

The ALEXANDRIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2010

JUNE MEETING

DATE: Wednesday, June 23, 2010

PLACE: The Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street, Alexandria, Virginia

TIME: 7:30 p.m.

SPEAKER: Barbara Magid, Alexandria Archaeology

Reflections on Alexandria's Pottery Industry

Alexandria ceramics expert Barbara Magid will speak on "Reflections on Alexandria's Pottery Industry." Her thirty years of working with artifacts from Alexandria's archaeological sites have provided insight into pottery made and used in Alexandria. Archaeological materials show that from 1792 to 1876, local potters supplied nearly all of the earthenware and stoneware used in Alexandria kitchens, while Alexandria merchants such as Hugh Smith and Robert H. Miller supplied finer imported ceramics for use on Alexandria tables.



Magid will focus on the locally-made pottery, but will also touch on other Alexandria businesses involved in the sale of ceramics. Alexandria's first potter, Henry Piercy, came from Philadelphia, and made slip-decorated earthenware in the Philadelphia style. Lewis Plum, who rented Piercy's manufactory in 1799, appears to have been experimenting with making stoneware, but it was Plum's apprentice John Swann who first manufactured Alexandria stoneware on a larger scale around 1810. Swann's Wilkes Street

Pottery later became a commercial success under the management of merchant Hugh Smith and, later, potter B. C. Milburn.

Magid is an archaeologist with the City of Alexandria, serving as curator and collections manager for the Alexandria Archaeology Museum. She studied archaeology at the University of Pennsylvania and at Cambridge University in England, where she earned a Master of Philosophy degree. Her articles on Alexandria pottery have appeared in the *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts* and in *Ceramics in America*, where a two-part article on Alexandria stoneware is to appear in the 2011 volume.

AHS Board Elections, Treasurer Opening

At the May 26 meeting, the Alexandria Historical Society members voted on a slate of candidates for AHS officers and open Board of Directors' seats for the 2010-2011 terms.

The following officers were elected:

President	Audrey Davis
Vice President	Peggy Gross
Secretary	Ted Pulliam

The following were elected to the Board of Directors:

Tal Day	Term to end 2013
Debbie Ackerman	Term to end 2013
Lisa Adamo	Term to end 2013

The position of Treasurer remains open, and the Board of Directors is asking for volunteers to fill this position. If you are interested in applying for the seat of Treasurer, please contact Audrey Davis at audrey.davis@alexandriava.gov or Mary Ruth Coleman at 703.922.5423.

Deaths of Two Northern Virginia Historians

AHS mourns the loss of two historians whose works explored Northern Virginia's past. Dr. James D. Munson died in Parrish, Florida, on April 14 at age 80, and Dr. Ross D. Netherton died in Arlington at 91 years of age.

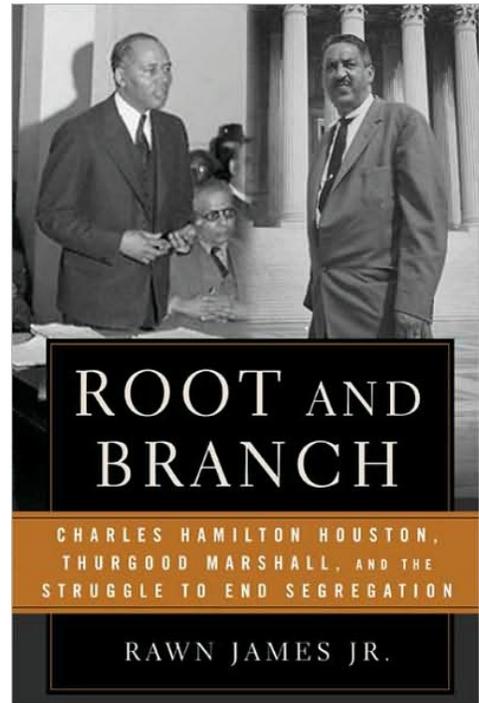
Jim Munson, a retired lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps, had served in Korea, Viet Nam, and the Middle East. He undertook graduate work in American Studies at the University of Maryland where he earned his doctorate with a dissertation on colonial Alexandria, "From Empire to Commonwealth: Alexandria, Virginia, 1749-1780." Dr. Munson continued to conduct research and to publish extensively about the City of Alexandria throughout his productive life. He was one of the most knowledgeable students of Alexandria's history. In 1986, he authored *Col John Carlyle, Gent.: A True and Just Account of the Man and His House, 1720-1780*, and in 1993, he became the first recipient of the Alexandria History Award. A memorial service was held in May at Carlyle House, and interment will be at Arlington National Cemetery.

