From the Chair

As the new chair of the Department of History, I want to first, thank outgoing chair Robert Owens for his work and dedication leading the department during a number of very challenging times, particularly with the loss of several key faculty.

Change seems to have become the “new normal” in so many ways. As I begin as chair, my “chain of command” includes an interim dean of LAS, Ron Matson; an interim provost, Keith Pickus; and a new university president, John Bardo. On top of this, changes in the state tax policy and the results of upcoming elections presents us with numerous unknowns for the near future.

Throughout all this, however, the department remains active and committed to our students and our profession. We welcome a new faculty member, Travis Bruce, who brings a perspective and depth that is different and exciting. Faculty research projects range from the study of Buddhism in Mongolia to Mediterranean trade links, from global pandemics to reform legislation. Our students are presenting to conferences and publishing their scholarship. Recently, the department has embarked on a speaker’s series, having brought to campus Renaissance scholar Jane Wickersham.

It is equally striking how many different activities that our alumni do. Our graduates have gone on to careers in law, business, and museums, as well as academia. One of my goals as chair, is to get to know our alums better and to learn more about their accomplishments. After all, historians know that the best way to get a handle on an uncertain future is to get a handle on where we have been!

With Regards, Jay M. Price

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Welcome to Dr. Travis Bruce

The department is delighted to welcome Dr. Travis Bruce as its new Medievalist. Before joining the History Department, he most recently worked for the Centre National de Recherche Scientifique in France on a project entitled “Imperial Government and Authority in Medieval Western Islam.”

Dr. Bruce will continue to collaborate with the project team analyzing documents from the Almohad chancellery, and their current work focuses on Almohad relations with the Italian port of Pisa. His dissertation from the Université de Toulouse is being published at the end of the year by the CNRS under the title La Taifa de Denia et la Méditerranée au XIe siècle, and Brill is publishing his translation of Governing the Empire: Provincial Administration in the Almohad Caliphate in early 2013.

He is working on a new manuscript based on his 2010 dissertation entitled Rethinking the Medieval Mediterranean and the Islamic Maritime State: The Case of the Taifa of Denia. He has also contributed book reviews this year to the Bulletin Critique des Annales Islamologiques and Medieval Encounters.

Dr. Bruce will be teaching courses on world, medieval, and Islamic history.

Fairmount Folio

The 164 page Volume 14 of the History Department publication of student work, The Fairmount Folio, was a great success. Jillian Overstake served as Student Editor. The articles all come from papers written for both graduate and undergraduate classes. They are chosen by a Faculty Board. This volume, Dr. Robert Weems and Dr. Jay Price served on the Board. Jason Herbert was the student reader on the Board. Themes ranged from the American Revolution era to contemporary American history.

The first volume of The Fairmount Folio appeared in 1996. Enough time has passed so see where some of the editors have gone with their careers. Dr. Hundley always stresses to the students that degrees in History are very useful, and that working on the journal and submitting papers for publication provide valuable experiences. In future “Clios” She will bring you up to date with the editors and authors of articles to see what varied careers they have forged.

Jane Livingston served as the first Student Editor for that 1996 volume. She was an undergraduate at that time. As this was the first edition, she did a great deal more than editing, she helped to set the pace for future volumes. The first volume was sixty pages and was typeset. Following graduation from WSU she decided to go into university administration. To further her career she earned an M.A. at Syracuse University. Today she is Director of ITS Communications Policy and Strategy at Yale University.

Christopher M. Joseph wrote one of the articles for the first volume, “Joseph Story and The Dartmouth College Case: Expansion of the Contract Clause.” He was an undergraduate when he wrote the original paper for a course on Constitutional Law with Dr. James Durham. Today he is a lawyer.
Public History

This past year has been one of openings, goings and changes for the Public History Program. A number of new students have come on board, including Timothy Howard at the Museum of World Treasures, and Seth Bate, with the Kansas Leadership Center.

Students in the program, remain active in various projects. Jordan Poland has helped WSU Special Collections, especially with so much work being done on the Gordon Parks papers. Austin Rhodes works with public history alum Melissa Thompson at Sedgwick County Records Management. Keith Wondra is now writing a history of Botanica.

