



Newsletter

Summer 2016

FROM THE PRESIDENT...

GUY WILLIAMS

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Lectori Salutem,

Once again, summer brings us fair weather, the pomp and circumstance of the American Public University System (APUS) commencement, and a moment to reflect on where we wish to go in life and our academic pursuits. Graduation always brings a sense of accomplishment and more importantly, of what may be. As noted poet and essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail." We have several Saber and Scroll members graduating this year and I challenge each of them to blaze new trails in the academic community and as Henry David Thoreau wrote, "Be not merely good—be good for something." Use your hard fought knowledge to inspire others to learn more and promote civic virtue by giving back to your community and your alma mater.

At the time of this publication, the Saber and Scroll Historical Society is on the verge or already achieved gold status with the APUS Chapter Standards program. A hearty "well done" to all of our members and thank you for continuing to make the Saber and Scroll a well-respected student organization within our school. As we look to the future, our sister organization the Historical Studies Honors Society (HSHS) continues to garner more members and gain more support within APUS. To that end, we need to consider the future of the Saber and Scroll Journal.

Do we wish to keep the Saber and Scroll Journal with the Saber and Scroll Historical Society or transfer the journal over to the HSHS? This is a question that each of you needs to ponder and make your voices heard to the leadership of our organizations.

The topic of leadership segues nicely into our 20 August 2016 elections. We have new officers to elect for the 2017 academic year. Leadership positions within the Saber and Scroll are both challenging and rewarding. I found a leadership position challenging because you do have to work with e-mails, meetings, and planning in order to achieve a solid organization and gold standing within APUS. However, I found the experience rewarding because I built a better relationship with other members within the Saber and Scroll, learned more about our online presence, helped formulate our annual plan and gained a better appreciation for how many students and enthusiasts of history we count amongst our members. The Saber and Scroll is a strong and vibrant organization that I enjoyed watching evolve into the organization's current form.

I hope many of you will consider running for office and I look forward to welcoming the new officers aboard. I also wish to offer a special thanks to Deanna Simmons, Tomesha Campbell, Mat Hudson, Anne Midgley, Jona Lunde, Joe Cook, Lew Taylor, Kim Trenner, Professor Emily Cynkar Herff, and Dr. Richard Hines for making this such a great year and making the job of the leadership team easier. I will neither run for the office of president nor accept the nomination for president in the coming elections. I believe this is a position best held by a current student to both help develop their leadership skills and to help bolster their curriculum vitae. I am extremely thankful for the opportunity that Lew and others provided me, but I feel strongly about letting others have a chance to excel.

I think our historical marker cleanup and thank a vet program were successful. Of course, we always hope for maximum participation, but our efforts counted and made a difference both to the preservation of history and the gratitude our nation owes to our veterans. I challenge each of you to continue to make a difference in your daily lives and not just when we sponsor a program. I volunteer as an outdoor educator and help promote the preservation of our environment and resources by teaching the Leave No Trace program. One of the things we teach is to leave only footprints when enter the backcountry. In many ways, I developed the same thought about how we journey through life. Will society remember you for the trash you left behind and the things you did not do or will society recall the footsteps that you left behind? The path that each of us takes is one of our choosing, but how glorious is the path that ascends the highest mountains, fords the deepest rivers, and travels amongst family and friends to build and strengthen. Bona fortuna as each of you make your own paths and I thank each of you for allowing me the opportunity to share a portion of our path together.

Aude sapere!

Guy Williams

Saber and Scroll President

OPINION ...

MAT HUDSON

I have long maintained that historical events are not created from a single cause or action. Instead, a set of circumstances exist which not only lead to the event but often encourage it as well. Consider the beginnings of the First World War. In grade school you learn that war began because Archduke Ferdinand was assassinated. Clearly when an Austrian nobleman is killed by a Bosnian Serb nationalist, Germany and England go to war. As we progress in our academic journey we learn of the intricate web of failed diplomacy and stubborn alliances. As we study further we can begin to grasp a deeper understand of colonial rivalries, generations of animosity, and the industrial revolution.

