

Chronicles

Newsletter of the Department of History, Queen's University

From the Chair...

RECENT ALUMNI: *WHERE ARE THEY NOW?*

A university is only as good as the students it recruits. For several decades, the Department of History, like other departments in the Faculty of Arts and Science, has had the privilege of teaching some of the very best students in the country. In the following pages, you will find over 20 interviews with alumni from all walks of life. They serve as a reminder to prospective students that part of the Queen's experience is the opportunity to meet fascinating people, leaders in the making.

It has been a pleasure to speak with former students. I thank them for taking time away



James T. Carson, Chair, Department of History

I went through it. You went through it. And if Thucydides or Georg Hegel or Woodrow Wilson had mothers, fathers, aunts, and uncles, they went through it too. "What are you going to do with a degree in History?"

That perennial question—what kind of job are you going to get?—ought to shape how we think about ourselves as historians to one extent or another every bit as much as the seminars we took, the books we read, and the papers we wrote. Let there be no mistake about it, however, that in this era of crumbling markets and sinking nations, those who follow the chosen path will have to stand up and be counted for their choice. And in the pages that follow I hope you will all find examples from public life and the private sector that will put to rest for good the notion that a degree in history, or any liberal art for that matter, is a nice if somewhat irresponsible thing to do. Indeed, we might all profit

from the cases presented and throw our doubters back on their heels with the simple reply---"what can't I do with a degree in History?"

Take, for example, Sally Campbell Thorpe whose time in Watson Hall launched her to Cambridge and thence to the United Nations. Or Robert Leckey who took lessons learned in our classrooms to his own at McGill's law school. Ayela Khan now applies her Queen's History experience to the challenges she faces at the Aga Khan University while Mark Wiseman turned his experience reading hundreds of pages a week for his seminars towards his complicated work at the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board.

Probing the link between a university degree and a job is just about as tedious as the ticking of time. What ought to matter is the human connection between what the department's faculty has offered over the years and what generation after generation of students have made of it. At Queen's we regularly hear of the special relationship between alumni and the university but what has gotten lost in the glad tidings and Oil Thighs has been the absolutely vital role played by the departments. In this issue we celebrate the accomplishments of our alumni and hold them forth as examples of what is possible when you answer the call to take up the practice of the craft of history.

(The Chair's report continues on p. 24)

We began by telephoning three students chosen from a seminar taught in 1994-95: Sally Campbell Thorpe, Robert Leckey, and Erin Eacott. There were three common threads to their recollections: first, they looked back fondly on the Queen's seminar experience. Back in 1993-97, on the eve of deep budget cuts—which continue today--these students would have taken at least six or seven full-year seminars. At least 40% of their classroom time consisted of small, intense discussion-based classes. Second, these three students recalled receiving valuable mentorship from all of

and History professors.”

We reached Robert in his office perched high on the slopes of Mount Royal. He teaches family law, constitutional law, and administrative law. He is one of Canada’s leading young law professors. His award-winning book, *Contextual Subjects: Family, State, and Relational Theory*, was published in 2008. Robert studied English and History, graduating in 1997 with the Medal in English and with the Honourable Mention for the Prince of Wales Award. From Queen’s it was on to McGill Law, the Université de Paris, a clerkship at the Supreme Court of Canada, and a doctorate in law (supported by a prestigious Trudeau Foundation Scholarship) from the University of Toronto. Robert has already won the Principal’s Prize for Excellence in Teaching at McGill as well as the Law Students’ Association’s John W. Durnford Teaching Excellence Award. Robert has worked for the Bastarache Commission (on the process for appointing judges) and he is the Chair of the Legal Issues Committee of Egale Canada. Robert frequently contributes op-eds to major Canadian newspapers.

We asked Robert what he gained from studying English and History: “Apart from a broad education in the liberal arts I gained crucial skills which have helped me in my current job. At McGill I have interactive classrooms. The close, critical reading of texts that I learned at Queen’s is something I try to reproduce in my law classes. I felt well prepared in law school; I had already learned how to manage large amounts of material. I was taught to read closely, to read vigorously, to organize an argumentative essay. In fact, my first job, in the year between graduating from Queen’s and going to law school, was in the financial sector. I was hired—on the basis of a Queen’s arts degree—by the Investment Funds Institute of Canada to conduct research, to write reports, newsletters and speeches. They recognized my ability to conduct research.” Robert recalls two seminars, in particular, which honed his research and writing skills. A course with Paul Christianson in Tudor and Stuart History “was revelatory. The way we were introduced to primary sources, what they might have meant back then, what they might mean to us today. It was amazing.” And a seminar with Elizabeth Hanson in English Renaissance literature was a place “where one learned how to read texts critically. I had the sense that my instructor knew me. I could talk to her and ask her how to improve my writing. She would read drafts. I got a lot of

valuable mentoring. I am grateful for it.”

