



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 151st Year!***

***Bulletin #132
May 2016***

President's Message...

When we think of war memorials here in the District the ones that most often come to mind are usually those most visited or covered by the press: The World War II Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Women in Vietnam Memorial. Following closely behind these are the District of Columbia War Memorial, the African American Civil War Memorial, the Pershing Memorial, the First Division Monument, the Second Infantry Division WWI Memorial and the recently dedicated American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial. All of the memorials and monuments have at least one thing in common: they are all physical, tangible venues, created from natural and manufactured materials and bronze and have been commissioned, designed, constructed, dedicated and, if properly maintained, will last forever.

But what of those intangible memorials to the men and women who have served in our armed forces... the firsthand accounts, the reminiscences, the memories many of which are too painful to recall? These accounts are memorialized in a very different manner: the Veterans History Project of the Library of Congress. Our May speaker, Robert Patrick, will describe for us how this project came to be, its importance in documenting the experiences of many American veterans and how you might contribute to it.

Bill Brown

May's Luncheon Event:

**"The Library of Congress' Veterans History Project" with
Robert Patrick**



Please join us...

Friday, **May 20**, 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 17, 2016.

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 Thurs., 5/19, 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 (***Sundried Tomato Pesto Crusted Salmon [new!], 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 151st Year -- Meeting dates and tentative speakers:

- June 17, 2016 – Earl P. Williams, Jr., “A Civil Servant Designed Our National Banner: The unsung legacy of Francis Hopkinson”
- Sept. 16, 2016 – John Michael, “The History of Ft. McNair”
- Oct. 21, 2016 – To Be Announced
- Nov. 18, 2016 -- Melanie Choukas-Bradley, “The History of Rock Creek Park”

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 May 20, 2016 luncheon.]

The Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia (AOI) held the third luncheon meeting of its 151st year at the Capitol Skyline Hotel at Noon on Friday, April 15, 2016. President Bill Brown welcomed the attendees and called for approval of the minutes of the March 2016 meeting, which were printed in the April newsletter. After a motion made by **Betty Walker** and seconded by **George Hutchinson**, the minutes were approved as distributed.

New Members: Bill Brown presented the names of four proposed new members: **Joan Beasley Gibala** (Bill's “Cady” family cousin nominated by he and member John Cady); **Julie Williams Cain** of Tallapoosa, Georgia, her brother **William G. Williams** also of Tallapoosa and her brother **Robert G. Williams** of Alexandria, VA (discovered us through genealogical research). None were present at today's luncheon. **Mark Griffin** moved for acceptance of the new members and the motion was seconded by **John Cady** and the four new members were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Presented by **Hulit Taylor:**

Membership

- Our budgeted membership is 340
- We now have 280 members, 11 of whom are new
- 80 have not yet renewed

Donated Funds

- Thanks to your generosity, we have received a little over \$4,300 for our Unrestricted Funds

Non-Routine Expenses since March Luncheon

- \$142.00 to Early, Cassidy & Schilling for a

Director's Fidelity Bond

Investments

- Due to the success of our 150th Anniversary and donating a total of \$150,000 to like-minded organizations, the Board hopes to use the same approach for our 175th Anniversary
- Over the next 25 years, the Board would like to increase our Investment Account by \$175,000 so that that amount could be given away and there would still be money in the account

Luncheon Report

- 76 Attended our March luncheon

Bill introduced first timer **James McKay, Jr.** and **Paul Chestnut** as a first timer as a member vs. being a guest. And there were a number of guests and their hosts: **Peggy Bartlett** had with her as her guest **Paul Sonnenberg**; **Francine Berkowitz's** guest was **Judith Anderson**; **Laurea DiJoseph's** guest was **Connie Kerwin**; and **Ruth Cornelsen** was **Wally Rossmiller's** guest.

Bill noted the passing of **Austin Kiplinger's** long-time friend **Bonnie Nicholson** and reminded those present of **Nelson Rimensnyder's** annual “No Vote, No Tax” protest scheduled for the east lawn of the Capitol at 5:30 today (April 15th).

Nelson offered a series of trivia questions for everyone's consideration:

Q: What occurred on April 15, 1791? A: The first Boundary Stone was placed at Jones' Point -- **Thomas Neale** provided the correct answer.

Q: In 1835 W.W. Corcoran married Louise Morris... how old was she? A: 17 years old – **Connie Kerwin** provided the answer.

