

# IMMIGRATION HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

Fall/Winter 2010-11 – Volume XXV, No. 1

Dear Friends,

When I review the events of this past year, an old television ditty starts running through my head: “Letters, we’ve got letters; we’ve got stacks and stacks of letters.”

In fact, the IHRC does hold great stacks of letters in the archival cavern. There are letters written **to** immigrants; there are letters written **by** immigrants; we even have a few precious correspondences that include both. And scholars from a wide variety of disciplines, we’ve learned, want to read other people’s mail!

For the past year, the IHRC has been talking about letters, digitizing letters, and surveying letters. We’ve sponsored two workshops and a very successful symposium on the topic. We are planning a major project in what is called the “digital humanities.” We believe we can use digitization and new web-based media to re-connect letters written **by** immigrants (which tend to be archived abroad) to letters written **to** immigrants (which are more commonly held in North America). By doing so the IHRC can begin telling the world-spanning stories of immigrants’ lives in new ways. As I write, I am deeply engaged in writing grant proposals to support such an endeavor.

A focus on letters is a perfect fit for the IHRC. **Theodore Blegen**, the first immigration historian at the University of Minnesota,

*Continued on page 3, Gabaccia*



## IHRC Hosts Letters Symposium

On May 17 and 18 the IHRC hosted scholars from Canada, China, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway and the United States for a symposium entitled “The Migration Letter: Archiving Intimacy in the Postal Era.” During the symposium a team of IHRC researchers—staff, scholars, graduate and undergraduate students—introduced their new web feature “Digitizing Immigrant Letters” and heard research reports on international correspondence by a wide variety of immigrant groups. After the close of the symposium, scholars and archivists from Europe, China, and North America discussed development and access issues in collections of letters written by and to immigrants, with hopes of forming international digitizing collaborations in the years ahead. The IHRC will continue to work with partners to write grant proposals and host events that will develop research in and digitization of letters which are of great interest for the stories they tell both to specialized researchers and to family historians, genealogists, and K-12 teachers and students.



(L to R) Haven Hawley, Ursula Lehmkuhl, Donna Gabaccia, Nando Fasce, & Auvo Kostianinen

## A Heart Connects Us

Andersen Gallery, Elmer L. Andersen Library

February 14–April 8, 2011



Photo: Theodore C. Blegen, courtesy University Archives

In pursuing his dream of a collaboration that would collect immigrant letters in Europe and America, **Theodore Blegen** worked to reveal “grassroots history” through his scholarship at the University of Minnesota and other institutions. The Immigration History Research Center makes that dream come alive in a multi-media project called “A Heart Connects Us: The Experience of Migration and the ‘Minnesota School’ of Immigration History” that constructs emotional portraits of immigrants through Croatian, Finnish, Hmong, Italian, Latvian and Ukrainian letters selected from the IHRC’s collections. The University Archives offers materials on Blegen’s career from its own collections for this exhibit highlighting immigrant experiences and the “Minnesota School” of immigration history. The IHRC has received a \$4,000 Tools for Discovery grant from the University of Minnesota’s College of Liberal Arts for this project.

## Visiting Researchers

**Janet Reilly**, City University of New York (CUNY), conducted research for a comparative study of Liberian immigrants in the Twin Cities and New York City. **Sylvia Onusic**, independent scholar from Pennsylvania, spent a week researching Slovene immigrant societies in the United States. **Louie Milojevic**, American University, researched the collections related to the former Yugoslavia (Slovene, Serbian and Croatian).

**Ann Toumi**, University of Eastern Finland (Joensuu, Finland), reviewed materials in preparation for writing a historical novel from the point of view of a Finnish woman immigrating to Minnesota. **Hauke Siemen**, University of Hamburg, conducted 5 weeks of research in the Center's historical collections for his project, "The Baltic Emigres' Political Activities During the Cold War." He gave a Research-In-Progress Talk on Oct. 20.



