Welcome to the annual George Washington University History Department Newsletter. Sharing the impressive accomplishments of GW’s History department is one of our goals in sending out the newsletter to alumni and friends. Letting you know about our current activities – new faculty, the activities of those who taught when you were a student, and bringing you up to date on departmental alumni and current graduate students – is another of our goals. I hope you enjoy this newsletter as much as the earlier ones and we look forward to you getting back to us.

We appreciate very much that many of you who were inspired by previous newsletters made a gift to the department. As you will see in the columns below, we used those donations to fund some of the exciting research that necessitated travel being carried out by our undergraduate and graduate students. If you are in a position to do so, I hope that you will consider making a donation. A gift of $1,000 can fund an important short research trip for a student writing a senior, M.A., or doctoral thesis. A gift of $2,500 can make possible a longer-term visit to a major archive. In any case, gifts of all sizes are most welcome, small and large, as we “bundle” them to use for these activities and many others.

Donations are also used to bring renowned scholars to campus to meet our students and to discuss with them and the public their path-breaking research. This past March, one of the country’s leading authorities on British history, Linda Colley, Shelby M.C. Davis 1958 Professor of History at Princeton University delivered the Kayser Lecture. Her subject was “Britain, Written Constitutions, and World History,” which is also the focus of her current research. In March 2012, the Kayser lecture will be delivered by Thomas J. Sugrue who is the David Boies Professor of History and Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania. He’s a specialist in twentieth-century American politics, urban history, civil rights, and race. He was educated at Columbia; King’s College, Cambridge; and Harvard, where he earned his Ph.D. in 1992. Please consult the department’s webpage for the date, time, and topic of the lecture.

If you have questions or comments, or merely wish to begin reconnecting with the department and GW, please feel free to contact me at whbecker@gwu.edu, by phone at (202) 994-6052, or at the mailing address listed at the end of the newsletter.

With best wishes.

William H. Becker

GW History Department Creates Special Summer Institute in Normandy for High School Students

Members of the GW history faculty and graduate students helped prepare a select group of high school students to take part in a unique historical experience on the beaches of Normandy. What follows is an account of the experience the high school students had written by Tom Long, the director of the project for GW and the department’s undergraduate adviser.

On Sunday, June 26, 2011 a remarkable ceremony took place on the western coast of France. Fifteen high school students from all over America gave eulogies to soldiers who had died in the Normandy Campaign, sixty-seven years earlier. The event was the culmination of months of work and study. Each of the young people was a participant in the Albert H. Small Student/Teacher Institute - Normandy: Sacrifice for Freedom. The students had spent several months learning about the Normandy Campaign and conducting research about a deceased soldier from their home town or region. Each student was supervised by a teacher from his or her school. The result was electric. These young people, two generations or more removed from the horrors of the D-Day invasion, identified with the young men who had sacrificed their lives so that freedom could be preserved. From the first eulogy there was not a dry eye within earshot. Mr. Small’s goal of dramatically conveying the message that “freedom is not free” to today’s youth had been achieved and surpassed.

The teacher-participants in the Institute were chosen from dozens who applied from all over the country. The winners came from fourteen states and wildly different backgrounds - from the inner core of major cities and the rural countryside. Each teacher then selected a student from his or her school to complete the team. The inspiration for the program came from its benefactor, Mr. Small. The idea for research on a deceased soldier came from Dr. Cathy Gorn, Executive Director of National History Day. She asked for the assistance of Professor William H. Becker, Chairman of the History Department of the George Washington University in designing and executing the ambitious project. Drs. Gorn and Becker asked Professor Tom Long of the GW history department to serve as Institute Director in January. They created a curriculum calling for college-level readings in preparation, research about the individual soldiers, participation in lectures and discussions in Washington, and a supervised examination of major sites from the campaign in France. Three undergraduate and three graduate students from George Washington University volunteered to serve as mentors to aid the students in their research and reading.

