

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Holiday Greetings to all my fellow AHS Members:

It's a challenge to fathom how and why it seems that time, our most precious commodity, gallops on with such unrelenting speed. Here it is, December already. It feels like I just put away the Christmas decorations from last year a few weeks ago! Fortunately, as historians, we take comfort that it is the steady march of time that creates history, or from which history is derived. As the keepers of Arlington's unique history, we look back, remember and record, while at the same time, we look forward to what lies ahead in order to be properly prepared. At this present time, the future may, even must, hold changes for our Historical Society. Please read on....

As has been mentioned in this space previously, I take advantage of occasional trips to Colorado Springs, Colorado, to visit my son at the Air Force Academy. I make it a point to take time to visit local museums in the area to ask questions about the way each sponsoring historical organization functions, how they are funded, staffed, run, maintained. I always learn something that is applicable to our own concerns and needs. In October, I took a short drive from my hotel to the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, which is located downtown in the beautifully restored 1903 El Paso County Courthouse. The magnificent building is an historical treasure. It was scheduled to be demolished in the 1970s, but through the persistence and vision of a small group of local history buffs, it was preserved, and it is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

This is the single municipal museum of Colorado Springs, and it features the history and culture of the Pikes Peak region in exhibits emphasizing the unique character of this uncommon Front Range community. As the focal point of the city's vibrant downtown, the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum draws thousands of people to the area annually. I spoke with several museum staffers about how they are sustained financially. I was told that for many years they operated mainly on donations and membership dues, but that this had proven an insufficient source of funds. So the museum board approached El Paso County officials and

“As the keepers of Arlington’s unique history, we look back, remember and record, while at the same time, we look forward to what lies ahead.”

eventually established a healthy, productive, successful, sustainable and mutually beneficial public-private partnership with the county, which now provides an annual appropriation to fund museum operations and maintenance, pays salaries for 6-8 staffers, and allows for use of county resources for promotion, publicity and public education.

During my tenure as president of the AHS, in speaking with former presidents and board members, I have become convinced that our current funding model of reliance on membership dues and donations is not sustainable or viable in the long term. I believe that in order to ensure the long-term viability of the Society, we must establish a similar public-private

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AHS MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday, January 12
7-8:30 p.m.

Civil War Uniforms: Confederate and Union

Arlington Central Library
Auditorium, 1015 N.
Quincy St.

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PRESIDENT, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

partnership with Arlington County that would produce a mutually beneficial association/relationship. We, the AHS, would then be able to expand and improve our unique mission and responsibility of sustaining and promoting Arlington's special and unique history to both local residents and the hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of visitors and tourists who come and stay in this area every year.

I have already spoken to members of the Arlington County Board about our ongoing financial vulnerability, which demands attention and change. While sympathetic, they tell me that our members must come forward and make appeals directly to board members in order to convince them of how important this type of relationship for financial support is for all residents and visitors.

Therefore, I am asking that each of you take a few minutes to write, send an email or call some or all of the Arlington County Board members. Please ask them to consider providing annual funding to the AHS in order to ensure the future of our organization and to improve our ability to preserve, promote and educate about our unique local history.

Here is how you can contact the board members (**Chris Zimmerman, Barbara Favola, Mary Hynes, Walter Tejada, Jay Fiset**):

**Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd. Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201**

Tel: 703-228-3130

Fax: 703-228-7430

Email: countyboard@arlingtonva.us

To schedule an appointment with a board member, please call the County Board Office at 703-228-3130. Thank you for taking time to do this to make the board aware of what must be done.

THE FUTURE OF AHS

A major development that will greatly impact the organization (and our need for such additional funding from a partnership with the county) is the possibility of AHS taking on the mission and responsibilities of the Arlington Heritage Alliance (AHA). The AHA, established in 1989, is the sole local organization whose mission is to "promote the preservation and creative use of historic, architectural, natural, and cultural significance in Arlington County, Virginia." Over the years, the AHA has had to deal with many of the same problems that we at AHS confront: declining membership and volunteer participation, and the challenges of administrative tasks, particularly fundraising, coupled with a steady and increasing demand for attention to matters of historic importance in the County. In full disclosure, I am a member of the AHA board of directors. I have served for the last six years as liaison between AHA and AHS.

