thousands of WSU grads who took a history course or series of courses as part of other majors and minors. With History one learns how to look at things with an eye for change over time, and to place events in a context. Students of History know to look at documents with an eye for the perspective of the writer and the intended audience. At a recent conference, a statement that arose was that “History gives you the skills for your second and third jobs, not (just) your first.” The study of History know to look at documents with an eye for the perspective of the writer and the intended audience. At a recent conference, a statement that arose was that “History gives you the skills for your second and third jobs, not (just) your first.”

To these concerns, I say go to http://history.wichita.edu and look under “alumni.” There, you will see those who have succeeded in the academic career track, including Julie Courtwright, assistant professor at Iowa State University, whose book Prairie Fire: A Great Plains History just came out. Others alumni take their passion for history in other directions, such as Nick Wyant, who now serves as one of the department’s key liaisons with Ablah Library. Then, there are the alumni such as the late Sheldon Kamen, for whom history served as the basis of a rich and influential career. Jobs in History can be very competitive and hard to get. Yet, History serves as the basis for so many careers. On our alumni list, you will see the names of attorneys, entrepreneurs, clergy, military officers, and many others.

This list is itself miniscule compared to the hundreds, if not
Remembering Don Douglas

Professor Emeritus Donald Douglas passed away on January 15, 2013. Professor Douglas taught modern European history, focusing on German history, at Wichita State University for 35 years. His rigorous courses on Hitler and the Third Reich and on the Holocaust were important offerings for undergraduate and graduate students in the Department of History. His colorful demeanor in the classroom inspired a generation of students to continue study in 20th century Central European history. His presence in department meetings often cut to the core of issues being debated, often serving as the “conscience” of the department in matters related to maintaining high academic standards for our graduates. His professional interest in the Holocaust made him a driving force behind the annual Wichita Holocaust commemorations, and he served as the Kansas Liaison to the U.S. Holocaust Commission. He made important contributions to Holocaust history by recording extensive personal interviews with Holocaust survivors who migrated to Kansas. Memorials in his name may be made to the Alzheimer’s Association, American Heart Association, Harry Hynes Memorial Hospice, and/or Holocaust commemoratives c/o Congregation Emanu-El.

Getting to Know: Denise Burns

Having just celebrated her 25 years of service to the university, department secretary Denise Burns has helped numerous students, faculty, and alums navigate the ins and outs of this institution. Faculty know her as the one who helps process travel orders, class schedules, and other administrative issues. However, Denise also serves as the department’s front line answering inquiries from bewildered students as well as the general public who wonder if that copy of the Declaration of Independence they found at the local garage sale is the real thing.

Born in Kansas, Burns grew up in Lubbock, Texas, until the 6th grade, when the family returned to Augusta. Her work career began with a farm supply business where she learned the practices of accounting. After that, she worked for Pizza Hut in both accounts receivable and accounts payable. Her time at WSU began in 1986 when she worked briefly as an office temp and learned about an opening in the Department of History. This position was initially temporary but became permanent after a few months.

Since starting at WSU, Burns has witnessed a number of changes, such as hiring of Dr. Judy Johnson, the department’s first female faculty member, and numerous other hires and departures. Changing technology has been a major part of her work. When she began, tests and other documents had to be reproduced through a mimeograph machine. Her first foray into computer work took place under the guidance of Dr. John Richardson and required a knowledge of MS-DOS. It wasn’t that long ago that faculty did not have their own phone lines; into the 2000s there was only one line and Denise had to transfer calls to the faculty.

Denise is married to John Burns, who works in the concrete business. They have three children, Chris, Matt, and Beth...as well as Cody the Australian Shepherd.