Helping Long prepare for the trip to Normandy was Major Casey Doss, who is currently teaching history at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point while completing the dissertation for his Ph.D. under the supervision of Professor Ronald Spector at GW. In March Long joined Major Doss, senior officers, and twelve West Point cadets on the annual West Point “Staff Ride” of the Normandy Campaign in France. They spent six days in Normandy...
studying the campaign. The experience was excellent preparation for Long and, despite having visited the area before and having studied it extensively, he learned a great deal from the West Point experts.

Before coming together in Washington, D.C., the student-teacher pairs had read eight assigned books about the Second World War and the D-Day Invasion and participated in an on-line discussion. Each pair worked with one of the student-mentors from GW. At the same time, the students began researching their fallen heroes while still at home. In some cases they were able to contact the soldier’s family, while others had to rely on local newspapers and similar sources for information. Representatives of the American Battle Monuments Commission, particularly Hans Hooker, Superintendent of the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial, identified soldiers from which the students were able to select their men.

Also, the students had assistance from Lee Ann Potter, Head of Education and Volunteer Programs, at the National Archives to find information about the men they were researching.

The students arrived in Washington on June 19th. That evening everyone assembled at the Officers’ Club at Fort McNair for a welcoming dinner. Guests included several World War II veterans from the Washington, D.C. Veterans’ Home who shared stories of their service with the members of the Institute. The first speaker following dinner was Robert G. Perry, Chairman and President of the National Trust for the Humanities and a trustee of both George Washington University and National History Day. He introduced Albert H. Small, the Institute’s benefactor, who spoke of his experience in the navy, and introduced the featured speaker, Mortimer Caplin, who had served as a U.S. Navy Beach Master on Omaha Beach on D-Day. He provided a vivid description of his experiences during the invasion. One of the students presented Mr. Caplin with a framed print of a water-color of a navy beach master, entitled D plus Seven. It was painted on Omaha Beach by Navy artist Dwight C. Shepler on June 13, 1944. Musicians finished the evening playing the songs of each of the armed forces. The dinner was a fitting and moving start for the second phase of the Institute.

The next day, Professor Long led the members on a walking tour of the monuments along the National Mall. They visited the Jefferson, FDR, and the evocative Korean War Memorial, where the wall bears the inscription “Freedom is not Free.” Then they went on to the Three Soldiers, the Vietnam Veterans’ Memorial, and the Vietnam Women’s Memorial. The walk ended at the World War II Memorial, bearing the engraving of General Eisenhower’s address to the troops as they prepared for the Normandy invasion: “You are about to embark upon the great crusade toward which we have strived these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you . . . I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty, and skill in battle.” The visiting students and their teachers ended the day by watching and discussing Stephen Spielberg’s film Saving Private Ryan.

Professor Ronald H. Spector of GW launched the academic part of the Institute with a lecture about the strategic importance of the Normandy Campaign. The home front and the impact of the war on those left behind was Professor Eric Arnesen’s focus. Then members visited Arlington National Cemetery to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns. One of the students, wearing her Civil Air Patrol Uniform, also laid flowers on the graves of her grandfather and uncle. Major Doss talked about the U.S. Army during the war and led a lively discussion about its composition and organization. Then it was back for dinner and the docu-drama Normandy, The Great Crusade, a more balanced and broader view of the campaign than either The Longest Day or Private Ryan.

Dr. Sarandis Papadopoulos, Secretariat Historian for the Navy Department and GW Ph.D., described the preparations for the invasion and the enormous naval and amphibious operation that led to the campaign. Then the institute members secured credentials to do research at the National Archives. On the final morning in Washington, GW Adjunct Professor Ray Batvinis gave a riveting talk about the role of intelligence and deception in the Normandy Campaign, focusing on the amazing activities of Juan Pujol (aka Garbo) in deceiving the Germans about allied plans. The lecture-discussion session then concluded with my talk about the D-Day landings themselves and the Normandy Campaign.

