

# ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMISSION

## ANNUAL REPORT

for

**FISCAL YEAR 2012: JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012**

### I SUMMARY

The Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC) had another active year pursuing its three-fold mission of preservation, education, and advocacy for Alexandria's archaeological and historical resources as they arose regarding issues involving City of Alexandria Strategic Plan. In particular, the AAC focused on the continuing Waterfront Plan issues including supporting the change to commission status for the Waterfront Committee and continued AAC representation with the Freemans Cemetery Memorial, and the Fort Ward Park archaeology project. This year was particularly important as 2011 marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of archaeology in Alexandria. The AAC was founded in 1975 and celebrated its 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary in February 2012.

Led by Chair Vincent LaPointe, the Commission worked to update its Strategic Plan. **As its guiding principles AAC used the City of Alexandria Strategic Plan with emphasis on Goal 7: Alexandria is a caring and inclusive community that values its rich diversity, history and culture, and promotes affordability.** The members agreed to retain the four goals approved in FY11 involving (1) People – Alexandria Archaeology staffing, volunteers, and the history community; (2) Archaeology Museum/ Lab/ Education Center/ Storage; (3) Resource Management – funding; and (4) Archaeology, History, and Preservation. Archaeology Staff were invited to provide input into the formation of objectives under each main goal. This updated plan will look to the future of Archaeology in Alexandria.

The AAC continued its tradition of learning about different historic places and issues this year. In addition to the Alexandria Archeology Museum the Commission met at different sites throughout the City, including Gadsby's Tavern, Lloyd House and the Black History Museum.

## **II AAC Activities Conducted/Participated in FY2012**

The Archaeological Commission pursued a variety of activities during FY2011. These activities are set forth below and are organized within headings taken from the AAC's Strategic Plan. The AAC met 12 times during the fiscal year and the Ben Brenman Award Committee met four times this fiscal year.

### **GOAL I PEOPLE**

**AAC Membership:** In November a motion was approved to ask City Council to appoint James McCall as the AAC representative to the Waterfront Committee. In April Pete Peterson resigned from AAC after 20 years of service to pursue other interests. His resignation was accepted with regret and thanks for his service and expertise over the years. Also in April a motion was approved to ask City Council to reappoint Kathleen Pepper to serve as the AAC representative to HARC.

**Ben Brenman Awards:** The AAC selected three recipients for the 2011 Awards, which were presented by City Council in October 2011. The recipients were: The Fort Ward History Group for Outstanding Community Research; Martha Williams as Outstanding Professional Archaeologist; and LandDesign for Outstanding Archaeology-Inspired Design Project for South Carlyle Square.

**Acknowledgements:** The AAC expressed its thanks to outgoing Chair Kathleen Pepper who presided over the group for eight years. And has graciously and effectively represented the needs and roles of archaeology in the community through many reports and letters as well as attending countless task force, public hearings, and City Council meetings. Additionally Kathleen presented as well received lecture to the Society of Historical Archaeologist Conference in Baltimore on January 6, 2012. The AAC also gratefully acknowledged the importance of Janice Magnuson's role as secretary for four years. Regrettably Lillie Finklea's has not been able to attend meetings for several months due health reasons. The AAC recognizes Lillie's vision and spirit in the preservation of Freedmen's Cemetery and the creation of the memorial as well as five years service on AAC.

### **GOAL II MUSEUM, LAB, EDUCATION CENTER, STORAGE**

**Staff Presentations:** As part of its strategic planning process AAC invited staff members to present discussions concerning the Archaeological Code and Community Archaeology at its Feb and March Meetings. Presentations were given by Paul Nasca, Garret Fessler, Fran Bromberg, and Ruth Reeder. Discussions revolved around the impact of Archeology on the city, the draw for visitors, growth of the program, and educational potential. Future needs of Archaeology were discussed to include staffing and improvements to the museum, office, and lab facilities. There was also a discussion of the effect of development on Archaeology and preservation within the city.

**Museum Accreditation:** In June AAC members participated in small group receptions with members of the Museum Accreditation Committee in support of efforts to achieve national accreditation for the Office of Historic Alexandria Museums to include the Alexandria Archeological Museum. AAC has supported this effort over the past several months.

