



# The FEDERALIST

Society for History in the Federal Government Newsletter

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Summer 2023

**SHFG**  
[www.shfg.org](http://www.shfg.org)

## SHFG MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATE

SHFG's Membership Committee will be rebooting this fall, so if any members are interested in contributing in this area, your support would be greatly appreciated. The committee will be working on nuts-and-bolts tasks like coordinating efforts to manage the Society's membership rolls and more effectively manage SHFG renewals, but efforts will also include expanding recruitment approaches and tools, and updating and revamping the SHFG member directory as well as the Directory of Federal History Offices. SHFG is interested in more effectively serving its members and more actively recruiting people who might also benefit from membership, so if you are interested in being part of this effort, please send an email to [shfgmembership@gmail.com](mailto:shfgmembership@gmail.com).

## Cryptologic History Goes Virtual

By Sarah Parsons, Center for Cryptologic History

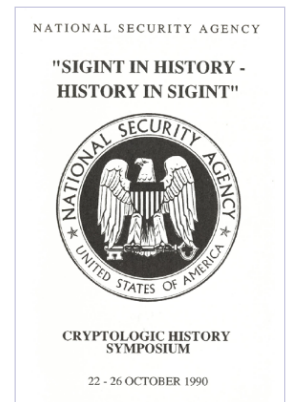
Like most people, the staff at the National Security Agency's (NSA) Center for Cryptologic History (CCH) believed that they would be home for only two weeks when the initial COVID-19 shutdown occurred in early 2020. When it became evident that this was not the case, the historians pivoted so that their efforts to preserve and present cryptologic history to audiences (both internal and external) could continue. In one prime example, the staff transformed the Cryptologic History Symposium from an in-person event to an online virtual broadcast for the very first time, dramatically redefining what it meant for NSA to engage with the public.

Since 1990, the CCH has hosted a public Cryptologic History Symposium in which scholars, authors, and cryptologic practitioners have presented on various declassified topics related to cryptology, signals intelligence, communications security, and cybersecurity history. This event has afforded non-government historians the opportunity to collaborate with other like-minded historians both within and outside the US Intelligence Community and improved their understanding of the complex world of declassified archival research. As a result, one would be hard-pressed to find a cryptologic history book published within the last two decades that did not acknowledge someone affiliated with either NSA's CCH or its parallel organization, the National Cryptologic Museum. For example, John Ferris, a notable scholar of US and UK intelligence history, has



acknowledged that NSA's early cryptologic history symposia, in particular, were fundamental to his early tutelage on the topic.

The Cryptologic History Symposium has evolved since those early years to become the bedrock of NSA's transparency efforts and CCH's largest event. Early on the symposium was held within secure spaces of NSA's Fort Meade, MD headquarters. Uncleared scholars and historians were invited to attend and participate, but the event was not open to the general public. Though small, the occasion was not lost on NSA's director, Vice Admiral William O. Studeman (a history enthusiast himself) at the time. At the very first



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# The FEDERALIST

Society for History in the Federal Government Newsletter

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## Published Quarterly

The Society is a national professional organization open to all who are interested in federal history programs. Annual membership is \$55, \$35 students, and \$100 for institutions and includes a subscription to *The Federalist*, *Federal History* journal, and other periodic publications. Contributors are encouraged to submit articles, news listings, and photographs to the editors.

Current and back issues are available to members at [www.shfg.org](http://www.shfg.org).

Opinions expressed in articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions of *The Federalist*, the SHFG, or the agencies or organizations where the authors are employed.

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## President's Message

Julie I. Prieto

The past years have seen new challenges for federal historians. A global pandemic shoved many of us out of our offices and into our homes to research, to write, and to try to connect with audiences who were similarly consuming history from behind a screen. For many of us, the ways in which we did our work changed, and we had to reevaluate how to remain relevant in the context of this new reality.

On June 1-2, we met in person to discuss these transformations at our annual conference. Held at the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington D.C., the theme of this year's meeting "Federal History 2.0" allowed us to explore some of the ways we do history both in the digital realm and in print in archives, museums, libraries, and history offices. Together, in the same room, we were able to discuss updated practices. We also thought about some of the ways in which the profession has not changed. The most important of these is our continued commitment to discussing and transmitting historical knowledge to the public.

In the year ahead, the society will focus on several key initiatives. A committee has formed to write a history of SHFG, covering its formation up to the present. Once completed and available on our website, it will allow our membership to better understand the

society's role in supporting federal historians by providing a forum to discuss a wide range of professional issues. If you have ever thought about taking on a volunteer role in SHFG but have not done so, this is a great opportunity to get involved and learn more about the society. Contact [shfg.primary@gmail.com](mailto:shfg.primary@gmail.com) or Mike Reis at [shfghistory123@gmail.com](mailto:shfghistory123@gmail.com) for more details.

In addition, the executive council is finalizing a mission statement for SHFG that will set the priorities of the organization for the next several years. The Oral History Working Group continues to meet and discuss best practices for conducting and writing oral histories today. The goal will be to update the society's guidelines for oral history, which currently date from 1985. The society continues to conduct outreach to area graduate students in public history and will keep reporting on the changes at the National Archives over the coming year.

It is my distinct honor to be president of SHFG for the 2023-2024 year. When I joined SHFG around eight years ago, the members of the society were instrumental in introducing me to the larger field of federal history. They welcomed me into a community of dedicated professionals who care deeply about the past and who engage with public audiences. No matter the challenges ahead in the post-pandemic world, SHFG will continue to serve as a place for us to learn from each other in the years to come.

Julie I. Prieto

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## FEATURE YOUR PROJECT!

Want to spread the word about your work? *The Federalist* newsletter prints information about federal history projects and issues affecting federal history programs.

If you or your organization have news items related to federal history that you would like printed in *The Federalist*, or if

you have a press release, feature article, or profile you would like to contribute, email the editor at [shfgfederalist@gmail.com](mailto:shfgfederalist@gmail.com).

*The Federalist* welcomes contributors with information highlighting news of the profession, or who are willing to describe their projects for the SHFG audience!

## Editor's Note

Well, the annual meeting in early June at the National Archives was a great success! Over 40 scholars made presentations in 10 panels over two days. Participants included graduate students, independent scholars, archivists, curators, cultural resources specialists, and historians. Sixteen federal agencies and three universities were represented. The first day of the conference began with a workshop on jobs in federal history and ended with a networking happy hour. Day two started with breakfast and ended at the District Chophouse. Two great speakers made the event even better. William J. "Jay" Bosanko, Chief Operating Officer, NARA, provided an update on declassification efforts, the presidential libraries, and NARA's priorities in a difficult budget environment. Dr. William "Bill" Barry, NASA Chief Historian, retired, received the 2023 Trask Award. He reviewed his career, and offered valuable lessons about how a federal history program can enjoy success. Thanks to the program committee: Mattea Sanders, Julie Prieto, Billy Wayson, Eric Boyle, Marc Rothenberg, Kristin Ahlberg, Thomas Faith, Jessie Kratz, and Elizabeth Charles.

At the SHFG business meeting, the leadership voted to end the paper copies of the newsletter in early 2024. About three-fourths of those who responded to the online survey favored this course of action. *The Federalist* will also change to become compliant with section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Our goal is to spread the word about the great work SHFG members do, and we want the newsletter to be accessible to everyone. On the SHFG website, *The Federalist* is no longer behind a paywall. Help us get new members by emailing copies of the newsletter to friends, colleagues, graduate students, and anyone you think might be interested. We hope members will contribute articles, announcements, and other materials. Our 2024 deadlines for submissions are January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15.

This issue of *The Federalist* starts with "Cryptologic History Goes Virtual" by Sarah Parsons at the

Center for Cryptologic History. She offers a case study of how one agency remained productive during the COVID-19 pandemic. Next, *The Federalist* highlights how the Federal government is commemorating Hispanic Heritage Month this year. Then comes a list of the new SHFG leadership. This issue has a commemoration for Dr. Joseph P. Harahan, retired Senior Historian at the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). Dr. Harahan won SHFG's Franklin Delano Roosevelt Award in 2022.

Next is an overview of this year's SHFG award winners. This issue contains a fascinating story from the National Archives about how archives helped free 15 wrongly jailed men. We also include reports on SHFG's Membership Committee from Eric Boyle. This issue ends with the usual features: Making History, Recent Publications, and the Calendar.

We need your help! Please send announcements of upcoming events, recent publications, or new programs to us at [shfgfederalist@gmail.com](mailto:shfgfederalist@gmail.com). We also welcome your thoughts on short articles to include in *The Federalist*.



Your editors:  
Susan Dawson,  
James Mitchell,  
and Steve Phillips

## Donate to SHFG

### Support New SHFG Events

Please donate to SHFG's current efforts to organize and promote new events and workshops. These events will provide opportunities for professional development: to meet colleagues, exchange ideas, and learn more about the federal community. We urge you to contribute to our General Fund. You can donate the amount of your choice, either by check or online payment (at <http://shfg.wildapricot.org/Donate>).

Your donations also support all activities of the Society, including publication of *The Federalist* newsletter, *Federal History* journal, and stories and news for our website; our annual conference, the Richard G. Hewlett Lecture; and programming such as occasional tours, workshops, and social events that help students and historians develop in their careers.

