



**WESTERN ILLINOIS
UNIVERSITY**

NOTA BENE

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
2024 NEWSLETTER**



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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings from the Department of History! I am pleased to share a quick update on our department. This year saw steady enrollments in our major, particularly in history education, and notable achievements by the department's faculty and students.

Two topics really galvanized our department's conversations this year, and will continue to do so. Educators everywhere are grappling with the opportunities and challenges of the new era of artificial intelligence (AI). The department believes that in the new age historians trained to critically analyze information, especially AI-generated information, will have the chance to thrive.

Likewise, in our political and cultural climate today it's crucial that our department sustain our commitment to liberal arts critical thinking and writing skills, but also use our knowledge of the past to inform thinking about the present.

Partly as a reflection of that, we saw a growing number of students complete internships in public history this year. Internships are great training for careers in hands-on history.

As always, do drop a line to us, check in, and network with other Leatherneck historians. Your news is always welcome. I hope you enjoy hearing ours. So, "nota bene," - note well!

-- Dr. Tim Roberts



RECENT FACULTY PUBLICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

- Lee Brice was interviewed by the *New York Times* for a story on the durability of ancient Greek armor
- Ute Chamberlin selected to join a summer seminar on Holocaust history, remembrance, and education at the school for Holocaust Studies of the Yad Vashem Museum, Jerusalem, Israel, July 2024
- Peter Cole published *Presente: A Dockworker Story by Herb Mills*, Hard Ball Press, 2024
- Richard Filipink served as content consultant for manuscript of *Watergate*, a book aimed at elementary school students
- Febe Pamonag was elected president of the Western Association of Women Historians
- In collaboration with the WIU Archives, Tim Roberts developed an online exhibition, “Experiences & Perceptions of Asians and Asian Americans at Western Illinois University”

HIGHLIGHTING ASIAN PEOPLES AT WESTERN

On April 16 Professor Febe Pamonag, far right, chaired a livestreamed discussion “Perceptions of Asians & Asian Americans at WIU.” Meant to address anti-Asian

discrimination, the discussion offered perspectives of students, faculty, and members of the Macomb community. The event accompanied a Malpass Library exhibition that highlighted the history, struggles, and achievements of Asian peoples in the region since the late nineteenth century.





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MEMORIUM

Professor Emeritus George Hopkins, 86, died on September 28, 2023, in Macomb, IL. He was a well known and loved professor of history at Western Illinois University in Macomb, IL, and an author and expert on the history of aviation and airline pilots. His two-volume *Flying the Line* (Air Line Pilots Association) is now a free podcast on several platforms.



As a high school student in Dallas, TX, he joined the U.S. Navy Reserve, and after graduation from Southern Methodist University he was commissioned an Ensign in the U.S. Navy. He served a tour of duty in Iwakuni, Japan, piloting a P5M U.S. Navy sea plane.

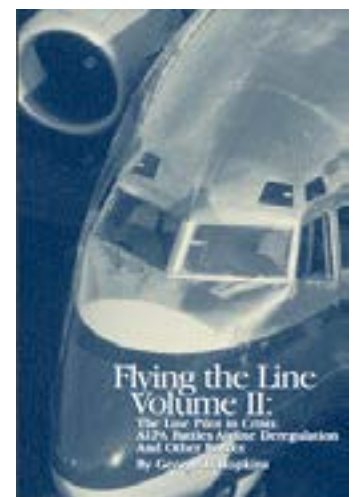
In 1964 he entered the University of Texas at Austin where he received his Ph.D. in history. His dissertation became a book, *The Airline Pilots, a Study in Elite Unionization*, published by Harvard University Press, 1971. In 1968 he was hired at WIU, where he worked until his 2007 retirement.



At Western he taught popular large illustrated lecture classes on the Vietnam War and U.S presidential assassinations, as well as many other topics. In 1979 he was voted Professor of the Year by WIU students. In 2003 he was named Distinguished Faculty Lecturer by his colleagues.

Hopkins was an expert on the history of American aviation, widely quoted in national publications and once was interviewed on CBS TV News.

In 1959 he married Elaine Bridges in Dallas, Texas, who survives him in Peoria, as do their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. George and Elaine traveled together throughout Europe, Asia, and the Western United States. They often reached the latter region via a Cessna airplane that George flew.





