



Historically Speaking

*The Department of History Newsletter
A University Exemplary Department*

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From the Chair

Since our last newsletter, the History Department has experienced a whirlwind of changes. Perhaps most noticeable to those outside the department, James I. “Bud” Robertson, Jr., decided to retire after 44 years of service. Details about his remarkable career are included below in a separate story. Suffice it to say here that Bud managed to touch the lives not only of countless students but also many members of the broader public through his teaching, writing, speaking, popular radio series, and consultation on documentaries about the American Civil War. William “Jack” Davis has graciously agreed to serve as Interim Director of the Virginia Center for Civil War Studies, which Bud founded over a decade ago, while the Center continues to raise funds for an endowed chair in Bud’s name. The successful completion of that campaign will serve as a fitting tribute to a man who did much to foster appreciation of a conflict that continues to shape our nation.

Even as Bud was stepping down, though, the department was in the midst of hiring two new faculty members, David Cline and LaDale Winling, who will continue his legacy of making history come alive for the broader public. For a number of years, we have talked about giving more emphasis to Public History, which not only attempts to make traditional academic history widely accessible but also seeks to forge alliances with a variety of constituencies to produce that history. We finally took the plunge last spring, when we were granted the opportunity to hire not just one, but two young public historians. David and Dale not only bring significant experience and acclaim in the field but also specialize in areas that complement each other and our existing faculty. Expect to see a raft of new classes in this exciting new subfield of history and closer relationships with a number of local museums and historical societies that will provide opportunities for internships and entry-level jobs for our students.

While we have long known we have a top-notch faculty in our department, I fear that word has leaked



Mark V. Barrow, Jr., Department Chair

out to the rest of the university, which has been actively recruiting them for key posts throughout Virginia Tech. Heather Gumbert and Robert Stephens have been tapped to become faculty leaders of the new Honors Residential College, which has been established in the newly renovated East Ambler Johnston. Tom Ewing has been selected as Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences. And Dan Thorp has been appointed as the full-time Director of the Curriculum for Liberal Education in the Division of Undergraduate Education. Although we will miss seeing as much of these faculty as we have in the past, we are also quite proud of the important new work they are doing for the university.

The remainder of this newsletter touches on additional changes (and accomplishments) in the department over the past year, including the launching of a new online journal for undergraduate research (the *Virginia Tech Undergraduate Historical Review*), the creation of a new Facebook page, and the appointment of a new Director of Graduate Studies (Kathleen Jones), a new Associate Chair (Trudy Becker), and a new Chair (yours truly). Amidst these many changes, though, one thing remains constant. Our faculty, staff, students, and alumni share a strong sense of community, an intense commitment to excellence, and a fervent belief that knowledge of the past is critical both for its own sake and for the light it sheds on the present.



Faculty News

*Retirement***Alumni Distinguished Professor, James I. Robertson, Jr., retires and is honored with emeritus status**

James “Bud” Robertson Jr., Alumni Distinguished Professor of History in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences at Virginia Tech, has been conferred the “Alumni Distinguished Professor Emeritus” title by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors.

A member of the Virginia Tech community since 1967, Robertson brought the American Civil War to life not only for thousands of students in his popular classes, but also for millions of others through his award-winning books, frequent television appearances, popular radio essays, and effective

outreach and public service. He was a captivating teacher who offered the nation’s largest Civil War course to an average of 300 students per semester. It is estimated that more than 22,000 Virginia Tech students took a course from Robertson during his 44-year career.

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the American Civil War, President John F. Kennedy asked Robertson to serve as executive director of the United States Civil War Centennial Commission. On the 150th anniversary of that war, he was called upon again to serve as a member of the executive committee of the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission.



Robertson was founding executive director of the Virginia Center for Civil War Studies, which from its beginning in 1999, sought to educate the public, particularly youth, about the causes and consequences of one of the nation’s most momentous conflicts.

While at Virginia Tech, Robertson compiled one of the nation’s largest collections of Civil War publications for the Virginia Tech University Libraries. He utilized those and other materials as the author or editor of more than 20 books on the American Civil War, including a definitive



biography of General Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson that became an important source for the movie, *Gods and Generals*, for which he served as historical consultant.

In addition, he was the executive producer of *Virginia in the Civil War: A Sesquicentennial Remembrance*, a DVD which was distributed free of charge to every school and library in the Commonwealth.

He held the C. P. “Sally” Miles Professorship at Virginia Tech beginning from 1976 until his appointment as Alumni Distinguished Professor in 1992. Robertson received his bachelor’s degree from Randolph-Macon College, and a master’s degree and Ph.D. from Emory University.

Although thousands of Tech students agree, they’re not the only ones who will feel a void. “I’m going to miss the classroom,” Robertson said. “A professor is as young as his students if he has the right attitude.”

