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Coffee shop owner pens coffee book

OXFORD – Former Miami University history professor Robert Thurston spent more than five years researching, interviewing and writing his book – *Coffee: A Comprehensive Guide to the Bean, the Beverage, and the Industry*.

Thurston, 64, traveled to seven different coffee-producing countries to gather multiple perspectives on the industry he has been a “fanatic” about for over 20 years, he said.

“This is a book that anyone can read, even those who aren’t fully interested in coffee would enjoy it,” said Thurston, whose book was published Oct. 16. “It covers a variety of subjects.”

The book has many different insights and authors, from coffee specialist George Howell to Smithsonian Project leader Robert Rice. Thurston also does a number of articles in the book.

“Everything there is to know about coffee is in this book,” Thurston said. “There’s anything from the health effects of coffee, the effect of climate change on coffee, and the production of good coffee.

Those are only a few things that we covered.”

Thurston had the idea for the book in 2007, but didn’t think he alone was capable of writing such a book. He wanted to organize a conference where people from all around the world could come and give their ideas. Anyone involved in the coffee industry was invited, including farmers, academics, and other coffee people.

The conference was eventually held in October 2008 and was a huge success. Thurston had the insight he needed.

“I had so many different ideas that it took me almost five years to write the book,” Thurston said. “I had so many topics to cover and so many authors to get in touch with.”

The book also includes some discussion about specialty coffee, coffee from a known origin that also brings a higher quality than most coffees, and how it differs from most other coffees sold over the counter, Thurston said. This specialty coffee is sold by Thurston at Oxford Coffee Company located on Lynn Avenue.

Thurston’s daughter and Miami University graduate Lara, 23, worked with her father on the book by taking photographs and illustrations. She believes the book was worth the hard work her father put into it over the

years.

“It’s very intensive when compared to other coffee books,” she said. “Other books usually focus on one aspect and this book covers so many different topics.”

Thurston also writes about organic coffee and taking a more hands-on approach to coffee making in the United States.

“With the coffee shop I opened, I wanted to see the Oxford community in a different way after many years of teaching,” Thurston said. “I think people really appreciate the coffee we hand-roast and serve every day.”