

# THE INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL STUDY

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## NEWSLETTER

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The NEWSLETTER is sent to all Institute members, as well as college and university libraries and other interested scholars. The Institute appreciates all

tax-deductible contributions made by non-members who wish to remain on its mailing list.

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Zoom! Where did those three months go? I hope some of you are finding the summertime a little more relaxing than the rest of the year; I'm afraid it doesn't seem much different to me. Not that I've been working that hard—it just feels like there are a million things to do all the time. There are also a million distractions beckoning. My “insatiable curiosity,” which many of you fellow scholars must share, keeps getting me sucked into the Internet. It's exciting how much information is out there, more and more of it available at our fingertips—and it's a little scary.

When the Institute for Historical Study was founded thirty years ago, networking was done face-to-face, by letter, and by telephone. Books, periodicals, archives and other resources were almost entirely on paper. Few of us had access to, or knowledge of, computers; we were lucky if we had typewriters with a tiny bit of memory. Now we have come to take so many aspects of our digital age for granted, especially e-mail and the Web. The Institute has had a website for about ten years, and we now do most of our communicating by e-mail. The day may come when we will decide we don't need a printed newsletter or roster, but I think we all still take some comfort in actual print on actual paper. We should probably savor any time we are able to spend handling old letters and archives in our research before they are all digitized. And the face-to-face interactions with fellow members of the Institute are still the most rewarding aspect of membership, partly because there's nearly always good food and wine involved!

At the same time, we need to look at how the Institute can adapt to the digital world we live in now. For example:  
- How can we refresh and manage our website ([tihs.org](http://tihs.org))? Can you help?

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## WORK-IN-PROGRESS – Cathy Robbins

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### *All Indians Do Not Live in Teepees (or Casinos)*

Although her manuscript had already been accepted by The University of Nebraska Press, Cathy Robbins said she knew she would have to make revisions. So at a meeting at the home of Anne MacLachlan in Oakland on April 21, she presented an outline of her book: *All Indians Do Not Live in Teepees (or Casinos)*. The book is scheduled for publication in November 2011. Having been a journalist for over 30 years, mainly focusing her work on the American Southwest, Cathy was drawn to write this book by the 1990 return to the Pecos Pueblo (25 miles northeast of Santa Fe, New Mexico) of over 2,000 bodies from Harvard's Peabody Museum. Cathy describes this as the beginning of the return of American Indians to their physical and cultural homes.

The book is the story of the journey of memory into the present. It is about contemporary American Indians, but it has a historical base. It is not a work from the academy; it has been written specifically for non-Indians.

Most Indians have an ancestral home: the Lakota Sioux claim the Black Hills in the Dakotas; the Nez Pierce claim land in Idaho; the home of the Diné (Navaho) is within the four sacred mountains in the Southwest. When a child is born to the Diné, the detached umbilical cord is buried with prayers in a special place, so the child will always know where home is.

Indians have generally become accustomed to modernity, either within an urban environment or on their ancestral homelands. Many return regularly to their homeland, and live as much as possible following their tribal traditions. (For example, creosote is used for medicinal purposes such as an antiseptic.)

For over 150 years, federal Indian policy was aimed at moving Indians off their homelands and integrating them into American society and culture. Children were sent to boarding schools, often run by missionaries, and made to wear western clothes. It wasn't until the 1970s that this policy of paternalism was abandoned by the federal government.

It was also the 1970s when Indians began to reassert their identities. Organizations such as the American Indian Movement, Navaho leader Frank King and his work to build jobs and limit the tribe's dependence on welfare; and the Rosebud Sioux begin their legal fight to get compensation for the taking of their ancestral lands.

A documentary at the Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC, says: Indian Country is really all of us. Wherever we are in this world, we're traveling together on this journey down a thousand roads, all leading home. (Shortly before I began writing this piece, I saw an article on the NPR website about a Navaho woman who had access to her ancestral land in Canyon de Chelley. She talked about how returning to this land every summer was so meaningful to her, and so important for her to bring her grandchildren. Her story illustrates Cathy's main theme.)

