

Herndon Historical Society News

September 2010

Wednesday, September 22, 7:30 p.m. at the Depot

The Making of a Historical Documentary

“Mosby’s Combat Operations in Fairfax County” is a new documentary currently in production that focuses on 42 locations where Confederate Colonel John S. Mosby conducted fights or raids in Fairfax County. Local historians Chuck Mauro and Don Hakenson are co-producing the film. Chuck, as most members know, is a former president of the Historical Society and a frequent presenter at Society meetings. Don is the past president of the Stuart-Mosby Historical Society.

Chuck will talk about the planning, design, and techniques used in putting a documentary together. Although not quite finished, he will show the film’s trailer and possibly some individual scenes that have been completed. Don will provide insight into the process of working through the myriad of details involved in creating the film.

About Chuck Mauro

Chuck is the author and photographer of *A Southern Spy in Northern Virginia: The Civil War Album of Laura Ratcliffe*, *The Civil War in Fairfax County: Civilians and Soldiers*, *Herndon: A Town and Its History*, and *Herndon: A History in Images*. He received the Nan Netherton Heritage Award for his historical research, writing, and photography of “The Battle of Chantilly (Ox Hill), A Monumental Storm.”

About Don Hakenson

Don has spent countless years researching obscure Civil War incidents and sites in Fairfax County, especially those relating to John S. Mosby and his rangers. He is a founder and a member of the board of directors of the Franconia Museum and is a Civil War adviser for the Mosby Foundation in Warrenton, Virginia, and for the Friends of Laura Ratcliffe here in Herndon. He was the recipient of the 2001 Nan Netherton Award for his manuscript, “This Forgotten Land.”

News About November

We’re planning something different for our November meeting, which will be held in conjunction with an exhibit of military art at ArtSpace Herndon.

The artist, Keith Rocco, is one of the most important historical artists working today. His paintings have been displayed in special exhibits across the country, including the 1992 Birth of a Nation exhibition in Washington, D.C., and a one-man show entitled “On Campaign” at Gettysburg National Park in 1994. Visit his website at www.keithrocco.com.

The details—including the date and time, which may vary from our usual schedule—are not yet final. We’ll plan to mail the November newsletter early so you can be sure to reserve the date.

About ArtSpace Herndon

ArtSpace Herndon, which just celebrated its second birthday, is located at 750 Center Street. ArtSpace is a project of the Herndon Foundation for the Cultural Arts.

The Foundation’s mission is to promote and support the creation of a full-scale arts center in downtown Herndon. Its goal is to bring together both the visual arts and performing arts. ArtSpace Herndon is the first step in fulfilling that dream of a full-scale arts center.

Thank you to Richard Downer and Les Zidel of the Foundation Board for arranging this event.

Website Update

Although the pace has slowed now that the summer break has ended, Board Member Steve Sensabaugh and our Webster, Thomas Jefferson High School student Philip Meyers, continue to work on the new and improved Historical Society website. Our thanks go to Steve and Philip for taking this project on, and to Barbara Glakas for researching and developing the section that highlights Society accomplishments.

If you haven't visited yet, go to www.herndonhistoricalsociety.org and take a look. And, if you have ideas for things you would like to see included there, let us know!

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

Sunday, September 26 at Frying Pan Meeting House

Voices of the Past

Song will ring out once again at Frying Pan Meeting House on Sunday, September 26 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. in a celebration of the rich history and diverse culture of this National Register Property. Built in 1791, the simple white frame building housed an integrated congregation and sheltered Civil War soldiers as it witnessed 200 years of community growth and change.

Come hear the stories and the music, tour the grounds, and enjoy light refreshments in the churchyard, just as the original parishioners did during their day-long meetings.

The cost for the event is \$15, and all proceeds will benefit restoration of the small cemetery that adjoins the Meetinghouse. Space is limited and prepaid reservations are required. For more information or to make a reservation call Frying Pan Farm Park at 703-437-9101.

The Meetinghouse is located at 2615 Centreville Road, Herndon.

HerndonPatch to Feature Local History

Herndon's new electronic newspaper, HerndonPatch, is set to debut on September 16. According to the website (<http://herndon.patch.com>), the mission of HerndonPatch is "to make people's lives better by providing quick and easy access to the local news and information that is most relevant to them."

We think that one of the most exciting features of HerndonPatch will be the weekly local history column, which the Historical Society has been asked to help develop. We'll be contributing regular stories about some of the many interesting people, events, and places that have played a role in Herndon's past.

If you have ideas for topics, please let us know. Contact Carol Bruce at carolbrcom@aol.com.

Thinking Ahead to January

The Society's annual election is just a little more than four months away. This year, all four officer (president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer) positions will be open. All terms are for one year, except for the treasurer, who serves for three years. One slot on the Board of Directors also will be open. Please start thinking now about nominations—including yourself!

