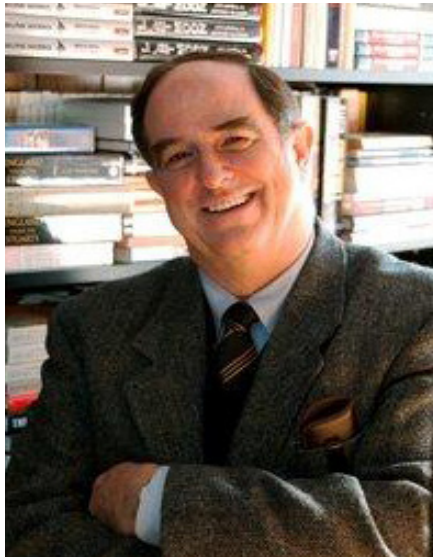

For Secondary Students of History

Winter 2013

A Partner of HISTORY®

Issue XXV



Will Fitzhugh is a graduate of Harvard College who taught at the high school in Concord, Massachusetts for ten years. He founded *The Concord Review* in 1987. With the Winter 2012 Issue (#95), 1,044 research papers (average 6,000 words, with endnotes and bibliography) have been published from authors in forty-six states and thirty-eight other countries. *The Concord Review* remains the only quarterly journal in the world to publish the academic work of secondary students.

I would like to extend my congratulations to the tens of thousands of high school history students in the hundreds of chapters of the National History Club, and their advisors, for choosing to “encourage the reading, writing, discussion, and enjoyment of

history,” during these sad times of nearly universal ignorance of history and serious problems with nonfiction reading and writing in our schools.

Your pioneering self-chosen and self-directed works will not only enrich your own knowledge and understanding of the wonders of history, they also set an example to so many others of the benefits of taking history seriously now.

I have been reading history pretty regularly for the last 35 years or so, but I have just wet my big toe in the vast and profound sea of the stories of war, famine, disaster, inventions, great leaders, and the great endurance and innumerable achievements of human civilization which history alone can bring us in detail.

Some of the history books in the stacks in my office will no doubt remain unopened when I die, but in addition to the great history books which I have been able to read, I have had the privilege of reading thousands of exemplary history research papers by bright diligent high school students of history from 46 states and 38 other countries. I have, as you may know, been able to publish 1,044 of such papers in 95 issues of *The Concord Review* since 1987. David McCullough wrote me that: “I very much like and support what you’re doing with *The Concord Review*. It’s original, important, and greatly needed, now more than ever, with the problem of historic illiteracy growing steadily worse among the high school generation nearly everywhere in the country.”

There is, indeed, a lot of concern over the ignorance of history shown by too many American students (the ones who have not founded a chapter of the National History Club). But most high schools, for some reason, seem reluctant to assign students one complete history book before they head out for nonfiction reading lists in college, and most high schools have long ago stopped assigning serious history research papers (4,000-5,000 words, with endnotes and bibliography).

The website of *The Concord Review* has more than 60 of the essays we have published, free for the reading, and on the site there is also a list of the 1,044 topics of papers we have published. I told students in 1987 that I was interested in serious research papers on any historical topic, ancient or modern, domestic or foreign. And students have taken me seriously and written on an incredible variety of historical topics, wider and more interesting than I would have been able to imagine 25 years ago. I also said I was interested in papers 4,000 to 5,000 words long or more, with Chicago-style endnotes and bibliography. I emphasize or more, because students have stretched that “more” beyond what I dreamed possible.

I have published a fascinating 21,000-word paper on the Mountain Meadows Massacre in Utah in 1857 and one last Fall of 32,000 words on the Regulator War in North Carolina in the 1770s. Both these girls went to Stanford,

continued on page 2

and the latter one had to cut her paper down from 32,000 words, as we published it, to 2,500 words to slip under the limit set by National History Day, where she was the National Winner for 2012.

I could tell lots of stories about the great history papers it has been my privilege to publish, but instead I would like to say that when I started working on this in March of 1987, I had two goals. One was to find and distribute the best high school history research papers I could find in the English-Speaking world (which turns out to include Sri Lanka, Madagascar, Nepal, Finland, Singapore, Hong Kong, Korea, etc.—which I had not anticipated completely), and that has been a genuine success so far for the only journal in the world for the academic papers of secondary students.

