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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:

This has been an exciting year for the UAH History Department. As reported on this page, the department received funding from two agencies distinguished by their public-spirited interest in education and history. The Bankhead Foundation extended a \$10,000 grant to the department to help establish an endowment in support of the annual History Forum. Then the Heritage Junior Women's Club donated funds that helped to endow a new scholarship for a female history major.

Articles elsewhere in the newsletter report on two public events that the department has sponsored. The first is the annual History Forum, which in the fall of 1999 celebrated the approaching millennium by taking a look back to previous millennia. In the spring the Consortium on Revolutionary Europe will hold its annual conference in Huntsville. UAH's Dr. John Severn, the program chair and organizer of this year's Consortium convention, has assembled an impressive program. Huntsville is indeed fortunate to have access to an array of international scholars.

The next issue of the newsletter will feature stories on students and alumni, so please let us hear from you. Drop us a line to let us know what you are doing, or email me at [dunara@email.uah.edu](mailto:dunara@email.uah.edu). (see Greetings, page 2)

Greetings (con't)

## Bankhead Foundation Contributes to History Forum Endowment

The Bankhead Foundation, one of the leading philanthropic organizations in Alabama, gave a donation in the amount of \$10,000 to the History Department for the purpose of establishing an endowment for the annual History Forum. The generous grant will enable Forum organizers in the future to have a source of dependable working capital that will continue to grow over the years. It provided a significant boost to the Forum fundraising campaign described on page 2.

The Bankhead Foundation serves society by providing assistance to deserving recipients in the areas of higher education and human resources. Based in Jasper, Alabama, the foundation was established with major support from the late W.W. Bankhead and Faustine C. Bankhead.

The Bankhead family is a pioneer Alabama family that achieved a distinguished history of public service. Family members include Sen. John Hollis Bankhead (1842-1920), Sen. John Hollis Bankhead II (1872-1946), Rep. William B. Bankhead (1874-1940), Rep. Walter Will Bankhead (1897-1988), and actress Tallulah Bankhead (1902-1968). Serving as board members for the foundation are John T. Oliver, Jr., President; Barbara B. Oliver, Vice President; and Faye Jenkins, Secretary. Mr. Oliver is a former Trustee of The University of Alabama System.

The History Department extends its gratitude to the Bankhead Foundation for its generous support. The faculty is also grateful for the assistance in the fundraising process of UAH Vice President of Advancement Dr. J. Derald Morgan; Mr. Charles Wood, UAH Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations; David Trueb of University Advancement; and Teresa Farris, a history graduate student with experience in grant development.

## Heritage Junior Women's Club, Hendricks Fund New Scholarship

The Heritage Junior Women's Club, a Huntsville service organization dedicated to advancing the general welfare of the community, has agreed to help endow a new scholarship to benefit a female history major at UAH. The scholarship, which will be awarded for the first time in the 2001-2002 academic year, will be endowed in equal portions by the Heritage Junior Women's Club and John Hendricks, a graduate of the UAH history department and founder and CEO of the Discovery channel. The contribution by John Hendricks is a portion of a donation he made to the department four years ago, part of which has already been used to establish the John Hendricks (See Scholarship, page 2)

Finally, help us build the History Forum endowment! There is a contribution blank on page 6 in the newsletter. Thanks to those of you who have already contributed to the department and to the Forum endowment. Your confidence in our programs is very much appreciated!

### Scholarship (cont)

Scholarship. Ms. Becky Vansant of the Heritage Junior Woman's Club met with members of the department recently to discuss the new scholarship.

The Heritage Junior Woman's Club has been active in a host of projects in Huntsville. Last year its seventy-eight members contributed over 6,000 volunteer hours and more than \$35,000 to the community. Members work on projects in the arts, conservation, education, home life, international affairs, and public affairs. Among its recent projects have been a program to promote reading at the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library, beautification of the Policeman's Memorial at the courthouse, restoration of the Madison County Nature Trail, and fundraising for international relief programs.

The history department is grateful to both the Heritage Junior Women's Club and John Hendricks. Their generous support has made possible the establishment of this new scholarship, which will be named the Heritage Junior Women's Club Scholarship. It is the department's third endowed scholarship. The other two are the Frances C. Roberts Scholarship and the John Hendricks Scholarship.



