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Presentation by Gene Gilliom on March 7 **“China – Off the Beaten Path”**

Gene Gilliom has led 19 tours of various parts of China since he organized his first study tour to China in 1975. On his last trip to China in September 2017, he and the 24 persons in his group traveled into areas in southeastern China rarely visited by Americans. That 21-day trip will be the focus of Gene’s Torch paper on March 7 with the appropriate title of “China – Off the Beaten Path.”

During his trips abroad, Gene photographs extensively the countries and their peoples. “I attempt to capture not only the physical beauty of the host country, but also the uniqueness of the cultures of the people living there,” he says.

In describing that last China trip, Gene recalls “the landscape was spectacular, the group’s experiences were sometimes physically challenging, the Chinese people we met were friendly and welcoming, and surprises greeted the group at every turn. It was a very special travel experience with a remarkable group of travelers. I hope my pictures convey the specialness of the trip.”



Gene Gilliom (left) with Richard Wang, a Chinese national tour guide for many of Gene’s trips to China, including the last one. Mr. Wang’s son is currently an undergraduate student at Ohio State.

Biography of M. Eugene Gilliom

Gene Gilliom is professor emeritus in social studies and global education at The Ohio State University. He taught courses dealing with social studies methods, multicultural education and global education. In 1985, he received Ohio State’s Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching, the university’s highest teaching honor.

Gene founded the university’s Social Studies Education Program Abroad in 1969. Since then, he has led

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Biography of M. Eugene Gilliom

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Gene Gilliom

81 groups abroad to a total of 46 different countries. In addition to organizing and leading study tours abroad for students and faculty members, he has led groups to China for the Smithsonian Institution and the National Council for the Social Studies and to China, Egypt, Ireland, Morocco and Turkey for the TravelLearn College and University Consortium.

Following Gene's retirement as a full-time faculty member in 1995, he continued to organize and lead trips abroad. Last September, he led a group to Bhutan, a small kingdom in the Himalayas. He says that may well be the last trip he will lead abroad.

President's Message: New members keep Torch fresh and renewed

Spring is on the way and I for one am ready to retire my boots and snow shovel to the storage closet. I hope this edition finds you well and as excited as we on the board are for our 2019 spring Torch series.

A special thanks to Jeff Baker and his team who gave a spectacular and innovative paper last meeting. I especially liked his era-by-era perspective and seeing all of the special treasures from our members. I am pretty sure we could have listened to his team talk about items for the rest of the night! Thank you again, Jeff.

For our new members, just a note: Jeff, Eric Gamble and Sally Willson are new members this year. Please let me know if you are interested in giving a paper or joining the committee to select papers. Torch is kept fresh and new because of the spirit of our new friends.

For our legacy members, there is such talent and accomplishment among all of you. There are many innovative ways to think about giving a Torch paper. I am sure many of you have some great ideas and if you want to present but need some help, we have a team who can work with you for slides or setting up the room for a presentation. Please connect with me or with a member of the committee very soon.

Next meeting, we will consider "China – Off The Beaten Path" with Gene Gilliom. Always a great presenter, Gene will explore the modern, vibrant, historic and hauntingly beautiful county. Such a vast country to experience – I bet we will feel as if we are really there!

Looking forward to seeing you in March!

By the way, I have made personal donations totaling \$300 to veterans' organizations as a result of great people recruiting new members. Keep bringing in amazing people who will keep us going and support our American heroes.



Tom Costantiello

Member's Moment – Susan Warrener Smith

Presented by Deborah K. Stevens on February 7, 2019

Susan Warrener was born and received her elementary and secondary education in Cincinnati, Ohio. Her family included one older brother, and her early childhood faith journey began with her family in the Episcopal Church.

She attended Boston University and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in the history of art and then studied at the University of Michigan, where she received a Master of Arts degree in art history. She married and had 3 children, David, Ann and Emily. Her young family moved to New Jersey, where the interests that would guide her professional life began to coalesce. She served as a docent at the Cloister Museum of New York. Her interest in medieval art began to grow into an interest in medieval architecture and the intersections between art, architecture and spirituality.

In 1982, Susan met and married her second husband, Bruce Smith. She followed her interest in spirituality and received a Ph.D. in theology from Drew University, planning to teach. However, after a stint of teaching at Seton Hall, she discovered that teaching was not her calling.

And so, the church benefitted from Susan's journey into spirituality. From church secretary to Christian educator to ordained elder, Susan followed her vocational path into ministry. She was ordained in 1995 by the Presbyterian Church as a minister of word and sacrament in South Orange, N.J.



Deb Stevens (left) presented the Member's Moment for Susan Warrener Smith on February 7.

In 1996, Susan accepted a call to Indianola Presbyterian Church, which brought her and Bruce to Columbus. Susan served as a member of the pastoral staff until her retirement in 2009 and is a pastor emerita.

