



The Association of 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 – Our 153rd Year!*

*Bulletin #149
June 2018*

President's Message...

*The Franklin School Saga...
From this:*



Franklin School Coalition Button

To this:



“Planet Word... was incorporated in Washington, D.C., in 2013 as the Museum of Language Arts, Inc. The museum is thrilled to announce that its new, permanent home will be the historic **Franklin School**, at the corner of 13th and K streets in the heart of Washington, D.C.” From the Planet Word web site.

Ground was broken June 4th...planned opening is late 2019. Cindy Janke would be pleased.

Bill Brown

June's Luncheon Event:

“The Battle of Ft. Stevens and The District's Civil War Circle Fort Parks” with Loretta Neumann



Please join us...

Friday, **June 15**, at the **Capitol Skyline Hotel** (free Parking) 10 I ('eye') Street, SW. (Metro Rail to Navy Yard Station), Social Time (cash bar) 11:45 a.m., Luncheon served at 12:30 p.m.

(\$35 per person - please make your check payable to “AOI” and have it completed prior to arrival or bring exact payment).

Reservations are a must! Otherwise your food preference may be unavailable. RSVP to our voice mail **202-342-1865**, not later than noon Tues., June 12, 2018. **This 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., 6/14, will result in you being charged.** Please be prepared to leave your name, the number in your party, your guest's names for name tags, your meal preferences (***Grilled Salmon with Kang Pao sauce, Grilled Skyline Chicken Breast, Grilled Black Angus Flank Steak, or Braised Ratatouille of Vegetables***) and a telephone number where you may be contacted should we have a question or a last-minute event cancellation.

Future Meetings...

The AOI's 153rd Year -- Meeting dates and tentative speakers:

- Sept. 21, 2018 – Dr. Ruth Troccoli, “D.C. Archeology”
- Oct. 19, 2018 – Mitchell Yockelson, “Pershing’s Warriors Came of Age to Defeat the German Army”
- Nov. 16, 2018 – Warren Belasco, “Washington, DC Culinary History & Highlights” and AOI’s annual elections
- Jan. 1, 2019 – AOI’s Annual New Year’s Day Buffet Brunch at the Capitol Skyline Hotel



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 call AOI at 202-342-1865 for last minute information.

If You Were Not At Our Last Meeting...

[Draft minutes of our last meeting for approval at the June 15, 2018 luncheon.]

The Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia (AOI) held the fourth luncheon meeting of its 153rd year at the Capitol Skyline Hotel at Noon Friday, May 18, 2018 with 59 members and guests present. President Bill Brown welcomed the attendees and called for approval of the notes of the April meeting, which were printed in the current newsletter. With no further corrections or additions, a motion made by **Barbara Ioanes** and seconded by **Patricia Clark**, the notes were approved and their reading waived.

New Members: There were two new member applications for consideration: **Stephen R. McKeivitt** (who joined at HSW’s annual membership meeting); and, **Robert Ellis** (recently retired archivist from the NARA who many know for his help with DC Court Records). **Rise Cole** moved and **Bill Pederson** seconded a motion to approve the new members which was accomplished enthusiastically.

Hulit Taylor presented the Treasurer’s Report:

Membership

- 86% of our members have renewed so far this year.
- Those who do not renew by the end of June will be removed from our active membership list.

Donations

- We have received a little over \$4,100 for our Unrestricted Fund
- This money is used to further our programs

Non-Routine Expenses Since the April Luncheon

- \$500 Historical Society of Washington for 2018 Historical Studies Conference
- \$71.80 Weebly for two-year website hosting

Luncheon Report

- 71 Attended our April luncheon

Investment Account

- Our investment account continues to do well

President’s Remarks: **Bill** welcomed everyone and in addition to spouses and family members: AOI member and **Dr. William D. Pederson**, Professor of Political Science, American Studies Endowed Chair and Director, International Lincoln Center of Louisiana State University at Shreveport had with him 8 Washington mini-semester students and we’d like to welcome them: **Gelell Fayard, Mitchell Williams, Allison Liddle, Lisa Starks, Luola Starks, Frank Severic, George Pabst and Tyson Lee**. We also had with us as **Tom Neale’s guest Gary Shorter** with the Library of Congress’ Congressional Research Service, **Joan Thompson** was **Hulit’s** guest and **Andrea Thomas** was **Phil Pannell’s** guest...

Brief Announcements: **Bill** stated how we were saddened to hear that member **Damon Miller** passed away February 10th. This was brought to our attention by **Craig Howell**. [Not part of the program: Member Sallybeth Bumbrey informed us that member Joan Smith recently died without additional details at the time this was written.]

Additionally, it was brought to everyone’s attention the 9th Annual “SAYING THEIR NAMES, TELLING THEIR STORIES” event to memorialize the Walter Pierce Park African American & Quaker cemeteries, which were nearly lost to time and desecration during the 20th Century. The event is schedule for 11 am on Sat., May 26th. The event will include the reading of the names of 8,428 people interred in these two cemeteries from 1807 to 1890.

Member, historian and researcher **Mara Cherkasky** asked if anyone had information or news about the “Young Progressive Party” in the late 1940’s to please contact her for an exhibit that is being prepared at the Supreme Court.