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HISTORY DEPARTMENT SCENES



Clockwise from upper left: New history student Nolan Rinearson poses in front of a Sherman Hall mural for a campus scavenger hunt; history major Carlos Colin studies a nineteenth-century baseball during a class on material culture; students in an American military history class play capture the flag to study infantry tactics; an on-campus World War II living history reenactment featured a British infantry tent, a MASH-like road sign, and middle school students doing hands-on history with a US GI.



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HISTORY DEPARTMENT SCENES



Clockwise from upper left: ASH history club officers Natalie Gibson and Julia Slesinski recruit for the club at Western’s spring student organization bazaar; Prof Peter Cole giving Western’s Distinguished Faculty Lecture on the 1919 Chicago Race Riot and his award-winning project to establish sites in Chicago memorializing the riot’s victims; Prof Tim Roberts awards a department prize for excellence to Eli Asplund at the department’s spring reception. Eli developed an historical website, “Department of Indian Welfare Plaque Project,” which curates early 20th-century historical markers of Illinois Indian tribes placed by the Illinois Federation of Women’s Clubs; Prof Ute Chamberlin leads the annual Women in History panel featuring her, Prof Greg Hall, and Prof Febe Pamonag, this year on the topic, “Women Who Advocate for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.”



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2024 GRADUATES



Clockwise from upper left: Prof Peter Cole with Brandon Ramirez, John Fuller (magna cum laude), Peter Kpelinbe (MA graduate), Evan Martinez (fall Department scholar, magna cum laude), Conner Hill, and Prof Tim Roberts; Prof Cole with MA graduates Gabe Sphar, Adetona Dennis, and Mary Owusu; Prof Lee Brice with, left to right, Samuel Jones, Nathan Penrod (cum laude), Ian Hutchison, Justin Glass, and Andrew Foss. Graduates not pictured: Allison Elias, Jordan Rouse, Brayden Ruland, Hayden Staten, Maeva Viyegbe, and Ben Granath.



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FEATURED STUDENT

Jordan Rouse, pictured with his parents, graduated this spring magna cum laude and as the Department's spring department scholar. A Macomb resident, Jordan was named the 2023-24 Lincoln Academy of Illinois' Student Laureate Award, representing all of Western's students, for Fall 2023.

Throughout his time at WIU, Rouse was an outstanding leader, serving as president of multiple organizations, including the Inter-Hall Council, National Residence Hall Honorary and WIU Food Pantry. He has also maintained a 4.0 GPA as a member of the Centennial Honors College and held leadership positions in the WIU Phi Kappa Phi honor society, WIU Phi Alpha Theta history honor society and WIU Honors Council.

Jordan's dedication to his studies and extracurricular activities earned him the WIU Presidential Scholarship and Eureka College Reagan Fellowship. In the history department, he contributed to a Chicago 1919 Race Riot Commemoration Project as a student researcher and editor.

The prestigious Lincoln Laureate award, presented annually to an outstanding senior from each of Illinois' four-year degree-granting institutions, honors a student's overall excellence emblematic of the character of Abraham Lincoln (Jordan's application essay could contain no more than 272 words, like the Gettysburg Address). This award recognizes exceptional leadership and a desire to make a difference in the world through civic engagement. The award encourages diverse fields of study to be considered for this honor. As a student laureate, the representative is recognized for outstanding contributions to campus life and beyond, in pursuit of the betterment of humanity.



2023-2024 ALUMNI NEWS

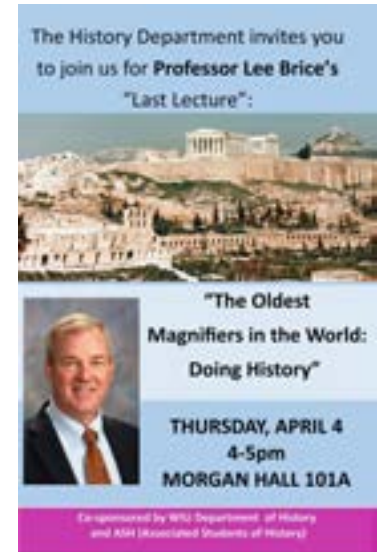
- **Emmanuel Ennin, MA 2023**, began a PhD program in History at Princeton University, Princeton NJ.
- **Firoz Hasnat, MA 2023**, began a PhD program in History at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb IL.
- **Zach Sutton, BA 2020**, obtained a master's degree in GIS and Cartography, and is a planner at the Bi-State Regional Commission in Rock Island, IL.
- **David Heusel, BA 2017**, completed a dual master's program at Simmons University, Boston MA, in Archival Management and History, and started work as an archivist at the Cook County Law Library in Chicago.
- **Michael Schraft, BA 2011**, is a VIP Group Manager at Chevrolet of Naperville, IL.
- **Nick Mann, MA 2011**, is a Clinical Distribution Project Manager for PCI Pharma Services in Rock Island, IL.
- **Adam Bednar, BA 2009**, is a Senior Project Manager with Blue Cross Blue Shield Association in Chicago, and Executive Board Member of the World War Two Historical Reenactment Society, Inc.
- **Ashley Eberle, BA 2007**, is a Talent Development Program Manager at Stanford University, Palo Alto CA. Ashley Zoomed with the ASH history club this spring about career strategies for history majors.
- **Greg Bennett, BA 1986**, Athletics Director at Lewistown High School, was inducted into the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame this spring.
- **Walter Champion, MA 1975**, is a Professor of Law at Texas Southern University, in Houston, and the author of 13 books including *Sports Law in a Nutshell*, *Gaming Law in a Nutshell*, and *Baseball and the Law*.



