

THE COURANT

Brought to you by History Student Council

“That men do not learn very much from the lessons of history is the most important of all the lessons of history.” -Aldous Huxley

Grubb Walk: A Hike Through Time

By Zakari Jaworski, Editor

It is a rainy umbrella morning filled with cups of coffee and a penchant for learning. The History Student Council (HSC) gathered together on this special morning to embark on their annual Grubb Walk.



Dr. Grubb takes the HSC on a tour of Ellicott City Photo by: John Parker

This walk took place in Ellicott City's historic district under the guidance and wisdom of Professor Grubb.

As we followed Dr. Grubb around the district, he revealed the city's humble founding, ambitious prospects, and current standing. The city sprang up in 1772 and saw its first church built in 1840. The geographical location of Ellicott City made it the way to the west until railroads made life easier on settlers. The initial economy centered around agriculture before the emigration westward, and was later replaced with an economy centered on industrial mills. The fertile lands of the west called the need for heavy cloth, canvas, and sails. The railroad that still runs through the city center became lined with mills, ready to unload products that would

reach the rest of the country. We saw many landmarks and important historical sites including the Patapsco Female Institute on Church road, where thespians come to perform Shakespeare to this day.

Oddly enough, as this city developed, it was modeled after Rome as it incorporated its very own seven hills, Tiber River, and Tarpeian rock. According to inhabitants at the time, this was to be the Rome on the Patapsco but this dream never fully reached its lofty goals.

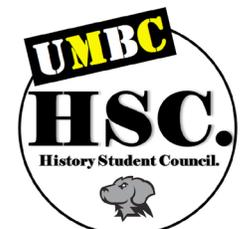
We hiked right through the heart of the city, up into the hills, and back down to the Howard County Court House that was built in 1840.

As we all headed toward lunch with Professor and Mrs. Grubb, we were regaled with ghost stories that told of friendly apparitions in kitchens and thumps of a forlorn trunk that is apparently still causing trouble in an attic.

The journey through Ellicott City was capped off with the hospitality of the Grubbs as we shared a wonderful lunch with them. At the end of it all was a goodbye to a city we had become intimate with as we learned of its secrets, troubles, and accomplishments.

Inside the issue:

- **Page 1:** A Hike Through Time
- **Page 2:** What is HSC?
- **Page 3:** Past Events
- **Pages 4-5:** Arts & Entertainment
- **Pages 7-9:** HSC Student Spotlight
- **Page 10-11:** Autumn-Themed History
- **Back Cover:** Future HSC Events



HISTORY STUDENT COUNCIL

So what is HSC exactly?

By Daniel Theisen, Managing Editor

When I began my History degree in the fall of 2012, I was 21 years old, a former Bio major who had failed just about every Bio class I took and an outsider in a new major with classes full of people I didn't know. I'll admit, it was scary and confusing. Then one day Ryan O'Connor, then President of the History Student Council (HSC), came into our History class and introduced HSC to us. In my time with HSC, I have met many individuals from many different majors. I have participated in events from movie nights to trips to the UMBC Relay for Life. I have been Chair of the Newsletter Committee as well as participated in other committees. But we do more than just have committee meetings and plan events. Our mission statement expresses that we are here to represent the body of history majors and provide ways for them to explore and experience history. It's important to remember though, we are



HSC Students at Dr. Grubb's house

Photo by: John Parker

more than just history majors. Some of our most dedicated members have been Biology, English, and Political Science majors. HSC has been for many people like myself a place to make friends, to be social, and

sometimes even to network professionally. The group really helped me by making history fun and giving me people to experience it with. This isn't just my experience, others have attested to this as well. I have heard club members talk about how HSC gave their degree a purpose,

while others say it made the study of history a fun and social experience. So what is HSC? It is more than a club. It is more than a student council. It is more than events, movies, and committees. For many, HSC is a place to make friends. For others, HSC is what made a History degree worth all the hard work. Though it may sound corny, for some HSC and that small conference room on the 7th floor of Admin, is home.

