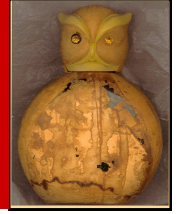




Department of History

# The OWL



Volume 13 2021/22

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## Words of Welcome

Welcome to the thirteenth issue of *The Owl*, the annual newsletter of the History Department at Wilfrid Laurier University's Waterloo campus.

Thanks to all who have contacted us in response to previous issues; please keep those letters and e-mails coming in. We especially love to hear from our former students.

Owl Trivia #13 (courtesy of Professor Chris Nighman): "Did you know that an owl's eyes can account for up to 3% of its entire body weight? A human's eyes make up about .0003% of its body weight." National Geographic.

## Faculty Interview

**Dr. Kevin Spooner** has been teaching Canadian history at Laurier since 2005, and he is the first Director of the new *Laurier Centre for the Study of Canada* (LCSC). *The Owl* sat down with Dr. Spooner and asked him to reflect on the Centre and its plans for the future at Laurier.



***What is the mission of the Laurier Centre for the Study of Canada?***

**KS:** The Laurier Centre for the Study of Canada (LCSC) aims to be a leading research centre focused on the interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and comparative study of the Canadian experience.


To achieve this mission, LCSC has three objectives:

- to facilitate and support original research on Canada
- to mobilize and disseminate knowledge to both scholarly and general audiences through community-engaged outreach programs; and
- to provide high-quality experiential learning and training opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students.


(cont. from pg. 1)

In pursuit of this mission, LCSC recognizes there are expansive, evolving, and contested interpretations of Canada.

**Can you tell us about the history of the Centre?**

 **KS:** LCSC was originally the Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies (LCMSDS). Around campus, it was affectionately known as the 'Military Centre'. LCMSDS became a nationally significant research centre, especially for Canadian military history. It started in the 1990s, under the leadership of Laurier professors Terry Copp and Marc Kilgour. By 2020, when I became Director, it was becoming more difficult to sustain the Centre with a focus solely on Canadian military history. Primarily because there were fewer Laurier faculty engaged in this field, we made the decision to widen out the Centre's mandate to look more expansively at the Canadian experience. Now, the Centre has more than 30 research fellows and associates from various disciplines and multiple faculties – all working to understand better the realities and issues confronting Canada. The Centre has four research collectives that focus on policy connections in Canada, communities, publics and social justice, and war and society. Our war and society collective continues to do all the great work in the field of Canadian military history that we did before as LCMSDS, but now we are also venturing into new and exciting areas of research.

**How did you get interested in the new direction for the Centre? How is your role as director related to your personal research interests?**

 **KS:** I suppose I'm something of a bridge between LCMSDS and LCSC. For years, my research has focused on Canadian peacekeeping, particularly during the Cold War. While much of that work focused on peacekeeping from a foreign policy perspective, it certainly spoke to the Canadian military history community too. I also have a background in Canadian Studies – I taught in Canadian Studies and History at Trent University nearly two decades ago, before I came to Laurier. And much of my teaching here has been in the North American Studies Program; understanding Canada from interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives is a key objective of that program, and of course that's an important part of the Centre's mission as well.

**What are the main activities of the Centre?**

 **KS:** There is always so much going on at the Centre! Honestly, it's hard to keep up most days. The Centre supports the research of dozens of Laurier professors working to understand Canada and Canadians. That work extends into all the various fields and areas of study I already mentioned. The Centre hosts public talks. Because of COVID, we shifted to doing these online as webinars. These webinars are hugely popular, with thousands of viewers every year tuning in from across Canada, the United States, and Europe. The Centre has its own ar-

chives, with important collections related to Canada's military history, including a rare collection of Second World War air reconnaissance photographs. We hold an annual colloquium on Canadian Military History; in fact, the 32nd annual colloquium was just held this May in-person, here at Laurier. The *Canadian Military History Journal* is published by the Centre, and we work with University of Toronto Press to publish a series of books. The Centre's website ([studyofcanada.ca](http://studyofcanada.ca)) gives a great sense of everything we do and gives easy access to the Centre's blogs and podcasts.

