Reflections From the Chair. . . . .
The State of the Department

As we enter the year 2000, I can report that the state of the history department is good. If you've spent time recently on the fourth floor of Major Williams Hall, you know the reasons for this positive assessment. We have a devoted faculty and staff. Moreover, we have motivated students.

To give you a sense of the energy in the department, I'll briefly bring you up to date on our more prominent ventures.

American History Initiative. Last spring, the Board of Visitors voted to require that all Virginia Tech students, beginning with the class entering in August 2001, show proficiency in American History. Anticipating a large influx of new students, the history department is responding on three fronts. First, in exploring ways that incoming students can show pre-existing competency, we are moving toward having the university require the SAT II in American History for admission. Second, for students needing to gain proficiency through instruction, we are developing an innovative course, with in-class and on-line versions, that provides an overview of key historical issues. Third, we are conducting a national job search to hire a new professor to help plan and teach in the program.

Area Studies Program. Operating in the framework of the M.A. degree in history, the Area Studies pilot program is now in its second year. So far, the program boasts seven graduate students and offers two Area Studies concentrations: European Studies and Spanish-American Studies. Three of the second-year students will likely receive their degrees at spring commencement. Co-Directors Fred Baumgartner and Antonio Fernandez (from

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History and Foreign Languages) provide fuller information at their Web site: http://www/fll.vt.edu/Area Studies/.

Civil War Center. The department is working with the university to establish the Virginia Center for Civil War Studies. Alumni Distinguished Professor James I. Robertson, Jr. will head the Center, which will draw on the library's substantial collection of Civil War materials. The Development Office reports good progress on the $3-million drive, launched last spring, to fund the Center. The Center will incorporate an endowed professorship; a

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scholars-in-residence program; scholarships for the department’s M.A. students; and annual symposia. For more details, refer to: http://www.majbill.vt.edu/history/civilwarcenter/index.html..

Diversity Award. The history department continues to enhance not only the gender and racial mix of its faculty but also the coverage of related issues in its undergraduate and graduate programs. At the spring 1999 meeting of the College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Association, Dean Robert Bates identified five departments for special recognition—including the history department for, in part, its efforts in diversity matters. The department elected to use half of the $5,000 award to finance a retreat for faculty members specializing in African-American history and to bring to the department a related speaker or consultant.

Virtual Jamestown. With the backing of the department and a $180,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (with the promise of an additional $50,000 in matching funds), Prof. Crandall Shifflett continues to develop a computer Web site to mark the coming 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown. Involving Virginia Tech’s advanced computer facilities, this is a multimedia, interdisciplinary, and collaborative project devoted to the history and legacies of the Jamestown settlement in 1607. As part of the cyber project, public school teachers will create classroom teaching units keyed to the new Virginia Standards of Learning. Moreover, the NEH funding will allow expansion of the prototype Web site http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/vcdh/jamestown/ into a teaching, learning, and research archive of national and international significance.

Bert Moyer
Chair

How To Register for Next Semester

Fall semester was the last time pre-registration would be completed on Opscan Forms. We’ve contacted the Dean’s Office and at this time there is no word on what the procedure would be to add courses for Summer and Fall. Look for information to be sent on the history listserv. If you are not on the listserv, email jaf@vt.edu and request to be added.

Spring Commencement Set . . .
Saturday, May 13, 2000

As in the recent past, the History graduation will be held in Haymarket Theatre, at Squires Student Center, on Saturday, May 13, at 11:00 a.m. Our commencement speaker will be the valedictorian of the class of ‘00... who is yet to be named.

There is no limit to the number of guests but we urge you to try to arrive between 9:30-9:40 to get a good seat since the theatre is always filled to capacity.

At this time, due to fire regulations in Squires Student Center, we will not be hosting the reception in the foyer outside Haymarket Theatre. We are looking for an alternate site, but space on graduation day is nearly impossible to find.