The second goal was to find financial support (and we have been turned down by 154 foundations and the federal government) and enough subscribers who wanted either to read the work themselves or who would encourage high school students they knew to read these exemplary papers by their peers. This goal is very far from met by now. It seems many people can understand the benefits of working to be published, but almost no one can understand the value of actually reading excellent academic work by high school students. We do have nationally televised high school football and basketball games, but many too few people seem to have an interest in excellent academic work at that level.

Nevertheless, the fine papers continue to arrive, and I welcome members of National History Club chapters who want to read good work in history by their peers. If you find a paper on a topic on our website (www.tcr.org) that you think you might want to read, send me an email (fitzhugh@tcr.org) with your request and I will send you the pdf. Again, great work, National History Club members! May your tribe increase!! ■



The Concord Review would like to receive outstanding history research papers by high school students, on any historical topic, ancient or modern, domestic or foreign.

TCR has published exemplary history papers (around 6,000 words with endnotes and bibliography) by 1,044 secondary students from 46 states and 38 other countries in 95 quarterly issues since 1987.

Many of the authors have sent reprints of their papers with their college application materials, and they have gone on to Brown(25), University of Chicago(18), Columbia(21), Cornell(16), Dartmouth(20), Harvard(115), Oxford(12), Pennsylvania(23), Princeton(60), Stanford(36), Yale(96), and a number of other fine institutions, including Amherst, Bowdoin, Bryn Mawr, Caltech, Cambridge, Carnegie Mellon, Duke, Emory, Johns Hopkins, McGill, Michigan, Middlebury, MIT, Northwestern, Notre Dame, Reed, Rice, Smith, Trinity, Tufts, Virginia, Wellesley, and Williams.

Find more information, and a submission form, on their website at: <http://www.tcr.org/tcr/submissions.htm>

Please direct any inquiries to: Will Fitzhugh, Founder, at: fitzhugh@tcr.org

CHAPTER FOCUS: BROWNSBURG HIGH SCHOOL (IN)

One humid, lazy August afternoon in Brownsburg, Indiana, a club was born. The Brownsburg High School History Club was founded on August 1st, 2012 by teacher sponsor Dawn Crone and president Ben Fouch. Less than half a year later, this new group would boast an NHC membership of over one hundred and twenty dues-paying members, multiple service and education projects in the community, and a goal to bring young adults into the exciting world of history.

“We’re a Club for the students and by the students”, explained Treasurer **David Huston**. “We’ve generated a lot of excitement in the community by listening to our student body and helping to cater to their interests.” This philosophy of appealing to the historical interests of the students led to the Club’s most ambitious project, a trip to witness history at the Presidential Inauguration.

The Brownsburg History Club, founded in August, had by December a fully planned trip to the Presidential Inauguration in Washington D.C. for fifty students. The goal of the trip was succinctly summarized by senior Club member **Marcus Joseph** when he quipped, “Witnessing national history on a budget”. The relatively low cost of the trip helped to bring in students from every demographic of the school, and it created a unique mix of students interested in civics.

This trip of Hoosiers from the Heartland involved three days of rapid exploration of Washington with barely a second wasted. The Brownsburg students left on Friday, January 18th and drove straight through – 12 hours. Once the students arrived, they immediately began exploring sites such as the Lincoln Memorial, Iwo Jima, National Mall, and the Holocaust Museum. While at the latter, the students were treated to a personal lecture by a Holocaust survivor who answered the students’ questions and shared his story. Then the students were off to see the frantic preparations and celebrations in

D.C. for the Inauguration itself in a guided night tour of D.C. On Sunday morning, the students ventured out to Arlington National Cemetery. The Club’s application for laying a wreath had been approved in December; therefore four students from the Club were selected to take part in the wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns less than an hour after the President had laid his own. “It was just absolutely incredible to lay the wreath; I’m active in the Wounded Warrior Project at our school, and this is something really special for me”, disclosed Brownsburg senior **Kellie Dippel**.

