

ARLINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY YEAR IN REVIEW 2012–2013

December 2012

On Saturday, December 1, a Holiday Boutique, sponsored by the Aurora Hills Women's Club, and held at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, offered baked goods, ready-to-go meals, holiday gift items, raffle baskets, a silent auction, freshly decorated holiday wreaths and more. The event benefited the Arlington Food Assistance Center and the Arlington Historical Museum.

On Saturday, December 8, AHS members enjoyed an opportunity to meet local author Michael Lee Pope at the Winter Social at the Arlington Historical Museum. Pope signed his books on local history for members, including his newest book, *Shotgun Justice: One Prosecutor's Crusade Against Crime and Corruption in Alexandria and Arlington*. AHS Members also chatted with AHS board members and volunteers about 2012 accomplishments and plans for 2013. It was a welcome respite from the hustle and bustle of the season and a great chance to hear the inside scoop on Arlington history and AHS projects.

January 2013

On Thursday, January 10, author Michael Lee Pope discussed his book, *Shotgun Justice: One Prosecutor's Crusade Against Crime and Corruption in Alexandria and Arlington*, at the AHS public program at the Arlington Central Library.

March 2013

Local historian and railroading history expert Ron Beavers delivered a fascinating presentation on Thursday, March 14 for the bi-monthly AHS public program at Arlington Central Library. Almost 100 people, a standing-room-only crowd, filled the auditorium as Beavers explained the origins of the Retrocession and its underlying economic drivers. The Constitutional basis for the 10-mile square (100 square miles) Federal District, which included what is now Arlington County (then part of Fairfax County) and the City of Alexandria, seemed to ensure a perpetual territorial allocation. However, as Beavers explained, when economic interests and capitalism are involved, even Congress can be persuaded to act.

April 2013

On Thursday, April 4, the initial class session of the Encore Learning (formerly the Arlington Learning in Retirement Institute) class on "Arlington History"

was held at the Arlington Historical Museum. This class, taught by Karl Van-Newkirk, has been an annual event at the Museum for the last ten years

The USS Arlington (LPD-24) was commissioned on Saturday, April 6 in Norfolk, Virginia. Those in attendance included John Richardson, representing the Arlington Historical Society, plus a full contingent of local dignitaries. The Society has been collecting ship memorabilia for an exhibit in the Arlington Historical Museum, and also contributed to the establishment of a "Tribute Room" aboard ship that tells the story of the 9/11 Pentagon attack.

On Thursday, April 18, a session of the Encore Learning class on "Arlington History" was conducted as a field trip to the Ball-Sellers House.

May 2013

The Aurora Hills Women's Club held its annual tea on Thursday, May 2 on the front lawn of the Arlington Historical Museum, which provided an elegant backdrop for the presentation of this year's ceremonial check in the amount of \$5,300, raised during the Holiday Boutique, to the Arlington Historical Society. This is AHCW's 6th year of contributing funds to AHS for the upkeep and maintenance of the museum building, totaling in excess of \$30,000 to date.

Special tours of the Ball-Sellers House were given to Arlington's Robert E. Lee Chapter of Questers on May 2, and to Cub Scout Bear Den 548 (and their parents) on Sunday, May 5.

On Saturday, May 4, the Society hosted Colonial-era amateur historian Kevin Vincent on a walking tour of George Washington's Forest. The tour started at Arlington's oldest house, the Ball-Sellers House. About 25 walkers participated in the 3-mile walking tour that covered sites of key colonial and Revolutionary-era historic events in Arlington

On Thursday, May 9, Carol Herrick was the featured speaker at our membership meeting and program at the Arlington Central Library. Her topic was her book, *Ambitious Failure: Chain Bridge, the First Bridge across the Potomac River*. Ms. Herrick argues that construction of the bridge was part of Georgetown's struggle to maintain its economic stature and independence from the expanding Federal City—a struggle which was ultimately lost.

That meeting was also the occasion for the election of officers and board members. Past President Tom Dickinson was chairman of the nominating

committee and conducted the election. Arlington resident John P. Richardson, a retired intelligence officer who has written a biography of Gov. Alexander R. Shepherd, the builder of Washington, D.C., in the decade after the Civil War, was elected president. Other officers elected were Karl VanNewkirk (Second Vice President), Gerry LaPorte (Corresponding Secretary), Annette Benbow (Recording Secretary) and Tim Gribben (Treasurer). New directors joining the AHS board were Luis Araya, Courtney Cacatian, Dr. Max Gross, Garrett Peck, and Fred Stokeld.

