



Isaiah Davenport House Volunteer Newsletter

June 2010

www.davenportmuseum.org

236-8097



Become a Facebook fan at "Davenport House Museum"

Summer Drink

The subscriber will commence on Monday next, preparing a delightful and pleasant beverage, made out of cream of tartar, loaf sugar and ginger, which will be sold in bottles, at the rate of 12 1/2 cents per bottle, the bottles to be returned. Those who have ever tasted this drink assert its fine qualities, and are delighted with its taste. All that is asked, is, that the public will try it and judge for themselves. This drink will be warranted to keep for three or four weeks, and persons going to sea will do well to furnish themselves with a supply.

The subscriber will also have constantly on hand syrup of lemon at the rate of 6 1/2 cents a bottle, Green ginger and pine apple syrup at 75 cents pr bottle, and plain do 50 cents a bottle, all which can be had at his house, one door east of Mr. J. Bryan's, in South Broad street.



SAMUEL RUSSELL

Savannah Daily Republican, June 4, 1823

NOTICE

PROPOSALS will be received by the undersigned until Thursday 29 for enclosing the yard connected with the new Guard House, with a brick fence—the contractor will make use of the old brick on the lot. For particulars apply to

ISA. DAVENPORT,
THOS. CLARK,
C. H. HAYDEN,

Committee

Savannah Daily Republican, June 4, 1823

DAVENPORT HOUSE CALENDAR

Saturday, June 5 – garden rental
Tuesday, June 8 at noon in the Kennedy Pharmacy – Davenport House Committee
Thursday, June 10 at 5:30 p.m. in the DH garden – All Staff Emergency Preparedness/Hurricane Season Refresher meeting

Friday, June 11 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. — Pharmacy rental

Saturday, June 12 at 7:30 a.m. – Early Bird's Walking Tour of the City
Isaiah Knew: Discovering 1820s Savannah (SOLD OUT)

Monday, June 14 at 6 p.m. – Welcome to the Summer/Veteran JI Refresher and pizza party

Thursday, June 17 from 6 to 8 p.m. – Junior Interpreter's Summer Training Program (JI1s)

Monday, June 21 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. – Veteran JIs Walking the Squares

Thursday, June 24 from 6 to 8 p.m. – Junior Interpreter's Summer Training Program (JI1s)

Monday, June 28 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. – Veteran JIs Walking the Squares

SHOP NEWS

-If you missed purchasing a copy of Ingrid Abramovitch's book Restoring a House in the City when she was in town for her lecture in the pharmacy in May, you may purchase a copy at the DH shop (\$40)

- Remember to ask for your staff, volunteer, Friends of the Davenport House or Historic Savannah Foundation discount on shop purchases.

- A new selection of reasonably priced framed prints of Savannah locations, including the DH, is now available (\$35 each).

DOCENTS

- **Dottie needs your assistance:**

There are tours which Dottie could use your help – Thursday, June 3rd (20 people) at 11 a.m., Tuesday, June 8 (36 people) at 12:45 p.m., Thursday, June 10 (24 students) at 3 p.m., Thursday, June 17th (20 Girl Scouts) at 10:30 a.m.

- **July Training:** A new session of the **Docent Training Program** will take place in July. The dates and time of the program will be determined by those participating. Meeting one day of the week for 3 hours those attending will learn the latest

interpretation of the house and receive practical advice for leading tours to the public. Veteran docents are encouraged to attend one or all of the sessions if they feel that a refresher is needed in their knowledge of museum interpretation or tour logistics, safety, etc.

- **Question:** We were recently asked, "How would you describe the height of the house." While some folks including prominent architects call the house a 3 1/2 story building, those in the know about local architecture note it as "a 2 1/2 stories with an above ground basement and an attic."

