Heritage Gazette

sociation for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery • Summer 2008

Road Work Begins!

t's been a long and sometimes frustrating road but we have at last arrived at groundbreaking for the reconstruction of the roads at Congres-

sional Cemetery! Engineers at the firm of Greenhorne & O`Mara completed Phase I drawings and specifications last winter and conducted a request



for proposals in the spring. The paving firm of Imperial Stone Paving was awarded the contract. Construction began on July 25th.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on July 28th with Congressman Jerry Lewis, who shepherded a Congressional appropriation

Continued on page 10

Macombs Rest in Peace

n July 17, 2008, Major General Alexander Macomb was once again carried from the Public Vault at Congressional Cemetery to his burial tomb, 147 years after his first interment.

Representatives from the U. S. Army, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the National Park Service, and the Smithsonian Institution Anthropology Department joined several descendants of the Macombs in a commemorative ceremony held in honor of Alexander and his wife Catherine.

Hartley Hobson Wensing, a great, great, great granddaughter

of the Macombs, delivered a moving eulogy in a short service in the chapel, reminding attendees that family does matter, and that knowing not only where we come from but who we come from, enriches our lives immeasurably.

At the service, Major General William Grisoli, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, offered a brief biography of General Macomb and his exemplary service to the Nation. Association Chair Patrick Crowley noted the tremendous contribution made

Continued on page 8

Ketter from the Chair

Congressional Cemetery's archives are replete with understated footnotes to the American story. While the family Bible often contained the first written entry in an individual's life story, the burial ground daily log was often the last. India ink scribed into oversized volumes record the end of so many journeys.

As I have watched and assisted genealogists, historians, and descendants explore the past through our records, I have enjoyed sharing their journey of discovery. I have listened to more anecdotes and followed more family trees that I can count. And believe it or not, it stays interesting: the great uncle who enlisted with the Pennsylvania Third; the great grandmother who served in the Blagden home as a slave; the sailor four generations back who sailed on the Great Lakes in the War of 1812 - so many stories, so many pieces of America.

On those rare occasions when we must open the original books to decipher a faded entry, I am often struck by the immediate spiritual connection with the past created by the mere presence of the oversized ancient tomes with sometimes tattered covers. Over and over I have watched visitors struggle with the irresistible urge to touch the paper and run their hand down the page over the disappearing ink entries. Researching original source documents is an emotional enterprise that rewards its practitioners in a manner unlike any other endeavor.

But note, please, my choice of words. Faded entries, disappearing ink, tattered covers. While no longer open to the general public, these old books were in daily use for about 175 years and are suffering the ravages of time. One of our goals as we enter our third century is to begin raising funds to preserve these books. Scanning, transcribing, and, hopefully, replicating them so that more visitors can experience the joy of discovery – without harming the originals.

It's what we're about at Congressional Cemetery: Community Leadership Discovery.



ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC CONGRESSIONAL CEMETERY Community • Leadership • Discovery

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HERITAGE GAZETTE: SUMMER 2008

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THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC CONGRESSIONAL CEMETERY

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Congressional Cemetery is a 501(c)3 organization. All donations are tax deductible.

Guided Tour Schedule

Guided tours every Saturday at 11:00 AM. Gather at the Gatehouse at 18th & E Streets Southeast. Metro accessible by Potomac Avenue Station. Tours are free & open to the public.

Special Civil War tours Check our web site for dates. Free & open to the public.

From the Executive Director

I am certainly pleased to be a part of the Historic Congressional Cemetery family and honored to be your first Executive Director. I was introduced to the property one hot July morning in 1985, when my husband, Paul, and I arrived with lawnmower. clippers and Japanese Farmer's knife. As soon as I saw the grass up to my knees, I knew the day would not be an exercise in "fine gardening." Today I keep a farmer's knife at the back door of the Gatehouse, because now there is "fine gardening" thanks to the many volunteers and Cemetery Members.

I am arriving at a wonderful time — planning is being completed for the roads, which are in terrible disrepair, and the work has begun. My first charge is to complete the projects that have been in the planning stages. The garage doors are up, the Gatehouse roof and electrical system have been repaired, and our

commitment to build steps at the Gerry monument is fulfilled.