Hauke Siemen

**Juha Meriläinen** was the recipient of the 2010 **Michael G. Karni Scholarship**. Rev. Dr. Juha Meriläinen is a University Lecturer in the Department of Church History, University of Helsinki. Meriläinen's research project is entitled "The History and Identity of Finnish American Lutherans between 1880 and 1970." He conducted research in the IHRC's extensive



Finnish American print and archival collections to study the role of religious identity in the integration process of an immigrant minority group.

### IHRC Staff

**Donna Gabaccia**, Director

**Haven Hawley**, **Cindy Herring**, **Ihar Labacevich**, **Daniel Necas**, **Jeff Nelson**, **Sara Wakefield**

**Student Assistants:** **Sadie Doggett**, **Mary George**, **Adam Grant**, **Dan Grussing**, **Nate Holden**, **Lukas Johnson**, **Johanna Leinonen**, **Muna Mohamed**, **Keit Osadchuk**, **Mia Overly**, **Justin Schell**, **Kao Choua Vue**

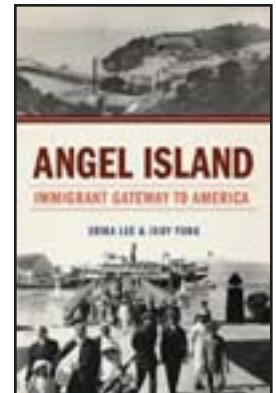
## Global Race, Ethnicity & Migration

**Erika Lee**, professor of History at the University of Minnesota, spoke on Oct. 27 about immigration through Angel Island, which opened in 1910. Lee and **Judy**



Erika Lee

**Yung** are co-authors of *Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America*. The authors provide the first comprehensive history of Angel Island Immigration Station. The work is a sweeping yet intensely personal history of Chinese "paper sons," Japanese picture brides, Korean refugee students, South Asian political activists, Russian and Jewish refugees, Mexican families, Filipino repatriates, and others from around the world. IHRC collections were consulted during preparation of the manuscript.



**Jose Moya**, Barnard College, presented "The European Diaspora, 1844-1930: Exceptionalism Revisited" on Friday, Nov. 5. The final fall semester Global Race, Ethnicity and Migration event will feature **David Chang**, University of Minnesota, History Department, on Monday, Dec. 6. He will speak on "The California Gold Country, Hilo, and Xiangshan: Migration, Kinship, Global Networks, and National Boundaries in the Nineteenth Century."

## Grants In Aid

The IHRC recognizes the following researchers, who have been awarded Grants In Aid for 2010-2011:

**Dr. Rachel A. Batch**  
Widener University

**Adam Krowka**  
Independent Scholar, Estonia

**Joel Brady**  
Ph.D. Candidate,  
University of Pittsburgh

**Shira Klein**  
Ph.D. Candidate,  
New York University

**Dezereé Hodish**  
Ph.D. Student, University of Kansas

**Louie Milojevic**  
Ph.D. Student, American University

**Dr. Sylvia P. Onusic**,  
Independent Scholar, U.S.

**Dr. Yannis Papadopoulos**  
Panteion University of Athens

Papadopoulos received the IHRC's first two-week Post-Doctoral Grant In Aid Award. He will be in residence April 2011.

Grants In Aid support travel by external scholars to use the IHRC's historical collections. The 2011-2012 Grant In Aid deadline is June 1, 2011.

Visit [ihrc.umn.edu](http://ihrc.umn.edu) for additional details

## Staff Updates

**Mia Overly** started working in the IHRC in June as an administrative assistant. She is an American Studies major from Eveleth, MN.



The newest member of our team is **Muna Mohamed**. She is an undergraduate library assistant working with the **Philip Hitti** Collection and Near Eastern materials. She is a psychology major from St. Paul, MN.

**Ihar Labacevich** volunteered as an archival intern and Slavic specialist for the IHRC in spring and summer 2010. He was hired in October as a library assistant for the fall 2010 semester.



