

**NEXT MEETING – Tuesday, June 11, 2013**

**Board Meeting – Alexandria Historical Society**

**May 14, 2013**

President Bill Dickinson called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. at the Black History Museum. Other members present were Ted Pulliam, Debbie Ackerman, Katy Cannady, Dave Cavanaugh, Jackie Cohan, Sarah Coster, Audrey Davis, Tal Day, Paul Friedman, and Linda Greenberg.

**Memorial Service:** Dickinson reminded the Board of the memorial service for Peggy Gross on Thursday, May 23, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern. He will talk at the service on behalf of the Society and asked that anyone with something they would like him to mention to let him know. He also reported that some of Peggy's relatives had made a donation in her name to the Society.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the April meeting prepared by Pulliam were approved.

**Treasurer's Report and Membership Report:** Adamo gave an oral report and said she will circulate a written report later. She reported that in the last month the Society spent \$1,732.49 for the awards ceremony, Chronicle mailing, newsletter mailing, and other items. She also reported a balance of \$5,982 in the checking account. She said that contributions to the endowment fund were less than last year.

She indicated that the membership numbers were down for the year but member contributions were up slightly because some members joined at a higher level of membership, such as a sustaining member. Forty-five members had not paid their membership dues over the year and were dropped from the membership rolls and one resigned because he had moved from the area. Because such figures were not compiled in earlier years, it was difficult to determine whether these numbers are typical. She also indicated that we have more new people joining this year than last year.

Greenberg reported that the money from the endowment fund had been deposited in the appropriate Vanguard account. Adamo reported that there was a delay in depositing the money market funds in the correct Vanguard account, but that she was in the process of resolving the problem causing the delay.

**Website Report:** Coster and Adamo are discussing the possibility of Coster's assuming the duties of webmaster for the Society. There was a discussion about whether to change the website manager early or wait until the contract with the current manager expires in October. It was mentioned that there might be a problem concerning who owns the domain name and whether it could transfer to the new site. Adamo thought that the name could be transferred. Adamo said that the artistic site heading with the illustration of old Alexandria now used at the website could not be transferred and that we needed to create a new one. Coster mentioned that

online renewals would be an advantage of moving to new management. Dickinson suggested that we move to the new website in September to coincide with our new year and pay the old manager for the one month until the contract term expires. That suggestion met with general agreement. Dickinson said the newsletter should mention that we are moving to new website management and tell when the move will be made.

Cavanaugh questioned whether the new website manager Wild Apricot could protect email addresses. Adamo said that it could and that it was known for its good membership management.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**Rosenwald School Lecture:** Dickinson said that this project was on hold until the new school year.

**War of 1812 Commemoration:** Dickinson reported the he had attended earlier today a meeting of the city group developing commemoration activities and that the planning for the commemoration was moving ahead satisfactorily. He further reported that he and Peter Pennington, a British citizen and retire Royal Navy officer, were to have lunch next week with the British naval attaché to discuss his help with the commemoration. Pennington had suggested several activities: a ball that possibly the British ambassador would attend, a cricket match, a tug-of-war, the docking of a tall ship, the performance of a Navy singing group, and possibly other events. He also was working with U.S. Naval Academy midshipmen on illustrating the difficulty of sailing large sailing vessels up the Potomac River in 1814 as the British navy did then. Dickinson also reported that he is continuing to work on the commemorative boat tour. Cavanaugh reported that on June 1, Prince George's County is sponsoring a bus and boat guided tour along the routes and waterways the British traveled through the county in August 1814. It might serve as a model for the similar Alexandria event. (Attached is additional information about the Prince George's County tour emailed by Dickinson.)

**Carver School:** Dickinson mentioned the earlier report on the Carver School that he emailed to the Board (attached) in which the school would be expanded but saved. It was the general agreement that at this point, this was a good outcome. Dickinson suggested that a local Parker-Gray group should list the buildings that constitute the core heritage of the Parker-Gray area and that should be preserved. Davis said that City Councilman Chapman already had requested such a list, and that she had furnished it to him. Dickinson suggested that easements be established to help preserve those buildings.

