



Going Medieval

*The Annual Newsletter of the Wilfrid Laurier University
Medieval and Medievalism Studies Program*

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Issue 13

Breaking News: New Medieval Philosophy Course

We are very pleased to announce that Laurier's Academic Senate has approved a second course from the Philosophy Department that will count towards the Medieval/Medievalism major and minor programs. Since Laurier's Medieval Studies Program started over 20 years ago, our students have been able to take PP 261: Medieval Philosophy in fulfilling their degree requirements. Now they can also count PP 352: "Aristotle & the Arab Tradition". Over the past ten years ago we have broadened our course offerings to include the entire world for the period 500-1500 CE, adding courses such as HI 222: Cultures of Mesoamerica, RE 250: Buddhist Paths, AR 337: Archaeology of Religion, and HI 224: The Asian World in Ascendancy, 1000-1700. The addition of PP 352, offered in Winter 2024 for the second time, continues that trend of de-centering the Middle Ages from the traditional focus on Europe.

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Greetings from the Newsletter Editor

Welcome to the 13th issue of Going Medieval!

Laurier's Medieval & Medievalism Studies program continued to thrive in 2023-24, as the numbers of our majors, minors and Option students and especially our course enrollments showed continuing strength due to our delivery of terrific courses taught by excellent instructors.

Both of our annual events, the Distinguished Visiting Speaker lecture and the Medieval Day colloquium, were very well attended this year, as we came together to celebrate the academic accomplishments of our students, faculty and guest speakers (see stories on pages 2 & 3)!

As always, I'm very grateful to members of our Program Steering Committee, which this year included faculty from the History Department (**Dr. Blaine Chiasson**), the English & Film Studies Department (**Dr. Robin Waugh** and **Dr. Richard Nemesvari**), the Department of Languages & Literatures (**Dr. Nathalie Freidel**), and the Department of Archaeology & Heritage Studies (**Dr. Debra Foran** and **Dr. Scott Gallimore**), as well as **Maddie Hobbins**, this year's co-president of the Medieval Students' Society, who represented our students at the steering committee's

meetings held in September and February. A special note of thanks is due to Dr. Gallimore, currently the Chair of Archaeology & Heritage Studies, who joined the steering committee for the first time this year and served on the program's hiring committee in March and June. At our meeting in February he was unanimously approved to serve as Acting Co-ordinator of the Program from January to June 2025, when I will be on sabbatical for research.

Finally, many thanks are due to our terrific Administrative Assistant, **Andrea Nechita**, whose support for our regular operations and special events has been instrumental to our success. Last summer Andrea took over as Senior Administrative Assistant to the Medieval program and the Philosophy Department after **Kristine Dyck** left to pursue an opportunity in the Faculty of Education, and also took on that role for the Department of Archaeology & Heritage Studies after the retirement of **Faith McCord**. It's been a steep learning curve for Andrea this year, especially since it is her first position at Laurier, but she's done an amazing job and I very much look forward to our continued collaboration on behalf of the program!

Dr. Chris Nighman

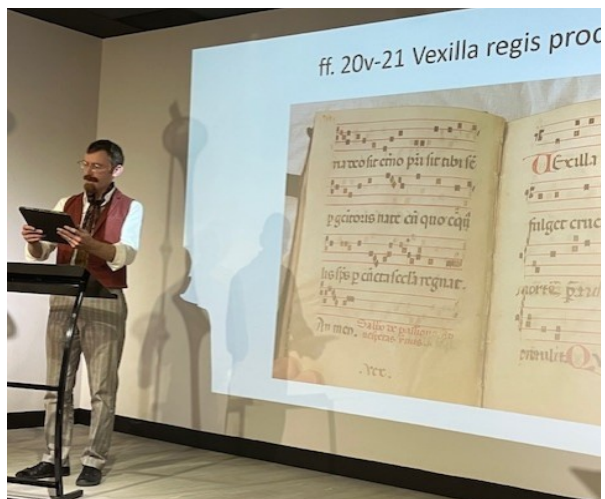
2023 Distinguished Visiting Speaker Event

Our nineteenth annual Distinguished Visiting Medievalist Speaker, also our second annual McKenzie Memorial Guest Speaker, was **Dr. Alma Santosuosso**, a Professor Emerita of Musicology who retired from Laurier's Faculty of Music several years ago. This year's event on Friday October 27th was appropriately held in the Robert Langen Art Gallery located in the Laurier University Library, with the support of the Library, the Dean of Arts, the Dean of Music, and the family of **Alicia McKenzie**.