A recent graduate of the University of Minnesota, **Chris DiSalvi**, worked at the IHRC for the summer before beginning a masters degree program in education/human development.

## The Sheeko Project

The Sheeko Project is a new initiative at the IHRC to create a digital collection of Somali youth stories. UMN undergraduate students **Mustafa Jumale**, **Fartun Abdi** and **Saida Hassan** are working with UMN graduate student **Andy Wilhide** and current IHRC intern **Lukas Johnson** from St. Cloud State. “Sheeko” means “story” in Somali. Students are collecting a variety of stories including oral histories, music, photographs, poetry, and speeches. UMN faculty **Walt Jacobs** and **Donna Gabaccia** are mentoring students on the project.

**Gabaccia, continued from page 1** pointed to the importance of what he called “America letters” for hearing the voices of immigrants and understanding their lives. When he went to Norway in 1927 with a Guggenheim fellowship he inspired the collection of these America letters. Here in the U.S. (and in Canada), the letters written to the immigrants have never attracted as much attention, but they are just as valuable as historical documents. They complete our understanding of the emotional and social relationships immigrants maintained after departure. They also help us to understand the impact of emigration on those who remained behind.

Imagine being able to go online and read both sides of letters exchanged between China, Germany, or Finland and the United States. Imagine scholars and family members adding information online about the places, activities, and persons described in these letters. Imagine students and teachers providing on-line translations or creating lesson plans based on letter-writing. All this, and more, is under discussion as the IHRC plans to bring letters research into focus in the years ahead.

Watch for further information about our upcoming IHRC exhibit “A Heart Connect Us” highlighting the work of Blegen and the power of the digital age to unlock the secrets and stories of immigrant correspondence. Those stories have always been at the heart of IHRC research and collecting activities.

I hope to see you in Andersen Library in the near future!

—**Donna Gabaccia, Director**

## New on the Web

**Mia Overly**, **Dan Grussing** and **Chris DiSalvi** scanned several IHRC publications. Download the following free pdf files from Publications>Marketplace:

*Hungarians in the United States and Canada* (1977)  
*Serbs in the United States and Canada* (1992)  
*Slovenes in the United States and Canada* (1981)  
*Svoboda Ukrainian Daily, A Select Index (Volumes 1–4)*

**Chris DiSalvi** created two lesson plans appropriate for sixth grade. Find these posted at For Educators & Students>Lesson Plans K-12.

**Anna D. Jaroszynska-Kirchmann** will speak about her book, *The Exile Mission: The Polish Political Diaspora and Polish Americans, 1930-1956*, at 7 p.m. on December 29 at the Polish American Library, 2514 Central Ave. NE, Minneapolis. Her talk is sponsored by the Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota.



At the middle of the 20th century two distinct Polish immigrant groups—descendants of economic immigrants from the turn of the twentieth century and political refugees who chose exile after World War II and the communist takeover in Poland—faced an uneasy challenge in reconciling their concepts of responsibility toward the homeland.

*The Exile Mission* provides an intriguing look at the interplay between the established Polish community and the refugee community. Dr. Jaroszynska-Kirchmann is Associate Professor of History at Eastern Connecticut State University. She is an award-winning author of works on the postwar Polish political diaspora. The manuscript for *The Exile Mission* won the Kulczycki prize.

### Winter Campus Closure

Due to the University of Minnesota's winter fur-lough and holidays, Elmer L. Andersen Library will be closed Friday, Dec. 24 through Saturday, Jan. 1. Regular IHRC hours will resume on Monday, Jan. 3.