**Are there any future plans you can share with the Owl readers?**

 **KS:** Over the next few years, we expect to greatly expand research with all four of our research collectives. That will mean more podcasts, more blogs, more publications, more public outreach. Thanks to generous support from the Faculty of Arts, our main floor space at 232 King Street (the same building as Special Constables) has been newly renovated. It's now a great space for researchers and students to meet to discuss and develop projects. Our main work area now also doubles as a hybrid event space. We're just finishing up work on something like a mini-TV studio / control room that will allow us to hold public events and livestream them. Some of the Centre's lower floor space will be renovated this summer, creating new areas for digital humanities work – high speed microform scanning, a podcast suite, vodcast suite, and high-quality large format scanning.

(cont. from pg. 2)

### ***Are there any opportunities for students at the Centre?***

**KS:** YES!! So much of what we do at the Centre is because of the great work of graduate and undergraduate students. Several graduate students (MA and PhD) work here to run our webinars, the journal, and the archives. Every year, we hire 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students as Copp Scholars (named after our Director Emeritus and former Chair of History, Terry Copp) to work as research assistants for our Centre Fellows. Many of these positions are funded through the Laurier Work Study Program (LWSP), so if you qualify as a LWSP eligible student please look out for Copp Scholar research assistants job postings in Navigator, in August/September. Sometimes we also have smaller projects that are just looking for some volunteer help; that's also a great way to get involved and make a connection with the Centre.

### ***Do you have any final thoughts for the readers?***

**KS:** Please, come visit us at the Centre! It's a great space for students to connect with other students and faculty. LCSC has a long and storied connection with the History Department, and generations of History students have helped to make it what it is today. Students really are the lifeblood of the place, so we look forward to seeing you here at 232 King Street – yes, that's beside Phil's.

**LCSC Events and Resources** can be found at <https://studyofcanada.ca/>



## **Chair's Message from Dr. David Smith**

Over the past year our department has met many COVID-era challenges with resourcefulness and determination. From in-person to remote teaching and back again, faculty and students worked to maintain teaching and research schedules. Thank you to everyone for all your hard work and creativity adapting to the ever-changing situation! Even in the midst of so many changes, we completed our seven-year cyclical review, and discussed the expansion and enrichment of our programming. This year also saw the establishment of an EDI committee to learn how the department can meet the needs and interests of a new generation of students, and to serve as a resource for equity and diversity questions. In sum, the department is well positioned for growth. History enrollments remain strong and the major is popular. Much of this success is due to the excellence of teaching within the department. This year the university community recognized Kevin Spooner with the Donald F. Morgenson Award for sustained excellence in teaching and Eric Story with the Laurier Student Teaching Award of Excellence. Congratulations both!

We are continuing to build on these accomplishments by examining how the department can improve the student experience. We will soon be surveying our majors to learn more about how we can meet their needs as they progress through the program and aspire to reach post-graduate goals. The department this year voted to join the Sussex Law program, providing our majors with new options in their learning. We are also exploring ways to reshape our history of science minor and the digital humanities option.

These initiatives also build on the research strength of our faculty. This year we inaugurated a research colloquium that met throughout the semester for faculty and graduates to share their scholarship.

Next year we can look forward to many more talks and events that reflect the productivity and expertise of our research community. Plan for at least two book celebrations (and maybe three, see below!) for the recent publications by Darren Mulloy and Amy Milne-Smith, and several works-in-progress talks (spots are still open for faculty and graduate students). Thanks to Len Friesen and all the presenters who made the first year of the colloquium so successful!

The department is changing in other ways. This year we lost a longstanding and dedicated colleague: Alicia McKenzie. Alicia was a gifted teacher, mentor to many undergraduates, and -- for me -- a friend brimming with enthusiasm and ideas about teaching and medievalism. Alicia is very much missed. The Department and Faculty will hold a celebration of her career in the fall.

Cynthia Comacchio is entering retirement -- an opportunity we all hope for her to write up more of her fascinating research on Canadian social history. Cynthia has been a member of the department for over 30 years during which time she established herself as a leading figure in Canadian history.

