



National History Club



Newsletter and Forum

Spring 2004

For Secondary Students of History

Issue IV

The Importance of History

Over the past twenty-five years, as a former elementary and secondary school teacher and a social studies methods instructor, I have been asked questions relating to the importance of history in the K-12 curriculum. Typically, I address these questions by referring to the comments of students, experiences of social studies teachers, and the creative insights of historians. Recently, since I became an officer of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), those inquiries have increased and some appear politically motivated (e.g. Why is history not in the curriculum? Why do social studies teachers deemphasize history?).

Rather than relying on anecdotal data, I am prone to turn to research studies in the area of teaching social studies in K-12 schools as I attempt to illustrate that, in most classrooms, history remains an integral part of the curriculum. However, in this essay, I would like to provide the reader with a personalized account of why I believe history is important and a valuable part of social studies.

Before embarking on this personal journey, let me first outline the position of NCSS with regard to the importance of history in the K-12 curriculum. Many of you who are affiliated with the National Council for History Education, sponsors of History Clubs, and perhaps members

of NCSS may be familiar with the organization's goals. NCSS is an education organization that promotes the integration of the social sciences for the purpose of teaching social studies in the K-12 curriculum. According to NCSS, the purpose of social studies is to help young children and adolescents develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good. And, we believe that a characteristic of an informed citizen is someone who possesses a firm grasp of this country's history.

Why do I value history and consider history a core discipline? Like many of the contributors to this column, I enjoyed social studies and history as a student and I can identify key individuals who taught me the importance of history and the other social sciences and the value of a broad and comprehensive view on issues. At home, my father, an immigrant from Mexico, skimmed my high school U.S. History textbook and commented on the lack of information on the contributions of Mexicans and Mexican Americans to the development of the Southwest in the early 1900s, World War II, and agribusiness in the early 1950s. My father piqued my interest by referring to my textbook as the "official" knowledge of the schools.

In high school, Mr. DeStefano held many of my schoolmates and me

captivated as he lectured on early U.S. History and the principles on which this country was founded. Mr. DeStefano taught me the importance of a strong historical base as a strategy to exploring the other social sciences. And after I left high school, my cousin Ernie Quintana, a community activist, made me aware of the importance of history when gaining an understanding of a particular human experience.

What role does history play in students' educational experiences in and out of high school? In my case, after my father looked at my textbook and talked to me about his experiences in the late 1920s, when he and others like him left Mexico in search of the American Dream, history helped me learn more about myself and my country. I began devouring historical materials of all kinds and quickly came to understand the importance of thinking skills—analysis and interpretation, issue-analysis, and decision making—when attempting to understand issues.

Once I became sufficiently versed in the Mexican American experience, I felt I possessed the skills and knowledge to search for political, social and economic perspectives. The more I searched, the more integrated my learning became, and, in the end, I began to appreciate the

[continued on Page 2]

value of a social studies understanding of the Mexican American experience in the United States. When I graduated from college and earned elementary and secondary social studies certification and a terminal degree, I took this personal experience and employed it in the classroom. Today, I encourage my social studies methods students to think of the importance of a broad-based knowledge base in understanding the human experience.

~ **Jesus Garcia** is President-Elect of the National Council for the Social Studies and Professor of Social Studies Education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