Then it was off to France. After a day in Paris to adjust to the time zones and take in the major sites, the members of the Institute were off to Normandy for three intensive days of visiting the actual scenes of major actions in the campaign. On the final day in Normandy, the study-tour began at Utah Beach, near where several of the soldiers the students had studied were killed. Everyone walked down the beach and climbed the bluffs to the American Cemetery where the group laid a wreath at the memorial. Then each student, in turn, gave a eulogy for his or her soldier. Each student placed an American and a French flag next to the marker for their soldier, and laid a rose on the grave. The final day was spent in Paris visiting Notre Dame Cathedral and other major landmarks of western civilization. The Institute concluded with a lovely ceremonial dinner at a palace at La Cercle de l’Union Intermarielle where it was clear that all had come away with a new (or reborn) awareness of the price of American liberty. And all the adults had great reason to have confidence in the future.

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Faculty News

During the last year the faculty in GW’s history department launched new programs, won major grants and continued researching and writing new books and articles.

Paula Alonso has published a book on the politics of Argentina at the end of the nineteenth century. It has received considerable public attention with radio and TV interviews, book reviews in the Argentine national newspapers and in a national news magazine.

Tyler Anbinder received a $290,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to fund the study of 18,000 bank accounts opened by Irish immigrants who came to the United States as a result of the Great Potato Famine of the 1840s and ’50s. (See a more complete description of Tyler’s project later in this newsletter.)

Eric Arnesen will be spending the 2011-2012 academic year at the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars as a visiting scholar. He will continue working on his book project about A. Phillip Randolph.


William Becker (department chair) has completed a coauthored book, Eisenhower and the Cold War Economy, which was published by Johns Hopkins University Press in November 2011.

Ed Berkowitz has returned to the department after a year’s sabbatical leave. He has submitted a manuscript “The Other Welfare: Supplemental Security Income and the American Welfare State” for review at Cornell University Press and looks forward to getting back to teaching.
Nemata Blyden was part of a three member Academic Consortium Board Evaluation appointed by the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) to review the CIEE Study center in Dakar, Senegal. Blyden also traveled to South Africa to participate as an invited speaker at a workshop organized by the Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS). She is teaching a course for GW students this summer entitled “Africans in America” at the Smithsonian Museum of African Art.

Gregg Brazinsky is returning to GW after a year spent as a visiting fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars where he published several articles on Korea and China during the Cold War. He was recently featured on a KBS documentary about Syngman Rhee, the first President of South Korea. The Korean translation of his book Nation Building in South Korea: Koreans, Americans and the Making of a Democracy will appear in November.


Erin D. Chapman has completed her first book, Prove It On Me: New Negroes, Sex and Popular Culture in the 1920s, to be published by Oxford University Press this November.

James G. Hershberg has recently completed a book manuscript on Eastern European diplomacy during the Vietnam War. The book, Marigold: The Lost Chance for Peace in Vietnam will appear from the Woodrow Wilson Center Press in conjunction with Stanford University Press in January 2012. It has been praised as “superb” and a “blockbuster” by leading experts in the field.

Cynthia Harrison delivered a keynote address on women’s political and economic status in the United States to an international group of leaders of NGOs. Under the aegis of the U.S. Department of State, International Visitor Leadership Program, this group was beginning a multi-state tour to discuss the role of NGOs in promoting global women’s issues. Her article titled “Race, Class and the Feminist Policy Agenda: The Case of the Women’s legal Defense Fund,” will appear later this year in the Journal of Women, Politics, and Policy.

Jenna Weissman Joselit, the Charles E. Smith Professor of Judaic Studies and History has just completed her first year as director of the Program in Judaic Studies and is about to launch a new M.A. program in Jewish Cultural Arts. When not engaged in matters administrative, she continues to work on her book about America’s relationship to the Ten Commandments and to contribute to the New Republic, Tablet and The Forward, where her monthly column is about to enter its twelfth year of publication.