In March, graduating seniors (and those walking that plan to complete in summer school) will receive a letter from Dr. Thorp asking them to call the department to schedule an exit interview and to let us know who will be attending graduation.

Caps and gowns and invitations can be purchased at the University Bookstore.

Information regarding the university graduation can be found on the main VT homepage later this semester.

Job Market for Historians . . .
Shows Improvement

The job market for historians continued to improve in the 1998-99 academic year, as the
number of job listings rose 11 percent over the year before, according to the American Historical Association. The number of jobs listed with the association increased to 779 from 704 in 1997-98 -- offering the most opportunities in more than 10 years reports the A.H.A., which held its annual meeting in Chicago.

The supply of jobs, however, is not keeping pace with recent growth in new Ph.D.'s. The production of history Ph.D.'s hit a 20-year high in 1998, when 998 degrees were awarded, according to a survey by the National Opinion Research Center.

Jobs for junior faculty grew by 8 percent last year, with increases occurring in every region of the country except the West. Within geographic specializations, the Middle East and Asia saw the greatest increases, by 38 percent and 13 percent, respectively.

Another positive sign for historians: Tenure-track positions have accounted for 81 percent of the job listings for the past two years. That's compared with 71 percent in 1991-92.

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Faculty and Students . . .
In the News

Glenn Bugh presented a lecture on "Homer's Way of War" on March 1, to the Hampden-Sydney College Symposium on Immortal Troy: Enduring Legacy in Western Culture. In addition, Professor Bugh has been appointed the Gladys Smith Professor of Classical Studies to direct one of the two graduate-level summer sessions at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens in 2000. This six week intensive study program will visit many sites in Greece and consists of 20 undergraduates, graduate students, and teachers selected from universities across the country.


Congratulations to Professor John Green and his wife, Jama, on the birth of a son, named Pieter (Dutch spelling) William Green, weighing in at 7 lb. 10 oz.

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David Burr’s "The Olive Page" (http://dburr.hist.vt.edu/OliviaPage/Olivi_Page.html), "Medieval Sources in Translation" (http://dburr.hist.vt.edu/Sources.html); and the American History Initiative (online instruction for U.S. history survey courses: http://www.majb11.vt.edu/history/prv_UShistory/). Check out these important sites.

Frederic Baungartner was interviewed on millennialism with ABC News program "World News Now" which aired on Dec. 30. Dr. Baungartner is currently teaching a 4000-level topics course on Millennial Cults.

Hayward Farrar participated in the Multicultural Programs Book Club in Fall 1999 discussing "How Stella Got her Grove Back" by Terry McMillian. He also gave a lecture for Black History Month called "Remembering the Black Panthers."

Daniel Thorp is a finalist for the University Sporn Award for teaching excellence in introductory subjects.

Mark Barrow was awarded a Certificate of Teaching Excellence and thus becomes a finalist for the university's Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Glenn Bugh is a nominee for the William E. Wine Award for a history of university teaching excellence.


Congratulations to Jennifer Wahlgreen, winner of the "Senior Challenge" scholarship for spring semester.

The “Don’ts” To Graduating . . . In Four Years

As absurd as the following may seem, all are documented mistakes made by students in the past:

* Don’t take a course for which you already have AP or transfer credit.
* Don’t register for a course that you’ve already passed or that duplicates a course you’ve already passed.
* Don’t take a course Pass/Fail if it’s required for the university core or for your major or minor.
* Don’t take a course Pass/Fail unless you have already passed at least 30 hours at Tech and your overall QCA is at least 2.5.
* Don’t take more than 12 hours Pass/Fail unless you plan to graduate with more than 120 hours.
* Don’t take more than two courses Pass/Fail in any single semester.
* Don’t take more than two Physical Education Activity courses (racquetball, tennis, etc.)
* Don’t take more than eight hours of Ensemble Music (MUS 3314 and 3414)
* Don’t take more than 16 hours of Army ROTC or 24 hours of Navy ROTC.
* Don’t take more than eight hours of Independent Study (2974 and 4974) and/or Undergraduate Research (2994 and 4994).
* Don’t sign up for a course for which you don’t meet the prerequisites.
* Don’t take any course away from Tech without securing “Permission to Take Courses Elsewhere” from the Dean’s office.
* Don’t take more than 50 hours of history unless you plan to graduate with more than 120 hours.