Sometimes, those who have studied with the public history program have found themselves in unexpected places. For example, Sheri Gaskins is doing living history in Hugo, Colorado and is particularly active in that state’s History Day activities. Bethany Kennedy has recently graduated and is starting a new life in the Marshall Islands. Recent graduate Judith Welfelt is one of several students who teaches classes in history.

The program relies on the help and support of so many people. Thanks need to go to those who have taught various public history courses over the years including Bob Keckesen, Dr. Lorraine Madway, Kathy Morgan, and Doug King. One exciting recent development has been to have alum

Student Awards

With the continued strong backing of our generous benefactors, the history department was again able to support our outstanding graduate and undergraduate students with over $10,000 in fellowships and awards. Students were recognized for excellence both in overall academic performance and for individual paper submissions. The department is pleased to reward the following students for their outstanding work.

In the categories of paper awards, Seth Bate received the Douglas Bendell Award in Undergraduate Research and Writing for his submission “Stanley Skirted Saloon Skirmishes.” Jason Herbert’s entry “Unburied Hatchet: The Creek Struggle for Neutrality during the American Revolution” was recognized as the John Rydjord Undergraduate Paper Award winner for the best undergraduate paper in an upper division history course. Kyle Smyth’s effort “The Enduring Drunken Hessians: A Historiographic Examination of the Myth of the Hessians Being Drunk at the Battle of Trenton and its First Appearance in Public Memory” was selected to receive the Fiske Hall Non-Seminar Paper Award for the best graduate paper in non-seminar course. For the Fiske Hall Seminar Paper Award for the best paper in a graduate seminar course, David Ferguson received the nod for his paper “Give ‘em the SMOKER’S Cigarette and Watch ‘em Register: The Story of the World War II Draft in Wichita, Kansas.”

These undergraduate students were singled out for their superior academic performance by receiving the following scholarships. Lynn Olson’s continued strong academic work prompted the re-awarding of the Dr. Henry and Minnie Ongsdor Scholarship for 2012. Mary Travis’ stellar performance garnered her the Donna and Bill Ard Endowed Scholarship. Felicia Hammons reaped the Constance Louise Routh Decker-Daughters of the American Revolution Scholarship for 2012 and Jennifer Dominick pocketed the Russell “Jiggs” Nelson Endowed Scholarship. Julia Leth-Perez was chosen to claim one of the history department’s oldest awards, the Marie Graham Scholarship. Finally, the history department is pleased to announce the founding of a new scholarship beginning in academic year 2012 named in honor of John Edward “Jed” Hurley Jr. The inaugural recipient is Christopher Thome.

The competition for undergraduate scholarship and paper awards is fierce which is only surpassed by the competition among the graduate students for our graduate awards. Every year the department is faced with the challenge of selecting two winners from our deep pool of talented candidates. After much careful discussion, the history department is pleased to recognize Eliot Eichbauer as the winner of the Anthony and Dana Gytchiel Endowed Scholarship/Fellowship Award in history and David Ferguson as the recipient of the John Rydjord Award (Fellowship) in honor of their superior academic qualities.

As always, the department would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to our benefactors who enable us to give these awards to our deserving students.
Faculty News

In 2012, some long-running projects came to fruition for George Dehner and he began work on some new topics. April marked the release of his first book Influenza: A Century of Science and Public Health Response published by the University of Pittsburgh Press. George’s second book Global Flu and You: A History of Influenza is slated for November release from Reaktion Press (U.K.). In addition, he was informed that his paper “Creating the World Influenza Surveillance System: Surveillance with a Purpose” given at the After 1918: History and Politics of Influenza in the 20th and 21st Centuries conference last summer is included in a forthcoming conference proceedings tentatively scheduled for a late 2013 or early 2014 release.

In the summer of 2012, George took a research trip to Philadelphia to conduct an interview and search newspaper archives for a new project on Legionnaires’ disease. George gave a talk drawn upon this new research to a joint meeting of the Medical Society of Sedgwick County and the Jager Club from the KU School of Medicine in Wichita in early October. He has also been selected to write an essay on pandemics for the National History Day Resource book. This resource book will be distributed to teachers and students around the world involved in the National History Day competition.