*Lorrie O'Dell*

### California Round Table

The California Round Table met on Saturday, April 10, at the home of **Joanne Lafler** to listen to **Anne Homan** discuss her newly published book, *Vasco's Livermore, 1910, Portraits from the Hub Saloon*, and to exchange views on local history and the period of a century ago.

Vasco Urbano Loureiro was a Portuguese artist and world traveler and during a journey around the world, he happened upon Livermore exactly 100 years ago. The book is replete with caricatures of Livermore residents of the period; most of whom at one time or another visited the Hub saloon, a popular watering hole in the Livermore of the early 20th century. Vasco set up shop there and the book is based on the drawings of these principal Livermore burghers and their biographies.

It is a delightful romp through early Bay Area history, but a great deal of the Round Table discussion centered around Anne's efforts to research the biographies and identify the role these men (women, of course, were not welcome in the Hub) played in the history of Livermore of the day.

Anne explained that the paintings had to be located first, and once they were found in the home of one of the descendents of the men who were depicted, she could proceed with the rest of the work of compiling the material for the book.

Anne's co-author is Richard W. Finn, whose task was to "achieve good copies of the drawings," as Anne notes in her Acknowledgement at the beginning of the book. But it was the extensive using of a number of sources, including local newspapers, that fleshed out the drawings and brought to life the 43 men depicted. In addition to concentrating on the subjects of

the drawings, the book also includes a number of photographs of Livermore of the period, and, of course, a photograph of the Hub.

It was an enjoyable and an Anne-imated afternoon's visit through the first decade of the past century, but a larger attendance would have been even better. Other Round Tablers really missed a good time and a fun meeting.

*Jules Becker*

### Biography Writers' Group

In the months since the last newsletter report, the Biography Writers Group has some new members. At its June meeting, **Anne Homan**, a long-time member of the Institute, and past president, presented a draft of an article-length biography of Thomas Davis Carneal, a progressive farm landlord and early graduate of the University of California at Berkeley.

Elizabeth Nakahara presented the introduction to her book-length study of photo-journalists, titled *Hungry Eyes*. The group agreed that her subject is most interesting and her writing very good.

**Rob Robbins** writes: "I am benefitting greatly from the comments being made by the group, both from the specific stylistic changes they have proposed and from their general comments about problems they are having in regard to a manuscript about Russians and Russian history. I have been ruminating about the vexed question of Russian names, how to deal with the fact that Russians have so many forms with which they address each other, last names, first name and patronymic, nicknames, pet names, etc. Also, I am giving much thought to the problem that is

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found in almost any biography, i.e. *The Times vs. The Person*. How should I link my subject to the history he lived through?"

Rose Marie Cleese is working on a biography of her grandfather, San Francisco mayor and businessman Angelo J. Rossi. The group read her chapter "Becoming Mayor (1930-1944)" with much interest.

Ethel Herr has presented more installments in her autobiographical piece with the new working title, *Memoirs of an Unexpected Journey*. Suggestions for clarity have been helpful, and the opinion was expressed by several that the "devotional" passages, while not common reading for many, are vital to help the reader understand how it is that Ethel is living through this difficult time with such peace of mind. Also, it was suggested that more of the comments of Ethel's close friend, Ellen, as she walks through the journey with her, would be helpful and enlightening, especially since Ellen is herself not a religious person.

Elizabeth Thacker-Estrada is preparing for publication the manuscript of her book, "Abigail Powers Fillmore: The Light of the White House." The Biography Writers Group members have shared their insights and experiences on overcoming challenges such as how best to handle conflicting historical accounts of poorly documented yet key events in Mrs. Fillmore's life, whether to use endnotes or footnotes, which citation style to adopt in light of differing formats used in books previously published in the Presidential Wives Series, and creating smooth transitions from one paragraph to another when topics abruptly change. Ann Harlow and Autumn Stanley have generously offered to proofread the manuscript, and Liz looks forward to their expert assistance.

