Department mourns two colleagues

Two long-time faculty members died at the end of spring semester. David Chesebrough 72, died on April 29, and Lawrence McBride, 58, died four days later on May 3.

Chesebrough had retired in May 2002, and battled cancer in his final months. McBride fell ill in early spring of 2003 when he was diagnosed with a brain tumor that finally took his life.

Chesebrough came to the department in 1988 after completing his Doctor of Arts degree here, filling the lead undergraduate advisor position and increasing teaching—history surveys, world religions, 20th century U.S. history, great figures, Civil War, and Lincoln. In 1995 he was picked to receive the Herb Sanders Award for outstanding advising, given by the University.

Chesebrough came to history after serving as a Baptist minister in various churches across the Midwest from 1958 to 1988. He drew on his interest in religion in turning out seven books in his years in the department, as well as numerous articles. His favorite book remained ‘No Sorrow like Our Sorrow’: Northern Protestant Ministers and the Assassination of Lincoln, published in 1994.

Chesebrough’s funeral was May 5 at the First Baptist Church of Bloomington. He is survived by one daughter, Brenda (Mike) Boscarino; one son, Timothy Chesebrough; a brother and one grandson.

McBride received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1978, and came to the department in 1986.

Department Chairperson John Freed praised McBride’s leadership in the programs and scholarship. “He was both a highly regarded scholar of Irish history and an internationally recognized expert in the field of history education,” Freed said. “Under his leadership our history education program became the largest in the country and a model for others to emulate.”

The Four-Courts Press in Dublin, Ireland, immediately posted a notice on their Web site that noted “Dr. McBride’s love of Ireland and Irish history, particularly 19th-century Ireland, was shown in his numerous visits to the island and the many friendships he established.” He co-edited two books for the Four-Courts Press, but was best known for his 1991 work, The Greening of Dublin Castle: The Transformation of Bureaucratic and Judicial Personnel in Ireland, 1892-1922.

McBride is survived by his wife, Sandra; his father, Lawrence; two children, Lawrence B. McBride and Brigid R. McBride; four sisters, and one brother. A funeral Mass was celebrated May 7 at Holy Trinity Church in Bloomington.

The Lawrence McBride Scholarship is being established to provide awards to history education and social science education students. Donations for the scholarship endowment may be sent to the Illinois State University Foundation, with a memo note for “Lawrence McBride Student Education Award, account #442-5788.”

Ross, Wyman, and Davis retire

By Amy Wood

Three more veterans of the department have begun their retirements this summer: Charles Ross, Mark Wyman, and Don Davis.

For Charles Ross, our academic advisor for history education majors, this transition marks his second retirement. After ending a 27-year career as a high school history teacher, Ross began working for the history education program in 1996. He has worked as a supervisor of student teachers, an intern coordinator, and as the academic advisor for history education students. He quickly became celebrated for this knowledge of the ins and outs of the catalog and registration process. His dedication to his work and to his students has been invaluable to the department.

Ross began his adulthood with aspirations to the ministry. After graduating from Southern Illinois University (SIU) with a degree in history, he studied theology at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School in New York for a year. Realizing that the ministry was not for him, but knowing that he enjoyed working with young people, he returned to SIU for his M.A. and teacher certification in history. He began
his teaching career in Shelbyville before moving to Monticello, where he taught for 20 years.

Ross and his wife, Lana, a reading recovery teacher, will continue to live in Monticello. He is looking forward to spending his days working on his family’s genealogy and cataloging family heirlooms. Retirement also will allow him to spend more time with his two children, Jennifer and Jonathon, and his six grandchildren.

Continuing his commitment to the history department, Ross has generously donated his unused vacation days to the student honorary, Phi Alpha Theta, as well as to the Larry McBride Student Education Award scholarship fund. In this light, the department is asking that gifts in his honor be made to Phi Alpha Theta or the McBride scholarship fund.

