

The Institute for Historical Study Newsletter

Volume XV, No. 1

Spring 1994

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I want to present a brief update of events involving our organization and the unfortunately named Institute for Historical Review, which denies the existence of the Holocaust. As many of you may know, two representatives of the Institute for Historical Review made an appearance at our open house during the annual meeting of the American Historical Association this last January, and they left behind samples of their literature on our display table. In addition, they attempted to hold a session at the convention by falsely representing themselves as an AHA-affiliated organization, which we are. These events constitute one more example of the many times the Institute for Historical Review either has traded on our good name or caused confusion about who we are and what we represent.

In response to these recent events, the board decided to send letters to the Executive Director of the American Historical Association, informing him of what happened, and to *Perspectives*, the newsletter of the organization, making clear the differences between our organization and the Institute for Historical Review. You will find those letters reprinted immediately below.

As an additional response to our difficulties at the conference, we chose "Denying the Holocaust: How to Fight the Deniers" as the topic for our own annual meeting in February. As those of you who attended know, the meeting featured outstanding presentations by Oscar Berland and Jack Boas, followed by a lively discussion. As you will read elsewhere in this issue, one major theme of the presentations and discussion was that it is important not to give respectability to the deniers by debating with them as if they represented one side of a serious, scholarly disagreement. Nonetheless, the members present also concluded that it is important to clear up any confusions within the scholarly community about our identity that might arise from the similarity in names.

There is no guarantee that we will not face this problem for some years to come. However, in conformity with the consensus formed at our annual

meeting, we will take steps whenever necessary to make clear to other scholars our commitment to serious historical research and the complete difference between us and the Institute for Historical Review.

—Michael Griffith



LETTERS TO THE AHA

1) To the Editor of *Perspectives* (Newsletter of the AHA), March 18, 1994.

Dear Sir:

As president of the Institute for Historical Study, an AHA-affiliated organization, I am writing to make clear the strong differences between our organization and the unfortunately named Institute for Historical Review, which falsely represented itself as affiliated with the AHA and made appearances at the last AHA convention in San Francisco.

Chartered by the state of California in 1980 and based in the San Francisco Bay area, the Institute for Historical Study is a group of independent scholars committed to the research, writing, and discussion of history. Among our activities, our organization holds regularly scheduled meetings at which members present and engage in critical discussion of their ongoing research projects.

We have *absolutely no* connection with the Institute for Historical Review, and we deplore in the strongest terms their attempts to deny the historical reality of the Holocaust. Their efforts are in fundamental conflict with the goal of rigorous historical research which we seek to encourage.

Sincerely,

Michael Griffith
President

2) To Samuel R. Gammon, Executive Director of the AHA, March 18, 1994.

Dear Mr. Gammon:

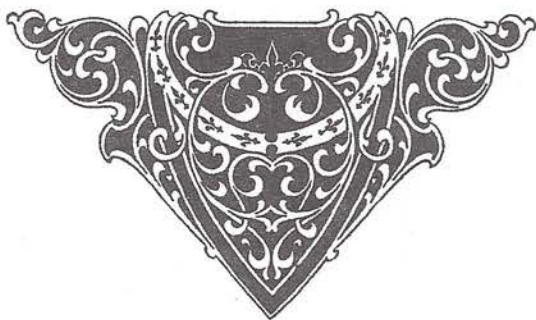
As president of the Institute for Historical Study, an AHA-affiliated organization, I am writing to call your attention to the appearances of the unfortunately named Institute for Historical Review at the last AHA convention in San Francisco.

As you may know, members of the Institute for Historical Review, a group which denies the historical reality of the Holocaust, made several efforts to participate in the convention. To our great distress, several members of the group showed up at our open reception and left samples of their literature before we detected their activity. In addition, the group attempted to host a session at one of the convention hotels, securing the room, as I understand it, by falsely representing themselves as affiliated with the AHA and advertising the session by posting flyers on the bulletin boards at the convention headquarters.

While I realize there may be limits to the ability of the AHA to police its convention, I would ask that the organization investigate what steps can be taken to prevent a recurrence of these unfortunate events.

Sincerely,

Michael Griffith
President



ANNUAL MEETING

Part One: Before Lunch

Attended by the usual suspects and a goodly number of new or infrequently encountered members, the Annual Meeting of the Institute was held on 26 February at the Laurel Heights campus of UCSF. Someone should study this behavioral pattern.