*Rachel Brannon and Shane Bjornlie, 1999-2000 winners of the Hendricks and Roberts Scholarships.*

## Oral History Review

The UAH History Department is hosting a national journal. Dr. Dunar has assumed the editorship of the Oral History Review, a national journal sponsored by the Oral History Association. The journal, which is published twice annually by the University of California Press, is the premier American journal in the field of oral history. Each issue of the OHR includes articles, book reviews, and media reviews that highlight the emerging field of oral history, and touch on topics related to methodology, pedagogy, and research. Dunar met in August with outgoing editor Bruce Stave of the University of Connecticut, and transferred the journal's files to UAH.

Barbara Wright, a graduate student in the UAH History Department, is serving as assistant to the editor. Wright, who has prior experience in editing, brings impressive computer skills to the position. She has already designed a Web page for the OHR and has been in contact with authors of articles for the next issue of the OHR in Germany, Israel, and the United States.

## The Historian History Forum Fund- Raising

The History Department this year has launched a fund-raising campaign to solicit funds to establish a permanent endowment for the History Forum. The Department launched the campaign this fall, and received a wonderful boost at the outset when the Bankhead Foundation contributed \$10,000. (See the separate article on page 1)

It takes a significant amount of money to produce a successful Forum. Expenses include honoraria, travel expenses, and meals and lodging for each speaker; publicity, including posters and brochures; postage; and a reception following each lecture. Over the years, we have relied on internal UAH funding sources, as well as generous contributions from external sources such as the Alabama Humanities Foundation. We are faced with the unfortunate fact that university sources of funding have decreased dramatically. We need a dependable source of funding to maintain the high quality of History Forum programming that we have worked to create and that our supporters have come to expect.

We have established an endowment, in which any contributions we receive will be deposited in a UA Foundation account. The funds are invested, with the goal of drawing interest each year to help operate the Forum, but also growing the fund. In an endowment of this sort, we draw annually five percent of the total fund money, and any additional revenue accrued goes back into the endowment account. In recent years, the UA Foundation account has earned approximately 14 percent interest.

The History Forum began in 1972 as a UAH student-faculty group that convened at homes of

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faculty members to discuss contemporary events in historical context. Over the years, it has grown into a more formal lecture series. Since the mid-1980s, the History Forum has been an annual lecture series that focuses on a different topic every year. Its purpose is to provide a public forum for the discussion of timely issues in a historical context by bringing national and regional scholars to UAH to speak on their areas of expertise.

If you believe, as we do, that the History Forum provides an important service to UAH and to the Huntsville community at large by offering intelligent, thoughtful discussion of issues important to our lives, we urge you to help us ensure that this valuable lecture series continues.

We have included a form that you can use to make a contribution to the History Forum endowment on page 6 of this newsletter. Thank you for helping us in this important endeavor!

## Consortium on Revolutionary Europe

The department will host the year 2000 Consortium on Revolutionary Europe on March 2-5 at the Huntsville Hilton. This conference, which meets annually, attracts from 100 to 150 scholars from around the world. Papers focus on Europe from 1750 to 1850 but include non-European topics. Political, military, diplomatic, social, economic, intellectual and gender topics are all featured during this three-day conference. Featured speakers will be Professor Conrad Donakowski from Michigan State University, who will offer a musical presentation and lecture at the opening session, Professor Edward Ingram from

Simon Fraser University, who will speak on imperialism in the revolutionary age at Friday's luncheon, and Bernard Cornwell, author of the Sharpe series of historical novels, who will address the closing banquet. The conference is sponsored this year by the UAH history department, the UAH Humanities Center, and Jacksonville State University.

## History Forum '99

After a transitional year moving from a spring to a fall format and a mini-Forum in the Fall 1998 semester, the History Department returned again to its traditional multi-speaker lecture series devoted to providing interesting historical insights into today's important issues. This year four scholars spoke on the topic of "Millennium and Millennialism, Past and Present." With all the apocalyptic talk about Y2K in the news every day, this was surely an appropriate topic for a little historical perspective!

Mr. David Duncan, author of the international bestseller The Calendar (Fourth Estate, 1998) among numerous other books, spoke on the topic, "Searching for the Millennium: The Epic Failure to Get Time Right."

Next, Dr. David Van Meter, medieval historian and Associate at the Center for Millennial Studies at Boston University, took us back to the year 1000 in our second lecture: "Y1K to Y2K: Resonances from the Past."

