



The Association of the 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 B
Founded December 7, 1865*

*Bulletin #78
March 7, 2008*

President's Message...

I recently was asked how I felt AOI's mission had changed during its 143 year history. While the goal of the founding members, as I understand it to be, was to preserve and ***"to keep alive the reminiscences of the past and the social and paternal communion of the present and the future"*** at a time when the post-Civil War population was surging with government workers, returning soldiers, and refugees. The city was also plagued by lingering and divisive sectional loyalties. After a campaign was foiled to relocate the Nation's Capitol to St. Louis, AOI's attention turned toward supporting improvements in public works and the city's environment by supporting Territorial Governor Alexander Shepherd and his commissioner-successors.

Today, AOI continues to support the preservation of the L'Enfant and MacMillan plans for the District and supports agencies, committees and institutions that preserve the city's heritage and help tell its story.

As we continue to fund the annual Dr. Philip W. Ogilvie Award for Academic Achievement and support the Heurich House Foundation (which AOI called >home= for nearly 50 years), the AOI Board has voted this year to support the continued research of Professor Mark Mack on the Walter Pierce Park Cemeteries, the Military Road School Preservation Trust, the Annual Civil War Symposium and, new this year, the Marie H. Reed Civil War Cadet Academy and the D.C. Preservation League. All of this is possible >thanks= to the generosity of AOI members who contributed beyond their annual dues and to the success of AOI's investments. Our designated funds for the Historical Society, Shepherd Statue and Ogilvie Award remain healthy.

Bill Brown

You Are Invited..

To our Luncheon Meeting on Friday, March 21, at the Channel Inn (free Parking) 650 Water Street, SW. (Maine Avenue via Metro Rail Green to Waterfront Station/SEU, Metro Bus 70 or Downtown Circulator Bus), Social Time (cash bar) 11:45 a.m., Luncheon served at 12:30 p.m. (\$20 per person - please have checks completed and payable to AAOI@), concurrent with our Business Meeting and followed by our Feature Presentation.

Reservations are a must! Otherwise your food preference may be unavailable. RSVP to the Historical Society of Washington, D.C. **202-383-1813, no later than** noon Wed., March 19, 2008.

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., 3/20, may result in you being charged.

Please be prepared to leave your name, the number in your party, your guest's names, your meal preferences (Fish, Seafood Newburg, Chicken, Beef, Veggie Plate or Fruit Plate) and a telephone number where you may be contacted should we have a question or last-minute cancellation.

March's Luncheon Event:

The National Press Club's Centennial

AOI Members Austin Kiplinger, Don Larrabee, John Daly and Gerry Basterache Recount the 100 Year History of the NPC with Past-president John Cosgrove and Preview a Documentary with Producer Gerald Krell and Film Maker Meyer Odze

Future Meetings...

The AOI's 143rd Year B Meeting dates and tentative speakers:

- April 18, 2008 - AThreads of Time, the Fabric of History@ - Rosemary Reed Miller discusses her book profiling 38 African-American clothing designers since 1850
May 16, 2008 - Laura Apelbaum on the Jewish Historical Society's new book, A Jewish Washington: Scrapbook of an American Community@
June 20, 2008 - To Be Announced

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, the AOI follows the closing schedule of the Arlington County Public Schools or call HSW at 202-383-1813 for last minute information.

If You Were Not At Our Feb. 2008 Meeting...

The first regular luncheon meeting of the membership for 2008 was held on February 15, with President **Bill Brown** presiding. There were 99 members and guests in attendance.

Because of the tight schedule for our guest speaker, Bill Brown rearranged the agenda format so that the guest speaker's presentation could be the first item. We were quite fortunate to have popular television personality **Tom Sherwood** of WRC-TV as our speaker. Tom is also a writer for several Washington newspapers. His many fans are devoted and enthusiastic.