See our departmental Facebook page for pictures of Dr. Robertson’s last lecture on May 4, 2011.

Other Faculty News

Heather Gumbert and Robert Stephens named leaders of Virginia Tech's first residential college



Heather Gumbert, assistant professor, and Robert Stephens, associate professor, have been chosen to lead the first step in the university's residential college initiative as faculty principals of the Honors Residential College at East Ambler Johnston Hall.

Virginia Tech's first residential college opened this fall for 330 University Honors students. In fall 2012, a second residential college in West Ambler Johnston Hall will open, providing a similar experience for students from all areas of the university. "We have found the perfect people to help launch this new residential community," said Frank Shushok, associate vice president for student affairs. "Both are impassioned educators with a profound vision for how integrated learning in the residential context can strengthen undergraduate education for all. Heather Gumbert experienced a residential college as an undergraduate and brings that valuable experience as well."

As faculty principals responsible for setting the vision for the intellectual climate of the residential college, Gumbert and Stephens facilitate lectures, social activities, and educational programs to bring faculty and representatives from across the university and wider world into the residential college while building a strong sense of community among residents. Students in the residential college represent all ages and disciplines in order to foster a diverse intellectual community.

"Heather and I are thrilled and honored to be chosen to work with the honors students to build a new model for living and learning at Virginia Tech," said Stephens. "The Honors Residential College offers a unique opportunity to build community, cultivate life-long learning, stimulate a vibrant intellectual atmosphere, and promote an ethos based in service. Throughout this process, we have been enormously impressed by the commitment and enthusiasm for this new venture from students, Residential Life, the honors program, and the administration."

"Rob and Heather have a long history with honors," said Terry Papillon, director of University Honors. "Both have taught honors colloquia and both have worked in a variety of ways with the program. I am so delighted that they will take on this new role that will serve University Honors students in such a profound way."

Michael Alexander won the Sporn Award for Teaching Introductory Subjects. Sponsored by the Center for Instructional Development and Educational Research and the Virginia Tech Academy for Teaching Excellence, the Sporn Award is presented annually to a Virginia Tech faculty member to recognize excellence in teaching introductory-level courses. Nominations are received from students, and recipients are selected by a committee comprised of student representatives from Omicron Delta Kappa and Golden Key honor societies and a faculty advisor who was the previous year's award winner. Recipients are awarded a \$2,000 cash prize and are inducted into the university's Academy of Teaching Excellence. The award was established in memory of Dr. and Mrs. Philip J. Sporn. Dr. Sporn was a Virginia Tech alumnus and president and chief executive officer of American Electric Power Company.

Linda Arnold has published a book chapter and an encyclopedia article: "La Suprema Corte de Justicia. Entre el proyecto liberal y la visión conservador del país: la clausura de la Suprema Corte y la ley de justicia de 1855." In *Los caminos de la justicia en México, 1810-2010* (México: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010): 141-157. And "Juicios verbales y conciliatorios." In *Diccionario histórico judicial en México: ideas e instituciones*. 3 vols. (México: Suprema Corte de la Nación, 2010): Vol. 2, 910-919.

Mark Barrow published "The Specter of Extinction: Taking a Long View of Species Loss," in *Environmental History* 16, no. 3 (July 2011): 428-32; "The Alligator's Allure: Changing Perceptions of a Charismatic Carnivore" in Dorothee Brantz, ed., *Beastly Natures: Animals, Humans, and the Study of History* (University of Virginia Press, 2010); and "On the Trail of the Ivory-Bill: Field Science, Local Knowledge, and the Struggle to Save Endangered Species," in Jeremy Vetter, ed., *Knowing Global Environments: New Historical Perspectives on the Field Sciences* (Rutgers University Press, 2011).

Barrow's second book *Nature's Ghosts: Confronting Extinction from the Age of Jefferson to the Age of Ecology* was selected as a Choice Outstanding Academic Title for 2010. Every year, the editors of *Choice* magazine recognize the most significant print and electronic works from among the 7,000 reviewed during the previous calendar year. Appearing annually in the January issue, this prestigious list of publications reflects the best in scholarly titles.

Trudy Harrington Becker has joined the History Department to serve as Associate Chair. She replaces **Marian Mollin**, who did an excellent job of leading our undergraduate program for three of the last four years. Many of you will know Trudy from her popular class, Hist 1024: Ancient History, which has grown to become the largest history course on campus due to the knowledge, passion, and excitement she brings to the classroom. In addition to joining our department, Trudy was also

awarded this year's CLAHS Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research Mentoring.

Glenn Bugh has received a Humanities Summer Stipend to continue archival research on cavalry in Hellenistic Athens and Renaissance Venice. He has also been elected Chair of the Managing Committee for the American Research Center in Sofia (ARCS), where he will be working closely with the Board of Trustees and the Director of ARCS in Sofia, Bulgaria, to provide leadership over all the programmatic and personnel needs of the Center. Glenn has also won the CLAHS International Initiatives Award for the outstanding work he has done at and for Riva, the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, the American Research School in Sofia, the Smithsonian Institution, and others.

