


Summer 2017

UA68/8 History Alumni Newsletter

WKU History

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SUMMER, 2017

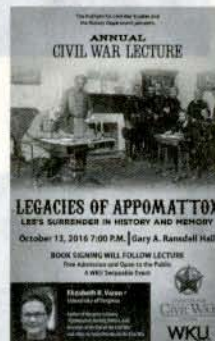
James T. Baker, Editor • John Hardin, Photographer

A HISTORY LUMNI NEWSLETTER



Elizabeth Varon with director of WKU's Civil War Institute Glenn Lafantasia

Civil War Lecture: Appomattox Again Takes Center Stage



On October 13, University of Virginia Professor Elizabeth R. Varon delivered the annual Civil War Lecture "Legacies of Appomattox: Lee's Surrender in History and Memory." Dr. Varon is author of an impressive number of books on the Civil War, including *Appomattox: Victory, Defeat and Freedom*. In all of her writing and lecturing she seeks to integrate social history with the traditional political and military history of the Civil War. In her lecture she discussed the enduring imagery of the surrender at Appomattox and the manifold ways it continues to color thought patterns both North and South.



Christina Snyder with her father-in-law Daniel Lee and wife. Lee earned a master's degree under Harrison in 1980.

Harrison Lecture: Native American Culture Reviewed



On April 19, Indiana University Professor Christina Snyder presented the annual Harrison Lecture. In her talk, "The Rise and Fall and Rise of Civilizations," she recounted the way Indian intellectual culture, in particular the Choctaw, adapted to changing circumstances in the early nineteenth century (the Removal Era in American History) and survived against great odds. This lectureship, in tribute to former Professor Lowell Harrison, has become a major contribution the History Department makes to WKU faculty and students each year.

Phi Alpha Theta Banquet Features Gift of a Book by Alumni

April 25 was the night for the Phi Alpha Theta banquet. Featured speakers were Jonathan Jeffrey, Gilbert Calhoun, and Mary Lucas. Here they are presenting Phi Alpha Theta sponsor Selena Sanderfer and the History Department with a copy of their book, *That Perfect Feeling in the Air*, a biography of WKU graduate Air Force General Victor Herbert Strahm. They gave credit for advancing their research to former faculty member Jack Thacker.



History Millennials Come Front and Center

On March 30, the history department held its annual conference to feature the research being done by our majors and minors. Above are some of those who made presentations: Jessie Norris, Brandon Pruitt, and McGavinn Brown. With them is faculty coordinator for the event Marko Dumančić.

Among Our Alumni

KENDRICK BRYAN (BA 2009, MA 2012) has been named a 2017 James Madison Fellow for Kentucky and will begin graduate work at Georgetown University next summer.

RONALD DALEY (MA 1975) has been inducted into the Kentucky Journalism's Hall of Fame.

EDWIN "ANDY" HOCKER (BA 2007) has been promoted to the rank of Major in the U.S. Army. He is stationed in Taif, Saudi Arabia.

SHELLEY SPALDING (BA 2015) has won a Fulbright Grant to teach English in Spain.

SHANNON WAGNER (BA magna cum laude 2015) is spending the summer of 2017 as an intern at the Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum.

