

History at Lehigh University

Volume 14, Issue 1

Fall 2013

Welcome to the Fall 2013 issue of *History at Lehigh*, the official newsletter of the Department of History at Lehigh University. *History at Lehigh* is published twice per year in an effort to maintain contact and share information with students, alumni, and faculty.

Message from the Chair

Greetings from the new chair. For those of you who do not know me, I have been at Lehigh for twenty-five years and specialize in the history to technology, especially the process of innovation in modern industries. Becoming chair reminds me of a paraphrase of a famous quip by Isaac Newton, "If I have not seen farther it is because giants are standing on my shoulders." I certainly feel the presence of giants on my shoulders. During my time the History Department has been fortunate to have had a remarkable group of chairs: Joe Dowling, Roger Simon, Jean Soderlund, Mike Baylor, and Steve Cutcliffe. I am honored and humbled to be included in this list. Speaking of Jean Soderlund, she will be retiring next year after twenty very productive years at Lehigh. Among her varied activities was her outstanding contribution to the Atlantic World side of our graduate program. Speaking of the Atlantic World, an anonymous donor has endowed a history department chair in the Atlantic World, which will be named after Lawrence Henry Gipson, Lehigh's Pulitzer Prize winning colonial historian. We are very grateful to this donor, and everyone else who contributes to the department. Your contributions play a major role in enhancing the educational experience of our students and assisting the scholarship of our faculty.

As you might be aware, these are rather tough times for the humanities in American universities. The relatively poor job market and high cost of college is pushing students into majors that are expected to lead to well-paying jobs immediately after graduation. We believe that these students should be taking a longer term perspective; technical skills have a rather short half-life. The traditional skills of complex reasoning, critical thinking, and effective communication are timeless and universal. We strive in our courses, not only to interest our students in the fascinating record of the human experience, but also to impart basic skills through reading primary and secondary sources, and writing essays and research papers. At the present time, when the future structure of the job market seems uncertain, we believe we should encourage students to develop skills that will serve them well in a variety of occupations.

To illustrate the options open to history majors, we would like to hear from alumni about your careers and how being a history major has contributed to your success. You can do this informally by sending me an e-mail at jks0@lehigh.edu. If we get enough interest we might invite a few alumni to come to campus to meet our current students. If you are planning on coming to the alumni reunion in May we might want to do some interviews for our students and posterity. In any event please keep in touch.

John K. Smith, Chair.

Accolades

Faculty

Bill Bulman presented his research on the Enlightenment and the religious politics of early modern Britain at an international conference at Oxford University in July. The conference brought together scholars in nine disciplines who were recently awarded research grants by the Templeton Foundation to study the relationship between religion and innovation in human affairs. Bulman and his co-investigator, Robert Ingram, received a \$100,000 grant as part of this program.

Kim Carrell-Smith's Intro to Public History class is working with local residents to document "the lost neighborhood" that once stood where Maginnes Hall is today. Their project will be shared on Lehigh's Still Looking For You website. See their work at <http://memories.lehigh.edu/> in December!

Kwame Essien co-edited the book *Pan-Africanism and the Politics of African Citizenship and Identity*, published by the Routledge Taylor & Francis Group. Dr. Essien also published the chapter "'Performance' in Transatlantic Communities in Africa: The Case of Brazilian Africans and American Africans in Ghana" in his co-edited volume. He also had one book review published in each of *African Studies Quarterly*, *Africa Today*, and *African and Asian Studies*. This summer, Essien will direct the first Iacocca Institute Internship in Africa, entitled "Internships in Humanitarian Engineering: Ghana."

Nitzan Lebovic had his book *The Philosophy of Life and Death: Ludwig Klages and a Nazi Biopolitics* published in the "Palgrave Studies in Cultural and Intellectual History," Palgrave Macmillan Press, 2013. He also published an article, "The Biopolitical Film (a Nietzschean Paradigm)," in *Postmodern Culture* 23:1 (September, 2013). In addition, he published a book chapter "Geschichte der nichtexistierenden Verfassung in Israel oder warum es keine Grundordnung vor dem Ende der Politik geben kann" [A History of a Non-Existent Constitution to

Israel or why the Basic-Order Comes after the End of Politics] in *Grundordnungen. Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Geographie, Religion, Kultur und Gesetz*, eds. Zaal Andronikashvili, Sigrid Weigel (Berlin: Kadmos, 2013), pp. 97- 115.

Michelle LeMaster co-edited a collection of essays with Bradford J. Wood. *Creating and Contesting Carolina: Proprietary Era Histories*, that was published by the University of South Carolina Press in October 2013.

John Savage presented his paper "Les Mystères des Antilles: The Colonial Roots of Eugène Sue's sense of Horror" at the "Urban Mysteries in the 19th Century" conference at the University of Montpellier and at the Sorbonne in Paris in November.

Roger Simon conducted a walking tour of Greenwich Village for the alumni association. The tour was limited in size and "sold out" in two days. Starting in the East Village at Astor Place, the tour included Washington Square area, and the West Village, the oldest original extant neighborhood in Manhattan. If you missed it, you have another opportunity. At the request of the Alumni Association, he will give the tour again on November 23, 2014, in conjunction with the special events of the 150th Lehigh-Lafayette football game, which will be in Yankee Stadium.

