

**NEXT MEETING: November 13, 2012**

**Board Meeting – Alexandria Historical Society**

**October 9, 2012**

President Bill Dickinson called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. at the Black History Museum. Other members present were Peggy Gross, Lisa Adamo, Ted Pulliam, Debbie Ackerman, Katy Cannady, Dave Cavanaugh, Jackie Cohan, Audrey Davis, Tal Day, and Linda Greenberg.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the September meeting were approved with a change. Pulliam circulated a revised roster of Board members for 2012-2013 (attached).

**Treasurer's Report:** Adamo circulated a Treasurer's Report for 1 September through 30 September, a Treasurer's Membership Report for the same period, and a Treasurer's 2012-2013 Budget (attached). She pointed out that the donations to the Endowment Fund to date for the current fiscal year were about half of the donations to the Endowment Fund for the last fiscal year. She also called attention to the Treasurer's Budget Report, a new form she had prepared this month and last month that allows the Board to compare the current and projected expenses from the checking account and Endowment Fund for the current fiscal year with the expenses for the last fiscal year. As to membership, she noted that the number of memberships for September and October were less than the number received in July, shortly after the renewal notices were sent out. She also indicated that such a reduction was typical for the time of year.

**Membership:** Cohan reported that there were 53 members with unpaid dues. She and Greenberg suggested that the second letter requesting payment that traditionally is sent in November go out earlier instead. That suggestion met with general approval. Dickinson indicated he would work with Cohan on the wording of that letter. Greenberg suggested that the second mailing be sent before the October lecture so members could bring their dues to the lecture. It was decided that the phone calls to members with unpaid dues discussed at the last Board meeting would wait until after evaluating the results of the second mailing. There was some discussion about making the membership year the same as the fiscal year, but no conclusion was reached.

**Website Statistics:** Adamo had circulated the statistics earlier today. She noted that certain activity on the site, such as total pageviews and total hits, had increased dramatically in the past month over the most immediate previous months. She also indicated that such an increase was somewhat typical of past years as people finish with their summer activities.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Rosenwald School Special Lecture:** Dickinson noted that there were no new developments.

**War of 1812 Commemoration – Boat Tour:** Dickinson reported that various individuals, including the September Lyceum speaker Carole Herrick, were interested in a tour down the Potomac to commemorate American and British actions in Alexandria and on the Potomac during the War of 1812. This tour could be organized by a special task force or by a task force

operating under the city's committee on the War of 1812 commemoration. Pulliam, a member of the city's committee, reported that the committee had not been active recently and said he would phone Helen Wirka, a Carlyle House staff member and the convener of the committee, to discuss the boat tour idea and the possibility of the committee's overseeing its organization. Various entities, such as the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association, National Harbor, and Burke and Herbert Bank might be interested in sponsoring and contributing money to such a tour. The British Embassy also might be interested in being involved.

Day recommended the current exhibit at the National Portrait Gallery on the War of 1812.

**Presidents' Plaque:** The plaque listing past presidents of the Society is to be presented at the October lecture at the Lyceum. Ackerman reported that at least four past presidents or their representatives will attend the presentation. Others whom she has contacted might also attend. In order to identify those in attendance who may not be recognized by current Board members, Gross suggested having a sign-in sheet at the desk downstairs at the Lyceum that the past presidents or their representatives could sign and be identified. Day suggested that a list of the past presidents be included in the next newsletter. Davis said she would deliver the plaque to a particular office in the Lyceum where Ackerman could pick it up before the lecture. The details of the presentation at the lecture were also discussed.

**Website Maintenance:** Dickinson and Adamo stressed the need to provide the names of future speakers on the website well before the lecture, and it was generally agreed that the information on speakers should remain on the site until midnight of the day after the lecture. A list of future speakers should also be provided to Adamo and included on the website.

**Constitution and By-laws:** Gross indicated she would provide Adamo a copy of the approved constitution and by-laws for posting on the website.

**AHS on Facebook:** This item was tabled until the next meeting when Coster could attend.

**Strategic Objectives for 2012-2013:** Dickinson had earlier circulated a draft of an AHS Annual Report (attached). It included a list of strategic objectives for the coming year. In a discussion of the objectives, Greenberg suggested removing a bullet on ensuring transparency and accountability for all AHS activities. That bullet was thought to be unnecessary because it is understood that the Society would ensure this. This suggestion was generally agreeable. Greenberg also suggested that the objectives that proposed an increase in attendance at lectures and an increase in membership should contain a goal for the increase of 10 per cent. This change also was generally favored. It was further suggested and agreed that this document be included in a future newsletter. Anyone having further comments on the Annual Report or Strategic Objectives is to email them to Dickinson. Discussion on the objectives is to be continued at the next meeting.

