

B.C. in the Second World War Project Gets New Tech

Associate Professor Scott Sheffield is excited to get a new digital microfilm scanner up and running in 2024. He has funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council for 4 years to support his research on the Homefront experience of British Columbians during the Second World War. A core part of the research for this project is newspapers from major urban dailies to small town weeklies in every corner of the province. Newspapers are a window into daily life and public debate during the war years, but many have not been digitised, especially older defunct and smaller community papers. Dr. Sheffield had a scanner from an earlier project acquired back in 2009, but the unit had aged out and was no longer functional. This forced the purchase of a new state-of-the-art Scanpro 3500. There is a learning curve as this is a more sophisticated machine than the previous one, but he is hopeful of being able to complete the bulk of the digitizing this coming year for the larger project.



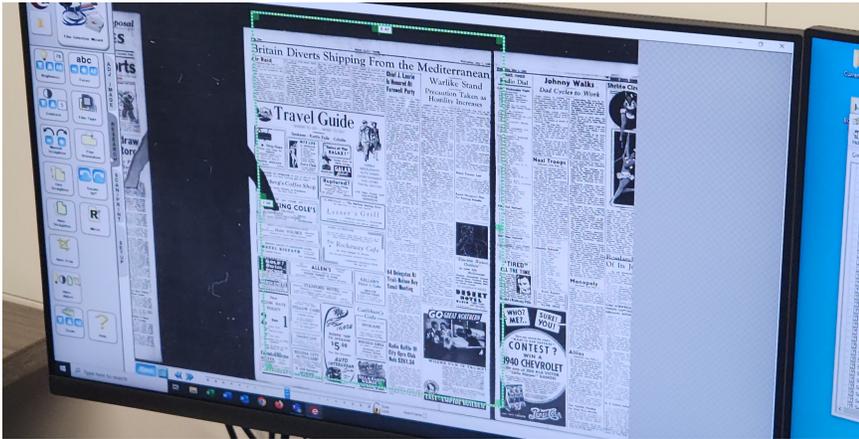
Featured Professor

Professor Scott Sheffield teaches Canadian, Indigenous, and Transnational Military histories at UFV. He is a distinguished researcher and received a [2021 Research Excellence Award](#) for a lifetime of excellence in academic research, highlighted by book publications: *Indigenous Peoples and the Second World War* (2018) and *The Red Man's on the War Path* (2004). Over the years, Professor Sheffield has mentored and collaborated with numerous student researchers and taught important archival research methods that make use of historic newspaper collections and other primary sources available on microfilm and other formats. His current project, outlined in this newsletter feature, explores BC history during WWII.

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[HTTPS://WWW.UFV.CA/HISTORY/](https://www.ufv.ca/history/)

Faculty Highlights



As part of this process, Dr. Sheffield will be hiring UFV undergrads each semester for the next couple years to help with this part of the process. Student Research Assistants (RA's) will learn to acquire microfilm from lending institutions through inter-library loan and scan those reels of film, which renders each page as a PDF file. These then require merging to produce a single PDF file for each edition of a newspaper, and finally student RA's will reach each edition and subject index the major stories and editorials. Through being involved, students will develop their research and critical thinking skills, and gain valuable experience. Dr. Sheffield also offers students the opportunity to work with the primary source base of the digitised papers if they wish to conduct a directed studies project.