ANTHONY SANCHEZ TO CONCENTRATE ON MUSIC

In June 2004, Antony Sanchez came to the DH as a fifteen-year-old home schooled 10th grader. He participated in the museum's Junior Interpreter program over that summer and a year later was hired as a staff docent working primarily on Sunday afternoons. "*We knew from the start that Anthony would be an ideal employee. He is dependable and dedicated to learning the material put forth. In fact he commits his interpretive material to memory in the same way he does his music. He is thorough and deliberate in his delivery,*" offers museum director Jamie Credle. Fellow Sunday worker Beth Kinstler adds, "*I am going to miss working with Anthony. He is the ideal co-worker—helpful and courteous.*"

Anthony is remarkable in a number of ways. For one, he is one of the young people who have made volunteering – because he continues to volunteer at the museum – part of their community service. The DH has been the founding ground for his friendships with the staff and other volunteers. Currently Sanchez is a rising senior in music performance at Armstrong Atlantic State University and needs to concentrate on his final year of undergraduate



study. Music is a difficult major requiring dedication, practice, creativity and talent. All the more remarkable for Anthony is the fact that he has cerebral palsy affecting the left side of his body.

“We have never made a distinction with Anthony as far as his abilities or disabilities in doing tours at the museum and while it takes him a little longer than some to walk up the stairs, a good number of our guests need and appreciate the time he takes,” says Credle. In fact they appreciate more than his speed of delivery. With regularity visitors note in the museum’s guest book “*Anthony was very knowledgeable and informative,*” “*Great tour and guide, Anthony,*” “*Anthony was very thorough and interesting,*” etc.

Indeed he has been a remarkable docent and he is a remarkable young man who will be sorely missed at the DH after May 30 when he completes his last regularly scheduled tour. So we say farewell and huzzah to Anthony! The DH is a better place for his having been here.

JUNIOR INTERPRETERS

New Class: A new class of Junior Interpreters will begin training on Thursday, June 17. They will meet from 6 to 8 p.m. through Thursday, July 29 and will “run the house” on Friday, August 6 when they give their first tours to the public. Their training will involve learning the basics of Savannah’s early history, museum interpretation and tour management. As of now we have 5 prospective JI1s two are from St. Andrews Prep, two are from Savannah Christian and one is from Savannah Country Day. We have room for more participants. The program is offered free of charge and is funded by a grant from the Wormsloe Foundation.

-VETERANS JIs (Mondays from 6 to 7:30 throughout the summer): The museum wants to keep veteran Junior Interpreters involved with

the museum. Several have signed up to mentor the new class and in so doing will receive a refresher for their own tours. As for organized meetings of these young people, they will meet on Monday’s beginning June 21 and for the next four weeks will walk all of the squares in the historic district. Participating in the program is good exercise as well as informational and even if they did this activity in previous summers – you can never experience Savannah’s fabulous squares too many times!

- To kick-off the summer Veteran JIs will have a DH refresher and pizza party on Monday, June 14 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.



The gathering will involve answering DH interpretation questions for M&Ms and walking through the museum’s period rooms recalling information about them.
 - Trained and secure JIs will fill out the museum docent calendar as they are available.
 - JIs will be asked to work the *Hands-on History Camp* session at the Davenport House on Thursday, June 17 from 11:30 until 1 p.m. JIs will take the campers on a tour of the house and assist with the activity “button on a string.”

HURRICANE/EMERGENCY PROCEDURES PREPAREDNESS



There will be a meeting of all staff members including docents and gift shop workers on **Thursday, June 10 at 5:30 p.m.** to review procedures for hurricane season preparedness and emergency situations. At the meeting an updated contact list will be distributed and news from the Chatham County Hurricane Conference will be discussed. Jeff Freeman and Raleigh Marcell will review pointers gathered at a recent risk assessment workshop.

MAINTENANCE

- Gaye Drummond and Raleigh Marcell planted the courtyard’s garden pots and parterre as well as the planters at the façade of the house in early May.
 What’s in the Garden: Spring-Summer Garden plantings include:
Italian Pots – Zinnia Profusion White, Pentas Lanceolata, Scovola Bombay Blue, Iomoea Sweet Caroline, Plectranthus Mona Lavender, Black Beauty Colocasia (Elephant’s Ear), Oxblood Coleus
Parterre Garden – Duck’s Foot Coleus (miniature)
Front of the House & Base of Center Italian Pot – Angelonia Serena White
 - Monitoring equipment: Recently monitors were installed near the AC ductwork in the Morning Room and the Master Bedroom. They will be used to determine the temperature and humidity in the period rooms with an eye toward improving the efficiency of our HVAC system and its effect on the house and collections.