History Clubs

Adams Central High School (Monroe, Indiana)	Loudoun Valley High School (Purcellville, Virginia)
Ahern Middle School (Foxborough, Massachusetts)	Lowndes High School (Valdosta, Georgia)
Atlantic City High School (Atlantic City, New Jersey)	Lynn Classical High School (Lynn, Massachusetts)
Basalt High School (Basalt, Colorado)	Mandaree High School (Mandaree, North Dakota)
Bentonville High School (Bentonville, Arkansas)	Manhattan High School for Girls (New York, New York)
Briarcrest Christian High School (Memphis, Tennessee)	Marshfield High School (Marshfield, Massachusetts)
Bexley High School (Bexley, Ohio)	McKeel Academy (Lakeland, Florida)
Cactus Shadows High School (Cave Creek, Arizona)	Mehlville Senior High School (St. Louis, Missouri)
Cardinal Gibbons High School (Fort Lauderdale, Florida)	Memphis University School (Memphis, Tennessee)
Chanute High School (Chanute, Kansas)	Millbrook High School (Raleigh, North Carolina)
Cobble Hill School (Brooklyn, New York)	The Morgan School (Clinton, Connecticut)
Collins Hill High School (Suwanee, Georgia)	New Canaan High School (New Canaan, Connecticut)
Conrad Weiser High School (Robesonia, Pennsylvania)	Park High School (Cottage Grove, Minnesota)
Creek Wood High School (Charlotte, Tennessee)	Princeton High School (Cincinnati, Ohio)
Dover High School (Dover, Delaware)	Providence High School (Charlotte, North Carolina)
Dulaney High School (Timonium, Maryland)	Richard Montgomery High School (Rockville, Maryland)
Durham Academy (Durham, North Carolina)	S.V. Marshall High School (Lexington, Mississippi)
Dysart High School (El Mirage, Arizona)	Salesian High School (New Rochelle, New York)
The Frisch School (Paramus, New Jersey)	Santa Catalina School (Monterey, California)
George Washington High School (Denver, Colorado)	Shorecrest Preparatory School (St. Petersburg, Florida)
Gorham High School (Gorham, Maine)	Smyrna High School (Smyrna, Tennessee)
Great Neck North High School (Great Neck, New York)	South Portland High School (South Portland, Maine)
Greensburg Salem High School (Greensburg, Pennsylvania)	Southside High School (Greenville, South Carolina)
Groton School (Groton, Massachusetts)	St. Benedict at Auburndale High School (Cordova, Tennessee)
Happy Hill Farm Academy (Granbury, Texas)	St. Mary's Episcopal School (Memphis, Tennessee)
Henry County High School (Paris, Tennessee)	St. Martin High School (Ocean Springs, Mississippi)
Hereford High School (Parkton, Maryland)	Suffern High School (Suffern, New York)
Hoover High School (Hoover, Alabama)	Suncoast High School (Riviera Beach, Florida)
Horace Greeley High School (Chappaqua, New York)	Warwick High School (Lititz, Pennsylvania)
Hutchison School (Memphis, Tennessee)	West Morris Central High School (Chester, New Jersey)
Irondequoit High School (Rochester, New York)	Whitman-Hanson High School (Whitman, Massachusetts)
Jay High School (Jay, Oklahoma)	Wichita High School East (Wichita, Kansas)
Katy High School (Katy, Texas)	Williams Bay High School (Williams Bay, Wisconsin)
Kingwood Christian School (Alabaster, Alabama)	Wilmington High School (Wilmington, Ohio)
Lago Vista High School (Lago Vista, Texas)	

Chapter Activities

Here is the latest information on what chapters have been doing over the past few months. E-mail addresses of the Chapter Advisors are listed in order for other clubs to contact them if they have questions or seek additional details regarding a club's activities. Clubs are encouraged to communicate with each other to explore new history related opportunities.

★ The **Adams Central High School History Club** had a guest speaker come to the school and conduct a teaching session on Civil War medicine this past February. **Dr. Ed Fisher**, and his son **Paul Fisher**, a history club member, conducted a re-enactment of what it might have been like to suffer an injury on the battlefield during the Civil War... On April 22, the Fort Wayne Jewish Federation (<http://www.shalomfw.org/>) sponsored a member of the Dutch Resistance during World War II to visit the high school. A convocation was held to hear the experiences of **Jaap Penraat**. The Dutch Resistance movement was formed to combat the Nazi occupation of Holland—its operations consisted primarily of organizational and networking functions, as well as gathering intelligence against the Germans. The most heroic and dangerous aspect of the resistance was the hiding of native Jews. History club members set up displays in the school to inform the student population about the Dutch Resistance movement... Contact: **Carolyn McCammon** (cmccammo@r8esc.k12.in.us)

★ **John J. Ahern's American History Travel Club** paid a visit to the Springfield Armory National Historic Site in Springfield, Massachusetts, last January. There they were given a tour by a park ranger who explained to them about Shays' Rebellion... Congratulations to **Christopher McKenna**, who won first place in the middle school essay division (\$200 prize), and **Christopher Gorham**, who won honorable mention in the middle school poster division, in the annual Civil War Preservation Trust competition... Contact: **Marla Davis** (davismar@foxborough.k12.ma.us)

Shays' Rebellion

Debt-ridden farmers, suffering from the economic depression that followed the American revolution, began to take up arms in August, 1786, to prevent the county courts in Western Massachusetts from making judgments regarding payments of debt. Led by Daniel Shays, the rebels were repelled when they attacked a federal arsenal in Springfield. From here, they moved on to Petersham, MA, where they were routed by General Benjamin Lincoln's troops. Shays escaped to Vermont and was eventually pardoned in June, 1788.

★ **Bexley High School's History Club** has been meeting every Friday at lunch to discuss such student selected topics as Joseph Stalin, gay marriage, Anti-Americanism, and also the book *Bowling Alone*. In this book, Harvard Professor Robert D. Putnam explores the diminishing role of the community in the life of Americans... Members recently participated in activities for Holocaust Remembrance Day... Contact: **Ben Trotter** (BTrotter@bexley.k12.oh.us)

★ The **Briarcrest Christian History Club** has been discussing Richard Clarke's book, *Against All Enemies*. Students have been analyzing the timing and the possible motive behind its publication. Also being incorporated into the discussion was talk about the Democratic candidates for the presidency and their platforms... Contact: **Len Hamner** (LDHamner@briarcrest.com)

★ **Stacey Cooper**, President of the **Cactus Shadows History Club**, reports that the members are preparing a presentation and exhibition for their junior and senior class peers on Japanese-American internment during the second World War and their loss of Constitutional rights. This presentation is part of the National Teach-In, sponsored by the Constitutional Rights Foundation (<http://www.crf-usa.org/>)... Contact: **Mark Sweeney** (msweeney@ccusd93.org)

