



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 #131
April 2016***

President's Message...

Back-ups are usually something we want to avoid – traffic back-ups, plumbing back-ups... the connotation is usually that of an inconvenience. Well, imagine the inconvenience if suddenly your computer crashes and you lose access to the photos, documents, letters and emails you have accumulated.

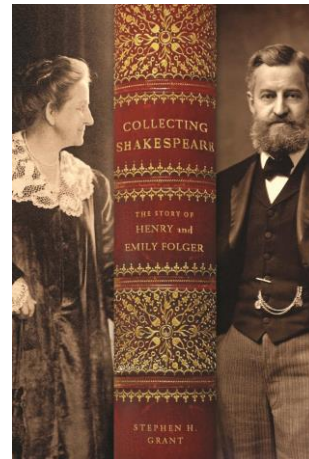
A recent workshop at the Kiplinger Research Library of the Historical Society pointed out the various threats to our paper and digital records that many of us maintain in various forms. Most everyone, hopefully, knows that at the least your important papers, photos and documents should never be stored anywhere you wouldn't normally live in your home... e.g., no hot attics, no damp basements subject to flooding. There are many resources and workshops available that go into great detail about further steps you can take to preserve those precious documents... acid-free protective sheet separators, archive boxes, etc.

Many of us, though, have become so reliant on our home computers that we don't spend sufficient time maintaining and safeguarding the documents and photos that reside on these devices. Jaime Mears, National Digital Stewardship Resident at the MLK, Jr. Library advised at a recent HSW workshop, "Back-up, back-up, back-up!" Use the resident on-board back-up features of your PC or down-load a free back-up program such as SyncBackFree and then, on a regular schedule, copy those photos and documents to an external hard drive (very inexpensive these days...

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April's Luncheon Event:

**"Collecting Shakespeare: The Story of Henry & Emily Folger" with
Stephen Grant**



Please join us...

Friday, **April 15**, 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., April 12, 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., 4/14, 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 (***Panko Crusted Baked Cod with lemon butter 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 151st Year -- Meeting dates and tentative speakers:

- May 20, 2016 – Robert Patrick, “The Veterans History Project – Interviewing the Veteran in Your Life”
- 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”

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 April 15, 2016 luncheon.]

The Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia (AOI) held the second luncheon meeting of its 151st year at the Capitol Skyline Hotel at Noon on Friday, March 18, 2016. President Bill Brown welcomed the attendees and called for approval of the minutes of the February 2016 meeting, which were printed in the March 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 three proposed new members: **Maria Limarzi*** (DC Tour Guide), **Thomas W. Walter*** (DC Tour Guide, sponsored by Carolyn Crouch), and **Elliot R. Wolff** (nominated by past Director Juliette Smith). The three were approved by acclamation upon a motion by **Carl Cole** which was seconded by **Mary Brown**. (* denotes present at today's luncheon)

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

Donations: Thanks to your generosity, we have received a little over \$4,100 for our Unrestricted Funds.

Non-Routine Expense since February Luncheon: None

Investment Account: So far this year, our investment account has earned \$270 in dividends and interest.

February Luncheon: 63 people attended last month's luncheon.

Membership: We now have 262 members, 6 of whom are new this year.

Bill Brown identified “first timers” and guests in the audience: This is **Carolyn Crouch's** first time with us since she was voted in last month, as it is for **Linda White**. **Christiane Bauer** is with us today from the Jewish Historical Society of Washington D.C. as she has a particular interest in WWII-era women government workers. **Wanda Sykes** and **Bill Lewis** are Barbara Morgan's guests; **Raphael Branch** is Anita Lee's guest; and **Ruth Cornelson** is Wally Rossmiller's guest. Now there are some folks with us today who are directly related to today's program. First, guest speaker and member **Cindy Gueli's** mom **Alberta Gueli** is here with Cindy. Member **Mary Brown**, whose photo is featured along with Cindy and Alberta on our newsletter, is also interviewed and part of Cindy's book as a WWII Government Girl. Along with Mary today are a number of her guests: **Allen Brooks**, **Minnie Brooks**, **Twana Brooks**, **Pauline Hazel**, **Vikki Ismael**, **Nathaniel McKan** and **Maurice Fitzgerald**. And, in saving something rather remarkable for the last: **Richard and Barbara Drechsler's** guest is **Mabel Sawhill**... Mabel is 102 years old and she, too, was a Government Girl who served us all during World War II in the Navy Department.