Ross Netherton, a retired lawyer with the Federal Highway Administration, was a World War II Army veteran and served the following 27 years in the Army Reserve before retiring as a colonel in 1973. He held multiple degrees including a doctorate in law from the University of Wisconsin. Often working with his wife Nan, they co-authored histories of Arlington and Fairfax counties. Individually, Dr. Netherton wrote monographs published by the Fairfax County Planning Department on the Fairfax Courthouse, Colvin Run Mill, and Green Spring Farm. A memorial service will be held on June 11 at the Fort Myer Officers' Club Ballroom, and his funeral at Arlington National Cemetery will be in August.

Preview of September Lecture

On Wednesday, September 22, at 7:30 p.m., author Rawn James, Jr. will discuss “Sailing East for Western Shores: The Strange Legal Strategy that Defeated Segregation” based on his new book *Root and Branch: Charles Hamilton Houston, Thurgood Marshall and the Struggle to End Segregation* (Bloomsbury, 2010).

In *Root and Branch*, James explores the life of Charles Hamilton Houston, who graduated from Amherst College and Harvard Law School and served in the army during World War I. As dean of the Howard Law School, Houston modeled the rigor and organization of Harvard Law School and the army to produce top-rated lawyers who committed their careers to overturning Jim Crow laws. One of his students was Thurgood Marshall. The book portrays the partnership of Houston, Marshall, and other civil rights lawyers. They repeatedly went before the U.S. Supreme Court and its affiliates to argue in favor of ending lynching, the poll tax, all-white juries, pay inequality, and unequal educational opportunity for blacks and whites.



The Supreme Court’s decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* is widely considered a seminal point in the battle to end segregation, but it was in fact the culmination of a decades-long legal campaign. *Root and Branch* is the epic story of the two fiercely dedicated lawyers who led the fight from county courthouses to the marble halls of the Supreme Court, and, in the process, laid the legal foundations of the civil rights movement.

A graduate of Yale University and Duke University School of Law, Rawn James, Jr. has been practicing law for nearly ten years in Washington, D.C., where he lives with his wife and son.

New Hours, New Number at Special Collections

Following the adoption of the City of Alexandria budget for the next fiscal year, the Alexandria Library is modifying its public hours. As a result, effective June 1, the Alexandria Library Local History/Special Collections located inside the Barrett Branch at 717 Queen Street will be open:

Monday, 1 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
First Saturday of the month, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Please also note that Special Collections now has a new phone number, 703.746.1706.

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The AHS Newsletter is published by the Alexandria Historical Society, Inc., and mailed free to members. To join the Society, submit your check made payable to "Alexandria Historical Society," together with your name, address, and telephone numbers, to the Alexandria Historical Society, 201 South Washington Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. Annual dues are: \$10.00, Student; \$20.00, Single; \$30.00, Couple; \$50.00, Sustaining; and \$100.00, Patron. The membership year is July to June. Dues are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

*The purpose of the Society shall be to promote an active interest in American history and particularly in the history of Alexandria and of Virginia.
The Society is organized exclusively for educational purposes.*

**VISIT OUR WEB SITE:
www.alexandriahistorical.org**



201 South Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314