

Alexandria Historical Society

September 11, 2018 Board Meeting Notes

Attending: Debbie Ackerman, Francine Bromberg, Erin Bush, Katy Cannady, Audrey Davis, Tal Day, Caroline English, Krystyn Moon, Severiano Ortiz, Elizabeth Peckham, Julia Randle; also Patrick Ladden (notes), Mark Whatford

Not Attending: Ginny Hamill, Steve Kimbel, Catherine Weinraub

AHS President Krystyn Moon welcomed all to the new board and September meeting.

1. **Meet new board members:** The meeting opened by having all members introduce and speak briefly about themselves. This facilitated the opportunity for all new members to meet returning board members. Two former board members - Patrick Ladden, immediate AHS past president, and Mark Whatford, previously responsible for membership – also attended.
2. The June 2018 board meeting notes were approved.
3. **June event debrief** - Tim Winkle's "Exploring the History of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial" - feedback included: very well attended about ninety people; Winkle was an excellent speaker and audience enjoyed his presentation; good to have the opportunity to see collection materials; minor critical stuff – room was hot; elevator small and slow; if we have another presentation at this location make sure to work with staff members to move attendees to elevators in timely way.
4. **Upcoming Events – free to members, \$5 for non-members**
 - a. September 26: Jeffrey Sammons's "Harlem's Rattlers and the Great War: The Undaunted 369th Regiment and the African American Quest for Equality"
Audrey sketched some background on this event. This is a co-sponsored event with the Arlington Historical Society (direct financial support), Black Heritage Museum of Arlington (in-kind support of food and drink) and Office of Historic Alexandria (Lyceum and PR). The AHS Board agreed to thank the Arlington WWI Memorial Task Force at the event itself. AHS Board members may need to help with food pick-up and set-up. Debbie Ackerman volunteered to help with food pick-up.
 - b. October 24: Bob Zeller's "The Grand Review: Civil War Photography – Discoveries and Explorations"
Co-sponsored with the Friends of Fort Ward and OHA. Presentation will be akin to a 3-D stereoscopic view of photos from the Civil War. **Register now** at AHS' website as seating will be limited (only ninety seats & 3-D glasses) and likely in demand.
 - c. October 18, GW Garden - Members Only Event: Debbie reported the good news that this will take place on Thursday, October 18. There remain some variables, such as whether the archaeologist

from Mt Vernon will attend or whether the explainer will be the owner of the house and garden on Pitt St. This is a rain or shine event, so if raining, bring your umbrella.

ACTION:

- CONFIRM start time, is it 6:30 or 7:00 pm (Debbie confirms with owner) and communicates info to Caroline, Krystyn, Erin
 - Member only event, so opportunity needs to be announced (at next lecture) and emailed to AHS membership and have a sign-up on Eventbrite (webmaster to do) and limited to twenty people
 - Once sign-up, need to have automatic process (or alternative) to provide event address to attendees (can Eventbrite do this?)
 - Krystyn will chat with City Archaeologist about varying interpretations
5. **Plans for Spring 2019** for the following dates March 27, April 24 (AHS Award Event), May 22, and June 26. Audrey plans to pull the program committee together, stay tuned. Several ideas/topics were tossed out during the board meeting, including these local writers/thinkers mentioned by Krystyn:
- i. Zachary Schrag, [A History of the Washington Metro](#), GMU professor;
 - ii. Howard Ernst, [Chesapeake Bay Blues: Science, Politics, and the Struggle to Save the Bay](#);
 - iii. Eric Yellin, [Racism in the Nation's Service: Government Workers and the Color Line in Woodrow Wilson's America](#), University of Richmond professor
 - iv. Audrey reported for Catherine that Ivy Hill Cemetery remains interested in partnering with AHS for an event – two possible ideas were mentioned: a talk in the “crypt” (similar to the one done a year or so ago on embalming during the Civil War) and a walking tour highlighting the development of cemeteries during the 19th century as almost park-like environments and the famous and not-so-famous people buried at Ivy Hill. Catherine also indicated her willingness to put together an event on fire fighting in Alexandria.
 - v. Caroline indicated that if AHS hosted a speaker that Episcopal High School was also interested in having as a speaker at EHS, perhaps EHS could host that speaker in a guest cottage on the property of EHS depending on availability.
6. **T. Michael Miller Award:** Julia indicated that soon she will initiate working on the process of the nomination letter and coordination of the T. Michael Miller award with Gretchen Bulova, the acting director of OHA. The award is given at the April Awards Ceremony/Event.
7. **The Chronicle update:** Tal said there will be a Fall 2018 issue of *The Chronicle* which will contain a longer article of about 5,000 to 6,000 words authored by Dan Lee on how Alexandria perceived and experienced late 19th and early 20th century immigration and a shorter article by Carter Refo on the history, occupants and change to interpretation of the Lee-Fendall House. A new feature for this upcoming issue is the concept of highlighting a newly acquired or under-appreciated collection from a local repository such as the Alexandria Library Special Collections. This feature is targeted to about 300 to 500 words. Krystyn made several suggestions including highlighting a women's history collection, such as Kate Waller Barrett. Krystyn indicated several people to follow-up with (this note-taker didn't get all those names),