*“Cryptological History” from page 1*

symposium, he acknowledged that the history of cryptology and its criticality to national security was not well known or understood by the academic community or the public, even though much had been declassified since the 1970s. This was the reason why he believed a history symposium on declassified topics was important. The symposium grew and expanded throughout the 1990s.

Beginning in 2003 and up until the most recent iteration, the symposium has been held outside the NSA headquarters and in partnership with the National Cryptologic Foundation (a private 501c3 nonprofit organization). It is typically a two-day event with multiple concurring sessions and entirely open to the public. On average, the symposium agenda includes about 60 speakers, some of whom travel internationally to participate, and about 350 attendees.

In October 2019, CCH had just wrapped up the 17th symposium (with a record-breaking 365 attendees), and started planning for the 18th symposium. A date was set for October 2021. All was on track until COVID struck five months later, forcing the staff home in March 2020. By May 2020, some of the staff started to return on a restricted basis, but their work was limited to the most essential CCH functions: responding to historical queries, producing the daily history article for the workforce, and keeping up with deadline-dependent projects.

Planning for a symposium typically takes a full year. It starts with a call for papers announcement, then meanders through various bureaucratic coordination and approvals, and finally concludes with all the last-minute details that are required to host any 300-person event. By September 2020, most organizations (including NSA) still enforced strict rules regarding in-person meetings and outside visitors. There was no way to know when, or even if, restrictions would be lifted. Almost a year away from the initial October 2021 date, CCH was very unclear whether the event could be held at all. So it did what any normal organization would do in an uncertain situation like that—it stalled, hoping that some added time might buy a little confidence in what the future months would hold. By March 2021, CCH concluded that it needed more time and decided to make the announcement that the symposium would be postponed to the following spring, specifically May 2022.

With at least a plan in hand and a year away from the new target date, CCH announced the call for papers, crossed its fingers, and hoped that within 12 months and the vaccination roll-out it would be able to host its in-person event like it had always done in the past. Unfortunately, however, that did not occur. By the end of 2021, many COVID restrictions were still in place. And while airline travel had resumed, it was far from normal operating conditions. Many people were still wary of long-distance travel both from a safety and a practical point of view. Knowing that many people had to make travel arrangements to attend the symposium, CCH was hesitant to plan for an in-person event knowing that there was a high likelihood it could be can-



celed at the last minute.

At that point, the CCH staff began to consider the virtual option. After all, organizations all over the world had pivoted their events and meetings to virtual platforms (with varying degrees of success). It seemed simple at first, but CCH exists within a very large federal government agency—within the Intelligence Community, no less—and it knew that such a pivot would be a monumental undertaking.

The first step was to reach out to the agency’s business application technology experts to pitch the idea and determine whether hosting the symposium would be possible. It was, but it had never been done at the scale CCH was proposing, particularly the number of days, sessions, and speakers. It certainly came with challenges and risks, but CCH decided it was worth doing. In January 2022, with about four and a half months to prepare, CCH decided it would move forward with the virtual solution.

The first challenge was deciding what platform to use. The agency held licenses for a couple different platforms, but exploring the features and capabilities, CCH decided Microsoft (MS) Teams Live Events was the best option for the symposium. MS Teams Live Events allowed for a designated “producer” role, who exercised full control over each session: controlling what screen and audio were broadcasted out on the live feed, muting people, potentially removing people, controlling the question-and-answer chat box, etc.

The second challenge was assembling a team of people who could be dedicated to hosting the symposium online, and preparing for it for the next four months. While the agency lent its technology experts for consultation and support, it would not provide a technology team to run the symposium on behalf of CCH. CCH identified and assigned eight people to different hosting and preparation roles.

The third challenge was deciding where the team would physically sit while hosting the virtual symposium. Normal office spaces at the NSA headquarters prohibit external microphones and camera connections. After engaging with organizations and partners internally, CCH learned of an

available office space outside NSA's secure fence line that met the requirements of the virtual symposium team. It had three private rooms where the team could spread out and host different virtual "breakout" sessions during the two-day symposium and allowed for external laptops to be brought in with microphone and camera capability. So, the next challenge was obtaining government-issued laptops

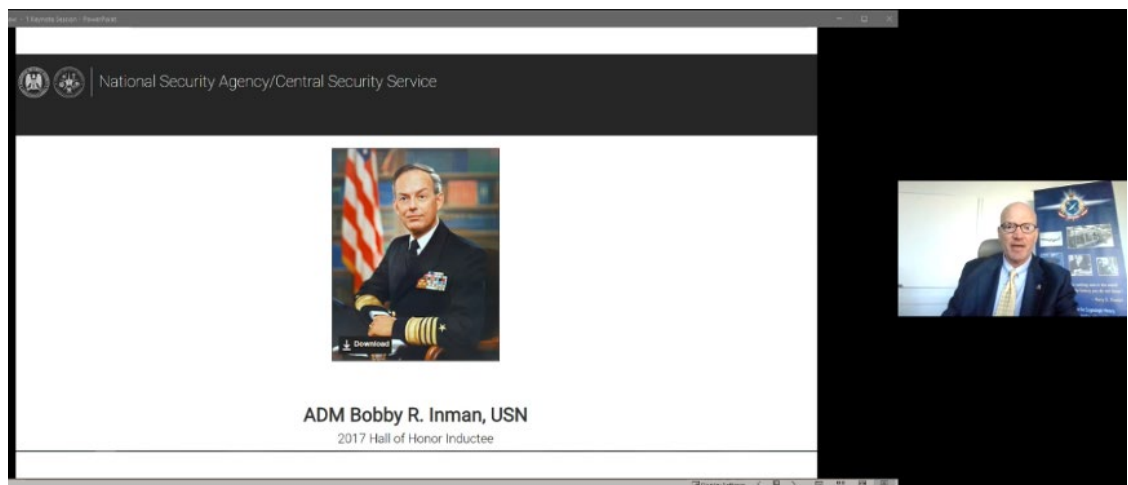
with the MS Teams Live Events application installed. This required symposium team members to apply for telework agreements, something that most did not have at that time.

Once the space and equipment were obtained, the symposium team could then begin its self-taught training to become power users of the MS Teams Live Events platform. The team received an initial overview instruction from NSA's technology experts, but then began rigorous practice and testing, working out issues and bugs with each practice session to eventually become proficient with the application.

With CCH historians now functioning as experts on the MS Teams Live Events application, the next challenge was to train the external speakers who were scheduled to be part of the two-day symposium program. CCH created tailored instruction guides and scheduled training sessions for every speaker. This step, while time consuming, was critical because many speakers had minimal experience with virtual meetings at that time and almost all had never used MS Teams before.

While CCH worried about a potential crash or a hack, the agency's tech experts assured them that it was unlikely to happen because of the way in which they were using Teams Live Events. Most likely, the worst scenario that could happen would be that a speaker forgot how to log in or a power outage. The symposium team planned for every possible contingency and then hoped for the best.

On May 11, 2022, the oldest surviving former director of the National Security Agency (NSA), retired Admiral Bobby R. Inman, USN, logged on to his computer to deliver a keynote address to an audience of roughly 350 virtual attendees. The theme of the Symposium was "Icons and Innovation" and Inman is indeed an icon. Under his leadership as director from 1977-1981, the NSA took its very first steps into the world of declassification, a process which over four decades later now allowed the agency to host such an event where once-classified NSA history could be discussed in a public forum. The agenda featured two days of presentations with three concurrently running tracks, each track being managed by a CCH staff member acting as a

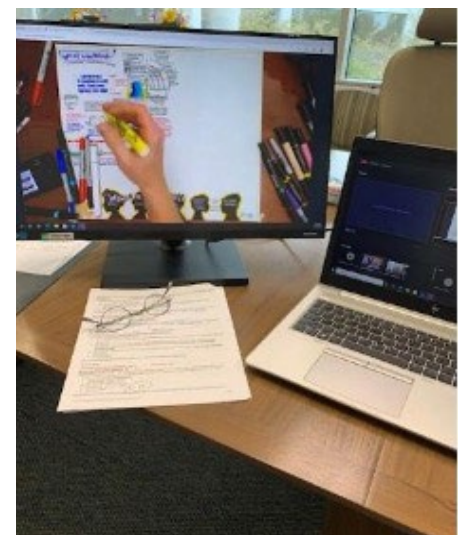


behind-the-scenes broadcast producer and another acting as a front-facing session moderator.

Thankfully, because of the tremendous support from partners and agency leadership, and with a large amount of preparation by the CCH symposium team, historians in CCH proved that they could pull off a large, complex virtual public event when necessary. With only a few minor hiccups that were mostly unnoticed by the audience, two full days were orchestrated without any incidents. Speakers were thankful to have had the opportunity to present their research regardless of the challenges presented by COVID.

The virtual option introduced cryptologic history to new audience members from all over the world who would not usually travel to attend. In addition, the platform could easily record sessions where all the speakers gave their permission to be recorded (viewable at <https://www.youtube.com/@NationalSecurityAgencyGov/videos>). CCH was even able to incorporate a live sketchnoting video feed where attendees could watch a graphic artist illustrate the cryptologic history concepts in real time as the speaker presented. While the symposium is a reunion for many who have become friends over the years and some were disappointed to miss getting together in person, most appreciated that CCH did not have to cancel the event outright.

For anyone interested in the next symposium or other history engagement events offered by CCH, visit <https://www.nsa.gov/History/Cryptologic-History/Cryptologic-History-Symposium/>.



## Hispanic Heritage Month

September 15 to October 15 is National Hispanic American Heritage Month.