## MN Historical Society Awards IHRC Legacy Grant

IHRC received a \$6,543 Minnesota Legacy Grant to conduct a statewide survey and create a database of historical repositories identifying locations of immigrant life writings. The repositories ranged from large historical research centers, such as the Minnesota Historical Society and the Iron Range Research Center, to smaller county and city historical societies. Research assistants **Justin Schell** and **Johanna Leinonen** focused on diaries, letters, manuscripts, and oral histories from 1850 to the present. The database is an initial step towards cataloging and digitizing the life writings. This project has been made possible by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the vote of Minnesotans on November 4, 2008. Administered by the Minnesota Historical Society.



## Giving to the Vecoli Chair

The University and the IHRC have a three-part mission: teaching, research, and outreach. The Vecoli Chair helps us accomplish each of these important goals. In the past year, Vecoli Chair funding has allowed graduate and undergraduate students to gain hands-on experience working alongside the IHRC Director. Exciting new research projects have taken shape, bringing together scholars from around the world to tell immigrant stories in new ways. Vecoli funds have helped scholars come to Minnesota to conduct research in our archives. This support is crucial in a time of declining resources. The Vecoli Chair is about so much more than the chair: it is about maintaining the strength and productivity of the IHRC.

—**Eva Widder**



Contact **Eva Widder**, External Relations, College of Liberal Arts, at ewidder@umn.edu or 612-626-5146 to arrange a bequest or pledge. Thank you for your support.

Immigration History Research Center  
University of Minnesota  
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## IHRC News —Fall/Winter 2010/11

### IMMIGRATION HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

The IHRC promotes interdisciplinary research on international migration, develops archives documenting immigrant and refugee life, especially in the United States, and makes specialized scholarship available to students, teachers, and the public. The IHRC acts in partnership with various ethnic communities, historical agencies, research specialists, educators, and many others. Its work supports the tripartite mission teaching, research, and service of its parent institution, the University of Minnesota. IHRC is a unit of the College of Liberal Arts.

*IHRC News* is published fall/winter and spring/summer (print and online). It is sent to supporters of the IHRC, including selected and prospective members of Friends of IHRC, donors, University of Minnesota colleagues, and exchange publications. Please notify the IHRC if you wish to receive the online version only. (ihrc@umn.edu)

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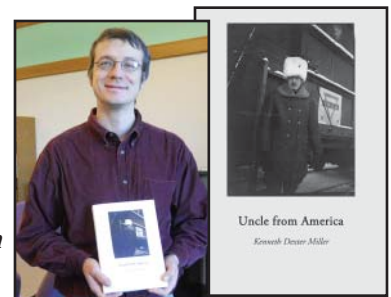
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This publication is available in alternate formats upon request.  
Printed on recycled paper.  
Contains a minimum of 10% postconsumer waste.

### Gift to Vecoli Chair

The IHRC gratefully acknowledges a gift of \$10,000 to the **Rudolph J. Vecoli Chair in Immigration History** by **Kazuo Takahashi**, in memory of **A. William Høglund**. The Vecoli Chair fund provides support enabling the IHRC Director to train promising graduate students in the field of immigration history, to promote connections between scholars and immigrant communities, and to ask new questions about immigrant experiences. A. William Høglund was a leading scholar of Finnish American studies and mentored a generation of graduate students. His research interests were also expansive, and he brought to his academic work a sensitivity to multi-ethnic immigrant experiences. Professor Høglund passed away on May 1, 2008.

### Uncle from America

The Center proudly announces the print and electronic publication of *Uncle from America*, a memoir by **Kenneth Dexter Miller** from a manuscript in the IHRC's Kenneth Dexter Miller Papers. *Uncle from America* is an account of K.D. Miller's engagement with the people of Czechoslovakia as well as Czech and Slovak Americans between 1912 and the early 1960s, with chapters describing Miller's work with the Czechoslovak Legion in Russia in 1917–1919. **Daniel Necas** prepared the book for publication. The project is co-sponsored by the Miller and Hiteshew families and American Fund for Czechoslovak Relief.



**Daniel Necas**

Uncle from America  
Kenneth Dexter Miller

## Immigration History Research Center 2010 Collection Update

### Progress Notes from the IHRC

While space (and budgets) are getting tighter here at the University, the Immigration History Research Center is making headway in processing its print collections—with the support of our community friends.