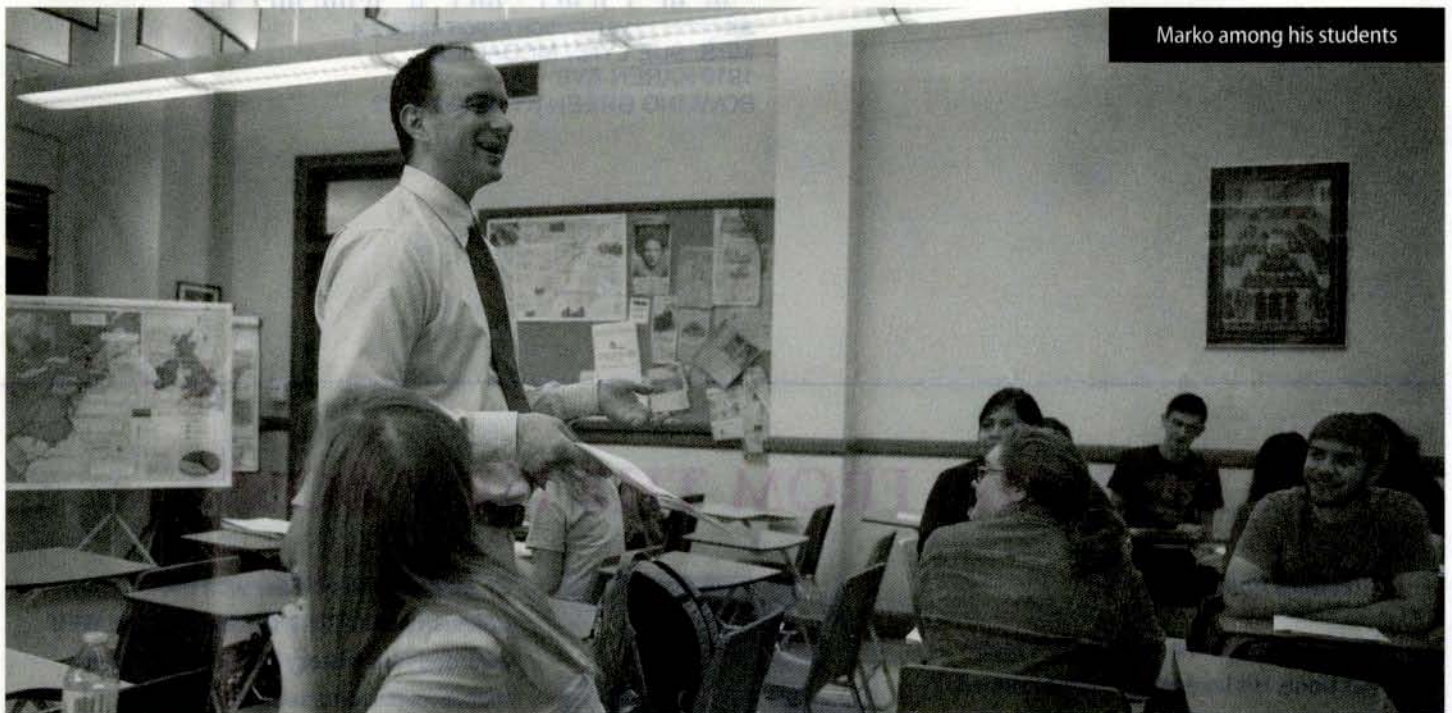
We welcome correspondence informing us of your achievements.

John Hardin Receives Humanitarian Award

At the Bowling Green Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Celebration on January 16, John Hardin was recognized for his tireless and selfless work in promoting racial equality, cultural diversity, and community history. He was cited for his work with the African American Museum and the Kentucky African American Encyclopedia. John has been with WKU's History Department since 1991 and has been an assistant dean and assistant provost.



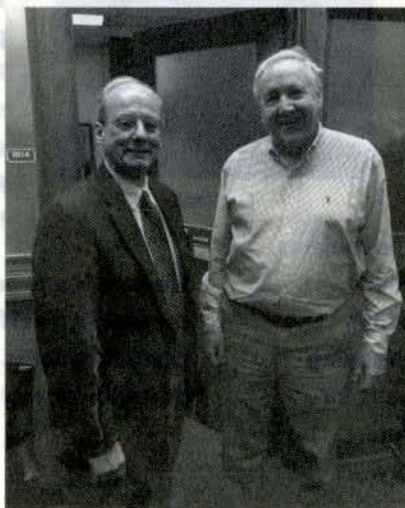
John Hardin receiving his award from MLK Celebration committee member Gambia Flemister



Marko among his students

Weigel–Dietle Era Ends

Two familiar faces will soon be leaving the central departmental offices. Robert Dietle, who has been department chair for ten years, will return to his role as a full time faculty member. Richard Weigel, who for nine years was department chair and for another ten was chief adviser to our majors and minors, will retire. The “Prussian Succession” has been at least temporarily suspended.



Dietle and Weigel

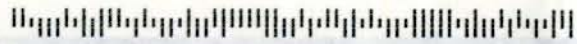
Historians Continue to Lead WKU in Teaching Skills

Marko Dumančić, our Russia, Cold War, and Eastern Europe specialist, has received WKU's Distinguished Teaching Award for 2017. Marko earned his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina, and he has been at WKU since 2013.



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MESSAGE FROM THE NEW BOSS

Greetings from Cherry Hall!

We are proud of the work Robert Dietle has done. His leadership has positioned the department well for the future. He spearheaded several important initiatives, including the development of WKU's new General Education program (the "Colonnade Program"), the creation of an online graduate program, and the transition to a World History survey course. I will have big shoes to fill.



Eric Reed

History is also proud of the achievements of its students and faculty. Senior McGavinn Brown was named WKU's Ogden Foundation Scholar, the university's top undergraduate award. Senior Katherine Manning of Louisville has won the James H. Poteet Award, for the senior who shows the most promise for future contributions to studying and teaching history.

Dr. Marko Dumančić has won the university-wide 2017 Teaching Award. WKU awarded four History Department faculty members research sabbaticals.

In recognition of his impact upon his students' lives, the History Department plans to create a scholarship in honor of Professor Jack Thacker. So far, Jack's former students and colleagues have contributed almost \$8,000 for this scholarship fund. Please consider contributing so that Jack's legacy can endure.

We want you to be even more connected to WKU's History community. Feel free to drop me a line to let me know how you're doing. Thank you for your support, we can't do it without you!

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