DONATIONS TO FRIENDS OF THE DAVENPORT HOUSE IN MAY

Mari Buchman
 Armin Cay Chisholm
 Frieda M. Hutchinson
 Dottie Lynch
 Mobil Matching Donation/Diane and Dan Reitman
 Eudora Roebing

... The historic house museums which dot our landscape are a testament that the world did not begin when we were born. .

... Dr. Jamil Zainaldin, president, Georgia Humanities Council
DAVENPORT HOUSE MUSEUM RECEIVES GOVERNOR’S AWARD IN THE HUMANITIES

On Tuesday, May 11 Savannah’s Davenport House Museum was one of twelve recipients recognized at the **25th Governor’s Award in the Humanities** at a ceremony in the Old Georgia Rail-



road Depot in Atlanta. “The museum was honored for its fifty years plus journey to create an accurate, well-preserved, sustainable, vital and exciting place to learn history. This includes its reinterpretation efforts, the raising of an endowment, its education programs and the energized and growing community of volunteers, staff and supporters who feel a part of and share the fine house museum on a regular basis,” notes the DH director, Jamie Credle. “The Davenport House is in illustrious company as a recipient of the Governor’s Award,” continues Credle. Other coastal Georgia recipients this year are archeologist Rita Folse Elliott of Rincon and the McIntosh County Shouters of Bolden, who ended the award’s program with a benediction of call and response shouting and a ring dance bearing witness to the experiences of their enslaved forebears.

In his remarks Dr. Jamil Zainaldin, president, Georgia Humanities Council, noted the value of the Humanities to “unleash the imagination” and that the awards ceremony celebrates the literature that “expresses the heart and soul of our state”, “the history that hold our feet to the fire,” the archeology that “bears witness to the footprints of our forebears,” etc. Through the years, a notable group of individuals and cultural entities including coastal Georgians Emma Adler, WW. Law, Charles Elmore and the Georgia Historical Society among others, have been honored by the **Office of the Governor** and the **Georgia Humanities Council** for their distinguished contributions to the enrichment and diffusion of ideas in the Peach State. In his letter of recognition adding the Davenport House to the list of recipients, Governor Sonny Perdue writes, “The Davenport House Mu-

seum has my deepest appreciation for its efforts to enhance the quality of life of Georgia citizens.”

Those attending the ceremony on the Davenport House Museum’s behalf were **Heather Anderson Jones, Adam Caracci, Jamie Credle, Hugh Golson, Ann Koontz, Dudley Koontz, Raleigh Marcell, Jordan Poole, Jane Pressly** and **Paul Pressly**.

LEADERSHIP

THANK YOU, PAUL AND HELLO, REED - At the April Davenport House Endowment Directors’ meeting **Paul Pressly** said good-bye as the body’s chairman and **Hugh Golson** was elected to the position. To fill the vacant spot as a Director **Reed Dulany III** was elected as well. In his leave-taking, Pressly, who served an extra year as chairman for continuity of leadership, spoke of the progress the Directors have made during his six-year tenure including the rehabilitation of the pharmacy, which the Directors own. They along with the 1772 Foundation financed and shepherded the project.

HSF: CHECK OUT THE NEW WEBSITE

Historic Savannah Foundation, recently launched a progressive new website, www.myhsf.org, unveiling a complete new brand identity. This symbolic gesture underscores the importance of historic preservation and helps bridge the information gap between the new web-savvy generation and Savannah’s leading preservation organization. Of the endeavor Daniel Carey, president and CEO said, “We wanted a fresh, accessible and interactive site that represents the diversity of HSF and the preservation movement. We think the new site will appeal to all ages and interests.” HSF enlisted Smack Dub Studio to be



the creative entity in accomplishing this work. Over the summer the Davenport House will also upgrade its website to dovetail with this initiative of its parent organization.

WORTH MENTIONING:

-Downtown Neighborhood Association: As an annual affair at the DH, the museum hosted the Downtown Neighborhood Association on May 11 for their picnic and awards ceremony. The DH received a \$1000 grant from the DNA to continue its education and preservation work.

-New staff docent: Dirk Hardison will become a staff docent working the Sunday afternoon shift on June 6.