Teaching history also was a career change for Mark Wyman, who has taught U.S. labor and immigration history at Illinois State University since 1971. He is a Distinguished Professor, the highest honor the university can bestow upon a faculty member. Wyman actually began his career in newspaper work, ending up on the Minneapolis Tribune, before going on to the University of Washington and obtaining a Ph.D. in History.

His dissertation eventually became Hard-Rock Epic: Western Miners and the Industrial Revolution: 1860-1910, which was published in 1979 by the University of California Press. He eventually published six more books.

In addition to his scholarship, Wyman became known for his courses on “The Gilded Age” and “The Immigrant in American History.” His services to the department over the past 33 years have been invaluable, including his work as graduate advisor and as editor of this newsletter.

In addition to his wife, Eva, Wyman’s family consists of three children and twin granddaughters. His son, Dan, after several years of working as a labor organizer in Southern New England, is now a used book dealer in Springfield, Massachusetts. His daughter Ruth is attending law school at the University of Illinois, while her twin sister, Miriam, is studying for her doctorate in ecotourism at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

Donations can be made to a scholarship fund for freshmen of non-traditional age majoring in history. One of Wyman’s former students, Stephanie Booth, is a history professor and associate provost at Kent State University in Ohio, established this fund in his honor.

Don Davis, who has taught courses in Russian and Soviet history for 40 years, is perhaps the department’s longest-serving member ever. Teaching history at the university level also was a career change for Davis, who, after attending San Francisco State University, planned to become a high school history teacher. Instead, he entered graduate school at Indiana University, where he focused on Russian history, writing a dissertation on Lenin and theories of warfare.

A committed and challenging teacher, he was most renowned for his graduate seminar in modern Russian history. He also played an instrumental role in persuading Professor Helen Cavanagh to establish a scholarship fund for graduate students. And extending his academic interests in Cold War relations beyond the University, Davis promoted sister city exchanges between Bloomington-Normal and Vladimir, Russia.

Davis has written numerous articles on topics ranging from Lenin to Russian émigrés after the Bolshevik Revolution. More recently, he teamed up with Gene Trani, an American diplomatic historian and an old friend from graduate school, to author The First Cold War: The Legacy of Woodrow Wilson in U.S. Soviet Relations (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2002), which was well-received. The book was translated and published in Russia, with Olma Press, the second largest publishing company in Russia, and sold out its first printing there.

He is continuing to work with Trani on another monograph: Perception and Policy: American’s Sino-Soviet Relations, also with the University of Missouri Press.

His retirement will be spent continuing work on that project, mostly in the archives at Stanford University, which will allow him to visit with family and friends in the San Francisco area. Davis is married to Mary Davis, also retired from a career as an elementary school teacher and as the director of SHOWBUS, a rural transportation program serving five Illinois counties.

They have two children, a son, Charles, a graphic artist in Chicago, and a daughter, Peggy, an aspiring actress in New York, who also works as the director of physical fitness at the 92nd St. “Y”.

Davis has requested that gifts in his honor be made to the Helen Cavanagh Scholarship Fund for graduate students.

---

**Internship on Scouts**

Nathan Anastas, a history major, is sorting and cataloging material on the Boy Scouts in McLean County as part of his internship with the McLean County Historical Society. An Eagle Scout himself, Anastas will write a history of the scouts and their activities in McLean County school.
Student awards presented

Six students walked off with top awards and scholarships April 1st at the department’s annual Spring Awards Program.

James Amemasor and Van Furrh each took home a $1,375 check for the Helen M. Cavanagh Award for Best Master’s Degree Student. The award was instituted by the late Helen M. Cavanagh, emerita, who taught in the department for nearly 30 years. Amemasor also was named winner of the 50th Anniversary Charter Department Graduate Student Excellence Award for History.

Laura Nycz won the Ray Scholarship for a student in teacher education for $100, and the James Todd Wilborn Scholarships for Sophomores, of $125 each, went to Alex Boynton and Daniel Greer. Jessica Richards won the Kyle and Jean Sessions Honors Scholarship, for $500.

William Philpott, chair of the Awards Committee, was master of ceremonies. Other Awards Committee members who participated in the selection process were Susan Westbury, Sharon MacDonald, and Mark Wyman.