One Viewer's Take on the Norman Rockwell Exhibit

By Chuck Mauro

Want to meet an American icon? Want to learn how one works? Well, we can't actually meet Norman Rockwell, who passed away in 1978, but we can see his paintings and learn how he created them. We can get tantalizingly close to the actual brush strokes he left behind, what he created with his own hands. And that's quite exciting in itself. Throw Hollywood legends George Lucas and Steven Spielberg into the mix, and this is quite an enjoyable exhibit. It is both educational to learn how Rockwell created his paintings and just breathtaking to see some of the works of art that so many of us were familiar with as we grew up. A lot of memories from the genius of one man!

The first picture I noticed when I walked into the exhibit was entitled "Good Boy (Little Orphan at the Train)." I noticed it because of its size, 3' x 5', and because of the strong colors. It stands out in the room. It tells the story of a young orphan boy meeting his adoptive mother for the first time at a train stop. Looking more closely, the faces of everyone else on the train also play a part in the unfolding drama.

What becomes very apparent is why this exhibit is entitled *Telling Stories*. It is Rockwell's genius of having every person and prop play a part. "Telling a story in one frame" is how George Lucas describes Rockwell's ability. The exhibit features a 12-minute video narrated by Spielberg and Lucas, who describe why they collected the 57 Rockwell paintings shown in this exhibit and how his works speak to them.

It is interesting that both see Rockwell's paintings as cast with people and props, just as in the movies they direct and produce. Spielberg grew up marveling at the covers of the *Saturday Evening Post* that his father brought home. Lucas says they were his introduction to art.

The exhibit also shows us how Rockwell selected and posed his models and photographed them so they wouldn't have to wait while he painted. He could use hundreds of pictures for one painting.

It also includes both the pencil drawing and the finished color painting of one of his covers, "Happy Birthday Miss Jones." It is a fascinating insight into the process he used.

As to the subject matter, a review by Blake Gopnik in the July 4 *Washington Post* in part criticizes Rockwell as being "docile" and selling "what middle-class white Americans most wanted to feel about themselves."

Even Spielberg admits that Rockwell painted "what America aspired to, the American ideal.

"I was surprised to see Rockwell's one and only nude—not that nude mind you—and his touches on poverty and the poor. So, there is a little grittiness to go along with his

vision of the American dream.

I walked through the entire exhibit before I watched the video of Spielberg and Lucas. (There is a two-minute break between each showing, so there's no need to hurry.) Then I walked through the exhibit again. I found that some paintings brought a smile to my face, some made me laugh, and a few touched my heart. I have gained a renewed appreciation of something from my memory and come to a current understanding of Norman Rockwell's timeless genius.

The Rockwell exhibit runs through January 2, 2011, at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American Art, located at 8th and F Streets, NW. For Museum information (recorded), call (202) 633-7970. For general information, call (202) 633-1000 or go to <http://www.americanart.si.edu>. The hours are 11:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. daily, and admission is free.



Little Orphan, by Norman Rockwell

Minutes of the Herndon Historical Society
Wednesday – 26 May 2010
Herndon Depot, Herndon Virginia

Carol Bruce, President, called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m. There were 12 persons in attendance including the guest speaker.

I. Approval of Minutes from the 24 March 2010

Meeting: Minutes approved unanimously on a motion made by Margaret Cyrus with a second by Thelma Hubert.

II. Treasurer's Report: Due to a schedule conflict, Treasurer Richard Downer was not present at this meeting; President Carol Bruce presented the Treasurer's report. As of this date, Total Assets are \$9,972.82. This includes \$4,313.11 in the Society's checking/savings account, \$5,629.71 in the Northern Virginia Community Foundation-HHS fund, and \$30 in petty cash. Other assets include \$25 in the gas house fund and \$3,304.53 in funds from the former Homes Tour Committee, which are reserved for the purchase of plaques for structures added to the Historic Registry. Income totaling \$425 was reported; \$110 from donations, \$315 from membership dues [Complete Treasurer's Report available upon request.]

III. Old Business: Carol Bruce provided a follow up to the Virginia Association of Museums report on the artifacts at the Depot, which included some security concerns and some storage concerns. Carol noted that she and Virginia Clarity had done some housecleaning and had accomplished much with the closet.

Steve Sensabaugh addressed the suggestion of additions to the Historical Society's existing website. He suggested that a walking tour of the town's plaqued houses be compiled and that this walking tour be detailed on the Society's website. He also suggested that the newsletter be added to the website as well as a link to archived copies of past newsletters. Steve asked for other ideas of information that should be linked to the website.

Charlie Waddell suggested that photos of Herndon, past and present be included on the website. He suggested that photos from the Berkley-Green collection be paired with current photos and displayed together on the website.

Carol Bruce advised that she had solicited help from Philip Meyers, a Thomas Jefferson student volunteer, to help Steve with this undertaking.

IV. New Business: There was no new business.

Announcements: Carol Bruce noted that the July meeting would consist of the Society's annual picnic. The location would be at Ben and Margaret Peck's home on 28 July at 7:00. She advised attendees that it would be pot luck and to bring a dish to share.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m., after which the members enjoyed an entertaining presentation by Chuck Mauro, "Herndon in the Comics," based on his book *Herndon – A Town and Its History* and how it influenced two editions of "Flashback" in the *Washington Post's* Sunday comic section.