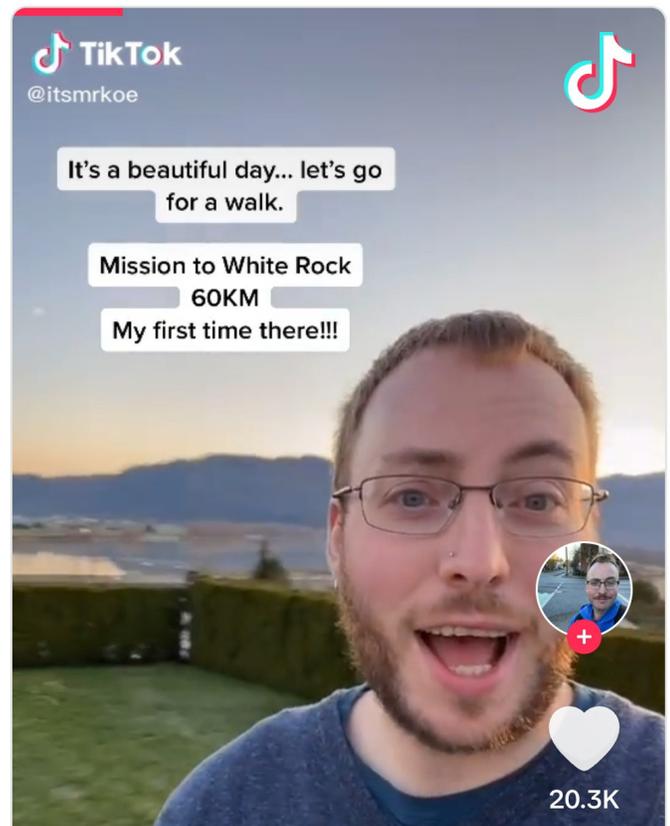
Dr. Sheffield looks at historic newspapers on the new Scanpro 3500.

Alumni Highlights

Mykael Koe, Tik Tok Walker

Interview by Prof. Ian Rocksborough-Smith.

It was a pleasure to hear from UFV history alumnus Mykael Koe, now a teacher with the Mission School District. Mykael has been in the news with a popular local Tik Tok account that chronicles long walks he has taken around the Fraser Valley and Lower Mainland. Recently, he completed a 100 km hike from Mission to downtown Vancouver. His hikes started when Covid began. Encouraged by his students, Mykael has logged many long treks - a routine that helped him achieve a healthy and active lifestyle.



What year did you graduate UFV and what were your majors?

I graduated with my Bachelor of Arts from UFV in 2016 and majored in History with a minored in Geography. I then continued my education at UFV and did a Bachelor of Education, graduating in 2017.

What have you been up to since you finished UFV?

After I finished my first degree at UFV, I returned the following year and enrolled in the teacher education program at UFV. I graduated from this program in 2017 and then received a position in the Mission Public School District as a middle school teacher. Over the years I've taught various position in the district, from English Gr. 7-12, and History/Social Studies Gr. 7-12.

Alumni Highlights

- **How have you been able to apply your history degree in your profession?**

As a Social Studies and English teacher over the past 6 years, my degree in History and Geography from UFV has been instrumental in shaping lessons for my students. I have drawn on the knowledge of historical events that were illustrated to me from various Professors in the History department at UFV, from exploring the French Revolution to Ancient Mayan Cultures, to the History of the United States and the History of India, each of these courses have enriched my understanding of world-cultures and their interconnectedness across the ages. The research and critical analysis skills that are at the forefront of every history class, have given me the skills to assist my students with analyzing primary documents from these historical time periods in order to broaden my students understanding of ancient civilizations. One of the highlights has been connecting historical events to the present, illustrating the relevance of history in understanding contemporary issues, which is something that was presented in many of my courses at UFV. Overall, I use the knowledge and skills I gained through my degree at UFV everyday in my teaching career and am grateful for the knowledge and wisdom I gathered in my time at the university.

Highlights [of teaching have] been connecting historical events to the present.

- **What advice do you have for any UFV students thinking about teaching?**

My advice would be to know that teaching is a rewarding but challenging career. If you are thinking about getting into teaching, I would highly recommend that you begin to volunteer at a local school sooner than later. I would also encourage you to try volunteering at different school sites (elementary, middle, and secondary) as each of them has quite different styles and techniques that benefit you in your teacher pedagogy.

- **What led you to think about documenting your Tik Tok walks?**

In essence, history is what we document, and so I thought it would be a fascinating way to keep track of my own progress over time and look at how I've changed as a person, and how even the areas I'm visiting have changed over time. At the time, Tik Tok was just beginning to gain steam in North America, and it was a fun way to connect with my students in a setting outside of the classroom where I could inspire them to take on their own challenges and goals. It was also just a fun way to connect with others and inspire them to begin their own healthy journeys by walking.

- **What has been your favorite long distance Tik Tok walk so far?**

I think my favourite long-distance walk was the first time I walked from Mission to English Bay in Vancouver. It was 78KM in length, and I did it on my birthday. For me, it was just a memorable day as I got to spend it on the phone with many of my friends and family, while doing the walk and finished it with a beautiful sunset at English Bay in downtown Vancouver.

