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# The Historian

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

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## GREETINGS

Spring semester is always a busy time for the department, and this year it seemed especially so. Ten history majors and three history M.A. candidates graduated at the spring commencement. The Department is proud of this talented graduating class. Graduates are listed in the box on this page.

For the last time, the annual History Forum convened in the spring semester. The History Forum, long a fixture on the University's spring calendar, will move to the fall semester in 1999. The change will move the Forum from the University's hectic spring schedule to the fall, when there are fewer conflicts. An article elsewhere in the newsletter describes the very successful 1998 Forum, managed by Dr. Martin and Dr. Boucher, and the plans for bringing speakers to campus this fall under the direction of Dr. Baird and Dr. Martin. This fall's speakers will constitute a transition program, leading to a full Forum in the fall of 1999.

The Department is excited about the approval of new multimedia equipment for use in Western Civilization classes. Dr. Waring researched multi-media equipment, and put together a system that should meet our needs very well. The money for the purchase came from funds donated to the university by UAH history graduate John Hendricks, the founder and CEO of the Discovery Channel.

Other developments of this very busy spring are detailed in articles throughout this newsletter. Among these are the initiation of a Phi Alpha Theta oral history project that will record the recollections of people who were here in the early years of the University. Another important development is university approval of changes in the requirements for the history M.A. In our next newsletter we hope to highlight the activities of history alumni. Please let us know what you've been up to. You can email me at [dunara@email.uah.edu](mailto:dunara@email.uah.edu), or drop us a note: History Department, University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL 35899. We look forward to hearing from you!

Andrew J. Dunar, Chair

## CYBERNETIC CLIO!

A new initiative of the

### 1998 Graduates

#### B.A. Degrees

Angel Copas  
Sahid Fawaz  
Umber Haider  
Kevin Hood  
David Lescarini  
Eric McGee  
John McKerley  
Jennifer Pelletier  
Kevin Pezanno  
Staci Rigsby

#### M.A. Degrees

David Gale  
Joseph Green  
Morris Williams

History Department is to add

computers and multimedia to its instruction, especially in its survey courses in the history of Western Civilization and the United States. We have recently received support from the UAH Administration to use part of the John Hendricks endowment to equip Roberts Hall 412 for multimedia presentations. We hope to begin using the re-equipped room with its computer, multi-media projector, and a sound system by the fall semester 1998.

Multimedia presentations in history classes are becoming increasingly common on campuses across the country. Multimedia uses images and audio/video clips derived from digital information in a computer file. The technology allows instructors to edit quickly and make presentations of visual images, maps, moving pictures, animations, sounds, and texts. Instructors can use multimedia to expand dramatically the sorts of information available in the classroom and thus to enhance the quality of the students' learning environment. Moreover, our students, who have grown up with video games and the internet (and even History Channel documentaries), and who live in a high-tech town and attend a high-tech university, expect multimedia experiences in the classroom.

The department's instructors will use information from the World Wide Web and from cd-roms (we are beginning a collection of cd-roms for classroom use). We look forward to enhancing the classroom experience of our students by

showing such things as dynamic maps of national borders or three-dimensional virtual tours of ancient cities.

## Professor Waring Wins UAH Foundation Award

Professor Stephen Waring, associate professor of history, received one of the UAH Foundation Distinguished Teaching Awards at a special convocation on April 23. The Foundation credited Dr. Waring in the following citation in the convocation program:

“Dr. Waring came to UAH in 1988, having completed his doctorate at the University of Iowa. He teaches courses in American history, western civilizations, and management and policy. His primary goal as a teacher ‘is to encourage intellectual independence in students.’ Dr. Waring is proficient in the use of instructional technology and shares his knowledge with colleagues in the department. He is among the first in the college to establish an e-mail discussion network among students in his classes. Cited by faculty and students for ‘engendering enthusiasm’ for learning, Dr. Waring provides an objective and balanced approach to the subject matter he teaches, and leads students in ‘honest discussion without intimidation or condescension.’ Under his leadership as faculty advisor, the UAH chapter of Phi Alpha Theta won national recognition.”



Dr. Stephen Waring, UAH Foundation Distinguished Teaching Award

## STUDENT AWARDS

Spring traditionally gives the Department an opportunity to reward student achievements of the past year at the Undergraduate Honors Convocation, and to nominate students for departmental scholarships for the coming year.