The contracts for repair and painting of the chapel windows are signed. The style has been chosen for the new drinking fountains for both our "walkers" and the "walked," and when the roads are finished early next year and the danger of a cement truck backing into them has passed, the fountains will be installed.

In case you have some extra time, we have a whole list of projects that need volunteers ranging from work which must be done in the Gatehouse dealing with our historical documents, to transcribing which can be done at any computer, to research at the National Archives. And if you don't have time to volunteer, we would always appreciate your tax deductible contribution.

Cindy Hays

INTRODUCING OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

After the Executive Director Search Committee reviewed a number of applications and conducted rounds of interviews, they recommended Cindy Hays for the position, based on her experience managing complex organizations and strong ability to connect with potential funders and affiliated organizations. Cindy has lived on Capitol Hill for 25 years and is married to long-time Hill resident Paul Hays.

Her role is to communicate our mission, provide development initiatives, improve all administrative functions, promote staff and volunteer teamwork, supervise overall budget and financial management to ensure the preservation and interpretation of the grounds, markers, monuments, related buildings and amenities.

Transitions on the Board

New faces appeared at the March 2008 meeting of the Board of Directors of The Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery.

We welcomed John Gillespie, dropping the 'temporary' status from his temporary treasurer position. John is a principal at the firm Beyond the Bottom Line, which provides accounting and financial support for non-profit organizations. John takes up the reigns from our former treasurer Frank Devlin, who passed away last year.

Rhonda Sincavage will step in for Tabitha Almquist to represent the National Trust for Historic Preservation, a board position that accompanies the cooperative agreement we have with the NTHP. Tabitha's many New Orleans preservation tasks draw her out of town for much of the year. Rhonda has a background in environmental planning and historic preservation.

Patti Martin is an active volunteer and volunteer coordinator among our dog walking community. She organized the membership verification process last year, coordinating over 60 individuals in a continuing program. Patti is also manager of membership retention at the American Chemical Society and has a great background in successful marketing programs.

Uwe Brandes is Managing Director of Sustainability and the Built Environment at the Urban

Continued on page 9

Ground the Galehouse

CELEBRATING

INDEPENDENCE

July 4th always starts with a tribute to our Signer of the Declaration of Independence, Elbridge Gerry, by the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), joined by a dozen or more patriotic lineage groups. A truer patriot would be hard to find: Committees of Correspondence, Continental Congress, Signer of the Declaration as well as the Articles of Confederation, Delegate to the Continental Congress, Diplomat, Governor of Massachusetts, and Vice President to James Madison.

A big thanks to all who marched with the Dozen Decent Docents and the K9 Corps in the Barracks Row Fourth of July Parade. We had participation from both groups and a sizeable presence in the community parade. Board Member Patti Martin and volunteer Andrew Lightman organized the dog walkers' participation while



Board Member Joyce Palmer gathered up the Docents for the six block parade. Our new banners were used and there was an enthusiastic public reception of us which seemed to support our efforts at the Cemetery. Rev. Judith Davis was our advance unit on her scooter which set up the proper tone for us. Thanks Judith!!!

STEPPING UP

The Sons of the American Revolution, inspired by its president Paul Hays, sponsored a refurbishment of the area around Elbridge Gerry with new sandstone steps and a new layer of sod to even out the grounds. The steps were carved from the old foundation cenotaph of John Quincy Adams, which was replaced with new stone.

You Dawg!

Members of the Congressional Cemetery K9 corps and friends joined the World Adult Kickball Association (WAKA) with a team appropriately named "Cemetery Dawgs." The Dawgs play every Thursday either at 6:30 or 7:30pm at the fields located on Constitution Avenue NW between 20th and 21st St NW (near the Vietnam Memorial). The team's record is 3 wins/4 losses with 3 more games left in the season which ends August 2008. Come support the team and cheer them on! The games are dog-friendly! Our organizer: Diane Johnson!



THE DOORS

We have our garage carriage doors installed! Ed Woods hand crafted new hinges and Andy & Anthony Hammond painted and prepared the doors. The doors were sponsored by the Fatz Foundation of Glenview, Ill. and our own Association member Kent Hickman. We now have a much more appealing front drive.