★ **Collins Hill High School's** chapter just finished the project they had been working on this year, which consisted of building upon the interviews they did last year with people who lived through historical events. The Club is planning on creating a book next year using all the interviews as the foundation. **Connie Maltese** interviewed an 86 year-old lady who lived through the Great Depression and whose husband had served in North Africa during World War II... Students continue to meet weekly to debate historical topics and elections for next year's officers will be held in the near future... Contact: **Terrae Fogarty** (Terrae_Fogarty@gwinnett.k12.ga.us)

★ For the month of February, **Dover High's History Club** has shown movies each Wednesday as part of their After School Theater program. To honor Black History month, the group watched *Lean on Me*, *Antoine Fisher*, and *Remember The Titans*... On February 27th, the Club had the opportunity to hear **Francis Gary Powers, Jr.** speak at the school, regarding his father's U-2 spy plane incident. His father's plane was shot down on May 1, 1960, near Sverdlovsk, in the Soviet Union. Gary Powers was convicted of espionage and sentenced to three years imprisonment and seven years of hard labor. He only served one year and nine months, as he was exchanged for a Soviet spy being held by the United States

Chapter Activities

government. Mr. Powers also described the Cold War Museum (<http://www.coldwar.org/>) and its efforts to preserve the memory of the Cold War...This past March, members got to hear another guest speaker, **Jon Reynolds**, talk about his military experience. Mr. Reynolds is a retired Brigadier General, who flew an F-100 and spent seven years as a POW during the Vietnam War...Contact: **Ray Braverman** (rbraver@capital.k12.de.us)

★ The **George Washington History Club** has continued working with the history department at the University of Colorado at Boulder. **Tom Thomas**, a professor at Colorado and chair of the History Advisory Board, met with the Club back in January to discuss the importance of historical study. Mr. Thomas invited the group to visit one of his classes, and members did so recently, where they heard him lecture on the Indian Wars with the Utes of Colorado. **Yelena McElwain**, History Club President, reports that “the class was a great addition to the visit to the University of Colorado Museum, which had covered similar topics.”...Contact: **Bonnie Guggenheim** (Bonnie_Guggenheim@dpsk12.org)

★ Members of **Gorham High School's** chapter spent a day at the State House in Augusta, Maine, on Tuesday, February 10. Gorham's own Representative, **Chris Barstow**, served as a host to the two social studies teachers and nine students who made the trip. The day began with a tour of the Senate chambers where the group was able to browse through the booths set up in the Rotunda by Maine's associations of taxidermists, hunters, and trappers, who were present for a press conference held by Maine's Governor to speak against the proposed ban on bear baiting. After this, students served as pages during the legislative session in the House of Representatives. During the session, the Club heard Chief Barry Dana of the Penobscot Nation give his State of the Penobscot Nation Address. To cap the day off, students and chaperones had a private conversation with the Speaker of the House, **Patrick Colwell**, as well as with their host, Representative Barstow. The Club reports that “it was a wonderful and unique opportunity to witness state government and history in action.”...Contact: **Rachael Grady** (Rachael_Grady@gorham.k12.me.us)

★ **Great Neck North's History Club** has continued with their Human Rights Project, where they are working on a documentary and companion desktop publication about the human rights of children. They received a grant from PBS to work on this project. In December 2003, students heard **David Gewirtzman** and **Jacqueline Murekatete** speak at their high school. Mr. Gewirtzman survived the Holocaust by spending almost two years burrowed under a pigsty on a Polish farm. Ms. Murekatete,

a 19 year-old freshman at the State University at Stony Brook, escaped from the Rwandan Massacre back in 1994. Her parents and six siblings were not so fortunate—they were all killed by a rival tribe...Students are deeply involved in writing for the Nassau County Holocaust Museum and Educational Center's (<http://www.holocaust-nassau.org/>) essay contest. This year's theme is “Perpetrators, Victims, and/or Bystanders of the Holocaust.” Contestants are required to focus on the choices individuals made and the roles they played while living under Nazi tyranny...Any Club interested in seeing their finished product for their Human Rights Project should contact them...Contact: **Elaine Weiss** (Lainjoy@aol.com)

★ **Horace Greeley's History Club** is working on an ongoing project with the New Castle Historical Society (<http://www.newcastle-ny.org/nchs.html>). The Club is designing an exhibit to be displayed at the historical society on the history of transportation in New Castle. **Philip Levitz**, chapter Co-President, reports that they'll be looking into early roads, the coming of the railroad, the growth of highways related to issues such as suburbanization, and housing in relation to transportation...In March, students took a trip to downtown Manhattan to visit the Lower East Side Tenement Museum (<http://www.tenement.org/>), walk across the Brooklyn Bridge, and see some of the historic sites of Chinatown...Future plans include possible trips to Harlem and Boston, and a guest visit from Professor **Kenneth Jackson** of Columbia to speak on his area of expertise, the history of New York...Finally, congratulations to Co-President **Susanna Heinz**, whose essay on Robespierre and Lenin will be published in the Summer Issue of *The Concord Review*...Contact: **Steven Houser** (StHouser@ccsd.ws)

