



# 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 Historic Organization –  
Founded December 7, 1865 – Our 155<sup>th</sup> Year!**

**Bulletin #162  
March 2020**

## **“Casey Trees”**

*By John Richardson, Secretary*

The February 21 luncheon speaker was Gabrielle Rovegno, the Community Education Coordinator for Casey Trees, who gave a professional and well documented talk about Casey Trees and trees in the Washington area more generally. Her talk included the history of trees in the area, starting with Captain John Smith in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, noting how tobacco, the dominant regional crop, depleted the soil and required clearing vast areas for new planting. The Civil War brought massive deforestation between the forts protecting Washington, as well as space for parade grounds and soldiers' barracks. In the decade after the war, public works czar Alexander Shepherd planted thousands of trees, some of which still survive. The 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, saw massive tree removal due to development of roads and buildings; in the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, some 30% of the area's trees were removed.

In 1999, Betty Brown Casey, founder of Casey Trees, became alarmed at the devastation and made tree restoration and maintenance a personal crusade. She made her farm in Berryville, Virginia, the center of the operation, devoting 720 acres to a tree nursery. Ms. Casey put together a professional staff, backed by hundreds of volunteers, who inventoried Washington's trees as well as maintaining them over the years. As a result, Washington now has 38% tree cover, with the goal of reaching 40% in 20 years.

(Cont'd. page 3)

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

**“The DC Public Libraries: Transforming and Adapting”  
With Richard Reyes-Gavilan, Executive Director**



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

Friday, **March 20, 2020**, 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**, no later than noon **Tues., Mar. 17, 2020**. **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., 3/19, 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 (***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 155<sup>th</sup> Year -- Meeting dates and tentative speakers:

April 17, 2020 – Peter Sefton, “Preserving NC Wyeth's Recorder of Deeds Building”

May 15, 2020 – Dr. Frank Smith, “Bullets to Ballots: The Civil Rights Legacy of the US Colored Troops”

June 19, 2020 -- Mary Belcher, “A Place of the Own Making: How African American Activists Created the Mt. Pleasant Plains Cemetery”

NOTE: All meeting subjects and speakers have been invited to appear, but nevertheless are tentative.

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 recorded information.

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

The Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia (AOI) held the first luncheon meeting of its 155<sup>th</sup> year at the Capitol Skyline Hotel at noon Friday, February 21, 2020 with 49 members and guests present. **President Thomas Neale** welcomed everyone, expressing his appreciation for the support shown him for his transition to President with specific thanks to Vice-President (immediate Past-President) Jan Evans and Director (Past Vice-President/President) and thanking everyone for inviting guests and potential new members. He said that barring any corrections to the notes of the November 2019 meeting, which were printed in the current newsletter, they would stand as AOP's official account of that luncheon meeting. There were no corrections or additions.

**New Members:** There were eight member applications for consideration: **Joseph Horning** (Read about us somewhere); **Tod Lindberg** (Tom Neale recruited); **Laura Richards** (Chas. Robertson, also a member of the Committee of 100); **Kim Savoy\*** (Marie Savoy, her mother); **Walter Springman\*** (Richard Marino); (Gladys, her mother); **Anntoinette White-Richardson** (Facebook); and, **Kent Boese** (Mara Cherkasky). \*were present at the luncheon.

Upon a motion by **George Hutchinson**, seconded by **Patricia Clark**, the eight new members were enthusiastically welcomed into the organization.

Treasurer **Hulit Taylor** presented her report:

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## RECAP OF 2019

### *Finances*

- Income from dues covers our basic membership expenses, such as the newsletter and telephone. Donations help us meet other expenses, such as grants
- Thanks to your renewals and generous donations, we met our budget again last year

### *Average Meeting Attendance*

- The average attendance at our luncheon meetings was 71
- Other organization can't believe we have such a large turnout.

### *Membership*

- We had a total of 326 members
- Of those, 28 were new members

## 2020 YEAR-TO-DATE

### *New Year's Day Brunch*

- Once again, the annual New Year's Day Brunch was very festive and social.
- 77 members and guests attended
- Don't miss next year's event – it's a lot of fun!

### *Membership Renewals*

- Our Membership Renewal letter was mailed a month ago. So far 211 people have joined. That's almost two-thirds – in a month!
- If you haven't renewed yet, please do so as soon as possible.

**President Thomas Neale** welcomed everyone on the Officers' & Directors' behalf and in addition to spouses and family members: **Bill Wildtrett** was **Mary Pett's** guest; **Joanie Dawson** was **Pat Richard's** guest; **Vice-President Jan Evans** had with her **Nan King**; and **Tom Buckingham** had with him **Lori Combs** and **Richard Storty**.

**Brief Announcements:** **President Neale** brought to everyone's attention that tomorrow, Feb. 22 would be long-time member **Clinton Chapman's** 95<sup>th</sup> birthday! In addition, **Tom** paid tribute to three members we have lost since our November luncheon: Architectural Historian and author **Dr. James Goode**, **Victor Hickman** and **Kathryn Eckles**. He also reminded everyone if they enjoy these programs and luncheons and want to ensure that the AOI continues on this path, PLEASE help us to recruit new members or bring a guest to a luncheon who we are certain will then want to join. We always have membership materials available.

**The Day's Speaker:** [see cover story] The day's speaker **Gabrielle Rovegno** is the Community Education Coordinator for Casey Trees and she presented a most comprehensive, narrated Power Point program on "To restore, enhance and protect the tree canopy of the Nation's Capital."

*The program recap is provided by AOI Director Bill Brown.*

[AOI's programs may be heard at <http://www.aoidc.org/aoi-luncheon-audio.html>]

***"Casey Trees" (from page 1)***

The speaker identified several crucial roles played by trees: 1) carbon storage, 2) absorption of rainwater, and 3) cleaning the air, aside from their aesthetic value. She pointed out that conservation easements are a way for local owners of open land to obtain tax benefits while insuring that their properties will not be given over to development in future. She said that the Casey Trees website ([caseytrees.org](http://caseytrees.org)) is an excellent source of information and guidance for interested individuals.



AOI President Thomas Neale and Casey Trees' Gabrielle Rovegno.



***GWU's Masters of Tourism Administration Celebrates 45 years...***



AOI Vice-President Jan Evans presents MTA Director Dr. Liang (Larry) Yu with a certificate in honor the programs 45 years.

As part of its sesquicentennial celebration in 2015, the AOI endowed the annual Philip W. Ogilvie Award in honor of the AOI's Past-President and in recognition of his adjunct professorship at GWU.



AOI's Newsletters are printed and distributed by:



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 Home Page and listen to the audio of 2016-2019 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](https://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  
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**Officers:**

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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

Luncheon RSVP Voice-mail: 202-342-1865

This Historical Society of Washington, D.C., and Washington History Center are now open Tues. thru Sat. 10am-5pm at the Carnegie Library.



Its Kiplinger Researcher Library is open by appointment, Tues.-Fri., 10-4. Visit [dchistory.org](http://dchistory.org) for exhibit hours or to make an appointment to conduct research.

**Directors:**

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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.**