Autumn Stanley continues to refine her "Orchard Wizard," the story of her grandfather's farm in Ohio. Ellen Huppert is revising her chapters in "Lizzie's Story."

*Ellen Huppert*

### History-Play Reading Group

The Play Readers moved backwards through two millennia first reading Sir Terence Mervyn Rattigan's *Ross*, set during and just after WWI, followed by Jean Racine's *Britannicus*, set in the year 55.

Rattigan is well known for many of his earlier plays, especially *The Winslow Boy* (1946) and *Separate Tables* (1954). He was fascinated with the life and character of T.E. Lawrence and in 1960 wrote *Ross*, based on Lawrence's activities during and following WW I. T.E. Lawrence, "Lawrence of Arabia" (1888-1935), is well known for his involvement as British military liaison to the Arab Revolt in WW I. Lawrence's own autobiographical account is to be found in *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, and, of course, in the epic movie "Lawrence of Arabia."

In 1917 Lawrence arranged a joint action against the port city of Aquaba which fell after an unexpected inland attack from the desert. In 1918, in the final weeks of the war, he was involved in the capture of Damascus. Lawrence enjoyed the confidence of General Sir Edmund Allenby as well as being an advisor to Faisal. In 1922, he joined the RAF under the name of John Hume Ross. He was found out and forced out in 1923. For a brief time he was in the Royal Tanks Corps under an assumed name. He was readmitted to the RAF in 1925 and served at a remote base in India until 1928. He left the service in 1935. Shortly afterwards, at age 46,

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he was fatally injured in a motorbike accident close to his cottage in Dorset.

Ross deals with the period when Lawrence has withdrawn from the public eye after WWI. The action takes place at a Royal Air Force Depot near London in 1922, where Lawrence is masquerading as Aircraftman Ross. The play includes dramatic flashbacks to Lawrence's earlier exploits on the Arabian Peninsula in 1916-1918.

The Play Readers then moved back two millennia to 55 C.E. to read Jean Racine's *Britannicus*, a tragedy first produced in 1669. Racine, orphaned at a very young age, was convent raised and then sent to study law. He became enamored of the theater and, as a young man, was befriended by Moliere, who produced his early plays. He soon separated from Moliere and gave his later plays, largely tragedies, to another company.

Britannicus was the son of the Roman Emperor Claudius. Although heir to the imperial throne, he was bypassed by Lucius (Nero as he became known), the son of Claudius' wife Agrippina. In reality, Britannicus lived only briefly into Nero's reign, murdered by him just before his fourteenth birthday. In the play, Britannicus is portrayed as a young man in love with Junia, whom Nero also covets. Racine presents us with two advisors who represent Nero's internal conflict. His tutor, Narcissus, urges him to destroy Britannicus; his mentor, Burrus, urges that he treat him with dignity. Nero yields to his dark side, attempting to possess Junia (who escapes from him by becoming a Vestal Virgin) and by ordering the murder of Britannicus. Much of the action of the play concerns Nero's possessive mother, Agrippina, who struggles, unsuccessfully, to keep control over her son and the Empire.

Anyone interested in joining the Play Reading group please contact Lorrie Odell.

*Edith L. Piness*

### MEDIEVAL STUDY GROUP

The April meeting of the Medieval Study Group was hosted by **John Rusk** and featured guest presenter Mariko Takahashi, a medieval historian visiting from Southern California. Mariko talked about the Catholic Church's doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, the subject of her doctoral dissertation. (Some members thought that the Immaculate Conception was the same doctrine as the Virgin Birth of Jesus.) The doctrine affirms that Mary, from the moment of her conception, was without sin and lived a life free from sin. The belief that Mary had been born without sin, as had Jesus, goes back to at least the twelfth century and was celebrated as a liturgical feast. Although endorsed by the Council of Basil (1431-1449), the doctrine was not formally defined as a dogma by until 1854 by Pope Pius IX.