★ **Katy High School's** elected officers are President **Chase Hague**, Vice President **Katie Cryar**, Secretary **Laura Vancura**, Historian **Erin Hargis**, and Treasurer **Josh Peace**...Some upcoming plans for the Club include making history club t-shirts, a discussion of Anti-Semitism and going to the Houston Holocaust Museum (<http://www.hmh.org/>), and a viewing of the movie *The Alamo*...Contact: **Elizabeth Bordelon** (elizabethbordelon@KATYISD.ORG)

★ The **Lowndes History Club** held a Black History Month presentation at their school of over 3,000 students, this past February...Also in February, some members participated in the Mock Trial Competition, sponsored by the Georgia Bar Association. Congratulations to the team for finishing in the Elite Eight...To celebrate National Women's History month in March, the Club

Chapter Activities

hosted a mother/daughter social in Valdosta, Georgia... Vice President **Cody Henderson** has continued to update Lowndes' website. To check out their activities and for other general information please visit www.geocities.com/lhshistoryclub... Contact: **Michael & Michelle White** (lhshistoryclub2003@yahoo.com)

★ The History Club at **Loudoun Valley High School** was established back in 1975. Since then, the Club has grown to accommodate a 15-member Executive Board that meets once a week, and approximately 266 members. One of their biggest events is John Brown's Raid Retreat. It is held over a three day period, and involves in-the-field study of antebellum America, slavery, and the Civil War... Contact: **Susan Stevens** (sstevens@loudoun.k12.va.us)

★ On February 10, **Lynn Classical** hosted 30 4th grade students from a nearby elementary school for a birthday party for Abraham Lincoln and George Washington. History club members offered questions relating to U.S. History and Geography, as well as World History and Geography, to the elementary school students... In March, fifteen students traveled to Fanueil Hall in Boston, Massachusetts to witness a reenactment of the Boston Massacre... Contact: **Gayle Richardson** (RichardsonG@lynnschools.org)

The Boston Massacre

This incident took place on March 5, 1770, when British troops fired into a rioting crowd and killed five men. The troops had been sent to Boston to maintain and enforce the Townshend Acts. The subsequent funeral for the five men turned into a great patriotic demonstration. The captain of the British troops, Thomas Preston, and his men were charged with murder, and were defended by John Adams and Josiah Quincy. Preston and six of his men were acquitted; two were convicted of manslaughter and were soon discharged from the army.

★ **Marshfield High School** learned a little about their town history when **Bill Frigoli**, an early 1950s graduate from the high school, spoke to the group. The Club reported that the talk was quite interesting considering how Marshfield dates back to the Colonial Period... Students continue to be involved in the World War II Diaries Project, in which they visit local World War II veterans and videotape interviews of their accounts and experiences. Vice President **Caitlin Greene** has taken over the student leadership part of this program. The Club

would like to give a special thanks to **Buddy Stewart**, who serves as the coordinator of this project... Contact: **Kim McGourty** (mcgourtyclan@adelphia.net)

★ **Mehlville Senior High School** participated for the first time in National History Day. Two of their history club officers, **Minh Phoung Nguyen** and **Stephanie Kululjan**, won first place in their respective divisions. Ms. Nguyen entered the Senior Paper Division, and in addition to finishing first, also received the University of Missouri-St. Louis Dean Scholarship and the Society for French Colonial Studies Best Writer Award. Ms. Kululjan competed in the Exhibition Category... Contact: **Maureen Landwehr** (LandwehrM@Mehlville.k12.mo.us)

★ Check out **Millbrook High School's** *Bridges* Newsletter at <http://mhs.wcpss.net/academics/sstudies/poling/index.htm>. In the March 2004 issue, a wide range of articles can be found, including **Eva Fauser's** essay "Similar Beginnings, Different Endings," which pertains to the current, repressive Communist government in Vietnam... Club member **Victoria Cash** mentions that in February students got to hear Colonel **Roger Donlon** speak. Colonel Donlon was the first of the 238 Medal of Honor winners of the Vietnam War; receiving the award for his bravery during the battle of Nam Dong... Just recently, the Club was fortunate to participate in a weekend filled with speakers and seminars in Washington D.C. They paid a visit to the Vietnam Memorial, met with **Joe Galloway** (co-author of *We Were Soldiers Once...and Young*), and heard international foreign policy experts at the U.S. Institute of Peace... Contact: **Lindy Poling** (lgpoling@juno.com)

★ **Park High School's** chapter got a behind-the-scenes tour at the Minnesota History Center (<http://www.mnhs.org/places/historycenter/index.html>), where they were able to look at the archives and restoration studios. In addition to this, they also viewed the film *Lewis and Clark* at the Minnesota Science Museum's Omni Theater (<http://www.smm.org/>)... Members have been promoting the understanding of history at their high school with the use of trivia and documents. Once a week, a trivia question is put on the school monitor. In order to find out the answer, students must visit the History Club display case. In the display case is a historical document and a brief description of the document... Contact: **Walter Newcomb** (WNewcomb@sowashco.k12.mn.us)

