



# Historically Speaking

The Department of History Newsletter  
A University Exemplary Department

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 VirginiaTech  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute  
and  
State University

## From the Chair

Janus was the Roman god of gates, doors, beginnings, and endings. He was often shown with two faces — one looking forward, the other looking back, and he gave his name to January — a month in which we often find ourselves looking both backward and forward as we finish one year and begin the next. January, therefore, seems an especially appropriate time to be sending out this issue of our newsletter because it highlights elements from both the past and the future of the department.

Bill Mackie was a charter member of Virginia Tech's Department of History; in fact, he began teaching at Tech before the school even *had* a Department of History. By the time I arrived, in 1981, he was an institution and a wonderful example of what teaching in the department had been until then. He was a gifted speaker who could hold the attention of a large class with nothing but his voice, but his greatest teaching tool may have been the door to his office. He had a massive collection of newspaper articles and *New Yorker* cartoons stretching back to the 1940s, and whenever he taught World War II he hung a selection on his door that changed as the quarter progressed. They were a marvelous tool for helping a new generation understand an earlier era.

Bill Mackie retired before computers revolutionized education, and I don't know what he would have made of project like the *Digital History Reader*, but if Bill represents one face of Janus, the *Digital History Reader* is another. The *DHR* is one of several projects underway in



**Daniel B. Thorp, Department Chair**

the department that show where we and the profession will be heading in the future. It begins with document-based historical scholarship but uses a variety of digital formats to present that scholarship on line rather than in print or a lecture. None of us believes that books or professors either one are about to disappear, but we do recognize that computers have changed forever the model of scholarship and teaching that Bill Mackie personified.

The fact that we love history doesn't mean we ignore the future, and like Janus, we look both backward and forward in an effort to provide our students and the broader public an accessible, engaging, and informative understanding of the how we got where we are and where to go from here.

## ★ Faculty in the News ★

**Linda Arnold**, professor, invited by the directors at two Mexican archives to create electronic catalogues, has produced PDF searchable catalogues for the Archbishops' Historical Archive and for the Federal District Historical Archive. With the urging of the staff in the reference center at the national archive in Mexico City, she has also created a PDF searchable catalogue for all the catalogued record sets in that repository. Additionally, she has recently created a PDF catalogue for the manuscript section in the Mexican National Library.

**Mark V. Barrow, Jr.**, associate professor, has won the 2006 Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching. Barrow has created seven new courses for the history department, STS, and University Honors, including a course on the history of modern biology. He has also co-authored a series of innovative, web-based problem solving modules for introductory American history with the support of two grants.

**Thomas E. Ewing**, funded by a \$648,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education, a group of 38 K-12 Montgomery County teachers, concluded a three-year professional development opportunity designed by faculty in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences to increase student achievement in traditional American history. Organized by **Tom Ewing**, associate professor of history, and **David Hicks**, associate professor in the School of Education, the partnership has provided the opportunity for teachers to create content-rich lesson plans that include primary and secondary source materials; test questions, rubrics, and high impact motivational hooks and strategies to engage students. These teacher-created materials will be included in an American History Database System, which is being created as part of this project. The database will serve as the project's primary vehicle for achieving replication and sustainability. "In our evaluations, teachers have noted appreciation for the range of topics and various approaches to teaching presented by historians," said Ewing.

**Richard Hirsh**, professor, is a member of the Virginia Tech Consortium on Energy Restructuring, with faculty members and graduate students in three colleges. He has worked on the utility system for more than two decades and has

published two books on the subject. Among other responsibilities, the Consortium for Energy Restructuring is assembling an interdisciplinary minor in energy management at Virginia Tech. It is intended to serve as a model for other universities and to educate professionals in the changing energy industry.

**Amy Nelson**, associate professor, **Kathleen Jones**, associate professor, and **Daniel Thorp**, associate professor and department chair, were recognized for their efforts to improve departmental climate for women during the 2006 Advancing Women Award ceremony on September 21<sup>st</sup>. Presented annually since 1995, the Advancing Women Award recognizes individuals who make a difference in support of women at Virginia Tech.

**William Ochsenwald** has delivered a number of talks recently on various aspects of the history of the modern Middle East. He spoke at Radford University on "Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Revival," at Washington and Lee on "Globalization and the Middle East," and at Roanoke College on "Contemporary Crises in the Middle East." He was also interviewed by German Public Television for a documentary on World War I in the Middle East.

