



Laura Davis was an 18-year-old freshman at Kent State University on Monday, May 4, 1970. Here (center of photo) she and others are leaving the peaceful protest that Guard officers decided hours earlier to disperse. Fifteen minutes later, she witnessed Ohio National Guardsmen turn, aim, and fire. They killed four Kent State students and wounded nine others, permanently paralyzing one. As a Kent State faculty member, associate provost, and professor emeritus, Davis co-created the university's May 4 Visitors Center museum and co-authored the nomination that had the site designated a National Historic Landmark.

Sunday night before I went to bed, I wrote on pages torn from a spiral notebook "Rally at Noon on the Commons Monday" and propped one against the


mirror in each bathroom in my dorm. Around eleven thirty a.m. on Monday, May 4, 1970, I sat in Julie's dorm room watching her tie and retie the bandana on her head. Impatient, I hoped she didn't notice the thought bubble over my head: "C'mon, Julie. We're going to be late for the Revolution."

Like every student walking toward the Commons that morning, we felt purposeful, conscious that we were exercising our First Amendment rights. Nixon had broken his promise that Vietnamization would wind down U.S. involvement in the war, that troops would come home. Invading Cambodia clearly was an escalation. By May 4, we also were protesting the presence of the National Guard on campus. We had a right to be there.

Five hundred feet across the field, guardsmen drifted in to form a skirmish line along the site of the ROTC building. Saturday night, I saw students attempt to set the building on fire. It was intact and showed no signs of fire when police cleared the area that night.

Students and spectators also drifted onto the Commons. Occasionally a chant would start up. "1, 2, 3, 4, We don't want your fucking war!" Mainly students stood around, looking in the direction of the Guard. The rally had been called for on May 1, when graduate students who called themselves WHORE (World Historians Opposed to Racism and Exploitation) symbolically buried the Constitution because Nixon had murdered it. The agenda for the May 4 rally was to discuss the university administration's response to Nixon's invasion of Cambodia and for students to consider joining a national student strike. Someone rang the Victory Bell at noon.

By 12:05, the Guard began dispersing the rally, first with tear gas and then by marching toward the students. One-third of the crowd left the Commons to the northeast and stopped at the end of Taylor Hall. Two-thirds of the crowd moved to the southeast, up and over Blanket Hill, past the Pagoda. When I reached the Pagoda, I went down the hill to the right. I didn't know how long



the Guard would keep marching, and I didn't want to stay out in front of them. I figured they'd march for a while and then turn around and go back to the ROTC site. I thought the rally would reconvene and then naturally dissipate as students left for class or the cafeterias. When I reached level ground, I waited and watched.

After standing my post for ten minutes, the guardsmen reappeared into my line of vision. When their boots hit the top of the hill at the Pagoda, they wheeled in unison, positioned their rifles in unison, and began to fire. In the direction I had not taken. There was a boy lying face down, still, on the pavement. I would learn he was Jeff Miller. A boy lay on his back, his knees bent up and weaving back and forth in slow motion. This was Bill Schroeder, whom I remembered by his orange corduroy bell bottoms. I also had a pair.

I looked up and slowly scanned the scene from left to right as if I was taking a panoramic picture. The vista was dotted with clusters of people looking down at the ground. I knew that they were looking at people who had been shot. Julie's sister Linda and I went to the Victory Bell at the Commons, where people milled in shock and silent protest. Bonnie came up to me and said, "Allison's been shot."

Soon it was made clear that the Guard would not let us remain at the Victory Bell. We moved to the south side of the Commons and took seats in rows on the hillside. My geology professor Glenn Frank appeared, pacing, in front of us. I had never seen a grown man cry. He pleaded, finally convincing us that if we did not leave, we would be killed too.

People around me made a plan. We would follow Glenn Frank quietly across the Commons, but when our feet hit the sidewalk on the other side, we would each run in a different direction. That way if they started shooting again, they couldn't kill all of us. Someone would be alive to tell the story. ■