Beverly Bunch-Lyons has been selected to evaluate applications for the Bill and Melinda Gates Millennium Scholarship Award. This highly selective scholarship provides full tuition for outstanding minority students planning to attend a college or university. Evaluators are chosen by a staff member of the Gates Foundation, and higher education administrators who work with the Gates Foundation, and the United Negro College Fund. Approximately 80 evaluators from higher education institutions across the United States participate in the selection process.

A review of **Jack Davis'** most recent book, *The Rogue Republic*, in the *Wall Street Journal* can be found at:

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703806304576237091694779206.html?mod=ITP_opinion_0

Roger Ekirch's book, *Birthingright: The True Story that Inspired Kidnapped*, was nominated for the "People's Choice Award" by the Library of Virginia. Readers vote for the winner, who with the four other nominees, is feted at an awards ceremony at the Library of Virginia in Richmond, VA. Also, the publisher W.W. Norton has released a paperback version of Roger's book, just over a year after the hardbound version was published.

Tom Ewing was the winner of this year's Sturm Research Award, which is granted annually by the local Phi Beta Kappa chapter. Tom won the award for his new book, *Separate Schools: Gender, Policy, and Practice in Postwar Soviet Education* (Northern Illinois University Press, 2010), which the selection committee described as a meticulously researched scholarly study—and also a compelling page-turner. Ewing's historical and pedagogical account chronicles how in 1943 Stalinist Russia abolished co-education in favor of single-sex schools to reinforce traditional gender roles during wartime, and how popular opinion brought about a return to coeducation in 1954, thus demonstrating how the will of the people can prevail even in a totalitarian society.

In addition, Dr. Ewing was promoted to professor, and he has taken a new position as Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research in the College of Liberal Arts & Human Sciences. He has also published an article entitled "Using Digital Resources to Teach U.S. Policy History in the Middle East" in *Perspectives in History*, a publication of the American Historical Association, the nation's flagship society of professional historians.

Woody Farrar has published a foreword to Kibibi Mack Shelton's book, *Ahead of Her Time in Yesteryear: Geraldine Pierce Zimmerman Comes of Age in a Southern African American Family* (Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 2010).

Heather Gumbert has received a 2011-12 Niles Faculty Fellowship from the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences. Dr. Gumbert also published a chapter in a recent anthology on Soviet space exploration and culture: "Cold War Theaters: Cosmonaut Titov at the Berlin Wall," in James T. Andrews and Asif Siddiqi, eds., *Into the Cosmos. Space Exploration and Soviet Culture* (Pittsburgh University Press, 2011), and a second chapter "Constructing a Socialist Landmark: The Berlin Television Tower" in *Berlin: Divided City*, eds. Sabine Hake and Philip Broadbent (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010)

Matt Heaton was selected to participate in the National History Center's sixth international seminar on decolonization, held July 11 through August 7, 2011, in Washington, D.C. The seminar, which was supported by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, is cosponsored by the American Historical Association and the John W. Kluge Center of the Library of Congress.

Richard Hirsh was selected as Scholar of the Week by the Office of the Vice President for Research at Virginia Tech. He also published "Historians of Technology in the Real World: Reflections on the Pursuit of Policy-Oriented History," *Technology and Culture* 52 (January 2011): 6-20; and an op-ed piece for the *Roanoke Times*, "Government Regulations Aren't All Bad," that can be found at: <http://www.roanoke.com/editorials/commentary/wb/284715>.

Kathleen Jones was appointed as the Director of Graduate Studies in the History Department. She replaces **Amy Nelson**, who has ably served in that office for the past three years. As a frequent teacher of graduate courses, a mentor of numerous graduate students, and previous Director of Graduate Studies, Kathleen brings a wealth of experience to this important office.

Amy Nelson, published co-edited book, *Other Animals: Beyond the Human in Russian Culture and History* published by the University of Pittsburgh Press. Amy not only co-edited the book (w/ her colleague at Bates College, Jane Costlow), but also contributed a chapter, "The Body of the Beast: Animal Protection and Anticruelty Legislation in Imperial Russia." She and Jane Costlow also organized the 2007 international conference that became the impetus for this publication.

Amy also published chapters in two recent anthologies: "Cold War Celebrity and The Courageous Canine Scout: The Life and Times of Soviet Space Dogs," in James T. Andrews and Asif Siddiqi, eds., *Into the Cosmos. Space Exploration and Soviet Culture* (Pittsburgh University Press, 2011); and "The Legacy of Laika: Celebrity, Sacrifice, and the Soviet Space Dog," in Dorothee Brantz, ed., *Beastly Natures: Animals, Humans, and the Study of History* (University of Virginia Press, 2010). For this and other research accomplishments, she was selected as Scholar of the Week by the Office of Vice President for Research at Virginia Tech.