Eric McGee accepted the award as the outstanding history graduate at the undergraduate honors convocation in April. For many years two organizations of the Colonial Dames have presented awards to UAH history majors at the honors convocation. This year Kevin Hood received an award from the Colonel Walter Aston Chapter of the Colonial Dames of the XVII Century award, which each year goes to an outstanding history major who is planning to pursue a teaching career and has a particular interest in American history. Each year the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Alabama presents an essay award to a history major for an essay dealing with a topic in American colonial history. Julie Lollar won the award this year for her essay “Dystopia in Colonial Georgia, 1738-45 .”

The department awards two undergraduate scholarships

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each year. The Frances Roberts scholarship, named for the founder and first chair of the Department, went to Michael Shane Bjornlie. The John Hendricks scholarship was endowed by the UAH history major who founded and now administers the Discovery Channel. This year the department split the Hendricks award, awarding equal portions to Michael Linder and Julie Lollar.

### SENIOR SEMINAR JOURNAL

Nine students completed HY 490, the history seminar course. Their papers will be published in volume 2 of the UAH *Journal of Graduate and Undergraduate Research in History* begun last year. Interviews with professors recorded as part of the Phi Alpha Theta oral history project will be included in next year’s journal.

### PHI ALPHA THETA

UAH’s Tau Omega Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta had an active fall and spring under the presidency of Staci Rigsby, starting with the planning of an oral history project that will document the early days of UAH through interviews of individuals who played roles in the founding of the University.

In December, Phi Alpha Theta hosted its annual Christmas party at Dr. Gerberding’s castle, followed on February 20th by a successful initiation ceremony held at the Noojin House. The 1997-98 initiates are Donald Combest, Kimberly Deal-Giblin, Thomas J. Lawton, Raymond Lykins, Deborah Nelson, Duane Roggendorff, and Erik Templeman. The speaker was Dr. Sue W. Kirkpatrick, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

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Throughout February, Phi Alpha Theta assisted with the introduction of speakers and hosting of receptions for the four lectures given in this year's History Forum on Islam. As part of the UAH Spring Festival, the Society sponsored a book sale, whose proceeds are being donated to the Department.

At the regional meeting of Phi Alpha Theta, held at the University of Montevallo on April 18, the UAH chapter was represented by David C. Gale, Jr., who presented a paper (written in Dr. Boucher's fall seminar) on 16th and 17th-century evaluations of sub-Saharan Africans. David's paper was very well received and placed second in the Graduate category.

The spring picnic was held at Dr. Severn's house on May 2. Besides Staci, this year's officers include John McKerley, Vice-president; Julie Lollar, Treasurer; and Laurice Jones, Secretary.

### Phi Alpha Theta Oral History Project

Phi Alpha Theta began work on an oral history project intended to preserve memories of individuals who were involved in the early years of the University. The recent retirements of the last members of the History Department who were at UAH in the 1960s, Dr. Carolyn White and Dr. Johanna Shields, inspired the Department to undertake a project that would record memories of the origins of the Department, and of the University itself. The project soon spread beyond the Department to include other faculty and staff members who were here in the early years of the University in other departments in the College of Liberal Arts, other colleges, and in the administration. The

Humanities Center helped out by purchasing a recorder and a transcription machine. The goal of the project is to make recollections available in several different formats, the first of which will be excerpts from Staci Rigsby's interview with Dr. Frances Roberts, included in the HY 490 student research journal and the next issue of the newsletter. Eventually, transcripts of the interviews will be donated to the University's archives.

To date, members of Phi Alpha Theta have interviewed eleven people, including five present and former members of the History Department (Drs. Frances Roberts, Johanna Shields, Carolyn White, John White, and Lee Williams), Barbara Vines of the Advisement Center, Provost Sam McManus, Dr. Benjamin Graves (the first president of UAH), and Professors Lee Cook, S.T. Wu, and John MacDougall. The students who have conducted these interviews are Kim Deal-Giblin, David Gale, David Lescarini, John McKerley, Deborah Nelson, Staci Rigsby, Duane Roggendorf, and Erik Templeman. David Gale and John McKerley have each conducted more than one interview, and John has spent many hours working on transcriptions. Several other present and former faculty members have agreed to participate, and other members of Phi Alpha Theta (Don Combest, Joe Green, Julie Lollar, and Nathan Toomey) have begun arranging to conduct interviews.

The next issue of the newsletter will include excerpts from the interviews with Professor Emeritus Frances Roberts. This will be the first in a series of articles highlighting excerpts from interviews with present and former members of the history faculty who were here in the early years of the University.