Hispanic American Heritage Month begins on September 15 to commemorate the date in 1821 when five Central American nations (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua) declared independence from Spain. It began with House Joint Resolution 1299 of September 17, 1968:

*Authorizing the President to proclaim annually the week including September 15 and 16 as “National Hispanic Heritage Week”. Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled that the President is hereby authorized and requested to issue annually a proclamation designating the week including September 15 and 16 as “National Hispanic Heritage Week” and calling upon the people of the United States, especially the educational community, to observe such week with appropriate ceremonies and activities. Approved September 17, 1968.*

Since 1989, the event has expanded from a week to a full month.

The Pew Research Center has a useful fact sheet:

<https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/09/23/key-facts-about-u-s-latinos-for-national-hispanic-heritage-month/>

### National Museum of the United States Army

The National Museum of the United States Army is providing a program on Puerto Rican Soldiers for Hispanic Heritage Month. The program will be held virtually on October 11 and 18 at noon Eastern Time and both virtually and in-person on October 25 at noon Eastern. The information is below. Those who are interested can visit <https://www.thenmusa.org/public-programs/history-talks/> to register.

In 2016, the 65th Infantry Regiment, nicknamed the “Borinqueneers,” received the Congressional Gold Medal for the contributions “made by hundreds of thousands of brave and patriotic United States citizens from Puerto Rico” who served the U.S. Army “from World War I to the most recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.”

The 65th Infantry traces its origin to the establishment of the First Puerto Rican Infantry Regiment at the conclusion of the War with Spain in 1898. The Borinqueneers served with honor and distinction during World War I and II but due to discrimination were often kept from the front lines. President



Truman’s Executive Order 9981, which ended segregation in the U.S. Armed Forces, gave the unit a chance to prove themselves in combat during the Korean War.

In this History Talk, explore the commitment, challenges, and bravery of the Borinqueneers from the War with Spain through the Korean War. Learn how their actions, along with the thousands of other Puerto Rican veterans, contributed to the Army’s mission. Examine the legacy of their service and impact on the Army.

### Library of Congress, et. al.

The Library of Congress, National Archives and Records Administration, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Gallery of Art, National Park Service, Smithsonian Institution and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum join in paying tribute to the generations of Hispanic Americans who have positively influenced and enriched our nation and society. You can learn more at <https://www.hispanicheritagemoth.gov/>.

Events at the Smithsonian: <https://www.si.edu/events/hispanic-heritage-month>

- The 80th anniversary of *the Palabra Archive* — This year, 50 authors will be added to the archive. The Library plans a series of blogs to highlight the authors and their works.
- **Sept. 21:** *Alejandro Brittes Quartet, Masters of Chamamé Homegrown Concert*—Music from Brazil and Argentina performed by the Alejandro Brittes Quartet in the Coolidge Auditorium (part of the Live At The Library series of free events every Thursday).
- **Sept. 28:** **A danzón class with Corazón Folklórico** at 6 p.m. in the Great Hall. Danzón – accessible to all skill levels and ages – has recently seen a resurgence as a popular dance form with younger generations in Mexico (part of LATL).
- Release of a *Latinx Representation in Film* Research Guide that was put together by the Cine Latine Junior Fellows. Here’s a preview of it: <https://guides.loc.gov/latinx-film-guide>
- **Latinex Alcove Grand Opening** part of the Hispanic Reading Room Open House, which is slated for a LATL event on Oct 5.

National Park Service calendar: <https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/event-search.htm> and <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/npscelebrates/hispanic-heritage-month.htm>



**Department of State:** <https://www.state.gov/state-department-celebrates-heritage-and-history-months/#hispanic-heritage-month>

**National Archives:** <https://www.archives.gov/news/topics/hispanic-heritage-month>

**US Navy, Naval History and Heritage Command:** <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/diversity/hispanic-americans-in-the-navy.html/>

**National Endowment for the Humanities, Teacher's Guide:** <https://edsitement.neh.gov/teachers-guides/hispanic-heritage-and-history-united-states>

## SHFG's New Leadership

Here's the new slate of SHFG leaders. It's a diverse group representing almost 20 organizations.

### OFFICERS

**President** – Julie Prieto, U.S. Army Center of Military History

**Vice President** – Felicia Wivchar, Office of Art and Archives, U.S. House of Representatives

**Past President** – Joel Christenson, Historical Office, Office of Secretary of Defense

**Secretary** – Kenna Howat Felix, National Museum of the United States Army

**Treasurer** – Jessie Kratz, Historian, National Archives and Records Administration

### EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Vanessa Burrows, Food and Drug Administration

Mark Lawrence, Director, Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library and Museum, National Archives and Records Administration

Karen Miller, Command Historian, U.S. Strategic Command

Mircea Munteanu, Office of the Historian, Department of State

Steven Phillips, Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense

Jennifer Ross-Nazzal, Human Spaceflight Historian, NASA History Office

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Kate Hallgren, Historian, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Andrew L. Johns, Brigham Young University & The David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies

Carly Swaim, Carly Swaim Consulting

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Leslie Poster, National Museum of American History, Chair

Mandy Chalou, U.S. Department of State

Julie Prieto, U.S. Army Center of Military History

Felicia Wivchar, U.S. House of Representatives

### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Eric Boyle, Department of Energy, Chair

Karina Esposito, West Virginia University

Mike Hancock, National Archives

Elizabeth Charles, U.S. Department of State

Kristin Ahlberg, U.S. Department of State

## FEATURE YOUR PROJECT!

Want to spread the word about your work? *The Federalist* newsletter prints information about federal history projects and issues affecting federal history programs.

If you or your organization have news items related to federal history that you would like printed in *The Federalist*, or if you have a press release, feature article, or profile you would like to contribute, email the editor at [shfgfederalist@gmail.com](mailto:shfgfederalist@gmail.com).

*The Federalist* welcomes contributors with information highlighting news of the profession, or who are willing to describe their projects for the SHFG audience!

## Remembering Pat Harahan

### 2022 Franklin Delano Roosevelt Award: Joseph P. “Pat” Harahan

The Society was pleased to bestow the 2022 Franklin Delano Roosevelt Award, our most prestigious service award which recognizes outstanding contributions to the study of history of the federal government, to Joseph P. Harahan. Harahan retired in 2010 after 35 years of federal service, serving from 1998 to 2010 as Senior Historian at the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), and from 1990 to 1998 as Senior Historian at the Department of Defense On-Site Inspection Agency, special assistant to the Historian of the Air Force, and staff historian at the Air Force’s Strategic Air Command. Harahan’s DTRA histories and writings about inspection regimes for the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) and Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaties, as well his 2015 book on Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction, are methodical and intensely researched narratives of complex bilateral and multilateral arms control regimes. They are essential for historians working on the topics of nuclear arms control, non-proliferation, threat reduction, and nuclear policy. They are also indispensable to any policymaker seeking to replicate the successes—and avoid the pitfalls—of the inspection regimes associated with these landmark Cold War agreements.

### Personal Remembrances

I first met Pat Harahan in the early 2000s at an SHFG function, I can’t remember exactly when. I was immediately struck by his enthusiasm and generosity in discussing federal work, but also his willingness to listen to others—to their stories.

As editor of *The Federalist* newsletter, I had learned that he had been active in the Society on committees in the 1980s and then served as SHFG president in 1994–1995. He understood the special needs of the federal history community and sought to promote professional standards in any way he could. One of his initiatives was to help start an SHFG workshop program in which members could learn from other federal historians about such common tasks as conducting oral histories and records preservation.

The sensitive and critical nature of his work as chief historian at the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) impressed me as a striking example of the essentiality of historical work in government. The range of his responsibilities and accomplishments demonstrated how historians document and enhance agency effectiveness. During the Nunn-Lugar initiative in 1991 he followed disarmament experts through inspections in the former Soviet republics, looking at missile bases, submarine sites, bomber airfields, nuclear weapons storage sites, weapons production plants, and chemical weapons storage depots. He produced a history of that vital disarmament effort, *With Courage and Persistence: Eliminating and Securing Weapons of Mass*

*Destruction with the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Programs* (2015). He acquired critical knowledge and expertise in the issues of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear arms control treaties and was able to share his knowledge and experiences in lectures around the world. Those complex duties, unknown in academia, proved essential to his agency’s effectiveness.

I spoke with Pat after his presentation at the SHFG conference in Shepherdstown, WV, in April 2015, and felt we had to have his testimony in an interview. He agreed, and the interview was published in *The Federalist*, Issue 50, Summer 2016. It is available at <https://networks.h-net.org/node/5299/h-fedhist-re-sources>. I think his responses show the complexity and difficulties of his work, and his professionalism and creativity as he approached those challenges. But his answers ultimately show and exemplify the full range of federal historical work—interviews, archival research, writing, sharing at conferences, and public education—and how valuable those duties are to our national governance and to democracy. He was a disciplined and skilled historian of the highest order, and demonstrated the best in federal historical work.