- Winding down the Busy Season:

The season has been huge. Since March 1 the museum put on eleven after hours Madeira tours, eight This **Old House** – top to bottom - tours, nine teas in the house, seven Preservation walking tours, seven teas in the garden, two Curator’s Tours and five “**Isaiah’s Savannah**” tours (3 dates were added in June). In addition it put on a grand **Trolley Back in Time** for the Tour of Homes (105 people) and a Mother and Daughter tea for forty-two on Mother’s Day weekend. Staff and volunteers offered hospitality, good cheer and great interpretation whenever they could. FYI: Our “regular” tour numbers were great for March, behind last year in April, and steady with last year in May. Gift shop sales per person are up as of now. There were four wedding/garden rentals this spring which is off from previous years. This work could not have been done without the constant support of our working volunteers and staff that gave tours, worked in the shop, cleaned up and did whatever was necessary. Gone are the days when the DH could exist on daily tours alone. It’s now



every hour (well, most hours) of the day and all days of the week.

- **Garden Rentals:** There are currently three garden rentals (wedding ceremonies only) this summer, one scheduled in September, three in October, two in November and in the spring of 2011 have four on the calendar (April 2, April 16, May 7 and May 14).

- **Garden Teas:** The museum's stellar troop presented teas in the garden in May and even with the precarious weather all had a good time. Thanks to performers **Jody Leyva Christie, Jan Vach, Jeff Freeman, Raleigh Marcell, Shannon Wichers and Kelsey Chandler.** **Dottie Kraft** did duty during the regularly scheduled teas coordinating and tidying. For the Girl Scouts Mother/ Daughter tea on May 8 **Helen Linskey** came to the rescue as the coordinator of the dishes and the Sally Lunn bread! It was a big baking season, thanks to **Helen Linskey** (who made Sally Lunn bread and ginger bread 6 times in May) as well as to bakers **Abby Schreiber, Renee Fila, Claudette Engvall, Judy Howell** and **Pat Seguire.**

- **Publicity:** Because of the terrific publicity for the "Isaiah's Savannah" tour three dates were added in June - June 12, June 19 and June 26. We are grateful to the Savannah Morning News and other local media who continue to support our programming.

- **Madeira after hours tours:** On eleven Thursday and Friday evenings in the spring, good DH helpers put on a grand show for Madeira-information seeking patrons. Thanks to Marty Barnes, Jamie Credle, Jeff Freeman, Pat Fraker, De Gassman, Dirk Hardison, Karen Halloran, Raleigh Marcell and Beth Wichers.

- **Saying Good-bye:** The community said good-bye to **Florence DuBois** at a memorial service on May 22. The Skidaway Island Presbyterian Church was filled with friends and admirers of Flor-

ence who had been the food coordinator for bereaved families for years. Her daughter Diane eulogized her mother by talking about all the things she was and all the things she loved — noting in particular the Davenport House. At the reception following the service, attendees could see Florence's volunteer nametag which was on display along with other representatives of service during her life.

SPOTLIGHT ON **DIRK HARDISON**

Dirk owns and operates **Savannah Rambles** architectural walking tours.



What is your background? I am from Wadsworth, Ohio but our family has roots in historic eastern NC. I studied architecture at Auburn University in Alabama and I came to Savannah because of an architecture firm – Forrest Lott Architects. During my tenure there I became a protégé of Mills B. Lane, IV who sponsored my attendance at Attingham Summer School in England and later patronized my position with Historic Savannah Foundation.

What is your relationship to the Davenport House?

I was Historic Savannah Foundations' architectural design consultant for 8 years. My work involved creating historically sensitive designs for all 9 historic districts. I averaged 50 projects a year including whole house designs as well as front porticos and carriage houses. I was asked to join the Davenport House Committee in 2009 because of my design experience and institutional knowledge of the property going back to 1993. In making decisions it is important to know the property inside and out. Along with helping in maintenance and preservation decision-making, I am willing to provide input and expertise wherever it is deemed useful. I took the Docent Training Program in 2009 and have been on the

schedule since then filling in and helping out often on short notice.

How does being involved with the DH assist you in your current endeavors?

I am able to take my **Savannah Rambles** visitors through the DH and since I have been trained I know what I should be saying.

What do you like about the DH?

I like that it has decisions based on authenticity instead of trying to be popular. It makes the house unexpected for our visitors.

What do you hope for the future of the DH?

