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*Editorial*

Regular readers of the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* may have noticed a pattern in recent years: the October issue is often, if not always, a special issue on a particular topic. In future, readers can expect one special topical issue per year, generally in October. This year we focus on the eighteenth-century Pennsylvania backcountry, which scholars also refer to as the Pennsylvania frontier, borderland, or crossroads, among other terms, depending upon their preference or emphasis. The issue grew out of a recognition that this is a burgeoning field, with numerous scholars, both young and established, finding fruitful ground to till. This issue does not attempt to provide a comprehensive look at that new scholarship; rather, it provides a sampling of work by some new scholars, surveys and analyzes recent literature on one aspect of the Pennsylvania backcountry—namely Indian-white relations—and, taking a cue from the popularity of the “Hidden Gems” essays of the October 2011 special issue on the Civil War, includes a smattering of essays on a variety of primary sources. These short pieces give readers a glimpse into the historian’s craft.

The authors of this issue have been instrumental in putting it together. Dan Barr, our guest editor, has helped frame the issue in addition to editing it and contributing an informative review essay. Dan is a professor of history at Robert Morris University, outside of Pittsburgh, and he has written extensively about the early transappalachian frontier. He is the author of *The Boundaries Between Us: Natives and Newcomers in the Old Northwest Territory, 1750–1850* (2006) and *Unconquered: The*

*Iroquois League at War in Colonial America* (2006). His most recent project, a study of the early southwestern Pennsylvania titled *A Colony Sprung from Hell: War and Society on the Pittsburgh Frontier, 1744–1794*, is forthcoming from Kent State University Press. I am most grateful for his help in putting this issue together and now turn you over to his capable hands.

Tamara Gaskell  
Editor