

SALVETE!

Greetings from the
Classics Department
at Holy Cross

Running *the* Marathon

By Alex Simrell '16

While doing research at Holy Cross as part of the Manuscripts, Inscriptions, and Documents Club this past summer, Chris Ryan '16 and I decided that we wanted to run the Authentic Marathon during our fall semester abroad in Greece. We were familiar with the legend of Pheidippides and the first marathon, but now it was our turn. After finishing our research each day, Chris and I would run through Worcester, adding on more miles each week. Andrew Boudon '15, who ran the marathon last year and was also doing summer research, answered all our running questions and helped us stay motivated. The ancient Greeks believed in exercising both the body and the mind, and that is exactly what we were doing.

The physical training continued when we arrived in Greece; the mental training shifted from manuscript research to our coursework. Training for the marathon was a great way to get to know the city of Athens. Not only did we get to see the ruins of the Acropolis and the ancient Agora, but we also got to see important parts of the modern city such as the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in front of the parliament building. The week before the marathon, we had a school trip to the Peloponnese. On the last day of our trip, which happened to be the day before the marathon, we visited Olympia. We had the



Chris Ryan '16, Alex Simrell '16, and Madeline Pierson, a fellow College Year in Athens student from Scripps College, just before beginning their run to Athens.

opportunity to run on the track where the ancient Greeks held the prestigious stade race.

The next day we woke up at 5:30 to take a bus to Marathon where the race began. It was a tough course, but the weather was great and we were encouraged by the thousands of runners and spectators around us. It was amazing to run by the burial mound in Marathon and to finish in the Marble Stadium in Athens where our friends were cheering us on. I saw that stadium almost every day, since it was right next to our school, but after finishing the marathon I

HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM FENWICK 4

We write to you with news from these dear, creaky corridors but also from far afield. Read here on page 1 about junior Alex Simrell's experience training for and running in the footsteps of Pheidippides. Members of the ever-growing Manuscripts, Inscriptions, and Documents Club have also been traveling overseas, both in person and electronically, among much other work in the fall (see p. 3).

Read also about the pioneering course on Old Persian that debuted in the fall (p. 2), the honor society Eta Sigma Phi's fall conversations (p. 4), some alumnae/-i updates (p. 4), and other news from the floor (p. 5).

And, alums, please stay in touch with us by emailing me (Tim Joseph '98) with news at tjoseph@holycross.edu

could never look at the stadium again without thinking of crossing the finish line and everything which led up to that moment.

I went to Greece to see the ruins and to be in the place where the events I study occurred, but in doing so, I went to a modern city which has its own people and its own culture, and the marathon helped me see how these two aspects come together.

Alex, a Classics major who is also in the Teacher Education Program, is from Scranton, PA.

PIONEERING COURSE ON OLD PERSIAN COMES TO HC

By Sarah Zatoonian '17

Introduction to Old Persian, the ancient cuneiform language of the Achaemenid Empire, was offered for the first time at Holy Cross in the fall semester of 2014. This course has been rarely, if ever, offered at the undergraduate level and is usually reserved for graduate school linguistics courses.

Professor Neel Smith, the instructor of the course, not only brought it to Holy Cross but also taught it in a unique way. Beginning the first week, we were able to decipher the works character by character—transliterating, transcribing, and translating a large portion of the corpus of Old Persian texts available to us. The course entailed sight and written translations—sometimes

deciphering directly from 19th and 20th century drawings and pictures—and working collaboratively on transliterations, which we compiled online.

This writing system for Old Persian was invented and used by Darius I of Persia and his son Xerxes during the sixth and fifth centuries BCE and can be found on monumental inscriptions in places like Behistun and Persepolis and on clay or gold tablets, coins, and luxury items like stone weights from the Achaemenid Empire. Translating these royal inscriptions gave us the opportunity to see some of the stories we have read from Greek historians, like Herodotus, written by the king of Persia himself. Comparing historical accounts—for example, the story of

Smerdis, the false king—that appear in both Herodotus and the Old Persian texts, we were able to verify historical accuracy, observe common themes, and read the stories from both Greek and Persian points of view.

The course ended with an *actus*, or a public examination, during which Professor Smith orally questioned the class, followed by questions from the audience (see the photo and caption below). Participating in the Old Persian class was a rare opportunity to better understand the history of the Persian Empire and of Indo-European languages; the experience was enriching for all of us.

Sarah is a Classics major from Waltham, MA.



Connor Moynihan '15, Jenna Soiles '16, Alexandra Bordin (a Teaching Assistant in French), and Vannak Khin '15 answer questions about this inscription from Behistun at the class's actus in December.