The report on the programs of the year was made in an unusually condensed form, doubtless the result of Lorrie O'Dell's experience in running meetings at

the Bank of America. The Institute rolls on, sponsoring panels and co-sponsoring events, scheduling monthly Works-in-Progress, and trying to keep track of group activities. For the record, IHS sponsored a panel at the annual meeting of the Western Association of Women Historians and co-sponsored a film program with the San Francisco Historical Society and the California Historical Society. The Institute's long-lived cells include the California History Roundtable, the Play-reading group (looking for a new director), the Classical Anarchists, and the Nineteenth-Century Study Group (both by now misnamed, since the first reads all sorts of old things without benefit of expertise while the second plumbs the psyches of its members). Punctuating this round of serious endeavors were the gala picnic, potluck, and dinner (the latter followed by talks on the Turner Thesis).

Wolfgang Rosenberg, treasurer, flew in from the East Coast and stayed long enough to allay suspicions that he had run off with the assets. He says we have \$14,000 in the bank, and while this seems wildly improbable, Marian Kassovic, our bookkeeper, backs him up. We give out \$800 in Minigrants twice a year, with deadlines of 1 May and 1 November.

Elaine Rosenthal, editor-in-chief, reminded members to send in their news, a chorus familiar from its inevitable repetition on such occasions. Patricia Swensen, in charge of scheduling Works-in-Progress, will try to arrange these regularly on the third Sunday of each month at 2 p.m. Good luck, Patricia! Elaine and Patricia are plotting together to line up reporters for these. The solution seems to be to have the presenter find a reporter (other than him- or herself) for his or her Work-in-Progress.

—Georgia Wright

Part Two: After Lunch

Jack Boas and Oscar Berland presented a program titled "Denying the Holocaust: How to Fight the Deniers," which included about ten minutes from a film video finished in 1991, "The Truth Shall Make Us Free," and ended with a stimulating discussion.

To those who lived through the World War II years, it is difficult to believe that a strong movement exists that denies the events of the Holocaust, which were perpetrated on Europe by the Nazis under Hitler.

The speakers presented materials illustrating denials of the Holocaust: 1) high-school teachers report that some students complain when presented with Holocaust information and discredit its veracity; 2) some college students demand proof that the atrocities occurred; 3) ten percent of the Italian population believe the Holocaust never happened; 4) in Brazil

and Japan, best-selling books deny the existence of the Holocaust, etc.

Such disbelievers as David Duke, Arthur Butz (the Holocaust is "the hoax of the 20th century"), neo-Nazis, white supremacists, and some black nationalists want to deny this aspect of recent history. They seek to rewrite history to put power into the hands of revitalized fascists "on an international scale." Their aim is both to "cleanse" the recent past of negative views of Nazi and fascist actions and to make their goals of present and future racism and religious bias, especially against Jews, intellectually respectable through "false scholarship."

The insidious agenda of the "movement" seeks to perpetrate this false information in order to appeal to college students, to various scholars, and finally to demagogues, in order to rewrite history to expunge the facts as reported by eyewitnesses, and thus to promote their own political and philosophical bias.

After the formal presentation, there was some discussion about how IHS should handle its problems with the Institute for Historical Review [see above]. Jack Boas made clear that the "deniers'" underlying position of anti-Semitism encompasses a belief in a pervasive Jewish conspiracy to hold power and control the media. There were many questions about how individuals could or should combat this when they encounter it. There seem to be no absolute answers other than to attempt to fight it on an individual basis; giving deniers a public forum only helps them in their purposes.

—Masha Zakheim

NEW OFFICERS OF THE INSTITUTE

The board has elected new officers for the coming year. They are: Michael Griffith, President; Doris Linder, Vice-President; Jack Boas, Secretary; Wolfgang Rosenberg, Treasurer; and Nancy Zinn, Membership. Also serving on the board are: Al Baxter, Catherine Ann Curry, Frances Keller, Elaine Rosenthal, Patricia Swensen, and Masha Zakheim.