In the third lecture, Dr. Ruth Alden Doan, Associate Professor of History at Hollins College and author of The Miller Heresy, Millennialism, and American Culture (Temple University Press, 1987), spoke on the topic, "Creating the Millerite Vision of the End."

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Our fourth speaker brought us up to the present and into the future. Dr. Brenda Brasher, Assistant Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Mount Union College and author of Godly Women: Fundamentalism and Female Power (Rutgers University Press, 1998), spoke on the topic "From Revelation of the X-Files: Millennialism at the Cusp of the Third Millennium."

## FACULTY:

**Dr. Bruce Baird** added several new courses to his repertoire last year, teaching for the first time HY 101 (the 1<sup>st</sup> half of Western Civ), HY 326 (Colonial America), and HY 428/528 (The Republic in Crisis). In addition, he continued to serve as the Book Review Editor for H-SHEAR, posting over fifty interactive reviews in the past year. He recounted his experiences with H-SHEAR in a presentation to the Conference on Historical Journals, which was subsequently published as "Confessions of an Electronic Book Review Editor," Editing History 15.2 (Spring/Summer 1999): 1-9. Another article, "The Social Origins of Dueling in Virginia," was published in Michael J. Bellesiles, ed., Lethal Imagination: Violence and Brutality in American History (New York University Press, 1999), 87-112. Dr. Baird co-organized (with Dr. Martin) the Fall 1998 mini-Forum that brought Drs. Lawrence W. Levine and Michael J. Neufeld to campus, and they also organized the Fall 1999 History Forum, "Millennium and Millennialism, Past and Present."

**Dr. Philip Boucher** has published an article entitled, "Why the Island Caribs 'Loved' the French and 'Hated' the English." The article was reprinted in La France Amerique (XVI-XVII

siecles), Paris, 1998. He has continued work on the manuscript "France and the American Tropics. Vol. I: Islands of Discontent?" Dr. Boucher was also the program organizer of the French Colonial Historical Society Conference held in New Orleans in June of 1999. He continued to serve on that Society's Executive Committee and Editorial Board.

**Dr. Andrew Dunar** is completing the last year of his five-year term as department chair. NASA recently published the book that he co-authored with Dr. Waring, Power to Explore: The History of Marshall Space Flight Center, 1960-1990. Dr. Dunar is also working on a book on the 1950s that will be part of a series to be published by Syracuse University Press; each book in the series will examine one decade of the twentieth century. He continues to work on his oral history of The Farm, the intentional community founded by hippies near Summertown, Tennessee in the early 1970s. He has also assumed the editorship of the Oral History Review, the journal of the Oral History Association.

**Dr. Jack Ellis** is continuing work on a new book that examines the lives and careers of black doctors in the Deep South between the founding of the National Medical Association in 1895 (the black equivalent of the AMA) and the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. During his sabbatical leave last fall, he worked at UAB's Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences, the Meharry archives, and Tuskegee University, and conducted taped interviews with over forty African-American physicians living in Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi whose medical training and practices spanned the segregationist era. He is also

working with colleagues at UAH and Alabama A&M in planning a course on the civil rights movement in Alabama, to be offered in the fall of 2001. A review-essay by Professor Ellis of two new French works dealing with the public health movement under the Third Republic appeared in the summer issue of the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*.

**Dr. Richard Gerberding** has continued with several of his long-term projects. He has finished the first draft of a textbook on medieval history for Houghton-Mifflin and is now working it through the revision and editorial process. His article on the Late Roman Empire will be published in 2000 in the New Cambridge Medieval History. In May he spoke at the Medieval Congress held at Western Michigan University on ethnogenesis, or the formation of Europe's nationalities in the early middle ages. He will be leaving on sabbatical for the spring semester of 2001 when he intends to return to his investigation of the intellectual life of Charlemagne's court.

**Dr. Virginia Martin** received a UAH Mini-Grant to undertake research in archives and libraries in Almaty, Kazakhstan in June 1999. The trip was very productive. Dr. Martin gathered important new materials for the revision of her manuscript, entitled "Law and Custom in the Steppe: Middle Horde Kazakhs and Russian Colonialism in the 19th Century." The new materials included court records, 19th-century photographs of nomadic life and colonial courtroom procedure, and the latest local scholarship on 19th century Kazakhstan. Dr. Martin completed revisions in July and the manuscript has been accepted for publication by Curzon Press. Dr.