Do you have news to share with the history department and Leatherneck history alumni? We would welcome it with open arms! Feel free to email the department chair, Tim Roberts, at tm-roberts@wiu.edu, call us at (309) 298-1053, or share a public post or private message on our [Facebook](#) page.

FAREWELL TO PROFESSOR BRICE

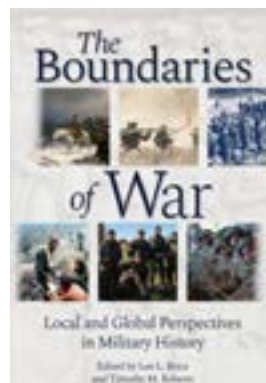
This spring the history department bade farewell to Dr. Lee L. Brice, who retired after 22 years of service. Dr. Brice brought his interests in Ancient Rome, Ancient Greece, Numismatics, and Military History to WIU in 2003 after receiving his PhD from the University of North Carolina. His classes on the Ancient Near East & Egypt, Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, Early Military History, The Crusades, and Alexander the Great were perennially among students' favorites. Several times, hands-on learning activities in Dr. Brice's classes produced replicas of ancient weaponry, including a fully functional life-size Roman *ballista*. Dr. Brice won awards for Outstanding First Year Experience teaching and Outstanding Undergraduate Research Mentoring. Dr. Brice led study-abroad trips to Greece and Rome. In 2019 he was selected to be the Distinguished Faculty Professor at WIU and delivered the 2020 lecture, "[The Colts of Corinth Revisited: A Numismatic Study](#)".



Dr. Brice has an active research agenda on the Roman military and on Greek numismatics (study of coins), which he will continue in retirement. His latest edited books are *New Approaches to Greek and Roman Warfare* (Wiley, 2020), *Brill's Companion to Diet and Logistics in Greek and Roman Warfare* (Brill, 2023), and *Women and the Army in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge, 2024). In addition to teaching at Western, Dr. Brice over his tenure was selected several times for positions at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, Greece, the oldest American foreign research institute. Gertrude Smith Professors and as the Elizabeth A. Whitehead Distinguished Scholar.



In 2023 Dr. Brice co-organized, with Professor Roberts, an international military history conference on the WIU Quad Cities campus. Selected papers at that conference became the basis of a co-edited book, *Boundaries of War: Local and Global Perspectives in Military History* (Marine Corps University Press, 2024).



The history department and many alumni who had the pleasure to study under Dr. Brice will miss his contributions immensely, and we wish him well in his post-Western career.



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HOW TO SUPPORT & STAY IN TOUCH!

The Show Must Go On!

The Department of History appreciates your generosity. Through your giving, last year we awarded scholarships and prizes to nineteen (19) deserving students studying history and history education.

Your donations fund student research, departmental resources for teaching, and history events.

Please give and help maintain our standard of excellence. Click

[here](#)

to make your gift to the department, or type in a scholarship you wish to support. If you wish to write a check, make it payable to the WIU Foundation, designated History Department, and mail to WIU Foundation, Sherman Hall 309, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455-1390.



Elephants in a circus parade in the Macomb, IL town square, 1934, courtesy of the WIU archives

Follow Leatherneck History!

Opportunities to visit Macomb and stop by the History Department:

A play, “When Macomb Hosted Abraham Lincoln” - October 5

Homecoming - October 11-22

World War II Living History Event - October 18-19

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