WORK-IN-PROGRESS

Georgia Wright

Some twenty-five members and guests gathered on 29 January in the Berkeley home of Lyn Reese to enjoy the rough cut of Georgia Wright's 45-minute videotape tour of Anglo-Norman and Gothic architecture, "Three English Cathedrals: Norwich, Lincoln, and Wells." Georgia had her editor, Charles Ragland, on hand to deal with whatever technical

questions she couldn't handle (not many), and it was a friendly and very supportive audience.

Georgia introduced the video by stressing that it was indeed a rough cut; that is, changes would be made and were being planned. The narrator, who described the cathedrals as though writing a letter to a young relative, will instead speak directly to the audience, which will be comprised of high-school juniors and seniors as well as college and university students. The 45 minutes is almost evenly divided among the three cathedrals, and the video opened with the oldest—the one in Norwich—which was started in 1096 following the victory thirty years earlier by William the Conqueror and his Normans over the Anglo-Saxon residents of England.

Georgia not only used her video to show off the cathedral, she also threw in some fascinating history about what took place in the following centuries, including the burning of outer buildings by an angry mob of townspeople in 1272 and the replacement of the original wooden ceiling with stone in 1463. The architecture is Anglo-Norman, with the present flying buttresses added much later.

The video then turned to Lincoln Cathedral, an example of English Gothic, which was begun on a hill in 1185 after an earthquake ruined the original Anglo-Saxon church. The early cathedral contained huge patterned Gothic windows, but most of the original glass has been destroyed in wars and revolutions. The present cathedral has unobstructed spaces filled with bright light, thin piers, a central rib in the ceiling, and light and dark stone, all of which are evident in the video. The ceiling design was copied in other areas of England.

Wells Cathedral, in southwest England, was also begun in the 12th century after the tensions of the 1066 invasion had subsided. It is Norman in shape, with thin piers and light-filled halls, with a tall Lady Chapel for public services. By the time the third cathedral had been shown, members of the audience were bursting with questions and comments, although some could not contain themselves and occasionally interrupted during the showing.

The video will be accompanied by a teacher's guide. For non-art historians, the video was a delight and a treasure of information. For art historians, it was obviously of great interest. We can hardly wait for the final print and a chance to see the completed project.

—Jules Becker



Spring 94

BOOK REVIEW

Lucia Chiavola Birnbaum, *Black Madonnas: Feminism, Religion and Politics in Italy*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993, xx, 273 pp., illus. \$35 (cloth).

Focusing on a topic of current interest in feminist and religious studies, (for example, a recent talk at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco was titled "Rediscovering the Lost Feminine in Christianity"), *Black Madonnas* links pre-Christian beliefs and the "civilization of the goddess" with peasant culture and radical politics. Using a wide variety of sources: historical, folkloristic, theological, as well as her own field research in Italy, Lucia weaves a rich tapestry about the significance of these black figures for the history of civilization.

A U.S. historian by training, this author has evolved a multidisciplinary, highly anthropological framework in this study. Her earlier book on the feminist movement in Italy, *Liberazione della donna: Feminism in Italy* (Wesleyan University Press, 1986), is a precursor of some of the ideas explored in the new work. One of the central premises is set forth in Chapter Two:

In Italy sanctuaries of black and brown madonnas are located in areas known for religious heresy and characterized by politics of equality and justice. This is not, as a critic has stated, "geographical determinism," but an instance of what [Antonio] Gramsci and others have pointed out, "that religious beliefs may influence political behavior, and that beliefs associated with ancient sites . . . may persist, often on nonverbal levels over long periods." (p. 33)

Black Madonnas describes twenty-five sites of shrines to the dark image, three *Carnevale* festivals, and a Sicilian Easter procession as examples of the "multicultural dimensions of black madonnas." Not an easy read, the book is filled with peasant folklore and myths, which evoked in me memories of stories and expressions heard from my immigrant parents and experiences I've had while visiting my Italian relatives. The most common 'swear word' my father used was *Madonna!*, and I even have a black madonna story. Some years ago I was taken by a maternal cousin to *La chiesa dell'Assunta* (Church of Our Lady of the Assumption) near Morbegno, a formerly-walled town dating from the Middle Ages. In this ancient church, my cousin whispered to me that the statue of Mary, once a *madonna bruna* (dark), had been whitened. In Italy, as in many other countries, dark skin was considered inferior to white, especially for peasants to whom the lighter skin was a status symbol, a sign that one was wealthy enough not to have

to work out in the sun all day. Lucia cites several instances of dark-skinned madonnas in Italy that have been whitened by the Church.

