FIRST STEP TOWARD SCHOLARLY EDITION OF WILBERFORCE DIARIES

Obscure penmanship has meant that candid insights by the famous abolitionist and politician have been a ‘sealed book’ to scholars

Dr Mark Smith, Director of Studies in Local History, has been awarded a John Fell Fund grant to produce a transcription of the diaries and journals of William Wilberforce – diaries that have proven near-impossible to read, due to what Dr Smith calls ‘a difficult hand, especially tricky to decipher’.

William Wilberforce, politician, philanthropist and leader of the abolitionist movement in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, was a prolific diarist – penning an estimated half million words over his lifetime, and recording approximately 50,000 more in a series of smaller ‘religious journals.’

The writings were never intended for public consumption, which makes them valuable to scholars. Says Dr Smith, ‘A full scholarly edition will shed light on a number of key political episodes in which Wilberforce was involved between the 1780s and 1820s and be a key source for the social and religious history of the same period.’ Read more, at: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/wilberforce

NEW RESEARCH: WAR-ERA WOMEN WEAVERS

Amidst the troubled years before and during the Second World War, French women designers and entrepreneurs turned to tapestry to express hopes for better days.

In April 2015, Dr Claire O’Mahony, Director of our Master’s in the History of Design, travelled across France on a mission: to rediscover the women who helped to renew the tapestry-making industry of France amidst the economic challenges of the 1930s and the dark days of the Occupation.

‘My project explores the largely unexamined role of women in reclaiming the distinctive tapestry techniques practiced in the town of Aubusson on the banks of the Creuse. The cartoons and weaving of women designers as well as a network of galleries and studios run by women entrepreneurs were at the heart of the twentieth-century tapestry revival.’ To learn more, please see: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/tapestry

OXFORD’S NEWLY ELECTED JUNIOR PROCTOR

Universities, like any large organisation, are governed by statutes, and at Oxford it is the Proctors (senior academic officers elected by the colleges) who ensure that the University operates according to them.

Dr Elizabeth Gemmill, Associate Professor in Local History and Director of the Department’s Weekly Classes Programme, said, ‘One of Oxford’s distinctive strengths is that its academic staff play a crucial part in decision-making and in upholding the University’s structures and procedures.’ To learn more about Elizabeth and the centuries-old office of Proctor, please see: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/proctor

RECOMMENDED

EXPLORING LOCAL HISTORY

A new blog dedicated to ‘bringing together research, discussions, and discoveries by staff, students, and alumni of Oxford University’s local and social history courses’ has been launched by Dr Jonathan Healey, Director of our Online Advanced Diploma in Local History. Current students and alumni of the Department’s local history programmes are sought as authors. Please see: blogs.conted.ox.ac.uk/exploringlocalhistory

VIDES 2015

Vides 2015, the annual journal of our Master’s in Literature and Arts programme, contains 25 interdisciplinary essays on subjects as wide-ranging as Victorian football, ghost stories, 18th century cosmetics and photographic illustration of the works of Tennyson. There’s something for everyone! Please see: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/vides2015.

WEEKLY CLASSES: ENROLMENTS OPEN 1 JUNE

Our 2015–16 Weekly Classes programme is open for enrolments on 1 June, with over 400 new 10-week classes held in Oxford, Reading and elsewhere. Please visit: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/weekly to secure your place!
HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER

Dr Nazila Ghanea, University Lecturer in International Human Rights Law, joined 70 leaders at the Carter Center’s Human Rights Defenders Forum in Atlanta, Georgia in the United States to address combating violence and discrimination, especially against women and girls. Read more, at: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/cartercenter

ADDITIONAL LANGUAGES COMING SOON

The Department will be offering four new languages this autumn as part of the weekly classes programme: Biblical Hebrew, Farsi, Korean and Polish. This brings the total to 17 languages taught, with further additions of Hindi, Urdu and Swedish planned for later in the 2015-16 academic year. For more information please visit: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/newlanguages

SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS

A new three-day ‘Satellite Communications’ course, taught by specialists from ESA in conjunction with industry experts from world-leading companies, has been designed for graduates and young professionals with engineering and/or financial backgrounds, as well as senior professionals wishing to expand their knowledge of satellite communications systems and services.

‘In planning this course, our goal was to provide a clear roadmap linking on-going technology developments with clear examples of real-world market requirement,’ said ESA’s Emmanuel Rammous, course coordinator. www.conted.ox.ac.uk/H690-1

2015 OPEN DAYS

Save the date: 25/26 September 2015

Join us for one or two days of short lectures, walking tours, workshops, panel discussions, information sessions and more – all for free! The schedule for our 2015 Open Days will be published on our website in the summer; sign up to receive notification the moment registration opens, at: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/openday

NEW RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS, BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL

A focus on research and on improvements for patients

A new Research Fellowship scheme enables surgeons to focus on research – and promises real improvements in patient safety and theatre outcomes. The Fellowship is offered by Birmingham Children’s Hospital in partnership with the Department for Continuing Education’s MSc in Surgical Science and Practice team.