**Investment of AHS Assets:** Day and Greenberg suggested that this item be discussed next month.

**Vacancy on the AHS Board:** Gross indicated that as chair of the nominating committee, she would convene a meeting of the committee to provide a nomination to fill the vacancy.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**The Chronicle:** Greenberg reported that the next issue of the *Chronicle* would be published this month. She also reported that she has been working with people on articles for future issues.

**Future Speakers:** Gross reported that the speaker on October 24 will be Jenny Masur, Manager of the National Capital Region's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom. The title of her talk will be: "Heroes of the Underground Railroad in Alexandria and DC in the Nineteenth Century." (More information attached.) Gross further reported that she is working on speakers for November and next spring. Anyone with suggestions should email them to her.

**Newsletters:** Cohan reported that she hopes to have the next newsletter prepared by October 14. The newsletter will contain information on the October speaker, a list of the past Society presidents, and possibly other pertinent matters.

**Archaeology:** Canady reported that the Alexandria Archaeology Commission recently had been given a presentation by the firm proposing to develop a hotel on property on the northeast corner of Duke and Union Streets bordering the Strand. An old warehouse owned by the Cummings family now is on the property, and it currently is being used by the Alexandria Art League. The development firm proposes a five-stories-high hotel and an increase in the number of people the hotel would accommodate per square foot in excess of the number the city currently allows. The hotel would appear from the street primarily as a solid block of a building rather than having an open area leading through it from Union Street to the Strand. The firm was not warmly received by the Commission. Day mentioned that the Old Town Civic Association had an insightful critique of the project on its website.

## NEW BUSINESS

**Del Ray Historic Preservation Conference:** Bill Hendrickson, president of the Del Ray Citizens Association, gave an overview of the Del Ray Historic Preservation Conference to be held from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on November 10 in the George Washington Middle School cafeteria and asked that the Society sponsor the conference. The conference would include presentations on Del Ray history, Del Ray's Historic District, art deco architecture in Del Ray, and a history of the Town of Potomac. (Copy of the draft program attached.) To be a sponsor, the Society would not need to provide money but would have its name listed as a sponsor in conference material and could set up a table at the conference for distributing brochures and seeking memberships. The Society would need to publicize the conference in its newsletter and in other ways. No action was taken immediately, but later a motion to sponsor the conference was made by Pulliam, seconded by Dickinson, and approved by email.

**Consulting Party in the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station EIS:** Dickinson reported that U. S. Department of Transportation has invited the Society to participate as a consulting party as part of the development of an Environmental Impact Statement for a project to construct a new Metrorail station in the Potomac Yard development. (Copy of invitation attached.) After a discussion, Gross proposed and Pulliam seconded a motion "that the Alexandria Historical Society participate as a consulting party for the purposes of monitoring the historic perspectives of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Project and the opportunities for developing historic resources as the project is brought to its conclusion." The motion passed unanimously.

**Carver Nursery School:** Dickinson earlier had circulated a request from Boyd Walker, president of the Greater Alexandria Preservation Alliance, seeking the Society's support for preserving the Carver Nursery School building (attached). The Carver School was constructed as a nursery school for African American children and later used as an American Legion post for African Americans. After some discussion, Cavanaugh reported that Walker plans to release a report on the building on October 27. It was generally agreed that the Board would postpone further discussion of this item until the next meeting when the new report would be available.

**War of 1812 Pension and Bounty Land Records:** Dickinson earlier had circulated an email from a member of a Maryland chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution seeking donations for a program led by the Federation of Genealogical Societies to digitize and place online War of 1812 pension and bounty land records now at the National Archives. (Email attached) It was decided to discuss this item further at the next meeting.

**Free Membership to Speakers:** Dickinson reported that the September speaker and some previous speakers had refused to accept the customary honorarium. He suggested that the September speaker and future speakers who refuse the honorarium be given a free one year membership in the Society. Dickinson so moved, Day seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Edmondson Sisters Statue:** Dickinson earlier had circulated a comment by an Alexandria citizen who had noted that the statue of the Edmondson sisters does not contain an explanation of who they are or why there is a statue of them. Davis reported that such language has yet to be drafted by the city and that she would investigate further.

**New Envelopes and Brochures:** Dickinson noted the immediate need for additional envelopes and the future need for more brochures. He said he would order more envelopes. He also requested that anyone with suggestions for changes to the brochure forward the suggestions to him so that they can be made before more brochures are ordered. Adamo suggested the need for make the terminology regarding membership categories consistent in the brochures and various Society documents.

**Refugees from Slavery Program:** Davis announced that there would be a lecture and panel discussion held from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on November 8 entitled "Refugees from Slavery: Contrabands in Washington D.C. and Northern Virginia." (More information attached.)

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Pulliam, Secretary