



# 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 #138  
March 2017**

## ***President's Message...***

***A Prize within a Treasure... The National Bonsai & Penjing Museum of the National Arboretum***

Whenever we host out-of-town visitors, we most always include the National Arboretum on our list of places to visit specifically because of the Bonsai collection...regardless of the season.



This month's luncheon will focus on many aspects of Bonsai...its origins and history.



AOI member Anne McClellan will chair a panel on this topic; her first AOI talk since presenting the history of the Cherry Blossoms to us in March 2010.

*Bill Brown*

## **March's Luncheon Event:**

**"Bonsai -- Stories, Inspiration, Art" with Anne McClellan, Steven Voss and Sandra Moore**



## ***Please join us...***

Friday, **March 17**, 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., March 14, 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 on Thurs., 3/16, 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:

- April 21, 2017 – Kathryn Allamong Jacob: “King of the Lobby – the Life & Times of Sam Ward, man about Washington in the gilded age”
- May 19, 2017 -- Skip Moskey: “Larz & Isabel Anderson: Wealth & Celebrity in the Gilded Age”
- June 16, 2017 -- Helena Wright: "The Smithsonian's First Collection"
- Sept. 15, 2017 – Anita Lee discusses her book “A Thread Runs through Herstory”

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 March 17, 2017 luncheon.]

The Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia (AOI) held the first luncheon meeting of its 152<sup>nd</sup> year at the Capitol Skyline Hotel at noon Friday, February 17, 2017. President Bill Brown welcomed the attendees and called for approval of the notes of the November 2016 meeting, which were printed in the February newsletter noting that he had omitted AOI's recognition of out-going Director Damon Cordon. After a motion made by **Barbara Ioanes** and seconded by **Dudley Brown**, the minutes were approved with the correction and their reading was waived.

**New Members:** Ten new members were nominated: **Melanie Choukas-Bradley** (our November speaker); **Alan K. Cole, Sr.** (Carls' nephew); **Lawrence DiJoseph III** (mother/member Laurea DiJoseph); **Paula Hirschhoff** (website); **Preston Huey** (unknown connections); **Chuck Ludlam** (website); **Jennie (Jane Miller) McDonnell** (website); **Larry Slagle** (unknown connection); **Daisy Mullett Smith** (Dudley Brown, Ms. Smith is a descendant of architect Alfred B. Mullett and a 5th generation Washingtonian); and **Judy Waxman** (Martin Murray). A motion was made by **Rise Cole** and seconded by **Charles Szlinker** to approve the new members and they were approved enthusiastically.

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

#### Membership

- 352 members which is in keeping with previous years

#### RECAP OF 2016

#### Finances

- Income from Dues covers our basic membership expenses such as the Newsletter and Telephone. Other expenses, such as Grants, are covered by Donations.
- Thanks to your generous donations, we met our Budget and had a surplus of \$105.00!

#### Average Meeting Attendance

- The average attendance at our luncheon meetings was 72

#### 2017 YEAR-TO-DATE

##### Budget

- The Board approved the Budget.
- As always, we rely on Donations to help us meet it

##### New Year's Day Brunch

- The revival of our New Year's Day Brunch was a festive occasion and plans are underway for next year's event
- 42 members and guests attended

##### Membership Renewals

- Two-thirds, actually 69%, of our members have already renewed this year, plus five new members have joined.
- If you haven't yet renewed, please do so as soon as possible.

##### President's Remarks:

Bill noted that 101 people were in attendance, a great start for the year, driven no doubt by a combination of the lecture topic and “cabin fever.”

In a departure from past practice (out of fear of excluding someone), Bill said he would no longer call-out/identify “First Timers” at our events and just say whether someone was new to our organization or a returning member we haven't seen in a long time... A number of guests were welcomed and recognized: Barbara Bates had with her **Kate Dell**; Sally Berk had with her her

mom **Betty Lichtenstein**; Dudley Brown has as his guest, new member **Daisy Mullett Smith**. **Bryant & Jonyce Cole**, Carl's & Rise's grandson and granddaughter-in-law, were present; Jim Jones had with him **Bill Dickinson**; Anita Lee, who will be our speaker in September, had with her **Raphael Branch**; Lisa Nickerson had with her **Robin Blackwood**; **Georgia Hall** was Laurana Reed's guest; and we had with us two folks who are not yet members but we hope will join: **Brigitta Sunderland and Amy Joseph**, who are working on an Adolf Cluss project and were brought to AOI by member Joseph Browne, now living in Colorado.