**James I. Robertson, Jr.**, Alumni Distinguished Professor, and executive director of the university's Virginia Center for Civil War Studies, has been appointed as a charter member of the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission by the Virginia Senate.

**Brett Shadle** published in Aug: "Girl Cases": Marriage Disputes and Colonialism in Gusiiland, Kenya, 1890-1970.

**Peter Wallenstein**, associate professor, has encouraged and utilized undergraduate research for years. Now, thanks in part to his efforts, there is a home for undergraduate research at Virginia Tech. Dr. Wallenstein served on the Undergraduate Research Faculty Committee with Gena Chandler (English), Bradley Hertel (Sociology), Kee Jeong Kim (Human Development), and Diana Ridgwell (the college's director of student development), to establish, arguably, one of the most comprehensive undergraduate research programs at the university. The new institute in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences will offer small grants (from \$300-\$1000) for undergraduates and their mentors to obtain books or computer programs they need for their research projects

Faculty Continued...

or to travel to conferences to present their work. The institute will be located in 232 Wallace Hall. The web site may be accessed at <http://www.uri.clahs.vt.edu>.

## Obituary

**William Ernest Mackie**, associate professor emeritus, 79, of Blacksburg, VA, died October 4, 2006 after an extended illness. He was born August 3, 1927 and was a native of Chapel Hill, N.C. He received his Bachelor's and Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina, where he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and served as student body president in 1950. After service in the United States Navy, he taught British and European history at Virginia Tech from 1959 until his retirement in 1992. Active at many levels of the university, Dr. Mackie served on the university council, faculty senate, and twice as chair of the Department of History. He introduced and taught a popular course on the second world war era. Throughout his career, Dr. Mackie was a strong advocate of innovative undergraduate education and the importance of faculty accessibility to students. In the 1960s and 1970s many students enjoyed the hospitality and spirited conversation of regular Thursday night "Open House" provided by Bill and his wife, Sally, at their home. A long time member of Christ Episcopal Church, he served on the Vestry and for many years sang in the choir. He was a lover and supporter of the arts, particularly symphonic music and opera. Dr. Mackie is survived by his wife of 56 years, Sallie Osborne Mackie, and two daughters, Christy Mackie and Linda Griggs, two grandchildren and a niece. Dr. Mackie will be especially remembered for his kind disposition, his quiet dignity, his wise counsel, and his ability to connect most anything to an appropriate lyric from a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta.



## Student News



Thirty-two history majors graduated in December 2006. Those students graduating with honors included **Benjamin Baldwin** (magna cum laude), **Jason Baska** (magna cum laude), **Stephen Hughes** (magna cum laude), **Allison Ribaldo** (cum laude), and **Steven Shapiro** (cum laude).

**Phi Alpha Theta** inducted seven new members on November 30. The new members are **Michael Andrew Berger**, **Thomas Michael Casey**, **Benjamin E. Chinsky**, **Daniel C. Dresch**, **Craig Andrew Mackey**, **John Christian Pearson**, and **Sarah Kyle Peters**.



## Alumni News



**Colonel Christopher L. Rears**, U.S. Marines, retired ('69) has been named Director of Operations Management for Balford Farms in Burlington, New Jersey. Balford Farms is a privately-held wholesale distributor of dairy products and specialty foods serving selected market areas in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland. Chris was previously Director of Human Resources for Balford from June 2000 until his promotion in October 2006. He holds a M.A. in management and lives with his wife, Beverly, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

**Lyle E. Browning** ('71) acquired Heite Consulting Inc., a cultural resource management firm located in Camden, DE.

**Brian R. Brown** ('74) was recognized in *Business North Carolina* magazine as a "Legal Elite" tax/estate planning in Raleigh, NC.

**Hugh J. Treacy** (B.A. '75; M.A. '77) earned an M.S. in Library Science from UNC Chapel Hill and worked for two years as a librarian at Creighton University in Omaha, NE and five years at Christopher Newport College in Newport News, VA. He moved to southern California in 1986, where he worked as a reference librarian at California State University, Fullerton for two years. From 1988-1991, Hugh attended law school at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. With his J.D., he

Alumni continued...

returned to librarianship and worked for eleven years as Public Services Librarian for the Orange County Public Law Library in Santa Ana, CA. Since 2002, he has been the Associate Director of the Library at Whittier College School of Law in Costa Mesa, CA.

