Please respond to this questionnaire. We have mentioned previously how important it is for us to keep track of what you are doing, both professionally and personally.

Name ___________________________ UMSL Degree _______ Year ______

Current mailing address: __________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
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Employer: ___________________________ Position: ___________________________

Recent activities:_________________________________________________________________
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Other News: ____________________________________________________________________

News of other Alumni: ____________________________________________________________

Dear History Alums and Friends:

As you may have noticed by now, I am not Louis Gerteis. Having served six years, Professor Gerteis stepped down from his position as chair in August. The reign of Gerteis was marked by tremendous growth in the face of dwindling resources and it is worth reflecting it is more than a little daunting to try to follow in his footsteps. I am feeling a little bit like Andrew Johnson must have felt following the Lincoln assassination, except in this case, Gerteis still lives and can indeed be found sauntering about Lucas Hall in the capacity of elder statesman and ordinary professor of History.

Since assuming the position of departmental chair, I have been tremendously impressed by the generosity of our alumni and friends. Nearly 50 individuals have made financial contributions to the department since August, totaling several thousand dollars. Through these gifts we have been able to maintain and, in some cases, expand our scholarship accounts. The Knapp, Shaffer, and Burns scholarships defray educational costs for students pursuing careers in education, while the Rawick prize awards $500 to the under-graduate who produces the best research paper in our undergraduate program in line with our new emphasis on transnational, metropolitan, and regional analysis at the graduate level.

Early in his tenure, Gerteis negotiated the transfer of Regional History Day from the Missouri Historical Society to the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Every February, junior high and high school students amass on campus to present original works of historical interpretation in a variety of formats: exhibits, video documentaries, papers, and performances. The event has grown in size every year and currently draws over 300 students, parents, and teachers. Although history departments are not known for their success in securing external grant funds, The Virtual City project, launched by Gerteis in the late 1990s, has brought over one million dollars to support graduate research assistantships. This ambitious enterprise aims to revolutionize teaching and research through the creation of historic 3D landscapes in digital form. In its current phase, the Virtual City project is developing a tool kit that will enable history museums to reconstruct and display lost urban landscapes such as the St. Louis waterfront. The department has also moved aggressively to integrate computer technology with teaching by offering an array of fully and blended online courses. In 2007, the department entered into a partnership with Missouri Southern State University to establish a cooperative MA program that relies almost exclusively on online instruction. The presence of the Mercantile Library has made the University of Missouri-St. Louis a major center for the study of western history. To build upon that strength, the department negotiated the transfer of the Western History Association to campus in 2006. Our own Kevin J. Fernlund serves as the Association’s Executive Director.

Over the next few years, it is my expectation that the department will concentrate its energies on implementing the new online curriculum, the cooperative MA program, and if all goes well, a Ph.D. program. We will also bring our under-graduate program in line with our new emphasis on transnational, metropolitan, and regional analysis at the graduate level. It is also my hope that in our research and teaching activities, we can contribute more directly to the university’s goal of constructive community engagement.

Andrew Hurley

Andrew Hurley

Last, and certainly not least, the former chair persisted in pressing for a Ph.D. program. Shortly before relinquishing his duties, he delivered a proposal to campus administration that emphasized the study of metropolitan, regional, national, and transnational history. We are hopeful that it will receive a positive response. The department owes a great deal of gratitude to Professor Gerteis for all he has done and it is more than a little daunting to try to follow in his footsteps. I am feeling a little bit like Andrew Johnson must have felt following the Lincoln assassination, except in this case, Gerteis still lives and can indeed be found sauntering about Lucas Hall in the capacity of elder statesman and ordinary professor of History.

With this in mind, the new chair, who is currently studying history at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, has taken over the position of departmental chair, and the department is poised for great things.

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Howard R. Lamar Center for the Study of Frontiers and Borders at Yale University and the Mercantile Library, opened its first part in New Haven on the Yale Campus in late September, 2007. Additional support for the conference has come from the St. Louis chapter of Les Amis, a historical society focused on the preservation of French History in North America, the Beinecke Library at Yale, the University of Missouri-St. Louis Department of History, and the Western History Association.

The conference, designed to commemorate the ground breaking work on the history of frontier studies in America by Richard Wade and John Francis McDermott, was planned to highlight the work of many current distinguished and often prize winning historians who have focused on this topic in considering cultures in cooperation, conflict and shared enterprise in various locales and eras. In this scholarly grants program's first part at Yale, this meant a broad geographical canvass, from Goa in the Early Modern period (Alan Gallay, Ohio State), to Montreal in the eighteenth century (Brett Rushforth, Brigham Young University), from New Orleans in the seventeenth century (Daniel H. Usner, Vanderbilt University) to early Russian cities like Sitka and Kodiak in North America (Govern Miller, College of the Holy Cross) as well as better known regions at times synonymous with the "frontier" such as the urban American West.

