Spring is Here!

After a long-awaited spring that finally arrived in mid-May, the restoration work on the Aloha House maidens started on May 31st when the weather was a consistent temperature. It took two weeks for the contractor to remove four layers of paint from all ten of the maiden statues to reveal their natural cast concrete color. As the layers of paint were being removed, it was revealed that a couple of the maidens had been painted with facial makeup at some point in time—including mascara, rouge, and lipstick!

The next step is to repair the cracks and exposed rusty rebar which, considering the age of the statues, are minimal. Once the repairs are done, the maidens will be finished with the appropriate paint to match their historic color of cream to make them look like stone or marble. Then we can install the plaques above each of the maidens to honor the generous donors who adopted them for this restoration. We look forward to celebrating the restoration and donors in early August.

July History Program

The next program in our educational series will be on Tuesday, July 19, at 7:30 pm in the ballroom. Before the National Park Seminary was founded in 1894, there were two other uses of the property—first as a plantation and then a resort hotel. This program will present what we know about those uses and how they were associated with people of significance in the religious, economic and political history of Maryland. Come and hear about the early lives of this historic site.
Our program on sports at the Seminary at the end of March was quite enlightening as to the range and depth of sports in the National Park school curriculum. We will soon be posting that program on our website for viewing, as we do with all our educational programs.

Successful House Tour
Although weather was predicted to be rainy, it was dry and pleasant for our biannual open house tour on May 1st. The 143 people who attended enjoyed seeing inside the varied residences as well as visiting the ballroom, original dining room, and SOS museum room. The description of each of the historic spaces is posted on our website at http://www.saveourseminary.org/tours/past-house-tour-2016/.

The tour was also a success for SOS, as we raised $5,440 between ticket sales and sales of our history book and NPS-related memorabilia. These funds will help us continue our preservation efforts, especially with our ever-growing archives that we use to learn and share the history of the Seminary.

Treasures in the Archives
SOS board members spent a couple of sweaty hours recently moving the last of some building artifacts out of temporary storage into the SOS archives space. These included a large fan-shaped window that had long ago been removed from the Art and Science building (now apartments), a decorative corner bracket from the ballroom building, and large wood wall plaques that list the Seminary class officers.

After we restore these and other artifacts, we plan to display them in appropriate common areas of the Seminary, with permission from the building owners. Our next newsletter will highlight another unique artifact!

Glen Restoration
If you want to do some hands-on restoration yourself at NPS, you’ll have a chance the **first Saturday of every month from spring through fall**. The NPS residents have established an ongoing program to restore the glen to its original beauty by removing the invasive species to reveal and repair the historic trails and bridges that traverse the glen. They have made progress so far by clearing the steps down into the glen from the Cyprisssus statue and most of the path across the stream to the abutment of the walk bridge that first connected the Seminary property to the Forest Glen train station.

The glen cleanups are scheduled from 9 am to noon on the first Saturdays of the month, and the meeting place is usually the parking lot by the villa and castle. Watch our website news page for exact dates in case there are changes due to weather.

Gymnasium Receives Award
Nominated by SOS, the gymnasium received a historic preservation award in March from Montgomery Preservation, Inc. for “restoration and rehabilitation of a historic resource for residential use.” Executive Director Bonnie Rosenthal was happy to present the award to the Voglmayr family of Washington Landmark Construction and congratulate them on such a successful and stunning restoration.

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

Watch the mail for your annual SOS membership renewal notice—coming soon!