I hope it continues to be more of the same. That more of the house can be interpreted the way the exhibit areas on the 1st and 2nd floors are now. I hope that the lives of the people who worked below stairs can be more fully interpreted as time and resource allow.

What do you like about Savannah?

It's now my home! It is one of the few places that you can live in an urban situation without being completely enslaved by the automobile.

A LOOK AT THE DH GUEST REGISTER:

During the month of May 2010 the DH saw visitors from the following **US hometowns:**

Moody, AL; Mtn. Home, AR; Accidental, CA; Big Bear Lake, CA; Pritchett, CO; Flintstone, GA; Fort Benning, GA; Hawaii; Coeur D'Alene, Idaho; Morton, IL; Norway, IL; Zionsville, IN; Topeka, KS; Owl's Head, ME; Annapolis, MD; Midland, MI; Raytown, MO; Buffalo, MN; Cherry Hill, NJ; Fargo, ND; Angie, NC; Constantia, NY; Massapequa, NY; Belleforte, PA; San Juan, Puerto Rico; Cranberry Twp, PA; Hideaway, TX; Manassas, VA; Schofield, WV; Pinch, WV; Casper, WY; Green River, WY; George, UT. **From afar:** Perth, Australia; **From Canada:** Calgary, Alberta, Niagara on the Lake, Ontario, Kitchener, On-

tario, Canada, Kelown, BC, **From England:** Birkenhead, Caistor, Lincolnshire, Derby, London, Hertford, Sussex, **And, from:** Paris, France, Berlin, GE, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Japan, Spain

HOW DID THEY HEAR ABOUT US? AAA, AAA Guide of Georgia, AARP, concierge, trolley tour, previous visit, on-line, Visitsavannah.com, TripAdvisor, friends, daughter, members of HSF, Girl Scout troop visit, walking, pamphlet, film on TV, hotel TV ad, residents, Oglethorpe Tours, Juliette Gordon Low House, “rode our bikes past the house,” wedding, stayed @ Kehoe H, Marriott Hotel, brochure at River Street Inn, Savannah Belle tour, hotel – Quality Inn, “we looked across the street!,” Inn at Ellis Square, hotel suggestion, Lowe House, Visitor Center, Visitor’s Guide, WOM, Paula Deen Show, Jody!, Old Town Trolley tour, fellow B & B guests told us it was their favorite, Hampton Inn front desk, Lonely Planet guide

WHAT THEY HAD TO SAY: “Wonderful tour guide!!” “Loved it! Polite, knowledgeable guide,” “Takes you back in time,” “Very informative but I was disappointed I couldn’t take pictures of the wonderful architecture,” “Awesome, thank you,” “Wonderful guide, Marty,” “Excellent commentary by Marty,” “Schweet,” “Anthony was very informative,” “Linda was great! Thanks, Linda, Tour guide was amazing,” “Job well done!!!” “Outstanding tour guide, Betty!” “Very well restored,” “Great tour guide Dottie,” “Memories,” “Fun and informative,” “Love this house! Delightful,” “Very informative and interesting presentation – one of the best so far! Dirk was fantastic,” “Thanks for preserving this for us,” “Maria was fantastic!” “She even took our picture,” “Beautiful, gorgeous garden,” “So glad to participate in history and days gone by!” “Great tour Anne,” “Love the linoleum,” “Marty Rocks!! A fabulous tour guide – informative, inspiring – puts you there in the scene,” “Excellent narrative guide has a grasp and loves history,” “Great tour with a lot of soul,” “Thank goodness for those 7 women,” “Inspiring from a woman’s standpoint,” “Great conservation of the 1820s style,” “Well-maintained house,” “Loved the Tea in the Garden”

SUMMER IN THE CITY . . .

Superior Court –Chatham County
May Term. 1823

We, the Grand Jury of the County of Chatham, have pleasure in again meeting His Honor Judge Wayne, and from past experience, we confidently took for a continuance of that faithful and prompt discharge of duty which dignifies the bench.

...

5. The utility of Treading Mills in suppressing crime, and affording salutary exercise to criminals, in every place where they have been erected, induces the Grand Jury to recommend the establishment of this mode of punishment in the jail of this county.

6. We present the following Persons for entertaining negroes on Sunday, and keeping disorderly houses, contrary to law—Charles Rapp, on the Thunderbolt road, on information of I. A. Ruckell, county Constable, -- and Joseph Delchamp, on the White Bluff road, on information of S? and Ruckell, county Constables.