The second part of the conference built on themes presented in the first part, such as the many terms that quickly evolved, such as "simulated obedience" in colonial organization and administration on the early modern frontier, a useful term presented by Alan Gallay. Definitions of other aspects of the frontier such as religious issues, cultural communications, environmental effects, Turner's ghostly recurrent thesis, and attempts at defining "colonial", "hinterland", "patronage networking", "empire", "porousness" or "porosity" (of cultural interactions) and "frontier" itself were all engagingly attempted in successive presentations.

The St. Louis conference also appropriately focused a number of papers on St. Louis as well as the comparative experience of Detroit, Pittsburgh and the Old Northwest Territory and also highlighted transportation, fur trade and cultural history. Noted historians John Mack Faragher (Lamar Center at Yale) and Elliott West (University of Arkansas) gave opening presentations in St. Louis. Professor Fred Fausz of UMSL discussed his recent research on Auguste Chouteau, regarding his forthcoming edition of Chouteau’s Narrative on the Founding of St. Louis, to be published jointly by the University of Missouri Press and the Mercantile Library. Peter Kastor (Washington University), read a paper on “Mapping the Urban Frontier” – Carolyn Gilman from the Missouri Historical Society, spoke on the early Revolutionary period trans-Appalachian frontier, and Karen Marrero (Yale) discussed Detroit’s early urban experience.

Carlos Schwantes (University of Missouri-St. Louis) discussed the concept of transportation "hubs" on the frontier.
SEMINAR IN GHANA

By: Dr. Dowden-White
Assistant Professor of History
Coordinator for the Ghana Africa Program (MAP)

During the Fall Semester, 2007, Dr. Priscilla Dowden-White, Assistant Professor of History, served as Coordinator for the Ghana Africa Program (MAP). Dowden-White accompanied seven students to Ghana, where she taught a course (The Black Diaspora) for the History Department at the University of Ghana, Legon. Education/History Major, Andrea Harping, was one of the students participating in the seminar long program. Beyond the academic enrichments that the University offered, Dowden-White and students experienced the rich cultural diversity of Ghana through a wide variety of field trips throughout the country (and neighboring Togo).

IN MEMORIAM

Dr. Louise Burner (Mrs. George S.) Robbert died on June 11, 2007, at the age of 81 from cancer.

Born August 18, 1925 in St. Paul, Minnesota, she earned her BA from Carleton College (1947); her MA (1948) and a Bachelor of Education degree (1949) from the University of Cincinnati; and her Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin--Madison (1955).


Dr. Robbert began her teaching career at Smith College in 1955. From 1959-1967, she was a professor at the University of Cincinnati. In 1967, she joined the faculty of the Department of History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where she worked as a professor emerita at UM-St. Louis in 1997.

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2008 PRIMM LECTURE
The 2008 James Neal Primm Lecture in History will be delivered on Monday, September 8 at 7:00 pm in the Mercantile Library on the University of Missouri-St. Louis campus. This year’s lecturer will be Professor David Blight of Yale University. Dr. Blight’s numerous publications include Frederick Douglass’ Civil War: Keeping Faith In Jubilee (2001) and Beyond the Battlefield: Race, Memory and the American Civil War (2002). The title of Dr. Blight’s lecture is “Has Civil War Memory Divided or United America?”

WESTERN HISTORY ASSOCIATION
By: Angela Scheer
Graduate Assistant
Western History Association

Working as a graduate research assistant for the Western History Association is an experience unlike all other assistantships in the UMSL History department. Adam Michalski and I do not teach any classes or help professors with research. Instead, we help run an organization with over 1,500 members. An average week at the WHA could involve running a membership drive, organizing a mailing, updating the website, and any number of other activities. Adam and I spent much of the fall semester preparing for the WHA’s annual meeting in Oklahoma City. The 2007 conference was held in Oklahoma City. 14-hour work days were not uncommon at the conference, but we also got to meet many of the influential people in the field of Western History. We toured Fort Sill and many other historic places throughout the Oklahoma City area. It was a great time! Of course, as soon as we returned we began preparing for the 2008 conference.

Over spring break, Adam and I will be heading to New York City to help prepare for the WHA’s Spring Council Meeting and the University of Oklahoma. The Spring 2008 conference will be held in Oklahoma City. 14-hour work days were not uncommon at the conference, but we also got to meet many of the influential people in the field of Western History. We toured Fort Sill and many other historic places throughout the Oklahoma City area. It was a great time! Of course, as soon as we returned we began preparing for the 2008 conference.

SCOTT JOPLIN HOUSE
By: Charles Loren McLane
Graduate Assistant
Scott Joplin House Neighborhood Community Outreach Project

Within our urban environment, it is crucial to retain or strengthen our common bonds with the past and reflect on where we have come from, how we got to the present, and where we want to go in the future. Through the recognition of the memories we share and our responsibility as citizens of a community, we can move towards instilling positive values and develop an identity for future generations who will one day come to call this place ‘home’. In taking a look at St. Louis neighborhoods and listening to the real issues faced by the residents living in these neighborhoods, this city can act as a microcosm for the study of solving the inner city problems in the 21st century.

