



The  
**ALEXANDRIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

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NEWSLETTER

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Please join us for the  
**2016 Annual Alexandria History Awards Ceremony**

Wednesday, April 27, 2016 – 7:30 PM  
The Lyceum – 201 South Washington Street

The awards will be presented by:

***Julia E. Randle and J. Lance Mallamo,***

Chairs of the AHS History Awards Committee

***Debra P. Ackerman,***

AHS President and Chair of the High School History Awards Committee

***The 2016 T. Michael Miller History Award*** will be presented to:

***George K. Combs,*** Retired Branch Manager

Special Collections at Barrett Library

Our Keynote Speaker is:

***Benjamin Skolnik,*** City of Alexandria Archaeologist

***The High School History Awards*** will be presented to:

***Michelle Dwyer,*** Bishop Ireton High School

***Gracie Burke,*** Episcopal High School

***Sterling Gilliam III,*** St. Stephen's and St. Agnes Upper School

***Aaron Higgins,*** T.C. Williams High School

*A reception, with refreshments, will follow the program*

## Winner of the 2016 T. Michael Miller Award



**George K. Combs**, retired Branch Manager of Special Collections at the Barrett Library was, for many years, the “go to” person in Alexandria’s libraries for researching Alexandria’s history and related topics. He upgraded the branch’s collections, provided unwaveringly cheerful and dedicated customer service to researchers and raised the public profile of the Special Collections branch. George was devoted to assisting researchers and was known for his ability to establish an excellent rapport with any researcher who approached him with a question. In 2012, with Leslie Anderson and Julia M. Downie, he published *Alexandria* (Images of America series).

George was born in Queens, New York in 1961 to Theodore and Barbara Combs and was raised in Trumbull and Newtown, Connecticut. He earned his Bachelor of Arts of American History at West Connecticut State University in Danbury in 1992, and his Master of Library Science with a specialty in Archives at Catholic University of America in 1995. In both 1990 and 1991 George was Summer Archaeology Intern at Belle Grove Plantation in Middletown, Virginia. He was Summer Intern at Special Collections, Alexandria Library in 1994 when it was located at the Lloyd House and a Library of Congress Fellow in 1995. From 1995 to 2006 George was Librarian at Special Collections, Alexandria Library, and from 2007 to 2016 he was the Branch Manager there.

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### Keynote Speaker

**Benjamin Skolnik**, our keynote speaker, is an Archaeologist for the City of Alexandria and has a background in digital research with historic maps and using lasers scanning to record archaeological sites. He recently participated in the recovery of the 1755 John Carlyle Warehouse and the 18<sup>th</sup>-century ship from Alexandria’s waterfront, and will talk about the circumstances and efforts behind the discovery, excavation, recovery and preservation of this 200-plus-year-old vessel. The ship was discovered last December and had been sunk and buried more than 200 years ago. During mid-April, Archaeologists will remove the ship’s timbers from their storage tanks for a week of documentation and study in preparation of removing them to a long-term conservation facility.

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### Accepting Nominations for an AHS Board Member

There is one opening on the Board of the Alexandria Historical Society for a new member. If you would like to become a board member or nominate someone for the position, please contact the President, Debra P. Ackerman ([alexandriahistoricalociety@gmail.com](mailto:alexandriahistoricalociety@gmail.com)) or the Vice President, Audrey Davis ([audrey.davis@alexandriava.gov](mailto:audrey.davis@alexandriava.gov)). The vote for the 2016-2017 board (which commences on July 1) will take place at the May 25, 2016 meeting.

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### AHS Spring Speaker Schedule

**May 25:** *Alexandria’s 1939 Library Sit-in: Its Impact, Aftermath & Legacy*, a lecture by Dr. Brenda Mitchell-Powell; **June 22:** *The Real Mercy Street*, join local historians Sarah Coster and Audrey Davis as we explore the true stories behind the first season of PBS’s new drama, *Mercy Street*.

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](http://www.alexandriahistorical.org)