

Dr Robert (Bob) William Unwin

Colleagues will be sorry to learn of the death, on 27 January 2021, of Dr Robert (Bob) William Unwin, former Lecturer in the School of Education.

After graduating in 1961 with a BA in History from the University of Hull, Dr Unwin spent his early career as a school teacher and head of department in several state schools in Yorkshire, whilst also completing a PhD from Hull. Bob was appointed in 1972 to the School of Education, where he remained until his retirement in 2002. During his time in Leeds, he completed a second PhD and was also Vice-President of the local branch of the Association of University Teachers.

History was Bob's passion and he quickly established a reputation as an outstanding tutor, teacher and communicator, enthusing generations of PGCE students. Bob was recognised for his unique teaching philosophy, believing that teachers should bring history to life in the classroom, guiding students to use their imagination to interpret evidence of the past in the present. The needs of his students always came first and he could often be found leading groups around the city and surrounding area, bringing history and the modern day together. His passion for excellent teaching was also reflected in his work as an OFSTED Inspector of Schools.

Bob was a social historian and author of over 30 books, ranging from popular local history to academic teaching resources. He was the UK's historian for the "Illustrated History of Europe" (1992), authored by historians from each of the (then) twelve member states of the EU, which is still in print. He was the founding editor of the Historical Association's journal *The Historian* for ten years. His "Handling History" kits and "Openings in History" books were ground-breaking teacher resources; these – and his many subsequent publications during the 1980s and 1990s – can still be found in classrooms today.

Bob gave frequent public lectures on campus and across the country. He was history consultant for the Yorkshire TV series *How We Used to Live*. He was active in local history groups, illustrated, for example, in his book "Wetherby – The History of a Yorkshire Market Town" produced with the Wetherby Historical Trust.

In the late 1970s-early 80s, Bob was called upon annually by the University to give lectures at the Leeds Playhouse to over 3000 new students. He was a legendary performer and he loved this event, in which he introduced new students to the history and culture of Leeds and Yorkshire.

Bob will be remembered by colleagues as an inspiring educator whose influence lives on through his students.

Due to current restrictions there will be a private funeral on 16th February 2021; a celebration of Bob's life as a memorial will be arranged when circumstances allow.