

## International Shakespeare on the Road team visits Tulane

July 14, 2014 8:45 AM Hope Barnard  
newwave@tulane.edu



Paul Edmondson, left, of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and Paul Prescott of the University of Warwick discuss Shakespeare across America with an audience in the Lupin Theatre at Tulane University. (Photo by Cheryl Gerber)

Sixty days. 25 states. 39 productions. 10,000 miles. A team of international Shakespeare scholars and connoisseurs from the University of Warwick, Misfit Inc., and the [Shakespeare Birthplace Trust](#) visited Tulane University on Thursday (July 10) as the second stop on an epic road trip to visit and document 14 Shakespeare Festivals across North America.

Their mission involves social media platforms using #BardintheUSA and a live digital documentary ([shakespeareontheroad.com](http://shakespeareontheroad.com)), updated daily with photos and interviews with Shakespeare Festival performers, producers and audiences, with an upcoming book, *Bard in the USA*, and a radio documentary.

Paul Edmondson of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust calls the project a “reverse pilgrimage” from Stratford-upon-Avon, England, to the American communities that have embraced and grown Shakespeare's legacy.

Each member of the international Shakespeare on the Road team can pinpoint the moment Shakespeare first had a personal impact ? through a high school basketball coach, an inspirational teacher, a line from *Romeo and Juliet*. They describe breaking through to understanding the emotional, human meaning behind Shakespeare's beautiful poetry as an “empowering” experience they feel compelled to share.

Paul Prescott of the University of Warwick is quick to emphasize that this is “not a story about the productions; it's about how the productions get made, and why.” Asked what prompted them to undertake a project of such phenomenal scope, Prescott smiles and says, “it's a story that needs to be told, and you only live once!”

The group is collecting archival material from each festival for a special collection at Shakespeare Birthplace's public library.

At the Tulane event, Shakespeare on the Road presented the [New Orleans Shakespeare Festival at Tulane](#) with a plaque, carved from a Cypress tree that grew in the garden of Shakespeare's birthplace, in honor of the Tulane troupe's service to New Orleans. The local Shakespeare Festival also produces a [Shakespeare on the Road program](#).

*Hope Barnard graduated from Tulane in 2012 with a B.A. in English and theatre. She is a freelance writer and actress living in New Orleans.*