Mr Liam McCarthy, Consultant Paediatric Urologist and Transplant Surgeon at Birmingham Children’s Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, developed the Fellowship in 2013 for the purpose of providing opportunities for surgical trainees to experience a greater depth of scientific training, enhancing their current training model.

Liam said: ‘I felt that the trainees would benefit from an alternative perspective, helping them to change the way they think and give them an opportunity to develop scientific approaches to decision making... framing and answering scientific questions as part of their general approach to problem solving.’ To read more, please see: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/sspfellows

Meet the first Fellow – paediatric surgeon Jon Wells

‘As a result of the MSc in Surgical Science and Practice I have become more involved with my local NHS Trust, working on issues of quality improvement. I’m currently working on a project to encourage engagement of front-line staff in resolving local issues – problems that people feel are too small to be reported, but where their resolution would improve their working lives.’ Read Jon’s ‘student spotlight’, at: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/jonwells

HUMAN RIGHTS LAW VICTORY

Tutor Carolyn Patty Blum waited 17 years to see the fruits of her labour

In April, the US deported back to El Salvador former General and Salvadorian Minister of Defense Eugenio Vides Casanova. For Carolyn Patty Blum, tutor on our International Human Rights Law Master’s programme, this was a long hoped-for victory.

Casanova is linked to multiple cases of killing and torture by Salvadoran soldiers under his command, including the rape and murder of four American nuns in 1980. The crime has been called one of the most notorious by the Salvadoran armed forces of that era.

Blum is legal advisor to the Centre for Justice and Accountability, based in California. ‘I have been working on cases concerning Vides since 1998 when we began to prepare a civil law suit against him... in the Human Rights Clinic at UC Berkeley,’ said Blum. ‘Seventeen years later – after winning our civil case and pressing for his removal from the US – the US deported him back.’ Read the full story, at: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/blum
FOUNDATION CERTIFICATE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE
Alumni move on to full-time study at Oxford colleges

This two-year part-time course is equivalent to the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree and has enabled hundreds of students to gain entry to year two of degree programmes – both at Oxford and elsewhere.

Recent alumnae Noel Davison and Nicole Sochor have been accepted onto the full-time Oxford BA programme. Said Nicole, 'Studying English Literature at the Department for Continuing Education was fantastic, the tutors were inspiring and all the students regretted that it had to end... I look forward to burning the midnight oil in the wood-panelled library at Harris Manchester College and also the historic Duke Humfrey's library.' www.conted.ox.ac.uk/fcel

NEW ONLINE COURSES

Ancient Egypt: An Introduction
From royal pyramids, court artisans and powerful pharaohs, to grandiose temples, mysterious gods and foreign invasions, participants will experience the world of ancient Egypt, its highs and lows, and the rich tapestry of its culture. www.conted.ox.ac.uk/O15P376AHV

Public Policy Economics
All of us are affected by government policies. This course covers the aims and tools of economic policy, and will equip students to evaluate the economic arguments made about public policy choices. www.conted.ox.ac.uk/O15P375SOV

The Architecture of the Medieval English Cathedral
Examples of all but two of the richest and most powerful institution of the medieval world, the cathedral, are still standing. Gain a rich understanding of this fascinating era through its world-famous buildings. www.conted.ox.ac.uk/O15P371HCV

BRIAN NISBET: NOW YOU KNOW
Celebrating a poet of talent and bravery

Brian Nisbet’s poetry collection Now You Know was launched on 9 April at Rewley House with a large and diverse crowd in attendance. Writers, choreographers, office staff, musicians, publishers, historians, even parachutists filled Rewley House’s largest room well beyond capacity, spilling out the doors. Transcendent, joyous, triumphant – these were the words attendees used to describe the poetry, the poet and the occasion.

Brian, an alumnus of our Diploma in Creative Writing, battled with the life-limiting neurological disorder, Multiple Systems Atrophy (MSA). By early 2015, in the face of rapidly deteriorating health, he was working urgently towards publication of his first print poetry collection. Read more about Brian and Now You Know, at: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/nisbet

SETTLING THE SCORE FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED
Project seeks to reverse a 30-year decline in music studies

Music is the only totally accessible art for blind people; and yet music studies have declined among the blind in Europe for the past 30 years. The main reason for this lies in the shortcomings of Braille musical notation.

