

## **2012 Annual Meeting Minutes**

Harpers Ferry Historical Association

September 16, 2012

Event tent, Lower Town Harpers Ferry

### **President's Introduction**

Board President Jim Sylvia welcomed members and guests, and offered thanks to park staff for their hard work in planning and hosting the 150<sup>th</sup> sesquicentennial event. Jim also introduced board members present at the meeting: Carol Gallant, Dave Gilbert, David Guiney, Jim Jenkins, Ann Long, George Rutherford, and Suzanne Sylvia.

### **Minutes from the 2011 Annual Meeting**

Secretary Dave Gilbert read the minutes from the 2011 Annual Meeting.

### **Executive Director's Report of Finances and Association Activities**

Association Executive Director Deborah Piscitelli thanked her staff and park staff for all their hard work devoted to the 150<sup>th</sup> sesquicentennial anniversary event. She noted that in 2011, book sales have improved, and park visitation has improved. The Association helped plan and fund two Civil War events, including the Battle of Bolivar Heights in May. Bad weather, however, adversely affected this event.

The Association continues to administer the David Larsen Memorial Fund, has worked closely with park staff on a living history program, helped fund teacher institutes and interns, and continues to work on a park guide service with the help of Park Superintendent Rebecca Harriet. The proposed program has finally cleared the NPS Solicitor, and the Association hopes to launch the guide service in Spring 2013.

The Association also attended two separate Civil War conference events to sell books and merchandise: one in Winchester, Virginia; and one in Hagerstown, Maryland.

### **Publications Activities**

Publications manager Cathy Baldu reported that the Association's 4<sup>th</sup> book to ship this year, "Garnet W. Jex's the Upper Potomac in the Civil War", is due to arrive shortly. She thanks several partners who helped make this book possible. Tom Hahn's "Towpath Guide", last published in 1999, is the Association's next big project. Cathy has recruited a cadre of "level walkers" to help bring this book's content up to date.

2011 publications produced by the Association include an update of a Civil War Magazine devoted to the 1862 Battle of Harpers Ferry; "Harpers Ferry Anthology: Civil War-era Stories by Park Rangers and Volunteers", a compilation of stories written by park rangers and dedicated to David Larsen; and "Harpers Ferry Under Fire: A Border Town In the Civil War", by Dennis Frye. Cathy recounted her extensive efforts to locate photos and artwork for this book.

Cathy reported that 2011 was a good year for membership. She recognized "Master Armorer" members, "Paymasters" members, and an "Armory Superintendent" member who wishes to

remain anonymous. She also recognized donations, including Dr. Drew Gilpin Faust, who donated her speaker's honorarium to the Association.

Debbie then took a moment to congratulate Cathy on a very productive and successful year.

### **Election of Board Members**

Dave submitted the nominations of Jim Sylvia and George Rutherford for re-election to the board. The motion was seconded and both nominees were re-elected by acclamation.

### **Report from the Park**

Chief of Interpretation Dennis Frye congratulated and thanked Debbie and her staff for their hard work in supporting park programs throughout the year. He pointed out that once again the park will face more challenges in the coming year, and will be more dependent on the Association than ever. Dennis then recounted the historic events of September 1862, culminating in the capture of Harpers Ferry, the fate of Negro contrabands, and the Confederate march to Sharpsburg.

Jim Sylvia concluded the meeting by thanking Dennis, reiterating the challenges both the park and Association will face in the coming year. Superintendent Rebecca Harriet also thanked the Association for their service.

*Submitted by David T. Gilbert, 9/16/2012*