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Martin also did archival research on the meaning of oaths in Kazakh judicial procedure, which formed the basis of a paper that she wrote in August and that she presented in November 1999 at the national convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies in St. Louis, MO.

**Dr. John Severn** has been busy completing arrangements for the annual meeting of the Consortium on Revolutionary Europe, scheduled to be held at the Huntsville Hilton on March 2-5. He has organized the meeting, handled local arrangements, and set up the program, which is described on page 3 of this newsletter. Dr. Severn continues to make progress on his forthcoming collective biography of the Wellesley brothers, the most famous of whom was the Duke of Wellington, who defeated Napoleon at Waterloo. In addition to his teaching duties at UAH, he has been serving as Coordinator of Undergraduate Advisement in the College of Liberal Arts.

**Dr. Stephen Waring** is proof of the adage: "the more things change, the more they remain the same." He is still working on a history of the space shuttle -Challenger accident and presented a paper entitled "The Challenger Accident and Engineering Knowledge: 'What you don't know...'" at the American Historical Association annual meeting in January 1999 in Washington, D. C. He is also continuing work on multi-media in the classroom to bring new opportunities to UAH students. Waring maintains his bad habits of filing stuff in his mailbox and leaving other stuff on his desk; only Bev keeps him on schedule. The only new thing with Waring is that he was married in

October--but you have to research to find out who his bride is.....



*Newlyweds Dr. Stephen Waring and Dr. Lillian Joyce, UAH assistant professor of art history*

**Dr. Lee E. Williams, II**, recently received a certificate of appreciation from the UAH Black Students Association for assistance with the 1999 "Frosh Mosh." Recently elected by the faculty of the College of Liberal Arts to a second term as their Graduate Council representative (1999-2001), Williams continues to serve as director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs in the Office of The Provost. He attended the 1999 session of the Black Heritage Council in Montgomery and served on the advisory board of the Burritt Museum. While still doing research on World War Two Mobile, Alabama, Williams has reviewed scholarly works for The Journal Of Southern History and the Journal of Mississippi History and written an article on the riot in Athens, Alabama (1946) that was published in The Griot magazine.

## Tournament Day

The UAH history department was one of three sponsoring departments of the 1999 Liberal Arts Tournament Day, in which area high school students came to campus to take competitive tests and display their academic prowess. On April 21, 1999, eight area high schools (Brewer, Randolph, Catholic, Hazel Green, Grissom, Sparkman, Guntersville, and Bob Jones) fielded teams for the history portion, which included team and individual competition. Each school had entries in either 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.

Grissom dominated the history competition, winning both the U.S. and World team contests; the top seven of the ten individual awards in the World competition, and nine of the ten individual awards for the U.S. contest. Randolph took second place in both team competitions, and held individual places in each contest. Catholic finished third in both team competitions. The top three teams and the top ten individuals received plaques furnished through the generosity of the UAH Office of Admissions.

This year our fourth annual tournament will be April 19, 2000. We look forward to more great fun!!

## Phi Alpha Theta

On March 14, 1999, Phi Alpha Theta initiated Shane Bjornlie, Ted Blanton, Rachel Brannon, Jennifer Fox, Ben

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Kavanaugh, James McKee, David Mullins, Angela Pennington, Edith Phillips, Aaron Hammond, Thomas Henderson, Barbara Wright and Jeremy Saint into the Tau Omega Chapter. The ceremonies were held at Dr. Gerberding's castle in Rogersville where the generous host also delivered the annual initiation address. Barbara Wright will serve as president for the year 1999-2000 with Shane Bjornlie as vice- president and treasurer. Activities will include the History Forum and the Consortium on Revolutionary Europe. Some members will also help with the department's oral history project directed by department chair, Andrew Dunar.

## Society For Ancient Languages

It has been another good year for the Society. The annual spring convivium, held in April, was another huge success. Seating was sold out ten days before the event. Because the then president, Shane Bjornlie, is an unrepentant medievalist and had the Society reading medieval Latin texts, it invited Professor Ian Wood of Leeds University in England, a noted early-medieval scholar, as its speaker. The Society spent last summer reading Cicero's letters and is now doing a melange of classical Latin texts. Professor James Smeal, UAH's Greek instructor, is now leading the Society's Greek section, letting Dr. Martine retire from the mines after many years of very appreciated help.

