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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

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# HISTORY DEPARTMENT --- NEWSLETTER

College of Arts and Sciences Department of History Spring 2004

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## Dear Alumni and Friends,

Despite difficult economic times at the university, faculty of the History Department are enjoying some great successes in fulfilling our missions. In this newsletter you will see two main themes emphasized. First, WMU historians maintain long-standing efforts to reach out to the community through both History Education and Public History projects. Second, our contribution to the research and scholarship of the discipline flourishes.

We are extremely pleased about the Teaching American History Grant and the outstanding museum exhibits described in this newsletter. During the founding days of Western Normal School, Dwight Waldo, the institution's first president, taught history classes. Since that time historians on our campus have dedicated their efforts to the enhancement of historical learning in the schools of Michigan and beyond. Under the new grant of nearly one million dollars from the Department of Education, history faculty will conduct workshops for area history teachers during three consecutive summers. We are delighted to partner in this way with the Kalamazoo Regional Education Service Agency, southwest Michigan schools, and area museums to pursue our century-old goal of enhancing the teaching and learning of history in the classrooms of our state and beyond.

At the same time our Public History faculty and students are helping citizens to appreciate aspects of their heritage through museum exhibits. Public History is the presentation of history and culture to audiences outside the classroom. You will read about two outstanding examples in the newsletter, one in Flint that has already taken place, and another in St. Joseph, that is still open to the public. I strongly recommend a visit to the *Shared Waters* exhibit at the Fort Miami Heritage Center, if it is geographically possible for you. The WMU Public History program, established in

1980, distinguishes our department through its training of professionals who bring history alive in communities of Michigan and beyond.

Faculty of the History department are contributing significantly to the world of historical research and scholarship. You will enjoy reading about their ten new books published in the calendar year 2003 in diverse fields and for varied readerships. (We are counting Emeritus Professor Ernst Breisach's new book among our achievements. Dr. Breisach, former chair of the department and an internationally known scholar, maintains an office in Friedmann Hall and remains very active in the life of the university.) Books are only one manifestation of historical research and scholarship. To see information about the articles, papers, editorial projects, and other accomplishments of the history faculty, view our new web page: <http://www.wmich.edu/history> and click on "research" and "research news." You will find a listing of all activities completed in the last six months and an archive of a year's activities.

This newsletter is one way we have of maintaining contact with friends and supporters. We were delighted to hear from many of you following our previous newsletter. Please keep the messages coming. Postal and e-mail address are on page 6.

Sincerely,  
*Marion (Buddy) Gray*  
*Department Chair*



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## *History Department Engaged with Schools, Communities*

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### *Shared Waters: Natives and French Newcomers in the Great Lakes Brings History to the Community*



*Shared Waters: Natives and French Newcomers in the Great Lakes* is an exhibit of Native American and French relations in the Great Lakes fur-trapping region during the 17th and 18th centuries housed at the Fort Miami Heritage Society. In cooperation with

Kenneth Potts, Director of the society, WMU public historians Kristin Szylyvian, Michael Chiarappa, and José António Brandão were instrumental in conceptualizing and executing this project. Several graduate students also contributed significantly.

*Shared Waters* highlights that period in Michigan history during which it was part of the colony New France. It was at this time, during the 17th and 18th centuries, that the Great Lakes region was the center of waterborne trade and cultural interaction between natives and Europeans. The first year of the exhibit focuses on Robert de La Salle, founder of Fort Miami, and later years will focus on topics such as archaeology in the St. Joseph area.

The exhibit has collected artifacts, documents, and art from the Royal Ontario Museum and Montreal's McCord Museum, where Szylyvian, Chiarappa, Brandão, and others did extensive research.

*Shared Waters*, however, is more than just a static museum exhibit. The project at Fort Miami includes tour guides, multimedia presentations, and reenactments to lead students through the exciting history of the region.

Scholars working on the project have developed an Education Loan Kit, which Szylyvian refers to as "Shared Waters with legs." Graduate student Dale Winling, recipient of the Frederick S. Upton Fellowship in Public History, has been instrumental in this aspect of the project. The kit includes curriculum guides, reproduction artifacts, readings, handouts, plays, activities, and videos to assist teachers in bringing *Shared Waters* to the classroom. While the kits are geared towards elementary school students, they can be useful for high schools and the general public.