★ The **Richard Montgomery History Club** traveled to The International Spy Museum (<http://www.spymuseum.org/index.asp>) in Washington, D.C. The museum displays exhibits on the history of spying— dating from biblical times to the twentieth century. It also

Chapter Activities

features interactive exhibits: History club members helped crack the German “Enigma” code that was used during World War II, and also adopted false identities for their own experiments in spying...On April 17, the group visited Antietam Battlefield in Sharpsburg, Maryland, and also Harper’s Ferry. The Battle of Antietam on September 17, 1862 is the bloodiest day ever in America’s history. Over 23,000 men were killed, wounded, or went missing on this one day. The battle was in many ways a major turning point in the war, and it led to Lincoln’s issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation...Contact: **Robert Hines (rphines@aol.com)**

★ Congratulations to **Kendall Hoxsey**, a senior member of the **Santa Catalina History Club**, who won the Colonial Dames of America chapter’s Leslie Phelps Henderson American History/Political Science Scholarship, a \$1,000 award. The competition was open to all the high schools in the Monterey, California area, and the contest is for students who intend to pursue a serious study of History and/or Political Science in college...The Club recently took the lead for the annual Cesar Chavez Day commemoration at the school, sharing thoughts from Chavez on human rights and dignity...Contact: **Broeck Oder (Broeck_Oder@santacatalina.org)**

Cesar Chavez

A migrant worker, he became a leading American agrarian labor leader after becoming involved in 1952 with the Community Service Organization (CSO) in California, working among Mexicans and Mexican Americans. Ten years after joining the CSO, he left to create the National Farm Workers Association, which represented wine grape pickers in their battle with a number of the major growers. This association later merged with the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee of the AFL-CIO to form the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, of which Chavez became President.

★ **South Portland High School** competed in Maine History Day on April 8. The Club separated into two groups to work on projects. The first group did a documentary discussing the creation of the United Nations, while the other worked on a documentary on the settlement of Popham Colony in Phippsburg, Maine...Contact: **Resty Sapuan (SapuanRe@spsd.org)**

★ President **Katie Ferlisi** of the **Southside History Club** reports that their Club added nine new members this Spring, bringing membership to 25 students...A number of students recently took part in their district’s National History Day Competition. Congratulations to the members who competed in the state competition, held on May 1. All four NHD categories were represented by history club students including two history papers, two individual performances, two group documentaries, and one group exhibit...Southside has also become an official youth partner with the Veterans History Project (<http://www.loc.gov/folklife/vets/>) of the Library of Congress. Recently, the Club submitted their first videotaped interview with a World War II veteran to the Library of Congress...Contact: **Deborah Carrero (dcarrero@greenville.k12.sc.us)**

★ **St. Martin High School’s History Honor Society** attended The Glory of Baroque Dresden Exhibition, in Jackson, Mississippi. This exhibition consists of more than 400 works from the State Art Collections of Dresden and reflects Baroque art during the rule of August the Strong and his son August III, electors of Saxony and kings of Poland. The historic treasures somehow survived the firebombing of Dresden in 1945...For graduation ceremonies, Club officers have decided to obtain red, white, and blue academic chords for each senior member to wear...The History Honor Society sets eligibility rules for potential members: among these include being a senior, and having all A’s in every one of their previous history/social studies classes or scoring at least a two on the A.P. History Test...Contact: **Dieter Miller (dmiller@jaco.k12.ms.us)**

★ One of the most recent chapters to join was from **Suffern High School**, which has over 100 members. The Club is actively engaged with Suffern’s Model Congress and Model U.N. chapter, and has participated in a few seminars. Co-President **Greg Deptula** attended one of these seminars, entitled “Defense, Intelligence, and Diplomacy,” in Annapolis, Maryland...Club Co-Historian **Joseph Rudnick** served as a volunteer for John Edwards during the New Hampshire Primary in January...Contact: **Kim Cleary (clearyk@ramapocentral.org)**

★ Members of **Suncoast’s History Club** are working towards getting published in *The Concord Review*. Students in the International Baccalaureate Program have to submit an extended essay on a topic of their choice, and many club members have decided to write history papers. The Club has established an editorial review board that proofreads the essays and gives the authors suggestions prior to submission...Contact: **Sarah Stout (stouts@palmbeach.k12.fl.us)**

Chapter Activities

★ The **Warwick History Club** has been busy traveling to different cities to take in landmarks—first to New York and then to Philadelphia. In Philadelphia, they got to spend some time at the Liberty Bell at the Independence Mall area, and also the Franklin Mint...Contact: **Maurice Blose** (mblose@warwick.k12.pa.us)

