



Alumni Newsletter

Keaney in Colorado

Dr. Thomas Keaney, Associate Director

Greetings to all Strategic Studies Alums from Colorado. I am writing from the Air Force Academy, located just north of Colorado Springs, where I've been teaching and trying to fill a position of distinguished visiting professor, a title that tickles my former classmates, many of whom have retired in the area.

As some of you may know, I was a cadet in one of the first classes at the Academy and returned to teach history here in the mid-1970s. All of that personal history means very little to the present cadets. It's as if my generation were to see relevance in the stories of those whose recent experience was the Spanish-American War. There's a B-52 on a pedestal near the front gate, mounted there in the 1980s, before these cadets were born, and they seem impressed to learn that I had flown that airplane. I don't tell them I was already a

lieutenant colonel when I flew it.

Though from a different age, I think my time here has been profitable for both them and me. I teach a course on irregular warfare. In addition, I work with the faculty on teaching techniques; and I have held sessions with the faculty on Air Force history and doctrine and on my present research on the Korean War. The teaching atmosphere is excellent, but I've had to adjust to that too. Classes are 53 (no, not 55, 53) minutes long; being used to the 2 hour classes at SAIS I was often caught unawares—I'd just be getting warmed up in that time. I must say, too, that the students treat me very well. They have even forgiven me for not using PowerPoint in class, a shock to them at first. Many differences I could cite between SAIS students and Academy cadets, but that requires a much longer note. No doubt though that Air Force has a better football team than SAIS.

Conquered into Liberty

Dr. Eliot A. Cohen, Director

Conquered into Liberty: Two Centuries of Battles Along the Great Warpath that made the American Way of War got a very good launch on November 10th at SAIS, thanks to Mrs. Thayer McKell, who orchestrated the event, Professor Doran, who chaired the panel discussion, and my friends Tom Ricks and Nicholas Westbrook who served on the panel. Those of you who have a craving to see such things can find it on C-SPAN at <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/302873-1>.

Thanks to all who showed up, and to succeeding events, including an alumni reception at which I shamelessly signed more books.

The most interesting aspect of the book so far has been the Canadian reaction to it. In the chapter on the battle of Plattsburgh in 1814 I casually remarked that the Canadians were, in many ways, the real winners out of the War of 1812. Not an exceptional observation, I thought, but it got a great deal of play in the Canadian press. Our neighbors to the north are planning a celebration of the War of 1812, including battles and heroes that most Americans know very little about. (Laura Secord, for example, who was a combination of Betsy

Ross and Paul Revere, warning the Canadian forces of the approach of American invaders by making a twenty mile trek through the snow).

Some of the ensuing radio and television conversations were silly ("Do you really think we should throw a big party?") but there were a couple of larger points. Canadians really were the winners from the war: they came out with their sovereignty intact – Americans very much intended to take part or all of the country by force, a retired and dismally ignorant Thomas Jefferson declaring that taking Canada would be a "mere matter of marching." They got a number of heroes, including French Canadians like Colonel Charles de Salaberry who fought with British forces, and

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FSR 2011: Reliving the Battles of Trenton & Princeton

Brad Potter (MA12)

No amount of rain could dampen the spirits of this year's Fall Staff Ride participants as they visited Independence Hall in Philadelphia, hiked fields throughout New Jersey, and even crossed the Delaware River. The rain, which haltingly made it presence

known during the trip, only added to the realism of studying the Battles of Trenton and Princeton, pivotal moments of the Ten Crucial Days in which George Washington's ragged army scored important victories for the glorious cause of American Revolution. As students considered the challenges associated with the daring actions defining this short campaign, the crash of cannon, creak of oars, and smell of

"The rain...added to the realism of studying the Battles of Trenton and Princeton...."

burning powder were faintly reminiscent, especially as many students donned colonial era garb and took on unique accents for their presentations.

Each student participant was given the chance to discuss important aspects of the campaign while filling the role of real historical figure throughout the trip. Weeks of reading and research culminated in an

enjoyable, successful staff ride, which provided insights into the dynamics surrounding one of the pivotal moments during the American Revolution.

The staff ride presentations and fall weather combined for a unique outside the classroom learning experience. Forty-two students led by quartermasters Ben Kutler (MA12) and Elena McGovern (MA12) spent October 1st

and 2nd visiting sites throughout Philadelphia and central New Jersey studying the strategic, operational, and tactical details driving the action in the winter of 1776 – 1777 during the American Revolution. Joining them on the trip were several instructors, including Professor Cohen, Professor Mahnken, Professor McLaughlin, and the newest member of the strategic studies Professor Theodore Bromund. A fall tradition of the SAIS Strategic Studies Department, the Fall Staff Ride once again offered an opportunity for students to enjoy one another's company, spend quality with their instructors, and have a fun studying history in one of the most atypical ways – reliving it.