Several months ago, the AHA board began to take a hard look at the future of the organization, determined to preserve and even enhance the accomplishment of its mission. Over time, one viable option that rose above others was to consider a merger with the AHS. In actuality, this would mean the dissolution or disestablishment of the AHA, and the creation of a permanent Committee for Historic Preservation under the AHS. In October, the AHA board made a formal presentation on this option to the AHS board. The matter is presently still in the deliberation and discussion phase. Both boards are carefully mulling over the implications, positive and negative, of such a "merger." We invite your thoughts, comments, suggestions and advice. Please do not hesitate to contact me at tomwd3@gmail.com, or by mail to AHS, P.O. Box 100402, Arlington, VA 22210.

(Continued next page)

The future presents both challenges and changes. Yet there is also the excitement of new, better, and more rewarding ways of accomplishing our AHS mission. None of this can be accomplished without your help. Please contact the Arlington County Board requesting financial support for the AHS. Please send me your thoughts and comments on the proposed AHS-AHA "merger."

Most importantly, please stay connected and involved with AHS. We can do nothing without your support. If you have not renewed your membership for 2011-12, please take a minute to do so.

Best wishes for a very happy holiday season, and for a healthy productive New Year in 2012!

"As historians, we take comfort that it is the steady march of time that creates history, or from which history is derived."



Tom Dickinson

Tom Dickinson
Tomwd3@gmail.com
703-841-4992

AHS BOARD MEETINGS

AHS board meetings are held at 7 p.m. at the Hume School Museum, 1805 South Arlington Ridge Rd.

Upcoming meetings:

- January 9
- February 6
- March 5

Meetings are free and open to the public.

GIVE THE GIFT OF HISTORY

AHS memberships make great holiday gifts!

Visit the AHS Museum or
www.arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org for details.

Memberships include:

- A quarterly newsletter
- Copy of the annual AHS Magazine
- Discounts at the AHS Museum bookshop
- Invitations to special member-only events



TIME TO RENEW YOUR AHS MEMBERSHIP!

If you haven't already renewed your AHS membership, please take a moment to do so for 2012.

You can renew online at:
www.arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org/membershipform.html.

Thank you!

IN MEMORIAM

Carolyn "Ditty" Boaz died peacefully Sept. 21 in Arlington. She was 91.

Boaz loved history and was a member of Arlington Historical Society.

Boaz lived for decades in Lyon Village, an historic community in Ar-

lington. She moved there in 1976 and was its official historian for many years; she was sometimes called its unofficial mayor. She maintained an extensive collection of photos and documents about Lyon Village and made some fascinating presentations of this material. She developed a map of the area

showing the numbers of each house.

Boaz was also active in the League of Women Voters, hosting meetings in her home every Saturday for years.

Born Oct. 25, 1919, Boaz retired as head of the National Security Agency libraries. A memorial service was held Oct. 29.

HUME SCHOOL GETS NEW AIR CONDITIONER

The air is chilly now, but the Arlington Historical Society's Hume School Museum is prepared to take on next summer's heat and humidity. After two years of faulty air conditioning, the leaking, malfunctioning second-floor air conditioning system at the museum was replaced in August.

This is the critical AC system that ensures that the valuable artifact collection is kept at appropriate humidity and temperature. The old unit was 20 years old and leaked condensation, necessitating removing ceiling tiles and requiring docents to use buckets and pails to catch the water. President **Tom Dickinson** oversaw and monitored installation progress. The new air conditioner now operates flawlessly and helped keep museum visitors cool during the remainder of one of the hottest summers on record in Arlington.

This was a huge expense for the AHS, and anyone wishing to donate to help defray the approximately \$5,000 cost should contact Tom at Tomwd3@gmail.com or 703-841-4992.



