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Linda Olsen, President
Renee Jackson, Vice President
Pat Williams, Secretary
Ephraim Salins, Treasurer

Damascus Heritage Society

--NEWS--

THE DEVOTED CURATOR OF DAMASCUS HISTORY

WINTER 2011

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From The Editor

Happy New Year to one and all. What a wonderful 2010 we had at the museum. We had 5 excellent exhibits with 300-400 visitors attending several of the exhibits and with more than 500 visitors in attendance at the Farm Exhibit. The Farm Exhibit happened to be running during the Celebrate Damascus weekend which, with a trolley stop at our door, brought in sizeable groups of visitors on Saturday. It has truly been a successful year for the Damascus Heritage Museum.

As we begin a new year we are busy already with planning upcoming exhibits, organizing our annual fundraising activities, and making improvements to our building and operation in general. We have a new Board of Directors in place since our November 2010 election with some of the same people you have seen before but also with a new face or two in the crowd. So, we are ready for a new year.

We can't move on, though, without taking time to thank our outgoing President, Randy Scritchfield, who was such an important part of getting this whole operation off the ground. He and several others in the community took the first steps to organize and plan and make it all work. With his knowledge as a businessman in Damascus and with his working relationships with the County and State, he was just the right person to aid in starting the organization with the proper paperwork and necessary tax filings to get us off on the right foot, so to speak. We are not just a group of people who got together to do a community service - there was a lot of "behind the scenes" work to be done beforehand to provide us with the legal status of operating as a non-profit. Randy was one who knew what to do, who to contact, and how to proceed. He then stepped up to the plate to be our first President and served 4 years in that position. His leadership was invaluable and we thank him for it.

The current leadership is now in the position of running and maintaining - equally as time consuming and tedious but with different skills and knowledge from that of the original organizing group. We are excited and honored and ready to take on the challenge but thank Randy

profusely for providing us with a well structured and efficient organization in which to build upon and carry us into the future. On that note, let the New Year begin.

And as I said in the beginning, Happy New Year to all. Be sure to visit the museum sometime soon. The current exhibit "Education in Damascus" will be closing on January 26 and the new exhibit "It's all about the Business" will open on Feb 2. Also you will read in this issue about our upcoming Tea and you can start getting ready now for our golf tournament in May. It looks like another busy year at the museum. Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

So, see you at the museum.

Linda Olsen, President and Editor

Second Annual Tea

Museum Tea to Feature Sweet Adelines

By Daria King

The second annual Damascus Heritage Society Tea will be held on Saturday, February 19th from 1:00-3:30 PM, and will feature the Escapade Quartet of the Sweet Adelines. One of the hottest new quartets in the mid-Atlantic, Escapade generates energy and excitement everywhere they perform. The dynamic foursome is comprised of a barbershop junkie lead (Sherry), a busy working mom (Laura), a recent empty nester preacher's wife (Donna) and an Immigration Enforcement Officer come-woman of leisure retiree (Anne). We are very fortunate that they have generously

agreed to support our museum fund raising efforts.



Escapade Quartet

Like last year, the tea will be held in the Senior Center with a total seating capacity of 70—so get your tickets early. There will be scones, sandwiches, and sweets galore. Door prizes will be part of the fun as will a “silent auction” to be held from 1:00-1:30 PM. Attire will be informal or if you prefer, wear your fancy dress, hat, and gloves if you are in the mood.

You and your friends are invited and the cost is a mere \$15 per person, all of which goes to benefit the museum. Children over ten years old are also welcome. It will be a wonderful afternoon for all while supporting a very worthy cause.

For information and reservations, call Daria King at 301-253-1564. Reservations will also be accepted at the door if space is available but advance reservations are recommended as last year’s event was sold out. Again, the date is Saturday, February 19th, from 1-3:30 PM (snow date March 5th). Our thanks also go to Tony Edghill, Director of the Senior Center for his continued support of this event.

Museum Hours

Museum hours are Wednesday and Saturday from noon until 5:00 PM or by appointment by calling the Olsen’s at 301-253-1811. See you at the museum.

