

The ALEXANDRIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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NEWSLETTER

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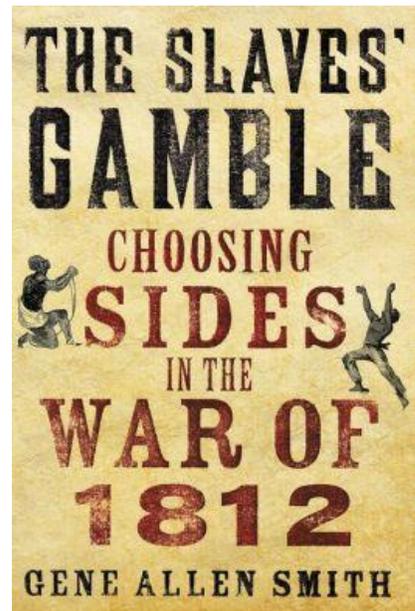
DATE: Wednesday, October 23, 2013
PLACE: The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington Street, Alexandria
TIME: 7:30 PM
SPEAKER: Gene Allen Smith, Professor of History

LECTURE

“The Slaves’ Gamble: Choosing Sides in the War of 1812”

The pivotal role that the War of 1812 played in the course of slavery in America is often overlooked. The war provided an unprecedented opportunity for slaves to earn their freedom and for free blacks to improve their financial circumstances by fighting for a cause they perceived to offer life-altering advantages.

Please join us for a lively evening with Gene Allen Smith, Professor of History at Texas Christian University and, in 2013-2014, visiting professor at the US Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland. Drawing on over a decade of research, Smith will demonstrate in his lecture, *The Slaves’ Gamble: Choosing Sides in the War of 1812*, the role played by slaves and blacks in British, Spanish and American military operations in the 18th and 19th centuries. The focus of his lecture will be how in 1814, particularly in the Chesapeake Bay region, British military orders directed that slaves seeking freedom would be taken aboard British warships and resettled in British colonies. The liberated men were given the opportunity to receive military training, don British uniforms and as Colonial Marines, augment regular British troops in military operations against Americans. These units were involved in the Battle at Bladensburg and perhaps the burning of the US Capitol, White House and Treasury. Smith will also discuss the heroic role



that slaves and freemen played defending the nation's Capital on behalf of the US, particularly under the command of Commodore Joshua Barney, USN, at the Battle of Bladensburg. An uncertain number of slaves located in Alexandria found freedom through the British Navy. This is an area still being investigated. The number of slaves liberated during the War of 1812 was huge, constituting the greatest number of freed slaves until the US Civil War. The manner by which the US and state governments responded to these events sealed the fate of American slaves for the next half century. This drama sheds light on an extraordinary yet little known chapter in both American and local history.

The Washington Times comments that Dr. Smith's book is "Thoroughly researched...fills in some much needed background to the complicated relations that...mixed racism, fear and anger on one side with an unquenchable yearning for freedom on the other." Professor Alan Taylor, a Pulitzer Prize winner who teaches at the University of California and is author of *The Internal Enemy: Slavery and War in Virginia, 1772-1832*, comments that "...this superb book illuminates the plight, courage and resourcefulness of African Americans in the early republic."



In addition to Dr. Smith's position at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, he is serving as the "Class of 1957 Distinguished Chair in Naval Heritage" at the US Naval Academy. His specialization is early American, naval and American naval history and is the author or editor of numerous books, articles and reviews on the subjects and the War of 1812 as well as territorial expansion along the Gulf of Mexico. He has served as the Director of the Center for Texas Studies at Texas Christian University since 2002, and for the past five years has been Curator of History at the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History.

The lecture is free and open to the public and no reservations are needed although seating is on a first-come basis. The Lyceum can accommodate a maximum of 100 people and is ADA accessible. This lecture is being co-sponsored by the Alexandria Black History Museum.

Upcoming Events in Alexandria

Spirits, Suffering, and Society: Death in Civil War Alexandria – October 19, 2013 from 6:00-9:00 P.M.

Visit the Lee-Fendall House Museum and take a step back in time to the 1860s when Alexandria was an occupied city. Attend a period funeral complete with mourners and casket. Speak with a surgeon as he tries to save the life of a dying soldier. Join in the debate comparing traditional mourning to the rising tide of 19th-century spirituality. The Lee-Fendall House Museum is at the corner of North Washington and Oronoco Streets. Tickets cost \$15. Reserve yours at www.LeeFendallHouse.org. 703.548.1789.