MADAME SECRETARY

The Cell Phone tours had another huge addition this summer. Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright made three recordings for our cell phone tour program, which discussed the histories of the former Secretarys of State buried in the Cemetery. We are most appreciative. Our efforts this month will be to find appropriate outdoor signage for our sites with phone tours.

Music Picks up the Beat

John Philip Sousa has to be smiling up in Heaven when he looks down at his grave marker and sees another high school band on a pilgrimage to honor the great march king. Under the guidance of board member Joyce Palmer, Congressional Cemetery is becoming a necessary stop on the itinerary of high school and community bands from across the Nation. Whether it's a marching band or concert band, they all do a little Sousa and owe a debt to the man who makes the crowds start tapping their feet and marching with their shoulders.

The tradition of playing a tribute to Sousa at his graveside started some forty years ago when the U. S. Marine Corps Band, in full dress uniform, marched in to honor one of their own. For many years they had the honor all to themselves. But



in the last two years, visiting bands have begun making the extra stop at Congressional Cemetery to the delight of visitors who happen to be on site when the bands arrive. Joyce ensures that one of the Dozen Decent Docents is on hand to offer guided tours if the band so desires.

The first visiting band was the Westside High School Band from Jonesboro, Arkansas, on March 16, 2008. However, the first of the 2008 mini-concerts was held on March 26 by the 80-piece Waunakee Community Band, returning to Congressional from Wisconsin. On April 4th, the Chaparral Middle School from Diamond Bar, California laid a wreath at the Sousa bench and on April 6th, we welcomed the West Johnson Choral Ensemble for a wreath laying.

House Passes Resolution Honoring Congressional

Board member Clyde Henderson reported in March the Unit-

H. Res. 698

In the House of Representatives, U. S.,

ed States House of Representatives approved by voice vote a resolution commemorating the 200th anniversary of Congressional Cemetery. Congressmen James

Walsh (R-NY) and Sam Farr (D-CA) introduced the resolu-

tion. Both congressmen were recipients of our Annual Sousa

Award in years past.
During debate on
the resolution,
House Natural
Resources Chairman Nick Rahall
(D-WV) shepherded the measure on
the floor. Delegate

Madeleine Bordallo (D-GU), House Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Jerry
Lewis (R-CA), Congressmen
Thomas Petri (R-WI), Chris Van
Hollen (D-MD), Congresswomen Hilda Solis (D-CA) and
Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC)
cosponsored the resolution. Congressmen Walsh, Farr, and Rob
Bishop (R-UT) all spoke on the
House floor in support of the
measure, praising the importance
of Congressional Cemetery and
the work of the APHCC.

American Heritage Section

Fame Fortune & Fire

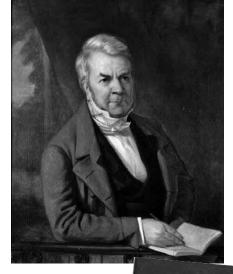
n August of 1814, Joseph and Sarah Gales, one of the most prominent couples in the new city, left the Capital for a Caribbean sailing cruise, entrusting their mansion to the care of their erstwhile trustworthy housekeeper. While they were gone, the housekeeper placed a For Rent sign on the front door. Even back then good help was hard to find.

Gales was a brilliant man whose talents brought him fame, fortune... and fire.

Joseph Gales was born in 1786 in a small village in Derbyshire, England. His fond memories of those years would lead him later in life to name his country estate in Washington, DC after the village. The name Eckington still adorns the map of near northeast DC.

He arrived in Washington in 1807, at the age of 21, to assist Samuel Smith with the *National Intelligencer*, the local newspaper. Within a few years, he and his brother-in-law, William Seaton, bought the paper and became enmeshed in the city's public life. His eminence in journalism brought Mr. Gales in frequent contact with all the public men of his period, including every President from Madison to Buchanan. He became one of the pioneers of Washington journalism.

As the publisher and editor of



the National Intelligencer, he wrote brilliant editorials on the political questions of the day, many of which helped shape public opinion

throughout the country. Considered by many to be the voice of the Government, the Intelligencer echoed the administration's policies in regard to the British Navy's "impressing" of sailors off American merchant marine shipping in the early 1800s. Gales published many anti-British editorials, helping to foment the cry for war against Britain.

