have been received for:

The Perth Medieval and Renaissance Group’s thirteenth annual symposium on ‘Houses, Households and Families in Medieval and Early Modern Europe’, 12 and 13 August 2005 at the University of Western Australia.


The Centre for Medieval and Early Modern European Studies, Sixth Annual Conference, 4-5 February 2006, University of Auckland, New Zealand.

The Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies’ twelfth Annual Conference on ‘Poverty and Prosperity, the Rich and the Poor in the Middle Ages and Renaissance’, 16-18 February 2006.


We have been advised of:

Monash University’s Conference on ‘Communities of Learning and the Written Record 1100-1450’, 30 July - 2 August 2006.
About our Members

Geraldine Barnes, 2005 University of Sydney R&D Grant of $13000 for 'Iceland and the Medieval World Picture'.

Elizabeth Bonner on 8 June 2005, for her services to French culture and history, was admitted by the French government as a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques, an honour conferred at Sydney University by the French Consul, M. Laurent Delahousse.


Elizabeth Bonner, 2005 (June) ‘The discovery of some previously unknown Scottish seals in French archives’, Heraldry Australia.


Mike Carter will be attending two conferences in the next few months, both by invitation. The first is a Symposium on Semitic linguistics to be held in Istanbul in October, the second a conference on the Ten Commandments in the three Abrahamic religions in Madison, Wisconsin.


[Geraldine Barnes advises that in Parergon 22/1 (2005), (pp.206-208) there is an excellent review, by Graham Tulloch, of Margaret Clunies Ross's The Old Norse Poetic Translations of Thomas Percy (Brepols, 2001). This book is Volume 4 in the Centre for Medieval Studies ‘Making the Middle Ages’ series.]


Margaret Clunies Ross, invited paper, ‘Fornaldarsögur: mythic fantasies or fantastic ethnographies?’, conference on Fornaldaersagaer: myter og virkelighed (Sagas of Ancient Time: Myths and Reality), Schæffergården, Denmark, w. University of Copenhagen, 25-28 August 2005

Margaret Clunies Ross, invited paper, ‘A new arrangement of Bragi Boddason’s poetry’, Skaldic Editors’ meeting and symposium, Reykjavik, 11-14 August 2005

Margaret Clunies Ross, invited paper, ‘Poet into myth: Starkaðr and Bragi’, conference on ‘Old Norse Myths’, 29 August 2005, Aarhus University and the University of Southern Denmark, Odense

Margaret Clunies Ross, Tarrin Wills, Edith Marold, University of Sydney grant for ‘Images of Old Norse Runic Poetry, 2004, $21,000

Margaret Clunies Ross, Academy of the Humanities, University of Sydney publication subsidy for A History of Old Norse Poetry & Poetics, 2004, $1,000

Margaret Clunies Ross, University of Sydney travel grant for conference, The Medieval Saga, Bergen, 13-15 April 2005, $2,500


**Helen Fulton**, University of Sydney R & D Grant, 2005, $14,000, ‘Writing Identity: Modern Histories of Medieval Welsh Literature’; also completed ARC Discovery Grant in 2004, awarded in 2002-4, for ‘The Medieval Town Imagined: Representations of Urban Culture in Medieval Literature’


H. Fulton, conference paper, ‘Wales and England in the Late Middle Ages: Antipathy and Sympathy re-theorised’, ‘Milestones’ Conference, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, June 2005


H. Fulton, conference paper, ‘Gender and Identity in the Welsh “Gereint” and the French “Roman de Silence”’, Celtic Studies Association of North America annual conference, University of Toronto, April 2004

**Smadar Gabrieli** in 2004 received the Australia-Israel Scientific Exchange Foundation (AISEF) Postgraduate Fellowship, to spend 3 months in Israel and study Medieval and post Medieval ceramics.