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Erin Eacott graduated with a Major in History in 1997. She is a Prosecutor with the Public Prosecution Service of Canada in Edmonton." She specializes in regulatory prosecutions."Erin notes: "Almost every sector in Canada is regulated and protected federally, be it immigration, food, the nuclear industry, transportation, or the environment." Canada has 97,000 federal regulations, any of which could end up on my desk as an offence if

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We asked Erin what skills she learned as a History major: "My experience at Queen's definitely prepared me for law school and for my current job as a prosecutor." I honed my writing skills and I developed my critical analysis

they simply study what they love. Spend these four years thinking about the things that are important to you and discovering more of who you are." My educational

April 2010, he has been in charge of all of its investment activity on behalf of 17 million Canadians— managing over \$150 billion.

! In his spare time Mark reads works of current affairs—former Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott's *The Great Experiment* is one recent read. Mark is the father of two boys, a wine connoisseur, an avid skier, and a philanthropist. He has been chairman of the board of a charity devoted to homeless youth and he currently sits on the boards at Mount Sinai Hospital and the international board of Right to Play. Mark is a testament to the old maxim: if you want something done, give it to a busy person. This pattern emerged at Queen's.

! We asked Mark what he liked best about Queen's: "I loved Queen's. There was so much to do. I got involved in everything from athletics to student government to attending lectures of guest speakers. I was a student senator, an ASUS Rep., I ran orientation, and I was a lifeguard. I liked the fact that Kingston was a university town. The university was an incredible community. After first year, I literally lived on the campus—at Union and University, where the Stauffer Library now resides. Then I lived on Stuart Street."

! We asked Mark why he chose Queen's and whether or not it met his expectations. "I chose Queen's largely because I was very much interested in the arts. I had an absolutely fantastic history teacher in high school. I am still in touch with him. There was no doubt in my mind that I wanted to study history and possibly politics as well. I chose Queen's because of its reputation in the arts, and, specifically, in history and politics."

We asked Mark about his time in the History Department. "I learned how to write well, which put me in good stead for everything that I have done since. I loved the classes of Professors Tulchinsky and Swainson. I wrote a paper on 'Sir John and the Gerrymander' which was on the election of 1878. Queen's had a lot of archival material related to this topic and I was able to do original research under the guidance of a leading historian of Canada. I found material that people had never found before. I remember History 121 being a rude awakening, but in the good sense. It was tough, and it was different than anything I had ever done in high school. It wasn't about dates and facts; we were challenged to think on our own and my peers were challenging too. The class size was smaller than the norm. To have a small class like that in first year—with

just 15 or 18 students—I felt enormously lucky. Right off the bat, I was challenged to write carefully and to think critically."

We asked Mark how History prepared him for Law. "I found that I was more than prepared for law; the transition for me was easier than it would have been had I come from another school or discipline. Reading hundreds of pages per week and having vigorous debates in class— none of this was new to me, as it was for some others." We asked Mark to speak about his current line of work: "The key to being a good investor is to never make the same mistake twice. Mistakes are inevitable; the point is to learn from the past. I spend a good deal of time reading economic history."

! Mark noted that Queen's is seen in his industry as a leading school. At the CPPIB, "we actively recruit from just a small handful of Canadian universities and Queen's is a key one." And finally, we asked Mark if he had some advice for current history students: "do things that you like at the B.A. level. The specific career, the money will follow later. When you're young, follow your passion. You'll be better at it. You can always specialize later. Take risks. Study abroad, work abroad, get a foreign language if you can."

Jess Joss has a busy year ahead of her. On October 15th, she is expecting her first child, a boy. On that date ("or possibly a bit later!") she begins a term as QUAA Alumni President, Queen's University. With two stepdaughters aged 12 and 18, Jess says that "one is off to university and the youngest" is about to be born!" Jess (History, 1996) founded a website design company called "Jesslin Services Inc." in 1997, while she was earning a Diploma in Internet Business and Technology from the University of Toronto. "What sorts of hurdles did you have to clear as a very young entrepreneur," we asked? "Actually, my youth was not considered a hindrance. The assumption back then was that if you were young, you *must* know about the Internet, and how to use it. I wasn't seasoned enough to strike out on

and hygiene. One area of focus was the adoption of 'best practices' in water supply management and regulation in small communities. This posting took Sinead to Asia and Africa. Prior to this job, Sinead worked at Health Canada as a Senior Policy Advisor to the Minister of State, Public Health. She provided advice to her department head, to other government departments, to external stakeholders and to the Cabinet. She has held several other policy-oriented positions in Health Canada, working in the

more time into the courses I teach at McGill -- in the fall

discusses, among other things, the difficulty many Canadians face getting affordable legal assistance: <http://www2.macleans.ca/2009/02/02/where%E2%80%99s-a-lawyer-when-you-need-one/>