Saturday morning, May 11, Spring Volunteer Day, marked the 8th year of spring and fall volunteer days to clear and maintain the grounds around the Arlington Historical Museum. The volunteer group Friends of Hume School had the usual strong turn-out from our local Mormons' singles congregation, the Green Manor Garden Club, and from Arlington Ridge Civic Association members, who began this grounds effort in 2005. Long-time partners in the Arlington County Parks Department provided mulch and tools, as well as occasional planting and landscaping. Morning refreshments were provided by ARCA, and lunch was a gift from neighbor Rich Kelly.

Dr. David Robarge, chief historian of the CIA, was the keynote speaker at the Arlington Historical Society's annual membership banquet, held Friday, May 31 at the Holiday Inn Rosslyn/Key Bridge. Nearly 100 people attended the banquet, including Arlington County Board member Chris Zimmerman and Commonwealth's Attorney Theo Stamos. Dr. Robarge delivered an illustrated, eye-opening lecture called "Spies Next Door," which covered three interlocking stories—much of which unfolded in Arlington

June 2013

On Saturday, June 1, the Ball-Sellers House helped Glencarlyn celebrate its annual Neighborhood Day by serving lemonade and inviting the neighbors to see the changes and new exhibits prepared in the spring.

July 2013

Dr. Mark Benbow, Director of the Arlington Historical Museum, put together an exhibit for the sesquicentennial of the Civil War titled "A Union Soldier in Arlington: John W. Bates of the 23rd Massachusetts Volunteers 1864–1865." The exhibit opened on Saturday, July 20.

August 2013

The Society was once again a participant in the Arlington County Fair, held at

the Thomas Jefferson Community Center in South Arlington over the weekend of August 9–11. Like last year, the AHS booth was shared with the County’s Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission and demonstrated the complementary nature of the two exhibitors; former AHS Board Member Warren Nelson and AHS Museum Director Mark Benbow were the backbone of the operation.

September 2013

The Ball-Sellers House Committee introduced their new caretaker/tenant, Margaret Wagner. She will live in the 1880s section of the house. As the live-in caretaker, Wagner will be keeping an eye on this Arlington treasure of a historic home.

Arlington County’s second-oldest house was featured at the membership and program meeting held on Thursday, September 12 at the Arlington Central Library. AHS board member Karl VanNewkirk’s presentation was about the Dawson-Bailey House, now the core of the Dawson Terrace Community Center, 2133 N. Taft Street.

The Arlington Historical Society participated in the Nauck Community and Civic Pride Day, held on Saturday, September 21. AHS president John Richardson and communications director Garrett Peck shared table duties, along with Judy Knudsen of the Arlington Central Library’s Center for Local History. The program, held on the grounds of Drew Model School in Nauck, was a great success, with numerous exhibitors and visitors.

Former Society President Ruth Rose spoke on AHS and Arlington history Saturday, September 28 in McLean to the Questers, an international philanthropic group whose local chapter supports Arlington House.

That same day was also Clarendon Day. The Arlington Historical Society shared a table at that event with the Sesquicentennial Commission on the Civil War. The event was a great success, with large crowds and a steady flow of visitors to the tent to talk about Arlington and Civil War history and scoop up literature from both organizations. More than 30 visitors signed up for more information via email.

October 2013

The Arlington Historical Society paid tribute to long-time member and supporter Robert McAtee on his 100th birthday party on Sunday, October 27 at his Maywood residence, joining with other friends and neighbors in wishing

him many happy returns. AHS President John Richardson presented McAtee with a framed certificate attesting to his long years of service and support to the Society. Richardson's remarks made note of McAtee's donation of his 1932 Washington-Lee High School cadet uniform, complete with sword, to AHS some years ago; the uniform is displayed periodically at the Arlington Historical Museum.

November 2013

Ron Beavers' spoke at the Society's membership and program meeting on Thursday, November 14, at the Arlington Central Library. His talk was titled "The History of the Alexandria, Hampshire, and Loudon RR."