



DECEMBER

FORT DELAWARE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

2013

COLLECTIONS ROADSHOW

In a departure from the usual General Membership Meeting format, the Fall meeting was devoted to the Civil War related collections of our Board members giving them the opportunity to exhibit a wide variety of fascinating items from clothing to weapons. Held Oct. 8 at Grass Dale Center, 8' tables were arranged around the room, allowing the visitors open access to the items on display and to speak with each exhibitor. President David Price hosted the evening, introducing each exhibitor and asking them to describe their collections. Refreshments provided by the Board members were available in the hall outside the exhibit area. The reaction was so positive, we are considering repeating the event in 2014.

SUTLER SHOP 2013

Thanks to all the following who generously gave of their time to staff the Shop during the past season. Tom Smith, Carolyn Raniszewski, Edie Mahoney, Al Trecost, Ed Fielding, Maureen Zieber, Deb Haskell, Jean Bonner, Kay Keenan, Barbara Citron and Hugh Simmons. The Shop serves two important functions. It is a significant source of income, and it gives the Society visible presence on the Island providing a means of interacting with visitors, answering their questions and promoting the Society and its mission.

CHAZZ SALKIN RETIRES

Charles Salkin has been the Director of the Division of Parks & Recreation since 1992. He has dedicated his professional life to public service and is recognized both for his leadership and his responsiveness to the diverse public that he served. He began his career in Delaware at Bellevue State Park in 1978 and held a variety of positions throughout Parks during his tenure there. He has been active in many professional associations at both the local and national level. Chazz was not only a strong supporter of our Society, he is an active member, for which we are indeed grateful. Whenever he paid us a visit, he had the most unique ability of making us feel that we were the most important organization in the state. Thanks, Chazz for your care and concern. Best wishes in your retirement. You'll be sorely missed.

BIVENS APPOINTED NEW DIRECTOR

Raymond E. Bivens has been appointed the new Director of Parks & Recreation replacing Chazz Salkin who retired Oct 31. Ray had been Section Manager for the Operations, Maintenance and Programming unit for Parks. He joined Parks in 2003 as Chief of Environmental Education. We welcome Ray and look forward to working with him.

HEADQUARTERS GETS A FACE LIFT

It has been seven years since we completed the restoration of our headquarters building, and the ravages of time and weather have taken their toll on the exterior. It was obvious that a new paint job was in order. Treasurer Tom Smith took on the task of getting quotes and working with the contractor approved by the Board. Areas where the paint had worn away were scraped, sanded and primed with oil base primer, Then two coats of satin finish acrylic color finished the job. The new color is beautiful—not quite the same, but still in the same family, and distinctive enough to stand out. Please make it a point to drive by and see for yourself. Thanks, Tom for all your efforts.

SUTLER SHOP SEES DECLINE IN VISITORS

The number of visitors to the Fort and to the Shop was less than last year. Much of the blame falls on the reduced number of New Jersey visitors who could not be served conveniently by the *Delafort* since a major part of the pier on the Jersey side was destroyed during Hurricane Sandy. The realignment of the ferry route to Salem proved to discourage our friends from the other side of the river, directly affecting the number of visitors to the Shop and the sales income they provided. Until the pier is repaired efforts are underway to eliminate the Salem destination, and we look forward to the Jersey traffic to resume.

SPRING GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Our bi-annual General Membership meetings have been and continue to be an excellent way to become better informed about items of interest about the Fort and those who served there or who were imprisoned there. The meeting this past May was a good example. Mike Dixon, Historian for the Cecil County Historic Society, offered a fascinating program about the history of the C & D Canal and its relationship to the Fort making good use of our LCD projector for the visual part of his presentation.

PROJECTS AT THE FORT

Project, Planning & Development Supervisor Matt Chesser announced 3 projects at the Fort for 2014 that are of interest to everyone as follows: Repairs to the tram path, repairs to the roof of the Endicott section and general masonry repairs. We all look forward to these improvements.