The May meeting of the Group was held at the home of **Lyn Reese** with **Lorrie O'Dell** discussing a biography by Nancy Goldstone of Joanne I of Naples, titled *The Lady Queen*, who reigned in her own right from 1343 to 1382, a status she fought most of her life to keep. She was married four times. Her first marriage was to a Hungarian cousin who was murdered. Although accused of his murder, she was later exonerated by the pope during a visit to Avignon with her second husband, another cousin who had probably participated in the murder of her first husband. After his death from the plague, she married the King of

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Majorca who had gone mad after spending seven years in a Spanish prison. He was killed while fighting to get back his throne. Her fourth husband was the Duke of Brunswick, a soldier who died defending her in the uprising led by another cousin who then assassinated her. Although she had three children (two girls and one boy) none of them survived her and the throne went to the cousin who led the revolt, the Duke of Durazzo.

*Lorrie O'Dell*

### “Reading in the White House” Library of Congress Symposium

Enthralled as a little girl by the beautiful First Ladies Hall at the Smithsonian Institution, I never imagined that one day in Washington, D.C. I would deliver a presentation about a woman represented there. However, on May 7, 2010, I had the honor of speaking at the “Reading in the White House” symposium at the Library of Congress. I presented “Abigail Powers Fillmore and the Creation of the White House Library,” a talk about the first wife of thirteenth U.S. President Millard Fillmore. The symposium celebrated the publication of the book, *The First White House Library: A History and Annotated Catalogue*, a co-publication of the Bibliographical Society of America (BSA), the National First Ladies’ Library, and the Pennsylvania State University Press. The symposium will always stand out for me as one of the highlights of my life.

The journey to the symposium began in 2001 with the publication of my article, “The Heart of the Fillmore Presidency: Abigail Powers Fillmore and the White House Library,” in the first issue of *White House Studies*. This led to an invitation to join the Editorial Board of *The*

*First White House Library*, and to write an essay, “Abigail Powers Fillmore: First Lady of the Library,” for the book. The Board chose Catherine Parisian (now a professor at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke) to research the Fillmore library acquisitions, compile the annotated catalogue, and write essays on the intellectual underpinnings of the library, the booksellers who supplied the collection, and the bibliographical methods used to create the catalogue. Other contributors to the book included White House Curator William Allman, who wrote about the furnishings of the Library, and Princeton University professor Sean Wilentz (winner of the Bancroft Prize for his book, *The Rise of American Democracy: Jefferson to Lincoln*), who placed the Library in its historical context.

In preparation for the symposium, at Biography Writers Group meetings and at my Work-in-Progress presentation, I received valuable comments on drafts of my presentation from Institute members Rose Marie Cleese, Ann Harlow, Ethel Herr, Anne Homan, Ellen Huppert, Joanne Lafler, Bonda Lewis, Jeanne McDonnell, Autumn Stanley, and Georgia Wright. Bonda coached me on my delivery. I also practiced my talk for interested friends and family members, at the Keystone/Progressors Meeting at the Burlingame United Methodist Church, and at the March Arts & Culture Salon at San Francisco Public Library’s Excelsior Branch, where I am branch manager. The support of everyone who helped me prepare for the symposium will remain a special memory for me.

My husband, Hedwing (Edwin) Estrada, lent his support by accompanying me on what was his first visit to Washington, D.C. At a dinner held at the University Club the night before the symposium, we met Mary Regula, the president and founder of the National First Ladies’ Library. On the morning of the symposium

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

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Edwin and I took a tour of the Thomas Jefferson Library exhibition led by the Chief of the Rare Book and Special Collections Division at the Library of Congress, Mark Dimunation. (Jefferson's books formed the foundation of the Library of Congress.)

The symposium took place in the Mumford Room of the Madison Building, where John Cole, Director of the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress, welcomed guests. Catherine Parisian spoke, and John Bidwell, former president of the BSA, presented copies of the book to the National First Ladies' Library and the White House. During the break, I met Jean Baker, who wrote the definitive biography of Mary Todd Lincoln, and Carl Anthony, author of several collective and individual biographies of First Ladies. Following lunch, I spoke on the panel "First Ladies, Reading, and Culture in the White House." My presentation, which included images of portraits, paintings, and photographs, was well received. The symposium concluded with the Plenary Address delivered by Professor Wilentz. I returned home thoroughly inspired to complete my biography of Abigail Fillmore (1798-1853) for publication.