James I. “Bud” Robertson and **Jack Davis** were featured on the radio show “With Good Reason,” in June. The program, entitled “Horses and Water in the Civil War,” examined the impact of the environment and animals on the outcome of the war.”

Helen Schneider was promoted to associate professor with tenure. Her book, *Keeping the Nation’s House: Domestic Management and the Making of Modern China* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011) was published this past fall. And she is currently serving the second of a two-year fellowship at Oxford University, where she was co-organizer of a workshop “Relief and Reconstruction in Wartime and Postwar China, 1937-1949” held on June 10-11, 2011. Thirteen invited participants, ranging from graduate students to well-established scholars, presented new, primary source-driven research that addresses the significance of social programs, international and domestic organizations, and government social policies in China during and after the Sino-Japanese War of 1937-1945.

Brett Shadle received an OIRED mini grant to support a trip to Kenya this summer. Working with Michele Deramo, of the Center for Student Engagement and Community Partnerships, he is seeking to establish a service-learning project in Kenya. During his time there, he met with prospective service-learning partners and laid the groundwork for the project. Brett also published “Sexual Offences in Kenya Courts, 1960s-2008,” in the *Kenya Law Review* 2 (2008-10) and “White Settlers and the Law in Early Colonial Kenya,” in the *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 4 (2010): 510-24.

Peter Schmitthenner, Associate Professor of History and Chair of Religion and Culture, published “Colonial Hydraulic Projects in South India: Environmental and Cultural Legacy,” *The British Empire and the Natural World: Environmental Encounters in South Asia*, edited by Deepak Kumar, Vinita Damodaran, and Rohan D’Souza (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011), 181-201.

Daniel Thorp has been named the university’s Director of Curriculum for Liberal Education in the Division of Undergraduate Education. As such he offers oversight for the university’s Curriculum for Liberal Education, which provides students with a broad base of knowledge and transferable skills through exposure to multiple disciplines and ways of knowing. Completion of this curriculum is required for every undergraduate student and makes up about 30 percent of a student’s credits toward graduation.

In addition, Dan published “New Zealand and the American Civil War,” in *Pacific Historical Review* (February 2011): 97-130, and he was featured in a recent *Roanoke Times New River Current* story about the discovery in the Montgomery County Courthouse of a marriage register from early 1866, with listings of marriages among freed slaves. The article connects the discovery and restoration of this document to Thorp’s research on the African American community in Montgomery County, as well as the efforts of Christiansburg Institute to preserve and document this history

David Zimring, who has been doing a great job teaching courses for us for several years, successfully defended his dissertation in Charlottesville. The title of his dissertation is: “Crossing the Line: Northern-born Men and Women in the Confederacy.” Also, WVTF broadcast a radio essay by David on the creation of West Virginia.

New Faculty Join The History Department

The Department of History is delighted to announce that **David Cline** and **LaDale Winling** have joined our faculty. David arrived in August 2011, and Dale joined us in January 2012. The addition of these two new colleagues helps us greatly strengthen teaching, research, and outreach in public history at Virginia Tech.



David Cline

David Cline is a public historian and oral historian who specializes in the study of religion and politics in 20th-century social change movements. He received his Ph.D. in U.S. History from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2010 and his M.A. in U.S. History with a certificate in Public History from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 2003. David has worked at the Southern Oral History Program at the University of North Carolina since 2004, and was the Associate Director of the program from 2008 to 2011. He is the author of *Creating Choice: A Community Responds to the Need for Abortion and Birth Control, 1961-1973*, published in 2006 by Palgrave Macmillan.

David worked as a journalist and publicist for a dozen years, and his public history projects have included directing fieldwork on the Long Civil Rights Movement research initiative of the University of North Carolina, interviews for a NPR documentary on the Korean War, work at Historic Deerfield in Deerfield, MA, museum exhibits, large-scale community history projects, and a project documenting the Cherokee Trail of Tears. He is the recipient of a number of fellowships and awards, including a Woodrow Wilson Foundation Charlotte W. Newcombe Dissertation Fellowship in 2008 and a National Council on Public History New Professional Award in 2004. He is currently working on an edited collection of oral histories with African American veterans of the Korean War and on a book on the Student Interracial Ministry, a seminary-based civil rights organization active during the 1960s. His website is located at <http://www.david-cline.com>.

LaDale Winling is an urban and public historian with experience in digital media. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in 2010 and has graduate degrees in urban planning and public history. He is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor of History at Temple University and was previously an instructor at Loyola University Chicago. His research and publications examine the role of American universities in urban development, including a book in progress entitled *Building the Ivory Tower*.