Yearbooks, Yearbooks, We Still Need Yearbooks

We still need some yearbooks. The yearbook collection at the museum is definitely of interest to some of our patrons. We have seen many people look over the yearbooks for hours at a time so we have now provided a table and chairs where a person can sit and peruse the yearbooks at leisure. (We also have several other books and newspaper articles available for your reading pleasure.) The earliest book we have is from 1948 but unfortunately we are still missing a few between then and 2010. For that reason we are currently seeking donations of the following years:

1962, 1966, 1973, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1986, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1996, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010.

If you have any of these years and if you are willing to part with them to donate them to a good cause, they will have a good home at the museum. Remember, Damascus Heritage Society is a not-for-profit, 501c3 charitable organization.

Exhibit Opening

A new exhibit will be opening on February 2, 2011 entitled “It’s all about the Business”. The exhibit will include information and memorabilia from Damascus businesses of long ago, current businesses that have been around for years, and even a mention of some of the new businesses recently opened in the community. Gary Richard will loan some items to us that will bring back memories of the Damascus of the past. We have copies of more than 100 old advertisements and pictures of town establishments that you have only heard about

from the "old folks". The Buck Gladhill collection has also produced some items of interest for your viewing pleasure. It should be fun for old and young so be sure to put it on your calendar for a Wednesday or a Saturday from noon until 5:00 PM.

So, see you at the museum.

In Memory of and In Honor of

Since our last newsletter in the fall of 2010, we have received several memberships but only one with a dedication. The new addition to our dedications is as follows:

*A donation from
Bonnie & Dale Maue
In memory of
Grace Ward Mistkowski,
Bonnie's Grandmother
& the Granddaughter of
John E. Ward Sr.
from Maryland*

Keep in mind that you can dedicate your membership to a loved-one, friend or family, at any time. We will publish the current names each quarter in this newsletter but you can find the complete list of names in our "Dedications" books in the research corner of the museum for your perusal anytime you are visiting.

Heritage Society Holds Election of Board and Officers

A new Board and Officers were elected at the November 2010 open meeting of the Heritage Society by a unanimous vote of members present.

The new Officers are as follows:

President: Linda Olsen
Vice President: Renee Jackson
Secretary: Pat Williams
Treasurer: Ephraim Salins

The three Board positions are:

Bernardine Beall
Gail Davidson
Jim Starcher

The new positions became effective as of December 1, 2010. Please call any one of them if you have information or questions or concerns. Linda's number is

always available for your use and she will pass you along to the others on your request. Call Linda at 301-253-1811.

MUSEUM SEEKING ARTIFACTS

The museum is seeking your old stuff. If you have any pictures, newspapers, old Damascus related items that you want to give away or throw out, throw it our way. We will find a use for it during an exhibit in the future. You would be surprised what old items someone out there is interested in looking over. Remember, we are a 501c3 not-for-profit organization. Call us at 301-253-1811 or stop in the museum on Wednesday or Saturday, noon to 5:00 PM. We love to see you and we would love to take your old stuff off your hands.

Look what we found in
an old Courier
from June 3, 1971.



Remember Sunset Roller Rink? Look at the price of admission and skates. Check out this and more at our new exhibit opening on February 2 entitled "It's all about the Business".

Heritage Society Year-End Review

The Damascus Heritage Society had a wonderful and successful year in 2010. We thought we should review the year for you so you can see our progress and accomplishments from our opening in November 2009 through December 31, 2010 – a little more than a year but let's start at the beginning. After four years of organizing, building, and preparations, the Damascus Heritage Museum had a Grand Opening on November 17, 2009. The Damascus Volunteer Fire Department was the featured exhibit at that time and as our first effort, was organized by the entire group. We were so happy that so many visitors came to see the Fire Department and to see our accomplishments at the museum. The exhibit ran for three months, closing at the end of January and, in spite of the snowy weather, we had almost 200 visitors come in to enjoy the exhibit.



Grand Opening visitors enjoying the Fireman's Exhibit.

We had a wonderful exhibit celebrating Black History open in February organized by Renee Jackson and Harvey Zeigler. It was a real benchmark for Damascus as it was the first time such a public demonstration of Black History was staged in our town. We were so excited that it was so well received and so well attended. We had more than 350 visitors during the three month run even though we had monumental snow during that time. I'm sure you remember the snow of last winter.