And the war did come, engulfing Gales far more personally than he expected. In the sweltering summer heat of August 1814, British troops invaded the city of Washington, setting fire to many government buildings, including the Capitol and the White House but made sure to leave private dwellings untouched. Except for Mr. Gales; in retaliation for his scathing editorials, British troops set his printing establishment on fire, completely destroyed it.

Getting back to the housekeeper and the For Rent sign... The British troops also intended

to burn his home at 9th and E Streets, NW, but upon arrival they found the house closed and shuttered, with a sign on the front door that read: For Rent. The housekeeper's presence of mind amid the invasion and conflagration saved the Gales' beautiful home.

Joseph Gales died in 1860 at the age of 74. On the day of Gales' funeral, all the booksellers of the city kept their stores closed for the day while most of the prominent citizens of the city, including President Buchanan, attended the services. The leading journalists of the country showed their regard by erecting the grant black granite monument that now stands over his grave just east of the Chapel in Congressional Cemetery.

The Race for the White House

n this year of dramatic contests in both Democratic and Republican primaries and caucuses across the country, it is apropos that we look at former presidential candidates who are now resident in historic Congressional Cemetery.

There are three people who vied to be president and each was particularly unique. One was the first woman to run for president on the ticket of a national political party, another was the candidate of the first organized third party, and the least known was the candidate of the Native American Party, which had nothing to do with "Indians."

The best known candidate is Belva Lockwood (R78/S296), an ardent advocate of women's rights, who ran for the presidency on the ticket of the National Equal Rights Party, a small California group, in 1884 and 1888, long before the 19th Amendment granted women the right to vote in 1920.

Lockwood, born in 1830, was a schoolteacher, widowed at an early age, who moved to Washington, DC in 1866 and began to study law. She married Ezekiel Lockwood in 1868 and earned her law degree in 1873. She was admitted to the DC bar but she was denied permission to speak before the Supreme Court in 1876 because of "custom." She successfully lobbied Congress for enabling legislation and in 1879 became the first women to prac-

tice law before the Supreme Court. She became noted across the nation for her lectures on women's rights and was active in a number of suffrage organizations. She died in Washington, DC in 1917.

The earliest of the three candidates to run for President was William Wirt (R.50/S267), a lawyer born in Maryland, who was named by Pres. James Monroe as Attorney General of the United States in 1817. He held that position for 12 years. Wirt ran for President in 1832 as a candidate of the Anti-Masonic Party, the first organized third party.

The Anti-Masonic movement started in 1826 because of suspicions of the secret fraternal order that was popular with a number of the Founding Fathers. The party, initially successful in state and local elections, held the first national nominating convention in Baltimore in 1831 and selected William Wirt for president. The party was the first to offer a platform of party principles. Wirt won only the state of Vermont (seven electoral votes) in the 1832 election and the party went into a decline. Wirt died in 1834.

Jacob Broom (R95/S95) was a lawyer in Pennsylvania and the son of James Madison Broom, a signer of the U.S. Constitution. In 1852, Broom was nominated by the Native American Party as its candidate for president to take the place of Daniel Webster who



William Wirt

Belva Lockwood

had died in October 1852, nine days before the election. The party rushed to fill the void with Broom. Webster, nominated at the party convention in July, had neither accepted nor refused the nomination and his name remained on the ticket after his death.

The party had dropped "Native" from its title at the July convention. "Nativist" was an anti-immigration term unique to the United States and at this time it was fed by fears of Irish Catholic immigration. The party evolved into the Know Nothing movement and was active in the mid-1850's working to curb immigration and naturalization.

The American Party received a smattering of votes in 1852 in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Massachusetts. After his unsuccessful run for president, Broom was elected to Congress on the American Party ticket, representing Pennsylvania for one term from 1855 to 1857. He died in Washington in 1864.

MACOMB

Continued from page 1

by the Department of Veterans Affairs in the restoration efforts at Congressional. Shirley Stanton, wife of great, great grandson Warren Stanton, read a poem by Catherine Macomb that described the battle of Plattsburgh, which she witnessed.

Macomb died on June 25, 1841, at 57 and his funeral procession 3 days later included President Tyler, several justices of the Supreme Court, many members of Congress, and scores of military and other dignitaries. Although no presidents attended the second interment, William Tuerk, the VA's undersecretary for memorial affairs, attended the service to honor this distinguished veteran. The VA is spending \$1.75 million to restore 168 burial sites at Congressional.