LaDale's public history experience ranges from architectural research with the Historic American Buildings Survey in Washington, D.C., to exhibit development on regional history and educational outreach at The Heritage Museum in southwest Michigan. Since 2008, he has been a co-director of the digital humanities project Classicizing Chicago at Northwestern University, an examination of classical reception in the Midwestern metropolis scheduled to launch in May 2011. For his academic research and public history work he has received support from the Lyndon Johnson Presidential Library and the National Building Museum. His website is located at <http://www.urbanoasis.org>.



LaDale Winling

Obituary: Dr. George Green Shackelford



George Green Shackelford, 89, died on Thursday, November 4, 2010, at Westminster Canterbury of the Blue Ridge in Charlottesville, Virginia. He is survived by his wife, Grace Howard McConnell Shackelford. Professor Emeritus of History from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, where he was on the faculty from 1955 to 1986, he was a graduate of Woodberry Forest School and held three degrees from the University of Virginia. His first teaching job was at Birmingham South-

ern, Birmingham, Alabama, in 1948 until 1949. He attended Columbia University, then worked as a research fellow at the Virginia Historical Society in Richmond before earning his final degree and starting his teaching career as an instructor at VPISU in 1955.

He earned a certificate from the Attingham Summer School to augment his architectural history credentials. He was instrumental in helping to start the restoration of historical Smithfield Plantation in Blacksburg under the auspices of Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities and worked as historical consultant to the Westmoreland Davis Memorial Foundation, Marven Park, Leesburg, Virginia.

He was the author of many journal articles and five books. He was also member of the Virginia Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution from 1987 until 1992. He served as President of the Monticello Association from 1969 until 1971, and as a member of the Board of Advisors of the National Trust for Historical Preservation from 1976 until 1979. He received an award from the Virginia Chapter, American Institute of Architecture in historic preservation in 1985. He had been President of the Southwest Virginia Branch of the English Speaking Union.

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 times of tight budgets. Any contribution can help fund student scholarships, graduate student fellowships, and exciting new program initiatives. Follow the link below for information on how to give and be sure to designate the History Department as the intended recipient of your gift:

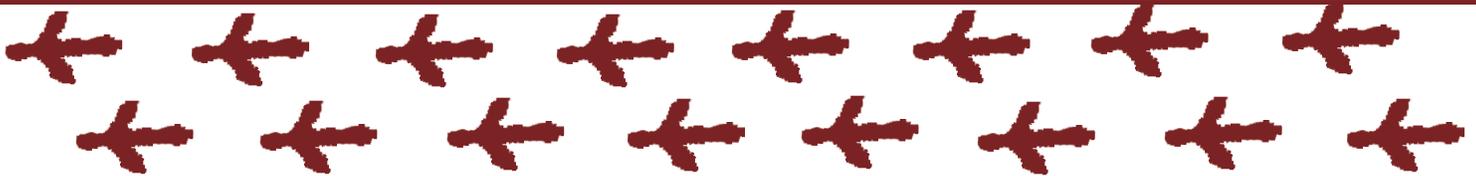
<http://www.givingto.vt.edu/>

If you are interested in learning how to endow a fund or make a named gift, please speak with Ms. Jocelyn Sanders, Associate Director of Development for the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, (540) 231-2893 or jocelyn1@vt.edu."

Leslie Sherman Memorial Fund

Leslie Sherman, a double major in history and international studies, was one of the students killed in Norris Hall April 2007. In her honor, the Leslie Sherman Memorial Fund was established and endowed with a portion of the money raised by the Hokie Spirit Fund from thousands of Virginia Tech's friends and supporters around the world. The income from this endowment will provide a permanent remembrance of a wonderful young woman by providing financial support to other undergraduates majoring in Leslie's chosen fields — history or international studies.

If you would like to make a contribution to the fund, contact Ms. Jocelyn Sanders, Assistant Director of Development for the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences at (540) 231-2893 or jocelyn1@vt.edu



One infamous story about Dr. Shackelford while at Tech was that he had a cannon in his front yard that he would set off on a whim, especially during social gatherings.



Student News

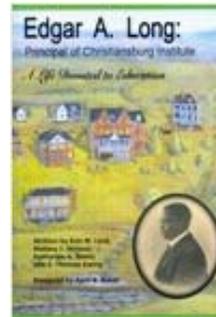


The Virginia Tech Pi Xi Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta has received a 2011 Best Chapter Award by the Phi Alpha Theta National History Honor Society. Each year Phi Alpha Theta presents Best Chapter Awards to chapters that excel in promoting the mission of the honor society on the local level. Chapters compete in six (6) divisions based on student enrollment at their institutions. Our division covers universities with over 23,000 students, which means that we successfully competed against chapters in other large Research I universities.

