

History Department Newsletter

STUDENT EDITOR: **Naomi Klassen '25** | FACULTY EDITOR: **Philipp Gollner**



John D. Roth '81 pictured on the left. Here he presents at a book release event during Homecoming weekend 2023. PHOTOS: JULIAN GONZALEZ

Goshen College's History: An Era of Reflection and Renewal

BY **Naomi Klassen '25**

As Goshen College nears its 130th year as an institution, students, faculty, and community members continue to reflect on its legacy. The History Department has often found itself in spaces in which current identities of Goshen College are negotiated, and new ones are forged. This past year, as the college continues to evaluate its past and makes plans for its future, has been no exception.

John D. Roth, professor emeritus of history and former director of the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism, provides an evocative overview of GC's history in his most recent book, *A Mennonite College for Everyone(?): Goshen College and the Quest for Identity and Inclusion, 1960-2020*. Roth notes that educational institutions are especially in need of historical storytelling because of the "built-in turnover" of students and faculty. Historical narratives act as a tool for maintaining collective identity in the face of constant renewal, "there is a certain fluidity of identity that is just inherent in this kind of institution." He believes that historical storytelling is essential when considering the divisions prevalent

in our world today, "engagement with history is inevitable and it's healthy." Roth advises aspiring historians to craft clear arguments, while also maintaining "a great deal of humility" in relation to their work. He notes that "part of the effectiveness of history is the degree to which it elicits other narratives, even counter-narratives." This study takes practice and the History Department continues to provide opportunities for students to do so.

The new course "Thinking about the Dead," offered by current history professor Philipp Gollner, includes assignments that encourage students to discover new ways of retelling the history of GC. One group project – "Keeping GC Weird" – requires students to evaluate interesting and controversial moments in the college's past. Kate Bodiker, a sophomore Journalism and Writing double major, was especially impacted by this exercise. The opportunity to explore GC's history informs her place within the school today, "Your knowledge about why something is the way it is, is helpful when you later interact

with it." By understanding GC's past, Bodiker believes we can better respond to its present. Sophomore history major Matthew Dyck echoes this message, "Often you hear stories [about Goshen College] but you don't actually get to look at the primary sources." It was "informative to research Goshen's history at length."

In preparation for his senior thesis, history major Dan Eash-Scott has also come to appreciate the importance of institutional history. He might feature GC's National Anthem debate during 2011-2012 in his thesis. Eash-Scott believes this focus could provide a chance to learn more about "reflective trends in higher education, with particular attention to Mennonite Church context." When asked why he thinks the past few years have inspired new GC-related historical projects, he observed, "Goshen has been constantly evolving, but in the past 20-30 years it feels like it's changed the most quickly and drastically." Historical research is a vital tool for "understanding and acknowledging our past, while still continuing to move towards our future." 🌿

Elizabeth Miller: "1 Year In" Feature

BY Naomi Klassen '25

Elizabeth Miller has been the Director of the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism and on the history faculty since beginning at Goshen College in August of 2022. During her first year at GC, she has especially appreciated collaboration with her dedicated colleagues, interactions with a wide range of students, as well as several energizing projects related to Anabaptist history. In recent months she has worked with history majors Montce Martinez '24 and Ruam Barbosa '24 to create a



database for the Jaime Prieto Interview Collection, containing 252 individual interviews conducted by Prieto with Anabaptists from across Latin America. Martinez created the initial structure for the database and began cataloging and indexing the Spanish-language interviews, as part of the Maple Scholars

program this summer. Barbosa has been working through a smaller portion of Portuguese-language interviews. She has also appreciated being a member of the Amish-Mennonite Museum Committee as they continue to present artifacts and art from the Mennonite and Amish traditions to the broader community. 🌿

Student Internship Check-in: Featuring Ruam Barbosa, Hermione Bean-Mills, Liam Minielly, and Emily Strzelecki



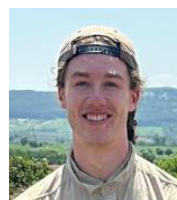
Ruam Barbosa '24 is currently completing an internship at the Mennonite Historical Library and Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism updating

the catalog of the Biblioteca Digital Anabatista em Português (Digital Anabaptist Library in Portuguese) and indexing the Portuguese-language interviews from Jaime Prieto's collection. Barbosa has enjoyed learning more about the history of the Mennonites in Brazil and how they established themselves there. The majority of Jaime Prieto's interviews are with the second generation of Brazilian Mennonites, who experienced the immigration and transition process throughout much of their lives. In the interviews, he has encountered insights from individuals who helped to build the Mennonite community in Brazil today.



Hermione Bean-Mills '25 completed an internship during the summer of 2023, at the Crawford County Library in Crawford

County, Indiana. In this role, Bean-Mills worked with a local genealogist to organize and digitize historical records in conjunction with the Historical and Genealogical Society of Crawford County. One particular highlight was an opportunity to catalog the works of Doris Liestner, a well-known genealogist and historical scholar from Indiana.