Bill made several announcements:

- Noting the death of **Josephine Beagle** on 3/16/2016 (obituary in the 'Post');
- AOI Historian **Nelson Rimensnyder** will give a talk at the Women's National Democratic Club Thursday, March 24, on “Why the District has no vote in Congress and what can be done about it.”; and,
- AOI Secretary **John Richardson** will serve as a judge for National History Day in Washington March 24 sponsored by the National Archives.

Nelson Rimensnyder presented several historical trivia topics and distributed packets of postcards printed by the late Joe Grano featuring the now destroyed Rhodes Tavern, where the issue of slavery in the District of Columbia was decided early in the nation's history.

Q: Which AOI member presented testimony in 1972 before the House District Committee on the name if Washington, D.C. became a state?

A: Groton Pittman, "New Potomac" (no one knew the answer)

Q: What is the cardboard sheet Rimy passed around?

A: A sample Republican ballot from the recent D.C. Republican primary for President. (no one knew the answer)

Q: Which three D.C.-born figures have statues in their honor?

A: Alexander Shepherd, John Philip Sousa and Duke Ellington – **Larry Feinberg** provided the answer and won a prize.

Bill Brown introduced the day's speaker, Dr. Cindy Gueli, author of the recent book, "Lipstick Brigade: The Untold True Story of Washington's World War II Government Girls." Most AOI members are aware of our organization's interest in our fellow citizens who served in both World War I and World War II. Our efforts to preserve the DC War Memorial and the 16th Street Tree Memorial have been both effective and notorious. Member **Barbara Bates** continues her efforts to document the lives of many of the men and women who perished in WWI who were District residents. Today, AOI member and American University Professor **Cindy Gueli** will tell us about some of those tens of thousands of women who descended on the District in the 1940's to create the civilian workforce that administered the war.

Dr. Gueli explained that at the outset of the war and because of the national draft that took many men into the military, the federal government was "desperate" for clerical workers in Washington. The ca. 200,000 women who eventually worked as civilian employees in government offices in Washington were mostly single and in their early-to-mid '20's; some had post-high-school education. 283,000 women joined the military, most in clerical positions, and many of them worked in the brand-new Pentagon, which was finished in 1942 and boasted air-conditioning, along with a resident population of bats and bugs. Many women worked in so-called "temporary buildings" along the Mall that were not torn down until the Nixon years in

the early 1970's. Housing the government girls was a challenge; the Department of Defense provided free housing for its employees, but civilian workers had to pay rent in buildings and private homes scattered across the metropolitan area. New buildings were built on sections of Arlington National Cemetery. African-American women were housed separately from the whites, since racial discrimination was still the order of the day (four of the 22 dedicated residence buildings were for African-American government girls).

The USO and other organizations sponsored social activities for the large numbers of single men and women in Washington during the war. Despite scattered crimes, including rape, there was relatively little crime against Washington's government girls, almost half of whom remained in the Washington area after the war.

Although the area was socially conservative, the government girls affected attitudes, particularly by women demonstrating the ability to provide needed skills and expanding the boundaries of what young women could reasonably expect. Several feature films were based on the government girl era, including "The More the Merrier" and "Government Girl," which can still be found.

The audience gave Dr. Gueli an enthusiastic response to her talk.

Bill Brown announced that the next regular luncheon will be held at the Capitol Skyline Hotel Friday, April 15. The speaker will be Stephen Grant, who will discuss "Collecting Shakespeare: The Story of Henry & Emily Folger."

Respectfully submitted,

John P. Richardson, Secretary

President's Message (Cont'd.)

...1 terabyte for ≈ \$80!) which you then keep or store in another part of the house or, better yet, at a friend's or relative's, away from your residence. Then, just to be doubly certain... back them up again to a thumb drive or to "the Cloud." Also, if you want to convert some of your memorabilia to digital format, the MLK, Jr. Library now features a digital laboratory that you can use. See dclibrary.org/labs/MemoryLab for more information.

For a decade the AOI has been calling attention to the plight of the District's historic records... Please don't be a victim of "failure to back-up" your priceless family records.

Bill Brown

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

On Saturday, April 16, the **Historical Society's** two exhibits will be open to the public for special Saturday hours!
Both [For the Record: Changing D.C.](#) and [Window to Washington: The Kiplinger Collection](#) will be available for self-guided tours, 10 am – 4pm.
This is the first weekend opportunity to view “For the Record: Changing D.C.” at the Historical Society of Washington, D.C.!

Directors:

Carl Cole 202-889-8813
Damon Cordon 301-215-7022
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.