

# University of South Alabama 1992 History Department Newsletter

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## FROM THE CHAIR

**George H. Daniels**

Two years ago, as the only response we could make to a series of budget cuts, we reluctantly discontinued publication of the annual Departmental newsletter. I hope that the many friends we made through the newsletter are still there and still interested in the fortunes of the Department, and I profoundly hope that we are able to continue from this point on an annual basis. Unfortunately, the resumption of publication does not indicate that good times have been restored and the education budget is sound--it signifies, rather, that improvements in computer software have made it possible for us to do the job so cheaply that we decided to run the risk!

Those who were following the Department's activities through the newsletter will find a great many surprises in this issue. Long-time faculty members Taber Green and Bill Speck have retired and we now have five new faculty members, who are introduced in a separate article inside. The new faculty members were honored at a celebration held at the home of Mayor Mike Dow and his wife Patsy (B.A. 1971). History faculty, graduate students and well over one hundred alums enjoyed the hospitality of the Dows, renewed old acquaintances, and generally agreed that it was a fine way to begin a new school year.

The new appointees represent a net gain in numbers of one faculty member--a welcome, but still inadequate, recognition of the fact that enrollment in history courses has almost doubled during the past ten years. In other articles inside, you will see that Department members continue to be active in both research and public service activities as they struggle with an increasing work load. The fact that Leonard Macaluso, long a mainstay of the Western civilization program, was judged "outstanding professor" for 1991-92 by the alumni association is evidence that the increasing workload has not resulted in diminishing our commitment to quality undergraduate education.

We like to think that our continuing commitment to quality was responsible for the best news of the past year. Late in the Spring, President Whiddon announced that History had been selected for one of the first of the endowed chairs to be established by the University and \$200,000 in "seed money" was transferred to a special account for the purpose. With the help of an alumni group which began meeting during the summer, we hope to add substantially to that account in order to speed its growth to the target of \$400,000, at which point we will be able to use it as the basis for the appointment of the chairholder. By unanimous vote of the Department, the new position has been designated "The Howard F. Mahan Chair" in honor of the outstanding teacher who founded this Department and guided its destiny for the first twenty years. The award came at a peculiarly appropriate time, for Dr. Mahan is retiring from teaching at the end of the current year. The intention will be to select a professor of distinction, taking care that he or she can contribute significantly to the teaching mission of the Department.

Although no appeal for contributions is included in this newsletter, I will say that I hope you will respond positively to the one that you will receive within a month or so. Meanwhile, after an interruption of two years in publication, I think it would be appropriate to close my part of this one with

the paragraph that closed my first one nine years ago.

We hope you like what you read, and that you will share our belief that the History Department is meeting the challenges of the modern world without losing its traditional reason-for-being. Most of all, we hope that you are interested enough in the Department's progress to want to remain in contact with us. We would like to send you a newsletter like this one every year, and we would like to include information on many more of our former students. In order to make this possible, please take the time to send us your current address, if we do not have the correct one, and to tell us anything about yourself that you would like to share with the staff and other alumni of the Department.

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## USA'S NEWEST HISTORY FACULTY

**RICHMOND BROWN** is a specialist in the history of Latin America. He grew up in Mobile, where he graduated from Davidson High School in 1980 and Spring Hill College in 1983. Intrigued and troubled by events in Central America in the 1980s, he pursued graduate study in Latin American history at Tulane University in New Orleans. He received an M.A. in history from Tulane in 1986, and is now a Ph.D candidate there. He is completing his dissertation on Juan Fermín de Aycinena, Central America's wealthiest and most powerful merchant in the late colonial era and the founder of one of Guatemala's most important families in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Rich is beginning his third year of teaching at the University of South Alabama. Prior to coming here, he spent a year teaching Latin American history at the University of Kansas (1989- 1990). Before that he spent nearly a year (1988-1989) in Guatemala on a Shell Foundation International Studies Grant, collecting materials for his dissertation. That was his third extended visit to Guatemala, and his fourth trip to Central America. Rich first encountered Central America in his sophomore year in high school, during a brief trip to Costa Rica. He was entranced by the gentle people and the physical beauty of a region he would have been hard-pressed to locate on a map. In college, he was drawn to the region again by his concern over Central America's brutal experience of civil war and revolution.

Rich is an avid sports fan, an occasional runner, and an enthusiast of racquetball, basketball, and weightlifting (though he has given up on golf!). He also loves the blues and secretly hopes one day to be the next Stevie Ray Vaughan (although, as he readily admits, he doesn't own a guitar and couldn't begin to play one if he did!).