Epilogue

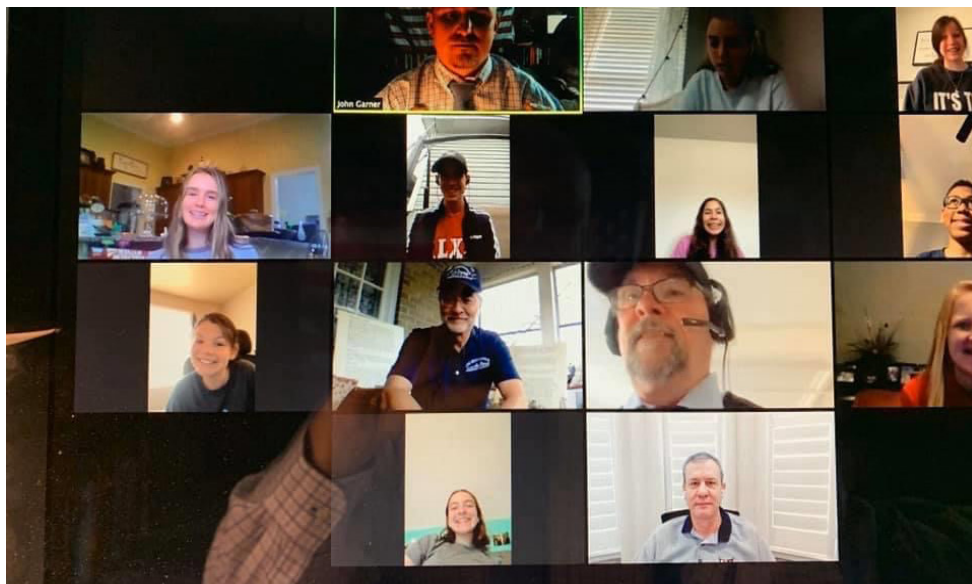
People make logical assumptions about what happened at Kent State. If students were shot, they reason, then they must have been doing something to warrant the shooting. Here are some of the details that surprise people:

- The FBI determined that no rocks were thrown at the time of the shooting. Nor was there any other immediate provocation.
- People today still say, "The guardsmen were kids, too." However, guardsmen who fired their weapons were older than the students and substantially trained.
- Students and faculty alike did not imagine, nor were they told, that the guns were loaded.
- The FBI's investigation and court testimony by guardsmen themselves reveal that guardsmen concocted a story that their lives were in danger.
- Many accept audio evidence of an order to fire.
- Ten years of investigations, reports, and legal trials concluded without anyone being found guilty of or responsible for the shootings.
- President Nixon's own Commission on Campus Unrest declared that the shootings were "unnecessary, unwarranted, and inexcusable."

Access to the NHC network, which includes chapters in 45 states and over 18,000 members, is a great benefit of joining the NHC. We encourage you to read about other chapters in your state or across the country and explore new opportunities!



Franklin Central High School's (IN) History Club collaborated with the Black Student Union at the beginning of March for a "Flashes Around the World International Festival". Displays and exhibits of various countries are part of the fest, and the Club represented the U.S. They included a tri-fold illustrating the diversity of our nation, an atlas of Native American tribes, "50 American Heroes every kid should know", and the opportunity to take your photo as or with a U.S. President.



Mason Creek Middle School and Carrollton Jr. High School (GA) stayed engaged remotely this spring! Here they are having a Zoom meeting with Jim Belcher, Jr., the son of Chief Petty Officer James Belcher, who survived the torpedo attack that sent the *U.S.S. Indianapolis* to the bottom of the ocean during World War II, leaving hundreds of men struggling for survival in shark infested waters for five days.



Penn-Trafford High School (PA) learned about Hadrian's Wall from Dr. Mark Possanza, a Professor of Classics at the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Possanza spoke about the Wall, which served as a defensive fortification in the Roman province of Britannia, built in AD 122 during the reign of the emperor Hadrian.



San Joaquin Memorial High School (CA) continued their year of adventure by traveling to Los Angeles at the end of February to visit the **Getty Center and Museum**. Featuring Western art from the Renaissance to the Impressionists, this world renowned art museum featured a special exhibition of Michelangelo's anatomical studies for the Sistine Chapel.



First Academy (FL) held their first annual "Examples of Honor" documentary contest. Upper School students chose an historical figure and examined how that person(s) displayed courage and honor throughout his/her life by creating a video documentary. Congratulations to senior Faith Woods, for her outstanding documentary on the Tuskegee Airmen, which can be viewed through this [LINK!](#)