Lecture Series

The 2012-13 academic year marked the inaugural year for the History Department Lecture Series. Under the leadership of Dr. Robin Henry, the history department welcomed Dr. Jane Wickersham, Associate Professor of History at the University of Oklahoma in the fall. In the spring, the history department partnered with the Ulrich Museum of Art to bring Dr. Tracey Deutsch, Associate Professor of History at the University of Minnesota to campus. This series is designed to bring regionally based historians to the WSU campus for a public talk and a small discussion with our graduate students. If you would like information on upcoming 2013-14 lecture events, please contact Dr. Robin Henry at robin.henry@wichita.edu
It is striking how many Public History Program alums remain active in helping the current crop of students. With Jay Price taking on new duties as chair, Dee Harris came down from Kansas City to teach HIST 701, Introduction to Public History, in the fall of 2012. Other alums such as Melissa Thompson and Laura Hartley have continued their mentorship of a number of current students while recent graduate Donna Rae Pearson has returned to Wichita after working with the Kansas State Historical Society to become involved with local African American history projects, among them being “Wichita’s Black History Kitchen Table” on Facebook.

Efforts of current students include that of Keith Wondra, co-author with program director Jay M. Price on the book Wichita: 1930-2000. Lynsay Flory is developing her living history passion by working this summer at the Nevada City Museum in Montana. Public history student Carolyn Speer Schmidt is working on a project documenting the Kansas Heritage of President Barak Obama.

The Society of Public Historians was involved in a number of activities including the Kansas Museums Association conference in Newton and a tour of the historic Burton Stock Car plant in North Wichita (see lower left). SPH also brought to campus Dr. Peter Welsh, from the University of Kansas Museum Studies Program to discuss issues in the museum studies field.

The program relies heavily on its supporters and adjuncts, so it was quite a shock to learn, recently, that Bob Keckeisen (and Department of History alum), who taught the HIST 703 museums course, has decided to leave his position at the Kansas Museum of History to work with the Topeka Symphony Orchestra. Fortunately, Keckeisen will be teaching the museum course in the spring.

Student Awards

Thanks to the generosity of the department’s many friends, the History Department was again able to hand-out over $11,000 in scholarships and awards to our deserving students. In the Undergraduate paper category, there was a clean sweep of both the Douglas Bendell and John Rydjord awards by Jason Herbert. In the graduate paper categories, Carolyn Speer Schmidt’s paper was selected to receive the Fiske Hall Non-Seminar Paper award and John Skelton garnered the Fiske Hall Seminar Paper award for his entry.

Selecting the undergraduate scholarship winners is always a difficult task and this year proved no exception. The following students rose above the competition and were awarded the following honors. Tyler Duncan was rewarded with the Lee and Helen Kamen Scholarship and Mary Travis’ continuing excellent academic work merited the Donna and Bill Ard Scholarship. Felicia Hammons’ stellar work was recognized with the Dr. Henry and Minnie Onsgard Scholarship and Claire Gregory snagged the “Jed” Hurley Scholarship. Kristopher Hiser grabbed the Marie Graham Memorial Scholarship; Jennifer Dominick received the Russell “Jiggs” Nelson scholarship; and Kevin Kirchgessner was selected for the Decker-Kansas Society of the DAR award.

A new annual award was added to the department’s roster of graduate scholarships and fellowships in honor of former department member Hal K. Rothman. The award, given to the superior Public History graduate student, went to Austin Rhodes. Two more graduate students were honored for their efforts. Eliot Eichbauer was selected to receive the Anthony and Dana Gythiel Scholarship and Jordan Poland’s excellent graduate performance was recognized with the John Rydjord Graduate Award.

Congratulations to all our student scholars and a hearty thank you to the department’s benefactors who make this support possible.
Dr. Travis Bruce has thoroughly enjoyed his first year at Wichita State. He published his French dissertation, *La taifa de Denia et la Méditerranée au XIe siècle*, with University of Toulouse Press in February. He also published with Brill an English translation of a critical edition and study of medieval North African diplomatic documents entitled *Governing the Empire: Provincial Administration in the Almohad Caliphate*. Dr. Bruce presented a paper on his new research on Pisan-Almohad relations in the thirteenth century at the International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo in May, and is closing out his work on the eleventh-century taifa of Denia with a talk at the Biennial Conference of the Society for the Medieval Mediterranean in Cambridge this summer.