Tom spoke of some of his experiences as a media maven in Washington. Initially biographical, he drew from a broad variety of opinions on both local DC political scenarios as well as national topics with a political focus. Some of the subjects that he commented on included security in DC; DC monuments and jersey barriers; parking in DC; Park Service and the Interior Dept.; the Jefferson Memorial; the Nationals Stadium; Marion Barry; the Dept of Transportation; Barack and Hillary; super-delegates; the ATF bureau; conversion of rentals to condos and vice versa; blighted areas, conservation and the bottle bill; and many others. Audience interaction was strong, and but for time constraints questions could have continued much longer.

Joe Grano and **Nelson Rimensnyder** anticipated the overwhelming reception that Tom Sherwood's presentation would generate, and on behalf of AOI, Joe presented to Tom the first AOI "Enlightening the Electorate Media Award." This award consists of a cherished antique electric light bulb purloined from the marquis of the Tivoli theater when it was about to be destroyed. The citation reads "Given to Tom Sherwood, Distinguished Print and Electronic Journalism in the District of Columbia, February 15, 2008." The bulb and citation will be mounted on a handsome plaque. Thanks to Joe's foresight it will live on, enlightening the media and diffusing knowledge throughout the world. Nelson similarly presented Tom with a picture of Rhodes Tavern (among other things the

first polling place in Washington, 1802), by artist Ken Fry, together with a special invitation to a commemoration to be held

Sept 10 2009, which will mark the 25th anniversary of the destruction (never forget!) of that landmark.

A brief business session ensued.

Minutes of the meeting of Nov 16 2007 were placed on each table for review, since there was no newsletter distributed (postcard meeting notification). **Al Wheeler** moved, and **Allen Beach** seconded, that the minutes be accepted as issued. The motion was approved.

President Brown read the names of new members, and their sponsors. They are: **Regina E. Hunt**, sponsored by Hulit Taylor; **South Trimble Lynn** and **Joe Ann Minter Lynn**, sponsored by Lauranna Reed; **George R. Douglas, Jr**, sponsored by John Daly; **Pamela J. Barton**, sponsored by Rosilyn Barton; **Yvonne M. Bishop**, sponsored by John Daly; **Molly Rupert**, sponsored by Raymond Rupert; **Dorothy C. Miller**, sponsored by Al Wheeler; **Father Michael O'Sullivan**, sponsored by Carl & Rise Cole; **Mary Anne Settlemyre**, sponsored by Carl & Rise Cole; **Carole Karp, Brian Kraft**, sponsored by Bill Brown; **Albert D. Sturtevant**, sponsored by Richard Pilkinton before he died; and **Jean (Helen R. Gibson) White**. A motion to accept the applicants was made by **Allen Beach** and seconded by **Bob Proudly**. The motion was quickly approved.

A brief treasurer's report was presented by **Hulit Taylor**. She noted that the average attendance for the 9 functions held in 2007 was 74 people. The total membership last year was 323. The number of renewals as of 2/15 was 233 people. Donations received and disbursed last year was \$4000. Our investment balance as of 1/31/08 was \$191K, reflecting the decrease in current market account values. However, our financial position remains very good.

Bill noted the passing of AOI member **Stanley Nesheim** after a brief illness. **Ellen** attended today's meeting, accompanied by **Jim and Mary Pat Gaffney**. Bill noted that there were

obituaries for Stanley in both the Post and the Times. Bill provided information regarding the memorial service. Bill also mentioned the happy news that **Charles I. Cassell** was elected to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects.

Nelson Rimensnyder briefly discussed plans to rename the Benning Bridge in honor of Ethel Kennedy. Nelson believes that this would be a bad precedent. He thinks that DC bridges should be named for individuals who are Washingtonians or have a strong primary association with the District, such as the Sousa and Douglass bridges. Nelson feels that the City Council should be advised of this, and he moved a resolution to go on record to oppose the renaming for Ethel Kennedy, and to send a letter making this known to the Council. The motion was seconded by Joe Grano and approved by voice vote. Bill Brown will write to Council Chairman Gray to communicate the AOI feelings on this issue.