Both spring and fall brought classes full of eager graduate and undergraduate students and George has assumed the mantle of faculty advisor to the Phi Alpha Theta History Honor Society from our new chair Jay Price. Outside of the university George and his wife Jodi tend to their rambunctious husky Trooper and their even more rambunctious children Brendan, Patrick, and Sean.

Europeanist John Dreifort continues to enjoy teaching his classes in modern European history. Indeed, he is delighted to report that he had some of the best classes in many years during the past year. He continues to serve as Graduate Coordinator for the department’s graduate students as well as undergraduate advisor for the International Studies major. As the “Geezer” of the department, he thoroughly enjoys his new, young, enthusiastic colleagues. He continues to be active in community organizations, frequently giving speeches to local groups. His role as Executive Secretary for the monthly meetings of the Wichita Committee on Foreign Relations keeps him abreast of international events. He taught an adult education course called “Great Decisions,” which allows him to use his foreign policy and historical interests in a useful way. He still tries to get some serious research and writing done on his book manuscript about the Eisenhower and De Gaulle relationship during World War II. He also has initiated several studies that he hopes will be included in projects published by the Society of American Baseball Research. He sends his best wishes to his many former students!

Robin Henry has had a very busy and active year, including the completion of her book Criminalizing Sex, Defining Sexuality: Sexual Regulation and Masculinity in the American West, 1850-1927. In addition, she has spearheaded a departmental lecture series that has featured, most recently, Italian Renaissance specialist Jane Wickersham speaking about the Inquisition in Italy.

Helen Hundley, the Russian historian, has had an active year. She chaired a session at the national conference of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, “Writing Regions in Russia and the Soviet Union,” in November, 2011. She gave two papers, “Siberian Buddhism, Revival and Identity in the Post-Soviet Era,” at the Identity and Community after the Cold War Era Conference, at the University of Kansas, in Lawrence in August 2011, and “Mongolian Introduction of Buddhism to the Buriats in the 18th Century.” at the 50th Annual Meeting of the Mongolian Society, in Bloomington, Indiana in July of 2011.

In May and June of 2012, she travelled to Siberia and Mongolia to continue her research. She especially enjoyed a camping visit to historically important Amarbayasgalant Monastery in Mongolia.

Dr. Hundley continues to serve as the Faculty Editor of The Fairmount Folio.

Professor Willard Carl Klunder published a book review: Grant’s Final Victory: Ulysses S. Grant’s Heroic Last Year, by Charles Bracken Flood, in The Historian. Dr. Klunder continues to be active on University governance. He is an at-large member of the Faculty Senate and a member of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee; and serves on numerous faculty committees, including Planning and Budget, Faculty Affairs, and the History Department’s Policy Committee.

Ariel Schwendner Loftus has had a good year. She was granted a year long sabbatical leave to finish her book, Women in Athens 300-200 B.C., a sourcebook of translated documentary texts. She has a new personal trainer at Genesis and continues to regain her strength, and looks forward to working with more Graduate students and...
Alumni News

John Aarsen, MA 1990 continues to work at the 82d Airborne Division War Memorial Museum as Director. He left for a yearlong deployment in 2010-2011 to Kuwait with duty Afghanistan. The US Army Center of Military History selected him be a member of a career development plan panel and establish the professional standards for Army museum historians and curators. He has completed by US Army War College Master of Strategic Studies in 2010 and was selected for Colonel and Brigade Command. At the 82d Airborne Division Museum we continue to work to support the 82d Airborne Division and its 22,000 paratroopers with history and exhibits support.

Monta Ballard, BA 1968 is now retired from her career as a commercial property & casualty underwriter in excess and surplus lines insurance.

Ben Hruska, MA 2004 just completed his Ph.D. in history at Arizona State dealing with memory and commemoration of the sinking of a U.S. Navy vessel in World War II. During the summer of 2009, Hruska served as a public history consultant for the Department of Defense’s U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces. He also serves on volunteer boards of both AASLH and NCPH.