"Staff rides are wonderful opportunities for students to not only study a
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Above: FSR 2011 participants in Philadelphia, near Independence Hall. Participants explored the Battles of Trenton and the Battle of Princeton in September 2011. (Photo Courtesy of Conor Halloran, MA12).

Alumni Reception 2011

Riccardo Cursi (MA12) & Rajiv Mehta (MA12)

On Tuesday November 15, SAIS Strategic Studies Alumni had their Annual Reception. The event was held in Dupont Circle, Washington DC, in the Library Room of the Darlington House pub. More than sixty alumni attended the Reception, as well as Professors Eliot Cohen and John McLaughlin.

The meeting was introduced by Professor Cohen, the Director of the SAIS Strategic Studies Program, who thanked the alumni for their support for the activities of the Program. In particular, he mentioned the importance of their generous support for such events as the International Staff Ride – the field trip that brings current SAIS students abroad to examine historic battles and campaigns to study their strategic

aspects. Prof. Cohen also presented his new book, *Conquered into Liberty*, and signed copies for participants.

This reception is one of the most appreciated events of the Strategic Studies community, and this year's edition was coordinated by alumna Nadia Schadlow (BA88, MA89, PhD05) and Mirentxu Arrivilaga (MA07). The rendezvous offered an opportunity to reinforce the ties of a solid network. The Strategic Studies Alumni network connects several generations of "Strat-ers" who, although operating in different work environments, always bring with themselves the spirit that characterizes the SAIS community. It is a point of reference for both students who want to explore post-graduation opportunities and professionals who look for informal forum offering the opportunity to share ideas and professional experi-

Below: FSR 2011 participant Bryan Schell (MA 12) as Colonel Henry Knox. (Photos Courtesy of Conor Halloran, MA 12).



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Memories of the International Staff Rides

David T. Fuhrmann, (MA 82),

Over the years my wife, Marilyn, and I have been fortunate to participate in several International Staff Rides. Invariably, we are asked which of the ISR's we've participated in was the best...and the answer is always the same for us: there is no basis for comparison, one cannot pick "the best." But there are moments on every ISR that are memorable, staying with us long after.

Our first ISR was Normandy, on the eve of the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Standing on Omaha Beach at the water-line, looking toward the bluff, it seemed like a million miles away...and one could not help but feel sympathy

and admiration for the young men who fought their way across that beach. Then, in the cemetery above Omaha Beach, we participated in a wreath laying ceremony for one of the student's relatives who was lost shortly after D-Day and is buried there. The student and members of his family each said a few words, and then read the letter the man had written to be mailed in the event of his death.

In Italy, refighting the terrible campaign of Cassino, we stood in the German military cemetery, as peaceful and beautiful a place as one

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could imagine. We listened to three young German men (two of them serving in the Bundeswehr at the time) sing the German soldiers' song "Der gute Kamerad" *a cappella*, implicitly making the point that for soldiers war is not

about politics or ideology; it is about your comrades, the men in the trench on either side of you. Three days in that valley with the Cassino Abbey looming oppressively above, never out of sight, with its windows like eyes watching

every move, provided more than an understanding of why the Allied

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Conquered Into Liberty (cont.)

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with that, some important unifying figures.

All this is perfectly true, even though the forces that preserved Canada were really British – the Royal Navy was indispensable, of course, and Canada was defended primarily by British troops. Even the Canadians, like Salaberry, were often regulars in British service. What is curious, though, is that two of the three other parties to the war also thought they had won.

The British felt, not without reason, that they had yielded not an inch to American demands for greater rights at sea, and had beaten back several American invasions of their colony, even while they fought for their life against Napoleon in Europe. The Americans believed that they had given the British several bloody noses, at sea, in some spectacular (if operationally insignificant) frigate duels, and on land, including at the end in New Orleans. The British had given up on the idea that war with the United States could

extend Britain's position in North America: henceforth London was very much on the defensive.

No, as so often, the real losers were the Indians, who lost a brilliant, unifying leader (Tecumseh) and ended up exposed to the onrush of settlers pouring across the Appalachians. But they did not end up writing the histories, which means that the bicentennial of the War of 1812 will be, oddly, a celebration on all sides of victory.

Battles of Trenton & Princeton (cont.)

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conflict, but to get inside the heads of those who participated in it, from the top generals to the foot soldiers,” reflected Quartermaster Elena McGovern. “I think the real insight people walked away with from this staff ride was how fragile the Revolution really was at the time, as well as an understanding of General Washington’s transition from a man who doubted his ability to lead to the savior of the Revo-

lution in such a short period of time.” Indeed, several themes emerged at the final dinner of the staff ride, which was held at the beautiful and quite appropriate Washington’s Crossing Inn on the final evening of the trip. Included among these was the powerful role of contingency during the campaign, the results and risks of bold action, and the difficulty inherent in predicting the future actions of adversaries. As students debated amongst themselves and

with SAIS faculty the finer points of the campaign, the enduring value of the staff ride experience was once again made clear.