**Reed Miller** ('88) has begun an M.A. program in special education, secondary school level at George Washington University. He was a business journalist at Phillips Business information and United Communications Group for seven years, becoming a senior editor for "Fiber Optics News," "Broadband Networking News," and "ISDN News." He completed an M.A. in modern American history in 1998 at James Madison University and wrote a thesis entitled, "Buried a Soldier: U.S. Foreign Policy Relations And The Life Of William Jennings Bryan." Reed is now working on two books when not occupied by his new graduate work.

**Katrina Workman Berger** ('89) completed her law degree in 1993 and has worked for both the State Attorney's Office and the Office of the Public Defender in Key West, Florida. She also worked for the State of Florida's Office of the Attorney General in Tampa, Florida. In 1998, she gave up the practice of criminal law and pursued a career as a Special Agent with the U.S. Customs Service. As a result of 9/11, U.S. Customs merged with INS under newly formed Department of Homeland Security and became the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (DHS/ICE). She has been promoted and is currently an Assistant Special Agent in Charge with the DHS/ICE, in the New Orleans Office. She is responsible for the operations of all DHS/ICE offices in Louisiana outside of the New Orleans area as well as all the operations in the DHS/ICE offices in the State of Arkansas. She is working on her Master's degree in Criminal Justice at Loyola University, in New Orleans, and she will graduate in December 2006.

**P. Neil Meier** (M.A. '90) has recently been promoted to Associate Provost for Administration and Dean of Enrollment for Union Institute & University, Montpelier, Vermont.

**Charles C. Sensabaugh** ('92) is a master sargeant in the U.S. Army Reserve. He lives in Centreville, VA.

**Barrett F. Warner** ('93) is assistant manager for Bedford, VA.

**John C. Bunin** ('95) received a National Council for Geographic Education's Distinguished Teaching Achievement Award in Afton, VA.

**Heather Gagnon** (M.A. '97) is teaching history and political science at Clark College in Vancouver, WA. She states "Imagine my surprise when I received my new American History text by Eric Foner, and Daniel Thorp was listed in the acknowledgments as someone who had helped to critique the text. It's sometimes good to remember what a small and insular world we live in."

**Edward J. Maggio** Esq., J.D. ('99) was recently appointed director of the NYIT (New York Institute of Technology) Center for Security, Espionage and Emergency Response which has been busy holding events and working on an upcoming training project with the U.N. Ed states "if any students are interested in learning about the field of academia, or need help in the areas of research, writing/publishing, or are interested in attending any of our NYIT events or being involved in counter-terrorism activities, they are more than welcome to contact me ([emaggio@nyit.edu](mailto:emaggio@nyit.edu)).

**Paul F. Fischer** ('99) earned an M.S. and is chief engineer aboard the USS Thach in San Diego, CA.

**Jason Neil Aker** ('01) has completed 90 hours of real estate appraisal course work from Mosley-Dickinson Academy of Real Estate in Roanoke, VA. In May 2006 Jason became a fully licensed residential appraiser in the Commonwealth of Virginia. In July 2006 he became the first ever county appraiser for Carroll county. Jason states that "a degree in history has been a great asset for me as an appraiser. Real estate appraisals require a tremendous amount of research. Thanks to my history classes at Tech, I am very comfortable with performing the research that is required of me in my job. I would like to send a special thanks to Dr. Linda Arnold and Dr. Peter Wallenstein because their research classes are the ones that I have found most beneficial in my career."

**Scott Krogh** ('02) is working at Jamestown Settlement in Williamsburg, VA. He is an interpreter with the ships. The *Susan Constant*, *Godspeed* and *Discovery* – re-creations of three ships that brought English colonists to Virginia in 1607 –

are moored at Jamestown Settlement's pier for visitors to explore. <http://www.historyisfun.org/>

**Nicholas Xidon** ('02) is currently working for a consulting firm in the Washington, D.C. area. In a recent email to his historical methods professor, Richard Hirsh, Nick comments, "it is my pleasure to let you know that I learned so much in your methods class. I am a better writer today because of methods."