Both Hult Taylor and Bill had nice notes from Vince Scalco's family in response to the sympathy notes they had sent on the AOI's behalf. Bill read the Scalco family's responding note of appreciation.

The AOI continues to provide comments on Pershing Park as both the NCPC and CFA are hosting briefings by the designers and accept comments from "Consulting Parties" (not the public, yet). Bill gave a 'shout out' and 'thank you' to member **Darwina Neal** for assisting in preparing written remarks about Pershing Park. Member **Jim Johnston** (author of *The Loughboroughs and Yarrow Mamut*) will be part of a panel at the Sackler Gallery on Sunday, 2/19 at 2:00 PM on "The Art of the Koran." The museum had to increase room size due to the overwhelming response but will also live-stream it on their web site ([asia.si.edu](http://asia.si.edu)). Speaking of the Sackler Gallery, new AOI Director **Barbara Bates** had Bill bring to everyone's attention the on-going controversy regarding proposed destruction of the Enid Haupt Gardens at the Smithsonian's main entrance and encouraged everyone to write to express objections to this ill-conceived plan. **Kate Meskill** and **Juliette Smith** announced the opening of this year's Hexagon show at Wilson High School. **Hayden Wetzel** invited everyone to the next Overbeck Lecture.

**Nelson Rimensnyder** challenged everyone with a series of DC history trivia questions:

One regarding the proposed return of the VA portion of the District to the District was by answered by Vernon **Tancil**. A question regarding the Electoral College numbers in the Bush/Gore election was correctly answered by **Larry Feinberg**. A third question regarding an equestrian sculpture was answered by **Tom Walter**. **Pat Bitondo** correctly identified Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) in response to a question, and **Barbara Ioanes** correctly identified the location of one of Alexander Shepherd's residences as being at Connecticut and K, the present location of the Farragut North Metro Station entrance. All 'winners' were awarded with a unique collection of DC memorabilia provided by Nelson.

#### **The Day's Speaker:**

Bill introduced the day's speaker, John Richardson, AOI Secretary and author of the recently-published "Alexander Robey Shepherd: The Man Who Built the Nation's Capital." Bill noted that John had worked on the book over many years, punctuated by overseas assignments to distant parts of the world.

John started his talk by paying tribute to AOI for

its long support for bringing the Shepherd statue back downtown. John also noted the early Shepherd scholarship of Dr. Philip W. Ogilvie (Past AOI President) and Nelson Rimensnyder (AOI's Historian).

Alexander Shepherd left school at a young age to help the family after his father's death. After a volunteer stint in the Civil War, Shepherd launched a two-pronged political and business career, becoming the fourth wealthiest Washingtonian by 1869 and creating a political movement that led to creation of a territorial government that lasted from 1871-1874. The new government consolidated the three sections of Washington and permitted a systematic, city-wide development program. As head of the board of public works, Shepherd commenced a city-wide program of level-grading and paving streets, laying sewer and water lines, planting trees, and installing gas lights.

The development program achieved most of its results but with catastrophic management and budgetary results that saw Shepherd out of a job and disgraced. He moved his wife and seven children to a remote village in Mexico in 1880, where he spent the remaining 22 years of his life developing a silver-mining operation that never provided him the fortune to permit a triumphant return to Washington. Of the two allegations that have dogged Shepherd's reputation, one is true and one is false. He was indeed racist although typical of his place and time. Concerning personal corruption, Shepherd came out of office far poorer than he went in, and John found no evidence to support the charge.

The next regular luncheon here at the Capitol Skyline Hotel is Friday, March 17th when AOI member and Cherry Blossom expert Anne McClellan will host a panel presentation: "Bonsai -- Stories, Inspiration and Art" with Steven Voss and Sandra Moore ...just in time for spring.

*Respectfully submitted by John P. Richardson, Secretary*

[Editor's note: if John ran out of his book before you were able to purchase one at the luncheon and would still like one, please email me at [aoiofdc@gmail.com](mailto:aoiofdc@gmail.com) and John will bring you a copy to the March luncheon.]

AOI's Newsletters are printed and distributed by:



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

Please check out our redesigned Home Page and listen to the audio of 2016 luncheon talks by our esteemed guests at [www.aoiofdc.org](http://www.aoiofdc.org). And, follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/www.aoiofdc.org](http://www.facebook.com/www.aoiofdc.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

---

**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  
Jim Embrey, F.D. Liaison 571-436-7774

**Past President:**

A. L. Wheeler 202-337-0030

Luncheon RSVP Voice-mail: 202-342-1865

Activities and programs at the **Historical Society's Carnegie Library** have resumed after some unexpected maintenance was performed.

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.