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### The Society For Ancient Languages

The Department's Professor Gerberding is the faculty advisor for UAH's Society For Ancient Languages, and he reports it had a splendid year. The Society continues to meet twice weekly during the term, Tuesday evenings for Latin and Thursday evenings for elementary Greek. Its Latin readings this year came from the period of the late Roman Empire, sometimes rather strange sounding to those trained in the style of Virgil and Cicero. The Society had many activities in addition to its weekly meetings. In the autumn it held a public reading of ancient poetry at Barnes and Noble Bookstore, traveled to the Birmingham Museum of Art for an exhibition of Etruscan jewelry, and enjoyed its annual Christmas party. In February several members attended a conference at Florida State on Greek Drama and the polis, and they held another public reading at Barnes and Noble. The highlight of the year came in March when the Society hosted a splendid lecture series by Professor Peter Brown of Princeton on the writings of Augustine of Hippo. In May, ten intrepid members took off for a two-week tour of Italy. Necesse est bene vivere.

### SECOND HISTORY TOURNAMENT

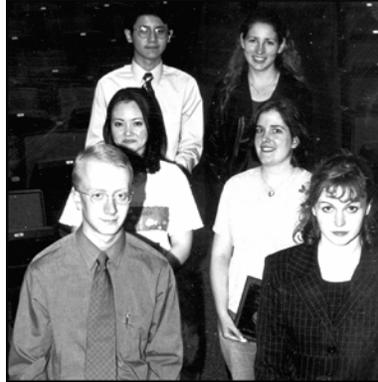
Last year, with the assistance of UAH History M.A. graduate Penny Wood, the Department initiated a history contest for area high schools. This year the tournament expanded to include other disciplines, as the departments of political science and psychology staged contests with ours, thus initiating the First Annual Liberal Arts Tournament Day. Contestants gathered in the

Administrative Science auditorium on the morning of April 23.

Seven area high schools (Brewer, Butler, Catholic, Hazel Green, Randolph, Sparkman, and Westminster Christian Academy) fielded teams for the history portion, which included team and individual competition. Each school had entries in each of two contests: American history and world history. The ten members of each team answered seventy-five multiple choice questions and a tie-breaking essay.

Randolph dominated the history competition, winning both the U.S. and World team contests, the top five individual awards in the U.S. contest, and four of the top five individual awards in the World competition. Butler took second place in the U.S. contest, with Hazel Green and Sparkman tying for third. Brewer finished second and Butler third in the World competition. The top three teams and top ten individuals in each contest received plaques furnished through the generosity of the UAH Office of Admissions.

Several students and teachers who participated in the event commented on how much they enjoyed the competition. One of the teachers remarked that with so much emphasis on athletic competition in the schools, it is nice to have academic competition of this sort to reward good students. The Department agrees, and plans to stage the contest again next spring.



Winners of the Liberal Arts  
Tournament Day Individual  
Awards

## FACULTY UPDATE

**Dr. Bruce Baird** reports that he kept very busy in his first two semesters at UAH just trying to stay atop his classes, but overall he feels his first year went well teaching HY 102 (the 2nd half of Western Civ), HY 221 (the 1st half of the U.S. history survey), and HY 427/527 (The Age of the American Revolution). He enjoys working with both the more traditional and non-traditional students and he thinks they have enjoyed working with him. Hopefully with a year of ~~teaching under his belt, things will~~ be a little less hectic next year.

Although teaching keeps him busy enough, Dr. Baird has also served as the Book Review Editor for H-SHEAR. H-SHEAR is an electronic interactive network/forum for scholars of the history of the United States from approximately 1789 to 1850 sponsored by H-Net (the Humanities & Social Sciences On-Line) and SHEAR (Society for Historians of the Early American Republic). Pursuant to general H-Net philosophy, he has focused his efforts on developing fully interactive book reviews in which reviewers, authors, and audience come together in a collegial forum.

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Professor **Philip P. Boucher** published "W.J. Eccles' France in America from a Caribbeanist Perspective," British Journal of Canadian Studies, 11 (1997): 72-77. His article, "Why the Island Caribs 'Loved' the French and 'Hated' the English" was reprinted in La France-Amérique (XVIe-VXIIIe siècles): Actes du XXXVe colloque international d'études humanistes, edited by Frank Lestringant, Paris, 1998. Dr. Boucher presented a paper, "The Frontier Era of the French Caribbean, 1620s-1690s," as an invited presentation at the First Sweet Seminar on Colonial Centers and Peripheries at Michigan State University. He chaired the Alf Andrew Heggoy Book Prize Committee for the French Colonial Historical Society. He also chaired the Smith and Simpson Award Committee for the Southern Historical Association. He served on the Executive Committee of the French Colonial Historical Society and the Forum on European Expansion and Global Interaction. He continues service as a member of the editorial board of the French Colonial Historical Society Proceedings. Dr. Boucher recently completed a five-year term on the Board of Directors of the Alabama Humanities Foundation.