**AARON S. FOGLEMAN** came to the Department in 1991 directly from the last throes of graduate school at the University of Michigan. Before enduring such wintry climes, he studied at the University of Freiburg, Germany, where he received a master's degree. Aaron grew up in North Carolina, Illinois, Montana, and then in Oklahoma, where he graduated from high school and attended Oklahoma State University. He was a double major in history and German, serving as president of the German club; he also accepted an Army ROTC scholarship for his last three years at OSU. After graduation, then, it was Lieutenant Fogleman of the Signal Corps who spent three years on active duty in Germany.

After the service, he studied at Freiburg and then at Michigan, where he received his Ph.D. in 1991. His research deals with German immigration to North America in the colonial period. At South Alabama, he has taught survey courses on American history, as well as more detailed classes on American social history and the colonial and revolutionary periods. He currently serves as the Department's graduate co-ordinator and Phi Alpha Theta advisor.

Aaron runs and was an enthusiastic participant in the Azalea Trail Race last March. He is a hopelessly dedicated Chicago White Sox and Tampa Bay (?) Giants fan and likes the Dallas Cowboys, too (all of which put him at odds with his colleagues). He plays golf at least twice a year.

**HENRY M. McKIVEN, JR.** returned to South Alabama in 1991. He had previously taught here on a temporary basis in the 1989-90 academic year, after which he taught at Livingston University. Mel, like his colleagues Brown and Rogers, is a native of Alabama, growing up in Montgomery. He graduated from Montgomery's Sidney Lanier High School. He received a bachelor's degree at Auburn University at Montgomery, where he double majored in history and English. He received an M.A. in history from Virginia Polytechnic Institute, after which he began his graduate studies at Vanderbilt. He completed his Ph.D. there in 1990.

Mel's research interests center around the U.S. South and working-class history. At South Alabama he has taught the U.S. survey, U.S. Social History, Civil War and Reconstruction, and the Old and New South courses.

Mel and his wife Julie live in the Lake Forest area of Daphne, where Mel can often be seen running before dawn. In fact, he won the intra- departmental competition in the Azalea Trail Run last year, posting a time of 38:33.1 for the 10 kilometer race (he hopes to do even better next year). Also like his fellow native Alabamians in the Department, Mel is a fervent Atlanta Braves fan.

**MICHAEL L. MONHEIT** arrived at South Alabama after teaching for two years at Michigan State University. Accompanying him were his wife, Dr. Diane Garden, and their daughter Hannah, now six. Mike grew up in Queens in New York City and began his undergraduate studies there at the City University of New York. He completed his bachelor's degree at the University of California at Berkeley. He received his master's and doctorate from Princeton University, the latter in 1988. His research has concerned the formative years of John Calvin and will result in a book on that subject. His research on Calvin has also led to a separate project on Renaissance schools of interpretation in Roman law.

Since coming to the University of South Alabama, Mike has taught Western civilization, Reformation Europe, and a seminar on sixteenth-century thought.

Beyond reading books in history, Mike's favorite subject is philosophy. He likes European films and classical music, and once upon a time played the piano regularly. This past summer he became involved in advocating tax reform for the benefit of Mobile County's schools, and now that that campaign has ended, he will have more time for two of his other favorite activities, swimming and sailing. Mike also loves a good political discussion; his staying power is amazing, equalled only by Mel McKiven's.

**DANIEL E. ROGERS** came to South Alabama from a one- year appointment at the University of Maryland. It was as close to a homecoming as it could be, since he grew up only 120 miles away, in Andalusia. After high school there, he went to the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, where plans to use a history major and German minor as stepping stones to law school went awry in the face of a love for history. German history became his special interest after he spent his junior year abroad studying in Germany. He attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he received both his master's and doctorate, the latter in 1990. His research so far has concerned German politics under Allied occupation (1945-1949). He worked in archives in Germany, Britain, France, and Washington, DC.

Dan teaches Western civilization, modern Europe, and modern Germany courses in the Department. When not at work on teaching or research, he likes to read all manner of fiction and non- fiction books

and to practice grooving his golf swing. This past spring he helped coach a baseball team of 9-year-olds. Recently, he and Richmond Brown began a racquetball rivalry that is as friendly as it is intense. Dan can also often be found at the Campus Recreation Center experimenting with all sorts of new ways of aerobic self-torture.