Dr. Barrow, Chair of the History Department, states, "I am extremely proud of the accomplishments of last year's officers and members. These are among our most engaged and dedicated undergraduate students, and it is their hard work and enthusiasm that made our department's chapter stand out in this national competition. I want to thank **Marian Mollin** for her excellent leadership of this organization, and **Glenn Bugh**, who graciously took over as faculty advisor while Marian was out last winter. This was very much a collective effort, with our students at the center of it all."

Rena Glavas, a double major in Classical Studies and History, was named the CLAHS Outstanding Senior.

Kim Straub was awarded the Janet Lowe Cameron Scholarship by the Peacock-Harper Culinary History Collection Committee here at Virginia Tech.



Two history majors, a history graduate student, and a history faculty member have published a brief biography of Edgar A. Long, an influential principal at the Christiansburg Institute. *Edgar A. Long: Principal of Christiansburg Institute*, by **Erin M. Lord**, **Mallery Orrison**, **Katherine A. Goins**, and **Tom Ewing**, tells the story of Long, who attended the Tuskegee Institute and studied under Booker T. Washington at the end

of the nineteenth century. Following graduation, he came to southwest Virginia to begin teaching and then serving as principal at the Christiansburg Institute. April Baker, a student in the professional writing program in the English Department worked under her faculty mentor, Jennifer Moody, to complete the book design.



Erin Lord, Katherine Goins, Mallery Orrison

The book was written with input from numerous Montgomery County teachers, for use in fifth-grade history classes. Copies have been distributed to every fifth grade classroom in the county, to local school and public libraries, and to the Christiansburg Institute. Funding for printing the book came from the History Department, the Office of the Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs, and the CLAHS Diversity Committee.

Alison Hight has been selected to receive an ACC Undergraduate Research Scholar Award to pursue a research project on Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland. She is one of only five undergraduates across the university to receive the award this year, and she follows in the footsteps of Ryan Prest, a History and Interdisciplinary Studies major, who received this award last year.

Three of our students have received funding to support their research and presentation of their results from the college's Undergraduate Research Institute. They are:

Andrew Gibbs

Faculty Mentor: Peter Wallenstein

Project: "Yes, but. . .": Oscar Blayton and the Unenthusiastic Intergration of William and Mary

Alison Hight

Faculty Mentor: Michael Alexander

Project: "Beyond the Broomstick: Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland"

Alexander Adkins

Faculty Mentor: Michael Alexander

Project: "Iraq through the New York Times"

Approximately 135 students received a Bachelor of Arts and 15 students received a Master of Arts at this year's History commencement in May 2011. Valedictorian Ryan Prest made an excellent speech that was both reflective and challenging. Good job, Ryan! And congratulations to all the new alumni!



Ryan Patrick Prest

Check out the pictures at the History Department at Virginia Tech Facebook page.

The first annual **History Undergraduate Research Showcase**, which took place on April 28, 2011, highlighted the many opportunities and achievements of history students in the area of scholarly research. In addition to displays of research projects, journals, presentations, posters, and other examples, students talked about their research experiences.

The History Department is pleased to announce the launch of the **Virginia Tech Undergraduate Historical Review**. There is so much excellent undergraduate research going on at Virginia Tech, and often outstanding undergraduate research projects go unnoticed outside the classroom. In an effort to showcase the terrific work our students are doing, the department has decided to begin publishing an online journal featuring the best research of our majors. **Robert Stephens** is the founding editor and faculty advisor for this exciting new initiative, **Stephen O'Hara** and **Heather Lennon** are serving as the Managing Editors, and a team of history majors, including **Victoria Heath, Alison Hight, Brian Marshall, Rebecca Middour, Gabi Setzler, and Waheed Sheriff** are on the Board of Editors. Look for to the first edition, which is due out this spring at

<http://www.history.vt.edu/vtuhr/index.htm>

2011 Departmental Award Winners

Undergraduate:

Andrew Gibbs and Alison Hight– Patricia Ann Gallagher Scholarship

Michael Cash – James W. and Martha N. Banks Award

Alison Hight – History Prize

Hannah Whitten – Curtis Award

Mark Starbuck – Phoenix Award

Graduate:

Matthew Sparacio – Outstanding Thesis Award

Stephen O'Hara and Laura West – Outstanding Graduate Assistant Award

Faculty Excellence in Mentoring Graduate Student Awards:

E. Thomas Ewing and Robert Stephens

Two of our majors have received Marshall Undergraduate Scholarships this past academic year. The George C. Marshall Foundation provides financial and logistical support for undergraduates to undertake major research projects using primary materials, including, but not limited to, material at the Marshall Research Library in Lexington, Virginia. **Rebecca Middour**, a junior and double major in History and Political Science, worked on a project entitled "The Dilemmas of Postwar Americanization in France" (under the direction of **Amy Nelson**). **Andrew Gibbs**, a junior and double major in History and Economics, worked on a project entitled "The Role of American POWs at Home" (under the direction of **Marian Mollin**). Congratulations to these fine students, and thanks so much to the faculty who agreed to supervise their work!

