California University

Volume 12, Number 27 NOV. 1, 2010

Medieval History Event Closes With ‘Beowulf’

Medieval historians from the United Kingdom, China and the United States were among the crowd entranced by Benjamin Bagby’s performance of ‘Beowulf’ Oct. 22 in Steele Hall Mainstage Theatre.

A world-renowned early music specialist now based in Paris, Bagby chanted, snarled, bellowed and sang the first portion of the Anglo-Saxon epic in the original Old English, accompanying himself on a six-stringed Anglo-Saxon harp.

Although his voice and facial expressions clearly told the tale, modern English subtitles helped the audience of nearly 200 follow the story of a Scandinavian hero’s battle against a fearsome, man-eating monster.

The performance capped off a three-day symposium exploring medieval life. Dancing with Death: Warfare, Wounds and Disease in the Middle Ages explored war-fighting and medical care in the medieval period.

The multi-disciplinary event was organized by Dr. Paul Crawford, professor of ancient and medieval history in the Department of History and Political Science, Dr. Sarah J. Downey, of the English Department, and Dr. Cassandra J. Kuba, of the Department of Justice, Law and Society.

Speakers included Anthony Adams, of Brown University, who specializes in medieval literature; Anthea Boylston, a researcher and lecturer in biological anthropology at the University of Bradford in Britain; military historian Kelly DeVries, of Loyola University-Maryland; John France, of the University of Wales-Swansea, a military historian specializing in the Crusades; Christine Lee, a researcher at the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology in Beijing; John Lennox, of the University of Wales-Aberystwyth; and John Wilson, of the University of Wales-Glyndwr.

Living Historians, will present “Bringing the Past to Life: Communications and Wampum” from 1-4 p.m. Nov. 9. Like Harris, Tigri also is returning to Cal U, where she previously presented a popular Native American cooking class hosted by Dr. Clarissa Confer and the Department of History and Political Science. This time she will dress in traditional native attire and demonstrate the production of wampum. She also will have artifacts on display.

Harris will deliver a lecture at 7 p.m. Nov. 9 in Steele Hall Mainstage Theatre. Her talk is free and open to the public; a book signing and reception will follow in the lobby of Steele Hall.

Harris first came to Cal U in 2007, when she presented a lecture in conjunction with the Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibition “Booming Out: Mohawk Ironworkers Build New York.” She returned to Cal U to receive an honorary doctorate in 2009.

Harris has developed a close relationship with the University and President Angelo Armenti, Jr. On the AIO website, she calls it “the kind of educational experience my colleagues and I dreamed about, one that celebrates diversity and utilizes cultural values.”

Harris Returns to Mark Native American Day

California University is planning a warm welcome for Dr. LaDonna Harris, president of Americans for Indian Opportunity (AIO), when Cal U celebrates its inaugural Native American Day on Nov. 9.

Harris and a group of AIO Ambassadors will participate in a series of events intended to create a dialogue between the Cal U community and indigenous leaders, providing education about Native American heritage and raising awareness about the role of native peoples in the 21st century.

The celebration begins with a reception from 5-6 p.m. Nov. 8 in the Kaza Alumni House, where students and community members can meet Harris and the AIO Ambassadors.

This group of Native Americans, ages 25-35, participates in an ongoing leadership development and community-building initiative based on traditional indigenous values. Founded by Harris in 1993, the AIO Ambassadors program combines mentorship and personal reflection with community service, communications training and a chance for participants to engage with national and international decision-makers.

The AIO Ambassadors will hold an open forum for students to ask questions and interact with Harris.

Cal U students at 11 a.m. Nov. 9, during the common hour. The program will give students a chance to hear more from the AIO Ambassadors, and to participate in a question-and-answer session.

As part of Cal U’s inaugural Native American Day on Nov. 9, Dr. LaDonna Harris, president of Americans for Indian Opportunity, will return to campus for THE third time and participate in a series of events.

Harris has developed a close relationship with the University and President Angelo Armenti, Jr. On the AIO website, she calls it “the kind of educational experience my colleagues and I dreamed about, one that celebrates diversity and utilizes cultural values.”

In Remembrance

About 400 Cal U students held a candlelight vigil Oct. 23 in memory of Jaron Grayson, a Hampton University student who was fatally shot Oct. 17 at an apartment building on Mechanic Street in California Borough. Speakers remembered the 18-year-old Pittsburgh man and urged all members of the Cal U community to reject violence and take steps to ensure a safe, secure learning environment for all. After the gathering on the quad, students carried lighted candles to the scene of the shooting, where a unity prayer was offered. The vigil was followed by an inspirational talk in the Performance Center and a reception with pastors from the area. The evening’s events were organized by the Black Student Union and the Office of Greek Affairs.

Music was provided by the University Choir and the Young and Gifted Gospel Choir. Above from left, Cal U students Kayla Wilson, Deonna Apgar and Aseelah Allen pause during the vigil. At right, Cal U students Maya Rey (left) and Donita Petto hold their candles high as they participate in the vigil.
History Buffs Gather Monthly

On Nov. 11, the Cal U Civil War Roundtable welcomes alumna and author/historian Kristopher White ’05 as its monthly guest speaker. His topic will be “The Battle of the Wilderness: The Tapp Field and Brock Road Intersection.”