**Jonathan A. Noyalas** (M.A. '03) is a history professor at Lord Fairfax Community College in Middletown, VA where he also serves as Director of the College's Institute of Culture & History. In May 2006 he celebrated the publication of his second book *My Will is Absolute Law: A Biography of Union General Robert H. Milroy* published by McFarland. Various institutions throughout the country are using this biography to examine occupation and the enforcement of emancipation. He also served as editor and contributing author for the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation's "If this Valley is Lost, Virginia is Lost": Stonewall Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign. He is currently collaborating on a paper/article with Shenandoah University Art History professor Dr. Geraldine Keifer on the interpretation, meaning, and memory of Gen. Philip H. Sheridan's ride immortalized in art and poetry by Thomas Buchanan Read.

He has also had several articles published on Civil War topics in America's Civil War over the past year and a half.

**Joseph Pierro** (M.A. '04) has signed a contract to publish his master's thesis "Everything in My Power: Harry S. Truman and the Fight Against Racial Discrimination" with Lexington Books, a division of Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

**Matthew Krogh** (B.A. '04, M.A. '06) is the site manager of the Perquimans County Restoration Association and the Newbold-White House, a 1730s Quaker Home in Hertford, NC. The website is <http://www.newboldwhitehouse.com>. Matt says "I just made it through my first big event of the year, Hearth and Harvest Festival which had crafters, re-enactors, guided tours, children's activities, sheep, raffles, food, etc. It went very well overall and everyone was generally satisfied with it. Next I have the colonial Christmas event to plan. We are also holding a gala in November."

**W. Kirk Wood** (M.A., 1969) after earning his masters degree, served in the U. S. Army until 1971. He then earned a Ph.D. in history at the University of South Carolina (1978) with a dissertation is entitled "The Union of the States: A Study of Radical Whig-Republican Ideology and its Influence upon the

## Please Help the Department Evaluate Itself

Every decade or so, the University engages in Outcomes Assessment – an attempt to measure the impact it has on students passing through its doors. As part of that process, the History Department has posted an on-line questionnaire and would like as many of our graduates as possible to respond to it. It will only take a few minutes and will help the department tremendously. We have few other ways of soliciting feedback from our graduates, but such feedback is critical to the state's understanding of what it is we do and how well we do it.

So please go to <https://survey.vt.edu/survey/entry.jsp?id=1132341816863> and take a few minutes to offer your assessment of the department and its program.

Nation and the South, 1776-1861.” He has published one book, *A Northern Daughter and A Southern Wife* (1976), and numerous articles and has recently finished a multi-volume study of links between the American Revolution and Constitutional Convention and later campaigns for nullification and secession. He has been a Professor of History at Alabama State University since 1986 and was recently named to the advisory board of the journal *Southern Studies*.

**Deanna Fisher** ('05) is an electronic warfare officer aboard the USS Stout.

**Evan Noble** (M.A. '06) has been chosen as this year's winner of the William Preston Society's Gold Watch Award as the Outstanding Master's Thesis in the Humanities and Fine Arts for Virginia Tech in 2006-07. His thesis will also be submitted to the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools for the 2007 Masters Theses Awards in the Humanities and Fine Arts

category. Evan wrote his thesis, “Marshall Plan Films and Americanization,” under the direction of Amy Nelson, Tom Ewing, and Rob Stephens.

**Seth Woodard** (M.A. '06) is publishing an epilogue in the second revised edition of Thomas J. Schoenbaum's “The New river Controversy” for McFarland Publishers. He is also acting as corresponding author for the book which is scheduled to be published in early 2007. Seth has written an article for the September edition of the “Appalachian Voice” about the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Blue Ridge Project's defeat.

**David Duvigneaud** ('06) is working as a relationship banker with BB&T.



### Generosity begins at your academic home. . .

A gift to the History Department can be instrumental in supporting our undergraduate and graduate programs, particularly in these tight budget times. A modest contribution can fund student scholarships here and abroad, graduate student fellowships, and our exciting new program initiatives.