! "You become a jack of all trades as a journalist. No day is the same. It is a fascinating profession." Kate has been a guest on TV Ontario's "The Agenda", hosted by Steve Paikin, where she spoke about the growing number of young women who are opting off the birth control pill. Recently Kate did stories on hip replacements. She enjoys "doing policy-oriented stories."

! "I was very happy at Queen's. I came from Ottawa. My dad went to Queen's. And I loved the idea of small classes. I got to know my professors. I remember having a seminar outside on the lawn on a nice sunny September day. There was a strong emphasis on writing. Having the time to write a 20 to 30 page paper—it was exciting. And it was ideal preparation for my career. History taught me to be curious about other parts of the world."

Carly Weeks graduated with a Major in History in 2003. She is a National Reporter with *The Globe and Mail*.

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degree after Queen's, which means I am probably pretty biased, it got me an internship that would help lead to the job I have now."

month research internship at the Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales, in Sydney, Australia. Liz arrived in 2009 expecting to return to Canada within a matter of months. At UNSW Liz did research on early childhood education and care policy. She was then offered a two year position at the same institute as a research associate. And recently she began her PhD in the same area, which she hopes to finish by 2014.

! Liz works on a number of projects for NGOs and government departments as well as grant-funded research. Her job involves fieldwork, literature reviews, and policy analyses of government programs. In the run-up to legislation it would introduce in parliament, the Rudd government contracted out to UNSW a project on paid parental leave in Australia. (The policy became law in January 2011). Liz was given the responsibility of writing a policy and literature review on paid parental leave in similar countries to inform further evaluation of the policy. "It was the perfect mix of the academic and the practical, both working with stakeholders and undertaking independent research" she told us in a telephone interview. Liz has also worked on a policy audit of the various services and programs for children and families offered by each and every Australian state and territory. When Liz finishes her PhD she will pursue an academic post or possibly a career in government or the NGO sector. A former member of the Queen's ski team, Liz has made a couple trips to New Zealand to ski, and enjoys Sydney for its outdoor lifestyle, especially jogging and surfing around Bondi Beach.

! Looking back on her Queen's years, Liz has fond memories of several courses. "When I began in the History Department I had no idea of the wide variety of courses on offer. I took courses on the history of China, the environment, terrorism, the history of medicine...things I never would have imagined taking when I was a high school student thinking about what was in store for me at the university level. All my professors were terrific. They were accessible and interesting. The History Department was small enough that you got to know other students. The seminars allowed me to take classes with a bunch of friends. We didn't plan it that way, but I just happened to end up in the same courses with familiar faces. The small classes required that I be on my toes all the time. You really had to come to class prepared to debate other people. I think this has helped me immensely in my graduate studies." We asked Liz what she liked about Kingston in

general: "I loved the small town atmosphere; everyone living in the same area. It was easy to get involved in campus life because the town was small enough. All my friends were close by. Queen's is a special place and I am happy that I chose to apply to study there."

We reached **Ayela Khan** in Toronto, where she works as the global website Content Editor for The Aga Khan University. She is responsible for writing and editing all content for the AKU's websites, which receive at least 1.2 million

hits per month. More generally, she is involved in the promotion of the university with a mandate to expand its global presence.

Born in Pakistan, Ayela spent a few years in Canada as a child. She decided to come back to study at Queen's, graduating with a Major in History in 2003. Ayela returned to Pakistan in 2003 and worked as a journalist with *Newsline*, a major national newsmagazine, for 3 years. Her articles focused mostly on modernization and the Pakistani identity. One can get a glimpse of this young writer's unusual talents here: <http://www.newsline.com/author/ayela-khan/>

position at the AKU.