Two win honors at NIU

Two students from the department walked off with top honors April 17 at the regional Phi AlphaTheta conference at Northern Illinois University.

Harley Jones received the Best Graduate Paper Award for “The General Will: The Philosophical Debate in the 17th and 18th Century,” and Susan Crowe took top honors in the undergraduate paper division for “Beyond Their Sphere: Northern Women and Their Involvement in the Civil War.”


Chun travels to Korea

Master’s student Charles Chun is taking some time off from his studies to teach English in Seoul, South Korea. He is the first Korean-American to teach in the Boston Campus Foreign Language Institute.

He teaches eight classes a day to students drawn from ages 6 to 14. Older students are preparing for the Korean equivalent of the Test of English as a Foreign Language exam, on which they must receive a high score for admittance into a top university or to work with a major firm. Teachers are from South Africa, Australia, England, and Canada, in addition to the United States.

Chun wrote that while the work is “draining and the subject matter is not the most stimulating,” he enjoys it “immensely.” He enjoys living in Korea and—having found a “wonderful bookstore”—he intends to accumulate a library “to rival Dr. Tavakoli’s.”

Basu celebrates book publication

The politics of Indian jute workers in the Calcutta area are at the focus on a new book by Subho Basu. Entitled Does Class Matter? Colonial Capital and Workers’ Resistance in Bengal, 1890-1937, the book is published by Oxford University Press.

In the study, Basu challenges traditional interpretations of the jute workers as migrant peasants, instead finding them industrial workers who organized over specific issues. They actively defined their own politics, leading to a radicalization of workers’ issues that broadened Bengal’s anti-colonial struggles.

Basu was coeditor of two previous books, and author or coauthor of four articles. He joined the department in August 2002 after receiving his Ph.D. from England’s Cambridge University. He later taught at Cambridge, at the University of London, and at the College of St. Mark and St. John, which is affiliated with the University of Exeter.

He teaches non-Western history, South Asia, peace history, global studies, and historiography for the department.

Subho Basu

Laura Nycz won the Ray Scholarship for a student in teacher education for $100, and the James Todd Wilborn Scholarships for Sophomores, of $125 each, went to Alex Boynton and Daniel Greer. Jessica Richards won the Kyle and Jean Sessions Honors Scholarship, for $500.

William Philpott, chair of the Awards Committee, was master of ceremonies. Other Awards Committee members who participated in the selection process were Susan Westbury, Sharon MacDonald, and Mark Wyman.

Two students from the department walked off with top honors April 17 at the regional Phi Alpha Theta conference at Northern Illinois University.

Harley Jones received the Best Graduate Paper Award for “The General Will: The Philosophical Debate in the 17th and 18th Century,” and Susan Crowe took top honors in the undergraduate paper division for “Beyond Their Sphere: Northern Women and Their Involvement in the Civil War.”


Master’s student Charles Chun is taking some time off from his studies to teach English in Seoul, South Korea. He is the first Korean-American to teach in the Boston Campus Foreign Language Institute.

He teaches eight classes a day to students drawn from ages 6 to 14. Older students are preparing for the Korean equivalent of the Test of English as a Foreign Language exam, on which they must receive a high score for admittance into a top university or to work with a major firm. Teachers are from South Africa, Australia, England, and Canada, in addition to the United States.

Chun wrote that while the work is “draining and the subject matter is not the most stimulating,” he enjoys it “immensely.” He enjoys living in Korea and—having found a “wonderful bookstore”—he intends to accumulate a library “to rival Dr. Tavakoli’s.”

The politics of Indian jute workers in the Calcutta area are at the focus on a new book by Subho Basu. Entitled Does Class Matter? Colonial Capital and Workers’ Resistance in Bengal, 1890-1937, the book is published by Oxford University Press.

In the study, Basu challenges traditional interpretations of the jute workers as migrant peasants, instead finding them industrial workers who organized over specific issues. They actively defined their own politics, leading to a radicalization of workers’ issues that broadened Bengal’s anti-colonial struggles.