- **Where do you plan to walk next?**

I think in 2024, I plan to walk to Bowen Island from Mission. After that, I will try for Victoria or Squamish.

Faculty Highlights

My Journey to UFV History

By Prof. [Alessandro Tarsia](#)



I am an Xwelitem working in Stó:lō Téméxw, living in the eastward strip of land that belonged to the Pilalt people that today is called Chilliwack (Ts'elxwéyeqw), within Skwah and Skwahla's contemporary stewardship. I live within the UFV community, acknowledging that I am benefitting from patriarchal, heteronormative, and Eurocentric settler colonialism. Indeed, I am a white atheist heterosexual man from the Southern Italian working class. When I was in Calabria, I wrote a book about the ethnohistory of organized crime from my region - 'Ndrangheta, which is the most powerful in Italy, and one on the history (3000 BCE - 1900 CE) of ergot and ergotism in the changing cultures of southern Italy.

When I arrived in Canada for my Ph.D. in 2017, I was first introduced to the work in Treaty Number 6 territory by Anthony Johnston from the Mistawasis Nêhiyawak First Nation. I never left the country since 2017, and I am still here with a work permit. In 2019, relocating to Chilliwack, I have been working with Professor Keith Thor Carlson on behalf of several First Nations on treaty negotiations, court litigations, reserve school curricula, and archival rematriation. In BC, I have been introduced to the work by dozens of Elders and Knowledge Keepers from Coast Salish communities. However, I consider Dr. Naxaxalhts'i and Carlson as my mentors. Since 2019, I have taught as a sessional the history of the Stó:lō-newcomers relations during three colonial eras - exploitation colonialism (fur/salmon trade, 1827-1857), extraction colonialism (Fraser River Gold Rush, 1858-1860s), and settler colonialism (1860s to the end of the 20th century). I published an article on the history of Italian-Indigenous relations in BC, and I am working on publishing the manuscript from my dissertation on the history of tobacco in Stó:lō historical consciousness.

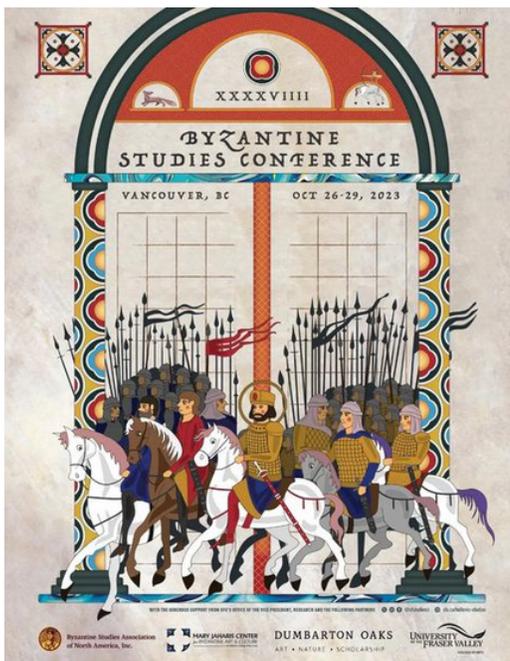
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Faculty Highlights Cont'd

At UFV, I was hired as a historian specializing in the Indigenous histories of Canada, the Indigenous history of alcohol and tobacco, and the history of Italian organized crime. I work in a Community-Engaged Scholarship (CES) framework, trying to build cross-cultural, cross-sectional, and cross-ethnic dialogue and understanding. For example, our ethnicity and gender alone do not define us. Indeed, the more intersections we add, such as class, sexual orientation, citizenship, religion, etc., the more precise the definitions of our standpoints. Therefore, multiple intersections define each human being. Moreover, our identities are at the crossing of unique intersections of privileges and discrimination, making standpoints strictly individual and not social. The CES methodology grounds the standpoint on the active and crucial role of the community within academic research. Here, I hope to continue transforming myself and my community by developing research projects on the history of colonial alcohol and tobacco among the Coast Salish people, the history of the Italian community in Powell River in the 20th century, and Operation Baytown in southern Italy during the WWII Canadian army's invasion of the land of my ancestors. I hope to be a valid ally in the decolonization and Indigenization process, moving toward genuine Reconciliation.