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## FACULTY NEWS

Professor **BETTY BRANDON** was a session commentator at the Southern Conference on Women's History, June 1991, and has faithfully attended the annual meetings of the Southern Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, the American Historical Association, the Alabama Association of Historians, and the Alabama Historical Association. She has just completed a three-year term on the executive council of the Southern Historical Association, and served for one year on the executive committee of the executive council for the SHA.

Professor Brandon authored the entry on "Benjamin Mosby McKelway" in the Dictionary of North Carolina Biography and authored the entries on "Women in Politics" and "J.L.M. Curry" in the Encyclopedia of Southern Culture. She has reviewed books for the *Alabama Review*, *Journal of Mississippi History*, and the *Georgia Historical Quarterly*.

She has also been extremely busy serving the University and the Mobile community. She chairs the University Writing Committee this year, and serves as a member of the Tenure and Promotion Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. Professor Brandon has also participated in the SUPER project, a partnership with high school teachers.

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Professor **APRIL BROOKS** interrupted a busy teaching schedule in the summer of 1991 to accept a Fulbright grant to study the history, culture, and society of the Netherlands. She extended the trip to include travel in France, Spain, and Portugal, where she notes her most memorable experience was being bitten by a feral dog. Nowadays she spends most of her time in the less threatening halls of Spring Hill College, where she teaches on a full-time basis.

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Professor **CHEN-KUAN CHUANG** was invited by the editor of *Chinese Studies in History* to contribute an article in their special issue on the theme "Modern China: Reform, Protest, and Revolution." His article, "Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Chinese Constitutional Movement," is included in the Summer 1992 issue of this quarterly published by M. E. Sharpe.

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Professor **GEORGE DANIELS** continues his service as chairman of the department, a position he has held since 1983. He travelled to Ames, Iowa, in the summer of 1990 as an invited lecturer at the National Endowment for the Humanities Institute. He presented a series of six lectures there on "Technology and Science within American Culture." In April 1992 he presented a paper at the meeting of the Alabama Historical Association on "Building the Big House in the Antebellum South: The Jemison House in Tuscaloosa." He also spoke at the Mobile Public Library in October 1990 on "The Economic Development of Mobile, 1860-1900." He serves as a member of the board of directors of the

Gulf Coast History and Humanities Conference and on the Alabama Press Committee. And he continues as Executive Editor of the *Gulf Coast Historical Review*.

Professor Daniels authored "Joseph R. Anderson, the Tredegar Iron Works, and the Industrialization of the Confederacy" in Lewis N. Wynne and John M. Belchlavik's *Divided We Fall* (1991). He authored articles on seven American inventors for the *World Book Encyclopedia* and edited and introduced the *Gulf City Cook Book*, a work of historical importance first published in Mobile in 1878. He has published book reviews in the *Annals of Iowa*, *Technology and Culture*, *History*, *Business Library Review*, and *Atlanta History*.

The NEH-funded program "The Civil War: Crossroads of Our Being" benefitted from a series of eight lectures Professor Daniels gave throughout southern Alabama. He was interviewed for a PBS documentary on Mobile during the Civil War, and has been interviewed by public radio stations on local historical topics and culinary history.

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Professor **AARON FOGLEMAN** made an only slightly sentimental journey back to Ann Arbor in June 1992 to consult with his collaborator on a project to translate one of the works of Karl von Clausewitz, the military strategist. He also spent a month of the summer of 1992 in Pennsylvania to complete the research for an upcoming book on German immigration and settlement in colonial America.

Professor Fogleman presented a paper on "Naturalization, Land Policy, and the Aristocratic Offensive on the Eve of the American Revolution" at the meeting of the American Historical Association in New York in December 1990. He has just returned from service as a commentator on a panel on Moravian women in colonial America at the German Historical Institute conference on German immigration, community, and culture in the Middle Colonies, held at Pennsylvania State University in October 1992. Additional scholarly duties have included reviewing a book manuscript for Princeton University Press.

He published an article on "Migrations to the Thirteen British North American Colonies, 1700-1775: New Estimates," in the March 1992 edition of the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*. He has reviewed books for the *William and Mary Quarterly* and *Pennsylvania History*.

Professor Fogleman received a National Endowment for the Humanities travel grant in 1992, along with a USA Arts and Sciences Support Award and a Graduate Research Council grant. He introduced himself to the Mobile community by serving as a judge at the Phillips Preparatory School social sciences fair this past year.