Despite a challenging year, we can look ahead to new course and program offerings in the department and the renewal of opportunities for faculty and students to share and exchange knowledge -- dare I say it -- in-person!

### ***Dr. David Smith, History Department Chair***



## Farewell address from our retiree, Dr. Cynthia Comacchio



*After a distinguished career at Laurier, Dr. Cynthia Comacchio will retire from the History Department in July. Congratulations on behalf of the History Department's Faculty, Staff and Students!*

*Dr. Comacchio graciously offered to write a farewell address for this year's Owl.*

When the venerable editor of *The Owl* invited me to write myself something of a send-off as I finish my Laurier history department chapter, I'm sure my first thoughts were those of all those transitioning to post-work. Mostly: how do I do that in less than three volumes? As it turns out, it wasn't so hard. Historians are not a nostalgic bunch. We know better than most that the 'golden days' have never existed. Certainly in June 2022 there is little danger that they are going to coincide with my retirement.

I began my forty-year stint at Laurier in a time of tight and highly competitive hiring, that, in retrospect, was the proverbial walk in the park compared to what I'm leaving behind as a full professor. In the early 1990s, this was a small and hopeful place. It was also a profoundly sexist, thoroughly White and mostly uncritical and unquestioning institution with little vision of breaking through the historic walls that kept it that way. Or maybe the vision was there, with some corresponding rhetoric, but the plans were not. Being a woman with a 'weird' name like mine already placed me more on the outside than in. In the current environment, thankfully, some real moves have been made to attack the systemic inequalities. So the hope continues, though I won't be here to see how far things proceed.

The best part of my forty years in the history department was working with some promising undergrads, and more closely with plenty of MAs and at least a dozen PhDs across the Tri-U, 6 of whom I supervised and with whom I am still in close touch. I was a young single mother of two children under five when I started. I am a grandmother of two teenagers, one about to start university himself, as I leave. I tried to make my teaching and mentoring convey both my passion for what we do, and especially for the history of Canadian society, but also my compassion. Since childhood and adolescence are my principal areas of research and publication, requiring massive amounts of reading in child development and psychology, historic and contemporary, and since I lived a lot of that as a mother and then grandmother, I can't think how I could have avoided feeling for them as much as trying to teach them something. It was often daunting. But a few have expressed their appreciation over the years, and that's enough.

It's fitting that I'm finishing off my hit-or-miss Laurier career with a book that started as a synthesis of the many, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, intersecting and intertextual [and whatever is the current 'in' word] and ended also incorporating a lot of primary research that I, and my co-author Neil Sutherland, had been compiling since, well, before the turn of the century. The history of this book, *Ring Around the Maple: Settler Children and Childhoods in Canada, 19th-20th Centuries*, is almost as complicated as its subject matter. First, it took far too long to complete. That is hardly unusual; books invariably do. The reasons, in this case, are especially unhappy ones. Neil Sutherland, who inaugurated the field of childhood history in this country, started the project twenty years ago but invited me to help finish it as he suffered increasingly from health problems. Given the distance between our homes, with his in British Columbia, and jobs, and family, and all the other things that, even before Covid 19, keep people from getting together, we worked mainly by email. This was the pre-Zoom age. Even email sharing effectively stopped about ten years ago as his health deteriorated.

To my enormous regret, I was unable to get the book past the first few chapters that he had sketched out before he passed away in July 2017. That tremendous loss of a mentor, co-author, wise and wonderful friend, was not merely a publishing setback. It was a personal sorrow that kept me from finishing quickly, much as I wanted this book to serve as a timely tribute to him. All these years later, it is not timely, but it is nonetheless complete and submitted to WLUP under both our names. The book focuses on the condition of "being children" within an environment in which the modern gradually, and then more rapidly, disrupted familiar ways.