**Torpedo Factory Art Center and Archaeology Museum:** Mary Jane Nugent continued as the non-voting AAC representative to the Torpedo Factory Art Center Board. Mary Jane's presence at the meetings and valued work in supervising the elections of the Board support coordination and collaboration between the Torpedo Factory and the Archaeology Museum. Planned upgrades to the Museum will assist in attracting more visitors to the third floor and can be integrated with other planning efforts such as signage.

### **GOAL III RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

**Budget Advocacy:** Kathleen Pepper spoke at an Oct public hearing advocating for an increase in the Alexandria Archaeology budget especially concerning: Museum Staffing for Sunday, Updating Museum exhibits, and funding for a professional study for a new museum.

**Fundraising Volunteer:** In December community member Bob Stevenson (Retired professional fundraiser) offered his services to AAC and FOAA to advise both groups on further fundraising efforts. His offer was accepted and he gave a presentation to AAC on fundraising at the January meeting. Discussions have been ongoing concerning future fundraising.

**Gladwin Record Fundraiser:** In October 2011 AAC along with FOAA hosted a fundraiser at Principle Gallery to sponsor the restoration of the Gladwin Record (Book of records of burials at Freedmen's Cemetery). More than 100 people attended and over \$5000 was raised. This was enough to fund the restoration with the remainder designated to the Memorial Dedication and other memorial programming.

**Friends of Alexandria Archaeology:** The AAC held its annual joint meeting with the Friends of Alexandria Archaeology (FOAA) in April. This was structured as a truly joint meeting and discussions surrounded common goals, collaboration between the groups, and the possibility combining efforts for future fundraising for Alexandria Archaeology.

### **GOAL IV ARCHAEOLOGY, HISTORY, AND PRESERVATION**

**City Council Work Session:** In October Kathleen Pepper presented to Council on behalf of AAC a program on 50 years of Archaeology in Alexandria. With other members of AAC, she discussed with City Council the role of archaeology in Alexandria as a community resource and future goals. Boxes of artifacts associated with different themes were distributed to members of Council so they could closely visualize significant finds related to Native Americans, Enslaved African Americans, The Civil War, Sugar Refining, and Alexandria Stoneware, Alexandria Brewing, and health and beauty.

**Dan Roberts Award:** In January several AAC members, along with staff and Councilwoman Hugh's attended the Society of American Archeologist awards banquet in Baltimore to accept the Dan Roberts Award for excellence in Public Archaeology for the City of Alexandria for 50 years of community Archaeology.

**Alexandria Waterfront Plan:** AAC continued to participate in the public debate regarding the proposed waterfront plan and advocate for the implementation of the History Plan authored by members of AAC and adopted as an appendix to the Waterfront Plan. James McCall actively attended meetings to keep AAC informed of the public dialogue. He also provided numerous written and oral statements to City Council on behalf of AAC regarding the need to preserve and interpret history. James was also endorsed by AAC as its member on the Waterfront Committee, now the Waterfront Commission.

**Freedmen's Cemetery:** The AAC continued to keep abreast of the issues regarding the Contrabands and Freedmen's Cemetery Memorial. Kathleen Pepper and Lillie Finklea represent AAC on the Contrabands and Freedmen's Cemetery and Memorial Park Design Steering Committee as well as the selection committee for the sculpture at the memorial. In November AAC asked Chair Vince LaPointe to write a letter supporting the name of the memorial as *Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial*. The May 2012 AAC meeting was the site of a public hearing on the nomination of the cemetery to the National Register of Historic Places held by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. The purpose of this hearing was to obtain public comment on the application, which had been prepared by Alexandria Archaeology and OHA staff. Several AAC members spoke in support of this action.

**Fort Ward:** Commission member Tom Fulton was appointed to the Fort Ward Park and Museum Advisory Group and was elected as the Chair of that group. Janet Magnuson was appointed by City Council to represent AAC on that group. The AAC kept informed of the planning process at Fort Ward through reports by these members, including the archaeological findings of the Stage 2 Archaeology Project conducted by Alexandria Archaeology staff. The formation of a management plan to guide the future of the park and museum was discussed along with solutions to the formulation of the plan.