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Professor **ROBERT HOUSTON** attended the Missouri Valley History Conference in 1991 as a session commentator, and chaired a panel at the Fourth Annual Conflict Studies Conference at the University of New Brunswick in 1990. He published "For the Honor of the Regiment: The British Army's Regimental System in the Last One Hundred Years" in *A Select Guide to Readings in Military History*, and he published biographical sketches of Harold Alexander, Bernard Law Montgomery, and Lord Louis Mountbatten in the *Research Guide to European Historical Biography*. Professor Houston has reviewed books for the *Journal of Mississippi History* and *History: Reviews of New Books*. He has also served as a manuscript reader for the University of Alabama Press, Prentice-Hall, and D.C. Heath. In the summer of 1992, Professor Houston held a United States Military Academy-ROTC Military History Fellowship at West Point, New York. He served as a military expert during the Gulf War for WKRG-AM and TV, and

has given talks to the Daughters of the American Revolution and other civic groups. Professor Houston shared the 1992 Phi Alpha Theta Teacher of the Year Award with Professor Brandon.

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Professor **MEL MCKIVEN** delivered a paper at the 1989 meeting of the Southern Historical Association on "Birmingham Workers and World War I." He has published book reviews in the North Carolina *Historical Review* and the *Journal of Southern History*. He also spoke on Southern history topics to a Monroe County teachers' institute and to a study group at the First Baptist Church of Mobile.

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Professor **MICHAEL L. MONHEIT** has been active in presenting the conclusions of his research to professional audiences. In the past year alone, he has read papers on Calvin, Roman law, and humanism at the Central Renaissance Conference, the International Congress of Medieval Studies, and the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference. He has just returned from a third appearance at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference in Atlanta, where he read a paper on "Interpretation in Roman Law: The Case of Andrea Alciato vs. Pierre de l'Estoile."

Professor Monheit published an article this past year on "'The Ambition for an Illustrious Name': Humanism, Patronage, and Calvin's Doctrine of the Calling" in the *Sixteenth Century Journal*. He has also reviewed books for the *Sixteenth Century Journal*.

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In June 1992 Professor **DAN ROGERS** travelled to Hamburg and Berlin to conduct research. He gained admittance to the archives of the former ruling communist party of East Germany, and he will use his findings in a forthcoming book on the re-establishment of party politics in Germany after 1945. He presented preliminary findings from other research on this topic at the Southern Historical Association meeting in 1991 with his paper on "America, Britain, France, and the German Communist Parties: An Allied Approach?", and to the Society for Military History in 1992 with a paper on "Occupation Generals and Occupation Politics." He has attended the American Historical Association annual meeting and has just returned from a conference on "Teaching the Holocaust" at Northwestern University.

Professor Rogers published two newspaper articles in the Mobile Press-Register reflecting on what he saw in the new Germany, and he has reviewed books in the *German Studies Review*. A strong side interest in the circumstances surrounding the assassination of John Kennedy led him to make three presentations on the subject in the wake of Oliver Stone's film: to the University of Alabama History Club in Tuscaloosa, to American history students at Mobile's Murphy High School, and to our own Phi Alpha Theta. He has also taken on the deceptively large task of editing this very newsletter.

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In addition to his service as editor of the *Gulf Coast Historical Review* and director of the University Archives, Professor **MICHAEL THOMASON** has been on the move throughout the region. He has travelled often to Calera, Alabama, to develop the Heart of Dixie Railroad Museum, and he made frequent trips to Florida to prepare an exhibit entitled "Palmetto Country," based on the books by Stetson Kennedy. Talledega also saw a lot of Professor Thomason when he travelled there to develop an exhibit on "The Religious Legacy" for Heritage Hall, the local history center there. He has wandered far and wide in Alabama presenting his exhibit funded by the Alabama Humanities Foundation on "The Image of Our Times: Alabama in Photographs since 1945." He serves on the board of the Museum of

the City of Mobile and often presents lectures to local and regional groups on local history topics.

Professor Thomason has attended conferences of the Southern Historical Association, the Society of Alabama Archivists, the Alabama Historical Association, and the Alabama Association of Historians. He also attended the Gulf Coast History and Humanities Conference in Pensacola in 1991. Professor Thomason serves on the editorial board of Alabama Heritage and the executive board of the Alabama Historical Association. He received the Virginia Hamilton award from the Alabama Historical Association in 1990, and serves on this year's Alabama Humanities Foundation Speakers' Bureau by giving lectures on post-1945 Alabama.