Dr. Santosuosso's presentation, entitled "Revelations from the Laurier Hymnal", shared her fascinating research findings from the 15th-century Latin hymnal manuscript that was acquired by Laurier's Library 15 years ago, which was on display for this event. Last year the Library's Rare Book Librarian, **Amanda Oliver**, arranged for the binding of this codex to be restored so the manuscript could be digitized and made

freely available on the Internet through the University of Waterloo's Cantus Project, led by **Dr. Deb Lacoste**, who was the keynote speaker at our 2023 Medieval Day Colloquium (see *Going Medieval* issue 12).

This year's guest speaker event was unique in comparison to all its predecessors in that after Professor Santosuosso had explained the significance of a particular hymn as it appears in this manuscript, the music for that piece was then sung *a capella* by her former colleague, **Dr. Daniel Cabena**, of the Laurier Academy of Music and Arts (LAMA), a former instructor in Laurier's Faculty of Music. This alternating pattern of research lecture and musical performance was repeated five times over the course of the event, much to the delight of a very appreciative audience.



Dr. Santosuosso's key findings will be included in a forthcoming research article that is expected to be published next year.

This very well attended event, which included a wine, cheese and other snacks, attracted a diverse crowd including students, staff, faculty and administrators from Laurier, as well as several colleagues and students from the University of Waterloo.

2024 Medieval Day Colloquium

Our eighteenth annual Medieval Day Colloquium, “The Interdisciplinary Middle Ages,” was held in the Arts Research Lounge on Wednesday, March 27th, with the generous support of the family of Alicia McKenzie.

The first session, chaired by **Dr. Debra Foran** (Archaeology & Heritage Studies), featured three student projects from her Fall 2023 course, ML302: The Middle Ages Again: Experimental Archaeology & the Medieval World. **Kolton Hendry** and **Jon Samson** presented their poster on recreating a scale-model medieval trebuchet and demonstrated it as well. **Maddie Hobbins** and **Lilyth Bell** then explained their project on baking a challenging medieval dish. **Teagan Burns** and **Madeline Smith** wrapped up the session with their poster on several experiments they carried out with various medieval recipes for making black soap.

Following a short coffee/tea break, the audience was treated to a wonderful musical interlude performed by **Dr. Daniel Cabena** (see pg. 2) who accompanied himself on viol while beautifully singing a variety of medieval vocal pieces (see photo on pg. 8).

Our keynote speaker for this year’s Medieval Day was **Dr. Steven Bednarski**, Director of the Medieval Digital Research in Arts and Graphical Environmental Networks Laboratory (D.R.A.G.E.N. Lab) at the University of Waterloo since 2016. A member of the History Department at UW who is cross-appointed to St. Jerome’s University at the University of Waterloo since 2006, Bednarski is the author of two books and multiple journal articles and has been awarded two major grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Originally a social

historian of crime and gender in late medieval France, in recent years Bednarski has also become a scholar who studies the impact of climate change on the natural environment and the lived human experience of the people of Sussex during the 14th and 15th centuries. His varied research interests, experiences and insights as a medieval historian were eloquently delivered in his keynote address: “Interdisciplinary and the future of Medieval Studies”.



After a terrific question/answer session that followed Dr. Bednarski’s presentation, we all enjoyed a buffet lunch.

The afternoon session comprised a faculty/graduate student research panel chaired by **Dr. Scott Gallimore** (Department of Archaeology & Heritage Studies):

Dr. Debra Foran (Medieval & Medievalism Studies and Archaeology & Heritage Studies): “Neutralizing the image: Iconoclasm and the mosaics of Madaba”

Dr. Michael Fulton (Medieval & Medievalism Studies): “Escher’s Castle: Untangling the architectural stratigraphy of Kerak”

John Loudfoot (PhD Candidate, History Department, University of Waterloo) “Medieval mining & metalurgy in England”

Many thanks to all participants!

2024 McKenzie Memorial Scholarship

Following the death of our beloved colleague **Alicia McKenzie** in April 2022, her family generously created a scholarship in her honour at Laurier, with a prize of \$3000 being awarded annually to the graduating medieval student with the highest grade average in their first three years of study. Thanks to the donations of many of Alicia's colleagues and students, current and former, and especially a large donation by Alicia's family, the fund has raised over \$37,000 as this issue of *Going Medieval* went to press. Further donations to the fund will be gratefully accepted; to make such a gift, please send an email to give@wlu.ca.

