



# 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 152<sup>nd</sup> Year!*

*Bulletin #140  
May 2017*

## *President's Message...*

### *Enid Haupt Garden, Part II... Application for Historic Designation Approved!*

Historic preservation is such an important cause for us that I had to write about the same issue in two consecutive newsletters. I joined with Directors Gary Scott and Barbara Bates, member James Goode and numerous Committee of 100 proponents, to testify before the DC Historic Preservation Review Board in support of Historic Designation for the Smithsonian Quadrangle and... the application was approved!



**Barbara Bates provided this photo looking from the Haupt Gardens through the Renwick-inspired gates.**



**Bill Brown testifying before the HPRB.**

This was the first time in all of my years of providing testimony on *anything* that an issue we supported was approved on the spot.

*Bill Brown*

## May's Luncheon Event:

**“Larz and Isabel Anderson: Wealth and Celebrity in the Gilded Age” with Skip Moskey**



*Please join us...*

Friday, **May 19**, 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., May 16, 2017. **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., 5/18, 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 152<sup>nd</sup> Year -- Meeting dates and tentative speakers:

June 16, 2017 -- Helena Wright: "The Smithsonian's First Collection"

Sept. 15, 2017 -- Anita Lee discusses her book "A Thread Runs through Herstory"

Oct. 20, 2017 -- "Clara Barton's Office of Missing Soldiers" with Kenneth Burke, National Museum of Civil War Medicine

Nov. 17, 2017 -- Charles Birnbaum, "The Cultural Landscape Foundation"

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.

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## If You Were Not At Our Last Meeting...

[Draft minutes of our last meeting for approval at the May 19, 2017 luncheon.]

The Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia (AOI) held the third luncheon meeting of its 152<sup>nd</sup> year at the Capitol Skyline Hotel at Noon Friday, April 21, 2017. President Bill Brown welcomed the attendees and called for approval of the notes of the March 2017 meeting, which were printed in the April newsletter. After a motion made by **Patricia Clark** and seconded by **Maggie Hobbs**, the minutes were approved and their reading waived.

**New Members:** Two new members were nominated: **Kathleen K. Dell** (Barbara Bates) and **David Maxfield** (Larry Feinberg). A motion was made by **George Hutchinson** and seconded by **Craig Howell** to approve the new members who were approved enthusiastically.

AOI Treasurer **Hulit Taylor** presented the Treasurer's Report:

### Membership

- We now have 294 members, which is 92% of the budgeted number.
- We appreciate you renewing your membership promptly.

### Non-Routine Expense since March Luncheon

- None

### Investment Account

- Our investment account continues to do well.
- 57 members and guests attended the March luncheon

### President's Remarks:

We were saddened to learn that our friend and regular luncheon attendee, **Vernon Tancil**, passed away on March 30<sup>th</sup>. Vernon, who was part of what Bill called the Van Ness Posse, was a retired National Park Service historian who served much of his career in the Pacific Northwest. His service will be at 11am at St. Paul's at 2430 K St., NW on Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>. We also learned from member **Dave Levy** that **Dudley Brown** suffered a fall during the annual Victorian Society's field trip... he is recovering from bruised ribs and contusions in a rehabilitation center in Richmond and will be there for a couple of weeks. We've mailed off a "get well" card to him.

The DC Historic Preservation Board is taking testimony in support of (or opposition to) historic designation for the Smithsonian's South Campus to include the Enid Haupt Gardens, Thursday, April 27<sup>th</sup> (AOI has strongly opposed the proposed plans to destroy the gardens.) This is a process which, if successful, will designate the gardens and surrounding area a Historic Landmark and will, for all intents and purposes, thwart the destructive changes proposed by the Smithsonian. We thank members **Amy Ballard**, **Darwina Neal**, **Barbara Bates** and others for keeping us abreast of these issues.

Bill also acknowledged the fine work that AOI Director **Barbara Bates** had done on her paper entitled, "The Emergence of American Air Power in World War I." Barbara has been AOI's "go to" person on the District's and its citizens' connection to World War I. Bill has placed Barbara's paper on the home page of AOI's web site: [www.aoidc.org](http://www.aoidc.org).

**Nelson Rimensnyder** challenged everyone with several DC history trivia questions:

Q: Who was George Washington's Secretary of State who supported limiting the height of buildings in DC? A: Thomas Jefferson - **Sara Hutchinson** provided the answer.

Q: What was and remains the tallest residential building in Washington? A: The Cairo apartments. **Francine Berkowitz** provided the answer.

Q: What downtown building was controversial since it provided a 'straight shot' at the White House? A: Metropolitan Square. **Larry Feinberg** knew the answer.

In addition, Nelson distributed several mementos from the estate of **Joe Grano**, all of which were based on Italy, Constantino Brumidi or a Congressional Gold Medal winner. **Francine Berkowitz** received an envelope of Italian lira that Joe had accumulated; **Allen Beach** received a memento for knowing that Arnold Palmer had received a Congressional Gold Medal; and **Vera Abbott** received a memento about female aviators (because she once wanted to be a pilot). We all fondly remember the late **Joe Grano** and his encouragement of preservation initiatives.