**14th Annual Brian Bertoti “Innovative Perspectives in History”
Graduate Student Conference
March 25-26, 2011**

Sponsored by the HGSA and the Department of History at Virginia Tech, the Brian Bertoti Innovative Perspectives in History Graduate Conference offers aspiring historians the opportunity to present scholarly research in a cordial, academic environment. The event is held in honor of Brian Bertoti, a former Virginia Tech graduate student who helped found the conference. Since its inception in 1998, the Brian Bertoti Innovative Perspectives in History Conference has continued to evolve and draw students from a wide variety of locations to present their research on topics ranging from treatment methods in 19th century Virginia sanatoriums to the historiography of terrorism.

The 14th Annual Brian Bertoti Innovative Perspectives in History Graduate Conference took place on March 25-26. The conference featured 28 presentations by graduate students from 12 different institutions, including Virginia Tech; Virginia Tech Department of History faculty served as discussants for most of the sessions. The conference was sponsored by the VT History Graduate Student Association, the Department of History, University Unions and Student Activities, the Department of Science and Technology in Society, the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, and the Department of Women’s and Gender Studies.

Department of History graduate students presented the following papers: **David Blaha**, “Somali v. Goshu: British Colonialism’s Effect on the Formation of Identity in Jubaland, 1895-1925,” **Dan Fischer**, “The Depoliticization of Everyday Life: Consumer Culture and the Politics of the Individual,” **Jill Ketron**, “I Am Not a Woman Revolutionary but a Revolutionary Who Happens to Be a Woman,” **Stephen O’Hara**, “A Matter of Honor: Media Opposition to Political Dueling Following the Henry Clay-John Randolph Duel on the Potomac, 1826,” **Matt Saionz**, “Visions of Anglo Empire: Anglo-Texan Justifications for the Texan Santa Fe Expedition of 1841,” **Jacob Spraker**, “Chiropractors and the Containment of the Polio Vaccine: An Historical Inquiry into the Controversial Cure,” **Kimberly Staub**, “Religious Empowerment: Women’s Impact on the Early Evangelical Movement, 1780-1820,” **Laura West**, “Saving White America, Saving Black America: Postmillennial Thought and the American Colonization Society, 1800-1822,” **Christopher Westfall**, “Union Above All Else: Evansville, Indiana’s Republicans and the Emancipation Proclamation,” and **Erin Weiss**, “A New Deal for Junkies: Changing Perceptions of Addiction and Treatment, 1835-1974.”

This spring will be the 15th Anniversary of the Bertoti Conference. We are hoping that many of the graduate students who have participated in this conference in the past can join us in Blacksburg to celebrate this important milestone. More details about this coming year’s conference can be found at http://www.history.vt.edu/hgsa_website/bertoti/index.html



Alumni News



Jim Branscome (B.S. ’63) “I was in the first graduating class in 1963 before it was designated as a B.A. I believe there were three of us. Got my M.A in History at Wake Forest and worked over fifteen years in higher education including being one of the five original faculty at the Wytheville Branch of Virginia Tech which is now Wytheville Community College, Dean of Finance at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, Registrar and Director of Admissions at Bluefield State College and Vice-President of Finance at Longwood College. I then served almost twenty-four years as the Treasurer of the Virginia United Methodist Conference and am now retired and living in Glen Allen, Virginia.”

John Danz (’63) “I am responding to your invitation for Alumni News for “Historically Speaking.” I graduated from Tech with B.S. in History (B.A. was not approved until later). Founded and continue to manage an investment management firm in Baltimore area, adjunct faculty at Towson University (Finance) and serve as vice-president, Asian Arts & Culture Center, Towson University. Married for forty-seven years with two children and three grandchildren.”

John T. Crenshaw, Jr. (’75) “For the past thirty-one years I have taught history at Craig County High School in New Castle, Virginia. I owe my longevity (and success?) to the Virginia Tech History Department and its wonderful, awe-inspiring professors. I see myself as a combination of Bill Mackie and Dean O’Donnell with a pinch of Bud Robertson and Ron Nurse thrown in. Thank you for everything you have done for me.”

Becky Fillinger (’79) “I just read the electronic newsletter and LOVED seeing the large number of History majors! I am semi-retired, living in St. Paul MN and taking history classes at St. Thomas University. St. Thomas has a lifelong learning program where people over 50 may take any class for the unbelievably low price of \$35. My WWII professor - Joseph Fitzharris, knows Professor Bud Robertson - it is such a small world.”