The winter and spring of 2012-2013 continued to smile upon George Dehner and his family. George’s second book, *Global Flu and You: A History of Influenza* was released in December by Reaktion Press. His research proposal for his next project was selected by the University to receive an ARCS award for the summer of 2013 and he is looking forward to traveling to Atlanta to continue his research into Legionnaires’ disease. He also has an NIH grant currently under consideration for funding as well. In April George travelled to Toronto to be part of a roundtable panel discussion at the annual American Society of Environmental History Conference. Fall and spring semesters brought another group of excellent undergraduate and graduate students making the courses fun and challenging. Most important of all is that his wife Jodi and his three sports-minded sons (Brendan, Patrick, and Sean) remain in good health and good spirits. George and his family are pleased to be part of the WSU community.

Dr. Robin Henry had another busy year. In addition to publications and conference presentations, she served as a Tilford Fellow. This fellowship is part of the Tilford Commission to diversify university curriculum. Receiving this fellowship allowed time to create a Law and Civil Rights course that she taught in Spring 2013. Dr. Henry also organized the inaugural year of the History Lecture Series. Through this series, the department brought two historians to campus to give public talks and meet with our graduate students.

Following her research trip to Mongolia and Siberia last summer, Dr. Helen Hundley returned to Kansas to begin a busy year. In September she was invited to speak at Emory University. She spoke on “The Buddhist Revival in Siberia and Mongolia since the End of the Cold War.” In April, she delivered a paper “China will Take Siberia? Myths and Realities, at the Russia and China: The Architects of a New Global Order: Interests, Strategies, and Prospects for Conflict and Cooperation Conference, sponsored by the Foreign Military Studies Office at Fort Leavenworth and the University of Kansas in Lawrence.
Professor Willard Carl 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, Honors, and Faculty Affairs. He published a book review: Grant’s Final Victory: Ulysses S. Grant’s Heroic Last Year, by Charles Bracelen Flood, in The Historian, and submitted a review of Thomas Nast: The Father of Modern Political Cartoons, by Fiona Deans Halloran, to Civil War Book Review.

Dr. Ariel Loftus has enjoyed her sabbatical leave, returning to teaching in August. She has written 4 chapters of her book about Athenian women and will start a new smaller project on women in Rome before and after the arrival of Christianity. In the mean time, she would be happy to have coffee with former and current students in her garden in Riverside.

Dr. Robert Owens enjoyed his return to full-time teaching and research, teaching the U.S. to 1865 survey, Colonial America, Historiography, Advanced Historical Methods, The American Revolution, and the American History seminar. In addition to several book reviews, he also saw publication of his article “Bigger than Little Bighorn: Nomenclature, Memory, and the Greatest Native American Victory over the United States,” in Ohio Valley History (Summer 2012), co-authored with Michael F. Conlin, PhD. He will spend part of the summer of 2013 researching at the American Philosophical Society and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, with the generous support of a WSU ARCS grant. Owens is currently working on a project tentatively titled “Murderers and Mediators: Conflict Resolution along the Trans-Appalachian Frontier, 1763-1815.” Dr. Owens will be on sabbatical in the spring of 2014.

The past academic year has been quite lively for Jay M. Price. In addition to taking on the role of departmental chair, he spent the fall working with Oxford University Press towards the completion of his book, Temples for a Modern God, his study of postwar religious architecture that came out with late 2012. Meanwhile, he and student Keith Wondra completed their latest Arcadia photo history, Wichita: 1930-2000, a book that came out in the spring of 2013 and benefits the Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum. In spring 2013, Price also learned that his promotion to full professor went through. This, along with taking the leap to leave renting in College Hill to purchase a 1950s ranch home in east Wichita, completed a very full 2012-2013 year.