As well fed and exhausted students climbed back onto the bus for the ride back to Washington, DC, many were already looking forward to the staff rides in the spring. Strategic Studies staff ride participants will next be spotted in London considering the Battle of Britain.

Memories of the ISRs (cont.)

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soldiers cheered when it was bombed. Another powerful moment was Professor Grykiel’s impassioned and tragic story of the Polish soldiers who took the Abbey, fighting only for honor because they knew they had no free country to which they might return.

The Cold War ISR was strange and rather surreal , not least because there was no battle or campaign to study, only a war that didn’t happen. It was surreal to stand in the former East German secret police headquarters – a nondescript, mundane bit of cheap 1960s apartment house architecture—where a young man played the role of Stasi chief Markus Wolf in the very office

where Wolf ran one of the most effective secret police and spy organizations ever. We watched an “anti-presentation” in Prague, where a presenter with subversive glee combined hand puppets, free-floating eyeballs, and a noted professor randomly tossed pebbles into a can, dumped them out, scooped them up...and started all over again. What did it all mean? Some of the staff riders are still trying to make sense of it! After lunch, a visit to the German Embassy where the final collapse of the Iron Curtain began.

I could go on! Certainly the Battle of France 1940 ISR had its moments -- the depressingly oppressive Ossuary at Verdun and touring a Maginot Line fortress; standing in a peaceful river

valley at Sedan. Two visits to Spain—first to study the vicious warm up to WWII, and later to follow Wellington’s triumphant defeat of Napoleon’s armies in the Peninsula War—were memorable for the countryside and lodgings (if not the food).

There are other moments, memories I am grateful to have experienced. Every staff ride has its moments, each has provided not only a better understanding of history, but also the pleasure of spending time with interesting, competent, clever people. It is the people—the students, professors, staff...the JHU president for a day...and the other DVs—that make them all memorable.

Third Strategic Studies Annual Fund

Dear Strategic Studies Alumni and Friends,

Last year, you pooled your support and contributed nearly \$24,000 toward the Strategic Studies Program, enhancing the education of the students. Strong alumni support is not just good for the program, it also strengthens and perpetuates a growing network of contacts and compatriots who share that common link to the Strategic Studies Program at SAIS.

This year we are asking all of you to again demonstrate your loyalty and generosity to the program by meeting and exceeding the success of last year's efforts. Strategic Studies is a great program because it enhances the classroom with guest lectures and field activities that provide a broader range of experience and cultural context. Student activities such as the film series or book discussions, guest speakers, Strat Studies social gatherings, or excursions away from the school all require resources. This year's fund will help to ensure these activities are available to all Strat students.

As they did so generously last year, Marijke Jurgens-

Dupree S'92 and her husband David Dupree have agreed to match combined gifts to the Strategic Studies program up to \$10,000. If you make your gift by January 15th you will double the impact! To make a gift online, click here: <https://jhweb.dev.jhu.edu/eforms/form.do?formId=8025> Please consider the most generous gift you can make to the program and know that, whatever you contribute, it will be put to good use investing in the next generation of Strat leaders and growing our impressive network. We had a great response to last year's drive, with your help and commitment we can do even better this year!

Thank you for your continued interest, loyalty, and support.

Sincerely,

David T. Fuhrmann, S'82
Strategic Studies Alumni Council, Chair
SAIS Advisory Council

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED STRATEGIC STUDIES LAST YEAR!

Summer Internship

Christopher Sarokhan (MA 12)

Thanks to a generous stipend from the Merrill Center, I spent the summer as

an intern in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OSD(P)), working as a policy action officer on the Global Force Planning team. This was an ideal placement for a Strat student and someone interested in the actual practice of U.S. strategy and national security policymaking. Indeed, on just our team of nine, four of us were SAISers, and many more throughout OSD are SAIS alums.

OSD(P) is a fast-paced and intellectual environment, where brilliant and committed public servants provide policy analysis and advice to the senior-most leaders on all matters of defense policy. What struck me most was how close the reality

of defense policymaking is to what we study and debate at SAIS, and how much impact we could have on the formulation of national security policy. Indeed, having been involved at the tail end of the decision to put U.S. Marines in Australia, it was an honor to see President Obama announcing to the world the results of our team's work. I am privileged to have had this opportunity to learn and serve, thanks to the Merrill Center and the committed public servants with whom I (still) have the pleasure to work.

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