Macomb was born in 1782 in the then British-held garrison town of Detroit. His family moved to New York when he was ten. He joined the New York Rangers militia at the age of 16. He eventually joined the newly formed Corps of Engineers and taught at West Point. Macomb was the general-in-chief of the United States Army from May 29, 1828 until his death June 25, 1841.

He was one of the heroes of the joint actions at the Battle of Plattsburg, N.Y., on Sept. 11, 1814. Macomb won the congressional gold medal after his 1,500-man unit at Plattsburg defeated a British force of about 10,000 by making it seem as if they had much larger force.





Macomb's tomb is adorned with a 13-foot tall, seven-ton marble monument that features a carved stone Spartan helmet. In recent years it began leaning and was in danger of collapse. The VA hired the NPS Historic Preservation Training Center, led by preservation expert Moss Rudley, to restore the monument, which led to the discovery of the previously unknown burial vault



beneath the monument. The vault was collapsing, causing the monument to tilt. To protect the Macomb remains during the restoration work, the Smithsonian Natural History Museum anthropologists led by Doug Owsley and Laurie Burgess remove the remains to the museum for examination and safe keeping.

The hand-crafted mahogany burial box containing the remains of the general and his wife Catherine was placed in the family tomb by an honor guard of National Park Service personnel, including representatives in period 1812 Army uniforms. The tomb was then permanently sealed.

From the Ground Up

The Eastern Phoebe

Text and Photo by Peter Vankevich

ast spring, Congressional Cemetery had a special resident. An Eastern Phoebe (Sayornis phoebe) successfully nested in one of the vaults on the south side of the cemetery. Eastern Phoebes are members of the large family known as tyrant flycatchers that inhabit North and

This particular bird is rather plain looking — with dark bill, olive/gray back and head, faint wing-bars, and a white or sometimes yellowish belly. What is characteristic about this phoebe is that it will pump its tail up and down while

South America.

perched. In our region, this is a very helpful clue, separating it from another similar looking fly-catcher that does not generally pump its tail. That bird is the Eastern Wood Peewee.

Phoebes are named after their song which sounds like a low rasping fee-bee or fee-b-bebe. Eastern Phoebes have some claim to fame in American birdlife. In 1803, John James Audubon tied silver cords to the legs of a brood of phoebes near Philadelphia. The following spring, two of these nestlings with the cords still attached appeared. With this experiment it was determined that phoebes return to the area of their birth and at the same time, they gained the distinction of being the first record of bird banding in North America.



A good spot to observe phoebes in the cemetery is the little stream on the east side of the grounds. Look for them in the nearby trees and occasionally on a tablet. After noting the nest site, I observed the phoebes (from a safe distance so as not to disturb them) for several weeks. One Saturday morning in June, I counted four young phoebes perched in the trees near the vaults. This was a sign that they had fledged, a small joy in a challenging world.

TRANSITIONS

Continued from page 3

Land Institute. He is an urban development professional with over 15 years experience in the planning, design and construction of new buildings, public infrastructure and the urban landscape.

Emily Crandall joined the board since our last newsletter. A transplanted New Yorker, Emily retired from the real estate development world & Met Life to shift gears and become a master gardener. Emily directs the Association horticulture activities.

Leaving the Board are Farleigh Earhart and Sandy Schmidt. Farleigh will join the Vestry of Christ Church squeezing her already busy schedule as both a Mom and an attorney with the Smithsonian Institution. Sandy decided that the demands of her two jobs and her passion for archives necessitated a shift back to being a "simple" volunteer. Sandy joined the board in 1999, taking on the treasurer's role, the 2000 Strategic Plan, and building a genealogy-based web site. She will continue as an archival volunteer, as well as our web master.

Also taking her leave is Reverend Judith Davis, the Rector of Christ Church + Washington Parish. Rev. Davis is taking on a new assignment in Massachusetts this fall. As rector, Judith served on the Association board for over ten years, helping usher in the resurrection of the board and the cemetery.

Our Cemetery Manager, Tom Kelly, slipped back into retirement last spring. He promised us

Continued on page 12

Conservation Restoration

ROADSContinued from page 1



through to the Association for repair for the roads and infrastructure at Congressional.