Bill mentioned that the Post Office Department has restored the DC cancellation postmark which they had nullified by routing mail through Southern Maryland.

Dorothy Miller said that there is a nice little area between Columbia Plaza and the Watergate, which neighborhood people have enjoyed and used informally as a park. They have referred to it as Jackie Kennedy park for many years. It was thought that this was to be officially made into a park, but little has been done by the Watergate, Kennedy Center, city authorities, or the NCPC, all of which were supposedly taking action at some time. She requested that AOI support and assist in having this area designated as a park honoring Jacqueline Kennedy. Bill asked if there were any objections, and none were raised. Joe Grano noted that Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis had strong associations with the District, being educated here (Holton-Arms School, and was graduated from GWU) and worked here prior to her marriage, conforming to the principle articulated by Nelson Rimensnyder earlier. Bill suggested that Dorothy keep him informed and that AOI would try to support favorable action.

Carolivia Herron, a remarkable author (Amazon carries 11 books that she has written) mentioned writing "Always an Olivia", which draws on both her African and Jewish heritage. She told us that she has just received a commission from the Washington National Opera to do the libretto for a forthcoming opera about Marian Anderson. The well known composer Bruce Adolphe is creating the work. Its premiere will be next February in Washington. Carolivia told us of her mother and uncle running all the way from Kenilworth to the mall in order to hear the famous Marian Anderson concert. Bruce Adolphe is including this part of history in the work. She requested that anyone who has anecdotes or other information that might be relevant to please contact her directly or via Bill Brown.

Another enjoyable AOI meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Seymour Selig

Please visit us at our web site at <http://www.aoidc.org> or simply AGoogle@ Governor Shepherd and we'll pop-up!

Our e-mail address is: aoi_of_dc@verizon.net



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Woodrow Wilson House Seeks Memoirs...

The Woodrow Wilson House is creating a cell phone guided audio tour of Embassy Row and is seeking oral histories pertaining to Embassy Row, Massachusetts Avenue, Dupont Circle and Kalorama neighborhood. This tour will focus on the architecture, history and diverse cultures for which Embassy Row is renowned. Members of AOI who would like to contribute to this exciting project are invited to contact Emily Pope at 202-387-4062, ext. 22 or via e-mail at epope@gwu.edu.

Join AOI Members for Annual Emancipation Day Rally & March...

Come join us Wednesday, April 16th at 2:30 p.m. and march from Freedom Plaza to the U.S. Capitol to commemorate Emancipation Day and call for DC Voting Rights. We will meet in front of the Shepherd Statue at the Wilson (District) Building on the SW corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 15th Street at 2:15. This will be third year that AOI has participated in the rally.

Some Background on the National Press Club...

The National Press Club was formed at the Willard Hotel in March 1908 by a group of reporters with offices across 14th Street on what was known at Newspaper Row. Club offices were in three locations until the Press Building came into being in 1926. The club is now celebrating its centennial with

a variety of programs including an hour long documentary to air on PBS at 10pm on March 31st and a gala evening of dancing, food and fun on Sat., April 5th.

Officers:

William Brown, President 202-342-1638
4425 Greenwich Parkway, NW, Wash., DC 20007
John Gill, Sr., Vice-president 202-338-5001
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Hulit Pressley Taylor, Treasurer 202-625-0203
Nelson Rimensnyder, Historian 202-546-4668
John Breen, F.D. Liaison 301-586-8866

Past Presidents:

A. L. Wheeler 202-337-3177
Harold Gray 202-248-3625

Directors:

Carl Cole 202-889-8813
John Jay Daly 301-951-9110
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Jan Evans Houser 202-234-6251
John P. Richardson 703-534-3577
Sherwood Smith 202-686-4107



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

Address Correction Requested

The Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of D.C.
4425 Greenwich Parkway, NW
Washington, D.C. 20007-2010

**-- Please renew your 2008 AOI membership if you have not already done so
-- Help keep AOI alive and growing: invite a friend to join!**