



MAY

FORT DELAWARE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

2007

GRAND OPENING

It was probably the most rain we have had since the hurricane several years ago. The south entrance into Fort DuPont State Park was under 14 inches of water, and the parade ground as well as most of the roads were covered. When the date of our Grand Opening was set in January, it was natural to assume that mid April would be warm and sunny. It was not to be. However, despite the weather, 37 brave persons braved the floods and the rain on Sunday afternoon, April 15th to celebrate the opening of our new headquarters. The spacious General Meeting Room proved its worth, since plans to address our guests outside were out of the question. After a brief welcome by President Bill Robelen, Chazz Salkin, Director of the Division of Parks & Recreation praised the Society for its leadership role in the restoration project as only the beginning of a long term program to make efficient use of the Fort Dupont State Park campus. Delaware City Mayor Dee Bennett offered her congratulations to the Society for being such an active and positive member of the community. The guests then adjourned to the front entrance, where Chazz cut the ribbon, making the opening official. Refreshments, including a large sheet cake with a photograph of the building air brushed on it

were enjoyed by everyone as they toured the various rooms. Board members acted as hosts, pointing out the features and benefits that our new headquarters offers to both our members and to the general public.

NEW FACILITY FINDS IMMEDIATE USE

It didn't take long for our new headquarters to be put to good use. Directors Kay Keenan and David Price hosted members of the Delaware Genealogical Society on March 24 for a day of activity. Kay gave a history of the Fort Delaware Society, followed by Dave's presentation on the history of Fort Delaware. After lunch, the guests were given assignments to use the Society's various reference sources to research information about Civil War era individuals who served or were prisoners at the Fort.

Director Dan Cashin hosted members of the General Meade Society on May 6 for an orientation program followed by a tour of the Fort.

The State Parks & Recreation Council held its quarterly meeting at our facility on May 2nd.

Our headquarters are designed to be used, and we are pleased that we have the space to do so.

BOARD ELECTIONS

At the 57th Annual Luncheon on Sunday, February 4th, the following Officers and Directors were elected to serve in 2007. Chairman of the Board: William E. Craven, Jr.; President: William G. Robelen; Vice President: Edith K. Mahoney; Secretary: Thomas M. Smith; Treasurer: Donald A. Sholl; Directors: Dan Cashin, Robert E. Curtin, John Gott, Catherine C. Keenan, David Price, Carolyn Raniszewski, Roger G. Reynolds, John C. Samis, R. Hugh Simmons and Robert Stark.

ANNUAL LUNCHEON

The 57th Annual Luncheon of the Fort Delaware Society was held at the Christiana Hilton on Sunday, February 4, 2007. A near record crowd of 71 members and their guests attended. Our Guest Speaker was Mr. Matt Chesser, Manager-Planning, Preservation and Development for the Division of Parks and Recreation. Using visual aids, he described in detail the on-going construction and restoration work at the Fort as well as the work that is planned for the future.

This event is one of the highlights of our year and features a delicious lunch and a wide variety of desirable door prizes.

WINDOW RESTORATION

By the time you read this, nineteen of the twenty windows in our new headquarters building will have been restored, broken and missing glass replaced, damaged wood rebuilt, stripped, primed, painted and installed. One window was missing entirely, so a new one is being built to match the existing ones. This meticulous and labor intensive work is being performed by John P. Lindtner Building Preservation Services. Those who attended the Grand Opening were able to see for themselves what a marvelous job he has done. Once his work is

complete, the Dewson Construction Company carpenters will install the interior sills and casing. There still remains some caulking and final painting of the interior trim to be accomplished. The Challenge Program has been given the approval to build, paint and install new storm windows, thereby protecting the restored sashes and providing another layer of insulation to minimize heat transfer throughout the year.

FORT NOW OPEN

The Fort opened to the public on weekends April 29. The Summer schedule starts June 13, Wednesday through Sunday.

NOTES NOW ON CD

Through a monumental effort by Director Hugh Simmons, back issues of *Fort Delaware Notes* are now available on Compact Disc format. This annual publication is a collection of many and varied articles about the Fort and its people and represents countless hours of research by the contributors. Copies are given to every member, but now anyone can obtain this priceless source of information for only \$15 plus \$2.50 s/h by calling or writing to the Society. Hugh has also compiled an invaluable index of the articles, making the search for information convenient and efficient. Order yours now.

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