SHOP VISITORS

Visitors to the Sutler Shop during the 2013 season represented 39 states and 15 foreign countries, emphasizing the importance of maintaining our presence on the island.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

The Officers and Directors of the Fort Delaware Society extend our sincerest best wishes to all of you and your families for a safe Happy Holiday Season and a prosperous New Year.

OUTREACH

Throughout the year members of the Board are represented in a variety of activities in the area in a concerted effort to generate an awareness of the Society and its mission. During 2013, they included: Community activities calendar at St. Marks H.S.; C.W. event at Neshaminy State Park (PA); Delaware Grays program at Marvel Museum in Georgetown; Memorial celebration at Finns Point National Cemetery (NJ); Memorial Day Service and celebration at Mt. Salem United Methodist Church in Rockford Park (Wilmington); Civil War activity in Penny-packer Park (PA); Newark Day; Manor College C,W. activity (PA); New Castle County Family Resource Fair at Kathleen H. Wilbur Elementary School; Separation Day event (New Castle); Peach Festival (Middletown); Delaware City Day; Ride to the River—Delaware City and New Castle; Community Day in Newark; Delaware County (PA) History Festival. Participation in these activities represents a significant contribution of time and effort on the part of our Directors, and it is deeply appreciated. Thanks everyone.

ADDED SECURITY

Thanks in part to some grant money, and to fulfill our commitment in the CAP program, we engaged Delcollo Security Technologies to design and install a Fire Warning System. As part of their contract, they will monitor the existing security system as well as the new fire alarm system and alert the proper authorities should trouble arise.

2014 ANNUAL MEETING

Be sure to mark your calendars for February 9, 2014, the date of our 64th Annual Meeting at the Christiana Hilton. Invitations will be mailed late December. Willis Phelps, a familiar face at the Fort in his role as blacksmith will be our Guest Speaker. and it promises to be a most enlightening program. Please join us.

DATA SYSTEMS PROTECTION

As your society grows in sophistication, paper records are becoming a thing of the past. Our Research Library has been digitized; membership records are in the computer, progress is being made to catalog our collections in digital format including photos of each item, and our large data base of Confederate POWs as well as members of the garrison was completed a few years ago and is updated regularly.

There is no question that this technology provides many benefits to our members and researchers. However, there is one drawback. Even in this age of technology, computers have been known to “crash” (fail), resulting in a major loss of the hours of hard work to develop it. Some months ago, we purchased two external hard drives which will enable us to download and preserve these resources of our collections and records. One of our newest Directors, Leroy Hathcock has effected the transfer of information to these external hard drives, which are being stored off premises as added protection. Thank you, Leroy!

Society Activities in 2013



Manor College Civil War Symposium



Victorian Kidsfest



"The Civil War Antique Show"



"The Civil War Antique Show"



Middletown Peach Festival



33 Staff Lane Freshly Painted

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

LIFE MEMBERS WHERE ARE THEY?

One of the strengths of our Society is the ability to communicate with our members—by US mail, by e-mail or by phone.

Unfortunately, there is a segment of our membership that presents an ongoing problem, and we need your help to resolve it.

If you know how to reach the following Lifetime Members or know if they are still living, please contact Martha Bennett in our office so that we can update our records.

See the next column for their names.

NO CURRENT ADDRESS FOR THE FOLLOWING:

Craig Lamond
Maurice Murray
William Paul
Kathryn Pippin
Carolyn Prickett
Sheldon Saints
Mrs. A.J. Stoner
Burton Teague
Christian Puglisi

Please remember to let us know if you move or your status has changed in any way. Thank you.

JAYNE McCORMICK

No organization likes to lose a valuable member, especially one who was so continually involved in the activities of the Society. We regret to inform you that Jayne McCormick passed away in her sleep December 2. She will always be remembered for her work as Library Chairman, the countless hours she and Edie Mahoney spent digitizing our library collection, her effort as contact person for Newark Day and Community Day and for generously paying the fees and purchasing a tent shelter for these events, helping to enter data in our extensive POW data base, and staffing the office two Saturdays a month.

Jayne will be sorely missed!