The near future appears to hold promise of continued activity. Professor Thomason is program coordinator for next year's Gulf Coast History and Humanities Conference in Mobile, whose topic will be "The Gilded Age along the Gulf Coast." Professor Thomason also reports that several more photographic exhibits on historical themes are in progress or on the drawing boards.

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## **PHI ALPHA THETA NEWS**

**by Thekla Wilkinson,  
1992-1993 President**

The 1991-1992 academic year was quite successful for Phi Alpha Theta. Under the leadership of President Julie Albrecht and Vice-President John Hays, the honorary experienced tremendous growth. Thirty new members were initiated during the Winter and Spring quarters of 1992. Dr. Aaron Fogleman took over advisory responsibilities during Dr. Mahan's absence and was later named full-time advisor.

Several members of our Rho Theta Chapter attended the regional meeting of Phi Alpha Theta at the University of Alabama last April. Sylvia Ash, a graduate student and member, presented a paper entitled "Erasmus as Subject." Her paper won first prize. Congratulations, Sylvia!

Phi Alpha Theta hosted guest speakers and receptions frequently this year. Dr. Dilsaver, associate professor of geography at USA, gave a slide presentation on America's national parks during the Fall quarter ('91). For spring initiation, Dr. Dan Rogers of the History Department presented a fascinating and controversial look at the JFK assassination.

A reception was given to honor Dr. Neil McMillen after his Forum lecture in April. Dr. Wayne Flynt was Phi Alpha Theta guest for the month of May. Dr. Flynt, a professor from Auburn, engaged in an informal discussion with our members. He discussed Alabama's educational problems and opened the floor for debate. Later that night, Dr. Flint spoke for USA's Forum series.

Phi Alpha Theta held its annual book sale during the winter quarter in the Humanities courtyard. It was a huge success and well received by students. Thanks go out to Anthony Donaldson for his tremendous help in planning and preparing the books for sale.

In the spring, Phi Alpha Theta reactivated its Teacher-of-the-Year Award. Members of the honor society voted by secret ballot for their favorite professor. This year's award ended in a tie. Plaques were presented at the spring history picnic to Dr. Brandon and Dr. Houston for this outstanding achievement.

Phi Alpha Theta members not only engage in historical studies at school, but also socialize together off

campus. Numerous parties, movies, and get togethers were sponsored during the year by individual members.

Any student interested in joining Phi Alpha Theta can contact the officers or Dr. Fogleman through the History Department. The requirements for membership are a 3.0 in 2/3 of non-history courses, with at least a 3.1 in history courses. A minimum of 18 hours in history is also required.

Phi Alpha Theta officers for the 1992-93 year are: Thekla Wilkinson, president; Angie Powell, vice-president; Sheila Wright, secretary; Diane Bailey, treasurer; Jennifer Powell, historian; and Donna Lewis, social coordinator.

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## **HISTORY/SOCIAL SCIENCES COLLOQUIUM BEGINS**

**by Professor Aaron Fogleman**

In November 1991 the History Colloquium was conceived as an informal forum for faculty members to present the results of their research in a friendly and supportive environment. It was also intended to serve as a vehicle allowing faculty and students to get together and have a roundtable discussion on various historical issues of importance.

In its first year the Colloquium did very well, becoming a monthly event during the academic year, and expanding to include many other disciplines. We are especially pleased that members of other departments have participated. Members from Sociology/Anthropology, Foreign Languages and Literatures, Philosophy, and others have attended and made presentations. In fact, their interest has been so important that we have expanded our name to History/Social Sciences Colloquium, and should probably now consider another name: Humanities/Social Sciences Colloquium.

Dan Rogers made the first presentation on the role of the Western Allies in attaining political stability in post-war Germany. Mel McKiven followed with a discussion of racial division in the Birmingham, Alabama iron industry in the late 19th century. Next up was John Wills, who discussed material culture in America during the early republic years, especially changing patterns of household display and comfort. In April, David Gartman of Sociology/Anthropology spoke about the birth of automobile styling in the United States during the 1920s. Mark Moberg then discussed ethnicity and class segmentation in the Central American banana industry. On Columbus Day 1992, in recognition of the 500th anniversary of the Columbian encounter, we had by far the largest turnout ever, as three faculty members presented material on the subject. Joe Nigota discussed the tradition of exploration in the merchant community of Genoa, followed by Pam Long (Foreign Languages and Literatures), who presented a literary view of the diary and letters of Columbus, and Marvin Smith (Sociology/Anthropology), spoke about the effects of the Spanish encounter on the Coosa Indian population in North America.

