

SAVE OUR
SEMINARY



AT FOREST GLEN

SOS NEWS

Spring 2017
Vol. 26 No. 2

9615 Dewitt Drive #68
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301-589-1715
info@saveourseminary.org
www.saveourseminary.org
www.facebook.com/saveourseminary

SOS News is the newsletter of Save Our Seminary, the nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the historic National Park Seminary and engaging the public through education and advocacy since 1989.

Spring Cleaning

SOS was pleased to offer a special members- and residents-only tour of the campus sculpture on June 17. This free tour enlightened guests about the cultural and site history of each of the more than 30 sculptural and artistic works that still exist from the Seminary school era, mostly from the 1920s.

During the tour, the members of the SOS Sculpture Committee conducted necessary cleaning of several of the National Park Seminary pieces to keep them looking their best and to maintain them for the long term. Tour guests were able to see preservation in action!

At the end of the tour, SOS showed on photo display boards the sculpture pieces that have been restored and those pieces still to be restored. SOS has taken the lead for the past several years to restore and maintain these historic pieces that grace the campus and add to its uniqueness.

Our success has been possible through the generous financial support of our members and others who have donated to our ongoing sculpture restoration campaign. As we plan to continue our sculpture preservation efforts, we hope we can count on members and other donors to help restore these historic works of art at the Seminary campus.

Save The Date for a Speakeasy

Mark your calendars now for Saturday, September 9, in the Seminary ballroom to enjoy an evening in a speakeasy atmosphere. For this year's fundraising event, SOS will present a Roaring 20's Prohibition-era theme with a jazz band, bathtub gin, tastes of local cuisine—and "gambling" in the back room.

The secret password to enter the speakeasy will come later, but don't forget to mark your calendar now!



SOS cleaning Cyparrisus during sculpture tour

The Performing Arts at NPS

At our educational program in May, SOS gave a multi-media presentation on the music and dramatic arts programs offered at National Park Seminary and College, placing them within the larger context of concerts, plays and musicals of the early 20th century.

We learned that the music and drama faculty at NPS were all experienced performers, that elaborate sets and costumes were donated to the school by notables such as stage actor Francis Wilson, and that all students were expected to participate in the arts in some manner or another.

Numerous examples of programs and excerpts from letters and school catalogs from the SOS archives showed how active the students were in individual vocal or instrument recitals, orchestral concerts, and full production plays. The plays were particularly elaborate, each with their own custom-designed program. The students rehearsed and performed in, handled costumes and props, worked with artists to create the scenery, and otherwise stage managed 10 to 12 such performances a year!

Artifact Restoration Update

SOS is happy to report that the large world globe that dates from the school years of the 1920s is now back in its beautiful wood stand. After having the center base piece replicated by Amish craftsmen, Osman Gomez of Berkeley Properties, LLC donated his time to refinish and reassemble the stand.

Due to the damage to the base of the globe itself, it cannot be turned in the stand, but the globe and stand are now an impressive addition to the restored artifacts of National Park Seminary.

Site Happenings

SOS has good news to share about three of the historic buildings that have been awaiting redevelopment for years. **The power plant, firehouse/garage, and Practice Hall** are now under the ownership of Washington Landmark Construction, the company that restored the gymnasium exterior to its imposing grandeur and created 12 condos within the expansive interior.

Work started promptly on cleaning out the firehouse and power plant of old stored materials and demolishing the seriously failing and unsafe concrete terrace between these two buildings. Removing the huge boilers in the power plant will be a major undertaking, but that building offers very large windows that overlook the glen—a lovely amenity for condominium units.

In other good news, the forlorn old **castle** sorority house across the glen next to the Italianate villa now has a new blue tarp covering its roof to keep out the elements until the plan for restoration is developed and approved, which the owner is working on.



Restored stand for Seminary world globe