Preview night of the Black History Exhibit.

Later in February we had our First Annual Tea at the Senior Center, thanks to Tony Edghill, the Center Director. We had a full house, 65 attendees, and a good time was had by all. Daria King organized that event and is doing so again for the Second Annual Tea scheduled for February 19 at 1:00 PM. Call Daria now for reservations at 301-253-1564. Interest is growing and reservations are going fast.



It's a full house at the First Annual Tea.

"Remembering the Farm" opened as the exhibit running from May until the end of July. We collaborated with the Friends of the Agricultural Farm Park in Derwood to bring that exhibit to fruition. We had more than 500 visitors enjoy that exhibit, due in some part to the fact that it was running over the Celebrate Damascus weekend and Gary Richard was kind enough to have a trolley stop at our door. Thank you, Gary. We couldn't believe how many people came to see the Farm and how much they all seemed to like what they saw. Pat Williams and Ray and Linda Olsen organized that exhibit with help from the Farm Park guys, Hugh Webb and Heritage Society Charter Member, Robert Allnutt.



The Farm Exhibit brought back lots of memories.

May brought our Second Annual Golf Tournament at The Links at Challedon in Mt. Airy. It was a bigger event than the first year and a good time was had by all. We are in

the planning stages for our Third Annual Golf Tournament to be held on May 23, 2011. Start practicing now to be ready to join us for a day of fun in the sun.



The sky is clearing and the carts are ready to roll.

We had our membership drive in July. Our membership seems to grow each year and we can thank you all for your continued trust and support.

July also brought Celebrate Damascus, of which we were a part. As I said earlier, Gary had a trolley stop at our door and we had a steady flow of visitors, many for the first time. We will be open again, of course, for Celebrate Damascus. Stop in then to see what's happening. We are usually sitting on the lawn, under the trees, enjoying the day.



The trolley delivers visitors to the museum.

“Serving Our Damascus Community” opened in August with many organizations from our town participating in the exhibit. Dan King, Charlie Crawford, and Jim Starcher organized the effort and had 14 or more organizations represented. Some of the organizations were from the past and are no longer active while other organizations are alive and well and still serving the community. Again attendance was great with more than 300 visitors during the 3 month run.



Mrs. Stipe, our faithful fan, attends the preview of the Service Exhibit.

In September we attended all three days of the Damascus Community Fair for the fourth year, where we talked to a lot of people, made some new friends, and just generally spread the word about the museum. Also in September we had our Third Annual Heritage Day, co-sponsored by the Izaak Walton League on the beautiful grounds of the IWL on Mullinix Mill Road. The day went smoothly and we are already planning our Fourth Annual Heritage Day for September 18, 2011. Mark your calendar now for a day of family fun and good food.



Our booth at the Fair. The Fair is always a lot of fun.



Mr. Whitehair regales the crowd at Heritage Day.

November brought us full circle, opening our fifth exhibit which is currently running. This exhibit is “Education in Damascus”, and was organized by society member and

retired teacher, Marie Dean, and some of her teacher friends. This exhibit includes a lot of information and memorabilia about all of the schools in the Damascus cluster with particular emphasis on the High School since it celebrated 100 years earlier in 2010. Again attendance is anticipated to exceed the 300 mark by the time it closes at the end of this month – January 2011.



Marie Dean (right) gave a private tour of the Education Exhibit to all the principals in the Damascus cluster early in January.

Also in November was the election of new officers and Board which you can read about earlier in this newsletter.

So there you have it, our year of accomplishments. Everyone works hard and makes a contribution of some kind which makes this all work. We need each and every one of you to “do your thing” to help us continue to preserve our history and to bring it to life through the museum exhibits. It is your museum.

So, see you at the museum.

We also found this in an old Courier from June 3, 1971.
Do you remember Bellison's?



Remember Bellison's Grocery? Check out the phone number. A young person came in the museum the other

day and during a conversation about phone numbers stated that she did not know that they used to start with a word, like Clearwater. Wow, I was felling old.

