

Humanities students explore a world of opportunity

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Brock students traveled to the Isle of Man this summer for an immersive, experiential education opportunity visiting historic sites across the island including St. Patrick's Isle, pictured above.

From the home of the Vikings in the middle of the Irish Sea to the breathtaking coast of Biscay Bay and picturesque shores of Pantelleria island, Humanities field courses took Brock students across the globe over the past year to experience the stories of people across the ages.

Medieval and Renaissance Studies (MARS) and History students travelled across the Atlantic and back in time during a recent visit to the Isle of Man, a small island in the middle of the Irish Sea steeped in rich history and heritage.

History graduate and master's student Jessica Leite (BA '23) will never forget being able to immerse herself in the medieval sites studied in class and in the vibrant current-day culture of the island.

“Not only did this journey enrich my understanding of medieval history and the Isle of Man, but it reminded me that history occurs not only in time but in *places* affecting real people, a perspective strongly reinforced through this experiential learning journey,” she said.

Guided by Professor Andrew McDonald, a Viking expert and historian of the medieval British Isles, students traversed the island from seashore to mountain top in an action-packed nine days, exploring medieval castles, cathedrals and abbeys, and historic Tynwald Hill.

“Along the way, we learned about the growth of Douglas and Castletown, the island's unique constitutional position, the story of internment in the Second World War, Victorian tourism, railways and waterwheels, native animal species — and even experienced the beginning of the annual TT motorcycle races,” McDonald said.

Students will share their experiences through an upcoming symposium, [Adventures in Living and Learning: Reflections on Isle of Man Study Travel](#), on Tuesday, Oct. 1. Classics and Archaeology master's student Miranda King says Brock's many fieldwork opportunities are one of the primary reasons she chose the University.

King, whose research focuses on the analysis and contextualizing of architectural material found during archaeological investigations, was part of a group that travelled to the Italian island of Pantelleria.

During the trip, she and other students became well-versed in excavation while exploring a Punic and Roman period sanctuary on the edge of the volcanic crater-lake Lago di Venere.

Led by Associate Professor of Art and Archaeology Carrie Murray, students spent a month excavating, recording and processing artifacts, which Murray said

strengthened their hands-on skills while connecting students to cultural, intellectual and artistic ideas from ancient times.

“We learned about the life and death of the sanctuary site through the recovery of votive offerings, discovered new structures and even found signs of an earthquake in antiquity,” Murray said.

Visual Arts students got taste of life in Spain, a country known for its vibrant cultural traditions, distinct cuisine and a stunning backdrop of diverse landscapes, during a trip led by Associate Professor of Visual Arts Amy Friend.

Among the many stops on their educational adventure, students visited the bustling city of Bilbao, the iconic Guggenheim Museum, and the town of Guernica and its Peace Museum.

“There is no substitute for this kind of learning opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of a place, its culture, its art scene and artists; seeing artwork up-close — experiencing its materiality, scale and vibrancy — can be transformative,” said Amanda Burk, Visual Arts Chair and Associate Professor.