Manuscripts Club Breaking Ground on More Digital Texts

By Stephanie Neville '17 and Charlie Schufreider '17

The Manuscripts, Inscriptions, and Documents Club (MID) has worked on a variety of projects so far this year. Team members have continued the research that they have been working on, started new projects, and participated in conferences and conversations with scholars throughout the world regarding their current endeavors.

The Homer Multitext team is continuing their work on the creation of a digital diplomatic edition of the Venetus A manuscript of the *Iliad*. On its way to helping complete the publication of the newest data release, HMT 2014-02, the team has been working to clean up the entire edition from Book 1 to Book 10. In addition, teams have been working in tandem to edit the text and scholia (or marginal notes) of Books 14 and 15.

MID also hosts works on two other Homeric projects. Using images photographed by students Nik Churik '15 and Rebecca Finnigan '15 while they were abroad last year, Brian Clark '15 and Drew Virtue '17 are editing the inscriptions found on the Tabula Iliaca Capitolina, a tablet from the Augustan period that summarizes a large portion of the Epic Cycle. Additionally, Nik Churik '15, Michael Kelley '18, and Corey Scannell '18 are editing the lexicon of Apollodorus, a large dictionary of Homeric vocabulary.

The Jerome team has begun work on a new manuscript of Jerome's *Chronicle*. In addition to the digital diplomatic editions in progress for both the Geneva 49 and St. Gallen 298 manuscripts, the group has begun work on a new seventh century manuscript of the *Chronicle*, Bern 219, the oldest known codex of the work. The team has continued editing the St. Gallen 298 manuscript in

studying the works of other Greek mathematicians, such as Euclid, to expand upon those of Archimedes that they have studied in the past. The group has been locating and gathering mathematical diagrams in ancient manuscripts. They are currently creating citable images for each of these diagrams so that they can later compare their materials.

Brand new to MID is the



An audience at the HC MID Open House listens to the current teams present on their individual projects. Pictured in the front row are Jennifer Adams '10 (Coordinator of Research & Instruction Services at Dinand Library) and Classics majors Will Callif '16, Rebecca Finnigan '15, Charlie Schufreider '17, Andrew Boudon '15, and Nik Churik '15.

addition to creating bifolio spreads for a majority of the pages in the Bern 219.

The group of students traditionally known as the Archimedes team is now

editing of an Old Persian text. Students of the unique Old Persian class taught by Prof. Smith (see the piece by Sarah Zatoonian on page 2) began the project this semester with the

Continues on Page 5

Eta Sigma Phi: Conversations about Cognition and Comedy

By Meagan Freeze '16

This semester, the Holy Cross chapter of the Classics Honor Society Eta Sigma Phi held weekly meetings during which majors from all years assembled and heard presentations, participated in debate, and enhanced our Classical trivia knowledge on the quiz website Sporcle. The group heard presentations from four of our senior members: Andrew Boudon, President, Rebecca Finnigan, Vice-president, Brian Clark, and Nikolas Churik, Treasurer. These presentations, some scholarly and some not, were succeeded by questions and debates among all the participants.

Andrew spoke about cognitive dissonance in response to the Lamian War, the contest in 323-322 BCE in which a coalition of Greek city-states was defeated by the Macedonian army. Although the Lamian War was fought on behalf of the proper worship of the gods, the gods did not intervene and the war was lost. The outcome of the war was incomprehensible from the point of view of Ancient Greek religious thought, and cognitive dissonance forced the Ancient Greek concept of divinity to adapt. Rebecca's presentation reminded the group what annoys

Classicists too frequently—Classical inaccuracies in popular culture. We have all watched and cringed at Disney's *Hercules*. Rebecca highlighted several instances, and provided the truth behind Disney's representation, to all of our delight.

Brian used his vast knowledge from working with the Homer Multitext Project in the Manuscripts, Inscriptions and Documents Club to translate complex passages from the *Iliad* into colloquial English. His comical translations were helpful and entertaining, especially with such a difficult text. Appropriately during the week of Halloween, Nikolas shared references to ghosts and witches from Classical authors such as Homer, Hesiod, Virgil, Plautus, Lucan and Pliny.

Presentations this semester contained an equal mix of informative and interesting Classical topics with applications today. Along with a few social symposiums, regular Eta Sigma Phi meetings created a friendly environment to welcome new Classics Majors and learn from old ones.

Meagan, a Classics major from Brooklyn, NY, is the Presentation Historian for Eta Sigma Phi.

ALUMNAE / -I NEWS

- **David Bonagura '03** is teaching Latin at Regis High School in New York, NY.
- **David Wright '08**, who earned an MA in Classics at the University of Arizona in 2012, is now pursuing a Ph.D. in Classics at Rutgers University in New Jersey.
- **Ashley Loyke '11** earned her J.D. at the Ohio State University and is now an attorney at Reese, Pyle, Drake, and Meyer in Newark, Ohio.
- **Michael Trachy '14** is working as a portfolio operations associate at Bain Capital in Boston.