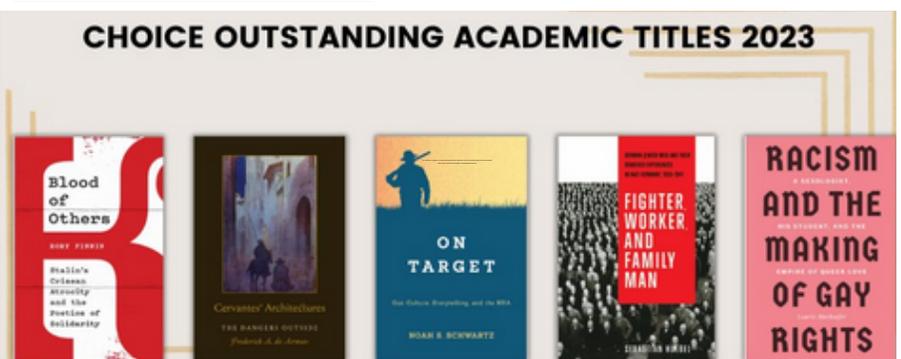
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Conferences and Accolades



Left: Dr. Aleksandar Jovanovic presented at the 49th Annual BSANA Byzantine Studies Conference hosted at Simon Fraser University in October 2023.

Below: Dr. Sebastian Huebel's book *Fighter, Worker, and Family Man* was chosen among a selection of University of Toronto Press books for recognition as a Choice Outstanding Academic Titles for 2023.



Faculty Highlights

Reflections From a Childhood in Nazi Germany

By Prof. [Sebastian Huebel](#)



Students of Hist318 (Modern Germany) had the chance to meet guest speaker Inge Madlin, a German woman born in 1933 who moved to Canada in 1951. Inge visited my class to talk about her upbringing and childhood in Nazi Germany and her experiences made during the Second World War. She touched on several aspects including the education system under Hitler and German culture in more general terms. Perhaps of some surprise to my students, she provided a rather positive canvas of childhood memories and gave examples of how she was taught proper morals and principles (that might be largely absent in today's time); things like helping an older person carry a bag at the train station or making a seat available. She had brought an old school that she quoted from: "to be a good child, the Fuhrer wants you to..." Students listened attentively to her stories and Inge, who gave this talk for the very first time in her life, excelled in public speaking. Her description of her war memories were likely the most poignant ones as she described in detail the increasing stress and trauma that she and her family felt when Allied air raids over Germany began and when the family had to spend numerous hours and days in underground bunkers; at one point she witnessed the fatal crash of an Allied plane near her house; according to her, her parents were pacifists and did not shy away from putting flowers on the grave of the fallen, Allied soldier. Later in the war, her siblings and her got evacuated to the countryside, where the state deemed children to be safer. In her concluding remarks, Inge vociferously condemned war and urged students to fight for peace and democracy. She stated that she had moved to Canada to get to know her enemy a bit better – but she never met one.

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Faculty Highlights Cont'd

Perhaps the most meaningful part of Inge's visit was the QA period. When asked if she had ever witnessed the aspects of the holocaust, Nazi antisemitism and oppression she denied having seen or known anything; she made a brief reference to a few people disappearing (likely political prisoners) but it was likely surprising to my students that antisemitism did not feature in her talk at all. In an almost apologetic way, Inge gave her audience an impression of a happy upbringing and she ostensibly downplayed the exposure of propaganda and other aspects of the Nazi dictatorship in her life. Interestingly, she contradicted herself; at one point, she did mention that as a teenage girl, she tried to imitate paratroopers (by jumping from a roof with an umbrella!) that had seen on (censored) state TV. I found this juncture in her visit especially interesting and directly asked her if she or her family had ever contemplated Germany's role as the aggressor and instigator of this war – of which she now was a part. The question took her off-guard, and she hesitated at first. She then suggested that in the mindset of the time, Germans were fighting a war against communism and Stalin. Her defensive stance was my personal major takeaway; how (some) Germans explained the war and started to portray themselves as victims, a form of rationalization that lingers on, it seems, within her. Of course, there is another contradiction at play: the allied air raids that she encountered in Western Germany were American, British and Canadian, not Soviet.

The following week, we had an in-depth debrief and I used Inge's talk as a teaching moment to illustrate that as historians we need to take witness testimonies with a grain of salt and not at face value.