John Smith presented a paper, "The Legacy of Paternalism in Bethlehem, PA" at a conference, "Rust, Regeneration, and Romance: Iron and Steel Landscapes and Cultures" at Ironbridge, UK in July.

Graduate Students

Adam Bentz presented "Cracking the Door: Rep. Francis E. Walter and the Hungarian Refugee Crisis, 1956-1957" at the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association in Gettysburg, PA. His talk was taken from part of his dissertation on the career of the Lehigh Valley congressman.

Silas Chamberlin received the award for best student presentation at the 2013 Association for Environmental Studies & Sciences Conference in Pittsburgh for his paper "It's Like the City Dump: Considering Past and Present Rails to Trails Opposition." As the Director of Stewardship & Interpretation for the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Silas was named by the Lehigh Valley Business Journal named Silas to its inaugural list of 40 Business Leaders under the Age of 40 who are "making headlines in their fields and share a commitment to business growth, professional excellence, and the community." In October, Silas was featured in a segment of WFMZ Channel 69's "History's Headlines" on John James Audubon.

Jay Donis presented his paper, "The Black Boys, Borders, and Authority in Colonial Pennsylvania" at the 2013 Pennsylvania Historical Association meeting.

Rachel Engl presented "Bonds of Strictest Friendship: Uncovering Traces of Friendships During the American Revolution" at the McNeil Center's "Traces of Early America: An Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Conference."

Kim Fabbri presented a chapter of her dissertation examining the relationship of the Moravian Church to the regime of Anastasio Somoza Sr., dictator of Nicaragua from 1936-1956, at the North Central Council of Latin Americanists Conference in Stevens Point, Wisconsin in September.

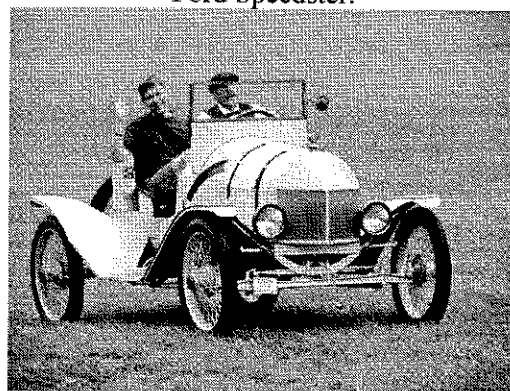
Alumni

Robert Armstrong (PhD. '12) directed "Coltrane's Philadelphia, 1943-1958: A Documentary Film." He has presented the film to several large audiences in Philadelphia and recently at Lehigh.

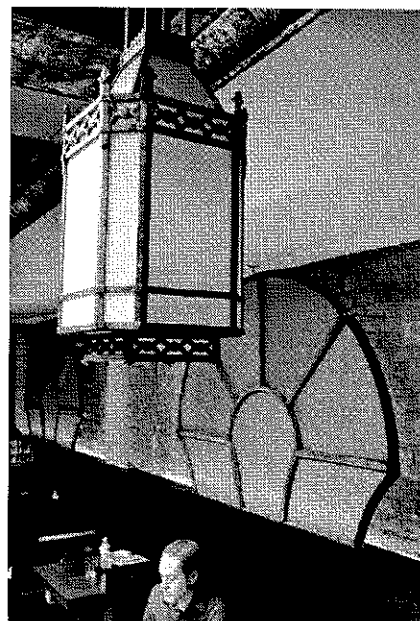
Michael de Nie (BA '92) published an article, "Speed the Mahdi! The Irish Press and Empire during the Sudan Conflict of 1883-1885" in the *Journal of British Studies*. In the spring of 2013 he was promoted to full Professor of History at the University of West Georgia.

Stewart Somerville (MA '96) was invited to speak at the Fall "Slabsides Day" for the John Burroughs Literary Association. Stew has also been invited to submit a paper for a John Burroughs Conference in June at Vassar. He further reports that he has been volunteering at the Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome where he works on antique bi-planes and Model T Fords. He was visited by Chris Eldridge (PhD '01) over the Labor Day weekend. Chris is still working for the International Atomic Energy Agency and living in Vienna.

Stew and Chris are pictured below driving a 1919 Ford Speedster.



Perry Smith (BA '87) has become a successful entrepreneur and businessman establishing a number of restaurants and dance clubs. In his restaurants he uses historical themes and artifacts, such as this antique light fixture.



Lehigh University Department of History

If you have any information for future newsletters, please contact the department.

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Gifts

The Department of History recognizes with gratitude those individuals and foundations listed below who have chosen to designate a gift in support of our academic and programmatic offerings or the Joseph A. Dowling Fund.

Gifts since May 1, 2013:

Wylie Borum '13
James Duane III '73
Jean Friedman '67
Michael J. Glasheen '67
Paul Hanks '81
Ralph Kidder '68

James Mitrano '93
Perry Smith '87
Julie and Kent Weaver '89

(Every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of this list, but if you notice an error or omission, please contact the Department of History, College of Arts and Sciences, Lehigh University, 9 West Packer Avenue, Bethlehem, PA 18015. Our phone number is 610-758-3360.)