The project reaches out not only to the schools, but to the community as well. Szylyvian and others have worked to build the public image of the Fort Miami Heritage Society with the exhibit, helping it to become one of foremost historical institutions in the area and creating an identity as a leading cultural and educational center.

The team has also sought to build the Society internally by helping the Fort Miami Heritage Society link together various initiatives. They established collaboration with the two Canadian museums by borrowing artifacts and conducting extensive research at both institutions.

Due to a large number of requests for the exhibit, Szylyvian, Chiarappa, and Brandão, along with graduate student Josh Koening, have developed a catalog of the exhibition.

#### **Shared Waters Exhibit Schedule:**

- Location:** Fort Miami Heritage Society
- Phone:** (269) 983-1191
- Dates:** January 31, 2003 - January 2005
- Hours:** Tuesday - Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Website:** <http://www.fortmiami.org/exhibits.phtml>

#### **WMU Historian Studies Jewish Life in Flint**

*Shared Waters* is not the only exhibit in which WMU historians have been involved. Dr. Nora Faires was instrumental in *A Century of Jewish Life in Autotown*, an examination of Jewish life in Flint, Michigan. The exhibit, which was on display in the Sloan Museum in 2001, explored the life of Jews in a city that once symbolized American prosperity, but now suffers from extensive deindustrialization.

The exhibit began when the Jewish community of Flint wanted a collection of photographs and artifacts that documented their varied experiences. This community later asked Faires and local historian Nancy Hanflik to join the project as curators. Faires and Hanflik are currently at work on a book, *Jewish Life in Autotown*, under contract with Michigan State University Press, with an expected publication date of fall 2004.



*Dr. Arnold Schaffer, left, and friend receive "matzah" (unleavened bread) while stationed in Korea. Flint Jews continued their record of service to their country during the Korean War (1950-53), demonstrating connections between American patriotism and Jewish identity.*

#### **Help Us Continue to Publish the Newsletter!**

The History Department Newsletter is published with donated funds. We experienced a deficit with our 2003 newsletter. If you appreciate hearing from us in this manner, would you consider a \$5.00 contribution? This would not only cover the cost of your copy but would allow us to distribute the newsletter to students and others who cannot at this time afford to assist. Your contribution can be in addition to what you otherwise will give, or it can stand alone. Thank you!

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## ***History Department Engaged with Schools, Communities*** (continued)

### **WMU History Department to Enhance the Teaching of History in Kalamazoo Schools**

The History Department of Western Michigan University will provide instruction to history teachers from as many as 52 schools in the Kalamazoo area. This project is part of the Teaching American History Program of the United States Department of Education, from which the Kalamazoo Regional Education Service Agency (KRESA) recently received a \$986,000 grant.

Also involved in the project are the Kalamazoo Valley Museum and the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum. Dr. Wilson Warren is supervising the program for the WMU History Department, and Drs. Nora Faires, Fred Dobney, and Patricia Rogers will lead the instruction along with faculty from the two museums. The History Department will also be working with the WMU College of Education on this project. They are currently developing summer institutes for the teachers.

The purpose of the program is to improve history teaching in high schools. WMU's History Department plans to do this by assisting teachers in the incorporation of historical methodology in the classroom. The program seeks to enhance teachers' skills, such as interpreting primary documents and objects of material culture. The project seeks to incorporate active learning in secondary school history instruction.

This more active method of learning, which Warren calls "authentic learning," encourages student involvement, so that high school students can participate in hands-on history. Like in other classes, especially science labs, students will actually be doing something, instead of passively listening or taking notes. The goal is to not only give students a better understanding of history, but to deepen their interest in history as a lifelong pursuit.

To qualify, teachers must be either untenured or uncertified to teach history. The program is aimed at those just entering the profession or those who are not primarily history teachers. The History Department plans to lead workshops for 30 teachers per summer for the next three years. Teachers can earn graduate credit in the workshops. KRESA was one of four Michigan school districts to receive a Teaching American History Grant in 2003.