COOLING OFF

The AHS Hume School Museum has a new air conditioner. Installed Aug. 5, it will help preserve the museum's artifact collection.



AHS PARTNERS WITH OAKRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

By Tom Dickinson, AHS President

Earlier this year, while planning the Arlington Historical Society's commemoration event for the anniversary of the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon, I thought it would be appropriate to engage students who were not alive, or just a year or two old, at the time of that tragic, infamous event.

I called the school located closest to the AHS Hume School Museum, Oakridge Elementary School. Principal **Dr. Lynne Wright** was immediately enthusiastic and supportive of the idea of having students come to the museum on 9/11/11. There they could see the display of Pentagon artifacts which I have been able to acquire over the last 5 years or so during the ongoing 10-year Pentagon renovation project. I decided to have the students take part in the event by ringing the Hume School tower bell 184 times, in memory of each of the victims of the attack on the Pentagon. On 9/11/11, about 20 students participated in the solemn ceremony.

In follow-up to that event, I met with Dr. Wright, and we both agreed it would be worthwhile to establish a partnership between Oakridge and the AHS. This partnership would include field trips from the school to the AHS Museum, guided tours, faculty in-service training on Arlington history, and visits from AHS members to the school to provide presentations on Arlington history. In addition, we discussed use of the museum by Oakridge faculty, staff and the school PTA.

On Nov. 30 I met with Oakridge teachers to formalize and activate the plan for partnership, which will begin in the spring. Anyone wishing to participate in this collaboration should contact me at Tomwd3@gmail.com.



Oakridge students rang the Hume School tower bell in memory of the victims of the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon. (Photo courtesy of William Merritt Photography)

HISTORY OF FORT MYER DETAILED IN AHS TOUR

By Tom Dickinson, AHS President

Members of the Arlington Historical Society were given exclusive access to some of the military's greatest historical assets and treasures Oct. 12 during a tour of Fort Myer in Arlington. Fort Myer is formally known as Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall (JBM-HH).

Nearly 40 AHS members met on a cold, rainy evening for the event. They were welcomed by Deputy Base Commander **Lt. Col. Jennifer Blair** and **Command Sgt. Major Necati Akpinar**. Lt. Col. Blair presented AHS President **Tom Dickinson** with the Commander's Coin, thanking him for helping to educate and inform people about Fort Myer's past and for sharing it with others.

Kim Holien, JBM-HH historian, then led the group on a tour of several sites of historical significance, first talking about Fort Myer's earliest days as Fort Whipple, constructed as part of the ring of 68 Civil War defense fortifications built to protect Washington D.C., from Confederate attack. Holien provided in-depth information about numerous sites and facilities, including: Quarters 1, home of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Quarters 4, home of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force; the monument to Gen. Albert Myer for whom the Fort is named; the original boundaries of Fort Whipple; the Caisson stables; Conny Hall; the old base theater; Building 249, headquarters for the Old Guard; Summerall Field, where the Wright Brothers conducted demonstration flights for the U.S. Army Signal Corps in 1908-09; and the grave of Black Jack, the lead horse for the funeral procession for President John F. Kennedy in 1963. Holien also talked about Gen. George S. Patton's times on assignment at the Fort, the Buffalo soldiers, and the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment.



Kim Holien (right), JBM-HH historian, led AHS members on a tour of Fort Myer Oct. 12.

The AHS extends special gratitude and sincere thanks to **Col. Carl R. Coffman**, Commander of JBM-HH, **Mary Ann Hodges**, director of public affairs, **Kim Holien**, and especially to **Leah Rubalcaba**, JBM-HH community relations director, for her extraordinary efforts over many months to make this event possible, interesting and enjoyable. Rubalcaba has indicated that additional future tours of Fort Myer and Fort McNair in Washington D.C., are possible. (Building 20 at Fort McNair, where the trial and execution of the Lincoln assassination conspirators took place, is currently being renovated and may be re-opened for a similar "Members Only" tour in 2012.) AHS members therefore have additional events like the Fort Myer History tour to look forward to!