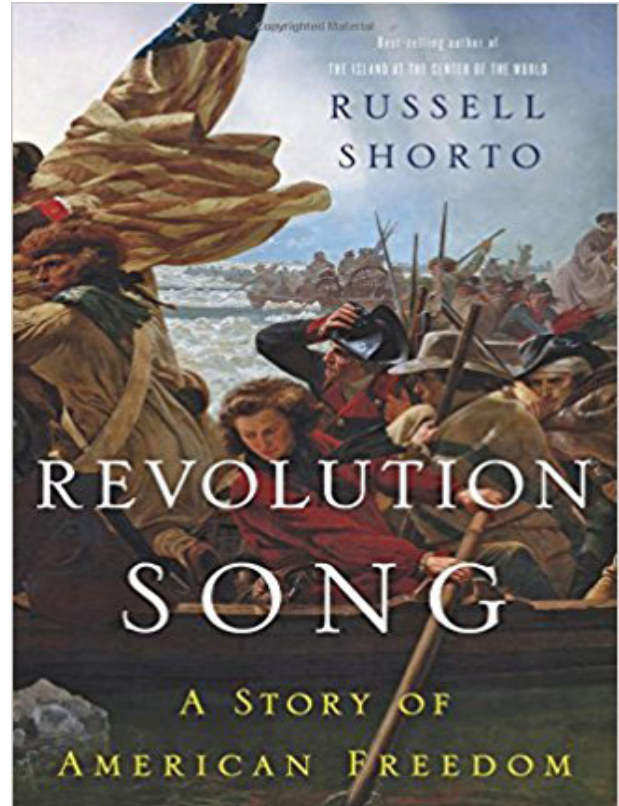
West Milford Township High School (NJ) took a trip to the New Jersey State House and Museum in February. Members got to take a tour of the state capitol building, sat in the state assembly and senate chambers, and got to participate in a mock state legislature in which they debated passing a law that would allow homeschool students to participate in public school extracurriculars.

HISTORY STUDENT OF THE YEAR AWARD

This Spring the NHC and George Washington's Mount Vernon again co-sponsored the "History Student of the Year" prize. Each chapter chose a recipient for this award, and s/he received an autographed copy of "**Revolution Song**" by Russell Shorto. This is the 16th year of the partnership between Mount Vernon and the NHC to sponsor this prestigious award.

To view all recipients for this year please visit [this page](#) on our website.

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 over 1,000,000 visitors each year.



LESSONS OF LEADERSHIP CONTEST

This annual contest co-sponsored by the National History Club and The HBE Foundation challenged students from across the country to select an elected official and examine how that person risked his or her career with a decision (passing a law, making a speech, advocating for change, etc.). Congratulations to this year's winners! Feel free to read the first place essay on Ralph Carr by clicking on this [link](#)!

FIRST PRIZE: \$1,500



Daniel Baur, Glen Ridge High School (NJ) --- **Ralph Carr: A Lone Voice**

SECOND PRIZE: \$750



Katie Lu, Hunter College High School (NY)
--- **Mayor Mike Bloomberg**

SECOND PRIZE: \$750



Reagan Huscher, St. Matthew Catholic School (KS) --- **Susanna Madora Salter**

THIRD PRIZE: \$500

*** **Lucie De Syon**, J.P. McCaskey High School (PA) --- Jacques Chirac *** **Jonathan Eaton**, Pennington School (NJ) --- Themistocles *** **Husnain Choudry**, W.T. Woodson High School (VA) --- Lyndon Baines Johnson *** **Karen Yang**, West Plainsboro High School South (NJ) --- Margaret Chase Smith

NATIONAL HISTORY SCHOLARS SOCIETY

The NHSS was created in Spring 2009 to recognize the truly outstanding members in each Club. Nominees are expected to have a B grade or higher in at least one Honors/AP history class, have been a member of their History Club for 2+ years, and be nominated by their Club Advisor.



There were 719 student members inducted into the NHSS this spring (4.0% of total NHC student membership), and they will proudly wear burgundy honor cords at graduation as a symbol of their academic excellence. To view the entire list of inductees please visit our **NHSS page** on our website.



HISTORY CLUBS OF THE YEAR

The following Chapters are being recognized by the NHC for exemplary activities, community service, and overall commitment during this school year. Each Club received a plaque to hang in their school and a year's subscription to *The Concord Review*. To view a picture of select groups please visit the **Clubs of the Year** section on our website.

The Concord Review is always looking for great History papers. Since 1987 they have published almost 1,400 serious History research papers by bright diligent secondary students from Australia, Canada, China, England, Finland, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, United States, Singapore, Taiwan, and Vietnam. 152 authors have gone on to Harvard, and 40% to the Ivy League or Stanford. Send an email to the editor, Will Fitzhugh, at fitzhugh@tcr.org for essay samples.

