

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Bernard “Ben” Brenman, USA, Ret. Col. envisioned a community archaeology program for Alexandria in which sites across the entire city representing all peoples and times would be valued by everyone living in and visiting Alexandria today; and

WHEREAS, Ben believed that a community working together in a partnership of residents, developers, archaeologists, volunteers and students could successfully “save, study, and share” Alexandria’s special heritage; and

WHEREAS, Ben was a founder and chairman for 21 years of the Alexandria Archaeological Commission, the first such local government commission in America; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Archaeological Commission has established the Bernard “Ben” Brenman Archaeology in Alexandria Award to recognize partners who have given significant contributions toward Alexandria’s community archaeology; and

WHEREAS, the Brenman Award acknowledges high quality work, innovation, commitment or extraordinary efforts in preservation, research, protection, enhancement, creation of historic parks and open spaces, documentation, education, public appreciation and advocacy for archaeology; and

WHEREAS, the 2013 Brenman Awards recognize the decades of work that have gone into the creation of the Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial, which will open next spring to remember and honor more than 1700 African Americans buried there during and after the Civil War and to acknowledge their descendants for their courage, strength, and perseverance; and

WHEREAS, a 2013 Brenman Award for **Outstanding Historian** is presented to Laura V. Trieschmann for her work in researching and writing the history of Freedmen’s Cemetery. As the historian for EHT Traceries, Laura devoted countless hours researching the history of the contrabands and Freedmen in Alexandria. She has produced a report that not only documents the background of the cemetery, but also elucidates what it must have been like as these destitute refugees teemed into the occupied city seeking freedom and opportunity. In addition, Laura wrote the nomination form that resulted in the designation of Freedmen’s Cemetery as eligible for listing as a nationally significant property on the National Register of Historic Places. Her work will also be used as the basis for a web site that will highlight the history and archaeology of Freedmen’s Cemetery, bringing this site to the attention of an even broader public audience; and

WHEREAS, a 2013 Brenman Award for **Outstanding Genealogist** is presented to Char McCargo Bah for her work to date in identifying the descendants of more than 100 individuals buried at Freedmen’s Cemetery. Char has spent her time pouring over historic documents like census and marriage records to connect the names of those known to be buried in the cemetery with families and people living today. Her research literally forms a bond between the past and the present. Individuals from more than 80 families can now visit the final resting place of their ancestors at the burial ground on South Washington Street. Char’s work continues to add descendant connections to the list of names that will soon be etched in bronze on the Walls of Remembrance at the memorial; and

WHEREAS, a 2013 Brenman Award for **Outstanding Archaeologist** is presented to Boyd Sipe, archaeologist with Thunderbird Archaeology, for his work in pulling together all of the archaeological research that has been done for the Freedmen’s Cemetery project. Boyd has produced reports on Freedmen’s Cemetery that provide the documentation and analysis of the 631 graves locations discovered as a result of the series of archaeological excavations conducted between 1999 and 2013. Boyd also worked on the draft for the web site and provided oversight of the construction process for the development of the memorial, ensuring that graves were protected as the memorial was built; and

WHEREAS, a 2013 Brenman Award for **Outstanding Private Donation** is presented to Champlain Stone for its contribution of 85 stones to mark the locations of graves discovered under the sidewalk at Freedmen’s Cemetery and 45 stone slabs for marking other burials at Fort Ward. This unsolicited contribution will provide important visual reminders of burial locations in long unrecognized historic cemetery sites. They represent tangible links to the archaeological, genealogical, and documentary research completed by the other award winners. The placement of the markers will restore dignity to individual lives, strengthen the bond to the past, and help to protect the graves in the future.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM D. EUILLE, Mayor of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, and on behalf of the Alexandria City Council, do hereby present the Awards for the Bernard “Ben” Brenman.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of Alexandria to be affixed this 22nd day of October, 2013.

WILLIAM D. EUILLE MAYOR

On behalf of the City Council
of Alexandria, Virginia

ATTEST:

Jacqueline M. Henderson, MMC City Clerk

