



DECEMBER

FORT DELAWARE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

2011

62ND ANNUAL LUNCHEON

The Fort Delaware Society's 62nd Annual Luncheon is scheduled for Sunday, February 5, 2012 at the Christiana Hilton. Invitations will be in the mail shortly after you read this newsletter. If you were fortunate enough to have attended our Spring General Membership meeting, you will remember the excellent program presented by Thomas Tear, author of "Memoirs of a Confederate Gentleman". He will be back, this time with two of his partners, in a fascinating program titled "An Under the Skirt Tour of the Civil War". The subject sounds a bit provocative, but rest assured, it's not exactly what it sounds like. This company of three individuals will demonstrate what the typical man and woman wore during the period of the Civil War. They will be certain to entertain and enlighten you. Please make every effort to attend. The Luncheon is the highlight of our year and is the time when we get together to talk with old friends, share an excellent meal, distribute terrific door prizes and elect Officers and Directors to serve in 2012. We have been able to hold the price of the luncheon to \$25, despite rising costs. It's not too early to mark your calendar and make plans to join your fellow Society members. And yes, we will be finished in time for you to watch the Super Bowl!

COLLECTIONS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

The Final Report of our Collections Assessment Program (CAP) was submitted to the Heritage Preservation organization in Washington, DC by Lois Price, a staff member at Winterthur Museum, who handled the two day visitation to our headquarters, met with members of our Board to discuss her findings and prepared the report. Ms. Price's expenses were covered by a grant from Heritage Preservation. Her detailed and in-depth analysis will serve us as a guideline to improve the quality of our preservation practices. Some of the recommendations can be accomplished by our own members and at minimum cost; others will involve a modest investment; while some will require substantial expense. With the CAP work behind us, we will be in a much better position to request grant funds to allow us to accomplish the latter. We are grateful to Lois for sharing her expertise and are pleased that she was so favorably impressed with the work of the Society. In addition to her findings, she also provided an invaluable list of resources for preservation materials and assistance. Her report is in our office, and interested persons are welcome to review it. Just remember to check with Martha to confirm.

STANDARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

The Standards for Excellence Institute in Baltimore has prepared a comprehensive set of guidelines for Non-Profits such as the Fort Delaware Society to develop a Code of Ethics and Accountability. It is intended to assist us in performing in such a way as to be considered truly a Non-Profit. It consists of Eight Guiding Principles and 55 Standards detailing performance benchmarks to strengthen our operation. This past Fall, President Bill Robelen, Vice-President Edie Mahoney and Director David Price met and drafted a code for the Society. It is an excellent tool to ensure we are performing in a professional and ethical manner. A copy is on file in our office for you to review.

SUTLER SHOP ENDS SEASON

Another season at the Fort is behind us; the unsold items have been moved back to our office and counted and displays covered for the winter. Manager Martha Bennett reported that the total gross sales was only slightly less than last year, which is welcome news considering the heat and the days the Fort was closed due to inclement weather. Your Officers and Directors join Martha in extending our sincere thanks for all the volunteers who staffed the Shop and answered visitor's questions. Without you, we could not operate the Shop and generate the much needed funds it provides.

WINE TASTING FUNDRAISER

Our Third Annual Winetasting Fundraiser was held November 4th, again at Deerfield Fine Wines in Newark. Despite the somewhat low attendance, those who did make it were treated to some fine music by a nine piece band playing the kind of music we remember. Edie Mahoney and Tom and Rosemary Smith provided some delicious refreshments. We were pleasantly surprised by the monetary donations which totaled \$340.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

One of the benefits the Society provides is the opportunity to get together in an informal setting twice a year to listen to interesting and informative speakers, to mingle with members and guests and to enjoy some delicious refreshments. This past Spring, one of our Directors, Dan Cashin presented an analysis of the Gettysburg battle known as "The Angle". He provided handouts which illustrated graphically the points he was making, and he wisely involved the audience as active participants, which made his program even more interesting. The Fall meeting was presented by Thomas Tear speaking about his book "Memoirs of a Confederate Gentleman" and the research that was behind his work. Thomas has been a re-enactor at the Fort, taking the part of a Confederate POW. The multitude of questions was an excellent indicator of how much the audience appreciated his remarks. You can see Thomas again at our Annual Luncheon in February.