★ **West Morris Central High School** also paid a visit to New York, where they first went to the New York Historical Society (<http://www.nyhistory.org/>). Here students viewed the exhibits and spent time working with documents and artifacts, much like actual historians. After this, the Club went on a walking tour of the lower East Side of Manhattan. Highlights of the tour included a walk across the Brooklyn Bridge, a visit to the Irish Hunger Memorial, and time spent at Ground Zero and St. Paul's Chapel...Future activities include a "History Movie Night" and a bulletin board display of historical anniversaries...Contact: **Rosanne Lichatin & Michelle Mongey** (lichatin@wmchs.org)

Irish Hunger Memorial

Dedicated on July 16, 2002 to raising the public's awareness of one of the worst natural disasters in history, the Great Potato Famine and Migration (1845-1852). During the Famine, a blight ruined the potato crop, the staple food of the Irish people, causing the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people and the migration to the United States of around 1.6 million people between 1847-1854. Over the course of four years, the population of Ireland went from approximately 8.5 million to 6.55 million.

★ The **Whitman-Hanson History Club** took part in a historical costume day on March 16. The event was accompanied by a history club sponsored 50/50 raffle in which students were encouraged to purchase tickets to support the Club's cause. After weeks of laboriously coordinating an extensive advertising campaign and two weeks of sales, the group was able to raise over \$400. With this money added to their other funds, they are currently planning an all-expenses-paid field trip to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (<http://www.mfa.org/>) or the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum (<http://www.jfklibrary.org/>). Some of the members who participated in historical dress-up day and their costumes are: **Pat Hill** as Cicero, **Caleb Fall** as General George S. Patton, **Brian Ballard** as Albert Einstein, **Erin MacMackin** as Marie Antoinette, **Mark Paré** as Gavrilo Princip, and **Emily Reynolds** as Josephine Bonaparte...Contact: **Robert Davidson** (robert.davidson@whrsd.org)

★ **Wichita East History Club's** main activity has been their involvement with their district History Day competition at Wichita State University. **Vincent Cheng** won first place in the district, with his paper entitled "Unwinding the Secret of Life: Exchanging Ideas in the History of Discovering DNA Structure." They also had third place winners for a senior paper and a senior exhibit...They will wrap up the school year with a guest speaker who will talk about art history...Contact: **Jennifer Fry** (jfry@usd259.net)

★ Our first chapter in Wisconsin is the **Williams Bay High School History Club**. The Club has had a very interesting school year, first traveling to the Chicago Historical Society (<http://www.chicagohs.org/>) for a two hour, hands-on workshop on the Civil War, called "A House Divided." Members got to handle and analyze actual artifacts from this time period during this session...In December, the group sponsored the first ever "History Bowl," a fast paced competition between the grades at their high school. Winners received medals, trophies, and a pizza party for their class...During February, the Club attended a Medieval Times Dinner Theatre in Schaumberg, Illinois, for a day of feasting and revelry—medieval style...Upcoming events include a trip to the Wisconsin Maritime Museum (<http://www.wimaritimemuseum.org/>). The museum offers visitors a chance to explore the rich maritime history of Wisconsin and the Great Lakes region...Contact: **Deb Soplanda** (bdsoplanda@elknet.net)

As I have written elsewhere, history is to the nation as memory is to the individual. Individuals deprived of memory become disoriented and lost, not knowing where they have been or where they are going; so a nation lacking a sense of its past will be disabled in dealing with its present and its future. History, with its eye cast on a longer past and a longer future, is the best preparation for citizenship, and it is the best preparation for making sense out of this dark and stormy world.



Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.
Historian



Looking For Activities?



For those Clubs seeking ideas for future plans, this section offers information about the many exhibits and opportunities available to them through Historical Societies, Presidential Libraries, History Museums, etc. If you are interested in a particular exhibit e-mail the Contact listed. Many thanks to all the museums and libraries that provided information. Other ones around the country that would like to mention exhibits for the next Newsletter, please e-mail me at nasson@tcr.org.

➤ **Arkansas State University Museum (<http://museum.astate.edu/>)** - Main Exhibits: African-American Life in the Arkansas Delta: Through the Lens of Rogerline Johnson. A Native American Gallery displaying cultures that were native to Arkansas...Contact: **Lynda Medlock (lmedlock@astate.edu)**

➤ **Atlanta History Center (www.AtlantaHistoryCenter.com)** - Explore Atlanta from 1835-2000, from Indian settlements and the railroads, through the Civil War and the Civil Rights movement. Atlanta's story is told with hundreds of rare objects, historic photographs, original documents, among other things...Contact: **Wesleigh Reaves (WReaves@AtlantaHistoryCenter.com)**

➤ **Colorado Historical Society (<http://www.coloradohistory.org/>)** - "Soldiers on Skis" is new to the museum and highlights the 10th Mountain Division of the U.S. Army—assembled during World War II to specialize in high altitude, cold weather warfare...Contact: **Martha Dyckes (martha.dyckes@chs.state.co.us)**

➤ **East Tennessee Historical Society (<http://www.east-tennessee-history.org/>)** - Main Exhibit: The Smithsonian's "September 11" exhibition will be on display and will include objects, images, and personal stories that help memorialize this tragic day...Contact: **eths@east-tennessee-history.org**

