

**Classics Newsletter – St. Olaf College
July, 2023**



A highlight of the past year was the 6th Annual James M. May Lecture in Classics (“The Power of Personal Names: From Homer to the New Testament”), given by soon-to-retire Steve Reece on Sat., March 11. The photos show a jolly Jim May (left) and a relaxed Steve Reece celebrating with daughter Hannah, sister Becky, and wife Rhonda.



Steve’s talk was followed by our “Reece’s Pieces” Alumni Symposium. The six speakers are all pursuing careers in either Classical Studies (Andrea Gatzke ’05, Hilary Bouxsein ’09, Collin Moat ’13) or Theological Studies (Jon Bruss ’89, Julie Kelto Lillis ’04 [virtually], Kris Coffman ’13). Besides the in-person crowd, we apparently broke St. Olaf’s record for most attendees of an academic event via a live stream!



Moat, Bruss, Bouxsein, Gatzke, Coffman

To clean out his office, Steve made 700 of his books free for the taking. He did keep a copy of his own latest book, *The Formal Education of the Author of Luke-Acts* (T&T Clark). We could not afford to endow a chair of Classics (\$1.5 million) in his honor, but he now has his own chair in the ice arena, inscribed with Homeric words ΚΛΕΟΣ ΑΦΘΙΤΟΝ (“undying glory”).



We were pleased with the success of the guest lecture by Denise Eileen McCoskey (Prof. of Classics and Affiliate in Black World Studies at Miami U. Ohio) on “Race Mixing” and the Fall of Rome: The role of eugenics in early 20th century classical scholarship.” Her visit to campus on Oct. 6, co-sponsored by Classics, Enduring Questions (new name for Great Conversation), Race, Ethnic, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, and the Leraas Endowment for Interdisciplinary Studies, was a follow-up to our student/faculty Book Club in 2020-21.



Although we had just five senior majors this year, they were a multi-talented crew, as exemplified by Ancient Studies major Melina Canas, standing with Kyle Helms and Anne Groton in the photo from Commencement Day. Melina is now in the English M.A.T. program at Hamline. Greek major Keerthana Babu is now at Princeton Theological Seminary (M.Div.). Classics major Olivia Simonson, who was this year’s Greek lab instructor, won the Viola Rossing Prize in Gender & Sexuality Studies and was elected to ΦBK. Latin major Audrey Hoehner, who was this year’s Latin lab instructor, graduated with distinction in Environmental Studies. The photo shows her with the poster on photogrammetry that she presented at the Classical Association of the Middle West and South’s Annual Meeting in Provo. This summer she will be assisting Tim Howe (History) at the archeological field school on the site of Antiochia ad Cragum in Turkey.



Our Classical Studies in Greece course, canceled twice because of the pandemic, returned in January 2023. All went well except that, after being trapped at O’Hare in a blizzard on the way there, Anne Groton and two of her 30 students contracted covid and had to be isolated for four days! For handling this crisis so professionally, we are indebted to Educational Tours and to our guide Smaro Touloupa and bus driver Theodore Patapis, worthy successors to Stella Galani and Georgos Gavalinis, both of whom recently retired. The photo (by Lily Nestor ’23) shows a romantic view in Nauplion. Next year Kyle Helms will lead Classical Studies in Italy; over 70 students applied for the 30 coveted spots!





Classics 251 (January, 2023) - Sunset at Sounion

Since St. Olaf's Smith Center for Global Engagement now offers merit-based scholarships that cover up to half the cost of programs abroad, Ken and Kathy Loomis are going to discontinue the scholarship they have offered since 2012. We're so grateful to them for

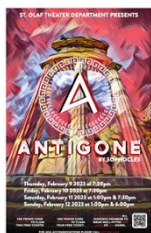


their many years of support! The 2024 scholarship funded by Greg Randall '96 and Toni Wilkes, pictured here, has been awarded to a Classics major with high financial need; when added to Smith Center



funds, the scholarship will cover the full fee for Italy. Greg and Toni also funded two merit-based Classics scholarships this spring. We received additional gifts from alumni that paid for everything from honor cords to pizza at the Classics picnic. Can't thank you enough!

On Harry Potter Night our students ran an "Eta Sigma Phi Room" in Holland Hall; visitors to the room created wands and composed magic spells in Latin! Competition was keen in the annual Loomis Latin and Groton Greek Translation Contests, especially among our 23 new ΗΣΦ initiates. Summer awards went to four students, one doing a research project in Latin, one enrolled in the Historical Book Binding program in San Gemini, Italy, and two attending the field school at Antiochia ad Cragum. The annual Alec Award went to Sophia Bloch '24, President of St. Olaf's Jewish Student Organization, for her service to others.



This was a year of new acronyms. Anne Groton piloted Classics 370, which satisfies Writing in the Major (WIM). The students liked the topic ("Tragic Heroines in Ancient Drama") and enjoyed seeing *Antigone*, directed by Peter Hansen '97. Kyle Helms taught his Vergil course with Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC); each student composed

a literary translation of a passage and presented it to the class. Steve Reece tweaked New Testament Greek so that it could satisfy Religion, Faith, and Values (RFV). Kathryn Steed taught Sports & Recreation in the Ancient World with a LAC (Language Across the Curriculum) component in Latin, focused on ancient graffiti about gladiators. Kyle reprised his popular First-Year Seminar (FYS), *Reacting to the Past: Ancient Greece & Imperial China*, with role-playing pedagogy. Anne will combine role-playing with Academic Civic Engagement



(ACE) in her FYS next spring: students will work with middle-schoolers in Northfield to stage Sophocles' *Ichneutae* ("The Trackers"), a fragmentary satyr play based on a Greek myth about Apollo's lost cows.

At this time last year we were sadly saying goodbye to Hilary Bouxsein; now we are happily saying hello as she returns in Sept. for a 3-year appointment. We are glad, too, that Kathryn Steed will be back to teach two courses next year. Our 2nd request to conduct a tenure-track search was denied, but we hope to be luckier with our 3rd attempt, after a self-study in 2023-24. If you're interested in endowing a chair, please let us know!

CAM Kyle Helms and Anne Groton have been busy reviving the Classical Association of Minnesota, as this glimpse of Kyle in his office proves. St. Olaf now hosts CAM's website (mnclassics.org).



Here's the May family on Christmas. In January Jim had a dream come true when he played baseball with greats like Bert Blyleven at the Twins Fantasy Camp in Ft. Myers, FL. He and Donna cruised the Danube last summer and led another tour to Greece in April/May.



The next May Lecture will be delivered on Wed., Apr. 17, 2024, 7 p.m., in Viking Theater (+ live stream) by Jim May's fellow Cicero scholar Jakob Wisse (U. of Newcastle). Stay well and be classic! Χαίρετε! *Valēte!*