Haven Hawley

We all can agree that unique materials simply must be the priority for our collections both now, when we struggle with limited storage facilities, and in the future. Our increased rate for processing books, serials and newspapers has helped us to identify the unique and highly rare print donated to the IHRC so that these materials can be preserved and made accessible. We are selecting for our collections those items that are closely associated with IHRC's archival collections, with our priority being print created by immigrant communities or individuals.

The IHRC is reshaping how it publishes Center research. We began several years ago placing collection-level finding aids (all 2,000!) online. Staff have been creating digital copies of past IHRC publications so they can be accessed online and distributed free to researchers. We have preserved copies for our institutional use and archives—but far fewer than we formerly maintained. Our collections staff is placing in-depth finding aids online to a greater extent than ever before.

We are working to make the full list of print already in our collections available online. About half of the IHRC's books, serials and newspapers are cataloged in the University of Minnesota's electronic catalog (MNCat). Most of the remaining volumes are listed in an on-site

card catalog called the temporary card catalog. We are converting that card catalog into an electronic file so that it will be searchable online. Our work on this project since 2009 is revealing that IHRC's online catalog holds very good materials—and the temporary card catalog is truly exceptional. Between 1/4 and 1/2 of the temporary catalog books appear to be very rare or unique.

The IHRC has many cataloged or partially cataloged print materials, but the most significant contributor to our capacity problem is an additional large backlog of unevaluated books, journals and newspapers. The IHRC has accumulated about 2,000 linear feet of print that needs to be reviewed title by title to determine appropriateness for our collections. This represents about 1/9 of our storage footprint—a proportion not unlike other high-quality institutions, but far too high when storage capacity is at a premium. As we process these materials to determine whether they are in scope for our topic of immigration and to ensure that they do not duplicate our exceptional ethnic print collections, we will generate more shelf space for acquiring archival materials and the rare print items that we do not yet have.

Our staff already are hard at work, weeding out the Center's own duplicates and out-of-scope imprints from materials donated in past years to IHRC. We have shared this overage with community partners, such as the Center for Hmong Studies at Concordia College, the Finnish American Heritage Center at Finlandia University and St. Sophia Seminary in Philadelphia. We have selected materials for the National Library of Latvia, which is constructing a new building and will soon be able to accept exchange print. Our staff are renewing and expanding contacts with national-level heritage repositories in countries of origin. (Only imprints are being sent to affiliate institutions, but we are working toward joint projects and virtual collections for archival and print materials.)

The IHRC is placing duplicate and out-of-scope print materials in a manner consistent with the expectations of our donors: that we promote immigration and ethnic history research, and ensure

preservation and access to as much historically important material as possible. Our print distribution efforts will preserve more books, create more access to historical print, and make the IHRC a strong, vital partner for U.S. and homeland heritage repositories.

Other reasons to be optimistic include a 2010 application for external funding to process a significant portion of our unprocessed print. Through preparing the application, we have established



(L to R) Agnes Fulop, Haven Hawley & Dr. Ferenc Somogyi, Hungarian Ambassador to the U.S., viewing some of the cavern storage

a blueprint for our work in coming years.

The grant application is for funding to process 1,200 linear feet of our 2,000 feet of hidden print collections, and we will hear in late 2010 whether this external funding has been awarded. The project relies on a combination of IHRC staff, graduate students, scholars of immigration and ethnicity, and community volunteers for its success.

During the summer of 2010, we made progress in preparing for the Immigrant and Ethnic Publishing and Print Project (IEPPP), with the assistance of volunteers working with Polish and Latvian immigrant print. IHRC hired a Slavic specialist to work in fall 2010 on Ukrainian print selection. I look forward to updating you in 2011 and beyond on our efforts.