Basu was coeditor of two previous books, and author or coauthor of four articles. He joined the department in August 2002 after receiving his Ph.D. from England’s Cambridge University. He later taught at Cambridge, at the University of London, and at the College of St. Mark and St. John, which is affiliated with the University of Exeter.

He teaches non-Western history, South Asia, peace history, global studies, and historiography for the department.

Subho Basu

Two students from the department walked off with top honors April 17 at the regional Phi Alpha Theta conference at Northern Illinois University.

Harley Jones received the Best Graduate Paper Award for “The General Will: The Philosophical Debate in the 17th and 18th Century,” and Susan Crowe took top honors in the undergraduate paper division for “Beyond Their Sphere: Northern Women and Their Involvement in the Civil War.”


Master’s student Charles Chun is taking some time off from his studies to teach English in Seoul, South Korea. He is the first Korean-American to teach in the Boston Campus Foreign Language Institute.

He teaches eight classes a day to students drawn from ages 6 to 14. Older students are preparing for the Korean equivalent of the Test of English as a Foreign Language exam, on which they must receive a high score for admittance into a top university or to work with a major firm. Teachers are from South Africa, Australia, England, and Canada, in addition to the United States.

Chun wrote that while the work is “draining and the subject matter is not the most stimulating,” he enjoys it “immensely.” He enjoys living in Korea and—having found a “wonderful bookstore”—he intends to accumulate a library “to rival Dr. Tavakoli’s.”

The politics of Indian jute workers in the Calcutta area are at the focus on a new book by Subho Basu. Entitled Does Class Matter? Colonial Capital and Workers’ Resistance in Bengal, 1890-1937, the book is published by Oxford University Press.

In the study, Basu challenges traditional interpretations of the jute workers as migrant peasants, instead finding them industrial workers who organized over specific issues. They actively defined their own politics, leading to a radicalization of workers’ issues that broadened Bengal’s anti-colonial struggles.

Basu was coeditor of two previous books, and author or coauthor of four articles. He joined the department in August 2002 after receiving his Ph.D. from England’s Cambridge University. He later taught at Cambridge, at the University of London, and at the College of St. Mark and St. John, which is affiliated with the University of Exeter.

He teaches non-Western history, South Asia, peace history, global studies, and historiography for the department.

Subho Basu

Two students from the department walked off with top honors April 17 at the regional Phi Alpha Theta conference at Northern Illinois University.

Harley Jones received the Best Graduate Paper Award for “The General Will: The Philosophical Debate in the 17th and 18th Century,” and Susan Crowe took top honors in the undergraduate paper division for “Beyond Their Sphere: Northern Women and Their Involvement in the Civil War.”


Master’s student Charles Chun is taking some time off from his studies to teach English in Seoul, South Korea. He is the first Korean-American to teach in the Boston Campus Foreign Language Institute.

He teaches eight classes a day to students drawn from ages 6 to 14. Older students are preparing for the Korean equivalent of the Test of English as a Foreign Language exam, on which they must receive a high score for admittance into a top university or to work with a major firm. Teachers are from South Africa, Australia, England, and Canada, in addition to the United States.

Chun wrote that while the work is “draining and the subject matter is not the most stimulating,” he enjoys it “immensely.” He enjoys living in Korea and—having found a “wonderful bookstore”—he intends to accumulate a library “to rival Dr. Tavakoli’s.”

The politics of Indian jute workers in the Calcutta area are at the focus on a new book by Subho Basu. Entitled Does Class Matter? Colonial Capital and Workers’ Resistance in Bengal, 1890-1937, the book is published by Oxford University Press.

In the study, Basu challenges traditional interpretations of the jute workers as migrant peasants, instead finding them industrial workers who organized over specific issues. They actively defined their own politics, leading to a radicalization of workers’ issues that broadened Bengal’s anti-colonial struggles.

Basu was coeditor of two previous books, and author or coauthor of four articles. He joined the department in August 2002 after receiving his Ph.D. from England’s Cambridge University. He later taught at Cambridge, at the University of London, and at the College of St. Mark and St. John, which is affiliated with the University of Exeter.