Dane Kennedy was a fellow at the National Humanities Center for the 2010-11 academic year, where he worked on a book about British exploration in Africa and Australia and edited another book on exploration.

Christopher Klemek, in addition to publishing several articles, recently published his book The Transatlantic Collapse of Urban Renewal: Postwar Urbanism from New York to Berlin with the University of Chicago Press. It was awarded the Paul Davidoff Book Prize from the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning.

Ed McCord was invited to present papers at numerous conferences around world. These included a paper on “Military Atrocities in Warlord China,” at a conference on “Military-Civil Relations in Chinese History” in Leipzig, Germany, on August 6, 2011 and another on “Narratives of Commemoration: The PRC Looks Back on the 1911 Revolution,” presented at the annual conference of the American Association of Chinese Studies in Philadelphia in October. Continuing his long history of University service, Ed was appointed Director of Sigur Center for Asian Studies, within the Elliott School.


Ronald Spector received a Taiwan research fellowship from the Taiwan Educational and Cultural Relations Office for research on the Chinese Civil War on Kinmen (Quemoy.) He also lectured at the National University of Indonesia in June 2011 and gave the introductory lecture at the Albert H. Small Student/Teacher Institute on The Battle of Normandy.


Daqing Yang published Technology of Empire: Telecommunications and Japanese Expansion in Asia, 1883-1945 with Harvard University Press. He is serving as a visiting professor at Waseda University in Tokyo for the academic year 2011-12.

Andrew Zimmerman spent July in the attic of the Victor Immanuel Monument in Rome reading letters from a colonel who served alongside Garibaldi in the Italian Revolution and brought his experience to the United States in the 1850s, where he helped to train John Brown and his soldiers for the fight against slavery in Kansas.

Alumni & Current Students

GW History Department alumni are taking over the U.S. Department of State’s Office of the Historian! Joining Sarah Berndt, (Ph.D. 2011), Elizabeth Charles (Ph.D. 2010) and Mircea Munteanu (A.B.D.) is Stephen P. Randolph (Ph.D. 2005) who has been named as the new general editor of the Foreign Relations of the United States, “the official documentary historical record of major U.S. foreign policy decisions and significant diplomatic activity.” A former fighter pilot and a retired colonel, Randolph has published a book with Harvard University Press (based on his GW dissertation), Powerful and Brutal Weapons: Nixon, Kissinger, and the Easter Offensive, which won the Best Air Power History Book Award from the Air Force Historical Foundation. He previously taught at the National Defense University.

Other alumni news includes a new book by Philip E. Muehlenbeck (Ph.D. 2007) Betting on the Africans: John F. Kennedy’s Courting of African Nationalist Leaders, which will be published by Oxford University and appear on the shelves in December 2011. Middle Eastern historian Helena Kaler (A.B.D.) has accepted a tenure-track appointment at Earlham College.

Yan “Diana” Xiong (Ph.D. 2011) is an assistant professor of Chinese history at Regent University. Laurie Stoff (B.A. 1992) an Assistant Professor of History at Louisiana Tech, spent the Summer in Russia doing research for her second book on women and Russian medical services in World War I.

Several of our B.A. graduates have elected to devote time to public service right after receiving their diplomas. Mike Keough (B.A. 2008) worked for Teach for America in the north Bronx, where he taught 7th grade history, which in New York spans from pre-Columbus through Reconstruction. His classes’ history projects included creating a mock Iroquois Confederacy and debating manifest destiny at an all-grade assembly. Brian Wittuhn (B.A. 2010) worked for City Year in Washington, D.C., teaching 4th grade. After their public service, both Keough and Wittuhn have gone on to law school at Fordham and Columbia, respectively. They join a large contingent of history department grads at some of the country’s finest law schools, including Harvard, Chicago, Virginia, and Colorado. Swetha Ramaswamy (B.A. 2009) was awarded a Fulbright to Nepal, 2009-2010 and is presently with Teach for America in Baltimore. Karinna Arroyo (B.A. 2006) graduated from the University of Maryland Law School and is now an Assistant District Attorney in Manhattan.
Annie Dobberteen (B.A. 2010), who is committed to getting the lessons of history out through museums and public history, will receive her M.A. in American Studies with a Museum and Material Culture focus from GW. She has been working at the Newseum and is currently interning with a curator in the Work and Industry Department of the American History museum. And over the summer she backpacked through Peru doing volunteer work. Connie Golding (B.A. 2010) is working at Ford's Theater, where she is expanding her interest in the era of the Civil War. She also serves as a docent at Anderson House, the lovely historical headquarters of the Society of the Cincinnati, and plans to pursue a Ph.D. in history.