HSC President's Address:

By Brittney Falter, HSC President

History Student Council is important because it allows students with similar interests to come together. Even though this club is small, it is more efficient because students are able to get to know each other and create meaningful friendships. Many students at this school are commuters or work and do not have a lot of time to make connections with other students, especially students with similar academic interests. This is why we try to have events, like movie nights with professors, so that history students can experience that sense of belonging that they might not have if this club did not exist. Some other things we do as a group is take trips to museums and places of

historical importance. This school year, we are trying to visit the White House, which would be really great because that is not something HSC has done before, and I know a lot of our members have never been there either. My role as president is to protect these interests of our members and to act on these interests. I want for our members to feel like they are getting something substantial out of being an HSC member. One thing I really want to work on this year is trying to get other students involved in our events. In the past, we have done some really fun things and have formed close relationships with other members. However, I think this year we need to take it a step further and try to show other students why history is important and how they can relate history to their own pursuits.

PAST EVENTS

BMore Historic 2014 Recap

By Jen Wachtel, Secretary

Every year, the History Student Council sends student volunteers to the Bmore Historic unconference – a day long participant-led, informal gathering of scholars, students, professionals, and volunteers who care about Baltimore’s public history.

On October 10th, Hannah Jones and I joined Lacey Wilson '12, former HSC Secretary and this year’s Bmore Historic Volunteer Coordinator. Lacey describes Bmore Historic as an inclusive event where conversations lead to concrete networking opportunities for professionals and emerging public historians.

As Lacey loves to remind us, Bmore Historic is a wonderful opportunity for undergrads to meet people, network, and of course volunteer. So how does Bmore Historic actually work? It all starts online at bmorehistoric.org where participants propose sessions and post comments.

On the day of the event, participants gather in the Maryland Historical Society and decide which sessions they would like to attend. Hannah and I joined in for the second round of afternoon sessions in the Social Responsibility of Museums panel.

Afterwards, we were delighted to run into graduate students from UMBC and other history programs.

We assisted in the clean-up process after the main event, when the organizers expressed sincere appreciation for the efforts of student volunteers facilitating the unconference.

According to Dr. Meringolo, the UMBC Department of History has been a co-sponsor and co-organizer of the Bmore Historic Un-Conference since it first began.

“The 2014 event was our best organized and most successful yet,” said Dr. Meringolo. “This year, we organized four skill-building workshops, so participants could gather some practical ideas about the value of genealogy, oral history, preservation training, and digital collections for building new audiences and expanding their home organizations connections to various communities.” Professor Meringolo also wants to encourage more UMBC students to participate in BMore Historic as UMBC students have truly become pivotal to the success of the Bmore Historic Un-Conference as both volunteers and participants.

“We welcome any ideas about how to attract more students and improve your experience,” Professor Meringolo added.

For more information, contact Dr. Denise Meringolo (Director of the Public History Track) or Dr. Nicole King (American Studies Department), who both recruit volunteers from UMBC and are leaders of the unconference. Look out for the fifth annual unconference next fall!



Photo courtesy of Jen Wachtel

Three generations of HSC secretaries on the History Walk with Dr. Grubb in 2013. (Left to right - Jen Wachtel, Raquel Grinage, and Lacey Wilson).

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Significance of *The Patriot*

By Matthew Davis, Editor

On Wednesday, October eighth, a group of HSC members gathered in Physics 101 to watch the movie *The Patriot* with UMBC professor Terry Bouton. The purpose of this night was to watch *The Patriot* and discuss the movie from a historical standpoint and to reflect on some of the modern attitudes that are displayed in Hollywood today. The infamous American film stars Mel Gibson in the leading role and the later Heath Ledger as his ambitious son.

It is 1776 in colonial South Carolina. Benjamin Martin, a French and Indian war hero who is haunted by his past, now wants nothing more than to live peacefully on his small plantation and wants no part of a war with the most powerful nation in the world: Great Britain. Meanwhile, his two eldest sons, Gabriel and Thomas, can't wait to enlist in the newly-formed Continental Army. When South Carolina decides to join the rebellion against England, Gabriel immediately signs up to fight without his father's permission. When Colonel William Tavington, British dragoon, infamous for his brutal tactics, comes and burns the Martin plantation to the ground, tragedy strikes. Benjamin quickly finds himself torn between protecting his family and seeking revenge along with being a part of the birth of a new, young, and ambitious nation.