He teaches non-Western history, South Asia, peace history, global studies, and historiography for the department.
Faculty achievements grow


“We were Green as Grass’: Learning about Sex and Reproduction in Three Working-class Lancashire Communities, 1900-1970,” by Lucinda Beier, appeared in Social History of Medicine, 16:3, 461-480. Beier talked May 1st on “The Transformation of Popular Health Culture in a Midwestern Community, 1910-1960”, before the American Association of the History of Medicine, in Madison, Wisconsin.

Issam Nassar was guest editor of a special issue of Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East on Palestinian historiography, recently released. History of Photography for winter 2003 published his essay, “Early Photography in Jerusalem: From the Imaginary to the Social Landscape.”

Erfurt University in Germany heard Nassar’s paper on “Writing the History of Palestinian Nationalism: Problems facing the Historian,” as part of a seminar on historical anthropology in January. He also talked that month on “War Photography: Reflections on the Photography of the War of 1948” at the Townhouse Gallery in Cairo, Egypt. Two other recent papers were “al-Nakba as National Trauma: The Place of the Events of 1948 in Palestinian Historiography” presented at the Trauma and Memory Conference in December at Bar Ilan University, and “Is Binationalism a Solution for the Palestine/Israel Conflict?”, presented in November at the ninth Karl Polanyi Conference at Concordia University in Canada.

New director of History Graduate Studies is Patrice Olsen. She replaced Mark Wyman, who retired.

Fred Drake presented a paper at a 12-nation international civic education conference, New Challenges in Democracy Education in the New Europe: Global Perspectives, in March in Vilnius, Lithuania. His paper was “Civic Education Models: Historical Thinking and Civic Education.” Later in March, Drake presided and provided comment at the Boston meeting of the Organization of American Historians, on “History Departments and Teacher Education: Past, Present, and Future.”

A $14,000 Japan Foundation grant went to Louis J. Perez recently to help support the Midwest Japan Seminar. He also was appointed by the Japanese Consulate in Chicago to serve on the executive committee of Japanese English Teachers (JET). In that role, Perez helped select 250 U.S. post-graduate students to teach in Japan from 2,132 candidates.

Also, Perez has been renamed to the National Endowment for the Humanities selection committee on summer programs and institutes. On the speakers’ circuit, Perez was an invited speaker at Knox College in Galesburg on February 14, presenting “A Celebration of the Scholarship of Mikiso Hane.” On March 17 he spoke at the Indiana University Seminar for Secondary School Teachers, run by colleague Richard Pearce, presenting “Teaching Japanese History Through Ukiyo-e.”


Agbenyega (Tony) Adedze is the new director of the University’s Unit for African Studies.

William Philpott won the 2003-2004 Hilliard Fellowship for research in the Denver Public Library’s Conservation Collection. Philpott’s current book project looks at the mass tourist development in Colorado after World War II.

Amy Wood presented “A Genuine Lycning Scene: Moving Pictures and Southern Crowds” at the American Studies Association Meeting in Hartford, Connecticut, last October.

Dvorak wins

The prestigious Clarence W. Sorensen Distinguished Dissertation award was granted to Andrew L. Dvorak, D.A. ’03. The $500 check and plaque were presented during a noon hour ceremony on April 5.

Dvorak’s dissertation is titled “Rendezvous with Death: The Assassination of President Kennedy and the Question of Conspiracy.” In writing the department’s final D.A. dissertation, because the program was discontinued, Dvorak chose to examine all known conspiracy theories and trace their origins, use of evidence, and results. He concludes that the single-assassin theory focused on Lee Harvey Oswald appears most supported by evidence.

Dvorak teaches at Highland Community College in Freeport. His original advisers were Ed Schapsmeier and L. Moody Simms, now both retired.

Annual institute draws 125

The 20th annual Institute on History & Social Sciences drew 125 participants to the University on March 15 from nearby high schools and community colleges and from Illinois State’s history education program. One participant drove from Ohio, but others represented distant areas of Illinois—Edwardsville, Macomb, Danville, Chicago, and points in between.

