

# GEORGIA ASSOCIATION OF HISTORIANS

SPRING 2015

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Thanks to all who spoke, presented papers, chaired sessions, commented on sessions, or simply attended GAH 2015 in Statesboro. We had a lively group who were engaged and shared exciting and thoughtful scholarship. It is always a pleasure to visit and to learn with the GAH membership.

I hope that many of you who presented will submit your papers for publication in the *Journal of the Georgia Association of Historians*. Several issues will appear this year, and our goal is to debut the 2015 issue at the 2016 conference. To submit, send your articles to Fred Van Hartesveldt and Lee Ann Caldwell, co-editors, at [lcaldwel@gru.edu](mailto:lcaldwel@gru.edu).

Submission instructions are available at <https://gaassociationhistorians.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/authorguide-revised.pdf>

Special thanks to Steven Hahn and Paul Pressly for the keynote and “Lives in History” address. Those talks fit together very well, and they opened up thoughts and directions for framing the global history of the Georgia coast and its public history.

Additional special thanks to Jon Bryant for local arrangements. The Nessmith-Lane Center, the Statesboro CVB, and the Averitt were wonderful venues for GAH. We are also thankful to Jon’s colleagues and students at Georgia Southern for all of the hospitality.



Beyond the conference, thanks go to Ken Wheeler for his leadership in 2014 and to David Parker and Megan MacDonald for keeping all of our business and program details straight. We appreciate Kennesaw State for providing these great leaders. We also thank David Owings and Columbus State for his work with the Archives.

GAH is your organization, and I hope that you will share your ideas during 2015. We will be gearing up for another wonderful conference in Rome in 2016. So start thinking about sessions you can propose or participate in to fulfill our mission of service and exchange among the professional historians working in Georgia.

Thanks!

Laura T. McCarty

# MEMBER NEWS

**Ashton Ellett** was selected by the University of Georgia History Department the inaugural recipient of the Jason Manthorne Memorial Award for “extraordinary commitment to scholarship, teaching, and the department’s academic and social community.” A museum exhibit that Ashton helped design, plan, and research, titled “Food, Power, and Politics: The Story of School Lunch,” opened at the Richard B. Russell Memorial and Library in September 2014. Ashton was the only graduate student invited to participate in the Russell Scholars and Policymakers Symposium in October 2014; he delivered a paper entitled “‘No Child Will Go Home Hungry’: Herman Talmadge and the School Lunch Program, 1967-1972.” But perhaps the biggest news: Ashton and his wife welcomed their first child, Margaret Noelle Ellett, on **March 11, 2015!**

**Chrissy Lutz** was awarded tenure at Fort Valley State University in March 2015.

**David Parker** (Kennesaw State University) published “In Griswold We Trust” in *Common-Place*, the online journal of the American Antiquarian Society. The article looks at George Washington’s alleged addition of “so help me God” to the presidential oath of office in 1789 and especially how this story became part of the American creation myth. David’s clever title refers to Rufus Griswold, whose 1854 book *The Republican Court* contains the first known telling of the story. Available at <http://www.common-place.org/vol-15/no-01/parker>. David’s “‘An Ever-

Ready Source of Inspiration and Information’: Ruth Blair and Georgia’s Bicentennial County Historians” was published in the latest issue of *Provenance*, the journal of the Society of Georgia Archivists. Ruth Blair was the second director of the state’s Department of Archives and History.

**Mark A. Smith** (Associate Professor at Fort Valley State University) is now a member of the Editorial Board of the *U.S. Military History Review*, a newly-established peer-reviewed online



Glenn T. Eskew received the Hugh McCall Award for “scholarly attainment, excellence in teaching, and encouragement of the study of history” from the annual meeting of the Georgia Association of Historians. Presenting the award to Glenn is Jennifer Lund Smith, head of the GAH Awards Committee.

journal that publishes scholarly articles and book reviews on American military history. The first volume of this new journal was released in December 2014. Submission guidelines, information for prospective book reviewers, and a free download of the initial issue can be found on the journal's web site:

<http://www.usmhg.org/u-s-military-history-review>.

**Matt Jennings** and **Stephen Taylor** are working with a couple other Middle Georgia State College colleagues on a public history project related to beer making in Middle Georgia. They are piecing together the story of the Macon Beer Company and its larger successor, the Acme Brewing Company. The Acme Brewing Historical Society, as they have styled themselves, is collecting breweriana, curating exhibits, and scanning images for a book on this fascinating subject. A Kickstarter campaign exceeded their goals. They invite GAH members to pass on any advice you may have on research avenues to pursue and to keep tabs on the work through the Acme Brewing Historical Society facebook page. (Get it? Tabs?) (Editor's note: This is Matt's joke.)

