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October 30, 2009

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## Arts & Entertainment

Lifestyle Entertainment Food for Thought Out & About Dining Guide

### Patriotic group honors former Berlin slave, Civil War soldier

#### Dressed in wartime garb, men perform at Taylor House in Fassett tribute

**NANCY POWELL** n Associate Editor



Re-enactors fire their muskets on the lawn of the Taylor House Museum in Berlin on Saturday during a tribute to Isaiah Fassett, a former slave and Union soldier.

(Oct. 30, 2009) Muskets were fired in Berlin on Saturday as a tribute to Isaiah Fassett, a former slave who fought in the Civil War.

Members of the Delaware 2nd Regiment Volunteer Infantry of The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War dedicated a makeshift memorial, which they later removed, to Fassett.

Born into slavery in Sinepuxent in 1844, Fassett was released by his owner, Sarah Bruff, on Nov. 11, 1863.

That same day, he enlisted in the Union Army, which had paid his owner \$300 for his freedom. He fought at Wilderness, John's Island, S.C., and Deep Bottom, Fussel's Mills, Petersburg and Richmond, Va. After the fall of Richmond, Fassett was promoted to corporal. He was discharged

on Nov. 26, 1866 and returned to live in Berlin.

When he died in June 1946, only one Civil War veteran in Maryland was still living.

Saturday's ceremony was held on the lawn of the Calvin B. Taylor House, which displays memorabilia of Fassett and other blacks involved in the Civil War. The re-enactors said a prayer, listened to a synopsis of Fassett's life, marched and shot their muskets near the makeshift memorial of a musket, hat, blanket and other gear of a Civil War soldier.

The father of eight children, Fassett, who was known as "Uncle Zear," was the commander of the Grand Army of the Republic Post 1 of Berlin until its disbandment. Before disbanding, however, the Grand Army of the Republic officially designated the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War as its legal heir and representative. The new group was officially incorporated by an act of Congress in 1954.

The Delaware 2nd Regiment Volunteer Infantry held the tribute to Isaiah Fassett to spread the word about the organization.

"We are trying to form a camp in this area," said Jeffrey French, camp commander of the Sgt. James H. Harris Camp No. 38.

The Sons of Union Veterans is described in its literature as a civilian patriotic education group. Uniformed military elements participate in ceremonies, parades, living history programs and re-enactments.

Membership in the Sons of Union Veterans is open to all male descendants who are not less than 14 years old and are a blood relative of a soldier, sailor, marine or member of the Revenue Cutter Service who served between between April 12, 1861 and April 9, 1865 and was honorably discharged from or died in the service.

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Anyone interested in learning more about the organization should contact French at frenchej@aol.com. The Web site is www.suvcw.org.

### The Public Eye

By Stewart Dobson  
Back in the WW II era and long before, having a few chickens at home was not a bad thing because a...



### Food for Thought

DEBORAH LEE WALKER n  
Contributing Writer  
(Oct. 30, 2009)  
Exquisitely simple, enormously complex and intrinsically virtuous, the egg is one ...



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