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Friends of Greek and Roman Studies

The Fall term of 2011 saw many interesting events. Christopher Smith, the Director of the British School in Rome gave two very good talks, one on kingship at Rome and the other on the Etruscans. There were also excellent guest lectures on Spartacus and the Weaponry That Won the Roman Empire. The production of *Antigone* in November was greeted with much enthusiasm. At a reception afterwards, His Excellency, the Ambassador of the Republic of Greece, Eleftherios Anghelopoulos, who had requested an invitation to the performance after seeing the previous year's production of *Oedipus Rex*, spoke in praise of the production and the students' performances. He said that he had found nothing comparable in his other postings, be it in the USA or elsewhere. We thank him for honouring us with his presence.

Since the editor will be in Europe from early January to April, he will ask Professor Elizabeth Klaassen to let readers know of special events this term. However, he would say that short articles about friends and alumni of GRS would be welcome for future issues. Below are included the details of a new course by Professor Greg Fisher on modern historical fiction and ancient history to illustrate how inventive and exciting classics courses can be in this world of late capitalism. Also we asked Professor Trevor Hodge, who retired in 1997, to write about his life in retirement. We thank him.

Faculty File

GREG FISHER

Course Overview This seminar will examine the interface between fiction and history. Through an exploration of six novels, each dealing with a particular event or time period, we will see how historical events are explained in narrative form and reimagined depending on the pressures, concerns, and biases of the time periods in which they were written. The course will begin by exploring the theory of narrative as outlined by Aristotle, Paul Ricoeur, and Hayden White, and we will then read five books in chronological order of the time periods they examine. Students will be encouraged to think critically about the material at hand and produce written and oral analyses.

Readings Required

Sutcliff, R. *The Eagle of the Ninth Chronicles* (Oxford University Press, 2010). ISBN 978-0192789983.

Pressfield, S. *The Afghan Campaign* (Broadway, 2007). ISBN 978-0767922388

Renault, M. *The Funeral Games* (Arrow, 2003). ISBN 978-0099463498.

Harris, R. *Lustrum* (Arrow, 2010). ISBN 978-0099522690.

Trevor Hodge On His Retirement

Perhaps one of the most surprising features of retirement is how long it lasts. Away back, say, around the 1960's, the principle, not just in universities, was that you retired at age 65 and then had two or three golden years before you died. Since then life expectancy has increased dramatically, but you still retire at 65. So, having left Carleton in 1997, I have now enjoyed 14 – count them, fourteen – years of retirement on full pension, and I'm not finished yet. So what have I been doing?

Officially, I am still a Distinguished Research Professor of Classics. The title is not generally known. It is conferred by the College of Humanities, for a three year term, reasonable, and seems to be largely honorific. Still, to get it renewed, which I have, repeatedly, in principle you have to show some signs of continued academic activity. I have generally done it by various lectures, not necessarily at Carleton. Last year, for example, I gave one to the local branch of the Archaeological Institute of America at Vancouver, then did the keynote address at a UBC conference on "Water in the Ancient World", before giving a paper to the Learned Societies meeting at Dalhousie (on "The Unimportamce of Mathematics, Ancient and Modern"!). Should be enough to get me renewed again!

It is yet true that my current research is not on the level of, say, the 1980's', when I was a working member of the Department. No doubt being in my 80's and handicapped (I cannot walk too far, though my wife does a fine job in keeping me going) has something to do with it, and anyway I felt that in my retirement, instead of taking up something sensible and useful, like golf, I could relax by indulging my two lifelong hobbies, crime mysteries and, believe it or not, British railways. So I proceeded to write a full-length murder mystery set on the railways around Nottingham. So far unpublished, and likely unpublishable, this has yet given me membership of an Ottawa mystery writers' society, bringing wide insights into Ottawa crime, as also a hitherto unsuspected insight into the quagmire of mystery publishers, on which I will only say that it is easier to write a book on the use of commas in the first 200 lines of Euripides' *Medea* and get it published by Oxford than it is to publish a murder mystery.

As a by-product of all this a further problem arose. Having lost my office when the Department moved out of the Dunton Tower, what to do with my books, some 500 or so of them? A colleague remarked to me that this was a common difficulty in what he politely called "the declining disciplines". The college of Humanities was sympathetically and courteously helpful over temporary storage, and some went straight into the Classics seminar room, but, for various reasons, Carleton could not be the answer. The answer came while I was lecturing in Cincinnati, at the suggestion of my host: "Have you ever thought of the University of Albania?" Oddly enough, I never had. So, Plan B. "Well then, the new University of Cyprus?" That got me. Above all I wanted my books somewhere they would be used; and Cyprus was in the heart of the Classical World – indeed, hadn't Cyprus recently been in the British Empire, so all their students knew English and could read my books?

Eureka! So one fine day the office of the Chairman of Classics at the University of Cyprus was invaded by 21 cartons of books from Carleton. With the Cypriots it worked out well. They flew me out to Nicosia to give a lecture or two, a pleasant and engaging occasion. I have since heard that one or two of their students are now doing PhDs on Roman aqueducts, expressly on account of my lectures, a very satisfying thought.

In fact, I still have three or four standard lectures that I can trot out on any appropriate occasion, provided the visuals are acceptable. I have lots of slides, but would run far to escape the dreaded PowerPoint. At home I also have several shelves full of books that I have kept, centred on the two chief areas of my specialisation, Roman aqueducts and Greek Massalia. Although I am not currently engaged in anything connected with them, well, you never know, do you?

There's life in the old dog yet.

A. Trevor Hodge

Events

In May 2012 Susan Downie take 18 students to Greece the second study tour of Greece offered by GRS. The group will spend three weeks in Greece hearing lectures at various sites and museums - in Athens, Delphi, Corinth, Mycenae, Eleusis, and on two Greek islands: Crete and Santorini. The highlight for both students and faculty will be a guided tour of Akrotiri and its conservation labs by the director of the site, Christos Doumas.

Donations

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