

Patterson to retire from PSH

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upper-level junior-senior-grad school. This was and still is a good place for discussing an expansion of topics. It's more difficult now to have that opportunity outside of the classroom. People are busier, and there are great distances many people are traveling to get to and from the campus."

Over the years, Dr. Patterson says that he found certain students more conducive to a free-wheeling discussion format. "I have enjoyed sharing ideas with a different type of student, one who has done a lot of living and is returning to school. Some one who has other life experience to share, rather than just sit back and take notes."

He says that he understands a slower exploration of various majors and that the reason he chose to focus his doctoral on American Studies after undergrad and grad work

in Government and Folklore was that "American Studies students are people who go different places; they combine different majors, and a lot of different interests. To study American culture expands to a lot of different interests rather than lead to an obvious career outcome."

Dr. Patterson has held a personal interest in Civil War history which is evidenced by many of the courses that he has taught, even conducting some courses on site at Gettysburg. He also is on the Gettysburg National Military Park Advisory Commission (affiliated with Gettysburg, not PSH.) Although he was in the U.S. Army for six months in the early 1960's, he does not teach courses on this subject as a war buff. "As an American Studies professor, the focus of a lot of course material falls into the nineteenth century, which includes the Civil War," he says. "I am interested in the Civil War as a place, a sym-

bol of conflicts in American culture. You have this peaceful pastoral landscape in contrast with the violence of war. I'm still exploring the ideas of how one symbol can be identified as the other."

His favorite courses to teach have been "Pivotal Books," "The American Renaissance," and "Snap Shot Moments in Time," a Twentieth century grad course. "I also used to teach a course on Popular Drama," he says. "We would do bad 19th century military dramas."

Major changes he's observed over the years have been obviously in the exterior ("It no longer looks so obviously like an Air Force base," he says) and more subtly in the interior. "There is an encroaching bureaucracy of the University, a drive to standardization. Like a lot of other institutions in society, there are downsizing tendencies where you get less for more. When things are no longer imaginative, it's not much fun to bother with," he says gently and wistfully.

"Fun" is a word that he uses to describe his

criteria for what he chooses to do both on and off campus. He founded the Susquehanna Folk Music Society in 1985, and continues to serve as the President. This organization sponsors monthly concert and dance series as well as an apprentice shop in traditional folk music.

Besides his radio show, which he would like to see developed on other public radio stations, Dr. Patterson is open to exploring new avenues for his interests, especially writing about topics he enjoys that he has not had time for. "I will miss good classes, I will not miss bad classes. It has been more fun than anything. I am not burned out or tired of it. I do not feel in sync with what others want done versus what I want to do.

Nor are his colleagues tired of him. "It is obvious to say that he is irreplaceable," said his close friend as well as his frequent Lion's Den lunchmate, Dr. Michael Barton of the Humanities Department. "He's left a big dent and it's going to be hard to fix."

Dr. Graham says "good bye"

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classes six days a week that first year. It became her minor. By the second year, however, she had moved on past the romanticism of reporting and explored the sciences. "I was contemplating medicine or zoology."

Although Dr. Graham did well academically in every subject, science did not seem to be the right direction to be heading. "People thought of me as scholarly, but I did not see myself that way. I just loved reading Middle English and Chaucer." In her third year she transferred to Rutgers University and focused on English as a major. "I wanted to major in philosophy but a professor told me that there were very few women philosophy teachers," she says.

In her senior year, she got her first taste of American literature from R.W. Lewis, who was a visiting professor from Yale. It proved to be a grounding force in her direction as she continued to pursue higher degrees, but first she thought of teaching. "I wanted to give back and not be a leech. I wanted to try to do something better than what I had gotten up until then," she says.