The new roads will be made of concrete pavers, roughly 5" by 10", mimicking the asphalt block pavers that have begun to deteriorate. Storm water damage to

the near-hundred-year-old roads has accelerated of late, leaving deep ruts and wide potholes. Some sections are only passable by utility vehicles. In considering the type of materials to use in rebuilding the roads, the Association road committee, lead by board member Scott Kibler, decided to plan a road that would last 100 years.

Phase I will include the replacement of the concrete curb, gutters, and the asphalt and pavers, along Congress Street from the main gate at E Street to the National Park Service fence; along Henderson Street from the19th Street Gate to Prout Street; Ingle Street from 17th Street to the east end near the Anacostia River: and Prout Street from the totem poles to Henderson Street. The road along the southern perimeter will require more sophisticated water management engineering before it can be repaired.



FOOT STONE RAISING



On June 4th, HCC hosted 25 volunteers from the Zimmer Corporation under the direction of Greater DC Cares. The volunteers were the world-wide legal staff of Zimmer who came to Washington for a professionally-led communication & teambuilding workshop, which included a morning of raising footstones on the HCC grounds.

At the end of the day, approximately 100 sunken footstones had been raised, and the Zimmer folks had been transformed from guarded to chatty (albeit a bit muddier).

Greater DC Cares is a network of volunteers, non-profits and businesses that deploys its assets of service volunteers and pro-bono consultants directly to other non-profit organizations in the DC area.

Special thanks to organizer Kaija McIntosh of Greater DC Cares [http://www.dc-cares. org/] for selecting HCC. And our appreciation to Cultural Tourism DC [www. culturaltourismdc.org] for the referral.

Paper & Pen

Marking the End of the Journey

n July 16, 1849, the sextant of the Congressional Burying Ground put pen to paper to record what must have been his saddest journal entry, Dolly P. Madison Est. D to opening and Use of Public Vault for Madison \$5.00. So begins Volume III of the Congressional Cemetery Interment Index.

For half a century, Dolley Madison was the most important woman in America. Wife of President James Madison, Dolley was sophisticated, charming, and politically astute. She made her home the center of Washington society from 1801 on and presided over the first inaugural

ball when her husband became president in 1809. She set the standard by which all first ladies are judged and is, by any standard, a legendary

figure in American history. Upon her death in 1849, she was placed in the Public Vault, where she lay for five years.

For historians, archivists, and genealogists, primary source documents such as our Interment Index books are not only valuable research tools but are priceless links to our heritage. The short neat entry of a business

transaction from 160 years ago reminds us that the individuals we read about in our high school history texts were real people who faced trials and tribulations just as we do today.

Congressional Cemetery's archives cover 200 years of American heritage in 60 leather bound books that

note the passing of both the great and the meek. Preserving these treasures is as important as any other endeavor at Congressional Cemetery. The decades of daily use are reflected in the sometimes tattered leather covers, the soiled edges of pages thumbed ten thousand times, and the spreading ink from a water drop 100 years ago.

How do you preserve a priceless document and maintain its usefulness at the same time? How do you make not only the data but the essence of history come alive for the regular visitor or the family descendant? Stay tuned — we're working on it!

,
Yes!
I want to help preserve and restore Congressional Cemetery
with a tax-deductible donation.
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TRANSITIONS

Continued from page 9

two years and gave us three; we paid him for 30 hours a week and he gave us 40. His equanimity in the midst of all that goes on at Congressional has been instrumental in keeping us on course during his tenure.

Joining the Staff at Congressional is our new executive director Cindy Hays and book-keeper Carol Itskowitz. Cindy is a Capitol Hill resident and very active in the Daughters of the American Revolution and numerous other civic organizations.

To the departing: Godspeed! To the arriving: Welcome Aboard!

HOG Galendar of Events

AUGUST

- 2 Casey Trees Volunteer Day
- 22 Push-Ma-Ta-Ha grave marking

SEPTEMBER

- 6 Marine volunteer clean-up day
- 20 Civil War tour
- 27 Barracks Row Bulb Sale

OCTOBER

- 11 Civil War tour
- 25 Navy volunteer clean-up day

NOVEMBER

- 6 John Philip Sousa Birthday celebration
- 29 SAR Revolutionary Patriot Grave Marking