Please let us know what you're up to by sending updates to tjoseph@holycross.edu

AMA President-elect Stack '94 speaking on campus March 17

Steven Stack '94, the President-Elect of the American Medical Association, will speak at Holy Cross on Tues., March 17, at 4:30 p.m. in Hogan Suite A. Steve, an emergency physician who practices in Lexington, KY, will speak about how his Classical education at Holy Cross has informed his career as a physician. A member of the AMA's Board of Trustees since 2006, Steve will become the youngest president of the association in over 100 years when his term begins in July.

All alumnae/-i and friends of the Classics Dept. are invited to attend Steve's talk.

Manuscripts Club Update (Continued from Page 3)

goal of creating a digital diplomatic edition of the Behistun Inscription, a large inscription made into the side of a mountain in Iran. The inscription details Darius the Great's military conquests, and was authored by the King himself. The Old Persian team has thus far transcribed and transliterated the first and fourth columns of the text, with the goal of completing this transliteration for the remaining columns and then

translating their work into a more readable XML format by the end of next semester.

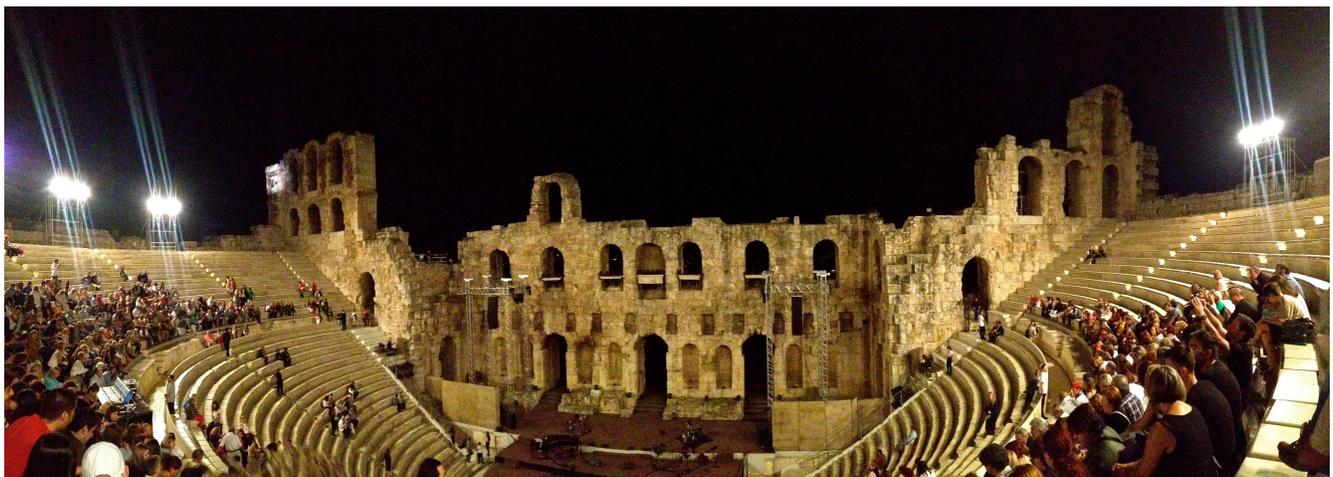
Sharing the efforts and findings of MID with other scholars and a wider audience, members of MID have had the opportunity to present at a number of conferences. This semester, Andrew Boudon '15, Nik Churik '15, Brian Clark '15, and Stephanie Lindeborg '13 (who is currently pursuing an MA in Classics at UMass-Boston)

gave two talks at the conference on "Greek and Latin in the Open Age of Data" at the University of Leipzig via teleconference. Nik and Brian will go on to Bern, Switzerland, to present on digital humanities later this January.

Stephanie is a Classics major from Grand Island, NY; Charlie, from Glenview, IL, is a Classics major and in the Health Professions Advisory Program.

ALIA NOVA CENACULO FENWICKIENSI ACTA

- For a profile of senior Classics and International Relations double-major Shea Maunsell, see here: <http://news.holycross.edu/blog/2014/12/05/student-profile-shea-maunsell-15/>
- On October 26 senior Classics majors Nik Churik, Harry Crimi, and Lindsey Nemshick were inducted into Alpha Sigma Nu, the Jesuit Honor Society. Prof. Mary Ebbott, the chair of the Classics Department, was an honorary inductee into the society.
- Classics Day will take place this spring on Thursday, April 16. Please see here (http://academics.holycross.edu/classics/department_events/classics_day) and contact Ms. Toni Methe (tmethe@holycross.edu) with any questions about the event.



The view of Alex Simrell '16 from his seat in the Odeon of Herodes Atticus in Athens.