On Monday, the day of the Inauguration, the students assembled together to move towards the Mall for the Inauguration. After passing through security, the students took their reserved golden tickets and found a spot. The highlight of the day was the swearing-in of the President, followed by his speech. The atmosphere was electric, and the students took note of the moment. Junior **Ellie Reinhart** described the event as “Inspiring...We just witnessed the peaceful exchange of power in the strongest nation on Earth. Absolutely incredible, words can’t describe. And did you hear Kelly Clarkson? I had goose bumps.”

Needless to say, the students loved the trip. These same students are the ones who have committed to the Club’s service projects in the community, the same who have gone on field trips to the Indiana Medical History Museum and the Indiana Historical Society. These students are shining examples both of the character of Brownsburg and the interest in the community for history and service. In half a year, the students of Brownsburg High School have turned an idea into an organization, a dream into reality.

* **Ben Fouch, President, and Dawn Crone, Chapter Advisor** (dcrone@brownsburg.k12.in.us)



CHAPTER FOCUS: ROCKMART MIDDLE SCHOOL (GA)

My name is John Garner and I am an 8th grade Georgia History Teacher at Rockmart Middle School in Polk /County Georgia. I have recently started a program called “Heroes of the Civil Rights Lecture Series.”

I am currently putting together a series of assemblies targeting grades 6-12 focusing on the Civil Rights movement and modern day bullying. I am in the initial planning phases of this but I truly do think this is a program that is very much worthwhile. I am very excited about getting this started and I know that students will respond very well to it.

Already there are eight schools that have signed on as well as multiple organizations that are going to sponsor the program. So far the Gilder Lehrman Institute, Southern Historical Association and the Phi Alpha Theta National Honors Fraternity are sponsoring this endeavor. The idea is to get 40 people who were involved in the Civil Rights movement, in various capacities, and have them go to schools around the country.

I plan for this program to continue to grow in upcoming years, but aim on staying with just 20 schools for the initial year. As of now schools in Fulton County, Carroll County, Polk County, Paulding County, Bartow County and Carrollton City are taking part in this. Approximately 7,000 students as of now are going to hear the message that our presenters, Joan Browning and Charley Person, have to offer. Mrs. Browning and Mr. Person are going to share their experiences as Freedom Riders.

Mrs. Browning grew up on a small farm in rural Georgia. She went from picking a hundred pounds of cotton a day to volunteering with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. She participated in the Paine College Steering Committee demonstrations in Augusta, Georgia, in April 1961, and with the Atlanta Student Movement sit-ins in Atlanta in 1961-63, and was one of nine Albany Freedom Riders on the last freedom ride.

Mr. Person visited Rockmart Middle School recently and addressed the entire student body, 835 students. Our History Club was able to speak with him as a smaller group for about 30 minutes. Mr. Person was one of the original 13 of over 400 Freedom Riders. He spoke on the Civil Rights Movement’s various aspects such as the marches, sit-ins, boycotts, freedom rides and the horrible hatred that surrounded them. He showed pictures of his beatings, spoke of his involvement with Civil Rights leaders such as MLK, and overall engaged the kids on their interest in the subject. It was a great event and it is going to be replicated at other schools in Georgia in the near future.



We have veterans all over the county that are interested in taking part in these types of events and I would like to invite History Club chapters to contact me and let me know if they would be interested in hosting a speaker. What better way to educate students than hearing first-hand testimony from people who made history?!

* **John Garner** (john Garner12@gmail.com)

CHAPTER FOCUS: SACHEM HIGH SCHOOL EAST (NY)

On February 13, 2013, Mr. Werner Reich, a Holocaust survivor, visited Sachem HS East to discuss his experiences living in Europe under the Nazi regime. He spoke to 500 students in the auditorium. His message was about being just and doing the right thing even when it is not the popular or easy decision. To do that, he offers the acronym JUST: for Judge the situation; Understand the problem; Solve it; and Take action; the reason is that indifference kills.

His impressive 270-slide PowerPoint presentation took the students through the rise of the Nazis, how it led his family to flee Germany in search of safety, and eventually led to his capture in Yugoslavia, from which he was transported to Theresienstadt concentration camp and then Auschwitz. From age 14 to 17, Mr. Reich was a prisoner of the Nazis. He came face to face with death on a daily basis and even had frequent encounters with Dr. Josef Mengele, the infamous SS Officer and physician who performed countless inhumane experiments on prisoners. While Mr. Reich was not experimented on, he was forced to run back and forth in front of Dr. Mengele and other Nazis; at which point those who did not look energetic enough were shot on site or removed for experimentation.