## Spotlight on Faculty Research

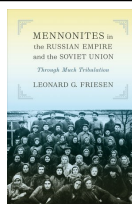
### *Dr. Comacchio's Farewell Address (cont'd)*

We looked to discern the constants as well as the variants that comprise the personal, social and historic dimensions of childhood. Just as they continue to matter in the formation of self and social identity, class, gender, race, generation, religion, culture, parental and familial status, urban, rural and regional location, among the usual contingencies that affect all lives, also shaped children's experiences. Since clearly no one chooses the family and society into which they are born, these are inherent identifiers in every sense. In the end, this book is about the historic centrality of children and their experiences in the multiplicity of childhoods that have always existed, simultaneously and generationally.

And this is where my Laurier story ends. I turned 65 this week. My official retirement begins at the end of June. I think I've been out of sync with current university values for the past decade, which has done nothing for my well-being and has certainly affected my collegial functioning. That I do regret, but it's not easy to see while it's happening. Only after there is some respite, when it's too late to do more than say 'so sorry.' It's quite simply time. There are plenty of very promising young people who are far better equipped to carry on in the classroom than I am now, and it's their rightful turn. I will continue to use their innovative scholarship to inform my own research and writing, which I have no intention of giving up. Meanwhile, I have a strange but memorable closing line stuck in my head from the strange but memorable works of the inimitable English writer Douglas Adams: "So long, and thanks for all the fish."

Cindy Comacchio  
Guelph, Ontario  
16 June 2022

**Len Friesen's** new book, *Mennonites in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union: Through Much Tribulation*, is available for pre-order from University of Toronto Press, 2023).



**Jeff Grischow's** new edited collection, *Disability Rights and Inclusiveness in Africa* (James Currey), will be released in July, 2022.



Dr. Grischow also produced 12 films on climate change in Ghana, made by Ghanaian youth for the United Nations *Youth Climate Report* (YCR) (with co-leads Magnus Mfoafo-M'Carthy and Mark Terry). The TCR videos can be found here: [YCR Interactive Map](#).

Dr. Grischow's other 2021-22 publications include three articles and a book chapter:

Magnus Mfoafo-M'Carthy and Jeff Grischow, 'Social Exclusion and Marginalization of Mental Illness in Ghana,' in Pranee Liamputtong, *Handbook of social inclusion : research and practices in health and social sciences* (Cham Springer, 2022), 953-68.

Jeff Grischow, Augustina Naami, Wisdom Mprah and Magnus Mfoafo-M'Carthy, 'Methodologically Thinking: Doing Disability Research in Ghanaian Cultural Communities,' *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*, 23(1)(2021): 169-179.

Magnus Mfoafo-M'Carthy and Jeff Grischow, 'Hierarchy and inequality in research: Navigating the challenges of research in Ghana,' *Qualitative Research*, online first (May 2022), <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/14687941221098927>

Jeff Grischow, Magnus Mfoafo-M'Carthy and Wisdom Mprah, 'Reflections on National Disability Programs and Disability Rights in Ghana,' *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 55(2) (2022): 183-203.

**Amy Milne-Smith** published a new book in March, 2022:



*Out of his mind: Masculinity and mental illness in Victorian Britain* (Manchester University Press, 2022).

Dr. Milne-Smith also hired a Research Assistant, Brianne Casey, through Laurier's Work-Study program (LWSP), to examine soldiers' memoirs

**Darren Mulloy's** new book, *Years of Rage: From the Klan to the Alt-Right* (Rowman & Littlefield) was published in November, 2021.



**Chris Nighman** is the Principal Investigator on a SSHRC Category C Knowledge Mobilization Grant (PI): "Modernizing the website for the Electronic Manipulus florum Project (\$2,000).

Dr. Nighman also published a peer-reviewed article in 2021-22: C. Nighman, "Impresse et diligenter correcte": Johann Koelhoff's transmission of Francesco Griffolini's Latin translation of Chrysostom's homilies on John," *Journal of the Early Book Society for the Study of Manuscripts and Printing History*, 24 (Dec. 2021): 263-88.