Started in 2007 through the efforts of Dr. Robert E. Eberly Jr., a Civil War re-enactor and living historian with the 101st Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteers, the monthly roundtables take place at 7 p.m. on Thursday evenings in the Kara Alumnus House. Each meeting features a speaker who shares the results of research and inquiry into a specific topic related to the Civil War, explained Dr. Clarissa Confer, of Cal U’s Department of History and Political Science. Attendees range from retired and current faculty to students and community members.

Confer, a previous guest speaker, has presented her research on American Indian women during the war. Earlier this year, eminent professor Dr. Anthony Saladin spoke about Union Gen. George H. Thomas. Speakers this fall have included Chris Mackowski, author of The Last Days of Stonewall Jackson, and Civil War historian and author Scott Mingus, whose slide presentation focused on Robert E. Lee’s best — and most controversial — brigades in the Army of Northern Virginia, the Louisiana Tigers.

“I am proud to be the faculty adviser and oversee a group of dedicated volunteers who work hard to make this happen,” Confer said. “We’ve hosted diverse topics and speakers, and last semester the roundtable cooperated on a trip to Gettysburg sponsored by the Cal U History Club.”

Exhibition Showcases ‘Working White House’

The exhibition showcases the souvenirs, housekeeping implements, letters, menus, photographs and other objects that help to illustrate the full story of the presidential residence. The American Democracy Project at Cal U and the Partnership Resourcing Educational Performance are collaborating to present “Understanding Democracy! Kids Get Involved.”

Guides curated are available online. Visit www.calu.edu, click on “Information for … Business and Community” at the top of the homepage, then look for “Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibitions.”

To schedule a field trip or group visit, contact Walter Czekaj, director of University Exhibitions, at 724-938-5244.

Young Visitors Learn About Democracy

Students can learn more about how the U.S. government works at a free program, “Understanding Democracy! Kids Get Involved,” this week and Nov. 8-12 in Manderino Library.

The program is offered in conjunction with the Working White House: 200 Years of Tradition and Memories, a Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibition now on display at the library.

Students can visit a recreation of the Oval Office, sit behind the Resolute desk for a photograph, take a stroll among first ladies’ ball gowns and enjoy a behind-the-scenes video presentation about the nation’s most famous residence.

The exhibition also showcases souvenirs, housekeeping implements, letters, menus, photographs and other objects that help to illustrate the full story of the presidential residence.

The American Democracy Project at Cal U and the Partnership Resourcing Educational Performance are collaborating to present “Understanding Democracy! Kids Get Involved.”

Guides curated are available online. Visit www.calu.edu, click on “Information for … Business and Community” at the top of the homepage, then look for “Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibitions.”

To schedule a field trip or group visit, contact Walter Czekaj, director of University Exhibitions, at 724-938-5244.

Theater and Dance Season Continues

The Department of Theatre and Dance will continue its 2010 fall season with a presentation by first-year students of Barbara Robinson’s The Best Christmas Pageant Ever.

Curtain time is 8 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday, with a 2 p.m. matinee also on Saturday. All performances are in the Gerald and Carolyn Blaney Theatre, a “black box” theatre in Steele Hall on the Cal U campus.

Directed by Dr. Michele Pagen, a professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance, this hilarious tale finds a couple struggling to put on a church Christmas pageant and faced with casting the inevitably awful Herdmans. The Best Christmas Pageant Ever marks the 15th annual first-year student show at Cal U. The University’s Bachelor of Arts in Theatre is one of 146 programs accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theatre.

All performances are open to the public. Cost is $12 for adults, $10 for seniors and children. Students with valid CalCards and a $5 deposit are admitted free.

For ticket information, or to order tickets by phone, call the Steele Box Office at 724-938-5943.
Students Teach at Heritage Days

Four Cal U students gained experience teaching in a classroom setting at Perryopolis Pioneer Days, held Oct. 2-3 at Dr. Harry R. Sampey Park. Elementary Education majors Kathryn Albani and Carlee Forgie, both seniors, and Lauren Satifka, Holly McKean and Terese Marszałek, all juniors, volunteered to teach children about the Civil War at Hopewell Schoolhouse, a replica log cabin within the park.

Perryopolis Pioneer Days is a weekend celebration of the town’s heritage, which dates to the 17th century. Festivities included a parade, a Civil War battle re-enactment and many Civil War-themed activities. For Cal U students, the festival was an opportunity to gain teaching experience.

“This was a great opportunity to become more comfortable and confident presenting historical topics in a way children find interesting,” said Albani. “That can sometimes be a challenging issue in an elementary setting.”

Each student prepared a lesson for the event. Albani and Forgie worked together to describe the living conditions of Civil War soldiers, and Satifka explored the period’s music. McKean discussed language differences through Civil War letters, and Marszałek spoke about diseases that were common in the Civil War era.