When asked if he is still angry, Mr. Reich replied that he is more upset with the “good people who did nothing,” than the Nazis who he described as “sick people.” Mr. Reich said never debate someone who denies the Holocaust happened. “You cannot debate two plus two equals four. Truth doesn’t need a defense.” Mr. Reich helped students to understand the events of the Holocaust by relating it to more current events. He likened the actions of the Nazis to the people who did nothing but admitted to hearing the cries of Kitty Genovese as she was killed at 3am in Kew Gardens, Queens.

Everyone who attended the assembly spoke of its powerful message and how it brought history alive. Mr. Jannace’s and Mr. Varajao’s history classes experienced an even more comprehensive day, as they took part in an all-day event devoted to understanding and protecting human rights. The students were taking part in lessons and activities about human rights throughout history. These lessons were created and taught by members of the National History Club & History Honor Society. They created activities and fueled discussions of the Holocaust, Cambodian killing fields, Japanese internment, treatment of Muslims post-9/11, and stereotyping and bullying.



Ishrak Alam, Maha Ashraf, Matthew Baccoli, Samantha Botros, Daniel Corbett, Jonathan Davidashvilly, Ryan Fazziola, Nick Gao, Abigail Groffmann, Amanda Gurriera, Anmol Gupta, Jeremy Kline, Jonathan Kline, Krysta La Bruna, Brandon La Porta, Rachel Llanes, Christiana Lojo, Valerie Luutran, Hifza Malik, Corley Miller, Andrew Nagler, Austin Portente, Justin Portente, Kyle Ritchie, Alexandra Russo, Matthew Salerno, Shannon Simmons,

Gabrielle Singer, Amanda Sluzewski, Jin-Mi Sohn, Young Jin Sohn, Brandon Thorne, Francis Vargas and Megan Zhang worked diligently for months after school and at home to master the content and devise ways to present the material to students in a meaningful way. Their moving and powerful presentations about survival were truly inspiring and especially relevant as they connected it to current issues of justice and bullying. Their community service is proof that student leaders exist at Sachem East.

* Advisors - **Mike Jannace** (MJannace@sachem.edu) & **Madelyn Haussner** (MHaussner@sachem.edu)

CHAPTER FOCUS: HENRY CLAY HIGH SCHOOL (KY)

Years ago, when I first came to Henry Clay High School in Lexington, Kentucky, I decided to resurrect the school's defunct History Club. Since then, with the invaluable aid of many dedicated and talented students, the HC History Club has created the world's first high school history lab, created museum exhibits for the Lexington Museum, worked cleaning and recording the thousand plus tombstones in the local African Cemetery #2, and completed a dozen more major projects connected to history. Last year, one of our beloved and gainfully retired teachers approached the Club with a very special project.

Diane Chiles requested that the History Club take over another retired teacher's task of collecting and archiving artifacts from Henry Clay High School's 100 year history. Ms. Chiles' former teacher, **Ellen Allen**, had been heading this effort for some time but was now ready to pass her labor of love to a younger generation.

Soon, the Club was scouring the school, contacting alumni and former teachers and looking to all four corners of Lexington for items connected to our illustrious school. For almost a year we collected everything from 20 year old football jerseys, 1930s high school play handbills, and tape recordings of past Henry Clay orchestral performances. In time we filled six boxes and learned a lot about the difficulty of archiving the sometimes strange things that were often dropped off in my room during the collection process. A 1920s print plate for the high school yearbook, ancient trophies, playbills; our young historians were challenged as they attempted to explain what each item was and from what year each had originated. In the end, we collected six boxes worth of items and presented them last month to the University of Kentucky's Special Archives Department, where they will be held for all generations of Henry Clay alumni and students to enjoy!