Jonathan Darnborough, our Director of Studies in Music, has taken part in an EU-funded international project called ‘Music for Visually Impaired People’ – or Music4VIP.

“The aim of this project is to make music much more easily accessible to blind and visually impaired people,” says Jonathan, who is the UK representative on the project. Learn more about this work on our website, at: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/music4vip

‘I JUST Wanted TO KNOW More’
Once caught, the education bug can be hard to shake

One of the primary benefits of Continuing Education is the chance it offers students to progress toward a degree. The process may begin with a single day school; those who catch the ‘education bug’ often progress up through undergraduate and postgraduate education.

Student Peter Gibson is a case in point: he’s just received his PhD in Philosophy from Birkbeck. Peter first studied philosophy at the Open University in 1980 and went on to teach the subject. A regular student of this Department, he has attended an estimated 100 philosophy weekend schools over the past 39 years. ‘The primary reason why I did the PhD was that even though I had retired from teaching the subject, I remained too interested to give it up, and I just wanted to know more.’ Read about Peter (and other students) in our online ‘students spotlights’, at: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/petergibson
CREATIVE WRITING


Diploma in Creative Writing | Alumna Rowena Warwick came joint third for the 2015 Hippocrates Prize NHS section for her poem ‘Mrs Noone’; one small freedom sets the stage for better days in apartheid South Africa, in student Gail Anderson’s creative nonfiction piece *First Day*, published in Hippocampus Magazine (www.hippocampusmagazine.com/2015/04/first-day-by-gail-anderson); student Sandra Gee’s short story *The Teacher* has been published in Oxfordshire Libraries Short Story Competition Anthology.

Master’s in Creative Writing | Alumna Maya Popa won first prize (£5,000) in the Hippocrates Prize for Poetry and Medicine for a poem inspired by her neuroscientist great-grandfather (blogs.conted.ox.ac.uk/mstcw/?p=789); student Bette Adriaanse published her novel *Rus Like Everyone Else* in December, and has a post on our Master’s in Creative Writing blog on *Writing, the course and getting published* (blogs.conted.ox.ac.uk/mstcw/?p=765); student Daisy Johnson writes of her recent two book deal with Jonathan Cape in her blog post, *On getting an offer for my writing* (blogs.conted.ox.ac.uk/mstcw/?p=719).

Tutor Nicoletta Demetriou’s TEDx talk, *Look deeper - write - the wonders of writing*, can be viewed at: youtu.be/aTgpJQ9Dy7Q; and tutor Roopa Farooki’s article, *Monsters in Caves* (commissioned by the Royal Literary Fund) is available to read at: www.rlf.org.uk/showcase/monsters-in-caves

IN BRIEF

International Human Rights Law Student Dr Kamiar Alaei has been awarded an Ellis Island Medal of Honor. The awards are presented annually to American citizens who have distinguished themselves within their own ethnic groups while exemplifying the values of the American way of life. Past Medalists include six U.S. Presidents, one foreign President, Nobel Prize winners and leaders of industry, education, the arts, sports and government.

A photo of Britannia from a sculpture at Aphrodisias, taken by Steve Kershaw, tutor in classical antiquity, was used by the Royal Mint on the packaging of a newly issued ‘uncirculated’ £2 collectors’ coin.

Dr Rikky Rooksby, who teaches on the Oxford Experience Summer School, gained a distinction for classical composition at the 2015 Oxford Music Festival with ‘For the New Frontier’, a ten-minute piece scored for trumpet and strings.

END NOTES

May Morning

Those of you who missed Oxford’s annual May Morning celebration can get a flavour of the day with our photo album and ‘audio postcard’ – both available on the 1st May post our Facebook page, at www.facebook.com/oxford.university.continuing.education

Scholarships praised in the Lords

Baroness Emma Nicholson told the House of Lords that our Master’s in International Human Rights Law Commonwealth Scholarships reach ‘an outstanding group of human rights lawyers from Africa and south Asia—the Commonwealth that would otherwise be impossible to reach.’ Read the transcript of her short speech at: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/hansard

Award Ceremony 2015

Nearly 200 students (representing 16 countries) and 340 guests attended our 2015 Award Ceremony at the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford on 31 March. Undergraduate and Postgraduate Certificates, Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas were presented in 24 subject areas. You can see a gallery of photos and videos of the event, at: www.conted.ox.ac.uk/awardceremony

Book Launch


Published

Professor Jonathan Michie, Director of the Department, is editor of two new books: Personal Knowledge Management, Leadership Styles, and Organisational Performance, and Mutual, Cooperative and Employee-Owned Businesses in the Asia-Pacific: Diversity, Resilience and Sustainable Growth.