Matthew Glozier, 2004, (nine new biographies for) expatriate British and Irish soldiers, including George Douglas, first Earl of Dumbarton, KT, Scottish colonel in France (c.1636–92); Henry
Hexham, military writer (c.1585–c.1650); Captain John Slezer, Dutch artist and engineer in Scotland (d.1714); and Nathaniel Hooke the elder, Jacobite soldier (1664–1738). *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*


**Jane M. Hardie**

‘Commemoration, Ritual and Performance : The Iberian Connection : Medieval and Renaissance music from The St Laurence Chamber Choir’ (recorded at St Scholastica’s Chapel, Glebe, New South Wales, February 2005, directed by Dr Neil McEwan), CD project directed by Dr Jane M. Hardie, Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Sydney. Most of the music from Medieval and Renaissance Iberia is performed here for the first time, and is the result of new research.

**Melanie Heyworth Brown** was awarded a Lynne Grundy Memorial Trust bursary and a TOEBI (Teachers of Old English in Britain and Ireland) bursary in 2004.


**Sam Lieu, Iain Gardner**


CIs Prof. Sam Lieu (Macquarie), Professor Majella Franzmann (UNE), and A/Professor Iain Gardner (Sydney, Study of Religions)


Dugald McLellan, ‘Managing the Apocalypse : the Cappella Nuova as focus for communal cults and civic liturgies in late Renaissance Orvieto’, *International Conference on Eucharist and Eschatology : Art and Theology in the Orvieto Duomo*, Orvieto, Italy, 25-29 May 2005


Kathleen Nelson at the end of 2004 received a Research & Development Grant for 2005 for project 'The Exultet in the Iberian Peninsula, c.1000 – c.1200'.

Nerida Newbigin, seedfunding, November 2005, for Antonio da Bacchereto, calzaiuolo, canterino, festaiuolo; ARC Three year Discovery grant, 2005-7, $86 000, for People and Performances in Fifteenth Century Florence.


Harry Peters, presented a paper on John Gower at the University of Arizona (Tucson) symposium, ‘Words of Love and Love of Words in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance’, held April 29-May 1, for which he received a travel grant of $1,800 from the Postgraduate Research Support Scheme. He is updating the paper so it might be considered for inclusion in the conference proceedings to be published in 2006.


Ursula Potter, (small) grant for 2004/2005 from Professor Roger Bartrop, Clinical Associate Professor, Northern Clinical School, Royal North Shore Hospital for ‘Research into Greensickness (the disease of virgins) in Early Modern Drama’.


Stephanie Trigg

Selected papers from the Once and Future Medievalism conference held at the University of Melbourne in September 2004 have been included in antiTHESIS forum, volume 3, the online version of antiTHESIS, the postgraduate journal of the Department of English at the University of Melbourne. The URL is http://www.english.unimelb.edu.au/antithesis/forum-3/ This issue features ten papers on topics ranging from Tudor court poetics to Walter Scott and Mel Gibson; many of them are beautifully illustrated. The essays are framed by an introduction from the conference convenor, Stephanie Trigg, and an afterword specially written by the conference's keynote speaker, John Ganim.


And last, but not least, and certainly longest & most entertaining, from John O. Ward :

Diary of a Wandering Scholar*

I attended the ANZAMEMS conference in Auckland at the beginning of February, and was most impressed at its organisation, at the Brepols stand, at Robert Bartlett’s very professional and informative keynote address and at many other aspects of the meeting. I presented a paper on Heloise’s proposed authorship of Carmina Burana 65 and 66, in an appropriate session organised by Juanita Ruys, and this passed without serious dissension from anybody! The exhibition of NZ manuscripts and attendant speeches was excellent and Donald Kerr of the University of Otago Library Special Collections should be invited over here to give us an address on Sir George Grey as a book and MS collector – he is writing a biography of this early figure in Australian and New Zealand history and it would be a great idea to team up with Neil Boness and have a good session on the subject – Grey, I believe, was the first to propose a ‘regional’ government for Australia, which should long ago have superseded the farce of states and a ‘Federation’. I stayed in the ‘Railway Campus’, which was, in fact, the old mainline Train Station in Auckland – in a pretty awful part of town, but a lovely building (and renovations to turn it into a student accommodation building were fine, except that they forgot about ventilation and the surrounding noise as the area is slowly being rebuilt). The railway station was originally in the centre of town on the site later occupied by the P.O. It was then moved to the ‘Railway Campus’ site, and just now it has been returned to its original site, at vast expense. There are no electric lines in Auckland and only a few train lines. The congestion between airport and downtown has to be experienced to be believed. No railway goes to the airport, alas . . . .