HISTORY ON THE GO

AHS co-sponsored the Virginia Tourism Commission's HistoryMobile in August at the Arlington County Fair. Nearly 2,000 visitors at the fair and at Arlington National Cemetery experienced the mobile unit, which features an exhibit on the impact of the Civil War on Virginians. The HistoryMobile will travel throughout Virginia over the next four years. Special thanks to **Warren Nelson**, AHS board member, who ensured that Arlington was among the very first stops for the History-Mobile, and to the volunteers who staffed the welcome tent. AHS's co-sponsor for the event was the Arlington County Civil War Sesquicentennial Commemoration Committee.

PARK VISITORS LEARN HOW POWHATAN INDIANS LIVED

By Tom Dickinson, AHS President, and Lindsey Wray, Newsletter Editor

Powhatan Indians once inhabited Arlington, and attendees of a recent Arlington Historical Society event learned how the Indians lived. The AHS co-sponsored the program "Indians of Arlington County" Nov. 19 with Potomac Overlook Regional Park.

Held at the park, the event featured Park Director **Martin Ogle**. He spoke about the Powhatan Indians and gave a walking tour of areas of the park known to have been inhabited by Indians 500 to 2,000 years ago. Ogle demonstrated how to use a spear and a bow and arrow.

He also showed attendees how the Indians made canoes: They cut down trees and burned out the insides to create a hollow cavity. According to Captain John Smith's notes taken during his exploration of this area on June 25-27 of 1608, the largest tulip poplar trees were cut and hollowed out using this method, and some of these vessels were so big they could accommodate up to 40 passengers.

Ogle showed John Smith's map of his 1608 exploration of the upper Potomac area, which shows several Indian villages in this area, the most prominent of which is named "Nameroughquend." Ogle indicated that this village likely overlapped with the present-day Potomac Overlook Regional Park.

The AHS will be working with Ogle in the near future to help with the reconstruction of an 1800s-era barn that was once part of the Donaldson family farm in the Potomac Overlook area.



A bow-and-arrow demonstration was part of "Indians of Arlington County," a November event the AHS co-sponsored with Potomac Overlook Regional Park.

W-L ALUMNI EVENT EVOKES HISTORY, NOSTALGIA

By Ann Guthridge, W-L Alumni Association Newsletter Editor and Archivist

On Sept. 15 at Arlington Central Library, alumni and community members gathered for a panel discussion about life in Arlington and at Washington-Lee High School from the 1930s to the present. The program, co-sponsored by the W-L Alumni Association and the Arlington Historical Society, featured stories from alumni ranging from fond memories of teachers, lessons learned, fashions and trends of the day, memories of excellence in the music and sports departments to memories of skipping class to practice jazz music and of crushes on teachers and others beyond reach.

Class years ranged from 1932, represented by **Bob McAtee**, to 2012, represented by **Madeline Hay**, senior class president. The panel included: **John Moore '36, Ann Ames Groves Gurman '36, Marion Grobowski '44, Nancy Smith Martino '44, William Scarrow '46, Lennie Cuje '52, Mickey Hamake '58, Woody Hair '58, Andrea Watkins '63, Johnnie Mae Graham Jones '66, George Dodge '71, Susan Sullivan Lagon '75, Doug Grove '81, Jennifer Lane '95, Tim Olson '98.** The moderator was **Sara Strehle Duke '02.**

The same evening, the library's Virginia Room opened an exhibit of memorabilia of the Class of 1944 that has been lovingly kept through the years by **Barbara (Borrer)** and **Burt Warden**. A few years ago, the class donated the collection to the Alumni Association. This was the first showing of the collection as a whole.

Anyone interested in joining the W-L Alumni Association can obtain a membership form at www.apsva.us/washingtonlee. Or, email wlalumni@gmail.com or call Mary Strehle at 703-524-3915.