7. We present as grievances the indecent practice of Persons bathing in Musgrove Creek, on the Augusta road, to the great annoyance of Travelers.

We are happy to congratulate our fellow Citizens on the present cleanliness of the streets and lanes of the city, and may with confidence anticipate favorable results from the continued exertions of the Board of Health and officers of the city.

Savannah Daily Republican, June 4, 1823.

To the Public

In as much as all persons are cautioned against crediting or harboring the subscriber by Samuel Hodge, alledging that she had left his house without cause—she compelled in justice to herself to reply and lay before the public, the reasons which she had, and which induced her to separate herself from M. H. whether they are sufficient or insufficient—she leaves it with the public to judge.

Mr. Hodge’s conduct towards his family, which through life has always been that of a Brute and Tyrant, finally has become insufferable. On Sunday evening last, unusual attention was paid to the closing of doors and windows of the house, which as soon as accomplished, Mr. H. commenced a volley of abuse the most shocking ever received by woman, he repeatedly threatened the subscriber with instant death-and provided himself with a large club which he kept by his bed side, affirming that it was his intention to sacrifice her. Symptoms of the Hydrophobia never were more strongly evinced than in Samuel Hodge, blowing, gritting the teeth, flashing eyes, incessant foaming at the mouth and threats of instant death, were his actions through nearly the whole night—this conduct induced the subscriber to calculate every moment of being destroyed—therefore on Monday morning she left his house as self preservation is the first law of nature-relative to credit, the caution was unnecessary for it could have been as easily obtained without his orders as with it.

Mr. H. is well known, and would probably deserve more credit by remaining silent.

JANE HODGE

Savannah Daily Republican, June 4, 1823.

ARCHIBALD DAVENPORT AND THE SAVANNAH VOLUNTEER GUARD

by Jeff Freeman



I am always trying to find out more about Isaiah and his family and their lives here in Savannah because the more we know about them, the more real they become to us. Recently, I was contacted by a woman from Athens, GA asking about Archibald, Isaiah's third oldest son. In our discussion, I found out that he had been involved with a prestigious volunteer militia unit the Savannah Volunteer Guards starting in 1837. He would have been 18 years old in that year and still living with his mother and brothers and sister here in this house on Columbia Square. Isaiah Jr, his oldest brother would be getting married the next year to Martha Fairfax of Virginia and his next youngest brother Henry Kollock would be entering the United States Navy. Cornelia was only 13 but I'm sure she was already showing signs of the beauty and charm that would bewitch the young men of Hartford and Yale when she attended Hartford Female Seminary in the coming years. So who were the Savannah Volunteer Guards? What was the attraction that drew Archibald Davenport to them and what role did his association with the Guard play in his life?

To answer those questions, we need to take a brief look at the role of militias in general in Georgia. Militias had been around since Oglethorpe's tenure of the Georgia colony. They were meant to be a source of military manpower that could be called up in times of need when danger threatened the colony be it in the form of Spanish

raids or Indian attacks. Membership was drawn from the citizenry and was compulsory for white adult males between the ages of 16 and 50. The colony was divided into militia districts and the commander of each district was responsible for keeping track of all the eligible men his district. Members met periodically for training with weapons and drill so that they would be ready when called to action. After the Revolution, this system was maintained with a few changes.¹

The Act of Feb. 26, 1784, passed at the close of the Revolutionary War to amend the 1778 Act, placed the age limits between 16 and 50, but still made the enrolling of the names of all residents in a Company District, by the Captain thereof, an automatic and compulsory enlistment. Under both Acts the boundaries of each Company District were determined by the Governor and Commander in Chief and were controlled by the number of militiamen residing therein, a Company being limited to a maximum of sixty-three men.²

During emergencies, the militia would be called into service for a specified period of time which could be from a few weeks to a few months. At the end of their term of service, they would be sent home. There were no dues and weapons, equipment and rations were supplied by the state or local government.

The Savannah Volunteer Guard was a different kind of militia. Since they were required to give service anyway, some men decided to form their own

companies made up of their peers. There were annual dues and these companies provided their own uniforms and equipment. They still adhered to state laws regarding regulation of the militia and when called up, they came under the authority of the state's military organization. However, rather than being forced to perform military training, they embraced it and prided themselves on their skill and precision.