As a reminder, **Bill** pointed out: since this time last year AOI has via our web site and page dedicated specifically to the centennial of World War I has promoted 23 programs, 11 D.C. monuments and memorials, 5 memorials on the National Mall, 17 other sites including those at Arlington National Cemetery, provided links to Arlington County, Virginia’s WWI Commemoration Task Force’s activities not to mention **Barbara Bate’s** amazing, three papers on World

War I. Just to promote our level of involvement to anyone out there (not in this room, of course!) who might think the Centennial of WWI isn't being taken sufficiently serious.

Nelson Rimensnyder challenged everyone with two history trivia questions:

Q: When Thomas Jefferson visited England he used a penknife to shaved a piece of wood from a chair in the home of what prominent literary giant? A: William Shakespeare – **Pat Clark** provided the answer.

Q: In 1918, General John Pershing directed everyone under his command to write a letter to whom? A: Their mother! – **Mary Frances Moriarty** knew the answer.

The Day's Speaker: Bill introduced author W. Douglas Fisher who along with Joann Buckley wrote "African American Doctors in World War I: The Lives of 104 Volunteers." Mr. Fisher was accompanied by Urbane Bass the grandson of one of those doctors. Fisher said that his research began with studying the role of his own grandfather, a U.S. Army Captain in World War I who had an African-American doctor, a Dr. Rucker, in his unit. Fisher's research led to him to army archives in Des Moines, Iowa, where he stumbled on the complete listing of 104 black doctors who served with the 92nd and 93rd Divisions in the American Expeditionary Force (the official name for the American units in WW I). The document gave extensive detail about the doctors, including where they obtained their medical degrees (most were graduates of Meharry, Howard, Shaw, and West Tennessee Universities, with scattered graduates of Harvard, the University of Illinois, and other schools). A chance elevator encounter with Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Director of the African and African American Research Center at Harvard, led to writing the book after Gates asked to see 15 biographical sketches of the doctors. Fisher noted that 400,000 black Americans served in WW I, of whom 40,000 were in two combat divisions, still segregated by race. The 92nd and 93rd divisions had 639 black officers and 104 doctors. Once shipped to France, the black units saw heavy fighting, particularly in the Meuse-Argonne campaign just before the armistice November 11, 1919.

Fisher singled out two of the doctors, Thomas E. Jones and Urbane Bass. Jones, a Howard University Medical School graduate from Lynchburg, VA., received the Distinguished Service Cross for bravery in treating wounded American soldiers. After the war, Jones went on to serve as the senior physician at Freedman's Hospital in Washington, D.C. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. The other physician, Urbane Bass, was from Richmond, VA. and was a graduate of Shaw University Medical School in North Carolina. Bass was killed in combat in October 1919, one month before the armistice; he received the Distinguished Service Cross posthumously for having continued to direct the treatment of wounded soldiers even after shrapnel had severed his legs. Dr. Bass is buried in the federal cemetery in Fredericksburg, VA.

Fisher introduced to the audience Urbane Bass, III, grandson of the WW I doctor, who provided details on the children and grandchildren of his namesake, a number of whom have had distinguished careers. Urbane Bass recounted the personal experience of having his house bombed as a boy

in North Carolina because of his father's involvement in school integration in 1952. Luckily, the family was not hurt, although part of the house was destroyed. The family then relocated to Los Angeles, CA, where the children grew up.

The next AOI luncheon program will be Friday, June 15, member Loretta Neumann will up-date us on developments and plans to further preserve and promote the District's Civil War Circle Fort Parks. Also, Historical Society Director John Suau will give a brief up-date on the much-anticipated fall 2018 reopening of the Historical Society and its Kiplinger Research Library at the newly restored Carnegie Library and new Apple Flagship Store.

Respectfully submitted by

John P. Richardson, Secretary

Franklin School Back Story...

For nearly 5 years beginning in 2009, the Coalition to Save the Franklin School met regularly at NY Avenue Presbyterian Church to oppose city plans to permit developers to turn the historic Franklin School into another boutique hotel. We insisted it be preserved for educational or cultural purposes. Well, after all of these years it appears the coalition was successful in its efforts. Cindy Janke (deceased) and Kesh Ladduwahetty developed a 9-panel exhibit to tell the story of the school. We are hopeful that it will be dusted off and installed as part of a permanent exhibit at the new Planet Word Museum.



Opening of the exhibit at the Historical Society in 2010. Pictured: Steve Ackerman, Jerry McCoy, Nelson Rimensnyder, Sherwood Smith, Cindy Janke and Joe Browne with Bill Brown

AOI's Newsletters are printed and distributed by:



AOI's web address is: aoidc.org and our email address is: aioifdc@gmail.com

You may also follow up on Facebook at:

www.facebook.com/www.aioifdc.org which may contain more timely events and calls-to-action than our web site.

Address Correction Requested

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Luncheon RSVP Voice-mail: 202-342-1865

The Historical Society of Washington, DC and its Kiplinger Research Library, together with portions of the Washingtoniana Division of the DC Public Library, are operating from temporary quarters in the Newseum while the Carnegie Library undergoes restoration by Apple, due for completion in Dec. The facilities will close in late summer to relocate. For information about programs and exhibits, check: <http://www.dchistory.org> or call 202-249-3955 for further information

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