! "History," Ayela says, "allowed me a lot of flexibility. I was free to pursue so many potential types of graduate study. Working as a journalist, I benefitted from my History degree. I was taught to write and to think in an analytical fashion. I was taught to be objective *and* subjective. The study of History made me take everything into account before arriving at my own opinion. Things are

"In History and Politics, the reading load was heavy. No question about it, I thought I was doing well, but I was stretched and challenged by the workload. I suppose it was a taste of what I would come to enjoy later in life. I gained a critical eye. I was taught not to accept scholarship on its face, no matter the credentials of the author. As a lawyer, the ability to critically evaluate arguments is hugely important. And the stamina required to get through legal material is essential. I think that I had a taste of that as a history student. We were constantly producing written work

Bridget O'Grady

is currently an Internal Auditor in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. Bridget graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Honours in History in 2003, winning the departmental medal." She pursued a Master of Public Administration at the Queen's School of Policy Studies,

and soon after graduation, became an Auditor and Audit Project Leader with the Office of the Auditor General of Canada (OAG) in Ottawa, where she worked from 2004 to early 2011. Bridget recalls, "I was responsible for conducting performance (or 'value-for-money') audits of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Canada Border Services Agency, the Correctional Service of Canada, and a variety of other departments and agencies. Over the course of my six and a half years at the OAG, I travelled the entire country, gathering evidence (just as I did while completing my history degree, in fact!); toured everything from the Kingston Penitentiary to container ships in Halifax; interviewed senior management across the Government of Canada, stakeholder organizations, and international bodies; and contributed to the drafting of audit reports (some of the longest 'history' papers I've ever written!)." I even had the privilege of representing the OAG at the Australian National Audit Office in Canberra, Australia, in 2009."

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my health to come up with a clear, positive and know a historian—will get you places you my pne9(y)18(e)r

Alexandra Petre is currently a fourth-year History student. During the summer of 2011 she held an Undergraduate Student Summer Research Program award. She is a residence Don, a Research Assistant in the History Department, a Princeton Review Campus Representative, and a

Government of Canada Student Ambassador (in the Office

The lecture began with a discussion of eight "Possible Causes" of the English Civil War. The key issues were posted on Power Point. Sarah walked the students through the historiography, including the very latest scholarship. Her notes were there to provide orientation but it was clear that Sarah was not reading from them. She seemed to have two pages of point form notes which guided her. The students knew exactly where the lecture was going. Sarah's delivery was well-paced, clear and concise. Sarah would occasionally walk across the front of the lecture hall to write key names on the chalkboard. She would use these occasions to go to the center of the 'stage' and speak directly to the class, untethered from the podium, in a way harking back to that master of the interactive, Phil Donahue.

The first third of the lecture consisted of a discussion of historiography, key concepts, and the like. The rest of the lecture was devoted to the "Narrative," which was clearly signposted. Sarah walked students through some of the early events in the Civil War. She concluded with a sweeping overview and then a series of questions. The last fifteen minutes of the class consisted of a question/answer session. Students were encouraged to defend or criticize a particular school of thought.

Sarah has the confidence and the natural ability that few of us possess. Sarah adds that her "lecture style is actually pilfered from my old mentor at WLU, Joyce Lorimer (now emerita). She didn't run as interactive a lecture as I do, but she did ask the occasional question. Most importantly, she was very explicit that half of what she was doing in the class was teaching us how to be effective students. So she always lectured to a question, to point out that she was essentially constructing an essay. Her goal was to teach us how to take effective notes, but I do it to try to emphasize historiography and to make it more memorable. Lectures have a tendency to be very passive creatures, and if you give people a reason to remember them, then exams are much easier."

"How did you find Queen's students?" "I could sing their praises all day long. The only reason I could pull [my lecturing style] off was because of the strength of Queen's students. My students also struggled through hard, foreign material, and they did so at ridiculous times, like 8:30 am on a Monday, or 10 am on a Friday. Even when they were tired f5fam on yyso

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royal wedding and the royal visit to Canada. #

Carolyn is doing
her PhD under the
supervision of
Andrew Jainchill
and Jeffrey Collins.
An expert on the
history of
monarchy,
Carolyn's thesis is
on "Henrietta
Maria and Marie
Antoinette:
Queenship and
Revolution in

Early Modern Europe." Carolyn adds: "I have completed the first draft of my dissertation and am in the process of doing revisions. My key argument is that negative perceptions of Henrietta Maria and Marie Antoinette as wives, mothers and heads of royal households undermined popular support for monarchical government preceding and during the English Civil Wars and French Revolution respectively. The dialogue between each queen's perception of her position and the expectations of the King's subjects intersects with numerous themes in Early Modern European history such as the formation of the state, the role of women in the family and the evolution of the public sphere."!

