

W&M

ARTS AND CULTURE



Patrick Willis '11 directs alumni and current members of the Gentlemen of the College singing the William and Mary alma mater.

Two Decades of Khakis and Blue Blazers

Celebrating the Gentlemen of the College ~ ALEXANDRA HART '11

Ask any girl on campus and she will tell you that the Gentlemen of the College is more than just an all-male a cappella group. These blue-blazered, khaki-wearing handsome young men truly live up to their name. ~ The Gentlemen was started in January of 1990 by a group of friends dedicated to music and looking for a fun, casual singing style. At the time, the only other small singing groups on campus were the strictly classical Christopher Wren Singers and the Botetourt Chamber Singers. In the beginning, there were no auditions and no set practice schedule. Despite their humble beginnings, the Gentlemen received several gigs that spring, appearing several times at “Change of Pace,” singing at a William and Mary basketball game and even serenading a marriage proposal. ~ “Our final concert that first year was at Ewell Recital Hall, and we were so worried that no one would show up,” says Mike Fitch '93, one of the founding members of the group and its director for three years. “As it turns out, the entire hall was filled and the back was standing-room only.” ~ Since then, the Gentlemen have appeared on TV shows like ABC News’ *Good Morning Charleston* and *The Price Is Right*. They have also performed at a variety of venues including the White House, the United States Capitol, the National Constitution Center and the Greenbrier Hotel. ~ The weekend of their final concert this spring was a historic moment for the Gentlemen, marking their 20th anniversary. Many alumni came back to the College to catch up with old friends, meet the new Gentlemen and share stories with fellow members. The Gentlemen Banquet, hosted at the Hospitality



House, held 53 Gentlemen and their guests. The program included a miniature performance of a song from each class year since 1990. Between each song, different alumni got up and talked about their experiences with the group; inside jokes, tour catastrophes and bonding moments. Also scattered throughout the evening were events like the Gentlemen “Academy Awards,” with nods given to *Titanic*, *Lord of the Flies* and “Real World: Middle Earth” for Best Picture. Also given throughout the night were Gentlemen Tour Awards, which included the “Plaxico Burress Award” for worst-dressed Gentleman and the “Gray Powell Award” for most forgetful Gentleman.

Despite the generational gaps between classes of Gentlemen alumni, a common thread holds each of them together. Their love of singing and the strong tradition that the original members sought to create runs throughout the room as each Gentleman laughs at a video montage from years before their time or a joke from years after they graduated. In his speech at the end of the night, Fitch said:

“Each Gentleman is connected to every other in this incredible web. You can draw a line down the list of Gentlemen connecting all the guys who have sung together or been friends countless times. It’s that connectivity that has kept the Gentlemen so strong.”

Since that first concert, the Gentlemen have continued to bring in a huge turnout at their final concerts every year and have added a variety of other entertainments to their set list. Anyone who has ever seen the Gentlemen perform knows that they are

more than just an a cappella group. A long tradition of skits and their famous final “movie” make their concerts entertaining even for non-music lovers. This year’s final concert featured the Gentlemen’s production of *The Chronicles of Narnia* with some slight deviations from the original plot. For example, the all-male cast takes on female characters such as the White Witch and Lucy Pevensie with apparent zest. The audience loved seeing Christian Pelfrey ’11 appear in a tiara and wand for his role as the witch.

In the Gentlemen’s rich history of concerts peppered with skits, one moment has stood above the rest. In a feat fondly known as “the toothpaste skit,” each freshman member of the Gentlemen is required to brush his teeth and rinse using a shared mug of water. After all of his friends have finished swishing and spitting back into the mug, the last unlucky freshman is required to drink the entire mug of toothpaste water to a resounding cheer from the audience.

“Through my years in college, it was nice to have such a tight-knit group of friends that sometimes you loved and sometimes you couldn’t stand,” says Tim Honeycutt ’00. “Even though rehearsals are just two hours twice a week, somehow it becomes much more than that.”



Top: Fifty-three current and past members of the Gentlemen of the College joined to celebrate 20 years of men’s a cappella harmony at William and Mary. **Above:** Mike Fitch ’93 (left), the Gentlemen of the College’s co-founder and first music director (1990-93), and Patrick Willis ’11, who will be the group’s music director for 2010-11.

The experience of having a close group of friends with a shared interest has kept many Gentlemen coming back over and over again. Fitch remains as dedicated to the Gentlemen today as he was when it first began. He has not missed a final concert since the group’s conception, and although he enjoys watching the changes in the group, he knows that the fundamentals are still the same.