SPRING BREAK!

March 11-19
Innovative Perspectives in History Conference 2000

The History Graduate Association will be holding the third annual Innovative Perspectives in History Conference from March 3-4, 2000.

The conference will be held this year in Major Williams Hall and McBryde Hall on campus and will feature a wide array of papers from both Virginia Tech students and students from other universities in the area.

The topics of sessions include: the Old South, gender, science and technology, military, and political history. The conference will begin Friday March 3rd at 7 p.m. in McBryde 113 with a keynote address by Dr. Maria Franklin an anthropologist and archeologist from the University of Texas at Austin. She will be discussing her work as a Senior Research Fellow at Colonial Williamsburg. Her talk will center around issues of race, identity and material culture in the slave communities she studies.

The conference luncheon will be held at the Four Points Sheraton on March 4th and will feature Dr. Kriste Lindenmeyer from Tennessee Technological University. Her talk is entitled "Protecting Boys and Girls: Gender, Modernity and Childhood. 1900-1950".

The Brian Bertotti Award will be awarded to the best paper given at the conference along with a monetary award. Brian was a graduate student at Tech from 1997-1998 and the conference is held every year in his name. If you have any questions about the conference please e-mail Caroline Neely at cmelanso@vt.edu.

James Bristow ('95) is engagement management coordinator with KPMG in Birmingham, Alabama.

Lt. j.g. Daniel K. Ryan, Jr. ('95) USN, was designated a Naval Flight Officer upon completion of the Advanced Jet Navigation Course with Training Air Wing Two in Orange Park, Fl.

Todd D. Becker ('95) left the military after serving as an Army officer in the 101st Airborne Division and took a position with PSS World Medical/Gulf South Medical Supply in Clarksville, TN.

Barrett E. Warner ('95) is planning director for the town of Davidson, NC.

Jason A. Darish ('95) Naval flight officer, USN, returned from deployment in Sigonella, Sicily with patrol squadron five and is now in Jacksonville, Fl.

Ronald W. Fischer Jr. ('94) was promoted to executive director at Charles Towne Landing State Historic Site in Charleston, SC.

Scott Hummel ('91) joined the Howard R. Swearer Center for Public Service of Brown University as a community service coordinator in Providence, RI.

Christian E. Henneke ('89) completed his dissertation in history and received a Ph.D. From the University of Virginia. He is a second year law student in Charlotte, VA.

Charles E. Collier ('86) is vice president of Energy and Environment Technologies in Fairfax, Va.

Maj. William L. Hooker ('85), U.S. Army, is assigned by the Special Operations Support Command at Fort Bragg, NC.

Bryan L. Carper ('80) was promoted to vice president at Crestar Securities Corp. where he was top producer in Crestar Securities' prestigious Chairman's Club for the second straight year in Colonial Heights, Va.

Alumni Corner... Where Are They Now?

Amy Van Middlesworth ('99) is attending Duke University School of Law.

Elizabeth Sneed ('97) is attending Regent University School of Law.

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Lance Wallen ('75) retired from the USAF after 20 years and is living in Hampton, Va.

W. Kirk Wood ('69) founded the Center for the Study of Myth at Alabama State University. Daniel W. Burger Jr. ('66) was appointed president of DuPont Europe in Geneva Switzerland.

J. Douglas Wigner Jr ('65) is the rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Lynchburg, VA.

Attention all Alumni! Let us know what you are doing and where you are located. Return this form or email your update to us. Our address can be found at the top of the first page of the newsletter or you can simply email jafranci@vt.edu

Name:

Year
Graduated:

Where you live:

What you've been doing:

Most Influential Professor:

Other News or Story Ideas: