

Herndon Historical Society News

March 2010

Wednesday, March 24, 7:30 p.m. at the Depot

Desperate Engagement: How a Little Known Civil War Battle Saved Washington, D.C.

The speaker for our March meeting will be Marc Leepson, who will discuss his book, *Desperate Engagement: How a Little Known Civil War Battle Saved Washington, D.C.* The book tells the story of the Battle of Monocacy, which took place on the blisteringly hot day of July 9, 1864, and is one of the Civil War's most significant, yet little known battles. What played out that day in the corn and wheat fields four miles south of Frederick, Md., was a full-field engagement between some 12,000 battle-hardened Confederate troops led by the controversial Jubal Anderson Early, and some 5,800 Union troops, many of them untested in battle, under the mercurial Lew Wallace, best known as the author of *Ben Hur*. When the fighting ended, some 1,300 Union troops were dead, wounded, missing, or taken prisoner and Early—who suffered some 800 casualties—had routed Wallace in the northernmost Confederate victory of the war.

Marc Leepson is a journalist, historian, and author who specializes in writing about American history, the Vietnam War, and Vietnam veterans. Among his other books are *Flag: An American Biography*, a history of the American flag from the beginnings until today, and *Saving Monticello: The Levy Family's Epic Quest to Rescue the House that Jefferson Built*.

He is the editor of *Webster's New World Dictionary of the Vietnam War* and a contributor to *The Dictionary of Virginia Biography*. A former staff writer for *Congressional Quarterly*, he has been arts editor and columnist for *The VVA Veteran*, the magazine published by the Vietnam Veterans of America, since March 1986. He also is an adjunct instructor in history at Lord Fairfax Community College in Warrenton, and he will be coming directly from his Wednesday night class to speak with us next week!

Wanted: Sponsors for Civil War Documentary

As we noted in our last newsletter, former Historical Society President Chuck Mauro is working on a new documentary, entitled "Mosby's Combat Operations in Fairfax County," and is looking for sponsors. While any and all contributions are welcome, individuals who donate \$50 or more, and organizations that donate \$200 or more will be acknowledged in the film credits.

Send contributions, 100% of which will be used to help defray the cost of producing the documentary, to Charles V. Mauro, 2508 Iron Forge Rd., Herndon, VA 20171.

New Book Added to the Society's Library

Several months ago the Society received a request from a woman named Elizabeth Haley, who was publishing a book of her mother's memories of Herndon as a surprise for her 80th birthday. She requested permission to use several of the Green Collection photos to illustrate the book.

We recently received a copy of the book, *The Mouse's Tail Is Gone*, which will be placed in our library case. Some of you may remember the author, Jeanne Robb Pritchard. Here are a few excerpts from her letter, which came with the book:

It was good to see the illustrations from the Historical Society, they bring back a lot of memories. I believe that you are situated in the old W&OD station; I have spent many an hour there waiting for the train to come tottering down the hill from points west...

My grandparents had a summer home in Herndon (on Monroe St.) in the early days of the 20th century, and in the mid-twenties they enlarged it to be their permanent home. My Aunt Emilie McDaniel later lived and raised her family there.

I would encourage you, when you have a spare half hour or so, to stop by and read it. (If you do so you will learn the story behind that unusual title!)

— Carol Bruce

Sad News

The Historical Society lost a great friend on March 9 with the passing of Charter Member Ruth Updike. She was 94.

Minutes of the Herndon Historical Society Meeting
Wednesday – 27 January 2010 • Herndon Depot, Herndon Virginia

Carol Bruce, President, called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. There were 12 persons in attendance including the guest speaker.

I. Approval of Minutes from the 18 November 2009 Meeting: Minutes approved unanimously on a motion made by Richard Downer with a second by Barbara Glakas.

II. Treasurer's Report: Richard Downer advised that a power outage throughout the town earlier in the day prevented him from completing the Treasurer's report in time for tonight's meeting. [Complete Treasurer's Report available upon request.]

III. Old Business: Carol Bruce advised that the Board election for 2010 was conducted in the same manner as last year—by mailed ballots. There was about 30% participation. Officers for 2010 remain the same (Carol Bruce, President; Virginia Clarity, Vice President; Richard Downer, Treasurer; Charlie Waddell, Secretary); Harlon Reece and Steve Sensabaugh and Margaret Cyrus are the other Board of members. Margaret's term has one year remaining; Harlon's and Steve's terms have two years remaining.

Carol Bruce advised that the Board had met recently to review the Museum report from the the Virginia Association of Museums [VAM]. The Board decided to adopt the recommendation of the VAM that the Society obtain additional storage for artifacts. Virginia Clarity advised that offsite storage would cost about \$528 a year. The Herndon Fortnightly Club currently leases storage at Abbot Mini-Storage and would share the storage and the cost with the Society at \$264 for 13 months. Carol Bruce advised that another storage option was at Security Public for \$88 per month for a 5 foot by 5 foot space. Richard Downer suggested that the Society identify and inventory what should be moved to a storage facility.

Richard Downer gave a report on the Annual Train Show that was held on the weekend of 12 and 13 December at ArtSpace. There were about 530 people attending on Saturday and about 230 on Sunday. He also advised that due to the extreme cold weather conditions, the Caboose was closed early.

Bill McCourt of the Sterling Amateur Radio Club advised that his club staffed the Caboose during the train show and that they had about 55-60 people tour the Caboose. According to Bill, while the Sterling Amateur Radio Club was not able to put up the big antenna, there were about 25-30 confirmations received by the amateur radio operators operating out of the Caboose during the train show. Richard mentioned that amateur radio operators will exchange amateur radio operator cards with their operator identification on them with other operators who they have established contact with. Bill men-

tioned that Sterling Amateur Radio Club had printed cards for this event bearing Herndon's Caboose on the card.

IV. New Business: Carol Bruce advised that Chuck Mauro has a new documentary in the works and was soliciting financial support. In exchange for financial support, Chuck would arrange a donor's name to appear on the film's trailer. The Society voted to appropriate \$200 to the project.

Announcements: There were none.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m., after which the members enjoyed a presentation by Gregg MacDonald on journalism during the American Civil war and a discussion on a book that he has written a chapter for, *Words at War, The Civil War and American Journalism*.

Herndon Historical Society

Post Office Box 99
Herndon, VA 20172
www.herndonhistoricalsociety.org

Officers

Carol Bruce, *President*
carolbrcom@aol.com
703-437-7289

Virginia Clarity, *Vice President*
Richard Downer, *Treasurer*
Charlie Waddell, *Secretary*

Board of Directors

Margaret Cyrus
Harlon Reece
Steve Sensabaugh

Herndon Historical Society
P.O. Box 99
Herndon, VA 20172