Mark Danley (M.A. ‘91). “After some time on active duty in the U.S. Army, I went on to earn my Ph.D. in history (Kansas State, 2001) and an M.L.I.S. (LSU, 2003). I’m currently a catalog library/associate professor at University of Memphis. I’m still active as a history scholar and right now have an edited book under contract with Brill Academic Publishers. It’s a series of essays on the Seven Years’ War as a global conflict, and in addition to contributing one of the chapters I’m co-editing the whole volume along with a colleague as well as writing the introduction.

It’s that latter process - drafting the introduction - that I’m working on now and which made me think of something Dr. Dean O’Donnell ...using the term ‘afterwar’ to describe ancillary or related armed conflicts that immediately follow and partially overlap with the winding down of some bigger conflagration. . .After two decades, a history doctorate, and a second master’s in a related field I still think about and value my Virginia Tech education (not just the class I refer to above, but especially what

I learned from Dr. Fred Baumgartner, who sure got me started off right as a historian!”

Michael Magee Taylor, Sr., ('94) who earned his B.A. in Communications and History, has joined Americom Government Services, Inc. d/b/ a SES WORLD SKIES, US Government Solutions, with headquarters in McLean, Virginia, as the company's General Counsel. Previously, he served in senior legal roles for Spacenet, Inc. of McLean, Virginia, and as General Counsel of Moran Industries, Inc. of Midlothian, Illinois. He is also a 1997 graduate of the DePaul University College of Law. He lives in Leesburg, Virginia, with his two children.

Heather Redmon Leise (B.A. '97 in Hist and PSCI, M.A. Ed, '98) received a 2010 R.E.B Award for Teaching Excellence. Along with the award, Mrs. Leise received a grant of \$10,000 to visit Peru and Argentina to renew and reinforce knowledge and compare cultures, governmental systems and indigenous populations.

Beau Dickenson ('01) has been teaching U.S. History at the high school level for the past eight years in Rockingham County, Virginia. "I recently achieved National Board Certification after spending the past two years video-taping my classes and developing analytical portfolios of my teaching methods. I really have an aversion to self-promotion, but I wanted the History Department to know that I greatly value the education that I received at Virginia Tech. I feel that my professors equipped me with the knowledge and skills to teach history and make it seem both interesting and relevant to adolescents." Check out Beau's website: <http://webfc.rockingham.k12.va.us/~jddickenson/>

Kathryn Muller Italia ('01) completed medical school and residency and have now been a pediatrician at All Star Pediatrics in Exton, PA, for the past two and a half years. We welcomed a baby girl, Sophia, in May and can't wait to introduce her to Blacksburg! It's always good to read what has been happening in the department, so thank you for the newsletter!

Thomas E. Sebrell (M.A. '04) earned his Ph.D. in history at Queen Mary, University of London in 2010, and has organized a series of walking tours of British sites relevant to the American Civil War. The idea originated when he was conducting research for his PhD thesis on Union and Confederate propaganda in Britain. His research uncovered not only a great wealth of knowledge pertaining to American Civil War activities occurring in London (and other areas of Britain), but the locations of most events and the personnel involved. Upon further research, Tom discovered that most sites not only still exist, but are largely in their 1860s' setting, unlike most urban Civil War sites in the United States owing to urban renewal. At the recommendation of several British and American academics, most notably his PhD supervisor Dr Peter Catterall, Tom began mapping out walking tours, which he has been offering to the public since October 2010. For additional information, see <http://www.acwlonon.org/>

Matthew Krogh ('05) is currently teaching a class at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Richmond on the Antebellum South. I am also progressing with my family's work on our 1779 dwelling known as Woodlawn in Halifax County which is slated to be completely restored by summer 2011. I am also working toward a certificate in historic preservation and urban planning at VCU (18 credits).

Will Shapiro ('07) graduated from law school in may 2010 and just passed the NY & NJ bar exams.

Michael Delaney ('07) finished up he MBA in May of 2010 from the University of Wisconsin Parkside. He lives in Church Hill, TN with wife Jennifer, and two sons Elijah and Gideon. I am currently serving as the principal of Duffield Primary School in Scott County, VA. He is working on his doctorate through Tech in Ed Leadership. Dr. Barrow was his advisor. Dr. Robertson and Dr. Farrar were some of his favorite professors.

Former VT Students: Have you been inspired? Challenged? Have you changed your perspective? Have you stepped outside your comfort zone?

Then maybe it's time to thank a teacher.

Virginia Tech's "Thank a Teacher" program allows students and alumnae to express their appreciation for teaching excellence at Virginia Tech. If a teacher (e.g., professor, instructor, or graduate teaching assistant) has made a positive contribution to your educational experience, consider sending them a *thank you* note. Our online system makes it quick and easy for you, and you can remain anonymous if you choose.

To send your thank-you note, click below:

<http://www.cideronline.org/thankateacher/>

We Want To Hear From You!

Please send updates on your activities to jafranci@vt.edu or to the Department of History 431 Major Williams (0117), Blacksburg, VA 24061.

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