**The Day's Speaker:** Bill first learned about today's guest speaker when he was compiling historical notes on the AOI... In her book "Capital Elites," he found it interesting that the author referred to the AOI and persons that held AOI's same post-Civil War sentiments as: "...one group of disgruntled old residents (who)took steps to distance themselves from the official and un-official newcomers whom they regarded as the 'mushroom aristocracy'... in 1865, 31 of the capital's longest residents established the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia... the "Antiques"" first and most self-conscious attempt to draw a boundary between themselves and the 'intruders.' Whom to admit fostered debate: "Any white male over the age of 50 who has been a resident for 45 years could join and attend... Most importantly, '... of good personal character.'" "Its members were without clout... when proffered, their collective wisdom... was ignored...[AOI] was quickly reduced to a purely social organization... able only to live up to the first part of its constitution... to keep alive the city's history..."

So, you can certainly tell why we wanted to hear from Kathryn Allamong Jacob, as we're certain hers is the only objective view of what our organization was like back in the 1870's. Now Kathryn has provided us with yet another view of what goes on behind the scenes in Washington with her book on one of the first lobbyists: "Sam Ward, the King of the Lobby and Man About

Washington in the Gilded Age."

Sam Ward was a new and special kind of lobbyist in Washington, who created what became known as social lobbying: combining elegant entertaining with carefully chosen dinner guests who could benefit from each other's company. The son of a partner in one of New York's major banks, Sam Ward was expected to take up residence at the firm, but a brief exposure to the business sent Sam on an ostensible business trip to Europe, where he fell in love with the culture and managed to extend his stay by several years. (Ward was also the brother of Julia Ward Howe, writer of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic.") Perhaps most important in the roaring Gilded Age, no allegation of corruption or impropriety was ever leveled at Ward, who achieved his clients' goals without appearing to use unethical methods. Ward's life was full of tragedy. His first wife, Emily Astor Ward, daughter of a wealthy businessman, died giving birth to their second child, who also died. Ward's second wife, a New Orleans fortune-hunter, encouraged his Wall Street speculation, at the end of which the bank collapsed. His wife left for New Orleans with their two sons, and Ward left for California to participate in the Gold Rush, where he made another fortune outfitting the miners, only to lose it again. Despite having strong ties to the South, Ward remained a staunch Unionist, providing intelligence from his southern travels to his friend, Secretary of State William Henry Seward. By the late 1870's, Ward was growing old and tired, having made and lost several fortunes. An unexpected gift of \$750,000 from an old friend whom he had once helped out put Ward back on his feet, only to lose the boon through unsuccessful speculation. Long separated from his second wife, Ward grew old gracefully. At his death in 1884, he was heaped with tributes from a wide range of distinguished Americans and Europeans who appreciated his unique and multiple talents.

*Respectfully submitted by  
John P. Richardson, Secretary*

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AOI's web address is: [aoidc.org](http://aoidc.org) and our email address is: [aioifdc@gmail.com](mailto:aioifdc@gmail.com)

Please check out our redesigned Home Page and listen to the audio of 2016 luncheon talks by our esteemed guests at [www.aoidc.org](http://www.aoidc.org). And, follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/www.aioifdc.org](http://www.facebook.com/www.aioifdc.org) which may contain more timely events and calls-to-action than our web site.

*Address Correction Requested*

The Association of Oldest Inhabitants  
of the District of Columbia  
4425 Greenwich Parkway, NW  
District of Columbia 20007-2010

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**Officers:**

William Brown, President 202-342-1638  
4425 Greenwich Parkway, NW, Wash., DC 20007  
Jan A. K. Evans, Vice-President 301-968-4749  
John P. Richardson, Secretary 703-534-3577  
Hulit Pressley Taylor, Treasurer 202-625-0203  
Nelson Rimensnyder, Historian 202-546-4668

**Fire Department Liaison:**

Jim Embrey 571-436-7774

**Past President:**

A. L. Wheeler 202-337-0030

Luncheon RSVP Voice-mail: 202-342-1865

Beginning May 9, both HSW resources and select DCPL/Washingtoniana resources will be available by appointment 10-4 Tuesday-Friday and one Saturday a month at the Carnegie Library. The currently scheduled Saturdays are May 20 (10-4), June 10, and July 15th. Check DCHistory.org for updates.

For information about programs and exhibits, check: <http://www.dchistory.org> or call 202-249-3955 for further information

**Directors:**

Barbara Bates 202-244-2090  
Carl Cole 202-889-8813  
Margaret (Maggie) Hobbs 202-547-0964  
Jessica Hodge 301-704-5133  
Thomas Neale 202-333-6946  
Gary Scott 202-544-4862



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