Carolyn's research has been supported by numerous Queen's graduate awards, student travel awards, and by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. She has worked in Great Britain and France at the British Library, the National Archives at Kew, the National Art Library in the Victoria and Albert Museum, Lambeth Palace Library, the National Library of Wales, the Archives Nationales (Paris), the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and the Bibliothèque de la Histoire de la Ville de Paris.!

! At Queen's, Carolyn has found that she belongs to "a very social group of grad students. I have enjoyed many lunches in the grad club and films at the screening room. We are a cohesive bunch; we have grad student volleyball and softball teams. And of course the classroom environment is great. I was drawn to Queen's partly because I liked the idea of a smaller university and I was

Departmental

and emerging middle-power respectively following the end of World War Two. The Department thanks Jeff for his four years of outstanding service as Undergraduate Chair.

The Department Welcomes...

Ben Woodford has just joined the department from the University of Cambridge and will hold a SSHRCC postdoctoral fellowship to research early modern Britain. Dr. Woodford will work with **Jeff Collins** on Oliver Cromwell and English print culture in the 1650s and also begin the revision of his dissertation into a book manuscript entitled "Perceptions of a Monarchy without a King: Reactions to Oliver Cromwell's Power" which will explore how members of the Cromwellian Protectorate and outsiders reacted to the growth of Cromwell's monarchical power.

Brad Miller will join the department from the University of Toronto in January, 2012 as a SSHRCC postdoctoral fellowship and will research the evolution of Canada from colony to state in reference to the place of British North America within nineteenth century international law. Particular issues of interest will include aboriginal claims to self-government, the rights of religious minorities, extradition, the use of military force, protection of foreign authors' property, and international trade and so on enmeshed "Canada" in the long 19th century in an emerging and contested global legal order." Dr. Miller will work under the supervision of **Jeff McNairn**, our current Graduate Chair.

Donations Matter

Last fall the Department and University concluded a centennial celebration of the James Douglas Chair in Canadian and Colonial History. The actual chair is ornate, elaborately carved, and was restored by the students in the Master's of Art conservation program at Queen's and then placed in a position of prominence in Douglas Library. The holder of the

Douglas Chair, **Prof. Don Akenson**, delivered an incisive talk about the state of the modern university entitled "Arithmetic, Purpose, and Liberal Arts Education," but only after

Graduate Students' Comings and Goings (*Queen's supervisor in brackets*)

- James Morton (supervisor, Richard Greenfield), a former Canadian Rhodes Scholar and Queen's MA student is at the University of California Berkeley doing a PhD in Byzantine Studies.
- Michelle Bourbonniere (Robert Shenton) is enrolled in a PhD at Stanford University.
- Aidan Forth (Sandra den Otter) has begun a PhD at Stanford
- Kelly Summers (Harold Mah) is doing a PhD at Stanford
- Sarah Shortall (Harold Mah) is doing a PhD at Harvard
- Nicole Longpre (Tim Smith) has begun a PhD at Columbia University.
- Lise Butler (Sandra den Otter) has begun a PhD at Oxford.
- Mark Condos (Sandra den Otter) has begun a PhD at Cambridge University.
- Robynne Mellor (Tim Smith/Colin Duncan) just started a PhD at Georgetown University.
- Stuart Henderson (Karen Dubinsky) received his PhD in 2007 and recently published *Making the Scene: Yorkville and Hip Toronto 1960-1970* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011). He has also accepted a position at McMaster University.
- Nancy Butler (Ian McKay) will hold an assistant professorship in the Department of Gender Studies this fall.
- Michael Eamon (Jane Errington and Jeff McNairn) teaches public history at Trent University and is editor-in-chief of "*First Person: The Online Journal of the Champlain Society at Champlain Society.*"
- David Duncan (Tim Smith) will finish his PhD at Cambridge University this autumn.
- Chris Churchill (Harold Mah) has landed a tenure-track job in History and Global Studies at Alfred University in the Fingerlakes Region of western New York. Dr. Churchill was a mainstay of the undergraduate teaching program for

Hot off the Press

Donald Akenson

*Ireland, Sweden and the Great
European Migration, 1815-1914,*
McGill-Queen's University Press,
2011.

Sylvia Söderlind and **James
Carson, eds.**

*American Exceptionalisms: From
Winthrop to Winfrey,* State
University of New York Press,
2011.

Rosanne Currarino

The Labor Question in America,
Economic Democracy in the

We are very grateful to have supportive alumni and friends who are inspired to make a difference at Queen's. Your support is instrumental in upholding our long-standing tradition of excellence.

The Department of History delivers an outstanding university experience, both inside and outside the classroom. We