AHS WELCOMES NEW CURATOR & COLLECTIONS MANAGER

By Mark Benbow, AHS Curator & Collections Manager

Hello, members and friends of the Arlington Historical Society. My name is **Mark Benbow**, and I am the new curator and collections manager for the AHS museum at the Hume School. Some of you may remember that I was curator at the museum in 2007-2008 and redid a number of the exhibits and created a display of antique toys for Christmas 2007. AHS President **Tom Dickinson** recently asked me to return and work with the museum again and I happily agreed.

I have lived in northern Virginia since 1987 and am a professional historian with a Ph.D. in American history from Ohio University. Since 2007 I have taught in the History & Politics department at Marymount University in Arlington. My specialties are late 19th - early 20th century American history and public history. From 2003-2006 I was the staff historian at the Woodrow Wilson House Museum in Washington, D.C.

My main goals at the AHS Museum are:

- To develop new exhibits for the museum, both permanent and temporary.
- To review the existing collection to better utilize what the Society has in its exhibits.
- To identify holes and help acquire new objects for the collection.
- To raise the profile of the Arlington Historical Society and the Hume School Museum in the community so that Arlingtonians know what a great resource they have in the AHS.

Since starting late in August I have worked with the Oakridge Elementary School with the 9/11 commemoration, displayed collection objects from Washington-Lee High School at an Arlington Library presentation and exhibited some of the collection's Indian artifacts at a program at Potomac Overlook Park. I have also added some new objects to the museum's exhibits, including a beautiful 1960s melodeon. Please come visit the museum and watch how it grows.

HELP PRESERVE ARLINGTON HISTORY

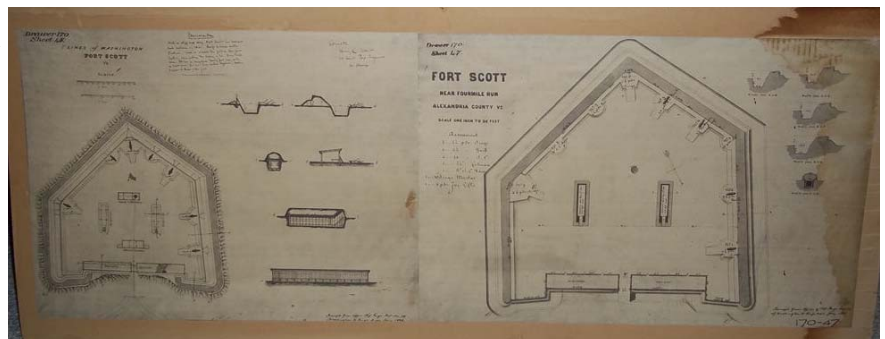
By Mark Benbow, AHS Curator & Collections Manager

The AHS has acquired two new pieces for our collection: an architect's drawing of a proposed Hume School circa 1950, and two maps of the original Civil War fortification, Fort Scott. The Hume School drawing was found at Oakridge Elementary School and was kindly donated to the Society. The Fort Scott maps were a gift from **Susan H.** in Maryland. We want to display both, but we need your help. Both items need to be framed and preserved from the elements with acid-free material and UV filtering glass.

We are looking for donors to help with the expense. It costs about \$250 for each item to have it properly preserved and framed. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to the AHS to help us save these items please send a check to AHS, P.O. Box 100402, Arlington, VA 22210. You can also make a donation via our website, www.arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org.

We will acknowledge donors in the AHS newsletter and on the display card for each piece. Donations to help pay part of the cost are as welcome as donations to pay all of it! Thank you.

The AHS recently acquired these two maps of Fort Scott.





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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

The Arlington Historical Society (AHS) is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization founded in 1956 and incorporated under the laws of Virginia for literary and educational purposes that support research, collection, preservation, discovery, restoration, and dissemination of the local history of Arlington County.

WWW.ARLINGTONHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG

HISTORY AWAITS. COME VISIT!



Photo by Maya Giacobbe

ARLINGTON HISTORICAL MUSEUM

1805 South Arlington Ridge Rd.
Open Saturdays & Sundays
1:00 - 4:00 p.m., Free
Come visit our permanent exhibits on
the 200+ year history of the county.

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