## History Students' Associations Annual Reports

### ***Undergraduate Students:***

*Report from HSA President Alyssa Firth*

I was very honoured to take on the role of President of the HSA for the 2021-2022 academic year. I am especially grateful to have been nominated for the role in my second year of university, as I had only previously served as a First-Year Representative. I am thankful to have had the guidance of last year's president, Nicholas Morrison, to make the major transition less intimidating. I look forward to working on the HSA in the coming 2022-2023 academic year and to work with Brittany Wyllie-Stevens as Co-President.

The past few years have been challenging for the HSA with the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. The shift from in-person to virtual events resulted in the need for creative planning to keep students engaged while not being able to meet in the same room together. The 2021-2022 academic year continued to see this challenge in a new way. This year we saw the gradual transition from online, back to in person, and online burnout struggles. This transition meant more creative planning for the executive team (Nicholas, Noah, Campbell, Meredith, and Tristan) and I. The year began with a successful online meeting where we met many new and returning history students interested in the club. However, we did run into a challenge of not having any First-Year Representatives this year. Despite this challenge we were still able to draw in first years to our events. Through these challenges we have also gained new ideas for recruiting representatives for our coming year.

Our first in-person event was our annual Remembrance Day ceremony. The event drew in many members of both the Laurier and Waterloo community. The ceremony also featured a presentation from Matt Baker from the Centre for Military, Strategic and Disarmament Studies. I was honoured to be the host of this year's ceremony. The event was completed with the reading of John

ceremony. The event drew in many members of both the Laurier and Waterloo community. The ceremony also featured a presentation from Matt Baker from the Laurier Centre for the Study of Canada. I was honoured to be the host of this year's ceremony. The event was completed with the reading of John McCrae's *In Flanders Fields* by the Dean of Students, Kate McCrae Bristol. The traditional reading in French was performed by our very own VP of Academics, Meredith Legace.

The rest of the semester featured movie nights where we watched different historically-themed movies. These events were our most popular by far this year! It was lovely to see so many students come out to unwind during the semester and engage with each other.

The winter term was definitely interesting when it came to hosting events. We started in the virtual environment with movie nights and our annual trivia tournament. We tried a new format for trivia this year, which included working in teams to figure out answers to different historical questions. This provided a more engaging environment for students! Finally, we ended the year with an in-person social. I was happy to see new faces in the HSA environment at the end of the year and hope to see some returning faces during the 2022-2023 academic year!

As everyone is aware, this was a challenging year for the constant changes to delivery of events and classes (online and in-person). However, I am proud of the work my team and I have done to work with the ever-changing guidelines to deliver another great year of events! This year has also taught myself and the executive team a lot of valuable skills and lessons that we will use in the coming year. I am beyond excited to be returning to the HSA as Co-President this year and hope to continue facilitating engagement for students in the history

department.

*Alyssa Firth*

### ***MA Students:***

*Report from MA Rep Kyle Chapman*

Quite a year it has been! With the return of in-person learning, a marginal level of normality has returned to campus – how refreshing it is! I should firstly like to congratulate all my fellow graduate students for doing their best in navigating these peculiar times and pursuing their academic goals. The friendly and supportive atmosphere this cohort has kindled, and which I am proudly a part of, has been uplifting to say the least. It is what makes Laurier a special place after all, is it not? Only by supporting one another can we push through!

I should also like to thank the entire Laurier history department for their hard work, dedication, support, and kindness that has made this academic year one to remember. A special thanks goes out to Dr. Chiasson and Dr. Crerar for their role as Graduate Advisors. Your patience and commitment in answering our inquiries has gone a long way. Though many of us never got the chance to meet face to face, just know that we, the MA cohort, appreciate you all and everything you have done to make our experience enjoyable!

There were some interesting and engaging graduate events held this year, including the annual Tri-U Conference (held March 12). Though it was held virtually, the conference was nonetheless a great success. It was truly a pleasure to have history students from across the Tri-U program meet, present, and discuss their fascinating research! It was also a pleasure to hear Laurier students present at the annual Canadian Military History Colloquium (held May 6-7), run by the Laurier Centre for the Study of Canada (LCSC).

I will cherish the memories I have made at Laurier forever. I am proud to call Laurier home; a feeling from which I have my fellow students, professors, and staff to thank.