**Dr. Andrew Dunar** continued work on his history of The Farm, an community in Summertown, Tennessee founded by hippies from the San Francisco Bay Area in the early 1970s. He has conducted more than fifty interviews with residents and other people associated with The Farm, and hopes to wrap up interviews for the project within the next year. His history of Marshall Space Flight Center, co-authored by Dr. Waring, will be published in a few months under the title Power to

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### Explore: the History of Marshall Space Flight Center, 1960-1990.

His research on the retirement years of Harry S. Truman is near completion.

In addition to his courses in modern European and French history, Professor **Jack Ellis** continues work on a new book treating the social role of black doctors in the south from the end of Reconstruction to the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Over the past year, he researched the records and publications of the National Medical Association (the black equivalent of the AMA) and began identifying and exploring relevant archival holdings and private collections. Because oral history will form an integral part of the study, he also began a series of taped interviews with black doctors in Alabama and Tennessee who practiced during the era of segregated clinics and hospitals. He will be on sabbatical leave during the fall of 1998 and will expand these interviews to include retired black physicians in Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas. The taped interviews are scheduled to become part of the permanent holdings of the Historical Collections of the University of Alabama in Birmingham Archives.

Along with book reviews for the *American Historical Review* and the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Professor Ellis is currently completing a review essay for the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* evaluating new studies of French public health after 1870. Recently, he joined the Oral History Association and the American Association for the History of Medicine, and was elected to the Nominating Committee of the European Section of the Southern Historical Association. He is also Vice-President for Programs for the

Huntsville/Madison County Historical Society.

Dr. Ellis was co-organizer of the 1997 UAH History Forum on Creationism and Evolution and since last fall has served as advisor for Phi Alpha Theta.

#### **Dr. Richard Gerberding**

has been teaching more Latin this year and less history. He traded a section of history for a section of Latin to fill the gap while the College finds an additional Latin instructor. His research continues to investigate the early European Middle Ages. He finished a chapter for The New Cambridge Medieval History and continues his work on a textbook. In April he and five students attended the Sewanee Medieval Colloquium, whose subject was the use of writing in the early Middle Ages.

#### **Dr. Virginia Martin**

taught modern Chinese history (17th-20th c.) in the spring, the first time Chinese history has been offered at UAH in many years. She and her five ambitious students explored the political and cultural history of this ancient civilization as it adapted to modern times. The West never looked so "barbaric" as it did through Chinese eyes.

Dr. Martin co-organized (with Dr. Boucher) the 1998 History Forum on "Islam on the Frontiers of Europe and Asia" in February, and she is already planning this fall's mini-Forum (with Dr. Baird), as well as the Department's next full-scale Forum in Fall 1999.

1997-98 saw **John Severn** on sabbatical for the fall term. Dr. Severn used his time to work on a biography in progress on the Duke of Wellington and his brothers. In preparation for his sabbatical, Dr. Severn spent a month in London on

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a UAH mini-grant and Humanities Center grant completing research. During the spring, he served as interim director of the Academic Advisement and Information Center in addition to his teaching responsibilities.

Two of **Dr. Stephen Waring's** activities are the subject of articles elsewhere in this issue: he headed the effort to establish multi-media capability for Western Civilization classes, and he received the UAH Foundation Distinguished Teaching award. He and Dr. Dunar completed final revisions on their history of Marshall Space Flight Center, which will be published late this year or early next year. Dr. Waring also continued work on his book on the Challenger accident. His service in the Faculty Senate received a commendation as "exemplary and meritorious" from the president of the Senate.

#### **Dr. Lee E. Williams, II,**

Professor of History and Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, also worked in the Academic Advisement and Information Center as a counselor. While continuing to do research on his study of World War II Mobile, Alabama, he published "Alabama Moderation: The Athens Riot of 1946" in *The Griot*, Volume 16, No. 2 (Fall 1997): 19-24 and provided an informational lecture to Burritt Museum volunteer staffers entitled "Huntsville, Alabama: 1850 to 1900" on 21 January 1998. Dr. Williams serves on the Burritt Museum Advisory Committee, numerous university committees, and the State of Alabama Articulation Committee (Area Five).