Alexandria Historical Society's Annual Report for 2012-2013 and Prospectus for 2013-2014

As of July 1, 2013, the Alexandria Historical Society (AHS) entered its 40th year of operation. In 2012-2013 the AHS membership was composed of 241 persons, a slight drop from 2011-2012.

Society membership was composed of the following:

Membership type	Number	%
Patron	16	8
Sustaining	29	15
Couple	51	27
Individual	94	50
Student	0	0
Total membership units	190	

Society revenue received for
2012-2013:

Revenue Sources	Amount	%
Membership dues	\$6,742	90.4
Endowment donations	\$698	9.2
Other *	\$26.	.4
Total	\$7,457	

Society expenses for 2012-2013:

Expense Categories	Amount	%
Administrative	\$1,531	30
Fees	\$625	12
Program/awards	\$2,022	40
Publications	\$934	18
Total	\$5,113	

Society assets as of June 30, 2013:

Account	Amount	%
Checking	\$8,879	18
Savings	\$5,001	10
Endowment	\$5,006	10
Investments	\$29,694	61
Total assets	\$48,581	

Thanks to our members who join as sustainers and patrons, we have been able to slowly grow our financial reserves and endowments, providing the society the flexibility to make strategic investments in projects within Alexandria that support our organizational mission. In 2012-2013, we transferred a portion of our endowment from a savings account, where interest earned was virtually zero, and made investments in equity indexes in Exchange Traded Funds where we expect a better return.

2012-2013 Endowment donors:

Anonymous
Tal and Barbara Day
Henry and Catherine Desmarais
Donald and Ellen Stanton
Amy Bertsch
Penelope Cottrell
Mary Page Hickey
Ted and Molly Pulliam
Mary Bier
Anne S. Paul

Lisa Adamo
Charles Trozzo and Gail Rothrock
Patricia Mellen
Louis and Jean DeMoll
Mona Dearborn
Robert and Vivian Miller
Peggy Gross
Nancy Pagliaro
Roberta Klein

2012-2013 Patrons:

Debbie Ackerman
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Tal and Barbara Day
Henry and Catherine Desmarais
Oscar and Toby Fitzgerald
Virginia Jacob
Jane Perkinson
Elizabeth Sibold

EHT Traceries, Inc.
James T. Williams
Patricia Braun
Dennis and Adrienne Hensley
Joseph and Rhonda Johnston
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Glenn and Judith Nordin
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2012-2013 Sustainers:

Lisa Adamo
David Cavanaugh
Brian Cabbage
Bill and Linda Dickinson
Jean Taylor Federico
Bruce and Linda Greenberg
James Johnson
Kathleen Kelly
James Norman
Randall Plante
Dr. Robert Sigafos
Charles Trozzo and Gail Rothrock
Amy Bertsch
Charles and Marilyn Court
Stewart and Loti Dunn

Susan Henry
Rev. John Humphries
Linda Mary Mills
Catherine Rodgers
Jaime and Whitney Steve
Jackie Cohan
Audrey Davis
Peter Pennington and Mary Jetton
John and Joyce Richardson
Seph and Sarah Coster
Mr. and Mrs. Caswell Hobbs
Rita Holtz
Sarah Riley
Richard Simmons

A rigorous annual internal audit was performed after the close of the 2012-2013 membership year and a clean opinion was submitted. A recommendation was also made that the annual budget be submitted to the board at its first meeting in the membership year. Board member Lisa Adamo, now the AHS Treasurer, transformed the AHS financial management into a highly efficient computerized system that greatly expedited the audit and will enable more careful monitoring of our financials by the society's board.

Four lectures were sponsored by the society in the 2012-2013 period:

Month	Speaker	Presentation
October 2012	Dr. Jenny Masur, US National Park Service	<i>Heroes of the Underground Railroad in Alexandria and the District of Columbia in the 19th Century</i>
March 2013	Prof. Richard Striner, Washington College	<i>Lincoln, the Confederacy, Slavery and State's Rights</i>
April 2013	Guy Gugliotta	<i>Freedoms Cap – The Expansion of the US Capitol in the 1850's and 1860's</i>
May 2013	John Hennessey, US National Park Service	<i>Sorrow Across the Land – The Impact of Death and Suffering Created by the Civil War</i>
June 2013	Charles V. Mauro	<i>A Southern Spy in Northern Virginia: the Civil War Album of Laura Radcliff</i>

Again under the leadership of Debbie Ackerman, our 2013 student awards program—now in its 29th year—honored students from the four Alexandria high schools (TC Williams, Bishop Ireton, Episcopal and St. Stephens and St. Agnes) for their accomplishments in the study of American history. The awardees are noted on the AHS website and each was presented with a Jefferson Cup. Audrey Davis led the selection process of the AHS annual history awards program that honored Dr. Pam Cressey, the retiring City of Alexandria Archaeologist.