## History Students' Associations Annual Reports (cont'd)

### *Report from MA Rep Kyle Chapman (cont'd)*

Through ups and downs, our graduate students have persevered, and the lessons, skills, and friendships we have sown will reap greater fruits further on.

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I will cherish the memories I have made at Laurier forever. I am proud to call Laurier home; a feeling from which I have my fellow students, professors, and staff to thank. Through ups and downs, our graduate students have persevered, and the lessons, skills, and friendships we have sown will reap greater fruits further on.

*Kyle Chapman*

### **PhD Students:**

#### *Report from PhD Rep Kess Carpenter*

Despite another year spent at distance from one another, Laurier's PhD history cohort still found ways to create and collaborate.

This year, Laurier had the opportunity to host the annual Tri-University Conference. Albeit virtual, the "Face to Face With History" conference offered the cohort the chance to connect with faculty and students from across the Tri-U program and Ontario more broadly. A special shout out goes to Carolyne Ticky for her stellar work as part of the planning committee. Brittany Dunn is also applauded for her fantastic work organizing the 32nd annual Canadian Military History Colloquium hosted by Laurier this past May.

The cohort also had several reasons to celebrate. Eric Story was awarded the Tri-U History PhD Essay Prize, along with the Canadian Historical Review prize. Eric was also the recipient of a 2022 Laurier Student Teaching Award of Excellence.

So, I salute a toast to you, Laurier PhD students and candidates. May the next year be filled with successful library trips, more opportunities for social events, and (fingers crossed!) exhilarating archive visits!

In July 2021, Cody Groat started his position as Assistant professor with Western University's Indigenous Studies Program and History Department. Congratulations, Eric and Cody!

We also wish to thank Blaine Chiasson, Adam Crerar, and Heather Vogel, and all other history department faculty and staff for their support over the past year!

*Kess Carpenter*

### **Student Achievements in 2021-22**

As several contributors have noted, 2021-22 witnessed notable achievements by our students:

Congratulations to Eric Story for winning the Canadian Historical Review article prize for "The Indigenous Casualties of War: Disability, Death, and the Racialized Politics of Pensions, 1914-39," 102(2) (2021), 279-304 (<https://doi.org/10.3138/chr.2019-0057>).

Four of our undergraduate students had their 4th-year seminar essays selected for publication in this year's issue of our undergraduate journal *Minerva* (Volume 8, 2022):

Maglyn Gasteiger, "West of Centre: Saskatoon Women's Liberation and Socialist Feminism in 1970s Saskatchewan."

Charlie Hamilton, "The Jewish Confederacy: The Prevalence of Anti-Semitism in Northern Print Media."

Tara Lukac, "The Pernicious Influences of Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines in the Rwandan Genocide."

Carlee Moran, "The kispum Ritual in the Old Babylonian Period: A Vehicle for Social Cohesion and Family Identity."

Nicholas Morrison, "Scoundrels, Swindlers, and Sleuths: The Victorian Press and the 1877 Trial of the Detectives."

Congratulations all!

# **In Memoriam: Professor Alicia McKenzie**

## **Tribute by Chris Nighman**

On 22 April of this year the History Department and Medieval & Medievalism Studies Program lost a dear colleague and beloved instructor when Professor Alicia McKenzie passed away after a brief illness. At the time she had nearly finished teaching three courses for the History and Ancient Studies programs and one course for the medieval program during Winter term 2022, after 14 years of continuous instruction in those programs. Her remarkable teaching record includes over a dozen courses she designed and repeatedly taught with great success, making her one of the most gifted and prolific Contract Teaching Faculty members ever to teach in Laurier's Faculty of Arts. Her achievements in developing and teaching engaging and very popular courses earned Alicia an Award for Innovation in Teaching in 2016 from Laurier's Teaching and Learning office. She was also an active scholar especially in the growing field of Medievalism, in which she attained an international reputation for her work on the representations of the medieval past in modern popular culture. In addition to three articles on medievalism published since 2018, she had a book under contract with University of Toronto Press entitled *Recreating Worlds: Digital Games and the Representation of Premodern History*, which a colleague in Britain has agreed to see through to posthumous publication. Alicia's commitment to her students' learning and personal growth was profound; for this reason, she will be both greatly missed and very fondly remembered.