One person who hit upon Dr. Graham's sympathy of career-changes was Jane Mikoni. She was a print and broadcast journalist at the State Capitol for twelve years when she decided to attempt to learn a more literary way of writing through the Humanities Graduate School at Penn State Harrisburg. "I credit her for helping me to discover that way of writing that I had not explored before. I took a poetry workshop that she offered and I began to write poetry for the first time. I often write poetry now. She spends a lot of time editing her student's work. She has very high standards but she connects with what's positive in her student's work and maintains a respect for their writing. She

would often write a full page of type-written commentary on the back of my papers, but I found this to be more valuable than a grade," says Jane, who is now a teacher at Penn State Harrisburg and also the Director of the Capital Area Writing Project, which serves to improve the teaching of writing by teachers in the classroom.

When Dr. Graham first taught at Penn State University at the main campus at University Park from 1965-69, she was one of three or four women in an English Department of over one hundred men. She came to Penn State at Harrisburg in its infancy in 1970.

In continuance with her trailblazing choices, she says "It was very experimental and innovative with the interdisciplinary approach to courses being taught. I thought it a great opportunity to work on curriculum design."

Another professor who holds Dr. Graham responsible for inspiring him to achieve something personally novel is Dr. Troy Thomas, an art history at Penn State Harrisburg. He credits Dr. Graham with his moving into a more interdisciplinary approach to incorporating literature with his own art courses. "She is a first-rate teacher. I learned how to approach text with her. I was amazed at how she got students to analyze difficult works and to see various levels of meaning," he said. "I tried writing poetry myself, but it did not take long to see I wasn't good at it. I analyze literature quite a bit on my own, however,

since working with her."

In 1971 she began Tarnhelm, which is Penn State Harrisburg's literary and arts annual magazine. Every year a panel of students who join Tarnhelm's staff vote on undergraduate, graduate and faculty entries for this publication. She has served as its faculty advisor since its inception. Kim Glass, a senior communications student who served a vice president of the Tarnhelm staff this year, and also served on its staff last year, credits Dr. Graham for her getting involved with the magazine. "She has been wonderful to work with. She campaigns hard every year to encourage everyone to at least try to submit something for consideration in the magazine. It will be hard to get someone who has given as much as she does to this magazine in coming years."

Dr. William Mahar, who is the head of the Humanities Department at Penn State Harrisburg, agrees that it will be very difficult to hire new professors of her caliber. "She is a gracious, thoughtful, dedicated professor," he says. "Whatever she did, she did with distinction here over and above routine work. She has gone to great lengths to nominate students for awards that would otherwise go unrewarded without her efforts."

Dr. Mahar says that he found a new direction for his pursuit of music education when she asked him to write various articles. "I found her editorial skills very helpful. She would write 'SWYM' (Say What You Mean) across the top and even if I had to send it back to her ten times, she kept my writer's

voice but made it stronger." Dr. Mahar also played a joke on her for many years when he anonymously placed a box of Nabisco "Teddy Grahams" cookies on her desk. "She may have figured it out, but I don't know if she ever knew it was me," he says with a sly smile.

In May, she will clean out her desk, carefully sorting through items to bring memories home of the years she has spent here. When she closes her door for the last time, taking her nameplate along, she will not be heading for a conventional retirement of ease. "My hobbies have been on hold," she says. "I plan to explore my interests in travel, gardening, and gourmet cooking. I'd like to go to more theatre shows and jazz concerts. I'll also be doing freelance and academic writing, editing, and maybe travel writing."

She looks off into the distance, caught up in her plans and dreams. Then she focuses on the book-lined walls of her office. "I will miss the lively, vital exchanges that I have with students and colleagues. It's one of the best cocktail parties you'll ever attend- you'll not get these kinds of conversations outside of here," she says. "The last thing that I write on a student's paper is 'Thanks for a good read.' That I will miss."

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Classified: Thousand Trails Resort is accepting applications for paid internships in the Recreation department. Room and board is available in lieu of wages. Contact Nikki Luecker at (717) 867-5625. Location: 493 S. Pleasant Road, Lebanon; off of Rt. 322 just past Hershey and Campbelltown.