

NEXT MEETING: March 8, 2011

**Board Meeting – Alexandria Historical Society
February 8, 2011**

The meeting was called to order by President Audrey Davis at the Black History Museum at 6:30 p. m. Other members present were Peggy Gross, Rob Stalder, Jackie Cohan, Ted Pulliam, Lisa Adamo, Debbie Ackerman, Amy Breedlove, Katy Cannady, Mary Ruth Coleman, Tal Day, Bill Dickinson, Linda Greenberg, Karen Wilkins, and Anne Paul.

Remembrance: Davis praised the character and service of Doug Thurman, a past president of AHS, who died January 10.

Announcement: Davis announced that artist Leisa Collins had made available for those board members interested copies of her 2011 calendar illustrated by her paintings of homes in Old Town.

Minutes: The minutes of the November meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Rob Stalder presented the treasurer's report (attached). He highlighted the fact that since July 1, AHS received income of \$6,875.20 and had expenses of \$1,926.03. Assets as of February 7, 2011, were \$44,133.75. Suggestion was made that the item in the report listed as "Direct Public Support" be changed to reflect that the money listed came as contributions to the AHS endowment, and Stalder agreed to make the change.

OLD BUSINESS

April History Awards:

Speaker: Davis reported that Margaret Spellings, former Secretary of Education, will not be able to be the main speaker. Vola Lawson, former city manager, had been suggested last meeting as a possible speaker. Davis also suggested that Susan Cumbey, Director of Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site, also would make a good speaker because of the upcoming 150th Civil War commemoration, if she were not too busy planning for the commemoration. It was generally agreed that Davis should approach Vola Lawson first, and if she was not available, then approach Susan Cumbey.

Senator Ticer: Davis reported that a letter had been sent to Senator Ticer inviting her to be a part of the program, but as yet there had been no response.

Requests for Nominations for History Award: Paul, chair of the history awards committee, reported that letters had been sent on January 15 to various organizations requesting nominations for the T. Michael Miller Alexandria History Award, and Amy Bertsch had issued a press release also requesting nominations. Nominations are due by March 4. Other members of the committee are Adamo, Gross, Carleton Funn, George Combs, and Lance Mallamo.

History Awards Committee Handbook: Paul circulated copies of books that had been published by previous history award winners and a copy of a handbook she had prepared containing information about previous history award winners and ceremonies.

High School History Awards: Coleman, chair of the high school history awards, announced that all high schools in Alexandria had acknowledged in a timely fashion receiving information about the awards and were proceeding to submit nominations. She also said that she and Ackerman would be going soon to Kings Jewelry to purchase the awards.

Refreshment Donations: Greenberg reported that Whole Foods would donate refreshments for the awards program.

Programs: Paul announced that Lance Mallamo had volunteered Bertsch to prepare the programs for the awards.

Nominating Committee for Next Year's Board: Dickinson, chair of the nominating committee, announced that Gross, Stalder, and Pulliam had agreed to continue as Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary respectively for the coming year and that good candidates were being considered for other board positions.

HARC Representative: Davis announced that Day would replace Laura Mae Sudder as the AHS representative on HARC at HARC's March meeting.

Bookplate Design: Greenberg circulated copies of a proposed AHS bookplate. The bookplate would be inserted into books, manuscripts, and other items that AHS received and donated to the Special Collections/Local History branch of the Alexandria Library or to the Alexandria Archives indicating that the article had been donated by AHS and giving the name of the original donor. The design was admired and received general approval.

NEW BUSINESS

History Award Announcement: Davis announced that an award would be given to the city by a national historic-preservation organization on February 15 at noon on Market Square. The exact nature of the award has been closely guarded, but she urged everyone to attend the award ceremony.

Fort Ward/Oakland Baptist Church Cemetery: Dickinson reported that he had been approached by local organizations that wanted AHS to encourage the city to hold a special work session to address preserving the graves and telling the history of the community of African Americans that once was located in the area now occupied by Fort Ward Park. He said AHS would not need to take a position on what the city should or should not do regarding the issue. Dickinson moved that AHS send a letter to the city council encouraging the council to address the issue, and Pulliam seconded the motion. The vote to send a letter was unanimous, except that Davis and Cohan, city employees,

did not take part in the discussion or vote on the issue. Dickenson agreed to draft the letter for Vice President Gross to sign.

FACEBOOK: Wilkins reported that she had looked into the possibility of AHS having a presence on FACEBOOK in order to attract younger people to Alexandria history. She determined that it was doubtful that AHS had enough information to keep a FACEBOOK fresh enough with regular updates to attract and hold the attention of FACEBOOK users. She also mentioned that updating entries frequently would consume a great amount of time. It was generally agreed that a FACEBOOK presence was not something that AHS needed to have for now.

AHS Grants: Coleman noted that AHS had some \$44,000 in assets and suggested that the board might like to consider granting some of these funds to worthwhile projects. Coleman, Davis, Wilkins, and Gross were appointed to a committee to investigate this suggestion further and report back to the board.

Horace Day Portraits of Black Alexandria: Davis and Day announced that on February 19 from 7:00 – 7:30 p.m. Channel 4 would air a program on the exhibition of paintings entitled *Style and Identity: Black Alexandria in the 1970s, Portraits by Horace Day* that is being held at the Alexandria Black History Museum. The program also would be available on the channel’s website and digital channel.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Program Update: Gross reported that Dr. James Kelley will speak in March on “English Faces: Virginia Places” about royals for whom Virginia counties were named and COMCAST will broadcast that lecture. She also reported that Mr. Kim Holien will speak in May on “Alexandria at War: Star of the South and the North” about Alexandria during the Civil War. There was a discussion concerning whether to hold a lecture in June. Board member Pulliam agreed to be the speaker in June if his book *Historic Alexandria* had been published by then. Wilkins suggested that at some point past high school history award winners might present papers on history they had written.

Newsletter: Davis reported that Bertsch will publish the next newsletter in March.

Chronicle: Greenberg reported that the next issue will be published in March or April and will contain an article by board member Bertsch on Volusia, a plantation just outside the boundaries of Alexandria that in the early days of the Civil War was the home of slave owners who were loyal to the Union. She also said that subsequent issue or issues will contain an article by Diane Riker on a group of Alexandrians loyal to the South during the Civil War who were ordered to report to the Alexandria waterfront to be deported for their loyalty and an article by Pulliam on Alexandria’s connection with the early Civil War Battle of First Manassas.

Website: Breedlove earlier had circulated by email a report of website contacts (attached). At the meeting she pointed out that a number of users were going to the

website but not clicking on links for further information. Still, she noted that it seemed that more people were downloading information from the site.

Archaeology: Cannady reported that Alexandria Archaeology, much to its relief, had received authority to hire personnel to replace Steve Shephard and Barbara Magid, who retired recently.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Pulliam
Secretary