In January 2013, it was discovered that our website (www.alexandriahistorical.org) had been “hacked,” resulting in the loss of much content and rendering the site inoperative although it was restored after several months. This incident made it abundantly clear that a new more modern website was essential, one that would contain many more features, much greater storage capacity and with appropriate security features. Thanks to extraordinary efforts by Lisa Adamo, a new vendor was identified, many of the lost materials recovered and new materials added, including a bibliography of Alexandria’s history by Ted Pulliam. Our new website provides a mechanism to join the society on line, as well as pay dues and make donations by credit card with its Pay Pal feature. The new site became operative in September 2013. Sarah Coster is our website manager and has also added new ways of communicating about our various programs, including Facebook and Twitter. Our Internet address remains the same at www.alexandriahistorical.org. Please visit the site and let Sarah know of any problems, comments, etc.

About two thirds of society members have provided their email addresses which will enable us to provide information on upcoming lecture notices, annual reports, special events, etc. through email communications. For those who do not have email connectivity, we will continue to use the US postal service for communications. By using the Internet the society will reduce printing and mailing costs. Please provide us with your email address if you have one and have not already done so. Be assured that we make every effort to keep your email address confidential.

In February 2013 the society wrote to the Alexandria City Council and requested that additional time be granted to ascertain if the historic Carver Nursery School and former American Legion Post building in the Parker Gray Historic District could be saved. Adrienne Washington, a society board member, testified before the City Council on our behalf. In August it was announced that the property had been sold and that the new owners plan to restore and expand the building to operate a dental practice.

In March we were all saddened to learn of the unexpected passing of the society’s Vice President, Peggy Gross, a person who made many contributions to our organization and to Alexandria’s history in general. Peggy was program chairperson and we thank her for the great speakers we featured in 2012-2013. She is greatly missed!

Two issues of *the Alexandria Chronicle*, edited by Linda Greenberg, were published in 2012-2013 and sent by mail to all society members. Past issues are available on the AHS website. Should you wish to contribute an article to the *Chronicle*, please contact Linda at lindaroseveargreenberg@comcast.net

The 2013-2014 membership year promises to be a very active one for the society with the Bi-Centennial of the War of 1812 (action occurred in Alexandria in August 1814) and the Centennial of the beginning of World War One. Vice President Ackerman has lined up an impressive schedule of speakers for the 2013-2014 year that began in September.

Month	Speaker	Presentation
September 2013	Gerald Gawalt	<i>George Mason and George Washington: The Power of Politics</i>
October 2013	Prof. Gene Smith	<i>The Slaves' Gamble: Choosing Sides in the War of 1812</i>
February 2014	Stephanie Deutch	<i>You Need a School House</i> – The story of the Rosenwald School built in Alexandria in the 1920's – Site of lecture to be determined.
March 2014	Stuart Butler	<i>Defending the Old Dominion – Virginia and its Militia in the War of 1812</i>
April 2014	Annual AHS History Awards Speaker to be determined	Speaker to be determined
May 2014	Mary Ann Jung	A historical composite "Rosie the Riveter"
June 2014	Team of Char Bah, Christa Watters, Audrey Henderson and James Henson	<i>African Americans of Alexandria, Virginia</i>

We are also considering sponsoring or promoting special events to celebrate the Bi-Centennial of the War of 1812 in Alexandria. These events would be paid for by the Office of Historical Alexandria, the Virginia War of 1812 Bi-Centennial Commission and other organizations.

The AHS budget for 2013-2014 as approved by the Board of Directors (October 8, 2013):

Category	Amount
Administrative	\$1,575
Fees	\$625
Programs/Awards	\$2,175
Publications	\$975
Total	\$5,350

In 2012-2013, we began an experiment having our June lecture filmed by JayBar video with the expectation the recording will be available on the AHS website. Feedback from society members would be appreciated.

As always the society is grateful to the Office of Historical Alexandria for making available—at no cost—The Lyceum for our lectures and the Alexandria Black History Museum for its board meetings. Ted Pulliam provides detailed minutes which, when finalized, are available on the AHS website. In the June board elections we welcomed Julia Randall, a professional archivist. Julia retired from the Virginia Theological Seminary and is co-author of the recent book *Hail! Holy Hill – A Pictorial History of the Virginia Theological Seminary*.

Should you have comments on any aspect of the society's operation or want to help out, please contact me or any other member of the AHS board.

Bill Dickinson
President

ALEXANDRIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
NEWSLETTER

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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