Elizabeth Thacker-Estrada

### A Visit to the "Floating White House"

On Sunday, May 16th, six Institute members and two non-members (who came in lieu of a member who wasn't able to join us) enjoyed a splendid tour of F.D.R.'s presidential yacht, the USS Potomac, berthed at Water Street at Jack London Square in Oakland. The boat has been restored by the Potomac Association. A volunteer docent, Don Ucello, gave us a most informative hour-and-a-half tour, describing the history of the vessel and F.D.R.'s relationship with

the boat. The "Floating White House" was originally commissioned the USCG Cutter Electra in 1934. In 1936 it was renamed the USS Potomac and served as Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Presidential Yacht until his death in 1945. He frequently used it to conduct business when he wanted to get away from the White House or to meet with diplomats or other important personages. Dockside tours are available three days a week; those who missed this tour may want to go individually.

Nancy Zinn

### Members News

**Jeanne McDonnell** reports that the Juana Briones house in Palo Alto has been selected by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of the 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in the United States in 2010. This annual list highlights important examples of the nation's architectural, cultural and natural heritage that are at risk for destruction or irreparable damage. The designation, a powerful tool for raising awareness and rallying resources to save endangered landmarks in every region country, has been applied to more than 200 threatened one-of-a-kind treasures in two decades. Only seven have been lost.

**Bill McPeak's** book exhibit runs throughout July to early August. *Renaissance Books: A Printed Journey from Ancient through 16th century Thought* highlights history, philosophy, and science as seen in the minds and works of authors and printers of books between 1535 and 1610. The exhibit can be seen at the Mission Viejo Central Library (Mission Viejo, CA), Heritage Hall.

As part of its year-long 80 anniversary celebration, the Berkeley City Club offered four public readings in June of **Judith Offer's** "Scenes from the Life of Julia Morgan." (Morgan designed the Women's City Club in 1929.)

**Jackie Pels'** Hardscratch Press received three awards in this year's BAIPA (Bay Area Independent Publishers Association) competition: "Best Memoir" for *Autumn Loneliness: The Letters of Kiyoko and Kiyoshi Tokutomi, July-December 1967*; "Best Cultural History" for *The Life Story of Henry Ramsey Jr.*; and "Best Regional History" for *Family After All: Alaska's Jesse Lee Home, Vol. II, Seward 1925-1965*. This spring's new book from Hardscratch Press is *Vasco's Livermore, 1910: Portraits from the Hub Saloon*.

David Rosen gave a paper at the annual conference of the North American Society for Oceanic History in Mystic, Connecticut in May, "Port Security in New York Harbor in World War II: The 'El Estero' Fire."

Maria Sakovich edited and oversaw production of *Building Richmond's Schools*, a book based on Richmond Museum of History newsletter articles by schoolteacher Helen Pence.

Autumn Stanley's book *Raising More Hell and Fewer Dahlias* has been reviewed by the library journal CHOICE and rated as "Recommended." "Sad to say," Stanley reports, "the review contained errors--such as getting the name of Charlotte Smith's first magazine wrong--but it was good to have the review, and also to have the book recommended."

***Globalizing Feminisms, 1789-1945:  
Rewriting Histories***  
**Karen Offen, Editor**  
(Routledge, 2009)

The twenty articles presented in this collection reveal the extent to which new scholarship has positioned feminisms as crucial global movements toward women's emancipation. Karen Offen has used her well established connections with fellow historians throughout the world, often through her participation in the International Federation for Research in Women's History, to collect and edit this seminal collection. The two action verbs featured in the title, "globalizing" and "rewriting," reveal much of the book's thrust. Terms such as reinterpreting, rethinking, redefining, reassessing, and reclaiming, appear in the text more than once as authors, in Offen's words, "challenge and transform our understandings of a variety of historical issues that have formerly been addressed strictly from male-centered, purely national perspectives."

