



FORT DELAWARE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

2011

61st ANNUAL LUNCHEON

The Fort Delaware Society's Annual Luncheon was held Sunday, February 6, 2011, and as President Bill Robelen promised 17 years before, it did not snow that day, much to the delight of the 65 persons who attended. As usual, the Christina Hilton provided a beautiful setting and an excellent meal. There were some fine gifts given away as door prizes thanks to the generosity of Society Board members, the State Park Office and the staff of the Hilton. Director Carolyn Raniszewski donated a handsome framed print of the Kalmar Nykle for a special raffle. Director Hugh Simmons had 2 tri-panel display boards; one with photographs of Society activities during the past year and another with archival photographs of Union and Confederate Officers who were at the Fort. In a departure from the usual guest speaker, members of the Reedy Point Players out of Delaware City presented three short one-act plays dealing with Civil War topics, complete with period costumes and props: "The Ghost of Lincoln and the Maid", "Alan Pinkerton's Interview with a female Confederate Spy", and "Grant and Lee's Meeting" to discuss the best way to handle the aftermath of the War. Everyone present was very pleased with this type of program.

WAL MART GIFT

The WalMart Superstore in Middletown showed its support of the Society by donating a new computer system complete with a large screen monitor and with plenty of capacity to handle our expanding data base programs to store our POW and Garrison records, Research Library contents, and archive information.

KIOSK COMING SOON

Thanks to the generosity of Crystal Trust, who funded the project, we have engaged the services of Kionetics to design and build a free standing touch-screen kiosk for visitors to our Sutler Shop during the season and for visitors to our booth during outreach programs to access our data base of over 41,000 names of Confederate POWs and Union soldiers who were at Fort Delaware during the Civil War. And if a photograph is in our files, that image will also be available to view. This is a marvelous addition to our efforts to spread information about Fort Delaware and the people who were there. We expect we will have the kiosk in our hands by the end of May. It is made with solid state components, with no moving parts. It just has to be plugged in to any 110v outlet, and we have the capacity to add new information as it becomes available.

2011 ELECTIONS

One of the major reasons for our Annual Luncheon each year is to elect the Officers and Directors who will guide the Society for the next twelve months. The following persons were unanimously elected by those present.

Chairman: William E. Craven, Jr.

President: William G. Robelen

Vice President: Edith Mahoney

Treasurer: Catherine C. Keenan

Secretary: Thomas M. Smith

Directors: Dan Cashin, Brendan Mackie, Jayne McCormick, Michael Pierson, David Price, Carolyn Raniszewski, Roger Reynolds, R. Hugh Simmons, Robert Stark and Roberta L.S. Wilkins.

These individuals give much of their time and effort throughout the year to serve you and to fulfill our mission to protect, preserve, promote and interpret our beloved Fort on Pea Patch Island. Please give them your support.

FORT TO OPEN

Fort Delaware will be open to the public for its 2011 season on June 15 and will keep its normal schedule of Wednesday through Sunday. Large groups are encouraged to contact the Park Office at 302-834-7941 to make reservations. Any questions concerning special programs or schedules should also be directed to that same number. Severe weather may result in the Park closing, so to be safe, call ahead if you are unsure.

LCD PROJECTOR PURCHASED

With funds generated by last year's Wine Tasting events, the Society has purchased an Epson LCD projector. It will be available to guest speakers at our General Membership Meetings who want to use it for their Power Point video assisted programs. It will also save our renting one from the Christiana Hilton during our Annual Luncheon when it may be needed by our guest speakers. Because the former technology of using slide projectors is rapidly becoming obsolete (if not already so), most presenters are using Microsoft Power Point, which is far more flexible. With this new equipment, we are all ready for them.

CAP GRANT

With the assistance of Kimberlee Johnson of the Division of Parks and Recreation in Dover, the Society applied for and was awarded a Collections Assessment Program (CAP) Grant to underwrite a professional assessment of our archival collections. After being notified of the grant, we had to submit a 20 page questionnaire to the Heritage Foundation in Washington, DC that manages the CAP. After careful consideration, we selected Lois O. Price as our Assessor. She is on the staff at Winterthur Museum and has vast experience in conducting these assessment programs. Lois will visit the Society office during the week of June 13 and would like to meet as many of you as she can. With the CAP behind us, we will be far more eligible for additional grants to obtain funding for preservation and protection of our collections.

STANDARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

The Standards for Excellence Institute in Washington, DC is committed to raising the level of ethical and accountable practices in nonprofit organizations such as the Fort Delaware Society. In order to protect our nonprofit standing, it is in our best interest to participate in the Standards of Excellence Program. What this means is that we need to set down in writing (where we have not already done so in the past) the means by which we as a Society manage our affairs to comply with applicable local, state and federal laws. There are eight (8) Guiding Principles and fifty-five (55) Performance Standards that we must address. This is indeed a lot of work, but President Bill Robelen, Vice-President Edie Mahoney and Director David Price are willing to undertake this effort on behalf of the Board. In reviewing the requirements, it must be noted that we are already in conformance with many of them and just have to state so in writing. Some other areas need to be addressed, but we are committed to producing a document that will satisfy the Standards of Excellence. When this material is complete, any interested Society member is welcome to review it in our office.

OFFICE OPEN TO VISITORS

The Society's office and Library at 33 Staff Lane in Fort DuPont State Park are open to visitors on the first and third Saturdays of each month from noon to 4 PM. All are welcome.

OUTREACH EFFORTS

One of the provisions of our Mission Statement that we take very seriously and for which we devote many hours, is to promote the Society as well as the Fort on Pea Patch Island. Here are just a few of the examples of our work in the communities of Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey throughout the year.

Participate in the Heritage Commission's celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War, speak at Masonic Lodges, partner with Fort Delaware Park Staff to plan and participate in the Annual Victorian KidsFest at the Fort, staff a table at Newark Night and Newark Community Day, participate in the Annual Civil War activities at Manor College in PA, maintain wreaths at the monument at Finns Point National Cemetery, speak to various school groups, participate at annual Civil War events in Neshaminy Park in PA, Boy Scouts of America Jamboree in Teterboro, NJ, and at a similar event in Scotch Plains, NJ, staff a table with Fort and Society information at the annual Memorial Day celebration at Mt. Salem Methodist Church in Rockford Park in Wilmington, Marple Township and Pennypacker State Park events in PA, Mason College Civil War celebrations in NJ, and many more. Most of our Board members take an active part in this outreach activity. Not only is it a commitment of a huge amount of time, but considering the price of gasoline, this represents a significant personal financial contribution as well. Next time you see a Board member, please extend your sincere thanks for their devotion and efforts.

Society Activities February to May 2011



Reedy Point Players at Society Annual Meeting



Society Members Hard at Work Setting Up Sutler Shop for 2011 Season



Outreach Display at Pennsylvania's Neshaminy State Park Civil War Reenactment

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

WINTER WINE TASTING EVENT

Just in time for your Holiday gift purchasing, our winter Wine Tasting Fund Raiser will be held Saturday, November 5 from 4 to 8 PM at Deerfield Fine Wines in Newark. If you have never attended, this is a special event with delicious snacks, silent auction, live periodic music, wine experts on hand to answer your questions plus a broad selection of wines for you to sample and enjoy. It's also a great opportunity to mingle with fellow Society members and other guests. It's not too early to mark your calendars now. Hope to see you there. Watch for details on our Website. www.fortdelaware.org

FALL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Please set aside Tuesday evening, November 15 for our Fall General Membership meeting at our headquarters at 33 Staff Lane in Fort DuPont State Park. No details are available now, but be on the lookout for a flyer in the mail and on our web site in October.

ADDRESS CHANGE

Unfortunately we are unable to communicate with some of our members because they did not inform us of an address change. It is easy to let this detail go by unnoticed, but it means that we have no way to contact you. A call or e-mail note will suffice. Thanks!

ARCHIVES DATA BASE

Ever since we have begun collecting archival materials and objects more than 50 years ago, we have maintained handwritten records listing an Archival Identification Number, donor's name, date of donation and a description of the article. Those records occupy ten binders, and are subject to the ravages of time and handling. Director Hugh Simmons created a Data Base to record this information on our computer, and Office Manager Martha Bennett, Vice - President Edie Mahoney and Director Jayne McCormick have been hard at work transcribing the data. It's a long process, but well worth the time and effort to complete.