Of course, while every event has its long list of factors resulting in its occurrence, there also exists numerous ways to view the history as well. Witnesses of an automobile accident often report vastly different views based on how they saw it happen. Even in sporting events one may find his or herself in disbelief at the way an official (or commentator) assessed the same play. Now, remove the ability to witness that wreck or game from the equation. The only resource at the disposal of the historian is someone else's interpretation of events. If one goes back far enough into the history, it can be someone's interpretation of someone else's someone else.

One nation's hero is another's villain. How fondly do many British remember Margret Thatcher? What about the debt owed to Oliver Cromwell by those who enjoy representative government over divinely appointed monarchies? Now, ask someone from Ireland how they feel about either of those figures. How divisive can a discussion become when waged by those of varying cultures and beliefs. The romantic notions can outgrow the figures and events. Wrapped in mystique civilizations become something more to the beholder. Ancient Sparta comes to mind. Just now I'm sure many of you had thoughts of military glory, bravery, and the mighty 300. My first thoughts of Sparta involve oppression and infanticide. For full disclosure, I was born with a birth defect that would have not allowed me to survive in Sparta, yet be more than accepted in most every other region of the world at that time. And therein lays the power of perspective.

As the next round of historians the world has at its disposal, it falls to us to provide insight and analysis to that which came before us. The importance of how we view the history is just as crucial as how we present it. Healthy discussion and hearty debate are the brainstorming tools of research and scholarly excellence. While each of us remains true to our vision of the eras, people, and places we love to dissect, we must be cognizant that other interpretations may stand opposed to our own. Seeing something from a different perspective than another is not only healthy, it's integral to scholastic growth. Without it the study of history would be names, dates, and places.

GRADUATION AND ANNUAL MEETING...

Congratulations to all who are Graduating this summer. It's a long journey, but you've succeeded!

If you are walking, or in the area on Friday, June 17 at 1:00 pm, please join us at the Gaylord Resort at National Harbor for the Annual Meeting. We will be sharing the meeting time with The APUS Historical Studies Honor Society. It's a great time to meet your officers and fellow Saber rattlers.



CALL FOR PAPERS

The *Saber and Scroll Journal* is a peer reviewed publication that accepts articles, book reviews, opinion pieces, and exhibition reviews. All submissions meet high academic standards. The journal team is composed of a volunteer group of APUS graduate student and alumni editors. While the current call for papers is closed—watch the web site at saberandscroll.weebly.com/journal-submissions.html as well as the Facebook page for future calls. The web site also offers an author guide and directions on how to prepare a successful submission. It is a great opportunity to get published!

OFFICERS MEETING

The officers met for the second quarter meeting in early May. President Guy Williams reported about the meeting on Facebook. We are going to repeat the highlights here for those who did not catch his post.

It was reported that there were 1,107 members, 11 Global Mentors, and 3 new members. Since there are only about 50 active participants, it was decided to send out a mass mailing requesting that both new and existing members respond—those not responding in 2 weeks will be dropped to inactive members on the rolls. The purpose is to reduce the mailing list and better enable the group to send out mass invites for events on Facebook.

The next item on the agenda was the Clear Path site of the APUS campus. This site will eventually replace both the quad and the Global Mentor Network. It was recommended that if you have not signed up yet, you should. Guy reported that it was a big improvement over the Quad and increasing usage by alumni and current students will improve the site.

It was reported that web master extraordinaire Jona Lunde has posted the last two lecture power point slides to the Saber and Scroll website. Check them out!

The newsletter is expanding and is currently seeking short articles 500-1000 words on book reviews, positional essays on historical events or figures, and academic interest stories that promote the study of history.

As of May 3, 2016 Saber and Scroll has 82 points which officially puts us in Silver Standard. We are so close to Gold Standard! By reaching the gold standard, we help the leadership team for next year with more resource and further reinforce the outstanding reputation the Saber and Scroll has earned these past years.

SERVICE PROJECT

We did a Joint Service Project with The APUS Historical Studies Historical Society the month of May. The theme for the project was “Thanking Those Who Serve(d).” We were charged with doing something nice for a past/present service member to thank them for their service. Suggestions included buying them a cup of coffee, getting them a gift card, helping them with a project, or just shaking their hand and saying thank you! While the project was just for the month of May, it doesn’t hurt to continue it on.

If you participated in the Service Project, make sure to report your time on the Quad—this helps us in our goal to reach Gold Standard.