—Benjamin Guterman, editor *Federal History*

Though Pat and I never became close friends, he always had a good word for me and for History Associates, my longtime employer, when I would see him at the annual meetings and Hewlett lectures. He was a font of amazing stories and seemed filled with sheer joy at his pure good fortune -- and even fun -- of being a working, dedicated federal historian, by dint of excellent professional skills and positive outlook. I always felt that, like the late Dr. Hewlett himself, Pat epitomized the best things about federal history and the doing of it: the enthusiasm for unearthing true facts about agencies and the optimistic gumption to take such findings and put them squarely and objectively in the hands of decision-makers. As for his commitment to SHFG, perhaps nothing better illustrates that than his volunteering, just over a week before he passed, to join the SHFG History Project Committee. I don’t know if even then he was grappling with health issues, but I was grateful to have been able to send him an immediate note of thanks and invitation, welcoming him to the effort to better understand SHFG and the fruits he as a pioneer of the group had so carefully nurtured.

—Mike Reis, Chair, SHFG History Committee, Senior Vice President (ret.), History Associates Incorporated



Joseph P. Harahan



Working with and for Pat Harahan at the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) from 2005 until his retirement in 2010 was a truly enjoyable experience for me. Before Pat hired me, I had worked at the U.S. Army Center of Military History in Fort McNair and at the State Department's Foreign Service Institute's Language School.

Pat was an entirely different kind of boss from what I was used to and a wonderful colleague. He had a great sense of humor, believed in networking with historians nationally and internationally, and above all, he had an adventurous spirit, curiosity, and a zest for life. A naturally born teacher, Pat acquainted me with DTRA, and its predecessor agencies, history and introduced me to all the people and offices I would be working with, and I was ready to assume my duties in no time. It was a good thing because it turned out, Pat had me hold down the fort during his year-long Fellowship at the Wilson Center (2005-2006) to research and write his book about the U.S. Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program designed to eliminate the danger of nuclear proliferation after the demise of the Soviet Union. Based in part on his own observations and interviews he conducted during site visits as the Onsite Inspection Agency's historian, *With Courage and Persistence. The United States, Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine and the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, 1992-2004* (Washington, 2015) is to this day the seminal account of the CTR Program.

I miss my friend Pat and will always remember him fondly for generously sharing his vast knowledge and experience and supporting the next generation of historians.

—Bianka J. Adams, Ph.D., Historian, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Office of History

I can't actually remember the first time I met Pat Harahan. During the 2000s, I was working on a PhD in Russian and Cold War History at GW, so my guess is that it was at a Wilson Center talk or a SHFG event of some sort. Pat was a fixture at interesting talks and events around DC. When he found out that my dissertation was about Gorbachev and the INF Treaty, he was incredibly supportive of my project and provided me with useful ideas, guidance, and a lot of encouragement along the way! Pat always had great stories to share and was a genuine and generous person who I was fortunate to get to know.

My fondest memory of Pat was during our December 2009 Euromissiles conference, convened in Rome. About 30 scholars working on the Euromissiles crisis gathered and presented papers from a variety of international angles. It was during this conference that I was lucky enough to have dinner with Pat and his wife Ann and a group of people. Pat regaled us with amazing stories of going to Russia and the former Soviet States for the On-Site Inspection teams during the 1990s to confirm the dismantling of INF missiles. As the DoD historian on this team, Pat chronicled the vital work of these inspection teams and the implementation of the inspection regime of the INF Treaty. At this stage of my career, trying to finish my degree, it was amazing to meet an accomplished federal historian who had done such

interesting work. Pat's career and work as a federal historian inspired me to think more broadly about what one could do with a PhD in history.

Pat researched and wrote several monographs on the INF and CFE inspection regimes, and on the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Programs. These works are methodically researched and are indispensable resources for policy-makers and historians studying nuclear topics. I often refer to Pat's books in my current work on the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series. While Pat was an accomplished federal and public historian, most of all he was a great person. For those of us who got to know him personally, we will miss his sense of humor and generous spirit.

—Elizabeth Charles, Historian, U.S. Department of State

I recall that I met Pat during my early years at the Society for History in the Federal Government (SHFG) when I served as the organization's first paid employee, a graduate assistant at the University of Maryland from 1987 to 1989. In addition to our work together at SHFG, we met often at SHFG, the Society for Military History (SMH), and other organizations' annual meetings and conferences over the years. He was always genial, professional, insightful, and supportive. I remember his kind words when we met at the annual meeting, possibly the SMH conference at the Virginia Military Institute in 2010. He had read my first academic publication, an article in the *Journal of Military History* in 2009, and offered profuse praise. They were the first comments I had heard on the piece, and coming from a consummate professional whose work I greatly admired, I found them greatly encouraging. But that was the essence of Pat—always there to offer his professional help or support to a fellow federal historian.

His loss is a great one for the historical community and the people who knew him, like me.

—David Goldman, Independent Scholar

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## Archives Matter!

### Philadelphia 15 Exonerated Thanks to NARA Personnel Records Research

By Cara Moore Lebonick | *National Archives News*

WASHINGTON, August 8, 2023 — The National Personnel Records Center, part of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), recently helped bring closure to one family’s efforts to right an 80-year-long historical wrong.

Larry Ponder knew little of his father’s and uncle’s Navy service. Larry had never heard of the Philadelphia 15 and wasn’t aware his father John Ponder Jr. and uncle James Ponder had received “undesirable” discharges because of a letter they wrote.

It wasn’t until after his father’s death that Larry found the military discharge paperwork in 1997 and began to understand the full story.

Since his father never spoke of his time in the Navy, Larry said he was unaware of what happened to the Philadelphia 15 until he began looking into what happened.

The “Philadelphia 15” was a group of Black U.S. Navy sailors who served aboard the USS Philadelphia just before World War II.

The sailors gained their moniker following a letter they wrote to the *Pittsburgh Courier*, which was published in October 1940. All 15 sailors signed the letter, which described racial discrimination, racially-based abuse, and the inability to advance into higher-ranking positions.

“We sincerely hope to discourage any other colored boys who might have planned to join the Navy and make the same mistake we did,” the letter said. “All they would become is seagoing bellhops, chambermaids and dishwashers. We take it upon ourselves to write this letter, regardless of any action the naval authorities may take or whatever the consequences may be. We only know that it could not possibly surpass the mental cruelty inflicted upon us on this ship.”

As a result of the letter, the men were forced out of military service with either “bad conduct” discharges, or “undesirable” discharges. This deprived them of any entitlements that they or their families may have received from their military service.

It also prevented them from reenlistment, despite their efforts to contribute to the country’s needs during World War II.

The discharge status did not sit well with Larry Ponder, a Vietnam veteran.

“They went through the chain of command and nothing happened,” Ponder said in a 2023 interview with *The New York Times*.

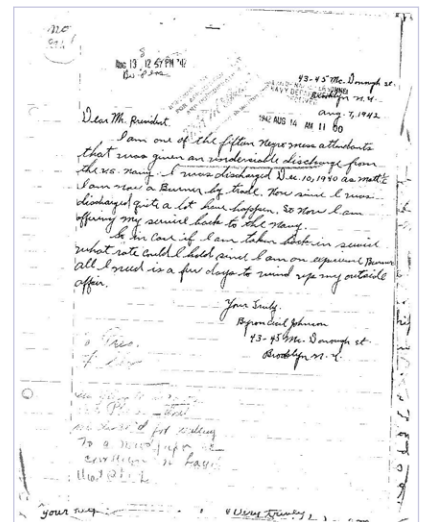
In his research, he found another Black veteran who was granted an honorable discharge 75 years after separation from service.

He reached out to the attorney who had successfully argued the case. She took the Ponders’ cases for free.



Above: *Pentagon ceremony correcting discharge status of Philadelphia 15 with Larry Ponder at the podium surrounded by his family. Photo by John Valceanu.*

Right: *Letter to President of the Navy challenging discharge status. Byron Cecil Johnson, Official Military Personnel File, National Archives, Records of the U.S. Navy.*



During its review of the case, the Department of the Navy requested the Philadelphia 15’s Official Military Personnel Files (OMPFs) from NARA holdings in St. Louis to prove their service.

#### Records for the Navy

The request consisted of little more than a list of names and branch of service, yet the NARA team was able to provide the Navy with sufficient evidence to result in the correction to the sailors’ records.

Kevin Pratt, then Assistant Director of the National Personnel Records Center, served as the point of contact for the Navy.

The project was assigned to Supervisory Archives Specialists Shawn Chevalier and Mersida Planic, and Expert Technician Thomas Richardson.

“We were nervous when we found out how little identification information we had. We thought it would be a project that would take us a lot longer than it did,” Planic said. “I am honored to have been a part of this.”

NPRC staff developed methods to research and collaborate with National Archives at St. Louis staff to fulfill the Navy’s needs.

“We knew that the records would be in the Navy archival registry, but without service numbers and dates, searching just by names would take time,” Richardson said. “We were able to cross reference service numbers using Navy Muster Rolls. Due to the time sensitive nature of the request, the records were delivered directly to our desks, rather than being sent to Veterans Affairs for scanning. We created digital copies of the OMPFs and performed the routine redactions per archival release procedures for delivery to the Navy.”

Archival records are the permanent, accessioned holdings of the National Archives at St. Louis and fully open to the public, subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) B6 redactions.

NPRC handles requests for OMPFs under a contractual agreement to assist the Research Services office of the National Archives at St. Louis. Supervisory Archives Specialist Bradley Abramczyk of the National Archives at St. Louis consulted with NPRC staff to get the correct veterans records.

“It was fascinating going through the records and seeing all of the bad conduct discharges,” Chevalier said. “Only a couple of records referred to the letter that they wrote to the paper. One actually had a letter to their family explaining that they were being mistreated due to penning that letter.”