Although her intellectual life has not been spent in an academic setting, Susan has continued to write, present papers and publish in the area of medieval studies, with a focus on Cistercian studies. Many remember Susan's Torch paper on the relationship between Cistercian spirituality and twelve-step philosophy.

Susan has been on a retreat in Maui with the spiritual teacher Ram Dass and has walked a portion of the Camino de Santiago. This is an apt metaphor for Susan's heart and life.

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Member's Moment – Susan Warrener Smith

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She is a student of the human spirit and the inner journey of life. An avid reader, Susan loves memoirs that describe how people have navigated their lives, and she is inspired by those who accomplish what she calls “extraordinary feats and journeys.”

Susan and Bruce have four grandchildren. In her retirement, she is involved in reading, photography, a writing group, and teaches a Bible study at Indianola, in addition to her faithful service as assistant secretary of the Torch Club Board.

It is my pleasure to introduce Susan Smith, spiritual seeker and student of the human spirit.

Club inducts personal property appraiser as new member in February

Jeffrey A. Baker

Jeff Baker introduced himself to the Torch Club by leading the intriguing program at the club's meeting on February 7 – the same evening he was inducted as a member of the club. He and two colleagues appraised antiques and collectibles brought by club members, and he explained the evolution of the styles of furniture and personal goods over the past several hundred years.

Jeff is the founder, owner and president of J.A. Baker, LLC, a company that appraises personal property and handles all aspects of estate and tag sales, as well as comprehensive liquidation services. He has a quarter-century of experience in the furniture and antiques business.

He earned his bachelor's degree in marketing in 1987 from the University of Missouri. He is an accredited member of the International Society of Appraisers and meets the Qualified Appraiser requirements of the IRS. He is certified as an appraiser of fine art. He also has completed training as an auctioneer.

Jeff was recognized as Big Brother of the Year in Columbus in 1995 and was the recipient of one of *Business First's* 40 Under 40 awards in 2004.



New member Jeff Baker is flanked by Tom Costantiello, who sponsored his membership, and Dorothy Driskell, membership chair.

Durham/Chapel Hill club will host 2019 Torch convention

The annual convention of the International Association of Torch Clubs will be June 20-23, 2019, at the Croasdaile Country Club in the North Carolina country setting outside Durham. The Durham/Chapel Hill Torch Club is the convention host. Registration by May 14 is \$350. Complete registration information is in the winter 2019 edition of *The Torch* magazine.

Responding to the Evite from Secretary Seelbach

Club secretary Thom Seelbach will send you via electronic mail an Evite to attend the Torch Club meeting on March 7. Respond promptly to the Evite so he will have an accurate count of meals needed. You also may respond to him at tseelbach@gmail.com or (614) 457-5103.

The directions for responding to the Evite are:

1. After you click on the email from Evite, it will bring up a new window on the Evite website. You must click your response in this new window for Evite to register your response.
2. The guest count is the actual number of attendees. If only you are attending, the count will be 1. The cost for a guest to attend the meeting and dinner is \$30. A potential member may attend one meeting without charge.

Schedule of Torch Club speakers and their papers for 2018-19

October 4, 2018: **“Kelton House Shares Sophia’s Secret”** by Diane Selby and Mary Oellermann

November 1, 2018: **“A Century of Chemical Warfare: Trenches, Treaties, Therapy”** by David Lenz

December 6, 2018: **Shiloh Baptist Men’s Chorus**

January 3, 2019: **“Advancements in Ohio Law and How They Affect the Estate Planning Process”** by Eric Gamble

February 7, 2019: **“Time Changes Everything”** by Jeff Baker

March 7, 2019: **“China – Off the Beaten Path”** by Gene Gilliom

April 4, 2019: **“A Journey through Time and Space”** by Sally Willson

May 2, 2019: **“Super Flow in the Universe”** by Will Saam



Torch Club’s monthly meeting agenda

- 4:30-5:30 p.m. Board of Directors meeting
- 5:30-6:15 p.m. Cocktails and conversation
- 6:15-6:35 p.m. Business matters
- 6:35-7:30 p.m. Speaker
- 7:30-8:45 p.m. Dinner and table discussion

Meetings are conducted in The Ohio State University Faculty Club, 181 S. Oval Drive; (614) 292-2262.

Board of Directors of Torch Club of Columbus, Ohio, for 2018-19

President – Tom Costantiello

President-elect – Violet Meek

Immediate Past President – Rich Davis

Secretary – Thom Seelbach

Assistant Secretary – Susan W. Smith

Treasurer – Howard Gauthier

Assistant Treasurer – Susan Tilgner

Fellowship Chair – Nancy Wardwell

Membership Chair – Dorothy Driskell

Nominating Chair – Rich Davis

Newsletter Editor – Steve Sterrett

Director-at-Large Dorothy Driskell (2019)

Director-at-Large Richard Meyer (2019)

Director-at-Large Jeff Caswell (2020)

Director-at-Large Deborah Stevens (2020)