

NEXT MEETING – Tuesday, April 8, 2014

Board Meeting – Alexandria Historical Society

March 11, 2014

President Bill Dickinson called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. Other members present were Debbie Ackerman, Lisa Adamo, Ted Pulliam, Katy Cannady, Dave Cavanaugh, Audrey Davis, Linda Greenberg, Julie Randle, and Mark Whatford.

PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

Welcome New Board Member: Dickinson welcomed Mark Whatford, Deputy Director of Gunston Hall, as a new board member.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes: The minutes of the February meeting circulated earlier by Pulliam were approved with the changes made earlier by Greenberg and Ackerman.

Treasurer's Financial and Membership Report: The report circulated earlier by Adamo (attached) was approved. Adamo noted that our membership to date was 171, down from last year's final number of 190. She also reported that over ten people had used our new capability to join through our website and that some of these new members were not local. She also noted that we are in compliance with our projected budget for the year.

Webmaster's Report: Coster earlier had circulated the webmaster's report (attached). Dickinson mentioned that putting lectures online on our website was helpful for older people who may be reluctant to drive at night and may find it difficult to find a parking space in the area around the Lyceum. Greenberg noted that their choosing to watch a lecture on the website may be cutting down on attendance at the lectures.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chronicle: Greenberg reported that the spring issue had been published. The next issue will be published in April and will contain an article by Luke Pecoraro, Assistant Director for Archaeological Research at George Washington's Mount Vernon. It will provide a new look at Mount Vernon's economic importance by describing its role as a commercial center for nearby plantations and towns.

She also mentioned that for prospective *Chronicle* articles she both solicits new articles and considers unsolicited submissions. She does not have a maximum word limit, in part because some articles have more illustrations than others. She prefers articles that will fit into 8, 12, or

16 pages because of the *Chronicle's* format. At times she has broken a particularly long article into two issues.

Speakers: Ackerman reported that the May lecture will be held May 20. As discussed at the last meeting, there was a conflict at the Lyceum with our usual date. She also reported that preparations are in place for the March 26 speaker, Stuart Butler. His subject will be "Defending the Old Dominion: Virginia and Its Militia in the War of 1812." Dickinson said that this talk will not be videotaped unless a sponsor can be found to do so. The talk will be co-sponsored with the Office of Historic Alexandria.

She also said that the dates for speakers in September and October have been confirmed with the Lyceum. Dickinson reported that the lecture by Alan Taylor on his book *The Internal Enemy: Slavery and War in Virginia from 1772 to 1832* is set for May 6. He also reported that the date for the talk by Jon Latimer is at some still-to-be-determined day in June. Cavanaugh reported that he is working on publicizing these events.

Newsletter: Dickinson reported that he and Cohan are working on the newsletter and that soon it will be circulated both by email and regular mail. He mentioned that there are about 30 members who have not given an email address who receive the newsletter by regular mail, plus some entities, such as libraries, who also receive complimentary copies of the newsletter by regular mail.

Membership: The position of membership chair is still vacant.

History Awards:

Main Speaker: Davis reported that Doug Bradburn, the director of the new George Washington Library at Mount Vernon, has agreed to be the adult history awards speaker.

T. Michael Miller History Award: Davis reported having received four nominations for the T. Michael Miller History Award thus far. She said the selection committee will hold its first meeting this coming Thursday. Although the Board decided not to buy space in a local newspaper to seek nominations, Canady reported that she had read an announcement to that effect in one of the local papers.

Student Awards: Ackerman reported that she had selections for the student history awards from each of the four Alexandria schools and that she had information for the program about all the students selected but one. Father Ferguson, a past student award winner from Bishop Ireton who will represent former student award winners, has been confirmed as the student awards speaker.

Refreshments: Greenberg reported that Trader Joe's has agreed to provide the refreshments for the awards program.

OLD BUSINESS

New Brochure: Adamo reported that she and Greenberg still are working on that project.

War of 1812: Dickinson circulated a list of upcoming events in Alexandria related to the commemoration of the War of 1812 (attached). He mentioned that the Lyceum already had a banner mounted on the front of the building and that soon flags would be out around town, plus advertising on items such as napkins, hats, book markers, coffee cups, and coins.

He also expanded on some of the events listed. The beginning event will be April 12 when the schooner *Virginia* will be at the dock at Robinson Terminal South, and someone will be on board to talk about the navy in the War of 1812. The film mentioned in the list will be *Masters and Commanders*, and it will be shown at the Old Town Theater on April 24. A member of the film's cast will be present to talk about making of the film. The event will be a fund raiser for the Wounded Warriors Project and for a similar British organization. The boat tour will be three hours on the *Miss Christin*, which holds about 100 people, and it is set for June 14. Guides will be on board, some from the National Park Service, and refreshments will be served. The 1812 organizing group is seeking sponsors for the tour. Whatford volunteered to look into finding a contact at Fort Belvoir, the place from which the Americans fired on the British fleet as it sailed back down the Potomac after plundering Alexandria. Dickinson expressed hope that this strong emphasis on history will bring new members to AHS.

Dickinson also mentioned that an artist from Baltimore, Patrick O'Brien, has worked with Ruth Reeder at Alexandria Archaeology to develop a digitized picture of Alexandria in 1814 to use in making a painting of the British ships before the town in 1814.

Letter of Support for Davis: Greenberg circulated a letter expressing the AHS Board's support for Davis to become the permanent Director of the Black History Museum (attached). On a motion by Greenberg, seconded by Ackerman, the Board unanimously approved the letter.

NEW BUSINESS

Not-for-Profit Mailing Privileges: Greenberg and Whatford led a discussion on AHS's purchasing a not-for-profit mailing permit for use particularly to announce upcoming lectures and to mail the *Chronicle*. They reported that a setup fee and an annual fee would be involved in the purchase. Mailings for lectures would go to everyone in a selected zip code. Mailings of the *Chronicle* would go to all members. Whatford said that Gunston Hall has had great success with its mailings using such a permit. The idea was generally approved, and Greenberg was to investigate fees and related issues further.

AHS at the Conference of the Virginia Association of Museums: Davis said she would work with Jim Mackay, Director of the Lyceum, to distribute brochures and copies of the *Chronicle* at the conference and erect the AHS sign at an appropriate spot. The conference will begin on March 16. Whatford volunteered to ensure that brochures would be distributed at Gunston Hall, which is part of the conference itinerary.

Edmondson Sisters Statue: Dickinson noted that there was no interpretive language on the Edmondson Sisters statue and asked when language would be included on the statue. Davis replied that it had been drafted but was stuck in the Alexandria Department of Parks and Recreation.

AHS Inquires and Donations: Adamo and Dickinson mentioned inquiries and donations related to Alexandria history that they had received from people through their roles with AHS. Adamo has tried to answer the inquiries or refer them to someone who might help. Dickinson has passed on donations to the Alexandria Library Special Collections or to the Lyceum for OHA.

Freedmen Cemetery Events: Davis announced that the several events held last week celebrating Freedmen Cemetery were extremely successful and likely would be repeated in September close to the September 6 dedication of the cemetery's memorial.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Pulliam
Secretary