4TH ANNUAL VICTORIAN KIDSFEST

The Victorian KidsFest gets better every year, just as we knew it would. When representatives of the State Park Office get together with members of the Society to plan the event, the key discussion revolves around ways to improve it over the previous year. One change for the 2012 event is the decision to move the date from June to July 8, after the season has started and all the kinks are worked out. It is hoped that the later date will result in greater attendance. It's not too early to mark your calendar and plan to invite your kids, your grand kids, your nieces, nephews and their friends. It promises to be bigger and better than ever.

NEW BOOK ON FORT DUPONT PREMIERS

Brendan Mackie and Laura Lee have released their second book for the Arcadia *Images of America* series. This new publication features archival photographs with interesting captions showing Fort DuPont with historically interesting captions in the period just before and during WWII. It is a companion to their previous publication devoted to Fort Delaware. Copies are available in local book stores as well as through the Fort Delaware Society. The Society was proud to be a resource for the authors of the historical photographs in our collections. Both these books are a "must" for residents of the Delaware Valley who will appreciate seeing such an important part of our history all in one place.

ARCHIVAL GIFTS AND ACQUISITIONS

Traditionally, we have listed our archival gifts and acquisitions in the copy of the *Fort Delaware Notes*, which is distributed in February each year. Because the *Notes* get bigger each year, it was decided to reduce the cost of their printing by including the Acquisitions in the December Newsletter. Here they are.

Ronald Atkinson - a CSA belt buckle.

David Winter - a letter written by POW J.N. Shanklin to Miss Rosie Lee Dickinson.

Ronald Brown—a cannon lock
Clyde Yoder—copies of 2 C.W. era letters written by J.F. Honges
Jacob Nowland—memoirs of his friendship with a German POW at Fort DuPont

William A. McKay—Pension Application of POW J.A. Brown of the 16th Mississippi

Univ. of Rochester, NY — letter from James Nelligan requesting a parole.

David Price—a Spencer bullet
Michael Pierson—series of C.W. era letters and military papers.

Brendan Mackie—Letters of PFC Edward Haley, 663rd Engineers at Fort DuPont; Philadelphia Inquirer articles about Fort Delaware dated July 21, 1862; Copy of the Ownership Resolution from both House and Senate of 27th Congress establishing the ownership of Pea Patch Island plus copy of the title to Pea Patch Island dated 1842 resolving the question of ownership.

The Society is indebted to these generous donors and grateful for their support of our mission to preserve the history and legacy of both Fort Delaware and Fort DuPont.

Society Activities in 2011



Spring General Membership Meeting



Fall General Membership Meeting



Kidsfest Activities



Victorian Baseball during Kidsfest



Kidsfest Sutler Shop Volunteers



Delaware Women on the Home Front

Fort Delaware Society
P.O. Box 553
Delaware City, DE 19706

DESCENDENT CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Since this program started three years ago, we have received a total of 64 requests for Certificates. Each one is accompanied by a personal letter from the Society President. This past year alone, we have filled ten requests. Inquiries have come from the following states: CA, TX, VA, GA, PA, NJ, AZ, NC FL, DC, NH, CT, WA, AK, KS and IL

What better demonstration of the wide range of appeal the Society generates. At \$25 per Certificate, the program has generated \$1600. A very welcome addition.

SUTLER SHOP VOLUNTEERS

Here are the folks who volunteered their valuable time to staff the Sutler Shop during the 2011 season. We are indeed grateful.

Kay Keenan, Tom Smith, Edie Mahoney, Hugh Simmons, Don Sholl, Al Trecoast, Ed Fielding, Bob Stark, Deb Haskell, Jean Bonner and Bill Robelen.

Be sure to thank them, and just as importantly, why not join them next season. As any one of them will tell you, it's not hard work, and you meet a lot of very interesting and interested persons. Give Martha a call and sign up.

HOLIDAY GREETINGS

The Officers and Directors of the Fort Delaware Society extend to you and your families sincerest best wishes for a safe and Happy Holiday season with anticipation of a joyous New Year.