The Teaching American History initiative is a program of the U.S. Department of Education and was developed under the leadership of Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia. According to the Department of Education, the purpose of the program is to "raise student achievement by improving teachers' knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of American history."

Please visit the  
**Western Michigan University Website:**  
<http://www.wmich.edu>

### **Graduate Student Turns Archivist for Local School District**

Tom Vance, pursuing an MA in US History, interned at the Portage District Library (PDL) during Fall semester in a course entitled Professional Field Experience. Tom worked on Portage Public School materials at the library's archive, the Heritage Room, under the supervision of PDL local historian Steve Rossio.

The collection consists of a wide variety of documents and photographs donated primarily by Portage Schools, but also by former faculty, staff, and alumni. The collection spans the entire history of the school district and includes education-related materials predating the establishment of Portage Schools in 1922.

Tom divided the collection into key content areas: board of education minutes, news releases, district and individual school documents, student newspapers and literary magazines, photographs, educational resources (record albums, microfilm, teacher guides), newspaper clippings, and documents preceding the establishment of Portage Schools. The collection also includes materials not organized into the 63 Hollinger boxes, such as yearbooks, over-sized photographs, and attendance records.

Once materials were organized and a series for the material was established, Tom developed a nine-page Finding Aid to assist library patrons, researchers, and school librarians at the district's elementary, middle and high schools. The Finding Aid will be shared with social studies teachers at middle schools and high schools to encourage student use of the collection. This summer his attention turns to oral history documentation.

### **Distinguished Visitors**

The History Department was fortunate to host or co-host several renowned scholars during the calendar year 2003. Natalie Zemon Davis, a leading world authority on early modern Europe and author of *The Return of Martin Guerre* was the department's Nicholas H. Hamner Lecturer. Professor Shepard Krech of Brown University and author of *The Ecological Indian* spoke in the Ethnohistory Lecture Series. William Cronon, one of the premiere environmental historians of the U.S., drew an overflow crowd in a large auditorium for his talk on "Saving Nature in Time." Dr. Ulrike Gleixner of Berlin, Germany, discussed, in a workshop with faculty and students, her research on gender and religion in early modern Europe.

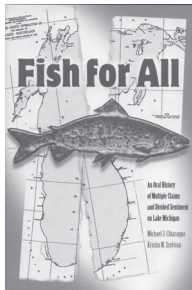
Please visit the  
**History Department's Website:**  
<http://www.wmich.edu/history>

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## WMU Historians Publish Ten Books in 2003

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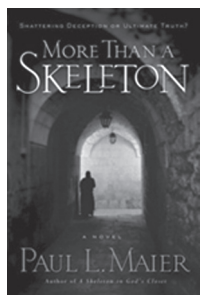
### Michael J. Chiarappa and Kristin M. Szylvian's *Fish for All: An Oral History of Multiple Claims and Divided Sentiment on Lake Michigan*



Drs. Michael J. Chiarappa and Kristin M. Szylvian's *Fish for All: An Oral History of Multiple Claims and Divided Sentiment on Lake Michigan* focuses on the contentious claims of groups seeking to use Lake Michigan's fisheries resources. These claims were at the center of modern America's emergent environmental politics in the middle of the twentieth century. Inheriting the environmental abuse, political oversights, and cultural inclinations of an earlier era, Lake Michigan's later twentieth-century fisheries stakeholders found themselves relentlessly divided by a series of disputes arising from the promotion of sport fishing over commercial fishing, strident policy positions of state government, the ecological changes wrought by non-indigenous species, and the reclamation of treaty-rights fishing by Native Americans.

For more information about *Fish for All*, visit:  
<http://msupress.msu.edu>

### Paul L. Maier's *More Than a Skeleton*



Dr. Paul Maier's *More Than a Skeleton* is a novel focusing on Jonathan Weber, who was at the helm of an action-packed archaeological dig in Maier's #1 best-selling novel, *A Skeleton in God's Closet*. Now, in *More Than a Skeleton*, Dr. Weber plays an integral part in the investigation of what is either a most convincing, dangerous hoax or the return of Christ. When Joshua Ben-Yosef, an Israeli from Galilee - born in Nazareth to parents Mary and Joseph - begins assembling twelve followers, attracting crowds, and performing miracles, the world takes notice. Paul Maier is also widely known for his historical scholarship on European antiquity and Christianity.