Meanwhile, our current students remain as busy as ever:

Five of our history majors Chris Ching, Carly Gibbs, Claire Kozik, and Robert Zane and undergrad alumnus and current GW grad student Sam Myers (B.A. ’21) have had papers accepted for the 2012 Biennial Convention of the national history honor society, Phi Alpha Theta. They will present their papers at the national meeting in Orlando, Florida in January 2012. The GW chapter has been recognized in the honor society’s newsletter for its increasingly active program. A photo of the delegation to the Regional Conference in 2011 appeared in the nationally distributed publication. The group has begun a series of visits to local museums and historical sites, study nights, and other activities to boost interest in things historical.

The Graduate Student Conference on the Cold War rotates each year between George Washington University, UC Santa Barbara, and the London School of Economics. In 2011, it was at UCSB, and two GW history students presented papers -- Mary McPartland (Ph.D. program) and Brian Lawatch (M.A. 2011). They were accompanied by Prof. Hope Harrison. Ph.D. student Bell Clement, a student of Ed Berkowitz and Chris Klemek, has been awarded a $25,000 doctoral dissertation research grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Clement’s dissertation, entitled “Creative Federalism, Empowered Citizens: Shaping the Great Society City,” explores the intersection of federal and community-based efforts to reconstruct the American city in the wake of the upheavals of the 1960s, and focuses on policy experience in Washington, D.C. Ph.D. student Patrick Funicello, a student of Marcy Norton and Peter Klaren, has been awarded $19,000 from the Fulbright Commission to conduct research in Spain for the academic year 2011-2012. His dissertation is entitled “Imperial Spain’s Dark Matter: Contraband in the Iberian Atlantic during the Composite Monarchy (1580-1640).”

Natalie Deibel presented numerous scholarly papers in 2011. On February, 14, at the Institute of Historical Research in London she delivered “For Profit, Pleasure and Sport: Recreation, Culture and Society in the Atlantic World, 1600-1700.” She was chosen to be one of twenty Ph.D. students to attend the Spring Academy of American Studies and History at Heidelberg University in March, where she presented a paper entitled “Feasting, Fighting and Fornicating: Recreation in Early America, 1600-1750.”

While continuing to work on his dissertation Greg Tomlin, a career U.S. Army officer since his commissioning from the College of William and Mary in 2001, has joined the faculty of the History Department at the U.S. Military Academy where he presently teaches courses on American and Cold War history. James F. Person has received grants from the history department, the Sigur Center for Asian Studies, and the Korea Foundation. He has continued his work as the coordinator of the North Korea International Documentation Project at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. During the last year he has presented papers in Seoul and Shanghai and appeared in a KBS documentary.

Recent Donors to the History Department

The History Department gratefully acknowledges these generous donors who made gifts to the department from November 1, 2010 through October 31, 2011.