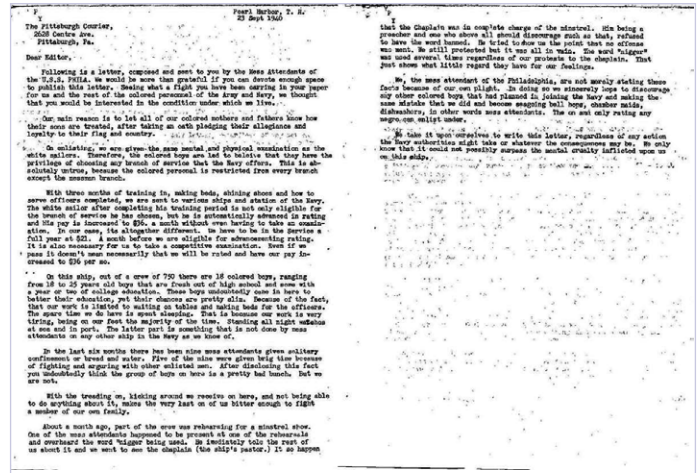
Eighty years after their discharge, the Philadelphia 15’s records now state that they were honorably discharged.

The Navy announced the correction to the records in a ceremony at the Pentagon on June 16, 2023, and NARA holdings were named as a contributing factor.

“It was a great sense of accomplishment to have located every single record so quickly and in knowing that we were able to assist these families in what was clearly mistreatment of these men,” Chevalier concluded.

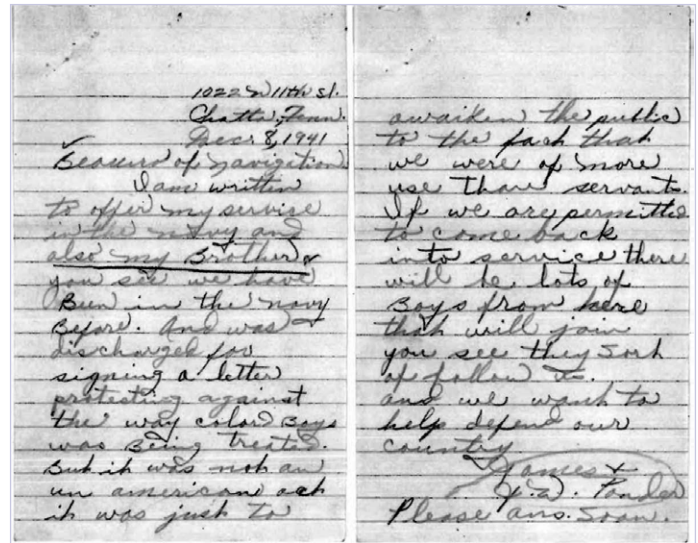
Members of the Philadelphia 15:

- Ernest Bosley
- Arval Perry Cooper
- Shannon Goodwin
- Theodore Hansbrough
- Byron Johnson
- Floyd Owens
- James Ponder
- John Ponder
- James Porter
- George Rice
- Otto Robinson
- Floyd St. Clair
- Fred Tucker
- Robert Turner
- Jesse Watford



Above: Letter to the press from Byron Cecil Johnson’s Official Military Personnel File. National Archives, Records of the U.S. Navy.

Below: Extract of letter requesting reenlistment to fight in World War II from James Ponder’s Official Military Personnel File. National Archives, Records of the U.S. Navy.



## Join H-Fed Hist

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## SHFG 2023 Awards

### Roger Trask Award

William “Bill” Barry,  
*NASA Chief Historian,*  
*retired*

The Society is pleased to honor Dr. William Barry as the 2023 Trask Awardee, in recognition of his innumerable contributions to federal history as NASA’s Chief Historian. As detailed in his award nomination, Dr. Barry brought NASA’s history program “fully into the 21st century” and exhibited an “open and inviting leadership style.” His innovative efforts to forge creative partnerships within NASA and with international and private entities to broadly share “the remarkable saga of space exploration” provide an excellent example of a successful federal history program.

Vibrant federal history programs are essential if agencies are to fully understand where they have been and facilitate the application of the lessons of the past to future operations. With the Trask Award, the Society honors Dr. Bill Barry’s demonstrated commitment to these principles and service to the federal history community. SHFG President Joel Christenson presented the award to Dr. Barry.



### Maryellen Trautman Award

Judson MacLaury, *Chief Historian (retired), U.S. Department of Labor (1971-2006)*

The SHFG Awards Committee is pleased to recognize Judson MacLaury for the 2023 Maryellen Trautman Award for outstanding service to the society. A founding member of SHFG, Judson served two terms as editor to the *Federalist* in the 1980s and 1990s, and was appointed Assistant Editor of *Federal History* in 2011. In recent years, he has directed great energy and initiative toward promoting public awareness and understanding of federal history, and developing and creating the comprehensive [History@fedgov](mailto:History@fedgov) directory of digital federal history resources. Along with a team of colleagues, he launched the Public Education Project, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, with several



engaging and informative educational productions, which provide a remarkable service in furthering the Society’s mission of supporting and sharing the importance of federal history - not just those of us who work in the field, but to all who are touched in some way by the US government.

### Award for Initiatives in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

Smithsonian Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Group (SI-DEAI Group)

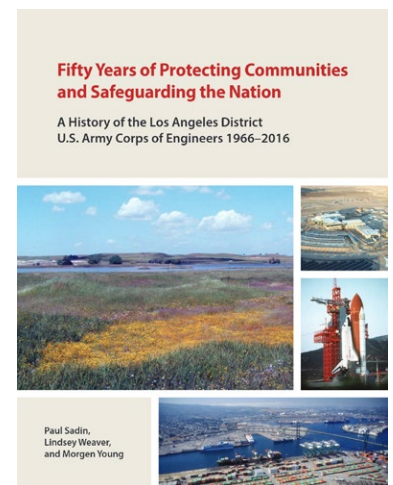
The Society is pleased to award its inaugural DEIA Award to the Smithsonian Institution DEAI group for developing guidelines to make all presentations accessible. The SI-DEAI group is a pan-institution group of staff from across the Smithsonian and focuses on fostering an inclusive environment that seeks to eliminate barriers to participation. The SI-DEAI presenter guidelines consist of presenter recommendations for making all meetings accessible, a list of accessibility resources, and a series of best practices for visual presentations. The Society believes that for this inaugural DEIA award, the SI-DEAI group and their accessibility guidelines are a shining example of the work all federal institutions should be doing to make their workplaces fully inclusive and accessible. SHFG’s Mandy Chalou presented the award to Keats Webb.



### SHFG Member Award

Paul Sadin: *Fifty Years of Protecting Communities and Safeguarding the Nation: A History of the Los Angeles District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1966–2016*

In *Fifty Years of Protecting Communities and Safeguarding the Nation: A History of the Los Angeles District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1966–2016*, Paul Sadin and coauthors tell a nuanced history of the Los Angeles District of the Army Corps of Engineers. The book highlights the diverse and changing work of the unit over a fifty-year period. It provides both a thorough history of work and an analysis of key themes and trends in the Corps’ work during

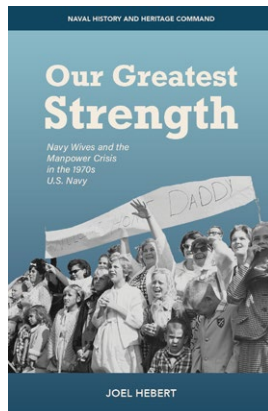


this period, making it a particularly excellent example of federal government history. Further, it highlights both highs and lows of the agency’s history. The clear, accessible writing along with thorough research, including several original oral histories and numerous illustrative images, make this work appealing to both a general and scholarly audience.

**Prize for Article Or Essay**

Dr. Joel Hebert, “Our Greatest Strength: Navy Wives and the Manpower Crisis in the 1970s U.S. Navy,” published by the Naval History and Heritage Command.

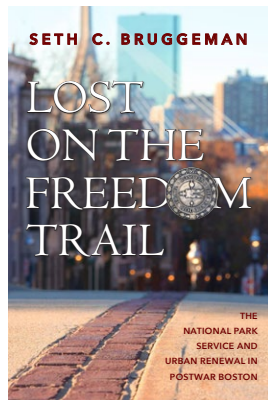
Dr. Joel Hebert’s innovative pamphlet provides a window onto an important and understudied area of U.S. naval history. It provides insight into how the U.S. Navy came to place women and families at the center of its retention policies, and the narrative addresses issues of race and gender, revealing personal stories that provide added depth. It provides a fascinating window into different levels of the Navy, from the office of the Chief of Naval Operations to enlisted men and their wives at the beginning of their careers. The pamphlet also uses records that have been underutilized, setting it apart from other contributions.



**SHFG Book Award**

Seth C. Bruggeman, *Lost on the Freedom Trail: The National Park Service and Urban Renewal in Postwar Boston* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2022).

The SHFG Book Prize Committee is pleased to announce that the winner of this year’s book award is Seth C. Bruggeman, *Lost on the Freedom Trail: The National Park Service and Urban Renewal in Postwar Boston* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2022). Using a wide array of primary sources, Dr. Bruggeman details the multi-decade attempt to “reimagine” the Revolutionary War landscape within the city of Boston. Such a “reimagining” emphasized one dominant narrative above all others and later impacted the development of the Boston National Historic Park. *Lost on the Freedom Trail* is a significant contribution to the literature on historic preservation. It also illustrates the connections among federal, state, and local shareholders, demonstrating the tensions inherent in these relationships.