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## **1992 DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY STUDENT AWARDS**

**E. Lewis B. Curtis Certificate for Outstanding Scholarship:**

Julie Albrecht, Sylvia Ash, George Ewert, Martha Mercer, Louise Renard

**Howard F. Mahan Award for Outstanding History Major:**

Louise Renard

**Robert L. Brunhouse Award for Outstanding Graduate Student:**

Sylvia Ash

**Department of History Service Award:**

Julie Albrecht

**Scholarship Award for Outstanding Junior History Major:**

Duane Strelow

**Stephanie Hardin Award for Outstanding Research Paper:**

Jim Beam

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**MASTER OF ARTS DEGREES IN HISTORY, 1990-1992**

Ginny Christensen (1990)

Dolores Creel (1992)

Philip Theodore (1992)

**BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREES IN HISTORY, 1990-1992**

**Spring 1990**

Sylvia Carole Ash

Christine Parker Bodin

Logan Reed Collins

Richard Michael Deihl

James Curtis Gill

William Keith Hutton

Bruce Grant Johnston

George Raymond Kolb

David Siegmund Kramer

Leslie Maury Radcliff

John Terryl Reeves

**Summer 1990**

Kristi Michele Carroll

Calvin Chatfield Nettles

Alice Gayle Shackelford  
Bryan Eugene Townsend

**Fall 1990**

Charles Peter Calagaz, Jr.  
Chritina Michelle Coxe  
Janice Laverne Gamble  
Patricia R. Meaher

**Winter 1991**

Andrew James Damico

**Spring 1991**

Thomas Edgar Dasinger  
William Daniel Dill  
Kristen Leigh Maas  
Stephen L. Martin  
Robert Joseph Parker  
Charles William Parmenter  
Monica R. Seltzer

**Summer 1991**

Elizabeth Ann Beck  
George H. Ewert, Jr.  
John Foster Hays, Jr.

**Fall 1991**

Margaret Babin Platt  
Louise Helene Renard  
Thomas Edward Russell, Jr.  
Joel Hollis Watkins

**Winter 1992**

Robert Thomasson Clark, Jr.  
Linda S. Hurt  
Charles Edward Lowery, Jr.  
Patrick Lester Stewart

**Spring 1992**

Tod Howard Childs  
Lawrence Eric Ducote, Jr.  
Margaret E. Lambert  
Avery Lee McCormick  
Raymond Kenneth Neff  
Steven Anthony Normand  
Margaret Anne O'Connor  
Jennifer Diane Powell  
William Wesley Shirah  
Michelle Dione Stanley

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went in a science major, interested in physics and engineering, and I came out very much concerned about questions in the humanities and social sciences. I tried a few subjects out and became a history major. A central concern of mine was why people have wars; could we learn how to prevent war? A little naive, perhaps, but that's what interested me.

**R:** You say it's naive; I take it you never discovered the answer.

**M:** I've been working all my life on the process by which the United States goes to war, but I don't have any magic answers.

**R:** Did the war affect you in any way other than your specific area of study? Did it make you in general a more inquisitive person? Did it make you more cynical about human nature?

**M:** The quality of my academic work after the war changed vastly, qualitatively and quantitatively, but especially qualitatively. I formed the opinion that the average college student loses a lot in education by not having work or service experiences. I thought that I had matured greatly by spending three years out of college, not necessarily in the military, but the military was part of it. I formed the opinion that college students could not learn much, qualitatively. The result was that I didn't want to teach at the college level.

**R:** Why not?

**M:** Because I felt the students were too immature and couldn't benefit sufficiently. I thought that education tended to be wasted on the typical college student.

**R:** So you would never teach anywhere?

**M:** No, no. While I was in graduate school, I took a job with the Fund for Adult Education in New York City. I became a research assistant to a man named C. Hartley Grattan, who was writing a history of adult education. He was the one who told me about an interesting opportunity in Alabama, with the University of Alabama Extension Division. They were trying to establish a first-rate educational system for adults, and so I came to Mobile.

**R:** Before we come back to Mobile, let me ask you why you chose to go to Columbia for graduate school?

**M:** I didn't choose. I took a job with Western Electric as an assistant engineer. I had been a physics minor and I qualified for a job. It drove me crazy. It was not for me; perhaps some people would have enjoyed it. After a year and a half I realized I should have pursued my first objective, and that was to become a professor of history. I had been a history major in college, and several graduate schools accepted me after they saw my GRE scores. I decided that Columbia would be easier because it was closer to my home town. That was my best choice, even though I realized professors didn't make much money. It was one of the best decisions I ever made.