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*We apologize if we have inadvertently left anyone off this list.*
Nineteenth century U.S. historian Tyler Anbinder's research has taken him from the Gangs of New York to the banks of New York, with attention to anti-immigrant politics and the Civil War draft along the way. Anbinder's last book, *Five Points*, illuminated the New York neighborhood that was called "the World's Most Notorious Slum" and inspired Martin Scorsese's 2002 film—for which Anbinder served as a historical consultant. Now he's examining American immigrants' "rags to riches" stories—and auditing their books to see if they hold up. This year Anbinder received a $290,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to fund the study of 18,000 bank accounts opened by Irish refugees who came to the United States as a result of the Great Potato Famine of the 1840s and '50s. The grant will allow him to hire 12 GW undergraduates as research assistants to help transcribe information from the records of the Emigrant Savings Bank and track the lives of its depositors in America over the course of the Civil War era.

What's more, even as he's delving deeply into the ledgers of one set of immigrants, he's simultaneously at work on a sweeping history of the immigrant experience in New York from the first Dutch settlers to the present. To share ideas with like-minded colleagues while he's working on that manuscript, Anbinder convenes a monthly University Seminar on the American Immigrant Experience, an interdisciplinary faculty roundtable sponsored by the GW Office of Graduate Studies and Academic Affairs. It's perhaps no surprise that he was elected this past year to the executive board of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society. That's because it's just the latest of many laurels garnered by Anbinder's research: His first book, *Nativism and Slavery*, won the Avery Craven prize of the Organization of American Historians for "the most original history book on the coming of the American Civil War;" his article on immigrants and the Civil War draft won the John Hubbell Prize for the best article in Civil War History in 2006; and he has a new article forthcoming in the Journal of American History. Anbinder has also held the Thomas Jefferson Fulbright Chair in American History at the University of Utrecht.

And it's not only via Hollywood and his publications that Anbinder inspires GW students, alumni, and the broader community. He's taken groups to Civil War battlefields, Ellis Island, New York's Lower East Side Tenement Museum, and Ford's Theater. Read more about Tyler at these links:

- [www.gwtoday.gwu.edu/people/commemoratingthecivilwar](http://www.gwtoday.gwu.edu/people/commemoratingthecivilwar)

More than twenty years ago, Professor Hope M. Harrison arrived in Germany to conduct her dissertation research on the construction of the Berlin Wall. Just as Professor Harrison began her research, however, the wall itself was torn down. The very monument she had come to study had been thrown into the dust bin of history. Harrison nevertheless went on to write a prize winning book on the subject entitled *Driving the Soviet Up the Wall: Soviet-East German Relations*, 1953-1961. Using newly available East German and Russian documents she showed how the East Germans had pressured the Soviets into allowing them to build this iconic symbol of the Cold War. Recently, a well-known German publishing house published an expanded translation of the book. Once again, Professor Harrison's timing turned out to be sublime. The translation of her book came out just as Germany started to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the closing of the Berlin border. Professor Harrison returned to Germany in the summer of 2011 amidst a swirl of media attention and controversy. Her book was reviewed in many of the most important German newspapers and journals while Professor Harrison made numerous appearances on radio and television. These included a book launch celebration with famous German politician Egon Bahr, who is known for devising West Germany's Ostpolitik policy during the 1960s and 1970s.

In addition to her activities as a scholar, Professor Harrison has been an instrumental force in the development of GW's Summer Institute on Conducting Archival Research (SICAR). Having spent so much time in the recently opened Russian and East German archives writing *Driving the Soviets Up the Wall*, Professor Harrison wondered why Ph.D. programs did not provide students with more training in dealing with the situations they were likely to confront as they did archival research. After launching the institute in 2003, she won three successive grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation—altogether worth more than $1 million—to further expand and develop SICAR. Today the institute has helped to put GW on the map in the field of Cold War Studies. Jeremi Suri, the Mack Brown Professor of History at the University of Texas Austin, recently praised SICAR as "the most valuable workshop offered for young historians of foreign policy, politics, and international affairs;" adding that "it provides an informative, inspirational, hands-on tutorial in how to do ground-breaking research." Currently Professor Harrison is taking a breather from her teaching at GW and is a public policy scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars. She will return to the university in the spring and continue with her active agenda for research and providing training for Ph.D. students.
How Your Donation Can Help

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