



SOCIETY FOR HISTORIANS OF THE EARLY AMERICAN REPUBLIC

SHEAR, Post Office Box 200, Williamsburg, VA 23187-0200

Citation for Johann Neem
SHEAR Distinguished Service Award
July 18, 2026

This year we honor Johann Neem with SHEAR's Distinguished Service Award for his dedication to our organization, including his 2014-2017 term on the Advisory Council, and especially for his transformative work editing the *Journal of the Early Republic*.

Johann is stepping down after co-editing the *JER* for six years, first with Andrew Shankman and for the last three years with Ronald Angelo Johnson. His timing could not have been worse. He stepped into the job in 2020—in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic—at a moment when archives both within and beyond the United States shut down, which would have implications for historical research for years afterward. And yet he has used the last six years to build a journal of the highest quality and a reputation for working closely and rigorously with authors at all stages of their careers, sometimes with material that needed careful guidance to allow it to sing. To quote Ron, his co-editor, “Everything positive that anyone hears about the *JER*, that’s Johann.” Anyone who has had the pleasure of working with him knows how much his enthusiasm for a project can mean to an author. But from Johann’s mouth, it’s never easy praise. He engages deeply with each piece, thinking seriously about what it does, how it uses evidence, and how it builds to the strongest argument possible.

The Covid pandemic did not just disrupt archival research, after all; it also saddled scholars everywhere with new stresses that made it even more difficult to offer up manuscript reviews in a timely fashion and to find colleagues willing take on some of the other editorial and board roles at the journal. Working with Andy and Ron, Johann has somehow threaded the needle of being generous with his editorial guidance and both firm and appreciative of those of us who have reviewed those manuscripts. All along, he has maintained the journal’s central commitment to scholarly excellence and to showing all of us who study the early republic where the field is going.

I speak for all of us in the larger SHEARite universe who eagerly open the journal the minute it arrives: Johann, we are so lucky to have worked with you, and there is no one more deserving of the SHEAR Distinguished Service Award.

With gratitude on behalf of all of us,

Carolyn Eastman
President