**R:** Some people go to graduate school and it's a time of intellectual growth; for others it's primarily a period of professional training. Would you fit primarily into either of these categories?

**M:** I had a very sound undergraduate education in history. But I was surprised how the intellectual stimulation of Columbia University preoccupied me more than I should have permitted it to. I read a lot of books that weren't history; I sat in on courses in literature and political science; I was just fascinated

by the university as an institution and I lapped it up. I was on the GI Bill and I didn't have to work. I'm really grateful. That was a great intellectual experience.

**R:** Allan Nevins was your dissertation director. Was he a great professional and intellectual influence on you?

**M:** Nevins was indeed my doctoral dissertation director. And he was very kind to me. For a while, I was his research assistant. I learned a lot, but at the time I was professionally naive. I didn't understand what an important person he was. Richard Hofstadter was on my doctoral board, and I didn't understand what an important person he was in the profession. Dumas Malone was also on my doctoral board, but I did realize that he was the great Jeffersonian scholar. I did understand more about him, and I took a couple of his courses on the Old and New South.

**R:** I can't imagine a more distinguished doctoral board.

**M:** These three were influential, but there were others. One was Richard Morris, who was in colonial and revolutionary history. Another was Henry Steele Commager, who taught me constitutional history. He was an opinionated, fascinating man.

**R:** You mentioned before that you came down to Mobile after finishing graduate school.

**M:** When I came down to visit the university, they introduced me to the chairman of the department, Frank Owsley. Owsley asked me if I didn't want to go to the main campus in Tuscaloosa. I didn't realize it, but my Columbia degree was a nice credential. But I said no, I was really interested in adult education. I wanted to work at the University of Alabama Extension division. They had a promising program here in Mobile, and so I joined that in January 1954.

**R:** So you've been in Mobile ever since January 1954?

**M:** That's right. For ten years for the University of Alabama, and I was on the original faculty of the University of South Alabama in 1964.

**R:** Did your beliefs about how adults were more willing and eager learners bear itself out in practice during those first ten years in Mobile?

**M:** Yes. I was convinced that older students bring more to a course, and get more out of it, and are more interesting, often, for a faculty member. At the time my teaching experience led me to believe I was right about that. But after about six or seven years I began to realize that there would be a new university here, and I became interested and interested in the possibilities of creating a new institution of higher education. So, I stayed on, and I put aside my notions that only adults can really learn well. I decided I perhaps ought to try with students as callow as I was when I was a freshman.

Incidentally, I am convinced now that very young students can develop qualitatively, but they have to be in the right kind of atmosphere with the right kind of academic leadership. You can't expect so much of them; they just haven't had the kinds of life experiences as adults. So if you take that into account, you can be very creative as a teacher. I think you can be very creative as a teacher at any level.

**R:** What is the right kind of atmosphere, and the right kind of academic leadership?

**M:** I've always thought that a university is a community of learning and that a student grows better

academically, intellectually, ethically, morally, and philosophically in the context of a community of learning. Universities have to create that kind of stimulating, challenging community, and if you provide that, the students will develop very well.

The problem is, how do you create that? This was perhaps the major preoccupation that I had. I didn't like big state schools at the time. In a way, I still don't. I did my best to promote this sense of community, and my wider objective was to help this university become one that represented the larger universe of learning and intellectual sophistication, and not just another provincial school.

**R:** Dean Acheson called his memoirs *Present at the Creation*. You were really present before the creation of the University of South Alabama. What was it like building a university among the pine trees?

**M:** I must admit that President Whiddon, who was also the product of a small Methodist liberal arts undergraduate college, was sympathetic with many of my views. He had been the director of the University of Alabama center in Mobile while I was teaching here. I think he rather sympathized with some of my views. I believe I was more radical in what I would like to have done here, and I was disappointed in not being able to achieve as much as I wanted to. I don't bear anybody any malice for that, but it just wasn't to be that we would have a program, say, like the University of California at Santa Cruz.

**R:** What kinds of programs are those?

**M:** They divided their universities into small colleges. Yale uses this approach. There's a headmaster for each college, and you go to a college. What they're attempting to instill is a sense of community, and within that context, they're trying to promote the highest quality of learning. I think that's the way to do it.