Athletes, Educators, and Citizens

By Pat Williams

Harry V. Stipe (1917-1999): Athlete, Educator, and Citizen are only a few of the titles used to describe Harry V. Stipe who contributed so much to his adopted home of Damascus. Born in Wadesville, VA, he was an outstanding athlete, a fact that helped shape his future. He entered Shepherd College (now Shepherd University) in 1935 where he earned degrees in physical education and history. After earning his master's degree in physical education from West Virginia University, he spent two years as a principal in a Virginia school. He settled in Damascus in 1941 where he found a home in the school and the community. He spent 33 years at Damascus High as a teacher, coach, and principal where he mentored his students to achieve excellence both on and off the playing fields. As the first certified driving instructor in the State of Maryland, many who are behind the wheel today owe their driving ability to Mr. Stipe.

World War II brought many concerns about security on the home front. Governor O'Connor created a reserve militia known as the “Maryland Minute Men,” designed to protect local communities should it be necessary. Harry Stipe joined the 704th Company of the Militia as a First Sergeant, leading and working on many war effort projects within his community. In addition, he helped found many civic organizations such as the Damascus Volunteer Fire Department and the Damascus Lions Club.

Mr. Stipe excelled in football, baseball, and basketball and was inducted into the Shepherd College Hall of Fame in 1993. He is remembered for his acts, deeds, and contributions. His accomplishments live on each year with the presentation of the Harry V. Stipe Scholar Athlete Award named for him.

Eleanor Oliver Stipe: Wife of the late Harry Stipe, Eleanor Stipe was herself a great athlete and educator. While at Shepherd College, she was a master of the basketball court, not only as a player but as a team leader, serving as co-captain, captain, and interim head coach. While still a college student, she officiated at local high school games and conducted referee clinics for the National Referee Association. Eleanor Stipe became the first woman to be inducted into the Shepherd College Athletic Hall of Fame. She was inducted in 1990, three years before her husband.

Not only has Mrs. Stipe proven herself as an outstanding athlete but also as a hero. She is credited with saving Shepherd College Head Basketball Coach John

Newcome and several students from drowning in the Potomac River.

Mrs. Stipe has dedicated her life to educating the area's youth. Although she retired in 1975, her contributions to her community and teaching are still making a difference. Her love of knowledge continues through her support of the Damascus Heritage Society. She faithfully attends the opening of each new exhibit as well as most of our annual events and is always eager to share her wealth of knowledge about Damascus. (See Mrs. Stipe attending the preview night for the opening of the Service Exhibit on page 5 of this newsletter.)

Future Meetings

Our meetings are open to everyone and we invite you to join us as a visitor or member at any time. We meet on the third Monday of the month, unless it falls on a holiday, in which case it will then be moved to the next day, Tuesday, at the museum. Monday meetings are held in the large conference room at the Damascus Public Library at 7:00 PM unless noted otherwise. If the meeting falls on a Tuesday because of a Monday holiday, the meeting will be held in the museum at 7:00 PM. For 2011 the meetings are as follows:

Tuesday, January 18, at the museum
Tuesday, February 22, at the museum
Monday, March 21
Monday, April 18
Monday, May 16
Monday, June 20
Monday, July 18
Monday, August 15
Monday, September 19
Monday, October 17
Monday, November 21
Monday, December 19

Mark your calendar now.
Call 301-253-1811 for information.

Join the Heritage Society today.

**Help us preserve the
history of Damascus.**

BECOME A FRIEND OF THE DAMASCUS HERITAGE SOCIETY

All payments are tax deductible - we are a
501c3 non-profit charitable organization.

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone:

Email:

Mail to:

Damascus Heritage Society Inc.
P.O. Box 218
Damascus, MD 20872

Memberships:

- Individual \$25
- Family \$35
- Business/Friend \$50-\$99
- Fellow \$100-\$499
- Sponsor \$500-\$999
- Patron \$1,000-\$4999
- Benefactor \$5000+

If desired, in Memory/Honor of:
(circle one)



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Volunteer today.**

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NEWSLETTER – Winter 2011

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See you at the museum.