



The Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia

Welcoming Young & Old Alike to Join in Remembering the Past and Working for an Even Better Future

**The District's Oldest Civic Organization –
Founded December 7, 1865**

**Bulletin #84
March 6, 2009**

President's Message...

One of the benefits of attending AOI's monthly luncheon meetings is the opportunity to meet members, guests, speakers and share common experiences and stories. The following is a wonderful example of just how this type of interaction can pay off:

Last February, AOI member Carolivia Herron announced at the luncheon that she was writing the libretto for an opera commissioned to document singer Marian Anderson's failed attempt to perform at DAR's Constitution Hall on Easter 1939 and to celebrate her well-known performance at the Lincoln Memorial.

Over lunch, two AOI members seated at Carolivia's and her mother Georgia's table conversed and mentioned, almost in passing, that one of their sisters had some information about Constitution Hall back in those days that might be of interest to Carolivia. A resulting email from the daughter of Washington Performance Arts Society's founder Patrick Hayes, and an accompanying 1993 NY Times article shed new light on the controversy surrounding the DAR's refusal to permit Ms. Anderson's performance in their hall. As it turned out, according to interviews with both Patrick Hayes and Sol Hurok, hall manager Fred E. Hand was believed to have been responsible for denying Ms. Anderson's appearance primarily out of spite over an unrelated incident years before. While all involved are now dead, the controversy will probably never be resolved to everyone's satisfaction; however, Carolivia has used this information in shaping the libretto for "Let Freedom Ring: The Story of Marian Anderson" composed by Bruce Adolph and commissioned by the WPAS and the Washington National Opera on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of Ms. Anderson's April 9, 1939 Lincoln Memorial performance.

Again, the AOI connects people and history to help tell a story.

Read more at: <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F0CE1DF143DF93BA25756C0A965958260>

Bill Brown

March's Luncheon Event:

Historian Kenneth W. Bowling

Peter Charles L'Enfant: The Man Behind the Plan

The first of two lectures celebrating the Centennial of L'Enfant's re-interment at Arlington Cemetery

Please join us for...

our Luncheon Meeting on
Friday, March 20th, at the Channel Inn (free Parking) 650 Water Street, SW. (Maine Avenue via Metro Rail Green to Waterfront Station/SEU, Metro Bus 70 or Downtown Circulator Bus), Social Time (cash bar) 11:45 a.m., Luncheon served at 12:30 p.m. (\$20 per person - please have checks completed and payable to AAOI@), concurrent with our Business Meeting and followed by our Feature Presentation.

Reservations are a must! Otherwise your food preference may be unavailable. RSVP to our new voice mail **202-342-1865**, no later than noon Wed., March 18, 2009.

This NEW voice mail box number is the only means to make a reservation*. Late reservations make planning very difficult for us and failure by you to cancel prior to Noon on Thurs., 3/19, may result in you being charged.

Please be prepared to leave your name, the number in your party, your guest's names, your meal preferences (Fish, Seafood Newburg, Chicken, Beef, Veggie Plate or Fruit Plate) and a telephone number where you may be contacted should we have a question or last-minute cancellation.

Future Meetings...

The AOI's 144th Year B Meeting dates and tentative speakers:

April 17, 2009 – Architectural Historian Don Hawkins presents: “L’Enfant: The Plan”

May 15, 2009 – “Historic Blair House” presented by Curator Candace Shireman

June 19, 2009 – Former AOI Vice-present and retired DC Police Chief Ernest Brown (1876-1966) will ‘return’ to this month’s AOI luncheon to reminisce about his years on the police department.