I then returned to Australia and a day later set out for Paris, where I was part of a panel welcoming the French translation (by Sylvain Piron) of the ‘Lost Love Letters’ of Heloise and Abelard, subject of a 1999 book by Constance Mews (who gave a main paper at the meeting – the book is coming out shortly in a French translation). It was an interesting meeting (Friday 11th February) and I think the supporters of Constant’s work (including myself) spoke forcefully, but the French intellectual
Establishment looked about as flexible as granite and I don’t think moved much. None of them, of course, had read the literature on the subject and it did not help that Guy Lobrichon (History, Avignon), whose Héloïse: l’amour et le savoir (Gallimard) hit the bookshops at the time of our visit, had declined to accept Constant’s identification. This helped neither History nor his book. We later met Sylvain properly at his house (and his wife, a very congenial Romanian who directs Marcel Marceau). He is a very energetic young scholar, whose main work has been on the followers of Petrus Olivi (he gave me a fascinating essay on this subject which I’ll copy for anyone interested). I think he makes a very good case for Constant’s identification. I have his book if anyone would like to read it (I also have Lobrichon’s book). Stephen Jaeger gave a good paper at the meeting and he and Constant opened another meeting, which took place the following Monday to Wednesday, at the École des Hautes Études (44 rue de l’Amiral Mouchez 75014 Paris), organised by Irène Rosier. Irène had done a great deal of work to prepare for this meeting, which had to do with eleventh/twelfth-century commentaries on Priscian and the work of William of Champeaux (Abelard’s master), distributing masses of documents and information over the web (none of which, alas, would ever download to the useless piece of Mac equipment I have to eke out my final scholarly years upon, so I was the least prepared of all participants). She invited us all back to her top-floor Marais apartment for a fine meal on the Monday night and we saw how people lived in the Marais in the past – under the roof beams and in the niches that they created! The meeting was pretty specialised and John of Salisbury would have been a bit short of breath there had he turned up the way he did after ten years at the Mont St Geneviève – Metalogicon II.10, trans McGarry p.100! I gave a presentation on ‘William of Champeaux and Rhetoric’, mentioning the edition being completed for Brepols by myself and Juanita Ruys, and they all seemed keen to see our work completed, but clearly had little real interest in or knowledge of rhetoric as such (apart from me, Constant and Margaretia Fredborg - their main concerns being the implications of certain grammatical and dialectical ideas and concepts, such as transitivity, substance, etc.). However, it was good to be able to place the subject of rhetoric in context and the meeting was attended by many heavies (Jolivet, Alain de Libera, etc.). I am very grateful here to John Scott, who prepared an excellent transcription of a key portion of a Durham manuscript, in which the views of a ‘Master G[uilelmus]’, i.e. William, of Champeaux, were much quoted – this was my contribution to the website, though luckily I did not have to consult it in that form! Paris, of course, provided ample diversion (Ecouen Museum of the Renaissance, where a filming of a book burning was being prepared for a documentary on Galileo; the Musée Cluny; the Panthéon, the Louvre, etc., etc.). Constant and Maryna Mews hosted a fine party in their apartment for many of us; we had a nice dinner with an elegant exchange-student daughter of a neighbour, another with Stephen Jaeger, several with the Mews and others, etc., etc., etc. David McRuvie, my oldest (former) Ph.D. student and now an eminent cultural philosopher, attended both conferences and assisted me greatly in deciphering what the native speakers were saying, etc.

I then went to London to work on some texts concerned with ‘Woman and Rhetoric’ (for which Sharon Davidson and I have a contract with Pegasus Press); saw excellent presentations of Schiller’s Don Carlos, Rattigan’s Man and Boy, and RSC Shakespeare’s Macbeth. I also visited our own students completing Ph.D.s in Cambridge and found them all in great form and shooting from the hip.