The first recipient of the Alicia McKenzie Memorial Scholarship was **Ms. Lana Mendez** (2023 Hons. BA in Ancient Studies with a minor in Medieval/Medievalism Studies). This year's scholarship was awarded to **Mr. Graydon Lee** (2024 Hons. BA in Archaeology and Medieval/Medievalism Studies). The following is excerpted from his full testimonial, written during his final term of study at Laurier:

I was born and raised in North York, Ontario. My mother immigrated to Canada from Hong Kong at the age of five, and my father was born in Canada. His father was born in China and spent the first fifteen years of his life there, immigrating to Canada in 1960.

Ever since my childhood, I had always had a fascination with the Middle Ages and history. This fascination developed as I aged, leading to my increased interest in medieval arms and armour as a teenager. My fascination with armour became greater as I began to watch more Kung Fu movies, which also sparked an interest in martial arts. I started learning muay thai, boxing, wrestling and mixed martial arts. One of the



Graydon Lee with Dr. Debra Foran,
WLU Convocation, June 12th, 2024

main reasons I chose to attend Laurier is that I felt the smaller class sizes and specialized programs such as Archaeology and Medieval Studies would provide a more engaging learning experience for me.

Professor Alicia McKenzie was one of the main reasons I ended up staying in university, as my first year was during COVID and was entirely online. Her courses were fun and engaging; she was a professor who cared for her students and was most interested in seeing them learn and succeed.

Alicia McKenzie was one of the greatest inspirations in my goal to become a coach, as she showed me the impact that a leader can have on others' lives. Her passion for teaching serves as an inspiration for me; I know how important it is to have a mentor that not only believes in you, but also loves what they do. Just as Alicia pushed me and other students to be the best that they could, I want to push those around me to be the greatest versions of themselves. This award will be used to contribute to my future, supporting me in further education.

It is an great honour to receive this award in commemoration of Alicia McKenzie and her contributions to the lives of many students at Laurier.

Conference Panel Honours Alicia McKenzie

As part of the 2024 Congress of Humanities and Social Sciences, the annual conference of the Canadian Society of Medievalists/ Société Canadienne des Médiévistes was held in Montreal on June 12-14 at Concordia University and Université du Québec à Montréal.

This year's CSM/SCM conference included a special session entitled: "*Homo ludens: Games in the Medieval Studies Classroom, a Roundtable in Honour of Alicia McKenzie*". The session included presentations by the following scholars: **Dr. Allison Fizzard** (University of Regina), **Dr. John Giebfiel** (University of Vienna), **Dr. Ben Nilson** (University of British Columbia), **Dr. Richard Raiswell** (University of Prince Edward Island), and **Dr. Donna Trembinski** (St. Francis Xavier University), all of whom have developed games to teach students about various aspects of medieval history and culture, including the Black Death, Magna Carta, the witch craze, and inquisitions against heresy.



The session was chaired by **Dr. Marc Saurette** (Carleton University), who began the meeting with the following tribute:

Alicia McKenzie was a gifted teacher, generous colleague, and friend to many medievalists here who knew her from her work at Wilfrid Laurier University and her studies at the University of Toronto.

While her early research was on Merovingian politics, her teaching and writing came to focus on medievalisms, particularly representations of the medieval past in videogames. When she died in April 2022, she was working on a book for the University of Toronto Press entitled "Recreating Worlds: Representations of Premodern History in Video Games". Her teaching has a continuing life on her Youtube Channel, where she made her lectures accessible to students during COVID lockdowns, including a course about the representation of Vikings in video games.

Alicia was lauded by her students and her colleagues as a storyteller, as someone who was "gleeful about games", intensely generous, and always looking out for her students. According to her students, Alicia was caring, sarcastic, fascinating, funny, enthusiastic, insightful, innovative, sometimes intimidating, and above all dedicated. "Professor McKenzie is an icon... You should respect her and fear her". One student puts her in a league of her own: "Hands down my favourite prof at Laurier. I struggled a lot this semester and her class is the only one I didn't skip to lie in bed." Another described how Alicia's lectures opened up new worlds: "I learned so much about history that I never knew existed."

She was a pioneer in the field of Historical Game Studies and her students benefited immensely from this. In fact, my own connection to Alicia is through one of her students, who will be starting a PhD with me this Fall and was so inspired by her teaching and learning. It is thus fitting to devote this session to her memory, as we explore how games can engage, motivate, and inspire students in the classroom.

Retirement of Dr. Robin Waugh

July 1, 2024 will truly mark the end of an era with the retirement of Dr. Robin Waugh of Laurier's Department of English & Film Studies. Since the inception of the Medieval program at Laurier over 20 years ago, Professor Waugh has been a driving force and major contributor to its success, serving as the program's Co-ordinator for a total of five years and in most other years as an active member of the program's steering committee and hiring committee.