Before and after the film, Dr. Bouton made sure to point out the many historical inaccuracies within the film's narrative and its overall message to audiences. These inaccuracies range from slaves calling themselves "free people who are working the land"

when Benjamin Martin's (played by Mel Gibson) plantation becomes the central scene after a battle to completely made up scenes and characters. Mel Gibson's character itself is at best a combination of minor historical figures to at worst, completely made up. Also, the infamous church-burning scene displays brutality that was never actually present during the war. While war tactics definitely changed from the "gentlemen's" warfare that most British and American soldiers still had in mind, this level of brutality portrayed in the film was never actually seen. It was just another Hollywood gimmick to entertain audiences.



Source: IMDB.com, © 2000 - Columbia Pictures, Inc.

Dr. Bouton himself also brought up another very interesting point. He mentioned how history is taught very differently to kids all the way through high school and that some history can "come as a shock" to many college students. Hollywood today can spend millions of dollars on costumes and scenery, but will often put a twist on the historical accuracy of the story because it may not be pleasant or it conflicts with what we want to hear. For instance, in *The Patriot*, the scene where the slaves call themselves "free people who are working the land" is very much because we don't want to see Mel Gibson, who is the hero in the story, being portrayed as someone who was part of the slave kingdom.

Despite the inaccuracies of the movie, the event was very educational and fun-filled for all who attended. This movie was one of many events run through the HSC, which tries to coordinate fun history-filled experiences for everyone who is interested in history. This includes both history majors and anybody else that wants to learn about the past.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Spooky Art History: Romanticism

By Valerie Nakshun, Editor-in-Chief

To keep up with Halloween season's dark and spooky themes, let's talk about Romanticism in art history. Romanticism was an art movement that started at the end of the eighteenth century and lasted for about half a century, ending somewhere in the mid-1850s. As with most periods in art history, it served as a reaction against the Age of Enlightenment and the rationalization of the environment and human thought. With the world becoming more invested in the sciences, artists, authors, and intellectuals decided to focus on ideas that humans cannot mathematize such as emotion and other subjective experiences.

According to Webster's, "romantic" can be defined as "having no basis in fact: imaginary" or "marked by imaginative or emotional appeal or what is heroic, adventurous, remote, mysterious, or idealized." Common themes and motifs of romantic art are as follows: being against Neoclassicism, supernatural elements, dealing with death, our inability to deal with the natural world, the limitations of science, romantic love/social relationships, and religion. A good example of romantic fiction is Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, a work that mirrors the scientific thought of the Age of Enlightenment while also focusing deeply on subjective experi-

ences such as fear, terror, and supernatural elements.

Perhaps the most famous of all Romantic artists, Frenchman Eugene Delacroix is best known for his patriotic work *Liberty Leading the People*, painted in 1830. While not initially spooky, it is painted with very dark tones, tertiary colors, and bursts of bright colors such as reds and blues. Liberty is depicted as a goddess, her complete hierarchy the Revolution. She wears a Phrygian cap to symbolize her battle for freedom.



Source: Wikipaintings.org

To end on a spooky note, another infamous painting of the Romantic period is Henri Fuseli's *The Nightmare*. A painting both beautiful and creepy, it features a sleeping woman in a white dress lying on a bed, with a winged incubus sitting on her chest, stealing her breath. The scene is dark and atmospheric, with a horse in the background.