Impressed with the belief that a regularly disciplined militia forms the best and surest bulwark of a republic's defense and safety – convinced that American freemen, stimulated by the impulse of patriotism, are the best guardians and protectors of that liberty which their excellent constitution secures for them – we, the officers and members of the Savannah Volunteer Guards, with a view to acquire a knowledge of military tactics, so essentially necessary in enabling us to serve our beloved country to advantage, when called to its defense, do agree to the following rules and regulations for the government of the corps, and hereby bind ourselves as soldiers and as men to their due observance, as well as to any others which may hereafter be adopted, which do not contravene the laws of this state and of the United States.³

Savannah had several volunteer militias that were well

known – the Georgia Hussars, the Republican Blues, the Chat-ham Artillery, the Phoenix Rifles and the Savannah Volunteer Guards.

The Savannah Volunteer Guards were officially recognized on May 1st, 1802. They mustered for parade and review four times per year – on May 1st, the anniversary of their founding, on July 4th, Independence Day, on January 8th, the anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans and on February 22, Washington’s Birthday. Additionally, regular meetings were held on the 2nd Wednesday of January, May, August and November. Training in the manual of arms and drill instruction took place between July and October – 1 night per week. This was traditionally the time when Savannah’s business slowed down giving the Guards’ members more time to allot to training. Training was conducted at all levels of company organization and members had to be approved by a board of review to be allowed to take the field. Since all positions within the company from commissioned to noncommissioned officers were elected from the members at large, each man had to be ready to accept and perform the duties if the ranks above him.⁴

In addition to defense, the Guard as well as the other volunteer companies in Savannah performed other duties. By arrangement with the city, each company performed a 3 month stint of “Fire-Duty” during which they answered every fire alarm between sunset and sunrise and helped police by guarding property and providing crowd control.⁵ They were also

called out on occasion to help the authorities quell public disturbances.⁶

Although Archibald was accepted into the Savannah Volunteer Guard in 1837, the first mention of him in association with the Guard that I found was in an article describing the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of the Savannah Volunteer Guards on May 1st, 1852.⁷ The celebration took place at a Savannah theater called the Athenium.⁸ In the audience sat “one of the most brilliant assemblies of ladies ever gathered within the walls of the Athenium.” On the stage, on the south side of the podium “sat the commissioned officers of the Guards, Captain James P. Screvens, Lieut. Archibald C. Davenport, Lieut. William F. Holland, and Ensign George Robertson, Jr.”⁹ It had to be a stirring sight to see the ladies in their best attire and the men in their colorful uniforms. On oration was given by Private John Screven (who would be Captain of the unit in a few years) after which a dinner was given at Le Fort’s Saloon.¹⁰ During the dinner, Lieut. Davenport was called upon to give a couple of toasts. His first was to The Independent Volunteer Battalion of Savannah.¹¹ This, of course, was the battalion of which the Savannah Volunteer Guard was part. The origin of this battalion explains a lot about the difference between the compulsory militias and the volunteer militias. State law required that all the militias of a district meet once per year and parade together as a regiment. Placement in the regiment was based on seniority of the militia so that compulsory militias or “beat”

militias were interspersed in the formation with the volunteer militias. Beat militias had no uniforms and as one might expect, were less than enthusiastic in their practice of marching in formation. This was embarrassing to the volunteer militias who worked hard on both their appearance and precision in drill. The influence of their membership was such that the Georgia Assembly passed a law in 1852 removing the volunteer militias from the regiment and creating a separate volunteer battalion from Savannah which allowed the volunteer militias to parade together separately from the beat militias.¹²

Davenport’s second toast was to honor John Screven who had earlier delivered the main address. Archibald raised his glass and said “The Orator of the Day – the eloquent and appropriate address delivered by him this day, is an evidence that he is as accomplished as an orator, as he is skilled as a soldier.”¹³