**Excellence in New Media Award**

Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) History Office’s Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Centennial program (Tomb 100)



The SHFG New Media Award committee is pleased to announce that the Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) History Office’s Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Centennial program (Tomb 100) is our award recipient in 2022. ANC led the Department of Defense’s year-long commemoration of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier’s centennial, which included the creation of six webinars and five video events; two virtual exhibit tours; a downloadable media resource guide; dozens of social media posts; eleven blog articles; a livestreamed flower ceremony with a historian speaker; a livestreamed military procession and aerial review narrated by a historian; and three webpages produced by ANC, the U.S. Army, and DoD. Tomb 100 reflects the ANC History Office’s commitment to exploring broad historical questions, and encouraging the audience to do the same, through virtual and hybrid media formats. The breadth, complexity, and quality of these materials speaks to the ANC History Office’s mastery of a wide variety of electronic media, its scholarly expertise, and its staff’s sensitivity to the profound and nuanced meanings of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

**Historic Preservation and Exhibitions Award**

U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM) History Office, Major General Dennis Nolan Building



The SHFG Prize for Historic Preservation and Exhibits Award Committee would like to recognize the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM) History Office for the 2022 Prize. The committee chose INSCOM’s project in their command headquarters, the Maj Gen Dennis Nolan Building, to utilize work spaces to interpret and display the command’s history. The committee appreciated the innovative approach to present inter-connected exhibits throughout the work spaces that, taken together, told the command’s story and captured its heritage through visual images, artwork, and other artifacts. Mike Bigelow accepted on behalf of INSCOM.

## National Coalition for History (NCH)

From the NCH website: The National Coalition for History (NCH) is a consortium of over 50 organizations that advocates on federal, state and local legislative and regulatory issues. The coalition is made up of a diverse number of groups representing historians, archivists, researchers, teachers, students, documentary editors, preservationists, genealogists, political scientists, museum professionals and other stakeholders.

Since 1982, the NCH (formerly the National Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History) has served as the voice for the historical community in Washington. The NCH seeks to encourage the study and appreciation of history by serving as a clearinghouse of information about the profession and as a facilitator on behalf of the interests of our diverse constituency.

The NCH is a non-profit organization organized under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. NCH is solely supported by contributions from its member organizations and the general public.

Lee White has served as the executive director of the National Coalition for History since 2006. He has over 40 years of experience in government relations with trade associations and professional societies, as well as several years with two federal government agencies as a legislative counsel. White received his BA in political science from Northeastern University, and his JD from The Catholic University of America. He also holds an MA in history from George Mason University.

### Executive Committee

- Jacqualine Price Osafo (Co-Chair) Society of American Archivists
  - Lawrence Paska (Co-Chair) National Council for the Social Studies
  - Alan Kraut (Immediate Past Chair) Organization of American Historians
  - Beth English (Vice Chair) Organization of American Historians
  - James Grossman (Vice Chair) American Historical Association
  - Christopher Brick (Secretary) Association for Documentary Editing
  - Dana Schaffer (Treasurer) American Historical Association
- 
- American Association for State and Local History—John Dichtl
  - American Council of Learned Societies—James Shulman
  - American Political Science Association—Ben Goodrich
  - HISTORY™—Kim Gilmore
  - National Council on Public History—Stephanie Rowe
  - Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations—Amy Offner
  - Society of American Archivists—Bryan Whitlege
  - Southern Historical Association—Rana Hogarth



### Rotating Members of the Board (term ending)

- Council of State Archivists—Joy Banks (2024)
- Society for History in the Federal Government—Bruce Bustard (2024)
- Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History—Kathrine Mott (2025)
- National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators—Dennis Riley (2025)

**Note:** Terms of the Executive Committee and Rotating Members expire at the end of NCH's Annual Board meeting held each January. NCH's Board has four rotating slots, two of which expire each year.

You can get more information at <https://historycoalition.org/>.

SHFG supports the work of the NCH through its membership and financial contributions.

## GET INVOLVED!

SHFG is seeking enthusiastic members to serve on committees and to help with events.

For more information, please visit our website and fill out a questionnaire!

<http://shfg.wildapricot.org/Volunteer>

## Making History

### Society for History in the Federal Government



#### Social Media Working Group

Calling all those who manage social media for federal history offices or cultural institutions (or who may be interested in doing so).

Laura O'Hara (Office of the House Historian) is forming a working group for those in our field who manage social media. She hopes to create an email forum for asking questions and floating new ideas or campaigns, but is also open to meeting quarterly (virtually or otherwise) to discuss common topics.

Among the topics that could be explored and discussed:

- Managing changing technology and platforms
- Balancing social media work with other job requirements
- Approval processes and dealing with politics on social media

If you are interested, email Laura at [laura.ohara@mail.house.gov](mailto:laura.ohara@mail.house.gov).

### Society for History in the Federal Government

#### Future Historians!

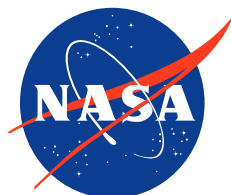
Interested in talking with students about your work? Looking for a way to meet future history professionals and encourage them to think about career possibilities in federal history? For the last three years, SHFG professionals have been meeting over Zoom with graduate students in American University's Public History program to talk about what they do on the job and about their career paths.

Sessions take only about an hour, are very informal, and typically include five to ten students. Past sessions have included historians, curators, educators, archivists, and documentary editors from the National Archives, National Park Service, Department of Defense, and State Department. The next series of discussions are scheduled for this fall.

Bruce Bustard, SHFG's liaison with AU's Public History program, is hoping to create a database of history professionals who would like to participate in this program. If you are interested in volunteering or have questions about how the program works, contact Bruce at [brucebustard@gmail.com](mailto:brucebustard@gmail.com).

### NASA

I write to invite you to consider applying to the Baruch S. Blumberg NASA/Library of Congress Chair in Astrobiology, Exploration, and Scientific Innovation or to pass this invitation on to a qualified colleague.



As a partnership between NASA's Astrobiology Program and the Library of Congress, the Blumberg Chair, an annually

selected position, supports an established scholar in the sciences, humanities, or social sciences to take up residence in the Library's John W. Kluge Center.

The Blumberg Chair creates an opportunity to use the Library's extensive collections to research the range and complexity of societal issues related to how life begins and evolves and to examine philosophical, religious, literary, ethical, legal, cultural, and other concerns arising from scientific research on the origin, evolution, and nature of life.

Within the parameters of NASA's mission, a chair might also seek to investigate how innovative quests for fundamental understanding may lead to major developments for the betterment of society. Barry Blumberg, for whom the Chair is named, conducted groundbreaking research addressing a simple but fundamental question: Why do some people get sick while others, exposed to the same environment, remain healthy? That this work unexpectedly led to the discovery of the hepatitis B virus, the development of a vaccine, and the awarding of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine illustrates the potential for unconventional thinking about fundamental questions to yield great rewards. Using methodologies from the history and sociology of science, the philosophy of science, legal, political, and cultural history, and other disciplines, a Chair might study and tell the story of how a basic research initiative led to completely unexpected discoveries and applications.

Possibilities for research subjects are many and wide-ranging in scope. The following potential topics of research are meant to inspire, not limit, your creativity:

- legal issues related to governance of planets and space;
- within the parameters of NASA's mission, "high risk, high reward" initiatives from a historical, legal, philosophical, or ethical perspective or one that draws on several disciplinary modes of analysis;
- ethical implications of cross-contamination;
- scientific and philosophical definitions of life;
- conceptions of the origins of life in theistic and non-theistic religions;
- comparison of the discussion of these issues in multiple nations and cultures;
- life's collective future—for humans and other life, on Earth and beyond;
- impacts on life and future evolutionary trajectories that may result from both natural events and human-directed activities.

Located in the Library's magnificent Jefferson Building, the Kluge Center offers a rich intellectual atmosphere for research, informal discussion, and exchange of perspectives.

Completed applications are due by October 15, 2023. For further information (including a new, streamlined process which does not require reference letters), please consult the Center's

webpage: <https://www.loc.gov/programs/john-w-kluge-center/chairs-fellowships/chairs/blumberg-nasa-chair-in-astrobiology>.

We invite you to disseminate information about the Chair widely, to your colleagues, academic departments, and personal networks. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

### Some Journals to Follow

The April issue 41 of *Scholarly Editing: The Annual of the Association for Documentary Editing* was published. It can be found at <https://scholarlyediting.org/issues/40>.

*Humanities*, from the National Endowment for the Humanities, is published four times a year. It is at <https://www.neh.gov/humanities>.

*Proceedings of the United States Naval Institute*: <https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings>.

*Army History Magazine from the Center for Military History*: <https://history.army.mil/armyhistory/>

See also *NASA History News & Notes*, published four times each year: <https://history.nasa.gov/histnews.htm>.

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### U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

What's the occupational outlook for historians? You can track prospects for historians at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/historians.htm>.

According to BLS, employment for historians will grow about 4 percent a year from 2021 through 2031. The median pay for historians in the federal government is about \$102,000 a year. The median wage for all historians is almost \$64,000 a year.