For more information about *More Than a Skeleton*, visit:  
<http://www.thomasnelsonpublishers.com>

### Adam Sabra, *al-Faqr wa al-ihsan fi Misr: `asr salat al-mamalik 1250-1517*. Translated by Qasim Abduh Qasim

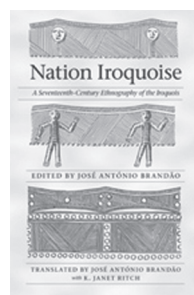
Dr. Adam Sabra's *Poverty and Charity in Medieval Islam: Mamluk Egypt, 1250-1517*, originally published by Cambridge University Press in 2001, was released in Arabic translation  
*continued on next column*

*al-Faqr wa al-ihsan fi Misr continued*

by the Supreme Council for Culture of Egypt. This pioneering work of scholarship is practically the first study of poverty and charity in the pre-modern Middle East. Sabra's book gives rich insight into matters such as begging and almsgiving; standards of living; and the housing and clothing of inhabitants of Mamluk Egypt.

For more information about the English edition visit:  
<http://www.cup.org>

### *Nation Iroquoise: A Seventeenth-Century Ethnography of the Iroquois*. Edited by José António Brandão, Translated by José António Brandão with K. Janet Ritch



Dr. José António Brandão's *Nation Iroquoise* presents an intriguing mystery. Found in the Bibliotheque Mazarine in Paris and in the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa, the unsigned and undated manuscript *Nation Iroquoise* is an absorbing and informative eyewitness account of the daily life and societal structure of the Oneida Iroquois in the seventeenth century. The *Nation Iroquoise* manuscript is arguably one of the earliest known comprehensive descriptions of an Iroquois group. Rich in ethnographic detail, the work is replete with valuable information about the traditional Oneidas: the role of women in tribal councils; mortuary customs; religious beliefs and rituals; warfare; the function of the clan system in tribal governance; the impact of alcohol; and the topography, flora, and fauna of the Oneida territory. It also offers important information about the famed Iroquois Confederacy during the seventh century.

For more information at *Nation Iroquoise*, visit:  
<http://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu>

### Juanita De Barros's *Order and Place in a Colonial City: Patterns of Struggle and Resistance in Georgetown, British Guiana, 1889-1924*



In *Order and Place in a Colonial City*, Dr. Juanita De Barros explores the conflicting visions of public areas held by local political and economic elites and by non-white urban poor in Georgetown, British Guiana, demonstrating that the period of study was marked by class and racial tensions as the social and political landscape of the city changed significantly.

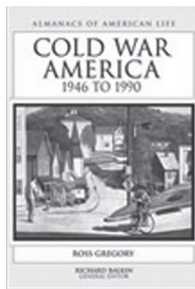
For more information about *Order and Place in a Colonial City*, visit: <http://www.mqup.mcgill.ca>

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## ***WMU Historians Publish Ten Books in 2003 (continued)***

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### **Ross Gregory's *Cold War America, 1946-1990***



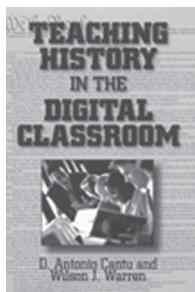
Dr. Ross Gregory's *Cold War America, 1946-1990* was recently published by Facts on File. *Cold War America* examines a time of immense change that called into question some of the most accepted and honored standards, principles, and institutions in the United States. This new volume in the Almanacs of American Life series provides a detailed look at everyday life during the second half of the twentieth

century. *Cold War America* chronicles all aspects of society during this tumultuous era: changes in the economy, from banking and finance to prices and inflation; trends in entertainment, from popular music to college sports; politics, from policy to scandal; the telecommunications revolution, from the post office to the internet; and much more. Through numerous statistical tables, charts, maps, photographs and lively informative essays this book reveals the diverse aspects of everyday life in the United States - from changing patterns in the racial and ethnic diversity of new immigrants to changing choices in birth control.