July 4, 2009 – Join AOI members and march in the annual Palisades Fourth of July Parade (10:30, Whitehaven Pkwy. at MacArthur Blvd., NW)

Sept. 18, 2009 – “They Done Killed Papa Dead!” – Author Anthony Pitch highlights his newest work on the Lincoln Assassination and Member Reminiscences (if time permits)

Oct. 16, 2009 – Historian Dr. Carroll R. Gibbs discusses the District of Columbia doughboys of World War I

Nov. 20, 2009 – Author/writer Bob Levey presents an update of his “Bob Levey’s Washington” & Annual Election of the AOI’s Board and Officers

NOTE: All meeting subjects and speakers have been invited to appear, but nevertheless are tentative. *If our published RSVP line (202-342-1865) is not answering or appears out-of-order, please call 202-342-1638.

Remember: No luncheon meetings July/August nor December/January

Note: The Board of Directors meets at the Heurich House Museum at 10 a.m. on the Monday immediately prior to a scheduled luncheon meeting.

Be Advised: In case of inclement weather, the AOI follows the closing schedule of the Arlington County Public Schools or call AOI at 202-342-1865 for last minute information.

If You Were Not At Our Feb. 2009 Meeting...

The Association of Oldest Inhabitants held its first meeting of 2009 on February 20, at the Channel Inn. There were 109 members and guests present.

President Bill Brown turned to the minutes of the last meeting. There was no newsletter issued prior to this meeting, as the meeting notification was done by postcard. Therefore the minutes of the meeting of November 21 were placed at each table for review and approval/correction. **Bob Proudley** moved, with many ‘seconders,’ that the minutes be adopted. The motion was approved.

Membership Chairman **John Daly** and Bill Brown introduced new members, first time attendees, returning members, and guests. John explained several options which he has developed to shanghai new recruits, including purchasable gift memberships and streamlined application procedures. There were 13 new membership applications. The applicants, with sponsors indicated in parentheses are: **Mary Irene Pett** (Marian Buelkin); **Kenneth Bowling** (Richard Conroy); **Dorothy Brafford** (Joanne Lynn); **Ed Wood**; **John M. Wigglesworth** (rejoining after moving back to DC); **Mary Frances O’Connor Moriarty** (John Daly); **Raymond C. Ross** (South Lynn); **Arthur Cox** (John Daly); **Bryan E. Deleo**; **Betty Claire Gilroy Lawson**; **Shannon Lawrence**;

Thomas H. Neale (Agnes Hill); and **Sumner Lyddane** (Margot Lyddane). **Gil Hill** moved, with multiple ‘seconders,’ that the candidates be accepted for membership. The motion was approved.

Treasurer **Hulit Taylor** presented a brief report. In recapping last year’s statistics she noted that in 2008 the average meeting attendance was 84 people at 9 functions; there were 331 total active members (42 new); donations total was \$4580 received and disbursed; our investment account decreased by 35% during the year, but we operated in the black. Thus far in 2009 we have 226 total active members with 8 new memberships. Donations received to Feb 20 are \$2960. Hulit mentioned and encouraged contributions to our dedicated fund efforts, namely the Phil Ogilvie Award, the Alexander Robey Shepherd Statue and the Historical Society’s Kiplinger Library, and an unrestricted donation fund.

Bill noted with sadness the passing of two AOI members: **Sara Booth Conroy**, 81, well known chronicler of District of Columbia history for the *Past* and other newspapers on January 12, 2009; and **Herbert P. Hall**, 90, a Roosevelt High School and University of Maryland graduate on January 9, 2009. In a note to Bill, Richard Conroy expressed regret that Sara’s memorial service conflicted with today’s AOI luncheon meeting but that he hoped to provide a tape recording of the service and reminiscences for AOP’s archives.

Historian **Nelson Rimensnyder** discussed the significance of

the recently issued DC quarter coin. He pointed out two significant facts--it is the first circulating coin to have an African American depicted, and it is also the first coin featuring a native Washingtonian. Nelson reports that the quarters are out and available now. Nelson also reported on another quarter program that DC has a role in---there will be a quarter with a national historic site on the reverse side and Nelson feels that President Theodore Roosevelt could be on the face, since he did so much to establish the National Park Service. The program will start in 2010, and Nelson will forward recommendations for a DC site to Mayor Fenty, similar to what he did for suggestions for the Duke Ellington DC quarter. It may be several years until the deadline is set for this; however, Nelson says that it's important to submit such suggestions early.