Q: Before National Airport was established there was an existing airport named for a cabinet member in the Coolidge administration? A: Hoover – **George Hutchinson** answered.

Q: Where was Thompson's Restaurant located where Mary Church Terrell often attempted to eat? A: No one knew the answer which was on 14th Street so **Paul Sonnenberg** was provided the prize as a guest.

Today's guest, **Stephen Grant**, is a senior fellow at the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training and author of "Collecting Shakespeare: The Story of Henry and Emily Folger." Even before Emily and Henry met, their lives were full of similar experiences and interests. They were from old, well to do families, were well educated and interested in many things. Emily was graduated from Vassar where she had been elected "President for Life" and Henry was graduated from Amherst where he played leadership roles in student life. After their wedding the young couple lived in Brooklyn. Emily and Henry had no children, but they were very much part of the New York scene, going to parties and visiting with relatives. The Folgers also began collecting books. Emily had earned a Master's Degree at Vassar in Shakespeare Studies so the couple was particularly drawn to Shakespeare.

Henry was obsessive about collecting books, he believed in quantity as well as quality. He liked to buy whole collections of books, not only for the pleasure of owning them, but also because he felt that the books were more valuable if he owned the only copies. Henry's purchases were always immediately labeled and stored. Storing them became quite a challenge, the couple's house was full of books and then they spread to leased storage buildings. By the end of their lives, the collection numbered 92,000 volumes.

Henry did work to support Emily and their book collection. Henry was John D. Rockefeller's right hand man. He got a law degree at Columbia University for his work with Rockefeller, but ended up running a number of businesses for him including Standard Oil (ESSO, then EXXON). Henry was fairly quiet in his jobs for Rockefeller but he did excellent work and was generously paid which helped him to maintain and enlarge his collection.

There were also books that were especially important to the Folgers. He was truly obsessed with Shakespeare Folios. These were books of Shakespeare's work. They had the words to the plays, sonnets, etc., but they also had illustrations and notes. Each folio was different, the creator interpreted Shakespeare's works in their own ways even altering the written words, adding

and subtracting whatever they chose. Henry found these re-writes interesting and just as valuable as Shakespeare's other works.

As The Folgers began to age they realized that they had to make plans for the future of their beloved books. The Folgers considered leaving their books to a college or university but they were concerned that the schools would lock the books away for safe keeping and then the public would not have access to the books. They finally decided to develop a privately owned and operated Library that would available to everyone.

The Folgers began to look for an appropriate location for the library and all of the support buildings and services it needed. By accident, the Folgers discovered a block of houses near the Supreme Court, that they felt would work perfectly. Folger slowly bought up the houses on the block as they became available. It took 16 years for him to obtain all of the houses which were then torn down for the construction of the Library.

The Folger Library, located at 201 East Capitol St. is a wonderful building in form and function. The exterior is classical and the interior design is Tudor. The Building contains the Library, a reading room for study, reception areas for events and exhibits.

The Library also contains a small 260 seat theatre which was originally built for lectures and presentations, but is now also used for the production of Shakespeare's plays and experimental plays and music.

The Folger Library was dedicated on April 23, 1932. Only Emily Folger attended the Program. Henry had died in 1930, but their Library lives on and is remarkably like what they had envisioned decades before. The Folger continues to be administrated by Amherst College.

Bill Brown announced that the next regular luncheon will be held at the Capitol Skyline Hotel Friday, May 20 when the speaker will be Robert Patrick, who will discuss "The Library of Congress' Veterans History Project."

Submitted by Bill Brown and Maggie Hobbs on behalf of John P. Richardson, Secretary.

AOI's Newsletters are printed and distributed by:



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

Address Correction Requested

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Luncheon RSVP Voice-mail: 202-342-1865

The **Historical Society's Anniversary Celebration & Annual Visionary Historian Award** is Thursday, May 26, 6-8pm at the Carnegie Library. HSW's board of trustees, advisory council, staff and volunteers invite you to join them as they celebrate the organization's 122nd anniversary featuring the presentation of the 2016 Visionary Historian Award to Lonnie Bunch, director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, which will open to the public on September 24, 2016. Members & non-members can purchase tickets: <http://www.dchistory.org/event/anniversary-celebration-and-visionary-historian-award/>

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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.