Professor Alicia McKenzie, 1979-2022

A memorial scholarship is being established to honour Professor McKenzie's memory. You can find more information and donation information here:

**[Alicia McKenzie Memorial Scholarship \(WLU Alumni Website\)](#)**

## Undergraduate and Graduate Officer Reports

### ***Undergraduate Officer***

It has been a pleasure serving in my first year as Undergraduate Officer. Students and faculty both were energized by the gradual return to campus in 2020-21. The flexibility and maturity of Laurier students is impressive; I marvel at how you have accommodated all of the changes in your world and your learning in the past few years. While advising still took place over email and Zoom this year, nonetheless it still has been wonderful to get to know so many students at various points in your academic careers, and work with you to chart your paths forward. We continued the departmental mentoring program this year, which provides an excellent chance for students and faculty to chat less formally than in ways directly related to coursework.

One of the pleasures of being undergraduate officer is getting to see students shine, whether it is through discovering new academic passions or through scholarly excellence. Among other ways, I saw these by serving on the student awards committee and teaching a fourth-year seminar. These courses, the capstone to the honours degrees, allow students to conduct in-depth research and show off all of their hard-earned writing skills. A highlight students noted in the Era of the Civil War seminar course I taught was the peer review process; students gave each other thoughtful and innovative suggestions for improving their work, and learned about new facets of history beyond their own projects in the process.

The tradition of honouring students at convocation has also returned to campus! The university and the department have celebrated graduands from this year and the past two years in ceremonies this spring. As we look forward to the upcoming year, I will be here to help students address any academic issues that arise. The department also anticipates enjoying more in-person activities, organized in conjunction with the History Students'

Association. I'm working with Drs. Amy Milne-Smith and David Smith to review the curriculum this summer, so we will have new changes (discussed in more detail in Dr. Smith's letter) to share with the history community in the coming academic year. We know we are fortunate to have so many talented and enthusiastic majors and minors, increasing in their knowledge and numbers.

*Dana Weiner, Undergraduate Officer*

### ***Graduate Officer***

Given the small sizes of our MA and doctoral field seminars, we were for the most part able to have classes on campus over the past year and it's been great to be back together to enjoy the free-flowing exchange and good-humoured banter of in-person discussions! Since the last Owl, sixteen students have graduated with their MA in History: Jihad Baayoun, Noah Churchill-Baird, Cameron Eaton, Mihai Giboi, Georgia Gingrich, Joanne Grafton, Dylan Henry, Oliver Johnson, Margrethe McKeon, Matthew Morden, Anthony Phu, Joanna Rickert-Hall, Nick Small, Dorian Staats, Ben Wagner, and Jared Warren. Congratulations to this team of thunder, and a special congratulations to Noah Churchill-Baird, winner of the Award for Outstanding Work at the Graduate Level!

A highlight of the year was our hosting of the Tri-University Graduate Conference in History in March. Although Omicron forced us on-line, the papers and discussion were terrific and the warmth and spirit of the conference were very much as if we'd been in person. Congratulations and thanks to the Laurier students and grads who presented: Jihad Baayoun, Megan Blair, Catherine Bredin, Kyle Chapman, Jessica Frank, Megan Hamilton, Oliver Johnson, Emily Oakes, Adam Palmquist, Steph Plante, Nick Small, and Jared Warren.

And special congratulations to the winners of the Tri-University Graduate Program in History Prizes: our own Eric Story for the PhD Prize, and Megan Hamilton (Laurier BA, now at UW) for the MA Prize!

Many thanks to Kess Carpenter, Carolyn Ticky, and Blaine Chiasson for organizing the conference and for crafting such superb panels—and a special shout-out to Kess and Carolyn for managing the sessions' Zoom meetings so seamlessly. Thanks too to Mary Lou Klassen and Jane Nicholas for their support from the Tri-U, and to Steph Plante, David Smith, and Dana Weiner for their work as moderators/introducers/chairs.