The students used entertaining activities to create a memorable learning experience. “We used a Morse code activity, and the children translated our message,” said Forgie. “We also had some examples of the foods armies had to eat, including hardtack, a cheap and long-lasting biscuit.”

Students learned about Pioneer Days through their Teaching of Social Studies for Elementary Grades class with Dr. Richard Wyman, a professor in the Department of Elementary/Early Childhood Education.

“Participating at Pioneer Days is voluntary, but I am relating to a class project that we are working on,” said McKean. “In our class we are using resources from the Library of Congress website to write a lesson plan.”

Learning to conduct research and develop a compelling lesson plan is a critical part of educational studies at Cal U, said the students.

“I think that my education classes at Cal U prepared me for this event by providing me with the effective teaching tools I need to go into an event with confidence and pride,” said Albani.

Conference Speakers Discuss Cyber Crime

A group of nationally recognized experts discussed the dynamic and global threat posed by cyber crime at Cal U’s fourth annual Corporate and Homeland Security Conference, held Oct. 19.

Among the speakers were Washington County District Attorney Steven Toprani ’01 and Dr. James Carafano, deputy director of the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for International Studies and the director of the Douglas and Sarah Allison Center for Foreign Policy Studies. Both are departments of the Heritage Foundation, based in Washington, D.C.

Toprani discussed some of the difficulties in prosecuting crimes committed with computers, cell phones or the Internet. He said his office now has a focus on prosecuting crimes committed with computers, cell phones or the Internet. He said his office now has

“Nearly all traditional crime has some elements of electronic evidence used in the offense,” Toprani said.

Carafano warned that terrorists already have used information and tools available on the Internet to make plans and even recruit experts who will carry them out. Even would-be terrorists who aren’t computer experts can be dangerous.

“If you are a reasonably educated person with some time on your hands, you can gain an awful lot of information without hacking into any systems,” Carafano said.

Other speakers were special agents Gregg Frankhouser and Mason Drew, of the FBI’s High Tech Computer Crimes Task Force; James Rega, an investigator with the Washington County District Attorney’s Office; and Cal U faculty members Drs. Sam Lonich and Dr. Emily Switzer.

“We were honored to have high-caliber scholars and professionals in the field of cyber security both presenting cutting-edge information and also attending the event this year,” said Dr. Michael Hummel, dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

More than 150 people attended the conference, which was developed and presented by the College of Liberal Arts and the Department of Justice, Law and Society.

‘Beowulf’ Closes History Event

— Continued from page 1

Michigan, an internationally respected expert on historical combat; and Cliff Rogers, of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, a historian who studies medieval military history.

Nearly all the teaching attended Bagby’s performance, which held the audience rapt for more than 90 minutes. Among the audience members was Dr. Piers Mitchell, of Cambridge University, who delivered the symposium’s keynote address, “Medieval Medical Care: Stereotypes and Reality,” on Oct. 21. He also discussed “Paleopathology: The Archaeology of Health in the Past” on Oct. 22.

Mitchell’s talks put to rest some stereotypical notions about medical care in the Middle Ages.

“It is a common misconception that medieval medicine was full of quacks who traveled to your city, took your money to heal you and then left town before more serious symptoms could occur,” he said.

“Although there was a good bit of that going on, there was also a very good network of licensing authorities and juries of the medical profession.”

In addition to talks and workshops, the symposium included displays of longbows and Friesian horses (similar to medieval warhorses) and demonstrations of historical fencing techniques.

SECA to Serve Spaghetti on Election Day

As part of the 2010 SECA fundraising campaign, “Give Hope Today. Build a Better Tomorrow,” a spaghetti-and-meatballs lunch will be offered from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. tomorrow, Election Day, at the Performance Center.

Cost is $6.50; the meal includes salad, dessert and beverage. All proceeds are donated to SECA, the State Employees Combined Appeal. Every ticket-holder will be eligible for a chance to win a door prize.

A parent organization of the SECA/Cal U drive is the United Way of Mon Valley. This organization’s president for a fourth term is Cal U’s First Lady, Barbara Armrini.

For ticket, contact Dana Turcic (turcic@calu.edu) or Norm Hasbrouck (Hasbrouck@calu.edu).
Blues Concert Thursday
Blues artist Gaye Adegbalola will perform with accompanist Roddy Barnes at 7 p.m. Thursday in Steele Hall Mainstage Theatre. The concert is free and open to the public. Visitors may park in the new Vulcan Garage.

Adegbalola has toured nationally and internationally and has won numerous awards, including the prestigious Blues Music Award. She came to campus in March for two days of lectures and a performance that drew raves from those in attendance. The Office of Social Equity, Office of Student Affairs and the Women’s Studies Department are collaborating to bring her back to the university.

Arrigo-Nelson Lectures at Zoo
Dr. Summer Arrigo-Nelson, assistant professor in the Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences, will lecture at the Pittsburgh Zoo’s Education Complex from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sunday. Her talk, “Lovable Lemurs,” will describe Madagascar, known for its more than 70 species of lemurs. She will offer insight into her research on silikas, a large species of lemur she has been studying since 1998.
After the talk, those in attendance will tour the Zoo’s Tropical Forest and see its collection of lemurs.