➤ **Eisenhower Museum (<http://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/>)** - Located in Abilene, Kansas, the museum is planning a two-day program on June 4 and 5 for the 60th anniversary of D-Day. Activities include guest speakers and a showing of *The Longest Day*...Contact: **eisenhower.library@nara.gov**

➤ **Indiana Historical Society (<http://www.indianahistory.org/>)** - From May 29 through September 19, see World War II unfold through the lens of Gary, Indiana's Private John A. Bushemi, during his time in the Pacific Theater...The Cole Porter Room continues to show free short films related to Indiana history every Thursday...Contact: **Carrie Wood (<http://www.indianahistory.org/contact/contact.asp>)**

➤ **Kansas Museum of History (www.kshs.org)** - The original Kansas-Nebraska Act will be making an appearance at the museum when the exhibit "Willing to Die for Freedom: A Look Back at Kansas Territory" opens on April 3. The exhibit runs through October 3, however, the Kansas-Nebraska Act document will only be featured through June...Contact: **Bobbie Athon (Bathon@kshs.org)**

➤ **Maine Historical Society (<http://www.mainehistory.org/>)** - "Amazing! Maine Stories," an original exhibit, will open on June 25 and run through December of 2004. This exhibit reveals the history of a wide range of individuals who in their own unique way have shaped the history of Maine. Some of these people include Commodore Edward Preble, Persis Sibley, and Dave Glovsky...Contact: **Jane Foden (jfoden@mainehistory.org)**

➤ **New Jersey Historical Society (<http://www.jerseyhistory.org/>)** - Three exhibits currently on display include "City on Display: A Newark Photographer and His Clients, 1890s-1940s," which shows the photographs of William Cone, "The Puerto Rican Flag as Folk Art," highlighting how the flag is used as a symbol of cultural expression, and "Resource-Full New Jersey," documenting the changes in the landscape of the state...Contact: **Connie Jackson (CJackson@JerseyHistory.org)**

➤ **New York Historical Society (<http://www.nyhistory.org/>)** - The Alexander Hamilton exhibition, sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Institute, will run from August through the Fall, and is a great place to take classes. It features some of the rarest and most precious historical objects and documents connected with Alexander Hamilton and the Revolutionary Era, including the pistols Hamilton and Burr used in their deadly duel and copies of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence...Contact: **Anthony Napoli (napoli@gilderlehrman.org)**

➤ **Virginia Historical Society (www.vahistorical.org)** - Through June 20, "The Civil Rights Movement in Virginia" will show the early victories of segregation in the 1940s, *Brown v. Board of Education*, and the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964...Contact: **Maribeth Cowan (maribeth@vahistorical.org)**

» Name That Person «

Test your knowledge of historical figures from the past and present. See if you can match each event with the person it relates to. The answers are found at the bottom of Page 10.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1) What United States President declared when taking office, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself?"</p> <p>A. Franklin Delano Roosevelt
B. Ronald Reagan
C. William Taft
D. Bill Clinton</p> | <p>6) Who was appointed Secretary of Labor in March, 1933, becoming the first ever female U.S. Cabinet member?</p> <p>A. Elizabeth Cady Stanton
B. Geraldine Ferraro
C. Madeleine Albright
D. Frances Perkins</p> |
| <p>2) Who was the first explorer to circumnavigate the world?</p> <p>A. Christopher Columbus
B. Hernando de Soto
C. Ferdinand Magellan
D. Henry Hudson</p> | <p>7) What South African activist was freed after 27 years in prison in 1990?</p> <p>A. Thabo Mbeki
B. F.W. De Klerk
C. Desmond Tutu
D. Nelson Mandela</p> |
| <p>3) What person was the leader of the first permanent English settlement in the New World, established in Jamestown, Virginia in April, 1607?</p> <p>A. William Bradford
B. John Hancock
C. Captain John Smith
D. William Penn</p> | <p>8) What General commanded the Union Army during the Battle of Gettysburg?</p> <p>A. George G. Meade
B. Ulysses S. Grant
C. Robert E. Lee
D. George E. Pickett</p> |
| <p>4) On April 15, 1947, who became the first black man to play in a Major League Baseball game?</p> <p>A. Jackie Robinson
B. Milton Bradley
C. Satchel Paige
D. Willie Mays</p> | <p>9) Whose government was recognized by the United States on January 7, 1959?</p> <p>A. Ho Chi Minh
B. Fidel Castro
C. Mao Tse-tung
D. Lech Walesa</p> |
| <p>5) What famous leader was assassinated on November 22, 1963?</p> <p>A. Robert F. Kennedy
B. John F. Kennedy
C. Martin Luther King, Jr.
D. Medgar Evers</p> | <p>10) Along with Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, what man is credited with writing the Federalist Papers?</p> <p>A. Alexander Burr
B. Thomas Jefferson
C. James Madison
D. Benjamin Franklin</p> |

For Graduating Seniors

Phi Alpha Theta, the national collegiate honor society for history, was founded in 1921 and has now expanded to 820 chapters. Information about joining **Phi Alpha Theta** is posted on the website, www.phialphatheta.org. The society actively encourages participation by its student and faculty members in three dozen annual regional meetings and at Biennial Conventions at which they present their papers. Student members also present their research at almost all the major national historical meetings.