Dr. Gregory's book credits include *American 1941: A Nation at the Crossroads*, *The Origins of American Intervention in the First World War*, and *Walter Hines Page: Ambassador at the Court of St. James*. He is also the author of Facts On File's *Modern America, 1914-1945*.

For more information about *Cold War America, 1946-1990*, visit: <http://www.factsonfile.com>

### **Wilson Warren Co-Authors *Teaching History in the Digital Classroom***



Co-authored with D. Antonio Cantu, Dr. Wilson Warren's *Teaching History in the Digital Classroom* is the first book in a new series called "History, Humanities, and New Technology," sponsored by the American Association for History and Computing. The book is aimed primarily at current and future middle and high school history teachers. While stressing ways that history teachers can use digital technol-

ogy in the classroom, especially related to the use of the World Wide Web, the book is meant to provide a thorough grounding in the history and structure of the discipline, methods for developing history lesson plans, and ideas about various methods of authentic historical assessment.

For more information about *Teaching History in the Digital Classroom*, visit: <http://www.mesharpe.com>

### **Ernst A. Breisach's *On the Future of History: The Postmodernist Challenge and Its Aftermath***

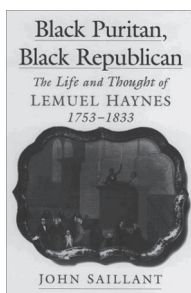


Dr. Ernst A. Breisach's *On the Future of History* provides the first comprehensive overview of postmodernism and its complex relationship to history and historiography. Placing postmodern theories in their intellectual and historical contexts, Breisach shows how they are part of broad developments in Western culture. Breisach sees postmodernism as neither a fad nor a universal remedy. In clear and concise

language, he presents and critically evaluates the major views on history held by influential postmodernists, such as Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard, and the new narrativists. Along the way, he introduces to the reader major debates among historians over postmodern theories of evidence, objectivity, meaning and order, truth, and the usefulness of history. He also discusses new types of history that have emerged as a consequence of postmodernism, including cultural history, microhistory, and new historicism.

For more information about *On the Future of History*, visit: <http://www.press.uchicago.edu>

### **John Saillant's *Black Puritan, Black Republican: The Life and Thought of Lemuel Haynes, 1753-1833***



Lemuel Haynes was an indentured servant who later served as a soldier in the Continental Army. In 1785 he became an ordained Congregational minister. Haynes's writings constitute the fullest record of a black man's religion, social thought, and opposition to slavery in the period of the Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution. Drawing on both published and manuscript sources, John

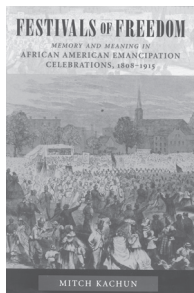
Saillant offers a comprehensive study of the ideas of Haynes, an extraordinary thinker, who criticized the institution of slavery using the rhetoric of inalienable rights and liberty. Saillant is jointly appointed in the departments of English and History.

For more information about *Black Puritan, Black Republican*, visit: see <http://www.oup-usa.org>

**Please visit the  
Public History Website:  
<http://www.wmich.edu/history/publichistory>**

## WMU Historians Publish Ten Books in 2003 (continued)

### Mitch Kachun's *Festivals of Freedom: Memory and Meaning in African American Emancipation Celebrations, 1808-1915*



Dr. Mitch Kachun's *Festivals of Freedom* explores the multiple functions and contested meanings surrounding African American emancipation celebrations from the abolition of the slave trade to the fiftieth anniversary of U.S. emancipation. Based on extensive research in African American newspapers and oration texts, this book retraces a vital if often overlooked tradition

*continued on next column*

### *Festivals of Freedom continued*

in African American political culture and addresses important issues about black participation in the public sphere. By illuminating the origins of black Americans' public commemorations, it also helps explain why there have been increasing calls in recent years to make the "Juneteenth" observance of emancipation an American - not just an African American - day of commemoration.

