



MODERN HISTORY with Beamish Museum and Lewis Ryder

Wednesdays and Fridays at 2pm

Biography

Lewis is a historian of modern Britain with interest in everyday life in early twentieth-century Britain. He completed his PhD at the University of Manchester, where he teaches a range of British history courses. Eager to take his research beyond universities, Lewis has worked with museums, schools, and local history groups. He believes that studying and sharing our histories should be open for everyone and is excited by the possibilities of online teaching in achieving this.

Beamish Museum is a large open-air museum in Durham which shows life in the North East from the 1820s to the 1950s. As well as lots of buildings that you can go inside, which show how people used to live and work, the museum also has a huge amount of collections in its stores, from everyday life in the region to the more unusual, and from small familiar items to huge ship engines. Michelle has worked at Beamish for 12 years and runs lots of different groups at the museum for people living with a range of health conditions; she feels very lucky to have a job which combines her love of history with supporting people's health and wellbeing.

Course overview

From Victorians to Baby Boomers: a social history of modern Britain is an exciting new history programme exploring the major developments in the social and cultural life of Britain from the early days of Queen Victoria's reign to the years after the Second World War. There will be two sessions each week, centred on a single theme – session one will be a talk and discussion with Lewis, and session two will delve into the relevant collections at Beamish. Themes covered will include childhood, crime, and healthcare, fashion, the home, and family life.

Sessions with Lewis will examine the historical roots of many of our contemporary habits and customs, questioning just how different we really are from our predecessors, and exposing some of the popular myths of this period in our history. In talking and discussing with Lewis and other group members, you will increase your understanding of the period and build relevant knowledge to interpret and engage

with the museum collection in the second session of the week. Michelle will deliver her sessions directly from Beamish Museum, either from the collections stores or one of the buildings on site. By diving into the object collections, these sessions will help you to build a more detailed picture of what life was like, particularly in the North East of England, and reflect on stories you might have that relate to some of the things you see. These sessions will include interactive and fun group activities and are a chance to get behind the scenes and explore things not on display to the visiting public.

PHOTOGRAPHY with Alan Sill

Mondays and Wednesdays at 3pm

Biography

Alan Sill is a specialist media, film and photography tutor/lecturer combined with over 30 years working in the media industry. In teaching any media related subject, Alan creates an atmosphere in which students feel at ease whatever their ability, providing opportunities for all, regardless of ability, and ensuring that everyone has a positive experience; he has worked in a range of Further and Higher Education establishments across the north east. In 2014, Alan set up a social enterprise community magazine to give 18-24 year-old job seekers opportunities to engage with a creative “real world” experience, supporting their personal development, building their interpersonal skills and improving their employability. The magazine – in its online and print form, as well as via social media and an internet radio station – offers local perspectives on issues and promotes positive values.

Through the 1980s-2000s, Alan spent time covering news stories for local and national newspapers as a freelance photographer. During this time, his assignments included the 1984-85 miners’ strike, royal visits, Glastonbury, and Premier League football. Alan has also worked with Google, carrying out business-to-business virtual tours that were then added to the Google ‘Streetview’ service.

Twitter - @alansillphoto

Instagram @alansillphotography

Course overview

Through these sessions, participants will learn how to take photographs through a focus on people and objects, the associations and relationships between them, and the significances that are personal to everyone as individuals. Simple or commonplace objects can spark all sorts of different thoughts and connections: a bus could remind one person of a daily commute and another of a one-off trip; a wristwatch might make a link with a particular person or a specific event.

Which little things or big views matter to you? What makes something important to you in a way that makes you want to capture it in a photograph? From simple shapes and colours to portraits of people and views of objects, Alan’s sessions will give you a chance to explore what is important to you and learn how to frame it in a photograph, taking into consideration angles, points of view, shadow and lighting, form and pattern, drawing on the principles of art and design.

MEDIEVAL HISTORY with Richard Asquith

Mondays and Wednesdays at 10am

Biography

Richard has been teaching medieval history for several years and loves bringing new and interactive methods into a learning environment. He has worked in communicating about our medieval past with lots of different people in different contexts, from universities to heritage sites to online, and believes that we can gain a lot from considering the past in relation to and as a reflection of our lived experience today.

Course overview

History isn't just about dates...it is about people! Want to learn about how people lived in the Middle Ages and discuss whether they really lived *that* differently from us? This course will answer your questions about medieval life in the North East and beyond.

This course introduces life in the medieval world, covering topics such as food, drink, music, theatre, books, poems and popular songs, houses and castles, graffiti, and travel. Each session will involve a new activity such as examining items such as coins, graffiti, and other objects, and listening to medieval music. One week, Richard will lead you on a virtual tour of a medieval building. Each session activity will be followed by a discussion about our own modern-day experiences, how the way we live has changed, and which things stay the same.

VISUAL ARTS with Pui Lee

Mondays and Thursdays at 2pm

Biography

Based in Gateshead, Pui Lee is an artist & arts educator working throughout the UK. Arts engagement forms much of her practice and she aims to make a positive difference in life by empowering others through creativity. Trained in a range of artistic disciplines, she uses both traditional and contemporary 2D & 3D art-forms including drawing, printmaking, craft, junk art, sculpture/installation, photography, parade art, and moving image. She has exhibited and sold work nationally and internationally.

Website: www.puilee.co.uk

Social media: www.facebook.com/puileeartist/

Course overview

In these creative workshops with artist Pui Lee, you will explore a range of visual arts techniques and processes, and work towards creating a unique mandala-inspired artwork to be proud of by the end of the 12 sessions. During this time, you will learn about art and practice with some of the formal elements that make up a piece of artwork, such as line, colour and composition. There will also be opportunity for some fun games along the way as well as time to chat to others to make new friends; each session will conclude with gentle stretching and breathing exercises to complete this mindful experience. These sessions are ultimately about responding to the now, using our imaginations, and will be tailored to the interests and needs of the participants with the aim of building confidence and improving overall wellbeing.

No prior experience necessary but please bring along the suggested materials, most of which we hope you will already have in your house.

CREATIVE WRITING AND POETRY with Katharine Goda

Biography

Katharine is a poet and creative facilitator with a background in university lecturing, skills training and student support. She has been commended/highly commended in several competitions nationally, with poems published in numerous blogs, journals and anthologies as well as, recently, selected to become a film poem. She thoroughly enjoys participating in and developing writing workshops, believing passionately that creativity is for everyone. Last year she received an Arts Council England Developing Your Creative Practice Award to consolidate her writing practice and explore creative facilitation with women in prison and new mothers. She appreciates being able to bring people, words and ideas together despite the additional challenges of the moment.

Course overview

Join Katharine in a series of fun, inclusive and inspiring creative writing sessions to explore, record and share what matters to you.

What would your perfect day be like? What's your favourite saying or one that winds you up? Do you have an object that means a lot to you? What about a place you love? If your friend were a vehicle, drink, season, colour, shape – what would they be? Could you write a poem about sadness in the shape of a teardrop? Or one about an apple set out to look like an apple? What about a list: questions you'd like an answer to, what if..., happiness is...? What letter would you like to write? If you take a page of text and choose just ten words, which would they be?

Everyone has stories. Everyone is creative. How about spending some time exploring creative writing? You don't have to have done it before. You just have to be a little bit curious and ready to play with words and ideas. We'll have a look at some words other people have written – songs, poems, lines from films, also words you find out and about in graffiti or advertising, words people have said to you. Why not join us to play with words and ideas, see what happens when you put surprising words next to each other, create a record of what is precious to you? We'd love you to be part of this.