

The ALEXANDRIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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NEWSLETTER

MAY 2011

MAY MEETING

DATE: Wednesday, May 25, 2011

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

TIME: 7:30 p.m.

SPEAKER: Kim Holien, Military Historian

“Alexandria at War: Star of the South and the North”

On the 150th anniversary of Alexandria’s Civil War occupation, historian and Alexandria native Kim Holien will discuss how the Civil War transformed Alexandria, beginning with the first sudden shock of the war on May 24, 1861. Alexandria’s sons left and served the Confederacy, and those at home had four years of occupation to endure. The war completely altered Alexandria as it became a hospital and quartermaster center of the Union war effort in Virginia. It was filled with spies of the blue and gray, with Mosby and his famed Rangers and Colonel Ellsworth and his Zouaves. There was a Navy fort in Alexandria as well as the prototype for Air Force One. Alexandria’s West End also has a significant Civil War history which Mr. Holien will also explore.

Kim Holien has been a resident of Alexandria’s West End since 1953 and is a 1966 graduate of Hammond High School. A professional Army historian with nearly forty years of experience, he is currently the historian for Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall consisting of Fort Myer, Va., Henderson Hall, Va., and Fort McNair, D.C. Mr. Holien is the author of *Battle at Ball’s Bluff* (1996) and the forthcoming *Manassas: The First Battle*. Kim participated in the Civil War Centennial, narrated the 125th anniversary reenactments, and is currently on the Board of Directors of the Lincoln at the Crossroads Alliance for the Sesquicentennial.

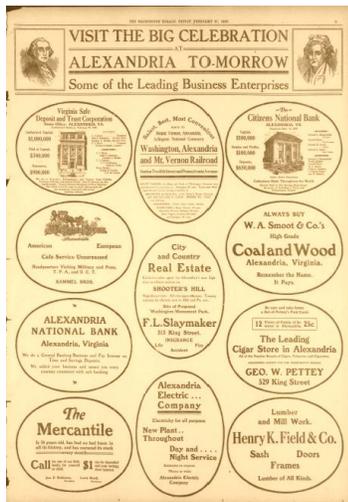
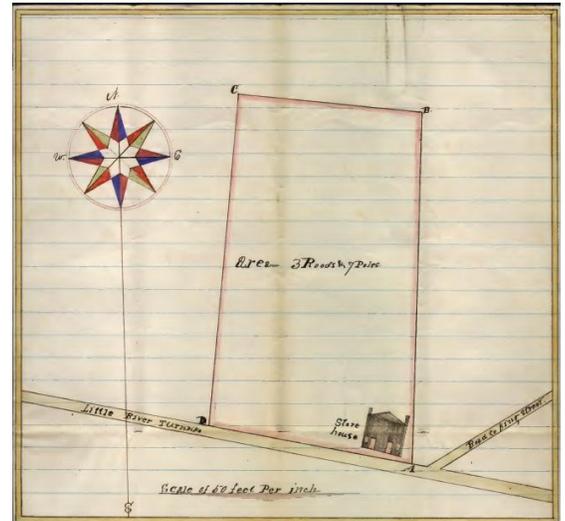


From “Map of the environs of Washington : compiled from Boschkes’ map of the District of Columbia and from surveys of the U.S. Coast Survey showing the line of the defences of Washington as constructed during the war from 1861 to 1865” (Library of Congress)

Online Research Sources

More and more excellent source materials are being made available online at no cost, so if you are interested in local history or family history research, here are a couple places you might want to explore.

The Library of Virginia has been digitizing chancery records from circuit courts throughout the Commonwealth and now more than five million pages are available. Many have important historical and genealogical information and a significant number also have plats, like this one showing a property and “Store House” along Duke Street when it was still the Little River Turnpike. These files can be retrieved and viewed online at www.virginiamemory.com/collections/chancery. You can narrow your search by selecting a specific locality, but if you’re interested in Alexandria, don’t limit your results to just Alexandria. Because boundaries have changed over the years, be sure to check Fairfax and Arlington records, too.



The Library of Congress’s Chronicling America initiative provides free access to a collection of newspapers from across the country, ranging from 1860 to 1922, at <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>. You can search by word or phrase and then view the highlighted results on a full page image. One very local paper included in Chronicling America is the *Alexandria Gazette* from 1900 through 1909. Other area papers of particular interest include the *Washington Herald*, the *Washington Times* and the *Washington Bee*, an African American newspaper which covered local news most other papers did not. You can find articles, obituaries and marriage announcements, and interesting advertisements for products and businesses.

June Lecture Announced

For the third consecutive year, the AHS is offering a June lecture. Author Barb Winters, winner of the 2011 T. Michael Miller Alexandria History Award for her book *Letters to Virginia*, will be the guest speaker for the June 22 meeting. Winters, who retired last year from the Alexandria Library, will share some of the stories she found in a collection of hundreds of family letters from the Local History Special Collections. Written by members of the Eaches, Fendall and Tackett families, these letters spanned three generations, two major wars, and more than one hundred years of Alexandria history. Winters will discuss the challenges and rewards of compiling these families’ stories into an engaging narrative.

Annual History Awards

Congratulations to the 2011 Alexandria History Award honorees! Despite the severe weather that evening, there was a good turnout for the awards ceremony on April 27. Senator Patsy Ticer regrettably was called to Richmond at the last moment but guest speaker Vola Lawson and Lance Mallamo, Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria, stepped in to help present the awards to our very deserving recipients.

AHS Board Elections

At the May 25 meeting, Alexandria Historical Society members will vote on the following slate of candidates for AHS officers and open Board of Director seats for the 2011-2012 terms.

Officers:

President	Bill Dickinson
Vice President	Peggy Gross
Secretary	Ted Pulliam
Treasurer	Jackie Cohan

Board of Directors:

David Cavanaugh	Term to end 2014
Adrienne T. Washington	Term to end 2014

Civil War Commemoration on May 21

This month marks the 150th anniversary of several major developments in Alexandria's Civil War history. Within a day of Virginia's secession taking effect, hundreds of men gathered at Prince and Washington streets and headed off to fight for the Confederacy, Union troops moved into Alexandria and occupied it for the duration of the war, and Union Colonel Elmer Ellsworth and secessionist innkeeper James Jackson both lost their lives in a violent confrontation at the Marshall House at Pitt and King streets.

The City of Alexandria and several historic sites will commemorate these events and kick off the Sesquicentennial with "Life in Civil War Alexandria," a large living history event on Saturday, May 21, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. The free program at Market Square includes the opening ceremony, music by the Federal City Brass Band, interpretations of Robert E. Lee, a Civil War photographer, an army surgeon, Union and Confederate soldiers, and African American civilians, as well as a U.S. Military Railroad portrayal, the Victorian Dance Ensemble, and a variety of other interpretive activities.

Also, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., Gadsby's Tavern Museum and the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum will offer free Civil War tours of their sites, businesses that remained open during the war, and Carlyle House Historic Park will host the program, "Spies and Scouts of the Civil War," where visitors can decode secret messages and try their hand at disguise. For more information, visit www.historicalexandria.org or call 703.746.4554.

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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 WEBSITE:

www.alexandriahistorical.org


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