It was Dr. Waugh who oversaw the program's first cyclical review in 2011, which involved much effort on his part and resulted in a glowing report from the reviewers. Back in 2003 he developed and taught the program's required first year course, ML100: Discovering the Middle Ages, and in 2014 he pioneered our unique pedagogy seminar, which trains some of our strongest senior students to serve as instructional assistants and student mentors in our first-year courses.

In his home department, of which he was chair for a three-year term, Professor Waugh developed and delivered many very popular courses, including EN214: Medieval Poetry of the Fantastic, EN392: Diversity in the Middle Ages, and EN410g: Romantic Heroes & Heroines of the Middle Ages.

A noted scholar of early medieval literature and culture, he is an expert in Old English and Middle English poetry and prose and Old Icelandic sagas, having authored a landmark book on medieval patience literature, co-edited two books on medieval literary culture, and published many journal articles and book chapters.

While his students and colleagues at Laurier will miss him dearly now that he is retiring from teaching, we gratefully wish Dr. Robin Waugh the very best for the future, in the expectation that his love of learning and research will continue to bear fruit in scholarly circles for many years to come.

Many congratulations on your well-deserved retirement, Robin!



Photos from Robin Waugh's retirement luncheon, celebrating with some of his approximately 30 colleagues from English & Film Studies and Medieval & Medievalism Studies who were present, April 10th, 2024

Study Exchange at the University of Lincoln



In the second issue of *Going Medieval* (2013) we provided a report from our first exchange student from Laurier, **Hilary St.-Pierre**, who studied for one semester in the Medieval Studies program at the Université de Poitiers. Our latest exchange student was **Sam Gorman**, who attended the University of Dundee in Winter 2024 as his final term. Sam is now traveling in Europe and so had to miss Convocation this June (see pg. 8); we look forward to his report in the next issue of *Going Medieval*.

Prior to Sam's study abroad term, the previous student who studied abroad on exchange was **Teaghan Chong**, who took courses at the University of Lincoln that applied to both her Film Studies and her Medieval & Medievalism Studies programs at Laurier. Here is Teaghan's report:

In the Fall 2022 semester I took part in the Laurier exchange program and hopped on a plane to Lincoln, England. The University of Lincoln was warm and welcoming and the campus was comfortable and easy to navigate. I took two ML courses during my semester, one of which was Intro to Latin and introduced me to many study buddies for the semester. The other was Chivalry in Medieval Europe, a class I was excited for since I first saw the list of courses.

Chivalry went over the general timeline of how chivalry developed as a concept, code of conduct, and the influence it had on society and culture. The research assignments and projects enabled us to dive into the more specific context around a single artifact or manuscript of our choice.

The city of Lincoln itself has so much history to offer, from museums to architecture, with tricky imps to find hidden throughout the buildings, and ghost stories that haunt the streets. A short hike from campus, sitting atop Steep Hill Street, are Lincoln Cathedral and Lincoln Castle. The Cathedral is a monument that can be seen and heard across the city and is absolutely awe-inspiring up close and inside. Just across the street at Lincoln Castle I met Lucy the Dragon (see photo below), named after the Lucy Tower. She only stayed until Christmas, but I hope she returns soon.

While there, I walked along the castle wall in the pouring rain. The whole city can be seen from up there, especially a stunning view of the Cathedral front (see photo above). The Castle offers a tour of the prison, and there is an original copy of the Magna Carta on display.

Overall, it was an amazing experience that I would recommend to any Laurier student!



Medieval Students Graduate!



From left to right: **Maddie Hobbins** (Hons. BA History and Medieval & Medievalism Studies), **Teaghan Chong** (Hons. BA Film Studies and Medieval & Medievalism Studies), **Graydon Lee** (Hons. BA in Archaeology and Medieval & Medievalism Studies), **Katrina Vander Ahe** (MA in Medieval History, after completing her Hons. BA in History and Medieval & Medievalism Studies in 2022), **Alicia Koepke** (Hons. BA in History and Medieval & Medievalism Studies), **Ben Cameron** (Hons. BA in English and Medieval & Medievalism Studies), and **Dr. Debra Foran** (Archaeology & Heritage Studies and Medieval & Medievalism Studies). Not shown: **Sam Gorman** (Hons. BA in Medieval & Medievalism Studies and Philosophy).

On behalf of all your professors at Laurier, our best wishes to you all in your future endeavours!

Dr. Daniel Cabena, performing for the musical interlude at this year's Medieval Day Colloquium (see story on pg. 3)