The theme was “Immigrants: Dangerous Aliens or New Americans?” Two department faculty, Mark Wyman and Kyle Ciani, opened the morning: Wyman spoke on “Historians and Immigrants: The Melting Pot, the Salad Bowl, and Beyond,” and Ciani followed with “Integrating Immigrant History into the Classroom.”

The classroom application section followed with a session led by Kelly Keogh, Gretchen Snow, and Latishia Baker of Normal Community High School.

Grants awarded

Four historians have been granted unrestricted research grants by the University. They are Kyle Ciani, Summer Faculty Fellowship; Ray Clemens, Faculty Research Award; Ross Kennedy, Pre-Tenure Faculty Initiative Grant; and Amy Wood, New Faculty Initiative.
The alumni record: activities and honors

John Thomas Williamson '02 is a land management specialist with the Alaskan Department of Natural Resources in Anchorage. He and his wife, Tammy, live in Anchorage.

A full-time job with the State of Nevada as a family services specialist will soon be sharing time with law school classes for Tammy Counts '95. She has been accepted by the William S. Boyd School of Law at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, to start in the fall. Intellectual Property is her major interest.

After conducting some 25 oral history interviews with the oldest families in Bloomington’s Holy Trinity Parish, Eileen M. Kanzler, D.A. '82, is revising the interviews for publication in a book on the church’s sesquicentennial.

After moving back to her native Ireland, Gillian O’Shea '00 completed her master’s degree in early modern history in April 2003 at the National University of Ireland, and is planning to eventually go on for a Ph.D. Her thesis was on Irish convict transportation to the colonies in the 17th and 18th centuries. She is working at the National Print Museum in Dublin, teaching adult trainees in history and heritage courses, while developing the museum’s education program and a new interpretation plan.

Retirement for Jack B. Nicholson, D.A. '80, will mean six months in Hawaii every year, as well as continued work on historical records with local organizations in Anderson, Indiana. He closed out his third term as Madison County historian and president of the county's historical society in 2001. Earlier, in 1998, Nicholson was granted the Elwood H. Phillips Award in History, as well as the Purdue University Crystal Apple Award as an outstanding teacher and local civics leader (the only non-Purdue alumnus to receive the award). In 1999, he served as grand marshal of Anderson’s 27th annual Victorian Gaslight Festival.

Steve Shute '74, of Oswego, Illinois, reports he is "doing well with the General Services Administration"—and that he is “very glad to see that Professor Earl Reitan is alive and well and enjoying retirement!”

Opportunities to teach abroad have helped Matt Popovich '98 see several new regions of the world. However, after teaching for two years at the American School of Alexandria, Egypt, he is considering returning to school himself to obtain a history master's degree.

Joseph Smith Academy in Nauvoo heard David Harbin M.S. '02 speak on "Brigham and the Brigadeer: Mormon Involvement in the War Between the States," on April 13. Harbin teaches at John Wood Community College in Quincy.

Thirty-three years of teaching American history and sociology at Thornridge High School closed out last year for John A. Mikemas '70. He lives in Brookfield, Illinois.

Living at 7,000 feet in the Himalayas, Marcus Johnson '98 writes that he is teaching—actually in my subject area, what a shock!”—at the Woodstock School, a Christian International School in Mussoorie (UA), India.

In his eighth year as academic dean and teacher at Judah Christian High School in Champaign, Rick D. Williams '91, M.S. '94, also is active in Illinois Capitol Forum, which prepares students to participate in a statewide forum on international affairs. A resident of Mahomet, Williams teaches world affairs, civics, and classics.

Scholarship funds

Gifts in honor of Charles Ross can be made to Phi Alpha Theta through the History office; and gifts can be made to the Larry McBride Scholarship Fund through the Illinois State University Foundation.

Gifts in honor of Mark Wyman can be made to: Mark Wyman Scholarship through the Illinois State University Foundation.

