

## THE MEDIEVAL PRESENT

Tuesdays, January 15 to March 19, 2019, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM  
Fairfield Senior's Centre, 80 Lothian Avenue, Etobicoke  
[www.learningunlimitedetobicoke.com](http://www.learningunlimitedetobicoke.com)

### **Coordinator and Presenter: Tim Nau.**

Tim Nau has taught Medieval History at Brock University and the University of Waterloo and broadcast more than a hundred talks on historical subjects on CBC national radio and Radio-Canada. He has also frequently lectured in life-long learning programmes. David Clandfield is Professor Emeritus of French at Toronto University of Toronto and Allen Koretsky is Professor Emeritus of English at York University.

### **Overview**

This series is about the modern world's debt to medieval Europe. It was a time of barbarism and superstition, but also tremendous creativity. For example, parliamentary government, the Catholic Church, as well as ideas like chivalry and individual rights arose then. Its inventions included Gothic architecture, musical notation, universities, silent reading, clocks, the Arthurian legends, and --last but not least-- form-fitting clothing!

**Jan. 15 "A Misunderstood Age"** focuses first on the undeservedly bad reputation of the Middle Ages (A.D 500 to 1500) and then on the inventions and agricultural techniques that more than doubled Europe's population.

**Jan. 22 "New Tools for Thinking"** is about new reading and writing technologies, practical numbers, musical notation, and concepts of time.

**Jan. 29 "Age of Faith or Age of Fools?"** is about the medieval beliefs and values and the predominance of the Church, leading some to condemn the period as "priest-ridden" and others to praise it as Europe's great "Age of Faith".

**Feb. 5 "The Invention of Love"** deals with how the rough behaviour of the elite classes gave way, in the 12th century, to a gentler way of life in which love vied with bravery and loyalty as society's loftiest ideal.

**Feb. 12 "Arthur: Then and Now"**. David Clandfield discusses the Arthurian legends and traces their origins and evolution in painting, sculpture, novels, movies, tourism, place-names, unsolved mysteries, and riotous comedy.

**Feb. 19 "The Middle Ages: Then and Now"** Allen Koretsky considers the contrasts and similarities, discontinuities and continuities between the Middle Ages and our times focussing on belief systems, the Church, parochialism and world-wide communications, knights (real and imagined), courtly love and the role of women.

**Feb. 26 "The Uses of the Middle Ages"** This lecture is about how later generations have interpreted the stories of Robin Hood, Joan of Arc and Magna Carta in ways that have little to do with the medieval realities.

**Mar 5 "Seeing the Past through Surnames"** uses the names of people taking this course to discuss medieval values, habits and economic life. Get out your scissors, Mrs. Taylor! Prepare to smite that anvil, Mr. Smith!

**Mar. 12 "Medieval Toronto"** looks at the city's churches that exemplify the longevity and ubiquity of the gothic style, and explains its origins, with a focus on the Abbey Church of St Denis near Paris and Chartres Cathedral.

**Mar. 17 "The Birth of the Individual"** focuses on the achievement of the sense of self that emerged in the 12th century. Diversity of thinking and the modern emphasis on individual- (as opposed to group-) identity and rights were among the results of this revolutionary step forward.

### **Researcher/Committee Contact and Chair: Loretta Fines.**