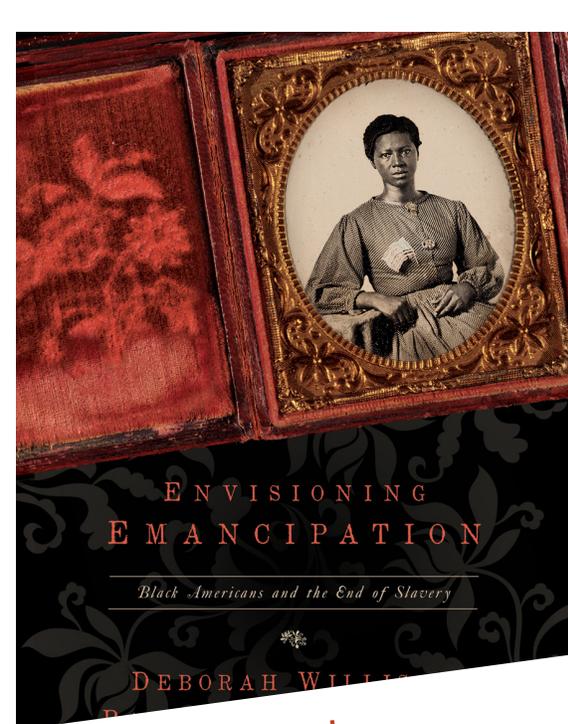
Source: Wikipaintings.org

"mare," get it? Another notable mention is the vile on the desk, a sedative that women used at the time to deal with hysteria (clearly prescribed by male physicians). It is said to have been a hallucinogen as well. For a self-trained artist, Fuseli was known for his mastery of chiaroscuro, the contrast of light and shadow. Overall, if you're looking to be both creeped out and enlightened this Halloween season, Fuseli is the way to go.

THE COURANT: Autumn 2014

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Editor:	Zakari Jaworski
Editor:	Francesca Tate
Secretary:	Jen Wachtel
Event Planner:	John Parker

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**NAACP Image Award
Outstanding Literary Work
Non-fiction 2014**

Envisioning Emancipation

Black Americans and the End of Slavery
with Dr. Deborah Willis
Saturday, November 1, 1pm

In honor of the 150th anniversary of Maryland Emancipation Day, Dr. Deborah Willis offers a new look at the periods from Emancipation to the New Deal using historic photographs from her landmark book of photographs, *Envisioning Emancipation: Black Americans and the End of Slavery*. The images – some rarely before seen - illuminate the daily lives of African Americans and offer a deeper understanding of the impact on African Americans before, during, and after emancipation. Co-written with Dr. Barbara Krauthamer and winner Outstanding Literary Work, Non-fiction 2014, NAACP Image Award. Book signing to follow.
\$10 program admission includes museum admission.

To register call 443-263-1816 or
visit www.RFLewisMuseum.org/emancipation



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HSC STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

British exchange student on history education

By Francesca Tate, Editor

History is a subject based very much on interpretations of sources in order to make sense of the past and come to conclusion about events which took place. Although historians attempt to ensure their interpretations of the past are as unbiased as possible, the retelling of some events is often subjected to cultural influences which change the way the historical event is taught.



Photo courtesy of Francesca Tate

Francesca standing next to an iconic American landmark - Walmart.

As a British history student myself, who is currently taking a year to study abroad in America at UMBC, I have found that certain events are portrayed very differently through the two different cultures. I've chosen two historical events which I have found personally to be interpreted and remembered different by Americans and Britons: the American Revolution and Independent perspectives of World War II.

1) The American Revolution broke out in 1775 when the British colonies decided they didn't wish to be ruled by the British King, George III. After years of fighting, the colonies eventually broke away in 1776 and declared their independence from England and the monarchy to become their own rulers.

British opinions: From what I've been taught, the emphasis has been on the colonies not actually being in a legitimate position to rebel against the crown. For example, one main reason for rebellion was the considered high taxes being paid to Britain, however, in reality the colonies were paying 40% less tax than people in England. Along with this 40% less, they were also earning more and had better living standards than most of England.

American opinions: Although taxes were a key player in the decision to rebel, the idea of freedom and the right to rule themselves without being placed under, what they perceived to be, the tyrannical rule of George III was considered the biggest factor for Americans in their revolution against the British.

2) World War II broke out in 1939 when Britain and France declared war on Germany after they had invaded Poland. However, it wasn't until 1941 that America joined the war effort to help the allies into ensuring a victory for the free world over the fascist regime of Hitler's Germany.

British opinions: WWII was a very frustrating time for the British as there was a strong feeling that America should have entered the war much earlier than they did. They believed that America was part of the free world and should have entered immediately with them and the other allies in order to restore world peace as quickly as possible.