**Michael Morris** (College of Coastal Georgia) recently published *George Galphin and the Transformation of the Georgia-South Carolina Backcountry* (Rowman and Littlefield Press). The book details the life and career of the Ulster-Scot Carolina fur trader and his slow rise to prominence in the Creole society of the Southeast.

It documents Galphin's diplomatic accomplishments with the Muskogee Creeks and the creation of Ulster-Scot communities in South Carolina and Georgia. It ends with an analysis of his multi-racial family and the family's legacy in the Central Savannah River Area of Georgia.

**Patrizia Stahle**, Associate Professor of History at the College of Coastal Georgia, received the Guale Historian of the Year Award at the Guale Banquet on November 6, 2014. Patrizia was selected "in recognition of her leadership and scholarly achievement." An active member of the Guale Historical Society, Patrizia is delighted for receiving an award for doing what she loves. She has a personal and professional interest in the richness of Coastal Georgia history as well as the historic preservation of Camden County and its proud heritage.

**Paul Hudson** (Georgia Perimeter College) is serving on the Consolidation Implementation Committee for the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. The committee is in process throughout 2015 to consolidate GPC with Georgia State University in 2016. Georgia Perimeter College, with its numerous campuses, will become a component of GSU. The new consolidated institution, projected to have enrollment of more than 50,000, will retain the name Georgia State University.

## GAH and SR 80

Many members of the Georgia Association of Historians were concerned during the recent legislative session about Georgia Senate Resolution 80 (SR 80). This is the resolution that criticized the Advanced Placement US History (APUSH) course for “minimiz[ing] discussion of America’s Founding Fathers, the principles of the Declaration of Independence, the religious influences on our nation’s history, and many other critical topics” and for “present[ing] a biased and inaccurate view of many important themes and events in American history, including the motivations and actions of seventeenth to nineteenth century settlers, the nature of the American free enterprise system, the course and resolution of the Great Depression, and the development of and victory in the Cold War.” The resolution threatened to remove state support for AP classes if the College Board does not revise the APUSH course. Richard Woods, the state school superintendent, seemed to support the resolution with his call for education standards that are “Georgia-owned and Georgia-grown.”

The Resolution passed the Senate but did not make it to the House floor for a vote. These things have a way of coming back, though, so we will likely see it again next year. We must continue to pay attention to what is going on with the social studies curriculum. The following statement, drafted by Matt Jennings, was approved by the GAH Executive Board on Feb. 20, 2015, and by the GAH membership at its annual meeting on February 21, 2015.

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Recently, a committee of the Georgia State Senate has taken up Senate Resolution 80 (SR 80). This resolution demands that the College Board alter the framework and test covering Advanced Placement United States History (APUSH), and, if that demand is not met, threatens to sever our state’s relationship with the College Board, defund the state’s APUSH programs and all associated activities, and authorize the governor to explore reciprocal agreements with other states who have rejected the College Board in this manner.

The sponsors of this resolution believe it necessary because, in their words, the framework is “radically revisionist” and “emphasizes negative aspects of our nation’s history while omitting or minimizing positive aspects.” SR 80 also states that the framework “minimizes discussion of America’s Founding Fathers [and] the principles of the Declaration of Independence” and in general “presents a biased and inaccurate view of many important themes and events in American history.”

SR 80 presents a distorted view of the AP exam and framework, and its adoption would set Georgia on a collision course with the College Board and possibly do great harm to students in our state by placing them at a disadvantage compared other students whose states continue to use AP to earn college credit. The exam and framework are not perfect, and specialists in a variety of fields could pick them apart. But they are also part of a long process that involved master educators at both the high school and college level. The framework provides guidelines and does not mandate that certain material receive coverage. For example, it recommends that approximately 12% of the course, which runs from 1491 to the present, cover the fifty-year period surrounding America’s War for Independence. APUSH teachers, in consultation with their districts, are free to choose which documents to use and which themes to emphasize. Some of the possibilities within the time period in question are “Stamp Act, Committees of Correspondence, Intolerable Acts, [and] Sons of Liberty.” One of the guidelines also states that “The American Revolution and the ideas set forth in the Declaration of Independence had reverberations in France, Haiti, and Latin America, inspiring future rebellions.” Thoughtful consideration of the framework reveals an effort to portray American history in a complex and contingent fashion, as accurately as historians are able.

In short, the framework urges AP teachers to help their students to think like historians, to follow the evidence wherever it leads, whether the results reinforce what we already believed about our past or force us to reconsider or revise previously accepted versions of our history. The Organization of American Historians and the American Historical Association have already issued statements in support of the APUSH framework, and against efforts to derail it, and we would like to do the same. Though we are not, by and large, high school history teachers, the Georgia Association of Historians recognizes the value inherent in the new framework for APUSH and urges Georgia’s State Senate to table SR 80.