Lynn Michelle (Martin) Hudson, BA 1979, History, MA Economics from WSU, along with her business partner, were recognized for their contributions to the Dallas Commercial Real Estate community, by D CEO Magazine. For more on her, check out http://www.dmagazine.com/Home/D_CEO/2012/March_April/Pioneer_Women_of_Commercial_Real_Estate.aspx

Marsha Lytle, 1971 is the director of the library at Sinte Gleska University in Mission, South Dakota as of March 5, 2012. The library serves as both an academic library for the university as well as a public library for the Rosebud Reservation in Todd County, South Dakota. She previously spent twelve years as a school librarian with the Spring Hill, Kansas school district.

Gary Miskimon, BA, 1974 (actually - 63-68 & then again in 73-74 finishing w/a BA – History/Political Science) formerly retired from the US Army, has now retired as Director, Administration, for the Redevelopment Agency of San Jose. He and his wife Jeanette graduated from the 3-year Institute for Leadership in Ministry (operated by the Diocese of San Jose) and now serve in several social justice activities/organizations. They helped to found the Awaso Hope Foundation, a non-profit now building a K-9 school in Awaso, Ghana. Check out their website at: http://awasohope.homestead.com, (and send a check?)

Myra Myers, BA 1983 and MA 1986 completed her thesis on Russian intellectual history at the turn of the 20th century, with emphasis on the Russian symbolists under the direction of Dr. William Richardson, her wonderful advisor. She teaches German, Spanish and Russian to several grandchildren and writes small books. She speaks to the public on living in Nazi Germany (she is 87 years old and lost part of her family in the Holocaust). She speaks occasionally from the prolific perspective about living with her youngest daughter who has Down Syndrome.

Jillian Overstake-Forsberg, MA 2012 started as the education director at the Museum of World Treasures in August. She celebrated her marriage to Cody Forsberg, WSU Nursing Class of 2010, in July.

John Peterson, BA 1998 graduated from the University of Health Sciences - College of Osteopathic Medicine with a doctorate of osteopathy, and has completed a residency in anesthesiology from the University of Kansas. He completed a critical care fellowship from the University of Cincinnati. He is working currently with Anesthesia Consulting Services in Wichita, splitting his time between the operating room and the ICU, and is a clinical assistant professor for the University of Kansas Department of Anesthesiology.

Steve Swanson, BA 2000 served in the U.S. Marine Corps in the 1970s. Worked as an air traffic controller for the FAA until he retired at his final duty station Wichita Mid-Continent Airport in 2010. In addition to B.A. in History at WSU, he has an AAAS in Paralegal Studies at WSU and a B.S. in Criminal Justice from Friends University. While working for the FAA he also worked part-time for many years at CornerStone Law in Newton KS as a paralegal performing legal research and preparing court documents. After retiring from the FAA, he formed CornerStone Companies which provides legal support solutions for law firms–first client is CornerStone Law. He has three grown sons, two married, so is presently learning the role of grandparent while managing a growing business.

Judy Welfelt, MA 2012 is now teaching History at Friends University.

Debbie Withrock, 1995, left school to become a full time homemaker, a position that she has enjoyed ever since.

In memoriam:

It is with great sadness that the department has learned about the passing of Steve Larsen, who received his BA in history from Wichita State. He served as the command historian for 22nd Air Fueling Wing at McConnell Air Force Base and wrote a photo history of the installation.

Attention alums:

Update us on your news! Please email jay.price@wichita.edu for your updates. Be sure to check out the “alumni” link on our web page: http://history.wichita.edu and please let us know if it is okay for us to include your activities on that page!
Faculty News Continued

participating in department events again when she gets back in fall 2013. In the mean time, she is still in town until next summer and will be happy to have coffee with old students on the weekends.

Having evaded numerous pitchfork and torch-wielding villagers, Robert Owens completed his three-year term as Department Chair in June of 2012. In addition to his administrative duties, Dr. Owens also enjoyed teaching History 536 (Survey of the American Indian), History 501 (American Colonies), History 502 (Revolutionary America) and History 698 (Historiography). On the research and publication front, Owens is nearing completion of a book-length manuscript on pan-Indianism in the Anglo-American mind, and secured publication of an article (co-authored with Michael F. Conlin) on nomenclature in Native American studies, forthcoming in Ohio Valley History. He was also interviewed by CSPAN II regarding his book Mr. Jefferson’s Hammer: William Henry Harrison and the Origins of American Indian Policy (Oklahoma, 2007), and gave a phone interview to the Voice of America network about William Henry Harrison, which was broadcast in South Korea in July. (Seriously.) Dr. Owens looks forward to his return to full-time faculty status.