Gifts in honor of Don Davis can be made to the Helen Cavanagh Scholarship Fund through the Illinois State University Foundation.

The foundation’s address is: Illinois State University Foundation, Campus Box 8000, Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61790-8000.

Olsen project selected

A $2,000 grant for the Cuba beyond Borders project was announced at the end of the semester for Patrice Olsen.

The grant, from the Center for the Advancement of Teaching (CAT), will be used for preparing both Olsen’s new course on Cuba and her projected student trip to Cuba. She also was honored by the Student Education Association, which, after soliciting student nominations and comments, recognized her as “one of the best” in history teaching.

Please send your e-mail address

Illinois State University, seeking new ways to communicate with its more than 150,000 alumni, is asking graduates to report their e-mail addresses if they have them.

Please update your information online, with e-mail or other new information, at: www.illinoisstate.onlinecommunity.com/updateuserinfo.htm.
Reitan book published

“My book is a book of passion, and I hope it arouses a similar passion in others, because without passion there will be no action.” With these words retired Professor Earl Reitan described his latest book, Liberalism: Time-Tested Principles for the Twenty-First Century.

The book, published by iUniverse, Inc., in New York, goes into the development and interplay of liberalism, liberal nationalism, economic liberalism, and conservatism, and examines controversies over foreign policy and war and liberals’ goals and activities in these.


Liberalism is available at Barnes & Noble bookstores as well as online at Amazon.com and iUniverse.com.

Student takes break—in Uzbekistan

An urgent call in September 2001 pulled James Shea out of class, out of his job at the Peoria Children’s Home, and into homeland security duty with the 182nd Air National Guard Security Forces Squadron — just as classes had begun. A year later, the history graduate student was in Uzbekistan, where he served for three months, returning in December 2002.

Shea’s job was to provide security for U.S. air bases in both the United States and central Asia. From the base in Uzbekistan Shea’s unit also flew “FAST” (fly away security team) missions into Afghanistan. Primarily a Combat Arms Instructor with the 182nd, in Uzbekistan he stood guard, searched people entering the base, provided protection to dignitaries including Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson, and encountered “very friendly” people who were veterans of different Soviet campaigns during the Cold War. Old Soviet airplanes parked at the base still showed evidence where the local citizenry had rubbed out the Communist nation’s red star insignia on each. Shea said he met “tons” of different people — locals as well as aircrews from Holland, Spain, and Norway. A star performer who visited the base was Robin Williams, who autographed Shea’s bagpipes with instructions on how to use them.

Colloquium draws teachers

Six historians led book discussions with 45 high school history teachers during the past school year under a program launched by Fred Drake and the late Lawrence McBride. This is the third year for the project.

Under the program, up to 20 high school teachers from across the state went to the McLean County Museum of History on specific dates to spend the day discussing an important book selected earlier. On May 1 all participants met at Pekin High School to go over their use of the books in classes.

The department’s participants, and the books used, were: Linda Clemmons, Tony Horwitz’s Confederates in the Attic; Anthony Crumbaugh, Madison Smartt Bell’s All Souls’ Rising; Lucinda Beier, Nancy Tomes’ The Gospel of Germs: Men, Women, and the Microbe in American Life; Mark Wyman, Kenneth Barnes’s Who Killed John Clayton: Political Violence and the Emergence of the New South, 1861-1893; Ross Kennedy, William Stueck’s Rethinking the Korean War; Greg Koos, adjunct member of the department who is director of the McLean County Historical Society, Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelan’s The Presence of the Past: Popular Use of History in American Life.

Women’s Studies Symposium held

The ninth annual Women’s Studies Symposium on March 26 featured student and faculty papers and panels and a talk by New York University Professor Berenice Malka Fisher.

The symposium marked the final major event carried out with Sandra Harmon as interim director of Women’s Studies. She retired from the position in May, a year after retiring from the History Department.

History student Marc Helgeson and recent graduate Beth Stevens read papers. Helgeson talked on “Phyllis Schlafly and the ERA: The Empowered Anti-Feminist Conservataive,” and Stevens’s paper was “R.A.W.A.: The Struggle for Women’s Rights in Afghanistan.”
Mentoring feted

A program to assist incoming non-traditional women students, founded and led by several History Department staff, faculty, and recent graduates, has won the 2004 Team Excellence Award of $3,000 from the University.