Phi Alpha Theta's next Biennial Convention will be held in Philadelphia from January 4-6, 2006. High school teachers and students are invited to attend, and more information will be posted on their website as convention time approaches.

High school teachers may want to subscribe to the society's quarterly journal, *The Historian*. It features a wide range of articles and timely book reviews, and it is the second highest in circulation among scholarly historical periodicals.

For more information, contact **Jack Tunstall**, Executive Director, at phialpha@phialphatheta.org.

NHC Support

The National History Club would like to thank the **Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History** for their generous matching grant of \$15,000, to help support operations during this year.

The **Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History** (<http://www.gilderlehrman.org/>) was founded in 1994 to promote the study and love of American history. Gilder Lehrman's initiatives target audiences ranging from students to scholars to the general public. The Institute creates history-centered schools and academic research centers; organizes seminars and enrichment programs for educators; produces print and electronic publications and traveling exhibitions; and sponsors lectures by eminent historians.

As the number of chapters and members grows, it becomes increasingly difficult to cover the costs of printing the biannual Newsletter, attending conferences to disseminate information about our organization, and mailing various NHC materials. If any person or foundation would like to extend support to the National History Club, we would relish the chance to speak with you, and we hope that you will contact us.



History Student of the Year



The National History Club is pleased to announce that during the 2004-2005 school year, we will be honoring one student in each existing history club as that chapter's **History Student of the Year**. We want each club to set their own guidelines for how a student is selected for this award. It is expected that the members and/or the Advisor(s) will choose the recipient.

Each member who is recognized as their chapter's **History Student of the Year** will receive a history book with his/her achievement noted on the inside cover. Their name will also be listed in the Spring Newsletter in a section highlighting award winners. We would like to hear your ideas for what book may be of interest to recipients, as we have not yet selected the book to be awarded.

Answers: 1-A, 2-C, 3-C, 4-A, 5-B, 6-D, 7-D, 8-A, 9-B, 10-C

❖ *The Concord Review* ❖
Varsity Academics®

As the school year winds down, we realize that many students are probably in the midst of completing some sort of research paper for their history or social studies class. We would like to suggest the idea, to those students interested, of submitting their essays to *The Concord Review* for possible publication. This unique quarterly journal remains the only one in the world to publish the history papers of high school students.

Students who submit essays for publication are eligible to be published in the next four issues of the journal, and have the opportunity of winning a **\$3,000 Ralph Waldo Emerson Prize** if their paper is printed in *The Concord Review*. Many of our authors have sent reprints of their papers with their college application materials, and they have gone on to Berkeley (6), Brown (19), Columbia (12), Dartmouth (10), Harvard (75), Princeton (33), Stanford (22), Yale (75), and a number of other fine institutions. **William R. Fitzsimmons**, Dean of Admissions at Harvard, has said "We have been happy to have reprints of essays published in *The Concord Review*, submitted by a number of our applicants over the years, to add to the information we consider in making admission decisions."

History essays may be submitted, with a fee of \$40, to *The Concord Review*, by any high school student writing in English. For the \$40 fee, the author receives the next four issues of the journal. Each essay must be accompanied by a Submission Form, which can be found on our website at <http://www.tcr.org>.

NHC

Membership Procedures

The **National History Club** was founded in March, 2002 to promote the reading, writing, discussion, and enjoyment of history. There is no fee for a chapter to be granted a charter, as the NHC wants any group with a genuine interest in history to be part of our organization. Our goal is to connect students of diverse backgrounds and varying abilities in schools across the country.

History clubs which join the NHC may be of several different kinds. Some may already be established, while others may be newly formed. Certain clubs will emphasize local history and site visits. Some will want to put their time into reading history books together and writing serious research papers. History clubs from the same region may even coordinate activities with each other. It is our plan to hold a National Convention in the coming years.

We provide members with a Newsletter twice a year, sharing information about club activities in chapters around the country. Schools looking to join the **National History Club** should send a letter requesting chapter membership to Robert Nasson, Executive Director, along with the names of the students and the Advisor, as well as the Advisor's e-mail address.

History Club Pens

We have now begun to offer NHC pens to any club that is interested in purchasing them. Each pen is a twist-action LaserGrip with solid brass construction and gold plated trim, and they come in either azure blue or burgundy.

Some clubs have purchased pens for induction ceremonies, while others are planning to give them to graduating seniors to reward them for their service to their chapters. Clubs may even want to sell pens as a fundraiser to support activities in the future.

If you have any interest please contact Robert Nasson at nasson@tcr.org for more information.



Contact Information:

Will Fitzhugh, President - fitzhugh@tcr.org

Robert Nasson, Executive Director - nasson@tcr.org

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National History Club

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