Following the presentation, numerous students came up to Inge to give her a hug, exchange some personal words, and even phone numbers. The following week, we had an in-depth debrief and I used Inge's talk as a teaching moment to illustrate that as historians we need to take witness testimonies with a grain of salt and not at face value.

Recent Events of Note on Campus

UFV ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT EVENT

ISRAEL AND GAZA: SEEING BEYOND THE HEADLINES

ABOUT THE EVENT

For over a century, the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians has been waged over land, self-determination, safety, security, and many related matters. The current war has escalated this conflict and rendered it seemingly out of control, with new levels of inhumane acts that have claimed thousands of lives on both sides. No end is currently in sight, thousands of civilians are currently facing expulsion, military misdeeds, and unbridled terrorism.

These events impact us all in our interconnected world, and it is very challenging to decipher what is going on in this conflict with all of the polarized rhetoric. Join us for a conversation on this topic where experts on this conflict share more of the context of what is going on in the region than is typically seen in our media coverage.

Everyone welcome

OCTOBER 19
Thursday, 7:30 PM

UFV Abbotsford, room B101

History faculty Prof. Steven Schroeder and Prof. Keith Thor Carlson were involved in putting on the two events profiled here. The first, was a standing-room only event featuring a panel of local speakers discussing the tragic events in Israel-Palestine. The second (on right), featured scholar Daniel Kim Craig's presentation on the impact of the Korean democratization movement on Canadian theological education in the 20th Century.

VISITING SCHOLAR OPEN TALK

A CRACK IN CHRISTENDOM: THE IMPACT OF THE KOREAN DEMOCRATIZATION MOVEMENT ON CANADIAN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION, 1950 TO 1980

ABOUT THE EVENT

During and immediately following the Korean War, Canadian theological colleges welcomed students from the Korean church via scholarships. The hope was to equip leaders to help rebuild Korean society and provide guidance for the young church.

This paper explores the stories of Koreans who received a theological education in Canada and the way their critique of that education has contributed to opening a space through which the Canadian church might reimage its future in a changing religious context.

6:30 - 8:00 PM
OCT 26
Abbotsford Campus, Building 9, room 9108

VISITING SCHOLAR
Dr. Daniel Kim-Craig

Dr. Kim-Craig has his PhD in history from the University of Saskatchewan and is a current seasonal lecturer at Emmanuel College, the seminary of the United Church of Canada in the University of Toronto.

LEARN MORE

Scan the QR code or visit: <https://ufv.ca/history/events/>

UNIVERSITY OF FRASER VALLEY
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Student Highlights

Uncovering Abbotsford's Forgotten History

By Kamren Andersen

Over the summer I had the chance to go through a work-study term as a research assistant under the supervision of Eiji Okawa for a local-history project with the Heritage Abbotsford Society. My main task was to examine individual case files of Japanese Canadians from the Abbotsford-area created by the Office of the Custodian of Enemy Property, the government body responsible for dealing with the property of uprooted Japanese Canadians during the Second World War. The documents in these case files were focused on matters related to the Custodian's management of property, like appraisals, sales records, and communication between the office and individuals regarding their land and possessions. What struck me as I browsed through them were the hints of prewar life and the hardships of the dispossession that came through them despite their focus on property and finances. This quickly turned into the focus of my research, and I was able to put together detailed glimpses into the lives of several local farming families for my final report, along with detailed lists of the 145 adult residents I was able to identify across 6 Abbotsford-area communities.

What struck me as I browsed through them were the hints of prewar life and the hardships of the dispossession that came through them despite their focus on property and finances.

This semester, in order to make up for a class that was cancelled, Eiji offered an independent studies course on this topic that allowed me to continue my work. To build on my summer research I sought to expand those individual glimpses into a more comprehensive history of one of Abbotsford's Japanese Canadian communities. A visit to the Reach's archives provided me with key material on a small community centred around the intersection of Gladwin and Downes Road in what used to be known as west Clayburn. 17 households built farms there and created a vibrant community on the settled lands, only to lose their homes, farms, and possessions when the government forced them out of their community, confined them to internment on the grounds of race, and sold their properties without consent during the Second World War. By putting together the individual case files of the families, primary sources from the local archives, and several secondary works, I have been able to piece together a story of the community that illustrates the history of many of Abbotsford's forgotten Japanese settlers. I have also tried to place that history within the wider pattern of Japanese Canadian settlement in the Fraser Valley, and the injustice faced by those who lived throughout the wartime exclusion zone.