### National Archives

Poise, Professionalism, and a Little Luck: The Cuban Missile Crisis 1962

William G. McGowan Theater, Washington, DC, Thursday, September 29, 2022 - 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. EDT

For two weeks in October 1962, the world teetered on the edge of thermonuclear war. Earlier that fall, the Soviet Union, under orders from Premier Nikita Khrushchev, began to secretly deploy a nuclear strike force in Cuba, just 90 miles from the United States. President John F. Kennedy said the missiles would not be tolerated, and insisted on their removal. Khrushchev refused. The stand-off nearly caused a nuclear exchange and is remembered in this country as the Cuban Missile Crisis.

In collaboration with the Army War College and the Naval History and Heritage Command, we present a panel discussion that will illustrate how the history of the Cuban Missile Crisis has changed as new sources of previously classified information

have been released in the 60 years since the crisis. Moderated by Jeff Hawks, Education Director at Army Heritage Center Foundation, the panel will include Steven M. Bye, U.S. Army War College, Dr. Frank Jones, U.S. Army War College (retired), and Curtis A. Utz, Naval History and Heritage Command and author of *Cordon of Steel: The U.S. Navy and the Cuban Missile Crisis*.

This program will be presented in person at the National Archives Museum in Washington, DC, and also streamed live on YouTube.

You can get more information at <https://www.archives.gov/calendar/event/poise-professionalism-and-a-little-luck-the-cuban-missile-crisis-1962>.

### United States Senate Oral History Project

Since 1976 the Senate Historical Office has conducted interviews with senators and staff. The mission of this project is to document and preserve the individual histories of a diverse group of personalities who witnessed events firsthand and offer a unique perspective on Senate history, many of whom may otherwise be missed by biographers, historians, and other scholars. These interviews cover the breadth of the 20th century and now the 21st century. The recording and preservation of these individual oral histories will lead to a fuller and richer understanding of the history of the Senate and of its role in governing the nation.

Transcripts of open interviews are available at the Senate Historical Office, and copies are deposited in the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and the senatorial manuscript collections and appropriate presidential libraries. Select interviews are available on the U.S. Senate website.

For more information about the United States Senate Oral History Project, contact the Senate Historical Office at (202) 224-6900 or via email at [historian@sec.senate.gov](mailto:historian@sec.senate.gov). See also <https://www.senate.gov/history/oralhistory.htm>.

### Combined WHA/SHA Conference, October 2024

The Western History Association and the Southern History Association will hold concurrent conferences on October 24-27, 2024 in Kansas City. The WHA's The 2024 WHA and SHA conferences are concurrent events, not one joint event. The associations will share exhibit space and joining events, but each will maintain their typical programs to ensure that the gatherings are familiar and enjoyable for all attendees. For more information, see <https://www.thesha.org/meeting> or <https://www.westernhistory.org/conferences>.

### National Endowment for the Humanities

WASHINGTON, D.C. (*August 15, 2023*) — The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) today announced [\\$41.3 million in grants for 280 humanities projects across the country](#). These grants will support a documentary by acclaimed filmmaker Stanley Nelson on the life, work, and legacy of jazz legend



Sun Ra; the creation of a set of linked online dictionaries of early Mayan languages; and analysis of pigment traces on the statuary at Paris's Notre Dame Cathedral to create a 3D model depicting the original colors of its medieval façade.

This round of funding, NEH's third and last for fiscal year 2023, will support vital humanities education, research, preservation, and public programs. These peer-reviewed grants were awarded in addition to \$65 million in annual operating support provided to the national network of state and jurisdictional humanities councils.

"These 280 new grant awards underscore the wide range of exemplary, fascinating, and impactful humanities work that scholars, practitioners, and institutions are conducting in all corners of the country," said NEH Chair Shelly C. Lowe (Navajo). "I am especially pleased to announce a number of innovative projects funded through NEH's *American Tapestry* initiative that draw upon the insights of history, literature, culture, and philosophy to help us understand, discuss, and address some of today's most urgent social issues."

This funding cycle includes the first round of awards made under three new NEH grant programs that were created under the agency's [American Tapestry: Weaving Together Past, Present, and Future](#) initiative, which leverages the humanities to strengthen our democracy, advance equity for all, and address our changing climate. Awards made through the Climate Smart Humanities Organizations grant program—which helps cultural organizations mitigate the impact of a changing climate on important heritage collections—will support a comprehensive energy and carbon audit at the Anchorage Museum and the development of a climate heritage plan to protect San Antonio's historic buildings and neighborhoods, including five colonial Spanish missions that are designated UNESCO World Heritage Sites. New Cultural and Community Resilience grants will support community-based efforts to preserve cultural heritage in the wake of climate change and COVID-19. Awards in this category include funding for the Abuelas Project to identify and document stories connected to places of historic importance to Latinx communities in the U.S. and Puerto Rico as well as a grant to enable the collection of oral histories from tribal elders about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Dangers and Opportunities of Technology grant awards will support research on the relationship between technology, culture, and society. Funded projects include a book examining the cultural and ethical implications of digital technology and the resulting "spontaneity deficit" as well as a convening of educators to develop resources on the use of AI technologies in teaching art history and media studies.

This round of funding also includes a \$500,000 cooperative agreement with the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition to digitize and describe 120,000 pages of records from federal Indian boarding schools in conjunction with [NEH's partnership with the Department of the Interior on the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative](#).

Other funding will support public humanities projects such as films, exhibitions, podcasts, and community discussion programs that bring humanities ideas and experiences to large public audiences. Grants will support a new exhibition on art, science, and innovation in the Islamic world; and planning for exhibitions on the evolution of Hawai'i's legal and judicial system and on the history of the Cincinnati neighborhood of Avondale, home to the city's largest African American community. Funding for media projects will enable production of an 8-hour documentary film series examining the U.S. criminal justice system from the colonial era to the present day; a feature-length documentary for PBS *American Masters* on the life and works of author, activist, educator, Holocaust survivor, and Nobel Peace Prize-winner Elie Wiesel; and a podcast series that revisits the stories and themes of Studs Terkel's first collection of oral histories, *Division Street: America*, through interviews with friends and family members of the original participants.

New awards for scholarly editions and translations will support collaborative teams of scholars in producing critical editions of the collected papers of Thomas Edison, the late life writings of poet Walt Whitman, and the letters of popular nineteenth-century American novelist Catharine Sedgwick. Additionally, they will underwrite work on a scholarly edition of the book of Psalms and an annotated English translation of the longest-running Indigenous-language newspaper in the U.S., *Iapi Oaye (The Word Carrier)*, which was published in the Dakota language from 1871 to 1939. National Digital Newspaper grants awarded in 12 states will support the ongoing digitization of newspapers published between 1690 and 1963 for inclusion in the [Chronicling America](#) online database of historic American newspapers.

Additional grants will enable the Norman B. Leventhal Map and Education Center and the American Geographical Society Library to expand the Allmaps software interface to allow for georeferencing of digitized historical maps and will support a digital project that incorporates geographic information system (GIS) mapping technology to explore the cultural, economic, and social influences of four discrete theater districts in London during the age of Shakespeare.

Several newly funded projects will help preserve and expand access to important historical and cultural collections, such as the relocation of Georgia O'Keeffe's personal library to archival facilities at the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum to protect her books and personal effects from environmental damage, and upgrades to storage and environmental monitoring systems safeguarding the collections of the Indiana Medical History Museum. NEH Preservation Assistance Grants will help 61 small and mid-sized museums, libraries, historical societies, and archival repositories improve their ability to care for significant humanities collections. Among these are grants to preserve the University of Houston-Clear Lake's archives relating to the NASA Johnson Space Center and history of space flight and to support cleaning and preservation treatment of audiovisual materials documenting Appalachian history at Appalshop that were damaged last

summer by massive flooding in eastern Kentucky.

NEH Public Scholars grants, which support popular nonfiction books in the humanities, will enable publication of 28 new titles, including a biography of novelist and poet Emily Brontë; a history of the “first color,” ochre, and its use by humans in art and technology over millennia; a book on the educational legacy of a group of nearly 200 Black scholars who attended Harvard University in the early twentieth century known as “special students;” a comprehensive history of anti-Semitism in the U.S. from the arrival of the first Jewish communities in 1654 to the present day; and a group biography of four nineteenth-century women reformers—Lucretia Mott, Sojourner Truth, Lucy Stone, and Frances Ellen Watkins Harper—who

used the lecture circuit to fight for abolition and women’s rights.

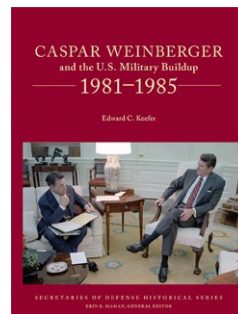
Thirty-seven grants for summer institutes and workshops will provide professional enrichment and research opportunities for K–12 schoolteachers and college faculty on topics such as the history of the 1964 Freedom Summer civil rights project in Mississippi, the ancient Olympics and daily life in the Mediterranean of 100 BCE, teaching Asian American history through community-based archives, and Kansas City during the Jazz Age and Great Depression.

More information is available at <https://www.neh.gov/news/neh-announces-413-million-280-humanities-projects-nation-wide>.