Please contact our chair, Daniel Thorp at [wachau@vt.edu](mailto:wachau@vt.edu), when you submit information about your gift. With your permission, we will list the contributors under the following categories:

- Friends: Up to \$250
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- Patrons: Up to \$5,000
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If you are interested in contributing a larger gift, you should speak directly with Evan K. Bohnen, Director of Development for the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences (540-231-8734 or [ebohnen@vt.edu](mailto:ebohnen@vt.edu))

## Virginia Tech Historians Complete Digital History Reader Project

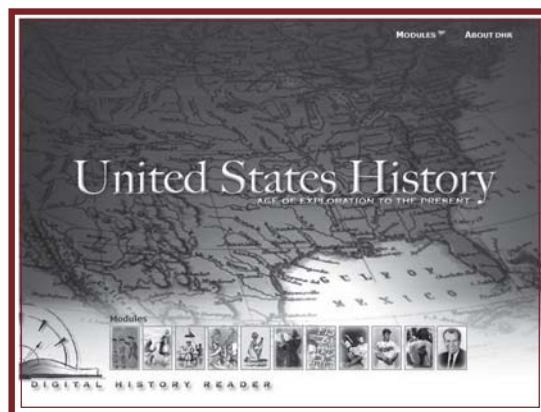
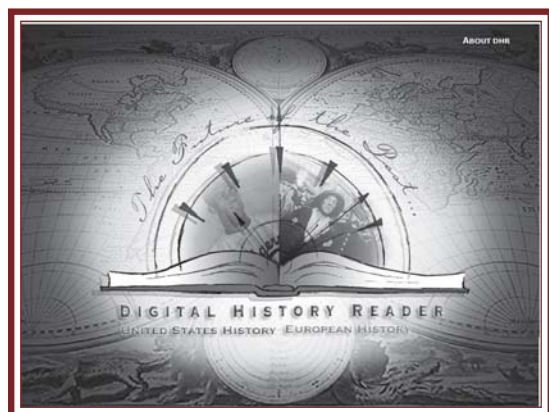
The *Digital History Reader* offers intellectually engaging, user-friendly, and easily accessible *digital* instructional materials in United States and European history. By exploring compelling historical questions, students learn to use source materials to develop their own conclusions. Each module includes six sections: the **Introduction** defines the historical questions and learning objectives; the **Context** provides a narrative framework to aid the students in understanding the primary documents; the **Evidence** includes textual, visual, audio, and video source materials; the **Assignments** evaluate comprehension and suggest writing and classroom exercises; the **Conclusion** integrates the evidence with the historical questions; and finally, the **Resources** direct students to additional materials relevant to the topic.

The *Digital History Reader* was funded by an Education grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and contributions from the Department of History and the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences. History Department Alumni Michael Snyder, with Kristi Snyder, and Ken Noe made financial donations to the project. Virginia Tech faculty participants included: Tom Ewing (Project Director);

Robert Stephens; Marian Mollin; David Hicks; Amy Nelson; Hayward “Woody” Farrar; Kathleen Jones; Mark V. Barrow Jr.; Daniel B. Thorp; C. Edward Watson; Jane Lehr. Heather Gumbert and Regan Shelton contributed to the project by testing out the modules in their classrooms. History M.A. students Anne Greenwood, Jared Bond, Evan Noble, Terry Burcin, and Tara Ashley worked on this project.

*Digital History Reader* modules cover the following topics: **United States History:** Native Americans after 1492; Slavery in Virginia; American Revolution, Abolitionism and Women’s rights; Industrialization in the 1870s; Strikes in the Depression; Jackie Robinson and Civil Rights; Campus politics in the 1960s; and Richard Nixon. **European History:** Urbanization and Perceptions of Nature; Women’s Suffrage; the Russian Revolution; the Great Depression; the 1968 revolt; and Demographics and Immigration.

By presenting a more sophisticated range of responses to historical questions, students learn to consider the power that individuals have to make choices and effect change, thus deepening their understanding of the past. All *Digital History Reader* materials are freely available for public use at: [www.dhr.history.edu](http://www.dhr.history.edu).



**We Want To Hear From You!**

Please send updates on your activities to [jafranci@vt.edu](mailto:jafranci@vt.edu) or to the Department of History  
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Our newsletter will continue to feature articles and notes about our History Department alumni/alumae. We would appreciate information about what you have been doing since leaving Virginia Tech. Please send your name, degree, email, occupation and other related information to the Department of History, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061-0117.

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