**April 18<sup>th</sup> Lecture:** Dickinson reported that the lecturer was pleased with the turnout, although Dickinson thought it was not large. A problem that developed with the projector during the talk led to the suggestion that the Society should have a projector of its own. Dickinson reported that his daughter had gotten a used one cheaply that he would test to see if it would be suitable for that purpose.

Friedman brought up the question of how connected to Alexandria should the subject of future lectures be. Pulliam mentioned that some lectures in the past have been on broad topics with only limited attachment to Alexandria. Greenberg, Day, and others had similar comments about

lectures. It was generally agreed that broader topics were fine, but that there should be some connection to Alexandria, Northern Virginia, or Virginia generally within the topic that the speaker should address.

**AHS Annual Awards:** All agreed that it was an outstanding awards ceremony and that the attendance (about 80) was unusually large for that event. Davis mentioned that at the upcoming AHS program on May 22, the Society was going to present the T. Michael Miller History Award to Richard Bierce, who was unable to attend the April award program. She mentioned that she might not be able to attend the May 22 program, but that Ackerman had the proclamation, and Dickinson agreed to present the award.

**Nominating Committee:** Greenberg, chair of the committee to nominate new officers and Board members for the coming year, announced that the other committee members were Davis and Cavanaugh. She also reported that three people had expressed interest in becoming Board members. Two that she had resumes from were Julie Randall, whom Cavanaugh and Pulliam had said would be a good member, and Dennis \_\_\_\_\_. A third person, Jan Olson, also had expressed interest in becoming a Board member.

**Historical Bibliography for AHS Website:** Pulliam reported that other projects had prevented him from starting on the bibliography but that he soon would be able to work on it.

**Metro EIS:** Canady reported that the committee on the Environmental Impact Statement for the new Metro station for the Potomac Yard Development had met twice. During those meetings there was a discussion of the three sites that the city has chosen for the metro. Apparently two of the sites would require that part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway be closed for an extended period to allow trucks to haul material into and out of the sites. The National Park Service, which has jurisdiction over the Parkway, was upset over this proposed use of the parkway. Apparently the Park Service's displeasure caused the issuance of the EIS to be postponed from the spring to the fall.

Canady believed that the only historical effect of the proposed metro would be its harmful impact on trees and other greenery along the parkway. Damage to the greenery would diminish the Parkway as an historically scenic route to Washington's Mount Vernon, which was its original purpose. There will be a period for public comments after the EIS is issued, and it was generally considered that the Board should wait for the issuance of the EIS before deciding whether to take any action.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**The Chronicle:** Greenberg reported that she had four potential articles for the *Chronicle*: Jack Sullivan on Alexandrian John Zimmerman of the 17<sup>th</sup> Virginia Infantry Regiment during the Civil War, Richard Klingenmaier on "Miss Mary Jane Stewart: Eye-Witness to History" about life in Alexandria in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Sherry Browne on the Minnigerode Memorial Arch at the Virginia Theological Seminary, and Kathleen Miliaras on the establishment of the Parker-Gray Historic District. She planned for the Browne article to appear this summer and the Miliaras article in the fall. Dickinson mentioned that Anne Paul was working on a possible article on the house where she lives.

There was a discussion about who should receive a free one-year membership and subscription to the *Chronicle*. It was generally agreed that adult history award winners and speakers who refuse the honorarium should receive the membership and subscription.

Greenberg suggested that all issues of the *Chronicle* to be sent to societies, associations, and libraries be sent by email to save postage. This suggestion met with general approval.