Robert E. Weems, Jr. was involved in a variety of activities during the past year. In August, 2012, he joined the Kansas Humanities Council’s Speakers Bureau. As part of the current theme of “The Way We Worked,” Weems subsequently gave a presentation entitled “African American Work Beyond Menial Slave Labor, Sharecropping, and Industrial Occupations” to audiences in Atchison, Parsons, Hutchinson, and Shawnee. Another statewide activity involved his contributing an article entitled “Spending Power and Wealth Accumulation Are Not The Same: An Overview of African American Economic History Since The 1960s” to The State of African Americans in Kansas 2013 published by the Kansas African American Affairs Commission and the Urban League of Kansas, Inc. Speaking of publications, he has received an advance contract from the University of Illinois Press for a co-edited book entitled Building The Black Metropolis: African American Entrepreneurship in Chicago. Also, during the past year, Weems started doing periodic commentary for KMUW, Wichita’s public radio station (for their “Past and Present” series). Finally, he made steady progress on two major ongoing projects: his biography of the noted African American entrepreneur Anthony Overton and his “Wichita African American Business History Project” where he is compiling data related to local black entrepreneurship that will ultimately be housed in Special Collections in Ablah Library.
Sara Ann Brown, BA
2008, graduated from the University of Texas School of Law in 2011. She is currently an associate attorney at Gardere Wynne Sewell in Dallas, Texas, where is practices complex commercial litigation. Prior to joining Gardere, she was a law clerk for the Honorable Harry Lee Hudspeth, United States District Court for the Western District of Texas.

Lawrence P. Buck, BA, 1966, recently retired from Widener University’s history department. He is professor emeritus, after serving as provost of the university for 20 years. In October, he presented a paper at the Sixteenth Century Society Conference entitled "John Barthlet's The Pedegrewe of Heretiques (1566): A Protestant Response to Catholic Apologists during the Great Controversy."

Scott Foens, BA, 1994, is Land Systems Manager for the City of Cedar Rapids. He spends his free time Motorcycle riding, enjoying time with children, and correcting mis-representations on social media by partisans pushing their agenda rather than demonstrating fidelity to the past.

Tammy Zimmerman King, BA, 2007, currently works at a financial investment firm in Wichita, KS. She recently wrote and published the biography, *Blinded by His Shadow*, about her grandfather’s life in western Kansas and service in Europe during World War II. Her passion is to research and preserve family history so the stories of these great, yet normal Americans may never be forgotten.

Ben Koker, BA graduated with an MLS from Emporia State University in 2005 after having completed a year abroad at Smolny Institute, St. Petersburg State University, Russia. He went into public libraries initially, working for the Wichita Public Library, but had hoped to transition to academic/research institutions eventually. Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately in hindsight), after several years working within public libraries, he decided it wasn’t a good fit, so in 2007, he took a risk and went to work as a technical support representative for a tax software company, CCH. He was quickly promoted within the team and within a year, received a job as a Software Training Consultant, that offered the opportunity to travel across the country installing software and training IT professionals how to use CCH products.

He stuck with that career for 5 years and excelled from a "Software Consultant" to a "Senior Software Consultant," and finally to a "Technical Software Consultant." In part, this was due to strong communication skills, these traits he can directly attribute to my education at WSU, and particularly within my history courses and Russian language study, including my term abroad.

Finally, last summer he decided it was time for another challenge and left CCH to begin freelance technical consulting, but was offered a permanent position as an IT Systems Administrator for West Linn Paper Company in West Linn Oregon, a suburb of Portland. There are big challenges within that organization as it struggles to be more streamlined, current in technology and efficient, without creating significant costs to the production bottom line.