In addition to becoming department chair, Jay M. Price, has been busy with a number of projects. The most significant has been to complete revisions for his survey of postwar religious architecture, Temples for a Modern God, to be published by Oxford University Press at the end of this year. This summer, he worked with Keith Wondra to produce the latest Arcadia photo history, Wichita 1930-2000, a project to support the Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum. He continues to serve on the board of the Kansas Humanities Council, the State Historic Sites Board of Review, and the Wichita Sedgwick County Historical Museum. He also serves as the vice president, and hence, program chair for the Kansas Association of Historians.

Craig L. Torbenson serves as the undergraduate advisor for the department. He worked with Dr. Price and several graduate students on Kansas: In the Heart of Tornado Alley that was published in fall 2011. The group has done several book signings around the local area. He is also working on an article about a North Dakota businessman and a sports history manuscript for which he has traveled to Minnesota on numerous occasions. He continues his interest in family history by volunteering at the LDS Family History Library and teaching “Your Family in History” at Wichita State.

Robert E. Weems, Jr. had a busy and productive first year as the Willard W. Garvey Distinguished Professor of Business History at Wichita State University. In terms of research, he continued his work on a biography of the prominent early 20th century black entrepreneur Anthony Overton. He also launched the “Wichita African American Business History Project.” Materials gathered from this initiative, which will include interviews and other pertinent information related to historic and contemporary black entrepreneurship in Wichita, will subsequently be housed in WSU’s Ablah Library’s Special Collections.

He gave two campus lectures which helped to introduce me and my work to the larger WSU community. The first was a February 2012 Black History Month presentation, sponsored by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, entitled “African American Business History: Lost, Stolen, Or Strayed?” The second was his April 2012 inaugural lecture, as the Garvey Distinguished Professor of Business History, sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. This presentation was entitled “The Making of an African American Tycoon: Anthony Overton’s Business Activities, 1915-1925.” Among those in attendance were members of the Garvey family.

He has had two publications since joining the WSU History Department. The first is an invited Epilogue (“Whatever Happened To The Business of Black Power?”) for the book The Business of Black Power: Community Development, Capitalism, and Corporate Responsibility in Postwar America co-edited by Laura Warren Hill and Julia Rabig and published in 2012 by the University of Rochester Press. The second was a chapter entitled “Alpha Phi Alpha, the Fight For Civil Rights, and the Shaping of Public Policy” for the book Alpha Phi Alpha: A Legacy of Greatness, The Demands of Transcendence co-edited by Gregory S. Parks and Stefan M. Bradley and published by the University Press of Kentucky.

Finally, this past summer, he combined some business with pleasure during a trip to Senegal, West Africa. Besides taking in the sights, including a side trip to the St. Louis, Senegal jazz festival, he also received an on-site briefing regarding a local initiative to distribute portable solar lighting devices (especially in the Senegalese countryside). He serves as both a consultant to and an investor in this project.

L-R, Kansas African American Museum director Prisca Barnes, WSU VP and General Counsel Ted Ayres, John W. Franklin of the National Museum of African American History & Culture, Robert E. Weems, Jr., and Associate Dean Linnea Glennmey at the fourth annual Gordon Parks Lecture Series.
In 2012, the History Department began a lecture series. Each semester, the department plans to bring in a historian from around the Great Plains and Midwestern regions to give a talk to students, faculty, and community members on his or her own research interests. In September, the history department welcomed Dr. Jane Wickersham from the University of Oklahoma. Wickersham’s talk, “Lies and the Lying Heretics Who Tell Them: Ritual Practice and the Roman Inquisition’s Pursuit of True Confessions,” drew an audience of around fifty people. The following morning, she led a small discussion with faculty and students on the use of religious source materials in medieval history. As historians, we see it as part of our larger educational mission to introduce our students and the wider community to as many different types of history, historical work, and historians as we can from around the region. These events serve as a way to make and keep collegial connections, and to get our students thinking about the possibilities of future academic work. For upcoming lecture events, please contact the department.