Another item of interest mentioned by Nelson is the Oldest Inhabitants Inc., founded in 1913. OI Inc. was founded by Afro Americans in the time of segregated Washington, and was established to be an equivalent organization for black citizens as the AOI was for white members. The organization existed until the 1970s. It was deliberately modeled along the lines of the AOI, with similar by-laws and requirements. It held meetings similar to those of the AOI, that there was one joint meeting celebrating DC's WWI veterans, and both organizations mutually supported an effort to win voting rights for all citizens of the District of Columbia to obtain representation in Congress. Nelson read the names of members of the OI Inc. who were active, and brought in a book displayed at the back of the room. He will continue researching this topic.

The principle speaker was AOI member **Dr. James M. Goode**, distinguished author, historian, and scholar. He is unquestionably one of the foremost authorities on architectural history in and of Washington. Dr. Goode explained that shortly after he started working at the Smithsonian in 1970 he was asked to organize a 6 hour walking tour of the outdoor statues in downtown DC for the Smithsonian Associates. The tour was very successful, and he began to be hounded by requests for copies of his notes. He then planned to do a 60 page booklet, which in 1974 became the beloved book "The Outdoor Sculpture of Washington, DC", of over 500 pages in length. It became a classic in a very short time, and is still sought after today. However, six years ago, in response to requests to update the book, he decided to do so, now noting that in the 35 years since its initial publication the number of outdoor statues in the area has increased from 325 to 650. Dr. Goode has selected 200 of these newer statues for the new edition of his book. It has expanded significantly, and is now entitled "Washington Sculpture: A Cultural History of Outdoor Sculpture in the Nation's Capital." Dr. Goode's talk was outstanding! He explained that there has been great growth in the number of monuments which fall into three categories: first, those that are national monuments; those that are statues of foreigners; and abstract statues. He picked 10 from each of the three

categories and spoke of them. Listening to his talk was a wonderful experience, educational, entertaining, delightfully witty, and enjoyably illustrated--it excelled in all aspects, and parallels one's reactions when browsing and then digging into this marvelous revision which the author has produced. Although slightly pricey, it is nevertheless a huge bargain and will surely endure for a long time, especially for Washingtonians.

Bill Brown reserved a few minutes for members reminiscences and questions following the talk. Several of our most noteworthy and knowledgeable members contributed anecdotes that fit into the program's theme perfectly.

It was a record attendance for our meeting and rightfully so!

Respectfully submitted,
Seymour Selig

Please visit us at our web site at <http://www.aoidc.org> or simply [AGoogle@Governor Shepherd](mailto:AGoogle@GovernorShepherd) and we'll pop-up!

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Thank You!...

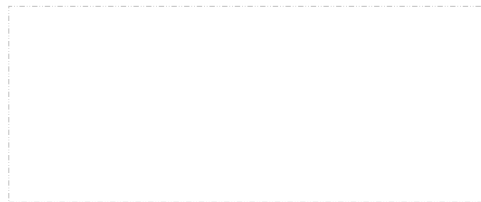
...to everyone who renewed their membership in the AOI for 2009. And, a big THANK YOU! to those who made an additional contribution to one of our funds. If you haven't gotten your renewal to us, please do so.

AOI's 2009 Budget in Brief...

At its Feb. 16th meeting, the Board approved a balanced budget for 2009 which included among other items: continued support for our community partners, funds for a bronze plaque for the Shepherd Statue and Ogilvie Award and monies to cover our memberships, subscriptions, phone charges, tax filing preparation and publication charges.

Address Correction Requested

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-- Help keep AOI alive and growing: invite a friend to join and be sure to renew your membership!
-- The free exhibits, book shop and café at the Historical Society are now open Tuesday thru Sunday, 10am-5pm!



The Heurich House Museum is the former home of the Historical Society of Washington and served as AOI's headquarters from 1956 until 2003.