Finally, we have placed a small



Dan Grussing working on the temporary catalog

Continued on reverse, Hawley



## Capacity Project Volunteers

During summer 2010, volunteers from the Latvian Organization of Associations in Minnesota included **Anna Hobbs, Ausma Giga, Janis Robins** (pictured above L to R), as well as **Baiba Olinger, Rita Drone, and Zane Mikelson**. American Latvian Association Graduate Fellow **Ilze Garoza** assisted volunteers as they made significant headway in sorting Latvian print materials.

**Edyta Dudek, Blanche Krbechek** and **Marta Alicja Swica** of the Polish Club also volunteered, providing Polish language expertise. Friends of the IHRC formed a Capacity Subcommittee, comprised of **Vicki Albu, Celeste Raspanti** and **Walter Anastas**, to help coordinate volunteers for further projects and to research possible recipients for out-of-scope and duplicate print.

## New on the IHRC's Webpage

Publications produced by the IHRC during its 45-year history are being scanned and made available for free download from the Center's website. **Cindy Herring** continues to coordinate a project to provide access to all bound IHRC publications, including Spectrum, IHRC News and collection finding aids that predate today's online system.

## Ukrainian Print Processing Project

In October 2010, IHRC began processing its Ukrainian American unprocessed print donations. **Ihar Labacevich** is working with **Daniel Necas** to identify books to be added to the IHRC's book and periodical collections. Duplicates will be offered to interested institutions in the United States and Ukraine.

## George Papademetriou Papers Processing Project

Undergraduate Research Assistant **Mary George** is processing (with **Daniel Necas**) the papers of **Rev. Dr. George C. Papademetriou** (20 lin. ft., 1930s-1990s) who has been actively involved in Greek American religious circles as well as in interreligious dialogue in the United States and beyond. Rev. Papademetriou has served Greek Orthodox parishes in Texas, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Massachusetts. He also taught and directed the library at the Holy Cross Seminary/Hellenic College in Brookline, Mass., before his retirement in 2003.

This fall, IHRC will provide a questionnaire for those interested in donating archival and print materials to the Center.

**Please e-mail the IHRC at [ihrc@umn.edu](mailto:ihrc@umn.edu) with the subject line "Historical Materials of Interest" to receive a copy of this questionnaire.**

## Improved Access!

**Daniel Necas**, student workers and community volunteers improve the Center's archival finding aids continuously, with special attention to collections of high interest to researchers. Recent new or improved archival finding aids include:

- Sucheng Chan Papers
- Dominic Massaro Papers
- Philip Khuri Hitti Papers
- United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants Records
- Anatoly Rozenblat Papers
- Barbara Hendrickson DiNucci Papers
- Estonian Archives in the United States Records
- Finlandia Foundation Records
- Romilda Foti Papers
- Karen Freeze Papers
- Antti Kopra Papers
- Stella Mucha Mickritz Papers
- John Edor Larson Papers
- Theodora and Walter Storozytsky Papers
- Fanny Jarvi Hammarlund Papers
- Adunata Dei Refratari FBI Files Collection
- Life Histories Project, University of Minnesota, Collection

Visit IHRC at [www.ihrc.umn.edu](http://www.ihrc.umn.edu) and search VITRAGE to see these improved finding aids!

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### *Hawley, continued from front*

amount of material off site and are seeking additional off-site storage. These arrangements are not optimal as they reduce the Center's ability to make materials available to researchers and to ensure archival conditions for all collections, but off-site space is a welcome resource. The College of Liberal Arts and the University Libraries continue to seek expansion opportunities, even during these financially difficult times, and they are solid partners who understand the value of IHRC's collections to the University's research, teaching and public engagement mission.

We will create more space. And just as assuredly we will, in time, face more limits on our capacity. As we keep faith with past donors by fulfilling our promise to further the study of immigrant experiences, we are spurred on by the need to continue saving historical materials for the future. More to come!

—*Haven Hawley, Program Director*