American opinions: Americans felt they didn't need to enter the war from the beginning as there was no direct threat against them, but when they did they saw it as a turning point in the war. Americans argue that they strategically planned their entry in order to split Germany into fighting on two fronts rather than one, weakening them and creating an advantage for the allies and therefore being more effective than they would have been had they entered when the allies wanted them to.

HSC STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Senior researches Jewish refugees in Shanghai

By Valerie Nakshun, Editor-in-Chief

History major Jen Wachtel ('14), proud secretary of the History Student Council, is currently conducting research on a topic that is often left unheard in Holocaust education: the experience of Jews in Shanghai, China during the Holocaust. With the help of UMBC professor Dr. Meredith Oyen, who specializes in East Asian foreign policy, Jen saw overlap in Dr. Oyen's research and her own interest in Holocaust history.

Specifically, Jen is focusing her studies on the one square mile Honkou district in Shanghai, which was also known as the area for stateless refugees where approximately twenty-thousand Jewish Holocaust refugees lived between 1933 and 1941. While Jewish people have had a long history in East Asia, the Jews that Jen is studying were immigrants who left Germany, Austria, and Eastern Europe in order to get away from the antisemitism that they faced back in their home towns.

According to Jen, there were a variety of different ways that the Jews emigrated. The first wave happened after 1933 following the Nuremberg laws. German and Austrian Jews saw the direction in which these laws were going and decided to flee. The next wave was after Anschluss in 1938, which was complicated diplomatically since Austria was part of Germany now. Kristallnacht was another major event that encouraged a huge wave of Jewish immigration to Shanghai.

"None of the people who went to Shanghai intended to live their lives there forever. They really only wanted to stay until the Nazis went out of power," Jen said.

When studying this part of history, Jen came across many complicated issues at the time. Shanghai was controlled by Japan, and therefore Japan controlled the district for stateless refugees. Through a very long-

winded bureaucratic process, Japan started allowing Jews to enter into Shanghai. The question that Jen came across early in her research was why. Why did the Japanese let Jews enter and settle in Shanghai?

"It turns out that the reason is antisemitism," Jen said. "The Japanese thought that Jews were rich, that Jews controlled FDR and the American government. Before 1941, the Japanese were really looking to appease the United States and by helping out European Jews, they thought the Jews of America would use their influence and look at Japan in a favorable light."

In her research, Jen came across a lot of help and was lucky enough to interview Dr. Peter Engler, a man who was among the Jews living in Shanghai at the time. She came across his speech while interning at the Jewish Historical Society of New Jersey during the summer. Luckily for Jen, Dr. Engler ended up giving her scans of numerous primary sources.

"I found him by a happy accident," Jen exclaimed. "I would love to have more leads but currently don't. I know there are many oral histories on the subject."

To fund all of her hard work, Jen has an Undergraduate Research Award and is going to present her findings at the Undergraduate Research and Creative Achievement Day. Jen plans to use this funding to access primary sources and find books that she doesn't have access to. Right now, the bulk of her research is conducted via the UMBC library.

"The URA program is great institutional support and recognition. Just knowing that I'm part of the community and that UMBC encourages the work that I'm doing is a huge vote of confidence for me," said Jen.

Overall, Jen hopes to shed light on this topic, produce primary sources and make them accessible to other researchers, and to help educate people further on Holocaust history.



Photo courtesy of Jen Wachtel

HSC STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Council President's Ireland Adventures

By Matthew Davis, Editor

I recently had the pleasure of interviewing our president of History Student Council, Brittney Falter, about her experience studying abroad last semester. She travelled to Ireland, where she has some family roots, to take classes for this past spring semester. She mostly took medieval classes that would fulfill her minor at UMBC.

According to Brittney, the greatest part about here trip was "being able to fly and travel outside of the U.S. and to meet people and make some new friends."

While she was obviously not familiar with much of anything while



Photo courtesy of Brittney Falter

she was there, she did get to travel to England and Scotland and have some interesting adventures. One thing she did mention that I thought was interesting was their concept of a class grade. Versus having tests and papers throughout the semester, her grade was based on a final paper at the end of the semester.