For more information about *Festivals of Freedom*, visit:  
<http://www.umass.edu/umpress>

Please visit the  
**Ethnohistory Website:**  
<http://www.wmich.edu/ethnohistory>

### Dr. Florin Curta and Mr. Richard D. Reed Receive College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Achievement Awards

The College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Achievement Awards program began in 1997 as a way of reconnecting our students and faculty with our alumni and our alumni with the College. The Awards are given in recognition for the recipients' achievements in their fields and for their service to their departments.

Dr. Florin Curta earned both his M.A. and Ph.D. in history from WMU in 1995 and 1998, respectively. He earned his B.A. in history and philosophy from the University of Bucharest in 1988 and his M.A. in medieval studies from Cornell University in 1999. Dr. Curta is an associate professor of history at the University of Florida. He is currently working as a visiting research fellow at the University of Notre Dame. Along with many other publications, Dr. Curta is the author of *The Making of the Slavs: History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region, c. 500-700 A.D.*, which offers new perspectives on the origins of the Slavic ethnicity in southeastern Europe. In January 2003, this work earned him the Herbert Baxter Adams Prize of the American Historical Association.

Mr. Richard D. Reed received his B.A. in political science with a minor in history from WMU in 1957. Shortly thereafter, he entered the Detroit College of Law, from which he graduated in 1961. After graduation, Mr. Reed became a law clerk for former Michigan Supreme Court Justice Theodore Souris. Mr. Reed has since owned his own law practice for more than 40 years. During his career, he has been a member of the board of directors for the Kalamazoo Legal Aid Bureau, chairman of the State Bar Representative Assembly, president of the Kalamazoo County Bar Association, and commissioner of the State Bar of Michigan. Additionally, he serves as a trustee of the Richard U. Light Foundation, which distributes \$2 million each year in grants for academic scholarships and fellowships.

### Dr. Ross Gregory and Dr. Bruce Haight Receive College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Achievement Awards

At the February 2003 State of the College Address, Dean Leonard Ginsberg presented awards to two faculty of the history department. Ross Gregory a member of the department for 38 years, received the Award for Research and Creative Activity. His publication of five major books and numerous scholarly articles has contributed significantly to the understanding of twentieth-century American history. See the notice of his latest book elsewhere in this newsletter. Bruce Haight, a WMU historian for 34 years, received the Award for Professional and Community Service. A specialist in African history, Haight is jointly appointed in History and Africana Studies. He has worked selflessly to enhance the life of the department and the university. He has lent his expertise to public school teachers and museum curators, while also fostering international exchanges between Africa and the U.S. He has brought to the consciousness of communities throughout the U.S. the artistic works of African sculptor, Lamidi Fakeye. The History Department congratulates colleagues Ross Gregory and Bruce Haight.

### History Department Contact Information:

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Western Michigan University  
4301 Friedmann Hall  
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5334

**Brenda Brewer:** Office Coordinator  
**Candace "Candy" List:** Office Assistant

## Yes, I Want to Support the WMU Department of History!

Like many states across the nation, Michigan has significantly reduced its funding to public universities. The WMU History Department is affected by this budgetary situation. Donations from friends and alumni can help us take advantage of new or unbudgeted opportunities, so that we can continue to enhance the teaching and research of the department.

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### Thank You for Considering a Donation to the WMU History Department

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*\*Michigan residents, remember that 50% of your gift to a Michigan university is returned to you as a tax credit on your state income tax (up to \$200 for single filers, \$400 for joint filers).*



### See Anyone Familiar?

Some of our readers knew the History Department as long ago as the 1950s and 1960s. If you are among them, you may recognize these faculty members:

**Back Row:** Sherwood Cordier, Nicholas Hamner, Edward Elsasser, Charles Starring, Gilbert Morell, Willis Dunbar

**Front Row:** Cornelius Loew, Margaret Macmillan, Alan Brown, Howard Mowen, Robert Friedmann, Edythe Mange

*Photo ca. 1955 or 1956, courtesy of WMU Archives and Regional History Collection*

**The History Department Gratefully Acknowledges the Support of the  
Following Donors in the Calendar Year 2003**

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