### **III GOALS FOR FY2013**

#### **I. People**

##### **Objectives**

1. Advocate hiring of City Historian
2. Pursue better collaboration between history related groups and commissions.

#### **II. Museum, Lab, Education Center, Storage**

##### **Objectives:**

1. Catalog needs and wants of Alexandria Archaeology
2. Advocate for study of Alexandria Archeological Museum

3. Define parameters (what the study needs to do) for the study. Write RFP
4. Identify “peers” or other cities to use as role models for history museums, which could be included in/used for the study

### III. Resource Management

#### Objectives:

1. Identify specific needs for funding and short term vs. long term.
2. Identify alternate sources of funding
3. Coordinate with FOAA for Fundraising efforts.

### IV. Archaeology, History, and Preservation

#### Objectives:

1. Work with staff to identify areas of archeological significance and requiring preservation.
2. Explore expansion of Archeological Museum.
3. Advocate continued enforcement of the Archaeology Code.
4. Educate public on Archeology.

## **IV. RECRUITMENT, LEADERSHIP SELECTION, AND SUCCESSION**

The Archaeological Commission recruits members by referral and the recommendation of sitting members, by advertisement on the City’s website, and/or by other City organizations they will represent. In addition, the Archaeological Commission seeks an active presence throughout the City, holding its scheduled meetings at widespread locations to allow the public to learn more of its activities and opportunities. Both Commissioners and staff attend historically-related events, presentations, tours, etc., at which they may promote AAC and also service on the Commission. Nominees are encouraged to attend Commission meetings prior to formal application to City Council to help inform them of current issues, and the activities and makeup of the Commission. The AAC’s brochure is distributed and appears on the OHA/Alexandria Archaeology website.

The Archaeological Commission chooses its officers by simple majority vote from among nominees proposed at the October AAC meeting: Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. A slate of officers is presented for this vote by the Slate Committee in September. Any additional names may be included from the members before the October vote. Individual members may not nominate themselves. Terms are not staggered. The leadership serves a one-year term, and an unexpected vacancy is filled for the remainder of the term. Leaders may serve again at the discretion of the Commission, but must be re-nominated in competition with other nominees and chosen again by simple majority.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair acts in its stead at AAC meetings and representing AAC at other meetings. Individual Commissioners also act in a leadership capacity, heading subcommittees or representing AAC at Council, or at the meetings of other City commissions and organizations. Service on these committees helps prepare Commissioners as future officers of the AAC.

## **VI. STRUCTURE OF THE ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMISSION**

The Alexandria Archaeological Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the Mayor and City Council on matters relating to the City's archaeological resources and related issues within the City. Included among the AAC's responsibilities are the establishment of goals and priorities which contribute to the history and heritage of colonial, federal and historic Alexandria; propose local ordinances and state statutes to the City Council and the City Manager which promote the goals and aims embodied in Ordinance No. 3733; plan, develop and recommend short-, mid-, and long-term archaeological plans and programs for the City; encourage the integration of archaeological and historical information and site preservation into master plans and development efforts; study and make recommendations to City Council with respect to additional activities involving the City's archaeological program and artifacts; promote the use of the highest professional standards by Alexandria Archaeology staff; and enhance the visibility of the City of Alexandria as a leader in archaeology throughout Virginia, the United States, and the world.

AAC meetings are held at least 10 times per year, on the third Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum and, several times a year, at other sites of interest to the Commission. The fourteen (14) members of AAC include five (5) members at large, three (3) citizen members representing each of the City's three planning districts, and six (6) members representing various City organizations.

Elections are held in October of each year. The Commission officers consist of a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Due to changes in membership and elections, person serving on the Commission may be listed in more than one representative or leadership capacity.

The following people served on the Commission during Fiscal Year 2012:

### **MEMBERS AT LARGE:**

Ann Davin  
Lillie Finklea  
James McCall, Vice Chair  
Peter Petersen  
Edward (Ted) Pulliam

### **PLANNING DISTRICT MEMBERS:**

Planning District I: Vincent C. LaPointe, Chair as of Oct 2011  
Planning District II: Donald Kent, Jr.  
Planning District III: Janice Magnuson, Secretary until Oct 2011

## **ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVES:**

Alexandria Association: Tom Fulton

Alexandria Historical Society: Georgia (Katy) Cannady

Alexandria Society for the Preservation of Black Heritage: S. Kathleen Pepper, Chair  
prior to Oct. 2011

Chamber of Commerce: Ellen Hamilton, Secretary as of Oct 2011

Friends of Alexandria Archaeology: Mary Jane Nugent

Historic Alexandria Foundation: Seth Tinkam