

### **A word from the President of AFLS**

I am delighted to accept the editors' invitation to write an introduction to Issue 14.1 of *Cahiers* and to applaud both editors and authors for this welcome addition to scholarly work in French Linguistics.

One of the main aims of the Association for French Language Studies is to promote research across the different fields of French Language and Linguistics and to support young researchers, including those still completing their PhDs. This issue of *Cahiers* features articles which arose from papers given as part of the Postgraduate Workshop at our conference in Boulogne in September 2007. The Postgraduate Workshop is an annual event which precedes the main conference of the Association and in recent years it has attracted a good number of postgraduate students who can exchange ideas with each other and with more experienced researchers – the atmosphere is supportive and convivial.

This year's conference is in Oxford from 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> September and we look forward to welcoming experienced and less experienced researchers alike to that event. The deadline for proposals for the main conference is 1<sup>st</sup> May and, for the Postgraduate Workshop, it is 15<sup>th</sup> June. There is a link on the home page of the website with all the details.

The Association offers two types of bursary for postgraduate students: travel bursaries to enable them to attend the conference and a £2,000 grant to help in the final year of writing up. Again, please see our website for further details.

Although undergraduate student numbers in specialist French are in decline in the UK, a recent report on Modern Languages Research indicates that research is very healthy – in AFLS we have had an internationalisation policy for over three years and we welcome new members to our committee, whether they are resident in the UK or in Europe or further afield. Currently, we have committee members from Lyon, Ghent and Würzburg as well as from Bristol, Birmingham and Leeds.

The committee meets three times a year, twice in London (November and May) and once at the annual conference, the venue for which alternates between the UK and a Francophone country. Travel expenses to committee meetings are paid – and this may provide a way for younger members of the Association to visit the British Library as well as relaying information about forthcoming AFLS events back to their

home countries. Please do not hesitate to contact me, if you are interested in contributing to our activities in this way.

I look forward to meeting you, either at our conference or virtually via email. In the meantime, happy reading!

Kate Beeching