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Student Highlights Cont'd

This two-semester process was the most engaging experience that I have had in my four years at UFV, and I hope to be able to share the final output soon. I would like to extend my gratitude to Eiji Okawa for his constant and guidance along the way, and to the Heritage Abbotsford Society for getting me started on this project. I am also very grateful to the Nikkei National Museum in Burnaby and The Reach Gallery Museum in Abbotsford for their assistance. -

With files from Prof. Eiji Okawa



A family picture on the Haraga farm in Abbotsford, c. 1927. Oka Family Collection, Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre, 2001.28.2.8.3.

Student Highlights

Battlefield Study Tour Reflections

By Hunter Gauthier

In May of 2023, I was accepted to participate in the Canadian Battlefield Study Tour where I was able to travel in France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. This tour consisted of several important Canadian historical monuments and memorials that went deeper into the history and importance of national identity. The tour had students from all levels of academics with a variety of interests - which created a dynamic conversation. A large point for many of the participants was that in some way shape or form everyone had a connection to these battles and it brought emotional understanding for many involved. Some had family who had died and never came home and some, like myself, had family who fought but made it home to live their lives. It seemed a privilege for me to be able to be there when many family members of soldiers never came back to memorialize those they lost. It was impactful to see how important honoring these soldiers was. There were cemeteries in the middle of farm fields or on the side of the road. This does not forget what happened. And I think sometimes people do. We live so far away from where the war happened that visualizing how much damage was done is hard to conceptualize.



Walking through these memorials and cemeteries and reading the names of the fallen soldiers was difficult on some days of the trip. I came across a headstone at Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery in the Netherlands; James Wells was 19 years old and from Hope, BC. I grew up there and went to school with a family named Wells. The visit was near the end of the trip and walking through this cemetery finding his headstone really impacted me. I come from a military family. My dad served overseas and my brother is in active service. To think that there is ever a possibility they could have been like James Wells is difficult to comprehend. This trip pushed me to confront my perspectives on national identity, our memories of the war, and the larger impact it had on Canadian culture and society. My viewpoints have changed but also became more solid being able to attach words and statistics to the visuals I have learned about in classrooms. I hope to be able to go back and see more because what I did get to see was really only the tip of the iceberg.

“What to do with a History Degree”



In coordination with the [UFV Alumni Association](#), the [Association of History Students](#) organized and hosted a lively session featuring history program alumni from the local community. It was a valuable discussion which helped students think broadly about the various careers history degrees can lead to. We were lucky to have insights from those who presented who now work in community planning and development as well as law. This is an annual event we coordinate with students, alumni, and faculty.

UFV History attends a soccer match of Vancouver FC (based in Langley) in their inaugural season.



Despite some consistent damp weather, a few of us attended an exciting match between Vancouver and Halifax as the Canadian Premier League approached the end of its season in late September. Vancouver won 2-1 in a thrilling finish.

The History Department at the UFV Open House



Each October, UFV hosts an Open House for prospective students and their families. Staff and faculty are on hand to answer questions about courses and programs and there are often great food trucks outside (as well as give away goodies and tote bags for attendees!)
-Photos by Alessandro Tarsia

EPAC (External Program Advisory Committee)



Twice a year we host a dinner meeting of current students, alumni, professors from nearby universities, teachers from local schools, and staff from local galleries, archives and museums to discuss UFV's history program. Each meeting leads to lively discussions. Fall 2023's EPAC meeting was no exception.

Social Media

Association for History Students



UFV Association for
History Students

UFV History Dept.

@ahs.ufv

@ufv_history_dept



Follow us to be kept up to date on events, volunteer opportunities and history department information!



Above and below: Students in seminar discussion during Prof. Eiji Okawa's HIST 398F: Family and Gender in Traditional East Asia.



If you are a current student or alumnus and are working on something you might like to have profiled in this newsletter, consider submitting ideas to *Now and Then*. We would love to hear from you! **Contact: historyinfo@ufv.ca**