Offen explains that she selected articles featuring "the work of historians who analyze and compare development in more than one national context [and]...raise questions about transnational feminist organizing across national countries." This focus is much needed given the recent path-breaking new perspectives on transnational efforts in the West, plus work from Japan, India, China, the Middle East, and Australia. In non-Western regions in particular, new analysis that identifies indigenous roots to feminist discourse as well as the influence of imported Western ideas is presented. Also described is cross-border activism as well as obstacles encountered as feminists have worked together in these international arenas.



## BOOK REVIEW

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The book's time period, from the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789 to the end of World War II, is described by Offen as a turning point that gave rise to practical efforts to embody principles of rights, liberty, and equality on behalf of women as well as men. Most important, it saw women's first ventures into international organizing. The book is divided into four thematic sections with introductory remarks by Offen at the beginning of each. Following a rough chronological order, it starts with "Opening Out National Histories of Feminisms"; "Rethinking Feminist Action in Religious and Denominational Contexts" follows. There is a large section called "Birthing International Feminist Initiatives in an Age of Nationalism and Imperialism." "Reconceptualizing History Knowledge Through Feminist Historical Perspectives" completes the book

Some pieces pose intriguing questions. Offen's own piece, "Was Mary Wollstonecraft a Feminist?," sets the stage. Later, Leila J. Rupp asks what in the early first wave of women's movements drew women together across the borders of nationality? What contributed to their sense of being internationalists, as well as members of discrete national, ethnic and religious groups? How was a collective identity defined, and in what ways did unacknowledged assumptions about the natural leadership of Euro-Americans limit truly world-wide participation in the internationalizing effort? Other articles discuss aspects of women's international connections that have been left in the shadows by most earlier historians. I was particularly taken with such less-explored topics of the religious roots of a number of secular feminists activities, as well as the actions of feminists within, or on the fringes of, organized religions. New assessments of earlier assumptions are equally intriguing. Examples include Francesca Miller's challenge of

previous understandings of the story of Latin American feminist

interactions with North Americans, and Marilyn Boxer's re-reading of sources which led her to rethink past paradigms that had denigrated feminist international movements as "bourgeois," thereby making this area of research anathema to many scholars. Boxer's work underscores the fact that a more complete understanding of the global nature of women's rights' activism demands the type of questions and research being done by the scholars in this collection.

*Lyn Reese*

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *continued*

- Could you compile an e-mail list of people to personally invite to join the Institute?
- Do you have a website you would like linked to the Institute's?
- What wonderful history resources have you found that aren't yet listed on our site?
- Should we do an online survey about our members' needs and wishes?
- How can we be more relevant to younger historians?

Please email me ([annharlow@pacbell.net](mailto:annharlow@pacbell.net)) with your ideas and how you might be able to help. And before you put down this old-fashioned printed piece, I suggest you enter our upcoming events (from the back page) in your traditional and/or electronic calendars. Attendance has been pretty slim at some recent events. Please plan to come whenever you can, as we continue to celebrate our 30th anniversary, and please invite new potential members.

*Ann Harlow*

# CALENDAR

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| July 18      | Work-in-Progress – Georgia Wright                        |
| August 15    | Work-in-Progress – Joanne Lafler                         |
| September 14 | Special Program at San Francisco Public Library: The WPA |
| September 25 | Potluck  |
| October 23   | California Round Table                                   |
| November 13  | Annual Dinner  |

Members are encouraged to let us know all their news – a paper being given at a conference; a new job or position; the awarding of a grant or fellowship. Please send all material for the NEWSLETTER either by e-mail to [msakovich@juno](mailto:msakovich@juno) or to the Institute's postal address given below. Also, we welcome the opportunity to review members' newly published books. Contact **Autumn Stanley** at [autumn\\_stanley@sbcglobal.net](mailto:autumn_stanley@sbcglobal.net). The deadline for the next NEWSLETTER is **August 31, 2010**.

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