A little over a month after the conference, Eric Story added to his laurels as the winner of the 2022 Laurier Student Teaching Award of Excellence in the doctoral candidate category. What a run! Eric's success is a reminder of the superb work of our graduate student TAs again this year and of how much our excellent undergraduate program depends on them.

Interest in the program continues to be high. As of writing, we're anticipating eighteen new MA students and one PhD, our own Emily Oakes, for September. Their proposed research spans the globe and offers a terrific mix of social, political, cultural, and military histories. And again this year it's a very strong cohort, with six in the group winning external funding from either the Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS) or the federal Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). Congratulations to all and here's to a great year ahead!

*Adam Crerar, Acting Graduate Officer*

## Current Full-Time Faculty

*In 2021-22, the History Department at Laurier's Waterloo campus had 20 tenured professors, including two who are cross-appointed to other departments or programs:*

**Dr. Gavin Brockett**, Associate Professor & Acting Dean of Arts (cross-appointed: 25% History, 25% Global Studies, 50% Religion & Culture): Middle East & Islamic History, Modern Turkey

**Dr. Blaine Chiasson**, Associate Professor and Graduate Advisor: Modern China, Sino-Russian relations

**Dr. Cynthia Comacchio**, Professor: Canadian History; Gender, Family & Class; Health Care. (Retiring, July 2022)

**Dr. Adam Crerar**, Associate Professor: 20th-Century Canada, Rural Ontario

**Dr. Darryl Dee**, Associate Professor: Early Modern France, Early Modern Europe

**Dr. Judith Fletcher**, Professor: Ancient Greece & Rome; Gender, Law & Culture; representations of the Ancient World in modern culture

**Dr. Leonard Friesen**, Professor: Russia & the Soviet Union, Global Ethics

**Dr. Karljürgen Feuerherm**, Associate Professor: Ancient Near East, Digital Humanities

**Dr. Jeff Grischow**, Associate Professor: Africa (especially Ghana), World History, Comparative Development

**Dr. Mark Humphries**, Professor: Canadian Military History, Epidemics

**Dr. SofieLachapelle**, Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Arts

**Dr. Amy Milne-Smith**, Associate Professor and History Undergraduate Advisor: 19th-century British Social History, Crime in Victorian England

**Dr. David Monod**, Professor, Modern American Cultural & Social History

**Dr. Darren Mulloy**, Professor: Post-1945 U.S. history, Political Extremism

**Dr. Susan Neylan**, Associate Professor: Canadian Indigenous Peoples, Cultural History



The Tri-University Graduate Program in History combines the faculty and resources of three of Canada's premier universities: Laurier, the University of Guelph, and the University of Waterloo.

Since 1994 our program has been educating students in innovative ways while providing them with a solid grounding in traditional historical methods.

The Tri-University program integrates the scholarship and experience of over seventy graduate faculty, making it one of the biggest graduate history programs in the country. Some 130 History graduate students are currently enrolled in the program and each year we accept up to 20 new Doctoral students and 60 new Master's students.

Because of its impressive size and scope and because of student mobility among the three campuses, we are able to provide courses and supervise research in the widest possible range of areas.

For more information, please visit our website: <http://www.triuhistory.ca>

**Dr. Chris L. Nighman**, Professor & Co-ordinator of Medieval & Medievalism Studies: Medieval & Renaissance Europe, Digital Humanities

**Dr. Eva Plach**, Associate Professor: Modern Europe, Poland, Women's History

**Dr. David Smith**, Associate Professor & Chair of History: Early Modern Britain, Law & Society, Commerce in Europe & the New World

**Dr. Kevin Spooner**, Associate Professor (cross-appointed to Political Science & North American Studies): 20th-century Canadian Foreign Policy

**Dr. Barrington Walker**, Associate Vice-President, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion & Professor, Department of History: Black Canadian History and the Histories of Race, Colonization Immigration and Law.

**Dr. Dana Weiner**, Associate Professor and Undergraduate Advisor: Pre-1877 US; Women's, Gender & African-American History

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