Known as the Illinois State University Women’s Mentoring Network, the program was set up last fall by Julie Ruby, office staff head for the department; Teri Farr ’92, M.S. ’95, academic advisor for the Department of Sociology & Anthropology; Sandra Harmon, retired department professor serving as acting head of Women’s Studies, and Patrice Olsen, professor. Molly Munson-Dryer, an administrative professional who works in teacher education, also is a mentor, as is Terri Ryburn-LaMonte ’85, M.S. ’88, D.A. ’99, assistant director of the University’s School of Kinesiology and Recreation, and Anita Revelev ’95, M.S. ’97, coordinator of public service programs.

Ruby explained that the program provides one-on-one mentoring to non-traditional women students along with a variety of academic and social programming during the semester. The program furnishes an information network to help students cut through any red tape they are experiencing. Some 45 mentors work in the program, which was launched after a questionnaire showed a need for such services. The group plans to use the award to offer an all-day conference in the fall, and to prepare a resource booklet for entering students.

State Department alumnus to retire

A master’s graduate who rose to become an historian with the U.S. Department of State, serving as an editor of the prestigious Foreign Relations series, is preparing for retirement and the chance to write histories drawn from the information he compiled.

Louis J. Smith, M.A. ’67, was editor or coeditor of 19 volumes of the Foreign Relations of the United States series, ranging from the first on Africa and South Asia for 1952-54, to Cuba and the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1961-64, and concluding with the volume on South Asia 1969-72, in progress.

Along the way Smith wrote two books and a major article for the State Department: United States Policy toward the Panama Canal (1976); Yorktown: Cornerstone of Independence (1981); and “The United States and Afghanistan,” Department of State Bulletin (March 1982).

Smith taught at the University from 1969-70 as an instructor of modern European history before going on to receive his Ph.D. from Michigan State in 1977.

In a recent letter to his Illinois State University mentor Earl Reitan, Smith praised the University for preparing him for his future career as well as noting that he formed “a number of enduring friendships” here.

Smith also praised Reitan, calling him “the best of all of the professors with whom I studied during my graduate career,” who “had the most influence on my professional development.” This included an interest in British history and learning “the historian’s craft,” Smith added.

Faculty honored on Founders’ Day

Frederick Drake won the 2003-2004 Outstanding University Teacher Award, which was presented at the annual Founders’ Day Convocation on February 19.

Drake’s award led a list of department members who walked off with top honors in university competitions. Anthony Crubaugh received the Research Initiative Award, and Ray Clemens was named College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teacher in the Social Sciences. Crubaugh had earlier won the Arts and Sciences Teaching Initiative Award.

In naming Drake as one of the two Outstanding University Teachers this year, the selection committee noted that he has gained national attention both in building the history education program and in teaching and writing about human rights. He has won large grants in support of the history education program, including last year’s grant from State Farm Insurance for the Illinois Institute for Civic Education. Earlier grants to Drake and his colleague Lawrence McBride were from the U.S. Department of Education, the National Council for Education and the Disciplines, and the National Council for History.

Phi Alpha Theta taps six

Six students were initiated into the University’s Phi Alpha Theta chapter at the start of the April 1 Spring Awards Program. Sharon MacDonald, chief adviser, led the program. The initiates were: Mark Brandstetter, Amanda Jayne Polley, Heather Friedman, Michael J. Hanley, Robert W. Morgan, and Daniel B. Stecken.
Let us know your history!

Send your news to the newsletter.

Name (maiden if appropriate) ____________________________________________

Graduation year(s), degree(s) ____________________________________________

Mailing address _________________________________________________________

City, state, zip __________________________________________________________

E-mail address __________________________________________________________

Your news ____________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Send to: Illinois State University, Department of History, Today & Yesterday, Campus Box 4420, Normal, IL 61790-4420.