It is my pleasure to work on a project that strives for such goals. Through the collective effort of scholars, archaeologists, researchers, and grassroots community initiatives the Jell-Vander-Lou neighborhood is rediscovering its past and planning for a better future. Citizen activists and representatives from the Missouri State Parks have collaborated with the St. Louis Gear-Up Program, guided by the efforts of Dr. Andrew Hurley. Anchored by the Scott Joplin House State Historic Site, the area lays claim to a unique heritage of cultural exchange, and boasts deep roots in the performing arts for over a hundred years. Through archival research, the collection of oral histories, and local digs, student-led neighborhood photography projects, this area can be developed on the living history of the Scott Joplin neighborhood. Residents hope that by rediscovering their past and common bonds with each other and the greater St. Louis metropolitan area they can preserve their cultural and environmental landscapes and plan for a better future in one of America’s great urban centers.

Currently, a photography project combining the archival images of the community with contemporary photos taken by students and residents is on display at the Scott Joplin House and the University Missouri – St. Louis. This is one of the many examples where researchers like myself and members of the local advisory committee combine their efforts and create an exhibition using the history of the community while empowering the area’s youth to rediscover their heritage. In the near future, a brochure on the neighborhood history will be distributed to local residents, highlighting their local history and informing them of our current activities. Finally, by working with high school teachers this summer, we hope to develop a curriculum that integrates the materials and oral histories we have collected to further the incorporation of local history into the lives of students living in this area today.

ΦΘ
Psi Psi Chapter began the 2007-08 academic year by using bidding “farewell” to outgoing History chairman, Dr. Louis Gerteis, with profound thanks for his generosity and support of the Chapter’s activities, and welcoming Dr. Andrew Hurley, as he takes up the reins. We also welcomed the return of online member Rowan, faculty advisor, from his Pullman Fellowship in Graz, Austria. As always, thanks to Dr. Peter Acsay for everything he does on our behalf.

The Executive Committee, composed of President Mike Beatty, Vice President Sean Seyer, Secretary Loren McLane, Treasurer Randolph Geary, SGA Representative Andrea Lawless, and member-at-large Travis Hamilton presided over an eventful Fall Semester for the Chapter. On 13 September 2007, the Chapter hosted a symposium on “Researching Local History” at the Millennium Center on campus. We will cover basic technical issues such as how do research, how to write and use citations, how to frame an argument, and other broad-and-breadth social-science writing techniques.

Last Spring, the major project for the Chapter got off the ground, as we began to establish a semi-annual scholarly journal, The Psi Psi Historian. The debut issue of The Psi Psi Historian included the winning papers in the Junior and Senior Divisions of the Missouri Region V competition for National History Day. The Spring 2007 edition of The Psi Psi Historian can be considered for the 2007 Historical Society, Missouri State Archives and the St. Louis University archives.

The Chapter’s initiation class of Fall 2007 was particularly strong, due to an initiative to “carry the message” to History classes. Members of the Executive Committee briefly discussed Psi Alpha Theta to a number of classes and invited students to join us. We initiated nine new members on 11 November 2007: Victoria Beerman, Danny Jenkins, Lee McDonald, John M. McGahan, Adam T. Michalski, Jenny A. Minelli, Mark Alan Neels, Kelly O’Donnell, and Abbi M. Teland. We look forward to a strong initiation class this Spring. Spring 2008 initiation is set for Sunday, 13 April 2008 at 6:30 p.m.; location to be determined.

President Mike Beatty, Vice President Sean Seyer and Member Cynthia Tharp attended the 2008 Phi Alpha Theta Biennial Convention, 24 January 2008 in Albuquerque, NM. Mike attended as Chapter Delegate and presented his research on Creek/U.S. relations during the Early Republic period; Cynthia presented her research on the evolving role of the World Court, and Sean gained valuable insight into the atmosphere of an academic conference. Watch for more details in the Spring 2008 edition of The Psi Psi Historian in late April.

The Fall 2008 Symposium on “Methods and Practices” is scheduled for Tuesday, September 2008 at a.m. in the Millennium Center on campus. We will cover basic technical issues such as how do research, how to write and use citations, how to frame an argument, and other broad-and-breadth social-science writing techniques.

AWARDS
The 2007 James Neal Primm Lecture was given by Jay Gittlin, on “St. Louis in a World of Cities, 1842-1857.”

The 2007 Thomas J. Knapp Memorial Scholarship winner was Stephen Meuten.

The 2007 George Rawick Award in History went to Laura Ayers.

The 2007 History Alumni Award winner was Gina Nesell.