Records of Archibald’s association with the Guards is not comprehensive but we do know he maintained his membership up through the outbreak of the Civil War. There was a great deal of confusion at that time as state after state seceded from the Union. Some felt the war would be over quickly while others feared that the struggle would be prolonged. Some wanted to stay close to home while others, filled with the martial spirit and dreams of glory, wanted to be sent into action as soon as possible. Initially, the Savannah Volunteer Guard was called into service for garrison duty at Fort Pulaski and at a bat-

tery on Thunderbolt. The term length for each duty was 2 months and Davenport was now Captain of Company B.¹⁴ But Archibald was surely torn as to what to do. Two of his brothers had elected to remain with the North. Dudley was stationed with the U.S. Marine Revenue Service in New York and Henry K.'s family was living in Washington, D.C. Isaiah Jr. was out west. McCall on the other hand was working as a customs inspector here in Savannah and Benjamin Rush was probably in Savannah too as he was in the Confederate Naval service by 1861. Archibald clearly felt it was his duty to defend his home but he also may have felt responsible for looking after his mother and his family. In the History of the Savannah Volunteer Guards, Henry Kennedy says that Davenport believed that the war would be of short duration.¹⁵ After the Guard's 2 month term was up at Thunderbolt, the unit returned to Savannah and was dismissed. However, they were notified that the next term would be six months and in August of 1861 when the Guard was mustered into service again, Davenport refused to enlist. His company was sent to garrison Green Island under the command of his second, formerly Lieutenant but now Captain Stiles. Davenport was allowed to retain his commission as Captain¹⁶ perhaps out of respect for his 24 years of service to the guard but by the end of the year, he resigned. This ended his association with the Guard.

It did not, however, mean the end to his military

career. Davenport decided to form his own volunteer company and called it the Tattnall Guards. Others of like mind, quickly enrolled and it was mustered into state service.¹⁷ For a while, the Tattnall Guards remained in the Savannah area under the overall command of Archibald's brother-in-law Major General Henry Rootes Jackson. One of the more interesting assignments Davenport's company was involved in was the construction of the CSS Georgia, a floating battery that guarded the Savannah River approach to the city just off shore of Fort Jackson. In April of 1862, all of the Georgia state troops were conscripted into the Confederate Army¹⁸ and eventually the Tattnall Guards left the Savannah area to aid in the defense of Charleston.¹⁹ These events will be discussed in a later article.

The history of the Savannah Volunteer Guards is a storied one and its membership through time reads like a Who's Who of Savannah.²⁰ It is easy to see why Archibald would have chosen this unit in which to fulfill his military obligation to the state of Georgia. From his long years of service and the rank he achieved, he was a competent and respected leader. However, like many people, the turmoil and uncertainty that accompanied the outbreak of the Civil War caused him to sever his ties with the SVG, an organization for which he must have felt a tremendous loyalty and strike out on his own. He chose a path that he hoped would allow him to defend his home and be

close to his family. He discovered, however, that war obliterates the best laid plans and alters forever the lives of those in its path.

1 Georgia Militia Districts - By Alex M. Hitz, *Reprinted from Georgia Bar Journal*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (February, 1956), and published with the permission of the Georgia Bar Association. <http://sos.georgia.gov/archives>

2 Ibid.

3 Celebration of the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of The Savannah Volunteer Guards, May 1st, 1852; John M. Cooper & Co. 1852, p. 10.

4 History of the Savannah Volunteer Guards, Inc. 1802 - 1992, Henry J. Kennedy - Compiler/Editor, 1998; p. 32.

5 Ibid., p. 31.

6 Ibid. p. 29.

7 Celebration of the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of The Savannah Volunteer Guards, May 1st, 1852; John M. Cooper & Co. 1852

8 Ibid., p. 6

9 Ibid.

10 History of the Savannah Volunteer Guards, Inc. 1802 - 1992, Henry J. Kennedy - Compiler/Editor, 1998., p. 23

11 Ibid., p. 25

12 Ibid., p. 29

13 Ibid., p. 26

14 History of the Savannah Volunteer Guards, Inc. 1802 - 1992, Henry J. Kennedy - Compiler/Editor, 1998; pp. 46-47.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 CSS Georgia: Archival Study, 2007, New South Associates Technical Report 1092, Mark Swanson and Robert Holcombe; pp. 53-55.

19 War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series I - Volume XXVIII - In Two Parts, Part I - Reports, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890 <http://books.google.com>

20 History of the Savannah Volunteer Guards, Inc. 1802 - 1992, Henry J. Kennedy - Compiler/Editor, 1998

