

Albion Area Lifelong Learners

A Lifelong Learning Experience in Cooperation with Albion College

SPRING TERM, 2021

Dear friends:

Spring is here and we continue making a transition from on-line to in-person classes. Two of our spring term offerings will be held online via Google Meeting and two will be held in-person, following CDC Covid-19 regulations/restrictions and physical distancing. I hope there is something for everyone! We look forward to the fall term in October when we hope to return to our usual large selection of in-person classes.

The Spring Assembly on April 22 will be a Google Meeting. David Blixt, a writer of historical fiction, will talk about the daredevil journalist Nellie Bly and how he tackles real-life subjects in his fiction. In order to make the assembly more accessible to all AALL members and friends, we will send an email with the log-in information to everyone a few days before the presentation. So if you are not registering for any classes, you do not need to send a mail-in registration for the assembly.

The April assembly is also our Annual Membership Meeting when we elect new directors. Members leaving the board are Cathy Campbell, Bruce Nelson, Kathleen Seidl, and Royal Ward. The following people have agreed to stand for election: Sue Farley, Carolyn Fraker, Dale Kennedy, and John Williams. If members would like to add other nominations, they can indicate names on the bottom of the mail-in registration form.

In light of unexpected expenses and lower than usual income during the time of COVID-19, the board is examining our financial situation. For many years we have offered our classes at bargain rates. Several board members are working on a committee to compare our prices and practices to similar life-long learning organizations. Look for a price adjustment in the fall.

The Curriculum Committee is always on the lookout for new for classes. If you have ideas or topics you would like to explore, or if you know of people who might be willing to teach a class or give an assembly presentation, please email either of the co-chairs: Martha O'Kennon (mokennon@albion.edu) or Doug White (dwhite@albion.edu). We hope to develop some new classes that follow a different format than the 4 week/8 hour standard we have been using. The recent 2 week/4 hour "book club" offerings have been popular. Help us think outside the box!

Royal Ward
AALL President

Upcoming Events

Spring Assembly – Thursday, April 22, streaming at 10:00 am

David Blixt, author and actor

Finding Nellie Bly—Fact and Fiction



Nellie Bly, the pioneering undercover reporter and daredevil who was the basis for Lois Lane, is an icon for feminists, journalists, and industrialists. With a career spanning the Sullivan-Kilrain fight in 1889 to the trenches of World War I, Bly divided her time evenly between undercover stunts, dramatic exposés, and in-depth interviews. What was not known until this year was that she was also a prolific novelist, writing a dozen novels, eleven of which were lost until they were discovered and published by novelist David Blixt. He stumbled across them as he researched the sequel to his bestselling novel about Bly, *What Girls Are Good For*. Blixt will discuss Bly's life, the impact of this discovery, and how an author tackles a real-life subject in fiction.

Blixt's Historical Fiction is consistently described as "intricate," "taut," and "breathtaking." His work spans the Roman Empire (the *Colossus* series, his play *Eve of Ides*) to early Renaissance Italy (the *Star-Cross'd* series) through the Elizabethan era (his delightful espionage comedy *Her Majesty's Will*, starring Will Shakespeare and Kit Marlowe as hapless spies) to the Victorian age with his series following daredevil journalist Nellie Bly. His novels combine a love of the theatre with a deep respect for the quirks and passions of history.

An actor and world traveler as well as a writer, David has ridden camels around the pyramids at Giza, been thrown out of the Vatican Museum and been blessed by John-Paul II, scaled the Roman ramp at Masada, crashed a hot-air balloon, leapt from cliffs on small Greek islands, dined with Counts and criminals, climbed to the top of Mount Sinai, and sat in the Prince's chair in Verona's palace. But David is happiest at his desk, weaving tales of brilliant people in dire and dramatic straits. Living in Chicago with his wife and two children, David describes himself as "actor, author, father, husband. In reverse order."

Upcoming Courses

COVID-19 VACCINES AND CRISPR. Robert Armstrong, Ph.D., Professor of Chemistry *emeritus*, Albion College. Mondays. 10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m. May 3, 10. Online. Class size unlimited.

In the first day of this class, we will discuss what a vaccine is; how it protects us from disease; and why we need two injections for some vaccines. We will discuss how in 2020-21 a vaccine was produced in less than one year while the usual production time is 4-5 years. A discussion will center around the difference between the various vaccines.

In Week 2, we will introduce CRISPR, the method that underlies all the new vaccines for Covid-19. We will study how CRISPR and the Cas9 protein were discovered, and how they work to produce specific directed mutations. After background information is given, we will discuss specific applications of CRISPR. For instance, how a Chinese physician treated an embryo to resist HIV Infection, and how a doctor in the United States treated a patient's bone marrow cells to cure sickle cell anemia. We will have time to discuss the ethics of such experiments and try to determine who should be involved in the regulation of such experiments.

WHEN MICHIGAN WAS FRENCH. Dianne Guenin-Lelle, Ph.D., Professor of French, Albion College. Thursdays, 10:00 a.m.—12:00 noon. May 6, 13, 20, 27. Online. Class size unlimited.

Most of Michigan's French history has been forgotten or reinterpreted by the English who took control of the region after winning the French and Indian War. For example, few see any important historical connections uniting Versailles, Quebec, Detroit, New Orleans and the island of Haiti. However, these places along with the Great Lakes, the Illinois Territory and the Mississippi River were important elements for French imperial aims and the colony's development. This course seeks to present a coherent picture of the history of French colonialism in North America from the 16th through the 18th century, with a special focus on Michigan and the Great Lakes. Through discussions and readings, participants will identify important historical figures and notable moments in history, as well as connect Michigan's history to the broader French presence in North America and the Caribbean. Of particular interest will be the French colonial vision (week 1), routes of exploration (week 2), *Voyageurs*, *Coueurs de bois* and other Michigan icons (week 3) and the importance of the French colonial legacy today (week 4).