The work's multidisciplinary approach is powerful in combining feminist history, folklore, sociology, and theology, but its most salient aspect for me, a social anthropologist turned historian, is its gathering together of the strands of Italian (and everyone's) his/herstory: African, Phoenician, Egyptian, Asian, Semite, Greek, Byzantine, etc., suggesting that racial distinctions are spurious. The author also posits that the preservation of black madonnas symbolizes peasant resistance to relinquishing pre-Christian beliefs, and the whitening of the statues is the Church's reaction to this heresy.

My own heritage, from peoples in the Italian Alps, is a *mélange* of Mediterranean, Germanic, Celtic, and Asian. Recently, there was a PBS documentary on the 4,000-year-old skeleton found in an Alpine glacier near the Austro-Italian border, which is thought to be that of an Asian man. The dialect my parents spoke was influenced by the Celtic language, since Celts as well as Mongols passed through the area, a fact that probably accounts for the red hair of some cousins and the Asian eye folds of others. So, with this multicultural, multiracial background, I resent being categorized as "Anglo" as much as I do the Mafia stereotype. Everyone in the world is of mixed background; people have been traveling and combining throughout the ages. If *Black Madonnas* contributes to the breaking down of racial categories, not only in this country but throughout the world, it will indeed be a major contribution.

—Rose Scherini



ANNOUNCEMENTS

IHS MINIGRANTS

The deadline for the next round of Minigrants is **1 MAY 1994**; get your applications in now! The Minigrant Review Committee has prepared a 2-page

"Information for IHS Minigrant Applicants." What follows is an edited selection of the most important points. For those of you who wish to apply, we suggest writing the Committee at the IHS address and requesting a copy of the complete Guidelines:

... The primary purpose of the IHS Minigrant Program is to further serious historical scholarship by members through partial payment for necessary support services, or for ancillary work and related expenses, which nonindependent scholars often get from their academic tenure or sponsoring institution. Financial need of an applicant is not a factor and is not judged. . . . We have rejected applications that indicate either intent to supplement living expenses or substantial existing grant support from elsewhere.

Typically, IHS Minigrant awards have been used to pay for duplicating, photocopying, translating, travel, or conference registrations, but they are not limited to such. Obviously, lack of financial resources tends to be a factor we must weigh; yet we have had no hesitation to make awards to applicants without financial need, strictly on the basis of the scholarly merits involved, in line with the overall aim of IHS to enhance and advance the serious study of history.

Here's what we want to see:

Applications should state the scholarly purpose of the project, the content, scope, and relevance of the work, the status of completion, the relation to IHS principles, and the specific intended uses for the grant funds. While there is no bar against projects that are receiving other funding, or ones that are expected to generate income from the results, we obviously tend to be sympathetic to and supportive of applicants for whom there is no readily available source of scholarship support. Our aim is to "make the difference" in helping an IHS member-scholar, who might not otherwise be able to complete a worthy piece of sound and preferably original scholarship, attain the successful completion of it. So we definitely want to know how an award would make a difference in furthering the work, and whether other resources for supplementary support work are available. Necessary documentation on anticipated costs and the scope and content of the project is of course essential.

In 1993, we determined that grants to applicants who had shared their project with other IHS members at a Work-in-Progress

session would get preference, other factors being equal, over applicants who had not engaged in this kind of peer review and discussion. Thus, WIP exposure is a definite plus, but it is not a requirement.

... Serious scholarship is expected; all fields of historical study are eligible; prior award recipients are not excluded but first-time applicants get preference.

1 February 1994.

Correction

Anne Richardson wishes to clarify an error in the Newsletter regarding the profession of l'abbé Germain Marc'hadour, whom she is happy to be able to commission [through an IHS Minigrant] to translate from Latin a contemporary account of the heresy trial of William Tyndale. Father Marc is not a monk, but a diocesan priest affiliated with a convent of Franciscans in Angers, France, and founding editor of *Moreana: Bulletin Thomas More*.