**R:** Why don't some people think that would work at an institution like South Alabama?

**M:** At the time, I didn't know enough to propose the way it would work. I made some proposals, but in retrospect I realize now they wouldn't have worked. I also think that not too many people were sympathetic or appreciated what I was trying to do. In fact, I think they probably thought I was a crank and in some cases were trying to avoid me. I just didn't know enough; if I could have gone back and done it again, I think I would have been able to make sounder proposals and we might have done well. Then the university began to explode and got beyond any major influence I could have had.

**R:** Would we be far too big now to put on the college system, or is Santa Cruz as big as South Alabama?

**M:** They keep the college sizes down to four or five hundred students each. When they grow, they grow the number of colleges. I like a lot of things about that, because a certain number of identifiable faculty are responsible for the intellectual development of a certain number of students. There's a responsibility there that we don't have at a big institution like this. You can't say, "This group of students didn't do so well, and you taught them; therefore you need to revise and think over what you're doing." You can't do that here.

**R:** Could you talk about the History Department. I assume it started at some point with one person, and that was you, and how did it grow from there?

**M:** We recruited two European historians, one was Taber Green, who had his bachelor's degree from

Birmingham- Southern, and the other was Bill Speck, who had his undergraduate degree from Stetson. I find in retrospect that the faculty that have appealed to me most generally are the ones from small liberal arts colleges at the undergraduate level. Not always. It's the individual that counts. I was also involved in appointing other people in other fields, because we didn't really have any "departments" then. I looked particularly for people who had experience in foreign countries and foreign languages.

**R:** Why?

**M:** Mobile is a port town without a port mentality. I thought that if we were going to work in a port town, it would be important for us to have global perspectives in the faculty. Others went along with me in this, and I think we have a rather sophisticated faculty in many ways. Unlike many other institutions in this state, our faculty tend not to be just from the South, from Southern graduate schools. In the history department we had one faculty member from Canada, and that person is Chinese and teaches Chinese history. And when students take Professor Chuang, they take not only Chinese history, but also a Chinese gentleman.

We also had a faculty member in this department named E. Lewis B. Curtis, who had a master's degree from the University of London, which I thought was the equivalent of a doctorate. In fact, one of the people who sat on his examining board was Arnold Toynbee. I mention these two individuals to suggest that we were interested in a universal kind of intellectual development, and not just a provincial one. We didn't want this to be a provincial college. I think President Whiddon was very sympathetic to that objective.

**R:** To close, what do you see as being some of the major strengths and weaknesses of the University of South Alabama?

**M:** I think one of the strengths of the University is that we do have communities of learning. For example, from what I can understand, the school of nursing has a really fine spirit to it, and there's a lot of enthusiasm over there for developing their professional skills. And I suspect that the fact that it's not that big a college helps it to foster the kinds of values that I would think are important.

The development of our graduate program has created another small-group learning environment, and I think that's been very good. The relationships between the graduate students and the faculty are very good. The development of our Phi Alpha Theta program is very promising, because there's a lot of interchange among faculty and students. I think those are the kinds of things that are very promising about the University.

I don't know if I should say this, but I'm not sure that our fraternity and sorority system promote the kinds of academic values that have concerned me during my tenure here at the University. I think they could, but I really wish that instead of a fraternity house, we had instead, say, a German house, where people interested in German history, German language, and German studies could live and work and discuss their concerns with each other. The same with French, the same with Spanish. I would like to see our history majors have a particular place, a Phi Alpha Theta house. If we could have done that, it would have been fine, but since we're in Alabama, which places tremendous value on the fraternity and sorority experience, I guess it was just a vain hope to expect anything else could happen.

Some decisions that were made at the beginning were really good. For example, we opted for small classes and made small classrooms. That promoted a more personal interchange between faculty and students. It promoted the kind of teaching that you can't get when you have 100 or 500 students in the classroom. Because of that, I think that our university is stronger than most of the other institutions in

the state. We have people with doctorates teaching freshmen. And we have that happening in small groups. If I had a child and had to recommend that this child go to a public institution in Alabama, I would certainly send him to the University of South Alabama. We have a lot of good things going for us.

I haven't exhausted the list, but that's an example of the kind of thing that makes us distinctive in the state. Some of the colleges are important. The Medical College is a great advantage to us. One of the strongest things we have going for us is that we're in the top one hundred universities and colleges for endowment. President Whiddon tells me we're going up on the scale; we're increasing our ranking. That's very promising for the future. He's quite pleased at that, and I'm pleased for him. I'm pleased for the University.

**R:** That's a nice positive note to end on. Thank you very much.