



FORT DELAWARE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

MAY

2013

63RD ANNUAL LUNCHEON

The Fort Delaware Society's 63rd Annual Luncheon was held on Sunday, February 3, 2013 at the Christiana Hilton. The 85 persons who attended were treated to a wonderful performance by the Libby Prison Minstrels as they entertained the audience with songs of the Civil War. The five musicians, in period dress, played a variety of stringed instruments and sang at the same time. Their toe tapping melodies delighted the audience who responded with enthusiastic applause.

There were an abundant number of excellent door prizes that were awarded by outgoing President Kay Keenan. Once again the Hotel provided a delicious meal.

This event is the highlight of the Society's year, and all who were there were very pleased. If you have never attended this annual affair, you should plan to participate next year. Watch for the announcement and invitations around December.

SUTLER SHOP 2013

In anticipation of another season, the inventory of items to be sold is in place on the island ready for our visitors. Please respond positively when Martha asks for your help in staffing the Shop. It is a great experience and most appreciated.

BOARD MEMBERS ELECTED

One of the important features at the Annual Luncheon is the election of Officers and Directors to serve in the coming year. Board Chairman Bill Robelen presented the following slate which was unanimously approved by those present.

OFFICERS

President: David P. Price
Vice President: Edith Mahoney
Secretary: Roberta Steele
Treasurer: Thomas Smith
Chairman: William Robelen

DIRECTORS

Dan Cashin
Leroy Hathcock
Sarah Kuntz
Brendan Mackie
Jayne McCormick
William McKay
Michael Pierson
Carolyn Raniszewski
R. Hugh Simmons
Albert Trecost, Jr.
Tracey Walters

DIRECTORS EMERITUS

Catherine Keenan
William Craven
Roger Reynolds
John Whitehead

Please give these persons your thanks and support as they carry out the responsibilities of their office. They voluntarily give much of their time throughout the year.

WHAT'S NEW FOR 2013?

There is a new atmosphere of excitement around our headquarters at 33 Staff Lane. Four new Directors were elected, and we expect them to bring new and fresh ideas. Those who attended the Annual Luncheon were given surveys to complete allowing them to express their preferences for activities in the coming year. As was expected, there was overwhelming support for the continuation of our Spring and Fall General Membership Meetings, and plans are already in place for the Fall meeting to be held on October 8th at Grass Dale Center. We will ask our members to bring any interesting artifacts from the Civil War period through WW II to be exhibited during the evening. The public will be invited to share in the program, and it is hoped that it will provide a means of attracting new members.

It has been seven years since our headquarters building was restored, and some portions of the exterior siding and trim are in need of painting. We hope to be able to do most of the work ourselves, thereby saving the tremendous cost of hiring an outside contractor. Stay tuned for more details concerning a "paint party".

The Board is also working to protect our collections to comply with the Collections Assessment Program (CAP) recommendations completed last year.

HIDDEN ASSETS

25% of our members live somewhere between here and the West Coast, so we almost never see them, and conversely, they never get to know us. And that's too bad, because the ladies and gentlemen of the Board work hard behind the scenes to move our Society forward. They do far more than just attend Board meetings. They spend time at home as well as traveling to represent the Society across the Delaware Valley. You need to get to know them better. Past President Kay Keenan started this practice last year, and it is a good idea worth continuing.

DAVID PRICE—*President*
David joined the Society in 2005 and was elected to the Board in 2006 going on to become a Life Member in 2007. He earned his BA/BS in Marketing from the Univ. of Del. and his MBA from Wilmington College. David was previously employed as a material coordinator at the GM Assembly plant in Wilmington and has traveled extensively attending Civil War events in seven East Coast states and has represented the Society in a variety of speaking engagements. He is currently President of the Central Delaware C.W. Roundtable, and previously served our Society as Chair of the Fundraising and Finance Committees.

WARNING—*Don't ask him a simple question about the Civil War unless you have a lot of time for a fascinating and detailed answer. He'll probably tell you much more than you really wanted to know, which is why he is frequently asked to be a guest speaker by local organizations.*

SPRING GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Mark your calendar for Tuesday, May 14 at 7 PM

This is one you don't want to miss! The Chesapeake & Delaware Canal is in the same category of significance as the Panama and Suez Canals. Find out why when Mike Dixon speaks about "The History of the C & D Canal" at our first Membership meeting of the year. Mike is in the perfect position to address the subject in his present role as Historian for the Cecil County Historic Society. To tie it in with our mission, he will discuss the Canal's relationship to the history of Fort Delaware.

A BUSY SEASON AT THE FORT AND FOR THE SOCIETY

Get out your calendars and note the following dates.

MAY

- 11 Confederate Memorial Day
Finns Point National Cemetery
- 15 New Castle County Resource Fair Kathleen Wilbur Elementary School—Red Lion

JUNE

- 1 Newark Day—Main Street
Noon—5 PM
- 8 Manor College Annual Civil War Symposium and Encampment
- 8 & 9 POW Weekend at Fort
- 9 Victorian KidsFest
- 26 Memorial Day service—Mt. Salem Methodist—Rockford Park Honoring C.W. veterans
(continued in next column)

AUGUST

17 & 18 Music Focus Weekend
at the Fort featuring the
Libby Prison Minstrels

SEPTEMBER

15 Newark Community Day-
Univ. of Del Green 11—5

OCTOBER

8 Society General Membership.
Displays of C.W. materials

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, 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 an external hard drive which will enable us to download and preserve this resource of our collections and records. One of our newest Directors, Leroy Hathcock will effect the transfer of information to this external hard drive, which can be stored off campus as added protection. Thank you, Leroy!

Society Activities in 2013



Outgoing & Incoming Presidents



President David P. Price



Libby Prison Minstrels



Setting Up Fort Delaware Museum Cases



Setting Up Society's Sutler Shop



Sutler Shop Set Up Volunteers

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

FUNDS NEEDED TO BOOST MARMOT GRANT

Last year in response to a request written by past president Kay Keenan, we received a \$7500 grant from the Marmot Foundation to protect our headquarters building by installing rain gutters and downspouts. That work is complete, and the next step was a fire alarm system (see col. 2).

Marmot Grant \$7500. Gutters, etc. \$4000 & Fire alarm \$5000.

Shortfall: \$1500

As someone so bluntly put it, "It doesn't do any good to brag about our house and its contents if we can't protect them." Whatever you can do to help this project will be sincerely appreciated.

FIRE ALARM SYSTEM- CONTRACT SIGNED

As an important step towards fulfilling our obligation to comply with recommendations of the Collections Assessment Program (CAP) completed last year, we signed a \$5000 contract with Delcollo Security Systems to install and monitor a fire alarm system in our headquarters. In a move to save money, Delcollo will also monitor our existing security system. This new system requires a second dedicated telephone line, which Verizon has already installed. Having this fire alarm system will demonstrate our efforts to protect and conserve our valuable library and collections when writing future grant requests.

DELAFORT NEW JERSEY SCHEDULE CHANGE

Due to damage to the pier at Fort Mott by hurricane Sandy, the *Delafort* will not be able to land there until repairs are made. In the meantime, the NJ ferry will dock at Barber's Basin, about four miles from Salem, NJ. Bicycles will be permitted on the boat during this time for those interested in visiting the historic town.

The first ferry from Delaware City, DE will now leave the dock at 10:45 AM.

For more information, call the Fort Delaware State Park office at 302-834-7941