“One thing that hasn’t changed over the last 20 years is that moment at the final concert where they give the seniors away,” says Fitch. “You get a glimpse into what it means for each of those guys to have been a part of this organization. The one thing that is the same is the commitment to each other and to the Gentlemen.”

[BOOKNOTES]

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

In *Voice-Over Voice Actor: What It's Like Behind the Mic* (Bug Bot Press 2009), **Yuri Lowenthal '93** and Tara Platt engage the reader with an overview of what it takes for aspiring voice actors to enter the industry. Lowenthal has performed in over 200 video games and in television series such as *Ben 10: Alien Force* and *Wolverine and the X-Men*. His and Platt's book details the preparation required for successful voice actors, as well as the ins and outs of a competitive and behind-the-scenes industry.



BIOGRAPHY

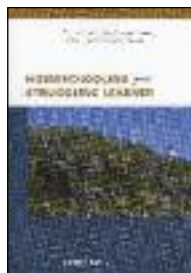
Josh Sundquist '06 tells his unique story in the bestselling *Just Don't Fall: How I Grew Up, Conquered Illness, and Made It Down the Mountain* (Viking 2010). At age 9, Sundquist lost his left leg after a battle with Ewing's sarcoma. Since then, he has set his sights on becoming a champion skier while pursuing a successful career as a motivational speaker. Throughout *Just Don't Fall*, Sundquist relates the thought process-



es of a young boy undergoing difficult medical procedures while simultaneously having a “normal” adolescence en route to becoming a young man.

EDUCATION

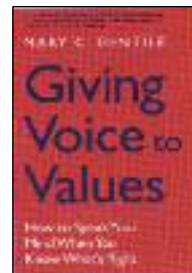
Kathy Kuhl's '79 latest book, *Homeschooling Your Struggling Learner* (Learn Differently LLC 2009), offers advice and help to those parents of children with learning disabilities. Kuhl discusses the option parents have of homeschooling children who would otherwise struggle in the public and private educational realms, but also helps those parents already encountering the challenges of this task to decide whether this is their best option. Providing goals, resources and encouragement to families pursuing homeschooling as an option, Kuhl also offers insight from 64 interviewees across North America, each with their own experience of homeschooling a child with learning disabilities and each with their own message to send.



ETHICS

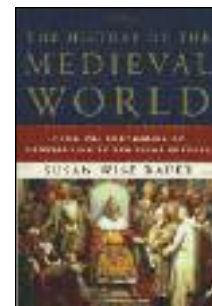
When workplace conduct begins to cross the line from normal to unethical, employees frequently are at a loss on how to proceed. *Giving Voice to Values: How To*

Speak Your Mind When You Know What's Right (Yale University Press 2010) is **Mary C. Gentile's '75** way to prepare readers for such conflicts before it's too late. As the director of the “Giving Voice to Values” curriculum at Babson College in Wellesley, Mass., Gentile offers her expertise on how to align your ethics and beliefs with your principles in the workplace.



HISTORY

American literature professor **Susan Wise Bauer's M.A. '94, Ph.D. '07** latest book, *The History of the Medieval World: From the Conversion of Constantine to the First Crusade* (W.W. Norton & Co. 2010), explores the struggle for power, the intertwining of church and state, and the quest for nationhood during the crucial era between 312 and 1129 A.D. Not only does Bauer discuss the despotism of such western historical figures as Constantine, Augustine, Charlemagne and Henry IV, but she also incorporates the histories of Persia, India and China as their own dynasties clashed with the overlapping Roman and Byzantine empires. In particular, Bauer investigates the impact of world religions on medieval politics and, ultimately, the course of history.



NONFICTION

Al Albert '69, M.Ed. '71, former team member and coach of Tribe soccer, has recently released a pictorial history book entitled *William and Mary Men's Soccer* (Arcadia Publishing 2010). Through 200 vintage photos, Albert chronicles the William and Mary men's soccer team from its humble

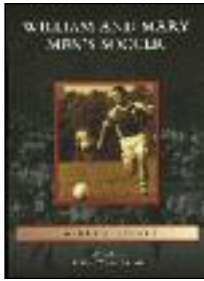
[WEB EXCLUSIVE]

His indie-rock music has been compared to that of Ben Harper and Jack Johnson, and is now available on iTunes. His latest film, *Rock Slyde*, will soon be available via the Netflix video on-demand service. As the landscape of entertainment evolves, **Jason Manns '02** is riding the wave and playing on a screen — and an iPod — near you.



www.wmalumni.com/?tribe_spotlight_011

beginnings as a club team in the 1960s to the exemplary intercollegiate program it is today. With a foreword from former Tribe soccer player Jon Stewart '84, D.A. '04, the book recounts several decades of memories which the team and its members experienced, and makes readers aware of the lasting influence the W&M men's soccer program has had on the development of soccer in the region.