Outside of work, he and his partner of 8 years (Anne Tran) travel abroad at least twice a year, spending around a month outside the US in total. Their most recent trips have been to Saigon and Hue, Vietnam; Istanbul and several amazing cities around southwestern Turkey; the south of France, including Cannes and Nice; a trip to Machu Picchu, and a quick trip to Amsterdam, not to mention MANY weekend getaways to our favorite Pacific Northwestern city, Vancouver, BC. We love to travel and will likely move abroad one day.

He is a big outdoor junkie, living in the Pac NW and is an avid, amateur photographer, volunteering for several organizations in the Portland area as a marketing/promotions photographer, as well as just documenting all of our travels. He is also BIG into home brewing and currently have a delicious Belgian Witbier on tap, and a light Hefe on deck.

Tony Lubbers, MA, 1998, is currently serving as Assistant Director of Financial Aid at Friends University. He is married with two kids and three grandkids. He has also kept busy in his spare time as an Adjunct Faculty member at Butler Community College, Baker University, and Friends University. Most of his teaching is done on survey courses (U.S. History 1 and 2, Western Civ 1 and 2), but he has taught some interesting elective courses (History of the American Presidency, The Great Depression and World War Two, and The JFK Assassination among others). He is currently the President of the Kansas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (KASFAA).

Carl Lund, MA, 2010, has finished his first year as Assistant Professor of Education at McPherson College. He is pursuing his EdD in Educational Technology from Boise State University. He also began work as an online
adjunct instructor for Allen County Community College, teaching courses in English and geography, and continues to serve as an adjunct instructor of English for Butler Community College.

**Ryan Keith Meyer, BA 2007,** graduated from Washburn University School of Law in 2010. Following law school, he served as a law clerk for the Honorable J. Thomas Marten of the United States District Court for the District of Kansas in Wichita (2010-2012). He currently practices law with the Wichita law firm of Fleeson, Goosing, Coulson & Kitch, L.L.C.

**Matthew Namee, BA, 2009,** graduated from the University of Kansas law school in December 2012 and is an associate attorney with the Employee Benefits department at Hinkle Law Firm in Wichita. He also serves on the board of the Society for Orthodox Christian History in the Americas.

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**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: [history.wichita.edu](http://history.wichita.edu) and please let us know if it is okay for us to include your activities on that page!

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**In Memoriam**

The department was saddened to learn that Charles A. Spears, passed away March 13, 2013. Charles graduated from Wichita University (now Wichita State University) in 1963 with a Bachelor of Arts in Education with a major in history. and was president of the campus chapter of the NAACP, being active in picketing of local businesses that discriminated in their hiring. While there, Charles met the person who a couple of decades later would become his loving life partner, Grace McIlvain, also an alum of Wichita State.

Spears served in the U.S. Army in Germany from 1963 to 1966 and afterward, lived for a short time in Sweden. In 1967, moved to New York City. He became editor of the Harlem News received a master’s degree in Comparative International Education from Columbia University. In the 1970s, he became Assistant Professor of African History and Director of Black Curriculum Development at Hobart College. He then moved to the Bay Area, where he was Head of Ethnic Studies at Golden Gate University.

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**The story of an alum: Ken Spurgeon**


With his ties to the reenacting community, Spurgeon was able to bring in individuals who valued accuracy in their clothing, weapons and manners. Among them was 2012 alum, Judy Welfelt. Spurgeon has been able to enlist the services of western actor Buck Taylor to do narration. Country star Michael Martin Murphey is doing a recording for *Road to Valhalla*.

More challenging, however, has been learning the techniques and logistics of filmmaking, from nuances of lighting and sound to long, agonizing hours in the editing room. Simply arranging actors, horses, equipment, and supplies at film locations, such as at Old Cowtown Museum, has been a learning experience.

Now with *Road to Valhalla* set to come out in 2014, Spurgeon's reputation as a local filmmaker has been set. He has taken his experience at WSU and shared his knowledge and passion with audiences across the state and beyond!