*** Commack High School --- Commack, New York ***

*** Frankton High School --- Frankton, Indiana ***

*** Hastings Senior High School --- Hastings, Nebraska ***

*** Henry Clay High School --- Lexington, Kentucky ***

*** Horace Greeley High School --- Chappaqua, New York ***

*** Houston County High School --- Warner Robins, Georgia ***

*** Mason Creek Middle School --- Winston, Georgia ***

*** San Joaquin Memorial High School --- Fresno, California ***

*** Sullivan High School --- Sullivan, Indiana ***

*** Williams Bay High School --- Williams Bay, Wisconsin ***

ADVISOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

The NHC and **The History List** are recognizing the following Advisors for their exceptional commitment to history education and the mission of the NHC.



Jennifer Coleman, Luella High School (GA)



John Garner, Mason Creek Middle School (GA)



Shelley Winterer, Hidden Valley High School (VA)



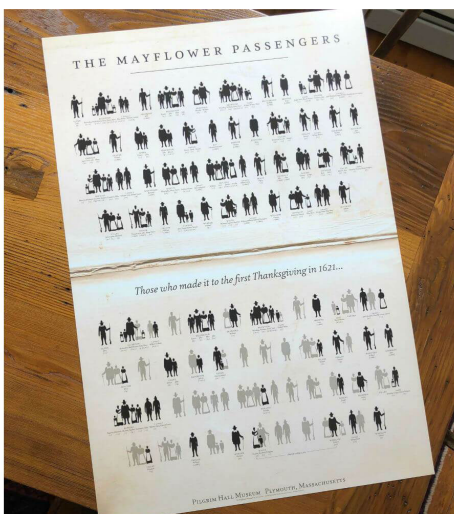
Trent Lamphier, Moline High School (IL)



Sue Hart, Sayville High School (NY)



Rod Cury, Richlands High School (VA)



The History List is providing this year's honorees with a gift certificate to The History List Store (TheHistoryList.com/store). There you'll find historical infographics, such as this poster, as well as their original designs on shirts, mugs, stickers, magnets, and more, all designed for people who share your passion for history. Use code "NHC2020" and you and your students can save \$5 on their first purchase of \$10 or more.

The NHC is proud to have the support of over 60 college history departments! We hope that any of our members who are interested in majoring in history in college will visit a college's website listed down below to find out more about the history department and its offerings.



American University	Marquette University	Texas Christian University
Baylor University	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Union College
Boston University	Messiah College	University of Alabama
Brandeis University	Mount Holyoke College	University of Arkansas
Carnegie Mellon University	Northern Illinois University	University at Buffalo
Coe College	Northwestern University	University of Chicago
DePaul University	Oberlin College	University of Cincinnati
Drew University	Ohio State University	University of Colorado
Georgia Tech University	Princeton University	UMass Amherst
Gettysburg College	Rhodes College	UMBC
Grand Valley State University	Rice University	University of Mississippi
Franklin & Marshall College	Rochester Institute of Technology	University of North Carolina
Harvard University	Rollins College	University of Pennsylvania
Hofstra University	Santa Clara University	University of Rhode Island
Indiana University	Skidmore College	University of Tulsa
James Madison University	Southern Methodist University	University of Utah
Johns Hopkins University	Southwestern University	University of Vermont
Lawrence University	Stanford University	University of Wyoming
Louisiana State University	Suffolk University	Vanderbilt University
Loyola Marymount University	SUNY - Oswego	Vassar College
Loyola University Maryland	Swarthmore College	Wake Forest University
Loyola University Chicago	Syracuse University	Western Carolina University

NATIONAL HISTORY CLUB

The NHC would like to express our gratitude to the following people and organizations who make our important work possible...

John Abele	Smithsonian Institution
HISTORY®	Society of Architectural Historians
George Washington's Mount Vernon	The Concord Review
The HBE Foundation	The Churchill Centre
Agricultural History Society	The History List
American Association for State and Local History	Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund
American Civil War Museum	Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library & Museum
American Historical Association	Patrick Allitt (Professor, Emory)
Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles	Carter Bacon
Gilder Lehrman Institute	Peter Baldwin (Professor, UCLA)
HarperCollins Publishing	Rick & Barbara Berenson
History News Network	Will Fitzhugh
History 500	Joan & Rick Gier
Laurel Hill Cemetery	Bill Haponski
Museum of Florida History	Elizabeth Jones
National Council for History Education	William Jordan (Professor, Princeton)
National Vietnam War Museum	Rod McCaslin
National World War I Museum	Guy Rogers (Professor, Wellesley)
National World War II Museum	Gary Rowe
Omohundro Institute of Early American History	Henry Seng
Organization of American Historians	Art Snyder
Parkview High School (GA)	Rick Sperry
Penguin Random House	Lisa Wingate

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).