When we were first approached with this project there was a general consensus in the Club that convincing people to give up the tokens of their high school pasts would be impossible. However, our kids cornered parents and grandparents, and word of mouth about our project spread quickly. Suddenly everyone seemed to want to contribute in some small way. The idea that their personal items would be used by future generations to explore Henry Clay High School's storied past seemed to give their old football pins and letterman jackets new importance. Soon, teachers who had been at Henry

Clay contributed items from their departments; trophies, recordings and photographs filled my room. Once we had collected enough items we began the archiving process, working before and after school. My student leader of this project, **Katylin Hydord**, came to school early most mornings and worked diligently to properly record each artifact. Once all the items we had collected were recorded Katylin took her notes home and produced a professional, well-



organized list for each box.

Now that we have collected and archived the first wave of items we will continue to collect and record the scattered history of our one hundred year old high school. Once centralized, these items will await curious alumni and historians in the protected confines of the University of Kentucky's special collections department.

* Advisor, **Chris Snow** (christopher.snow@fayette.kyschools.us)

CHAPTER FOCUS: WEST MORRIS CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL (NJ)

On Friday, December 7, 2012 the National History Club of West Morris Central High School in Chester, NJ hosted Frederick Douglass Academy from Harlem, NY to celebrate the achievements of local veterans. The start of the day consisted of bonding experiences between the students of FDA and WMC through Project Adventure team building activities. The students participated in trust falls, school tours and classroom visitations. The students then greeted the veterans and shared lunch with them, and the afternoon consisted of veterans sharing their wartime experiences.

We were proud and honored to host many great veterans that day. Martin “Marty” Fleisher, World War II B-26 Bomber Pilot, kept the audience rapt attention as he described his 65 combat missions in Europe from just before D-Day in June, 1944 to the end of the war in 1945. In addition, Commander James Smith talked about his Service with the U.S Marine Corps in the Pacific on the islands of Saipan and Okinawa in 1944 and 1945. Commander Smith was badly wounded while “clearing” caves on Okinawa when a TNT explosion in a cave he was “clearing” literally buried him alive during the battle. Post “1776” members Charles Polvino, World War II 9th Army Veteran in Europe, discussed his time as a Morse Code radio operator on the front lines in France and Germany while Keith Nitka, U.S. Navy Veteran of “Operation Desert Storm” in 1991, discussed that conflict and also his expertise on “Iowa class” World War II era “Battleships”. Mr. Nitka had served on one of the last surviving battleships, the *USS Wisconsin*. Forrest “Woody” Burgener, Air Force Vietnam Veteran, discussed the Service of his five uncles who served in WWII (four in combat in Europe) and his father, Charles Burgener, who had enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1940 as an “ordinary” Seaman and ended his Service in 1946 as a Navy Fighter Pilot.



Students reacted with surprise and awe as the veterans conducted a “Flag Ceremony”. A World War II “Aircraft Carrier Ensign Flag” was unfolded and displayed for the students. The Flag was flown during combat operations by an aircraft carrier operating in the Pacific Theater during the War. Students posed for pictures and handled the flag as West Morris Central High School’s talented Lorelei’s and Noteworthy’s entertained the veterans and honored their service and our country with various patriotic songs.

West Morris Central students experienced FDA’s hospitality on January 11, 2013 when Frederick Douglass Academy hosted WMC for a day of fellowship and scholarship. We were treated to the incredible presence of historian Dr. Clement Price. Dr. Price captivated students with his knowledge of the

First Emancipation and the Great Emancipation. Students learned the work of historians and the importance of making connections and complicating the narrative of the past. The day was supported by Gilder-Lehrman Institute and the generous support of Mr. Sid Lapidus.

Two already magnificent days were enhanced by the very special relationship and friendship that continues to grow between WMC and FDA. This relationship began almost a decade ago and is grounded in our mutual love and respect for the study of history. This partnership has continued to flourish as the two schools from very different worlds continue to recognize the bonding powers of our common history.

* Advisors, **Michelle Mongey** (mmongey@wmrhsd.org) & **Phil Nicolosi** (pnicolosi@wmrhsd.org)

NOMINATE A TEACHER TODAY!