After five days I set out for Champaign-Urbana [Illinois] to take part in a seminar on twelfth-century literary theory with Martin Camargo and Marjorie Woods (Marjorie was sick and didn’t attend, so I had to work a bit harder here than expected). We stayed with Martin and his wife Sandy (a film teacher, who loved Troy, as we did, contrary to an ignorant public and useless film critics). Martin is an over-worked HofD in English there and has an excellent library I was able to make much good use of. Our plan was then to take ‘planes to LA in time for the opening lecture (by Terence Tunberg) at a Conference in Claremont organised by Nancy van Deusen on ‘Cicero in the middle ages and Renaissance’. We arrived in good time at the little Champaign-Urbana airport
(‘Willard airport’) and killed time until ‘gate-time’ – 11.00 in the morning. On the way through security we discovered that American Airlines had randomly selected us for a ‘thorough search’ which involved taking off coats, shoes, jumpers, and money belts, being felt up and down and ‘wanded’, and having our luggage searched down to the last pin. Willard airport is a little place and the Security staff clearly had nothing much to do that morning so they made our search a blue ribbon event. In the end I asked ‘is this going to make us miss our plane?’, to which they replied ‘oh no sir’. Duly released we arrived at the actual plane-entry point (at 11.20) to be told that the flight ‘had closed’ one minute previously. So I said ‘well, you better open it again, we have to be in LA for a ‘speakers’ dinner’ and talk, etc., etc.’. They said ‘oh no sir, we have to do various checks and balances and the plane cannot be opened. Your luggage will be taken off it and we will get you on the next plane – in four hours time’. I could not believe this, as the plane was only a little one, the flight-time to Chicago was 25 minutes and the allowance for it was 55 minutes. However, they were adamant and we missed both dinner and lecture, by the time we arrived in Claremont, LA after 9 p.m. the same day. Moral: never fly American Airlines, avoid the USA altogether in your travels and, if you are stuck with flights there, go by non-existent train or allow yourself hours for the security check . . . . The planes were cramped, offered no food service, and were generally dark age.

The conference, however, was excellent, indeed the best I have attended. The spirit of collegiality and warmth was remarkable, all speakers had prepared well and had something to say and were given ample time to say it and have it discussed. There were no parallel sessions. My paper on ‘Cicero and Rhetoric from Augustine to Guarino da Verona’ seemed to strike a receptive chord and it was nice to have 50 mins again, after all the 20 minute ‘burps’ I have delivered in the past. Catering was excellent and there were many very informed and interesting people there. Andy Kelly turned up for the morning in which I spoke. LA is, of course, a horrible place and roar of the freeways is everywhere. HOWEVER, they are building many train and tramlines (with about the zeal with which Bob Carr is building freeways here in Sydney) and for $3 you could travel all day all over town by bus, train, or tram AND get out to the airport (LAX) – all for a measly $5 Australian – and think of the extortionate charge the local railways here make for their often delayed and disrupted trip out to or back from Sydney airport!!!

My wife Gail accompanied me on all the above and attended many of the papers and sessions, generally making it easier for me (as I had bad arthritis pain pretty well the whole time, worse at nights when the body was inactive, for some reason). Gail is currently reading Constant’s book on the Lost Love Letters of Heloise and Abelard, and finds it very well-written and entertaining. I think it is one of the finest books on the middle ages to have appeared in recent years and reflects great credit upon Australian medievalism.

*title courtesy of Margaret Clunies Ross
Dr Jane M. Hardie’s NEW CD

OUT SHORTLY

‘Commemoration, Ritual and Performance: The Iberian Connection: Medieval and Renaissance music from The St Laurence Chamber Choir’

(recorded at St Scholastica’s Chapel, Glebe, New South Wales, February 2005, directed by Dr Neil McEwan)

Available commercially soon; pre-release orders taken by the Centre for Medieval Studies