BEAM US OVER, CONSI

Two Institute members, Betje Klier and Carl Guameri, were among the seven American scholars who spent a Utopian weekend in France in October at the "Colloque international: Fourier, Fourierisme et Fouriéristes." This was the first major international conference in the twentieth century devoted to either Charles Fourier or Victor Considerant, and commemorated the centenary of the death of Victor Considerant, the most influential of Fourier's followers. Those attending were from forty universities worldwide.

Carl's presentation, "Les Fouriéristes américains et la révolution de 1848," emphasized the close connections between French politics and the American press in the last century.

Betje and Jonathan Beecher, of UC Santa Cruz, participated in the session devoted to Victor Considerant who, along with Victor Hugo, was exiled from France to Belgium at midcentury. Considerant continued to the US and founded a Fourierist colony near Dallas, of which only a cemetery and the colony's name (the latter as Reunion Tower, a high-rise building) remain today. Beecher published a biography of Fourier in 1986; the French translation was released just prior to the conference and was featured in Parisian bookstores.

Spring 1994

Who was Considerant, this follower of Fourier, who thought of Texas as the promised land? Fourier had said that a society should be judged by how it treats its women; in June 1848, Considerant introduced a bill allowing women the right to vote. A draft was prepared but did not come to a vote, and was omitted from the official published minutes of the session. However, in the unofficial minutes in the Archives of the Chamber of Deputies is this note: "Mr. Considerant says that in a Constitution where the right to vote is given to beggars and servants, it is inconsistent and unfair not to grant the same to women." He requests that a record remain of the protest made against an unfair exclusion."

After the failure of his east Texas colony, Considerant moved to San Antonio in 1857, where he lived for thirteen years. He eventually returned to France and died in Paris in December 1893.

—Betje Klier



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Michael Black wrote an article, "Tragic Remedies: A Century of Failed Fisheries' Policy on California's Sacramento River," which will be forthcoming in *Pacific Historical Review*. He also has "Recounting a Century of Failed Fisheries' Policy on California's Sacramento River," forthcoming in *Conservation Biology*.

Jack Boas's new book, *Wartime Diaries of Jewish Teenagers: Eva, David, Moshe, Yitzhak, and Anne*, is being published in April 1994 in Dutch in the Netherlands. It will be brought out here in an English version slanted more to younger readers. Jack also has an article, "The Role of Deception in the Destruction of the European Jews," that appeared in the March 1994 issue of the *Annual of the Netherlands Documentation Institute*.

Congratulations to Edith Gelles, who was corecipient of the Herbert Feis Award for 1993, given by the AHA—a most prestigious award. Edith received

it for her book, *Portia: The World of Abigail Adams*, published by Indiana University Press in 1992.

Paula Gillett received summer fellowships in 1993 from the American Council of Learned Societies and the California State University in support of her project on "Musical Women in England." She has signed a contract for publication of her book on this subject. Congratulations! Paula also gave presentations at the North American Conference in British Studies held in Montreal and at the Western Conference on British Studies held in Albuquerque.

Quentin Griffiths reports publication of his article, "The Nesles of Picardy in the Service of the Last Capetians," in *Francia* 20:1 (1993). In March 1994 he spoke on "Royal Counselors and Trouvères in the Houses of Nesle and Soissons," at the Medieval Association of the Pacific, held at the University of Washington.

Pamela Herr edited *The Letters of Jessie Benton Fremont* together with Mary Lee Spence. Published by the University of Illinois Press in 1993, the volume includes 271 annotated letters along with a general introduction and seven chapter essays.

Alison Lingo presented a paper entitled "The Professionalization of Apothecaries in Early Modern France: The Battle over Boundaries," which she presented at the Western Society for French History held at Missoula, Montana in October 1993.

History of Medicine

Luciana Lombardi has written "La Musica: Four Centuries of Women Making Music," a concert program, with notes, artistic direction, and translations, which had three performances in January and March by the Santa Cruz Chamber Players and the First United Methodist Church of Campbell. The program presented rediscovered music by European, American, and Brazilian composers from the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries.

Peter Mellini is co-chair of the Western Conference on British Studies meeting at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in October of this year. Peter invites proposals for papers or panels on any subjects relating to British History and Culture. Manuscripts should be sent to Peter Mellini, c/o History Department, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, CA 94928.