**From the Archives:** Two historians, Dr. Lee Williams and Dr. Philip Boucher (back row, first and second on the left), were members of the only UAH Team to have ever competed in an intercollegiate football game. The club team, which also included Professor Clyde Riley of the Chemistry Department (front row, left), competed in the 1974-75 academic year. The other members of the team were students. Legends persist of dramatic come-from-behind victories, but no documents have survived to provide verification.

## CHANGES IN THE HISTORY M. A.

On the recommendation of the College and University Undergraduate Studies Committees, the Provost has recently approved the Department's proposed revision of the M. A. Program in History, which provides a new track for completion of the degree and is designed to meet the needs of secondary teachers, individuals working in assorted areas of public history, mid-career professionals, and others in the Huntsville community who would benefit from advanced historical training but have no interest in pursuing the doctorate.

Applicants will now be able to choose one of three plans, depending on their personal and professional goals. **Plan A** (thesis with language) is strongly recommended for all students who plan to study history beyond the master's level. **Plan B** (thesis without language) and **Plan C** (without thesis or language) are both intended for people who do not intend to pursue a Ph.D. in history.

## EVENTS

### History Forum - Spring '98

In February 1998, the History Department presented its annual History Forum lecture series. This year, four scholars

spoke on consecutive Thursday evenings on the topic, "Islam on the Frontiers of Europe and Asia: Historical Perspectives and Prospects." The first speaker, Dr. Daniel Spector, Adjunct Professor of History at University of Alabama at Birmingham, gave a background lecture entitled "Islam: A Dynamic Religion." The remaining three speakers gave presentations on their areas of scholarly expertise. Dr. Michael A. Sells, Professor of Religion, Haverford College, spoke on "The Bosnian Tragedy: Historical and Religious Dimensions of Genocide." Dr. Azade-Ayşe Rorlich, Associate Professor of History, University of Southern California, gave her talk on "Islam and Ethnicity: the Turkic Peoples

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of the Russian Empire in the 20th Century.” The final speaker was Dr. M. Nazif Shahrani, Professor of Anthropology, Indiana University, who lectured on “The State, Religion and Ethnic Politics in Afghanistan.” Summaries of each of the lectures are available from the History Department.

### History Forum - Fall '98

The History Department has decided to change the format of the History Forum: beginning this year, we will hold the annual lecture series during the fall semester. Because we already had a full-scale Forum in 1998, this fall will be a transition year. We have invited two historians with excellent national reputations in their fields to speak on their recent research work. The first lecture will be on Friday, October 2: Dr. Lawrence Levine, Professor of History, George Mason University, will speak on the topic, “The Search for American Identity,” based on his acclaimed book, The

Opening of the American Mind (1996). The second speaker will be Dr. Michael Neufeld, Curator of World War II History, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution. Dr. Neufeld, author of the award-winning book The Rocket and the Reich (1995), will speak on Tuesday, November 17th on the topic, “Wernher von Braun: the Peenemünde Rocket Team and the Third Reich.” Both talks will be given in the Chan Auditorium in the Administrative Science Building at 7 p.m.

### Black History Month Activities

The Office of Multicultural Affairs, in association with the Honors Program and the Department of History, celebrated the following Black Heritage programs on the campus of UAH:

On February 4, 1998, a dramatic exhibition of African music and dance was performed by “The Healing Force,” a three person ensemble which also showed a collection of African artifacts.

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On the fifth of February 1998, OMA sponsored the visit of Dr. Todd L. Savitt, who presented a lecture entitled, “Historical African-American Health Issues,” and co-sponsored with the Department of History the annual History Forum.

Benny Andrews, a nationally acclaimed artist from New York University, presented a “Meet the Master” lecture on February 7, 1998, and on February 19, 1998, Dr. William Turner lectured on the topic, “African American Social History in Appalachia.” On February 26, 1998, Dr. Frederick Hale, visiting professor at the University of Minnesota, offered a presentation entitled, “The New South Africa”.

Black History Month activities concluded with the Annual Office of Multicultural Affairs African American History Month Luncheon, held in the University Center Formal Dining Room, which was well attended by faculty, staff and students.

## MARK YOUR CALENDERS

### History Forum '98

- October 2 - Dr. Levine
- November 17 - Dr. Neufeld

### Issues in next Newsletter

- Alumni Update
- Dr. Frances Roberts Interview