SHAKESPEARE AT THE BOHM. Royal Ward, Ph.D., Professor of Theatre, *emeritus*, Albion College Thursdays. 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. May 6, 13, 20, 27. Bohm Theatre. Limited to 80 participants—if you are interested in this class, be sure to read the “Policy for Limited Enrollment Classes.”

It will still be a while before theatres open for live productions of Shakespeare, but we can have our very own Shakespeare Festival right here in Albion. These four recent movie adaptations vary from the straight-forward, to the feminist, to the gay, to the silly! They are all under 2 hours long, so there will be time for brief

introductions and/or comments after. In person in the Bohm Theatre, where we will socially distance and follow current state and CDC guidelines.

Movie 1: MACBETH (2015)

This straight-forward version is set in medieval Scotland and remains faithful to the play without sacrificing its own cinematic flair. Featuring a mesmerizing performance by Academy Award nominee Michael Fassbender.

Movie 2: OPHELIA (2018)

An imaginative retelling of Hamlet from Ophelia's point of view, with Daisy Ridley in the title role.

Movie 3: PRIVATE ROMEO (2011)

A low budget, indie, all-male adaptation of Romeo and Juliet that retains Shakespeare's original language but is set in a high school military academy.

Movie 4: LOVE'S LABOURS LOST (2000)

Actor/director Kenneth Branagh turns his version of this little-known comedy into a delightful 1939 romantic Hollywood movie musical, with lots of singing and dancing.

There is a \$10 charge to help cover the cost of the theatre rental.

STEM IN THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. Jason Raddatz, Director of the Whitehouse Nature Center, Albion College. Tuesdays. 10:00 a.m.—12:30 p.m. May 4, 11, 18. Whitehouse Nature Center on Albion Campus. Limited to 12 participants—if you are interested in this class, be sure to read the “Policy for Limited Enrollment Classes.”

“STEM in the Natural Environment” will explore applied technologies and their applications in the natural world. STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. In this case, applied technologies include, but are not limited to, 3D modeling and printing, remote robot piloting, coding unmanned aerial vehicles, and using GIS/GPS. Lessons will primarily take place at the Whitehouse Nature Center. Arrangements will be made to access campus computing resources while following COVID-safety protocols.

There is a materials fee of \$15.00 which will cover equipment use and consumption of plastic.

Reminders for Spring, 2021:

1. Annual membership dues for 2020-2021 are reduced to \$10. If you are unsure whether you have paid your dues, contact registrar Mary Deardurff (517-629-9661). Members may take one class each term without additional fee; each additional class is \$10 (classes meeting twice are \$5).
2. The Spring Assembly (on Thursday, April 22, at 10 am) will be an on-line Google Meeting. If you are registering for classes, please register for the assembly at the same time. If you are not registering for classes, you will be emailed login information a few days before.
3. Registration will be by mail only. Mail-in registration forms (along with a check or money order made out to AALL) must be received by Thursday, April 15. Mail service can be sluggish—please mail early! Log-in instructions for the assembly and classes will be emailed to you soon after registration.

Registration Information

1. If you wish to register for the assembly, “Finding Nellie Bly—Fact and Fiction,” place an X in the box in front of “Assembly.”
2. For each course for which you want to register, place a number in the box in front of the course name: 1 for the course you most want to take, 2 for the second course you wish to take, etc. (NOTE: If you only wish to take one course, mark it with the number 1—see instruction 3 below.)
3. If you wish to indicate an alternate choice (in case one of your choices is oversubscribed and you are not admitted to that course), mark an X in the box before your alternate choice.
4. Mail the completed form along with a check or money order payable to AALL to: **AALL Registrar, P. O. Box 188, Albion, MI 49224**

Policy for Limited Enrollment Classes

- When a course with limits is over-enrolled, the names of all those who had it listed as #1 shall be entered in a lottery. Those randomly drawn shall be placed in the class. Those not selected will comprise the waiting list and also be given first access if that course is offered again. The Registrar will keep a record of those on the waiting list until the course is offered again.
- Those selected for the course in its first offering will not be eligible to retake it until all those on the waiting list have had the opportunity to take the course.
- Those who have signed up for a class with limits and listed it as #1 are encouraged to sign up for at least one additional class. Members are also encouraged not to sign up for a course with limited enrollment if they know they won't be there for all four sessions.

AALL Spring Term 2021 - REGISTRATION DEADLINE: THURSDAY, APRIL 15

REGISTRATION 1

	2020-2021 annual dues (July 1 – June 30) (\$10) (Only pay dues once. First class is free.)	
	Assembly: Finding Nellie Bly—Fact and Fiction (free)	
	Class: Covid-19 vaccines (\$5)	
	Class: When Michigan was French (\$10)	
	Class: Shakespeare at the Bohm (\$10 + \$10 fee)	
	Class: STEM in the natural environment (\$10 + \$15 materials fee)	

TOTAL:

Name	
Phone	
Email	

REGISTRATION 2

	2020-2021 annual dues (July 1 – June 30) (\$10) (Only pay dues once. First class is free.)	
	Assembly: Finding Nellie Bly—Fact and Fiction (free)	
	Class: Covid-19 vaccines (\$5)	
	Class: When Michigan was French (\$10)	
	Class: Shakespeare at the Bohm (\$10 + \$10 fee)	
	Class: STEM in the natural environment (\$10 + \$15 materials fee)	

TOTAL:

Name	
Phone	
Email	

Name _____ Spouse/partner name _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

___ Yes, I am 55 or older (spouse/partner could be younger)

MAIL form and check or money order to: AALL Registrar, P. O. Box 188, Albion, MI 49224