Peter Palmquist's *Camera Fiends and Kodak Girls II: Sixty Essays by and About Women in the History of Photography 1855-1965* will be published by Midmarch Arts Press, New York, this spring. The first volume in this series was published in 1989. He is

Spring 1994



working on a revised and enlarged second edition of *A Bibliography of Periodical Writings by and About Women in the History of Photography 1850-1994*, which will contain more than 3,000 citations indexed to the women photographers. Peter also announces that he has opened an archive devoted to resources connected with the history of women in photography. The archive, which is still in need of a name, features a collection begun in 1971 containing information on more than 10,000 women photographers around the globe. In addition, it contains more than 600 books on women photographers, and collections of original photos, artifacts, and ephemera related to the subject. The purpose of this new archive is not only to collect data and materials about women in photography but to actively promote research in the field and to allow for publication and distribution of the results of this research. One of the immediate needs of the archive is the production of a catalogue. We wish Peter much success with his new archive.

Agnes Peterson, newly retired from official duties at the Hoover Institution, is busy at work on her own projects in her new office at Hoover, equipped with computer and telephone. She wrote "An Insider's View #7: World War II Holdings at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace," for the *World War Two Studies Association Newsletter*, No. 50, Fall 1993. She is currently at work on a project dealing with the history of "Captured German Documents" after World War II.

Anne Richardson has been invited to give a paper in September at the conference at Oxford University celebrating the 500th year of the Bible translator and human-rights pioneer William Tyndale (1494?-1536). She is also on the program of speakers for the Tyndale conference in July, to be sponsored by Catholic University of America and the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. *William Tyndale and the Law*, (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth-Century Journal Publishers, 1994), a collection of interdisciplinary essays Anne has coedited with John A. R. Dick, will come out in June. She is most grateful to Institute members for their support and vetting of her contribution to the volume, "William Tyndale and the Bill of Rights."

Mae Silver wrote "Centennial Journey," stories of the Midwinter Fair, and "Walk-Thru Legacies of Midwinter Fair in Golden Gate Park—Tour Map." She gave a slide show on March 17 on "Midwinter Fair Women Artists." She also presented in-service training to the faculty of Rooftop Elementary School on Rancho San Miguel.

Peter Stansky reports the forthcoming publication (in May) with coauthor William Abrahams of

London is Burning: Life, Death and Art in the Second World War, by Stanford University Press.

Our best wishes to **Rosalie Stemer**, who is now Rosalie Feldman and lives in Morristown, New Jersey. We're happy to report that she will continue as a member of the Institute.

Ruth Willard had her paper "Evolution of the Equal Arm Balance in Ancient Egypt" published in March in the *Cahiers de Métrologie: Une activité universelle; Peser et mesurer a travers les âges (11-12) 1993-94*, (Proceedings of the VIe Congrès International de Métrologie Historique in Lille, France, September 1992). She has contributed "Egyptian Metrology ca. 3800 B.C.-1873 A.D." to the *Encyclopedia of the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine in Non-Western Cultures*, forthcoming in 1995 by Garland Publishing Co. Ruth taught a course on "Sacred Places of San Francisco" to the Elderhostel program of SFSU, February 5-12. She also gave a slide lecture, "The Lasting Influence of the 1893 World Parliament of Religions and the 1894 Midwinter Fair," as part of the "New Threads in the Religious Tapestry of San Francisco, 1894" programs sponsored by the San Francisco History Association celebrating the centennial of the San Francisco Midwinter Fair of 1894.

Marist College Technology

NEW MEMBERS

John Rusk received his BA in history from Indiana University, and completed all work towards a PHD in the same subject except for finishing his dissertation. His field was Early American colonial history, with an emphasis on 18th-century maritime history. He had a career in the United States Navy, from which he has retired. He is currently an independent computer programming consultant. John is still interested in maritime history and has added Mayan archaeology to his interests. He is a member of the American Historical Association, the Society for Nautical Research, and an associate of the Institute for Early American History and Culture. He learned of our Institute through the AHA, and attended our reception there. He looks forward to the opportunity to "talk history" with other members.

Other new members, since they were voted in as the Newsletter was going to press, will have their "bios" appear in the next issue. Meanwhile, welcome to these new IHS members: **Kate Hearst**, **Christopher Newton**, **Dora Roth**, and **Vicenza Scarpaci!**