Liam Minielly '25 spent four weeks in Rapoltu Mare Romania, on an archaeology dig with the ArchaeoTek Archaeology field

school during the summer of 2023. This dig focused on excavating a Roman Villa in hopes of learning more about the Roman occupation of that area, as well as the inhabitants pre and post-Roman occupation. Minielly helped to open a new trench to see if a wall on the western side of the villa extended outward or traced back into the building. His biggest find on the dig was a Roman earwax scoop along with many ceramic pieces (both Roman and post-Roman). Minielly had a great overall experience and would love to tie some of his work into his upcoming senior thesis.



Emily Strzelecki '25 has been working on the Mara Cultural Heritage Digital Library (maraculturalheritage.org) since April of

2022. Her current project is possible because of a National Endowment for the Humanities grant and part of a partnership with Michigan State University's Africa Online Digital Library. Strzelecki is primarily responsible for digitization and compiling metadata for a database of primary source material from the Mara region of Tanzania. In particular, she has spent most of the last year working on the Siso Collection, which includes interviews with elders and written accounts of these oral histories from amateur historian Zedekia Oloo Siso. Strzelecki's experience in Tanzania for her Study Service Term included the opportunity to create emotional connections and ongoing relationships with some of the interviewees and their families. She is very grateful for the opportunity to work on this historical project. 🌿

New Major: History Pre-Law

BY **Philipp Gollner**,
Associate Professor of US History &
MQR Book Review Editor

History's emphasis on reading and interpreting evidence, appreciating context, crafting arguments, and honing writing and speaking skills makes it an ideal major for students preparing for law school. Some of our recent graduates have gone on to law schools such as the

University of Notre Dame, University of Chicago Northwestern, or Indiana University; others have interned at the Innocence Project, National Immigrant Justice Center, or local law firms. This is not surprising: History ranks at or near the top of all lists of majors who do best on the LSAT, the law school entrance exams - far better, by any measure, than Pre-Law majors.

This new major is tailored to provide the knowledge base, intellectual rigor, and academic skills necessary to prepare students for law school and a legal career. History Pre-Law majors benefit

from requirements that ensure depth in the histories of politics and culture, chronological and geographical breadth, and the skills in weighing evidence and crafting written and oral arguments intrinsic to our history major (and a proven boost to LSAT scores) while allowing for the opportunity to focus on courses especially useful for law school preparation. At very low cost, the college's admissions office gains a marketable major - and the humanities at GC another facet of real-world application with a distinctly Goshen take on justice and public service. 🌿

Faculty Updates



Julia Schiavone Camacho has an academic journal article on Chinese Latinos in Hong Kong, Macau, and Southern China on submission, currently in

the external review phase. A historical fiction piece has been accepted in a Women's Fiction Writers Association anthology, *Feisty Deeds: Historical Fictions of Daring Women*, forthcoming in the spring. The story is inspired by the life of Afong Moy, the first known Chinese woman in the United States, and her male interpreter and attendant, Atung. Approaching the anthology's theme from a different angle, it explores his perspective of Afong Moy, who defied societal and cultural expectations of her time, while Atung had a unique role as a cultural broker. Julia was invited to give a talk as part of a reading group at the Middlebury Public Library this fall. She is also looking forward to chairing a panel on U.S. policy and Chinese experiences within the American empire during the exclusion era at the Association for Asian American Studies conference in Seattle next spring.



Elizabeth Miller presented a paper on the historical development of peace theology among Colombian Mennonites at the Global

Mennonite Peacebuilding Conference in June 2023. Over the past year, Miller has also preached or presented at Hopedale Mennonite Church; Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary's peace colloquium; an ecumenical Colombian peacebuilding effort called Crisálida; and Goshen High School. Miller has also been collaborating with international authors and GC students to publish biographies of leaders from African, Asian, and Latin American church conferences in the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online (gameo.org).



Philipp Gollner continues to serve as the department's chair. In this capacity, he spearheaded the creation of the new History Pre-Law major and its rollout for new students. He participated in the chair's workshop at the American Historical Association, completed his fellowship as a Young Scholar at the Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture through IUPUI and the Lilly Endowment, and, at the end of the last academic year, was also awarded tenure at Goshen College as an Associate Professor.

In May, Philipp conducted research on transatlantic religious migration in London and Stockholm and presented on anti-Mormon European missionaries in the U.S. at the meeting of the Nordic Association for American Studies at Uppsala University

in Sweden in May 2023. His contribution *Our Narrative-Deficit Disorder: On Teaching Religion, Nationalism and Uniqueness* was published in the proceedings of the conference "Religion, State and Nationalism: Possibilities and Problems" by Valparaiso University. In addition, Philipp began a semi-academic podcast on soccer culture, history, and politics, *The Assistant Professor of Football*, which is available on all podcast platforms biweekly.