## Department of Defense

The Office of the Secretary of Defense Historical Office is proud to announce the publication of *Caspar W. Weinberger and the U.S. Military Buildup, 1981-1985*. In this tenth volume of the Secretaries of Defense Historical Series, historian Edward C. Keefer details Caspar Weinberger’s role in orchestrating the largest peacetime military buildup in U.S. history and the most consequential military engagements in the last decade of the Cold War. Reagan’s choice of Weinberger as Secretary of Defense was paradoxical given his reputation as “Cap the Knife,” a ruthless budget cutter, which he had honed working for then-Governor Reagan in California and then as head of President Richard Nixon’s Office of Management and Budget. Reagan’s hope was that Weinberger would create a cheaper military expansion by trimming the fat and creating new efficiencies allowing for a cost-effective military expansion. But in practice, Weinberger emphasized the Soviet threat, sheathed his budget knife, and prioritized the buildup. The military services enjoyed record budgets and great freedom to pursue their own priorities, the U.S. defense industry rode the rising budget tide to record profits, and even the average member of the All-Volunteer Force enjoyed increased pay and expanded training. Efficiency and fiscal moderation, however, took a back seat.

Although he was unwaveringly loyal to President Ronald Reagan, Weinberger did not blindly toe the administration’s line in the area of foreign affairs. Weinberger opposed arms control agreements with Moscow, something Reagan came to favor under the weight of the presidency as wrestled with the horrors of nuclear war and saw opportunities for progress amid the generational shift in Soviet leadership that would bring Mikhail Gorbachev to the Soviet premiership. Weinberger



called for the United States to complete its historic buildup before any attempt at negotiations or improved relations with the Soviets, a position that led to standoffs with Secretaries of State Alexander Haig and George Shultz in particular. In Weinberger’s thinking, the military buildup could not be compromised by an early thawing of relations. As a result, he argued that arms control agreements must be verifiable, equal, and in the interest of the United States. He therefore opposed concessions to Moscow in the SALT negotiations and argued that the United States and Soviet Union reduce their Intermediate their Nuclear Forces in Europe to zero. The Soviets considered Weinberger’s approach an attempt to negate their advantage in strategic missiles forces and gain nuclear superiority, not parity. By the end of Reagan’s first term, arms control negotiation saw little progress, which suited Weinberger. The second term would be a different story. Weinberger often found himself in conflict with Haig and even more so Shultz. He opposed their efforts for better relations with Moscow. He was often accused of being anti-Israel and pro-Arab as he advocated closer relations with friendly Middle East nations, his so called “more friends” policy. He was far ahead of the administration when it came time to pick sides in the Falklands War, and proudly described himself as Britain’s assistant supply officer. In the Lebanon crisis, he unsuccessfully opposed American intervention; in the end the United States suffered in Beirut its worst single-day loss since Vietnam, and the peacekeepers left a nation that was still far from peace.

But Weinberger was not always the odd man out. His views on confronting communism in Central America, using China against the Soviets, and keeping NATO allies happy were largely in line with the president’s views and those of the administration. And no one in the administration could complain about his early successes in managing and selling the military buildup. His consistent appeals for more defense spending began to lose their appeal with Congress and the president as federal budget deficit ballooned. Despite his being tainted by second-term Iran-Contra

scandal, Weinberger's legacy as the key conductor of the Reagan defense revolution remains secure. For more information see <https://history.defense.gov/>.

### Congressional Research Service



In June 2023 the Congressional Research Service published “The Eighteenth Amendment and National Prohibition, a seven-part series that discusses the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution. Prior to its repeal, the Eighteenth Amendment prohibited the manufacture, sale, or transportation of “intoxicating liquors” for “beverage purposes” within the United States. Section 2 of the Amendment granted Congress and the state legislatures “concurrent power” to enforce nationwide Prohibition by enacting “appropriate legislation.” The Eighteenth Amendment was partly a response to the Supreme Court’s pre-Prohibition Era Commerce Clause jurisprudence, which limited the federal and state governments’ power over the liquor traffic. As such, the Eighteenth Amendment’s history provides insight into the judicial evolution of the Commerce Clause, which operates as both a positive grant of legislative power to Congress and a limit on state authority to regulate commerce.

As CRS explains, prior to its repeal, the Eighteenth Amendment prohibited the manufacture, sale, or transportation of “intoxicating liquors” for “beverage purposes” within the United States. To enforce Prohibition, Congress enacted the National Prohibition Act or “Volstead Act.” The Eighteenth Amendment and Volstead Act were controversial in part because they empowered the federal government to police activities that implicated individual social habits and morality—a role

traditionally led by state and local governments. Difficult to enforce and widely disobeyed, Prohibition lasted almost 14 years before the Twenty-First Amendment repealed it. You can find this fascinating series here: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/>.

### Air Force Historical Foundation

The summer 2023 issue of the *Journal of the Air Force Historical Association* is now available online at <https://www.afhistory.org/journal-of-the-air-force-historical-foundation-summer-2023-issue/>.

This issue offers interesting articles like “Civil Air Patrol and Civil Rights, 1941-1965” by Frank A. Blazich, Jr. It also includes a feature on “The National Museum of the United States Air Force: The World’s Largest and Oldest Military Aviation Museum.”

As the Foundation Chairman Gen. James “Mike” Holmes explains, Perhaps the Foundation’s most ambitious project for the year is the rebirth of the AFHF Symposium. From September 15-19, this year’s event will include a unique blend of Air and Space Museum presentations, AFHF Vietnam Veteran panel presentations, academic lectures, and the culminating AFHF Awards event that will be held at the Wings Over the Rockies Exploration of Flight Hangar at the Centennial Airport in Denver. All symposium participants, community supporters, and AFHF membership will rally at the Blue Sky Gallery to enjoy a heavy hors d’oeuvres meal, aerial demonstrations, the presentation of the AFHF Book and Article Prizes for 2023 and will culminate with the presentation of the Maj Gen I. B. Holley Award, recognizing an individual who has made sustained, significant contributions to the documentation of USAF Air and Space History during a lifetime of service. This year’s recipient is Col. Phil Meilinger, USAF (Ret.), PhD. We invite all of you to attend this seminal event. Registration will be available soon on the AFHF website.

## FEATURE YOUR PROJECT!

Want to spread the word about your work? *The Federalist* newsletter prints information about federal history projects and issues affecting federal history programs.

If you or your organization have news items related to federal history that you would like printed in *The Federalist*, or if you have a press release, feature article, or profile you would like to contribute, email the editor at [shfgfederalist@gmail.com](mailto:shfgfederalist@gmail.com).

*The Federalist* welcomes contributors with information highlighting news of the profession, or who are willing to describe their projects for the SHFG audience!



# The FEDERALIST

Society for History in the Federal Government Newsletter

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## Federalist Calendar

**Sep 22-24, 2023. Nineteenth Annual Seminar on the American Revolution.** Fort Ticonderoga Museum, NY. [www.fortticonderoga.org](http://www.fortticonderoga.org)

**Oct 18-21, 2023. Oral History Association.** Annual Meeting. Baltimore, MD. [oralhistory.org/annual-meeting](http://oralhistory.org/annual-meeting)

**Oct 23-26, 2023. Western History Association.** Annual Meeting. Los Angeles, CA. [www.westernhistory.org/2023](http://www.westernhistory.org/2023)

**Oct 25-29, 2023. Society for History of Technology.** Annual Meeting. Long Beach, CA. [www.historyoftechnology.org/annual-meeting/2023-shot-annual-meeting-october-2023-long-beach-california](http://www.historyoftechnology.org/annual-meeting/2023-shot-annual-meeting-october-2023-long-beach-california)

**Nov 9-12, 2023. History of Science Society.** Annual Meeting. Portland, OR. [hssonline.org/page/futurepastmeetings](http://hssonline.org/page/futurepastmeetings)

**Jan 4-7, 2024. American Historical Association.** Annual Conference. San Francisco, CA. [www.historians.org/annual-meeting](http://www.historians.org/annual-meeting)

**Apr 3-7, 2024. American Society for Environmental History.** Denver, CO. <https://aseh.org>

**Apr 10-13, 2024. National Council on Public History.** Annual Conference. Salt Lake City, UT. [ncph.org/future-meetings](http://ncph.org/future-meetings)

**Apr 11-14, 2024. Organization of American Historians.** Annual Conference. New Orleans, LA. [www.oah.org/meetings-events/future-annual-meetings](http://www.oah.org/meetings-events/future-annual-meetings)

**Apr 18-21, 2024. Society for Military History.** Annual Conference. Arlington, VA. [smh-hq.org/conf/futuremeetings.html](http://smh-hq.org/conf/futuremeetings.html)

**May 9-12, 2024. American Association for the History of Medicine.** Kansas City, KS. <https://www.histmed.org/meetings>

**May 30-31, 2024. Society for History in the Federal Government.** Washington, DC. <https://shfg.wildapricot.org/Annual-Meeting>.

**Jun 6-8, 2024. Agricultural History Society.** “Borderlands, Marginal Spaces, and Agriculture in Between.” Las Cruces, NM. <https://www.aghistsociety.org/2024-meeting>

**Jun 13-15, 2024. Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations.** Toronto, Canada. <https://members.shafri.org/annual-meetings>

**Jun 19-22, 2024. Society for Civil War Historians.** Raleigh, NC. <https://scwh.memberclicks.net>

**Jun 27-Jul 2, 2024. American Library Association.** San Diego, CA. <https://www.ala.org/conferenceseventsw/node/7>

**Jul TBD, 2024. Society for Historians of the Early American Republic.** Philadelphia, PA. [www.shear.org/future-conferences](http://www.shear.org/future-conferences)

**Aug 1-4, 2024. Society of American Archivists.** Chicago, IL. <https://www2.archivists.org/am2024>