**Future Speakers:** Friedman said that the May 22 speaker would be John Hennessy, a Civil War historian with the National Park Service. He would speak on the Battles of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania, rather than the Battle of Fredericksburg as previously reported. There was a discussion concerning whether as a federal employee he could accept an honorarium, and it was generally agreed that it was up to him. Friedman will offer him an honorarium, and he could accept it or not. If he did not accept it, then we would give him a free one-year membership.

Several possible future speakers were discussed. Dickinson said that anyone with suggestions for future speaker should send them to Friedman. Friedman asked for a list of speakers for the last year. [Cohan said she would provide him with one?] Adamo suggested that Dickinson announce at the next lecture that members could pay their dues for the coming year while at the lecture, and Dickinson agreed.

**Newsletter:** Cohan reported that the newsletter would be out soon. There was a discussion about the content of a members' survey that would be referenced in the May newsletter. It was generally agreed that the survey needed more review, and information about it would appear in the June newsletter instead. Dickinson said he would send out a new draft of the survey soon.

**Archaeology:** Cannady reported that the dedication for the Freedmen and Contraband Cemetery is to be in the fall. She also said that more bodies were discovered buried under the sidewalk next to the cemetery, and that the Archaeology Commission has decided to place different style bricks in the sidewalk to indicate where people were buried. The Commission will hold a fund-raising event to raise money to pay for the bricks.

Pulliam reported that the Commission has issued a call for nominations for the Ben Brenman Award, an annual award made to businesses, organizations, families, and individuals who have demonstrated superior work in archaeological investigation, research, site protections, education, public interpretation, open space design, collections, or conservation. Deadline for submitting nominations is July 1. (For further information see the attached email provided by Greenberg.) Friedman suggested that at the June meeting the Board consider nominating someone. Anne Paul was suggested as a possible nominee.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Billings for 2013-2014:** Adamo said that bills for membership dues for 2013-2014 would be sent to current members the end of June.

**Sales Tax Exemption:** Dickinson suggested that as a non-profit organization, the Society should apply to the state for an exemption from paying sales tax. Adamo confirmed that AHS

did not have such an exemption. It was suggested that the Society might pay so little in sales tax that we would not qualify for an exemption. Adamo and Greenberg agreed to look into the matter over the summer.

**Fund Raising Certificate:** Adamo said that a new state regulation requires the Society to be issued a certificate by the state if it wants to do fund raising. She said she would look into this matter further over the summer.

**Recording Lectures:** Friedman reported that under a new law, COMCAST is not required to cover as many public programs as earlier. Thus, it is unlikely that it will continue to record our lectures, and we will need to record them ourselves. Adamo suggested finding video students to do the recording as part of their practical experience for their instructional program. Friedman said he would contact a person connected to a school video program to see if he could suggest students to help us. Davis said that in her experience C-Span might record one of our lectures, as it has at least once in the past, if told about the lecture far enough ahead and was interested in its subject matter.

**Relations with Other Area History Groups:** Dickinson said the Board should try to develop relationships with other history groups in the area in D.C., Virginia, and Maryland. He suggested possible joint meetings to exchange ideas.

**Financial Audit Team:** Cohan, Davis, and Cavanaugh volunteered to do the yearly audit.

**Facebook and Twitter:** Coster reported that she had established a page for the Society on Facebook and that 30 people were following us. She asked if the Society should have a Twitter page, and the general opinion was that it should. Coster said she would do the Twitter page. Adamo mentioned that the Society has an email address that she would forward to Coster.

**VTS Civil War Lecture:** Dickinson reported that the Virginia Theological Seminary is sponsoring a Civil War lecture on Friday May 17 at 7:30 p.m. The lecture will be given by historian William G. Thomas and will focus on the war's effects on the seminary and surrounding community as well as on American religious life. The lecture is one of a series of lectures on religion and the Civil War that VTS is sponsoring. (Attached is more information on the series.) Dickinson said he would arrange for the Society to have a table at the lecture to display brochures, membership forms, and copies of the *Chronicle*.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Pulliam  
Secretary  
Attachments