A series of nine essays edited by Jonathon Daniel Wells and **Sheila R. Phipps M.A. '96, Ph.D. '98**, *Entering the Fray: Gender, Politics, and Culture in the New South* (University of Missouri Press 2010) explores the multifaceted role gender played in the lives of both black and white Southerners from the late 19th to the early 20th century. More particularly scrutinized in these essays are the roles played by black and white women during this time as they became more prominent in political and economic realms, yet still maintained their gendered place within society as it had been determined. Through their book, Wells and Phipps provide a new insight into the meanings and representations of gender in the post-Civil War South.



POETRY

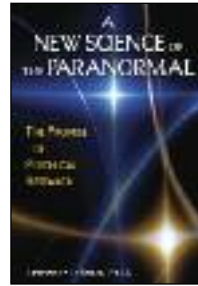
Brian Henry's '94 most recent poems have been collected into *Wings Without Birds* (Salt Publishing 2010), and through various poetic forms, he explores the everyday and commonplace occurrences that fill all our lives. From marriage and parenting to the house and its general



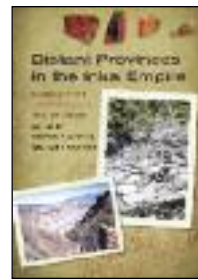
upkeep, Henry's poems consider ways of being simultaneously singular and plural.

SOCIAL SCIENCE

A New Science of the Paranormal (Quest Books 2009) by **Lawrence LeShan '42** argues for the place of psychic phenomena within the scientific community. Through empirical findings and accounts of psychic events, LeShan explains how psychical research contains the key to unlocking the mystery of human potential.



In *Distant Provinces in the Inka Empire* (University of Iowa Press 2010), **Michael Malpass '75** details how the Inka attended to their political and economic goals in their interactions with their conquered peoples and how their subjects responded, producing a richly textured view of the reality that was the Inka Empire. Malpass incorporates archaeological and ethnohistorical research, among other fields, as he discusses the provinces of the vast Inkan empire. From Bolivia to south-east Argentina, to southern Chile and Ecuador, to the central and north coasts of Peru, Malpass examines the various ways in which conqueror and conquered interacted.



THEOLOGY

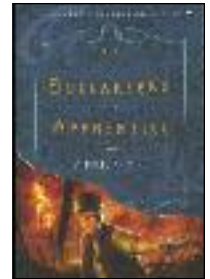
James G. Cobb's '69 new book, *Lutheran DNA* (Wipf and Stock Publishers 2010), chronicles the Reformation's Augsburg Confession of 1530 and relates it to what the Lutheran church teaches today. Through stories, illustrations and reflections of his own experiences as a parish pastor and seminary adminis-



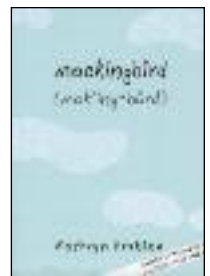
trator, Cobb asks how this historic and fundamental Christian text has translated over the years from Augsburg to Baltimore.

YOUNG ADULT

The second volume of the Cassaforte Chronicles, *The Buccaneer's Apprentice* (Flux 2010) by **V. Briceland '85** tells the story of young Nic Dattore on his first sea voyage away from the magical city of Cassaforte. When his ship is overrun by pirates, Nic throws a lighted torch into a cache of gunpowder, blowing up the ship. Washed up on a deserted isle, Nic and the remainder of the crew commandeer the pirate ship and begin their journey battling assassins, pirates and a cursed ship with a dark and powerful secret, all the while racing against time to save Cassaforte from an evil coup.



Kathryn Dobbs Erskine's '80 book *Mockingbird* (Penguin/Philomel Books 2010) follows Caitlin, a young girl with Asperger's syndrome, and her father as they cope with life after her brother Devon's death. Caitlin, who sees the world in black and white, attempts to deal with her grief by turning to textbooks and dictionaries. After reading the definition of the word "closure," Caitlin knows that is what she and her father need. As she sets out to find it, she discovers that the world is messy, colorful and beautiful.



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