Our own Adeeb Khalid has been recently featured in an article by Jeff Baron for the Bureau of International Information Programs in the U.S. Department of State. In his article titled “A Scholar Looks Back to the Future of Central Asia,” Baron describes Adeeb’s life away from the department: “Khalid, 46, a Pakistani American and a professor of history at Carleton College in Minnesota, has begun six months of rare scholarly luxury in Washington. As a visiting scholar at the Kluge Center of the Library of Congress, he is freed from the duties of preparing and teaching classes, mentoring students and meeting with faculty colleagues, not to mention shoveling the snow of another Midwestern winter from in front of his house. (His son, now 14, is big enough to take that over, he says.) Instead, he has immersed himself in the resources of the world’s largest library to finish a history of Central Asia in the first 15 years of Soviet rule after the 1917 Russian Revolution, a pivotal period he describes as one of nationalistic and idealistic hope turning to disappointment and fear.” To read more about how Adeeb describes his project please go here.

Kudos to Kai Bird, history major ’73, whose autobiography, Crossing Mandelbaum Gate: Coming of Age Between the Arabs and Israelis, 1956-1978, is a National Book Critics Circle Award finalist. The National Book Critics Circle Award honors the best literature published in English in six categories—autobiography, biography, criticism, fiction, nonfiction and poetry. Winners will be announced on March 10th.
The Truth About The Dual Life of a Double Major

Thinking about double majoring in History and something else? Too intimidated by it? Be afraid no longer! Rachel Schwartz, our trusty investigative reporter, hunted down two of the senior class’s double majors, Aaron Maurer and Moshe Lavi, to find out the truth about the two-faced life of a double major.

Aaron Maurer is a double History and Math Major, hailing from Swathmore, PA. Coming to Carleton with a number of math credits already, Aaron was, “pre-determined NOT to become a math major.” He really enjoyed the history classes he took, and decided to declare history as a major. But as he continued to take higher level math classes, he realized that his fondness and talent for the subject made it inevitable that he declare math as well. Aaron particularly enjoys war and slaughter, and is currently writing his comps on Byzantine military history.

Thanks to a massive intellect, Aaron has experienced very few problems juggling the two majors. Unlike some of the other majors, neither math nor history has a very strict structure in terms of requirements, course load and order of courses. This (in addition to the math credits he came in with) has granted Aaron flexibility with his schedule. “I’ve never not been able to take a class that I want because of my other major” he says. In fact, over half of the math majors this year are double majoring (although presumably more are within the math/ science track, not as many in the glorious humanities!). The only thing that Aaron would warn against is doing two “hard comps” at the same time. Currently, Aaron is taking three credits of math comps in addition to his history comps. “Its good because I’m taking the bigger part of my math comps in the spring,” Aaron explains, “otherwise I would be pretty miserable right now.”

Most surprisingly to some number-fearing history majors is the way in which Aaron sees how math and history overlap. “Most people who don’t understand the discipline of history think it’s about memorizing dates and places. Its not. And most people who don’t understand higher level math think its about memorizing things also. Its not. I’m really not good at that kind of thing. But what upper level math courses do teach you is how to gain a deeper understanding of a concept, and use it to figure out the logical flow of a given problem. Its about using these kinds of tools. I think history is pretty similar in this respect.”

While he likes studying history, Aaron has since realized that he really likes math more, and is even planning to pursue math outside of Carleton. He is currently applying to several PhD programs in Mathematics all over the country.

Moshe Lavi is a double International Relations and History major from Israel. He claims that doing the double IR and history major was “not very difficult, and very feasible for anyone who wants to.” The only problems he ran into was last spring, when the history research seminar he wanted to take conflicted with his IR comps. “But it all worked out in the end, so it doesn’t really matter” he says. Moshe has even managed to go abroad twice: the first was last fall to King’s College London, and the second will be this spring on Madrid/Maastricht, political economy program lead by IR professor Al Montero.

Moshe has enjoyed different aspects of his two majors. He really loves the more theoretical focus of the IR major (his IR comps was centered on integrating several different theories), but has really enjoyed his experience with professors in the history department. “I’ve really loved all my professors; I think they’re the best at Carleton. I like being able to examine events and actors in depth in history, but I really do miss the theoretical component that I get in the IR discipline.” Moshe is particularly focused on European history from the 19th century through the Second World War.

Next year Moshe is enlisting in the Israel military. After his service, he hopes to pursue a career in the Israeli foreign service as a diplomat. “That’s also why I’m studying IR; history was always what I wanted to study, IR is for my career as a diplomat.” He also hopes to get a Masters degree in War Studies, a discipline which he believes integrates both IR and history nicely. “But I don’t know, I want to get a degree in a lot of things, so we’ll see” he says. Good luck to him!
This Day in History
1783 – England proclaimed the formal end to the hostilities with the United States.
1781 – George Washington and John Adams are elected the president and vice president of the United States.
1794 – The French legislature abolishes slavery throughout all territories of the French Republic.
1861 – Delegates from six southern states met at Montgomery, Ala., to form the Confederate States of America.
1936 – Radium becomes the first radioactive element to be made synthetically.
1945 – Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin met at the Yalta Conference.
2004 – Facebook, a mainstream online social network is founded by Mark Zuckerberg.

Happy Birthday!
1677 – Johann Ludwig Bach, German composer (d. 1731)
1877 – Eddie Cochems, Father of the Forward Pass in American football (d. 1953)
1902 – Charles Lindbergh, American pilot (d. 1974)
1913 – Rosa Parks, American civil rights activist (d. 2005)
1931 – Isabel Martínez de Perón, President of Argentina (1974-1976), widow of Argentine President Juan Perón
1947 – Dan Quayle, 44th Vice President of the United States
1952 – Li Yinhe, Chinese sexologist

Sorry About the Death…!
1894 – Adolphe Sax, Belgian instrument maker (b. 1814)
Trivia
1. Queen Cleopatra VII and Marcus Antonius’ death as a result of their army’s defeat in the Battle of Actium.
2. Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin.
3. On 10 August 1793, the first anniversary of the French monarchy’s demise.
4. Georgetown College (now part of Georgetown University)
5. Gamal Abdel Nasser

The Journal of Undergraduate International Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is currently accepting submissions for its Spring 2011 issue. The journal seeks to publish the best undergraduate work across the country related to international themes and topics. To submit your work, juis@global.wisc.edu or for more information see www.juis.global.wisc.

The History Department at Mississippi State University will host its 2nd annual Symposium for Undergraduate Research on May 13-14 2011 and are accepting papers! “Visions of the Past, Dreams of the Future: Europe and the America since 1650” is the conference theme. Interested students should submit 500 word abstracts, or finished papers, to SHUR, c/o Dr. Peter Messer, Dept. of History, P.O. Box H, Mississippi State, MS, 39762 by March 1, 2011. Electronic submissions accepted at pmesser@history.msstate.edu