she also made suggestions about primary source materials for the immigration article. Tal said that Krystyn's Chinese immigrant article might be best included in the Spring issue. This initiated ideas for the Spring issue and the possibility that a women's history longer article might be possible for Spring. Erin has a strong interest and academic background in women's reform movements and teaming with Krystyn may develop a topic that she would write about for Spring (after December 2018 due to academic requirements that Erin is facing at GMU). Tal mentioned Lorton and its history and development as a possible topic. Outcome is that these ideas will be further discussed offline and brought forward at a later date.

8. **Newsletter update:** Elizabeth as the new Newsletter Editor published the September issue this past week. She thanked all those who wrote the text, provided materials, helped train her (Jackie), and to email the newsletter. Congratulations to Elizabeth!

ACTION:

- One member needs to receive a hard copy
- The Newsletter needs to be sent to the list of lapsed AHS members

9. **Website update**

Caroline and Krystyn created a new website on WordPress platform during the summer working with contractor Michael Woodward. WOW! a fantastic job reflecting many hours of work. Caroline suggested that the contractor receive a bonus of \$200 and the board concurred by acclamation. The new site has many features that will allow/support growth including Eventbrite (event and ticket management site). By switching to WordPress, AHS will recoup our \$2,000 cost to hire the contractor in about two years as opposed to the fees we were paying Wild Apricot our former website host. Michael Woodward was always available for consultation and will remain available for another year so that Erin, the new webmaster, can access his services. The board thanked Caroline and Krystyn for their excellent work and hours of volunteer work to attain this goal. Congratulations Caroline and Krystyn.

ACTION:

- Thank Michael Woodward and send him \$200 bonus from Abshire fund

10. **Membership and events software:** Eventbrite allows registration for lectures, special events, and other activities. It will take membership orientation and some getting used to it. There is an explanation article in the current newsletter. A Membership Report was provided that showed among other things that we currently have 124 members (counting couples as only 1) and 63 lapsed members. It was agreed that lapsed members would receive the newsletter (see above) and that the code for registering for the Fall lectures would allow lapsed members to register for free, expecting that this good faith effort will encourage members to renew.

Francine will be the public face at lecture registration at the Lyceum assisted by Mark at the first lecture as Mark has been the friendly face to members for a number of years. There could be some confusion among members but members will be able to attend lectures whether they register via Eventbrite or

not. Meanwhile Krystyn and Caroline will work on the back-end database to conform all members onto one list.

ACTION:

- Steady as she goes to reassure members to use Eventbrite and allow members and lapsed members to attend the first lecture, also members of the co-sponsoring groups for the first lecture will be admitted for free as well; the second lecture requires registration via Eventbrite due to the limited number of seats so this needs to be emphasized from the podium, on the website, and in the newsletter
- During the Fall, keep working on creating one database of members
- Need to ID a process to allow board members who need to use the database to access it easily (e.g. newsletter, perhaps membership, etc.)
- From PR perspective, the Fall Lecture postcard was created, produced, addressed and mailed by Mark. Thank you, Mark! AHS will need to designate someone to do this for Spring before Spring series.

11. Treasurer report

Caroline sent out a Treasurer's Report in advance of the meeting. She continues to be mentored by Tal. The report lays out the account balances for 6/10/18 and then again for 9/10/18. AHS is in good standing.

12. Correspondence and Lafayette Heritage Trail: Steve provided a correspondence report and a proposal for the Lafayette Heritage Trail in advance of the meeting. Due to time constraints and because we wanted to hear directly from Steve who was not able to attend, these items were deferred.

13. HARC: Sev, the new HARC representative, said he would provide a short, written report electronically.

14. Archaeology: Katy reported that work on the Ben Brenman award was beginning. Katy will miss several meetings due to upcoming knee surgery.