Brittney also mentioned that while the weather was not very pleasant in comparison, she had always wanted to go to England and would gladly and eagerly go again in the future.

Brittney is pictured here in the Irish "Cliffs of Moher" with beautiful scenery all around.

HSC students attend UMBC soccer game

By Valerie Nakshun, Editor-in-Chief

After spending time studying together on Thursday, October 16, HSC members gathered together to cheer on their fellow Retrievers at the UMBC women's soccer game against University of Massachusetts Lowell.

During the Mardi Gras-themed game, HSC mem-

bers Matthew Davis and Zakari Jaworski were randomly selected to compete against each other on the field and perform a series of fitness challenges such as dribbling the soccer ball and doing jumping jacks. Of the two "athletes," Matt was declared the winner. After accepting his winning pizza, Matt shared his prize with his fellow HSC members.

Better luck next time, Zak!



Photo by: Brittney Falter



Photo by: Brittney Falter

FALL-THEMED HISTORY

Thanksgiving customs and traditions

By Francesca Tate, Editor

It is common place in America for every family to celebrate Thanksgiving, even if just to appreciate the extra two days of holiday it gives you. It is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November every year and the day generally consists of gathering together with family members and eating as much food as possible.

However, there is a deeper history to Thanksgiving.

The concept of Thanksgiving was derived from the celebration of a harvest, which was celebrated by the colonies of America during the 17th Century. The first officially documented record of the first Thanksgiving is from 1621 when the Plymouth Colony, modern day Massachusetts, held a big fest to give thanks for a good harvest.

However, the Thanksgiving held in 1623 by Pilgrims and attended also by Native Americans is seen as the first Thanksgiving of which the current one today derives from, where a good harvest was celebrated after having had an almost catastrophic drought that year.

Although seen originally as a religious ceremony of thanks for the harvest collected, it was also

endorsed by the state and civil authorities, with George Washington stating on 26th November 1789 that the celebration of America's first national Thanksgiving was a secular and not religious event.

In 1863, President Lincoln proclaimed that

the last Thursday of November would hold the official Thanksgiving celebration. However in 1941, President Roosevelt changed this through Congress to

make it the fourth Thursday of November in order to help boost the American economy.

A tradition that lies with Thanksgiving is the President pardoning a Turkey which is given to him by the National Turkey Federation and then spared their life to live on a farm or in a petting zoo. This tradition originally dates back to Lincoln in 1863 who supposedly saved a Turkey's life after his son named it Jack and refused to part with it.

The first president who actually used the word pardon in connection with a turkey was Ronald Reagan in 1987, but the actual tradition started with George Bush in 1989, who pardoned one during every year of his presidency, therefore establishing a tradition which has been maintained to this day.



The First Thanksgiving 1621, oil on canvas by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris (1899), courtesy of history.com

FALL-THEMED HISTORY

Historical Celtic origins of Halloween



Cartoon by Mariama Barr-Dallas

By Mariama Barr-Dallas, Editor

Candy stores and dentists make profits from a spooky tradition characterized by sweets, gore, witches, zombies, and pumpkins. Halloween involves a culmination of several different traditions, most famously, the Celtic New Year known as Samhain.

On this fun and spooky day, it was customary to have feasts, consult the dead about the future, and to eradicate ones fears. Most interesting of all, however, is how this tradition of Samhain was uncovered. Very few people know the story behind

the discovery of Samhain, and that its uncovering rests on the unearthing of what has come to be known as "the Tablet of Coligny". It was 1897 when small copper fragments were found scattered in the forests of Bourg-en-Bresse in France.

When they were rearranged, it was discovered that the resulting tablet was in fact a Celtic calendar containing the various markings of months observed by the Celtic people. Most importantly, the first month is labeled "Samonios," the start of the Celtic New Year. Samonios is the month that Samhain lies in, and what we would mark on our western Gregorian calendar as the month of October: our very own Halloween.

FUTURE HSC EVENTS

November 6th: *The Wipers Times*,
Movie night with Professor Laurents

November 10th: *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, Movie Night with Dr. Tapscott

November 17th: Peace A Pizza
Fundraising Event

November 22nd: Smithsonian Trip