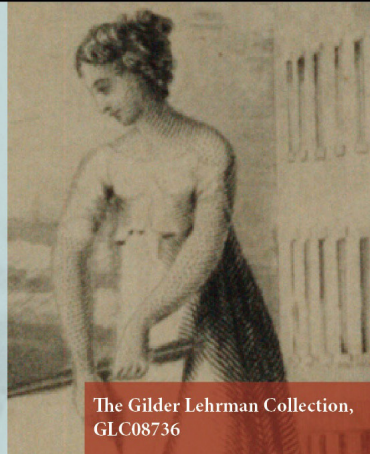
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The Gilder Lehrman Collection,
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The **National History Club** is looking to further publish the work of Club members on our website and in the monthly eBlasts. This Spring, we will be creating a section on our website for the work of students belonging to member chapters, as we seek to build upon the original work of students.

There are no specific limitations on what may be submitted, however, here are some recommendations:

- * Historical research (papers)
- * Commentary (editorials) on relevant issues
 - * Reviews of history books or movies
 - * Interviews with historical figures
 - * Videos of trips to historical sites

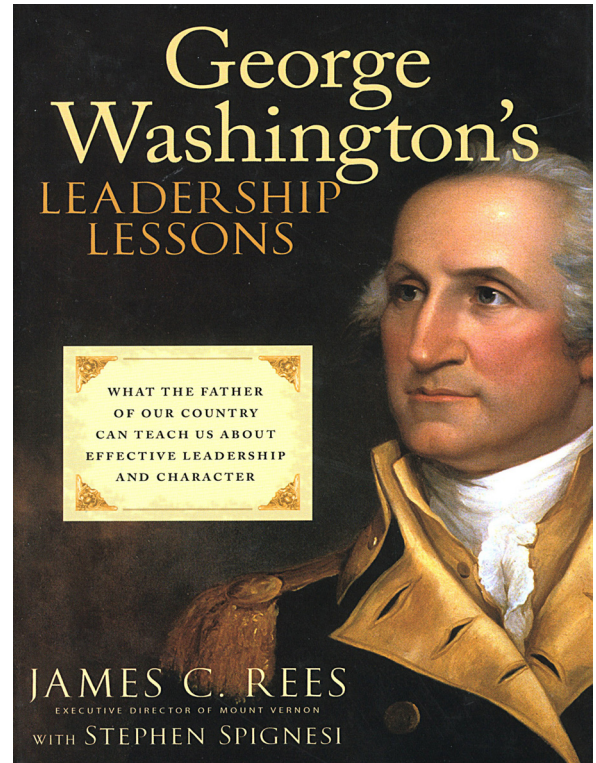
We are looking to expand on all the great work being done by chapters throughout the country, and it is our plan to start running sponsored competitions for the best individual student work during next school year.

To submit material please contact **Bob Nasson**, Executive Director, at rnasson@nationalhistoryclub.org

This Spring the NHC and George Washington's Mount Vernon will again co-sponsor the "History Student of the Year" prize. Each chapter will choose a recipient for this award, and s/he will receive an autographed copy of a history book. This is the 9th year of the partnership between Mount Vernon and the NHC to sponsor this prestigious award.

The book prize this year will be a hardcover copy of *George Washington's Leadership Lessons: What the Father of Our Country Can Teach Us About Effective Leadership and Character* by James Rees. Mr. Rees is the former President of Mount Vernon, a position he held for 18 years.

Mount Vernon is the most popular historic estate in America. The estate, gardens and farm of Mount Vernon totaled some 8,000 acres in the 18th century. Today, roughly 500 acres have been preserved 16 miles south of Washington, DC, on the banks of the Potomac River. Visitors can see 20 structures and 50 acres of gardens as they existed in 1799, as well as the tombs of George and Martha Washington. Mount Vernon welcomes an average of 1,000,000 visitors each year.



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The NHC would like to recognize the following colleges and universities as supporters of our organization. We strongly encourage students who are considering majoring in history in college, and may be applying to one of these schools, to visit the school's website listed down below to find out more about the history department.



American University

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Georgetown University

Fordham University

Franklin & Marshall College

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Loyola University New Orleans

Marquette University

Middlebury College

New York University

Northern Arizona University

Northwestern University

Ohio State University

Penn State University

Princeton University

Rice University

Rollins College

St. John's University (NY)

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Texas Christian University

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The National History Club is a 501(c)(3) organization that relies on grants and donations to support efforts. If you are passionate about history and would like to contribute to our mission of promoting history at the secondary level please contact **Robert Nasson** (rnasson@nationalhistoryclub.org).