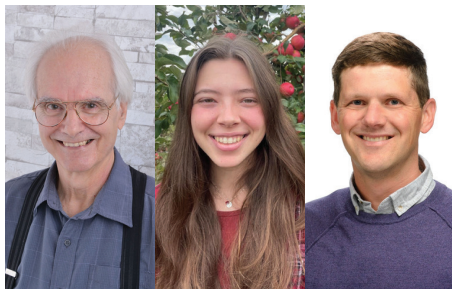


Jan Shetler, director of global engagement and the SST program at Goshen College, is retiring at the end of the academic year! She hopes to spend more

time in retirement on the Mara Cultural Heritage Digital Library and its dissemination in the Mara Region, Tanzania. Jan will present this work at the African Studies Association Conference in November on "The implications of envisioning the past through the digital return of oral sources to Mara communities in Tanzania." In addition, she may get back to more historical research and writing. Her chapter, "Walking as a mnemonic practice for abundance in a storied landscape," in the book *An Anthropocene Journey: Walking as Embodied Research*, Routledge Handbook of Art, Science and Technology Studies, is forthcoming. She welcomes your updates and salutations as she leaves the campus community.

Updates from Former Students: An Archivist Feature

Discussions with Sam Steiner, Olivia Krall, and Jason Kauffman



Tell me a little about your past or current experience as an Archivist. What originally led you to this role?

Sam Steiner: I became the archivist at the Mennonite Archives of Ontario in 1974. It's located at Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ontario. I had finished my B.A. at Waterloo, primarily studying Anabaptist and Mennonite history. I was very taken, especially by the 16th-century Anabaptist story. My grandfather, Albert J. Bishop, had been a bishop in the Ohio Mennonite Conference and was very involved in conference and denominational activities. That family background also intrigued me and attracted me to work in a church's archives. [Sam Steiner has authored *A Mennonite Draft Dodger in Canada: a Memoir*, which is featured in the Mennonite Historical Library in Goshen, IN.]

Olivia Krall: In July of 2023, I started as the Archives Coordinator at the Mennonite Church USA Archives. I got an introduction to archives and public history while working at the Elkhart County Historical Museum during my senior year. I liked the field, so I started looking for full-time positions, and when this one opened up, it all clicked! Working at a small archive means I get to do some of everything. A typical day could include anything from answering research requests and processing collections to ordering supplies, fundraising, and writing articles.

Jason Kauffman: I'm currently an Archives Specialist in the University Archives at Notre Dame where I've worked since September 2022. Before that, I was the director of archives and records management for Mennonite Church USA at the denominational offices in Elkhart (started July 2016). Coming to Notre Dame

was an opportunity for me to be part of a team of archivists working together to preserve, manage, and provide access to the collections under our care. It was also a chance to put into practice some of my digital preservation skills, developing and establishing workflows for storing and preserving our large and growing collection of born-digital materials.

What would you consider as unique and life-giving about Archival work?

Sam Steiner: Working with the raw materials of history was always a pleasure for me, and I always had to guard against spending too much time reading the documents! These included minutes or correspondence between church leaders. If I was really lucky, there might be diaries or autobiographical reflections. The Archives was also a major resource in my writing three books on Ontario Mennonite history. Working in the Archives I almost felt I got to know conference and congregational leaders that had gone before--sometimes both the bad and the good!

Olivia Krall: There is a lot I enjoy! I find research requests really gratifying. I love when someone comes in with an obscure question, and after a few hours of digging in the stacks, I can find the answer. It feels like a treasure hunt! My favorite part so far has been working on processing collections. Every time I work on a new set of papers, I get a window into that person's life; it feels incredibly personal to read people's private letters and diaries. After reading through a collection, I am often struck by a sense of purpose and responsibility since it is my job to help preserve and tell their story.

Jason Kauffman: Working as an archivist is all about finding the best ways to manage and provide access to information. I enjoy the challenge of finding solutions to problems I encounter on the job, whether that's appraising a new collection for its suitability for inclusion in the archives or determining the best way to describe a collection in a finding aid. As someone with a background in history, an added bonus is that I get to learn new and interesting things about the past on a daily basis.

How did your experience at Goshen College prepare you for this profession?

Sam Steiner: I attended Goshen College from 1964 to the fall of 1967. My time there got me fully engaged in the political issues of the 1960s. This piqued my interest in institutional decision-making and the roles of institutions in the life of the church. My ideas about social justice were partly nurtured through my time at Goshen. I would hope the History courses at Goshen today will help do the same for students.

Olivia Krall: Goshen College did a lot to prepare me for this job! My junior seminar class trip to the MC USA Archives introduced me to the idea of archives as a career. Doing senior thesis research at an archive was also helpful, and I encourage current history students to lean into that and spend some quality time with their sources. Most importantly though, Goshen taught me to think carefully about primary sources and to approach them with empathy and the understanding that they came from people with lives as rich and complicated as my own. That has been the foundation of how I process papers and navigate collections decisions in this job.

Jason Kauffman: At Goshen, I learned to think critically about the past and organize and synthesize large amounts of information. I also developed an interest in learning about and documenting the experiences of people and organizations that have been overlooked or poorly understood in the past. I use all of these skills in my work every day.

If you were speaking to your college-age self, what advice might you give them?

Olivia Krall: Local historical organizations (Including the MC USA Archives!) almost always need volunteers and interns – if you are curious about this field, it is worth it to reach out!

Jason Kauffman: If I were speaking to my college-age self, I would say to pursue your passions and remember that all of the interests and skills you pick up along the way will help you, not only in your profession but in life. 🍷