



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 #129
February 2016***

Press Release, December 6th...

On the occasion of its 150th Anniversary, the AOI of DC – the District's oldest civic organization, established December 7, 1865 -- hosted 125 of its members, friends, affiliates and honorees at a luncheon held at the Capitol Skyline Hotel in Southwest.

"Our organization has been particularly fortunate to have made good investments over the years while at the same time supporting on-going initiatives of the District's historic and heritage organizations. We felt it was time to pay forward the fruits of our fiscal good fortunes and disburse about one half of our holdings to organizations we know would benefit from this gift," according to AOI President Bill Brown. The six organizations – the Military Road School Preservation Trust, the Friendship Fire Association Museum, the Heurich House Museum, the Historical Society of D.C., the Committee of 100 on the Federal City and the George Washington University School of Business' Masters of Tourism Administration program – have all been held close by the AOI, each reflecting their own, unique contribution to the historic fabric of the District.

The reception and luncheon featured music from the Levine School of Music, an audio-visual history of the organization, welcoming remarks by *The Washington Post's* John Kelly and a keynote address by former Mayor Anthony Williams. Every member and guest received a commemorative challenge coin based on the AOP's logo on the obverse and a unique, stylized representation of Peter L'Enfant's Plan for the City of Washington together with the District of Columbia flag on its reverse. A detailed written history of the organization by researcher/author Zach Klitzman accompanied the printed program.

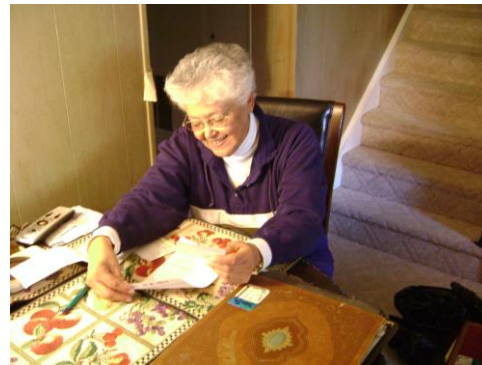
Washington Post columnist John Kelly who many long time readers know as the successor to Bob Levey, Bill Gold and other "chroniclers" of D.C. history...

(Cont'd. on Page 3)

February's Luncheon Event:

**"William D. Nixon: the Oldest Inhabitants, Inc. and Civic Activism"
With Delores Mounsey and Mera Mounsey Archambeau.**

**Including a review of the serendipitous discovery of the records of
the AOI (Colored).**



Please join us...

Friday, **Feb. 19**, 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 "AOP" 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., Feb. 16, 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., 2/18, 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:

March 18, 2016 – Cindy Gueli: “The Lipstick Brigade” (Women Workforce in World War II)

April 15, 2016 – Stephen Grant: “Collecting Shakespeare: The Story of Henry & Emily Folger”

May 20, 2016 – Robert Patrick, “The Library of Congress’ Veterans’ History Project” (tentative)

June 17, 2016 – Earl P. Williams, Jr., “A Civil Servant Designed Our National Banner: The unsung legacy of Francis Hopkinson

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 Feb. 19, 2016 luncheon.]

The Association of Oldest Inhabitants of Washington, D.C. (AOI) held the eighth luncheon meeting of its 150th year at the Capitol Skyline Hotel at Noon Friday, November 20. The draft minutes of the October meeting were approved as distributed. (Randy Clarke - motion/George Hutchinson - seconded)

Bill Brown reported three new member applications: Eleanor Pernia (by Vince Scalco), Juliet Six (by Anne Renshaw and Pat Clark) and Anne Nelson (Juliet Six), none of whom were in attendance. All three were approved for membership. (Allen Beach - motion/Barbara Ioanes - seconded)

AOI Treasurer Hulit Taylor presented the membership and treasurer's reports:

- **Membership:** AOI Membership totals 351, which is in keeping with recent years.
- **Non-Routine Expenses since the October Meeting:** \$500 Grant to the Heurich House Foundation.
- **Luncheon Report:** Attendance at the October luncheon was 67.
- **Gala:** For more than five years, we've been talking about plans for our 150th Anniversary Gala, and it will be held in two weeks. About 120 people are expected, and plans are being finalized. If you haven't RSVP'd but find you're able to attend, let us know. We can always make room, but cannot accept “walk-ins.”

Bill Brown noted the passing in the last several months of several AOI members, most recently Cindy Janke, to whom he paid tribute for her many contributions to D.C. history. Her memorial service will be held January 16 at 11:00 AM at Christ Church (620 G St., S.E.), with a reception to follow at the nearby Hill Center (921 Pennsylvania Ave., S.E.). Interment is at Congressional Cemetery. Cindy's daughter and son ask that expressions of sympathy be made to either the

Historical Society of Washington or the Old Naval Hospital Foundation in support of the Hill Center Preservation Trust.

Bill announced temporary suspension of the meeting in order to elect AOI's 2016 officers and Directors. In the absence of the members of the Nominating Committee, AOI Director Carl Cole presented the committee's recommendation, as follows.

Officers:

President: Bill Brown

Vice-President, Jan Evans Houser

Treasurer: Hulit Taylor

Secretary: John P, Richardson

Directors: Margaret Hobbs, Jessica Hodge, Gary Scott

There being no nominations from the floor, Carl called for a vote, and the slate was approved unanimously. (The other directors' terms continued in effect.)

Bill introduced today's “First Timers” and guests and recognized their hosts, as follows: Shirley Cherkasky's guest is Mary Alexander; Larry Feinberg's guest is David Maxfield; Betty Monkman's guest is Marilyn Wandrus; this is Mary Frances Moriaty's son Tim's second time with us; and Jenny Masur is Ruth Sando's guest.

Bill expressed appreciation to member Thomas Neale, who provided a biographical write-up on recently deceased member Dr. Clarence “Bud” Schatz, who served the Tenleytown community and others for 58 years. The appreciation will be placed in AOI's archives.

Brief Announcements:

- Gala: Bill reminded the audience of AOI's upcoming 150th anniversary gala, to be held at lunchtime Saturday, Dec. 5 at the Capitol View Hotel.
- Member Barbara Ioanes is receiving one of the Scottish Rite's (Masons') DC Community Service of the Year award. The award comes with an honorarium, which she has asked the Masons to donate to Martha's Table, who work and feed our homeless, and also to SOME (So Others Might Eat).
- Pershing Park: Bill said that AOI was the only local

organization that provided input to recently-published proposals to transform Pershing Park into a World War I memorial. Member Tom Neale said that the Pershing statue “must” stay in any reconfiguration of the park.

- Bill noted that AOI VP **Jan Houser** had brought a copy of **James Goode’s** “Capital Homes;” which is available on Amazon for \$75.00.

Nelson Rimensnyder posed the following trivia questions:

Q: During the Nixon years, what national figure intervened to halt planned destruction of the Maine Avenue fish market?

A: Vice-President Spiro Agnew, whose family owned a restaurant and bought fish on Maine Avenue (**Randy Clarke**)

Q: What were ticket costs for the 1924 baseball World Series, the last one in which a Washington team played?

A: Box seats \$6.00, bleachers \$1.00 (**Barbara Ioanes**)

Q: What musical instruments did D.C. original surveyor Benjamin Banneker play?

A: The violin, inter alia (**Dwayne Starlin**)

Q: What major thoroughfare was used by the original rail car traveling from Georgetown to Eastern Branch (Anacostia River)?

A: Pennsylvania Avenue (**Larry Feinberg**)

Q: What international leader was rumored, in 1866, to be interested in political asylum in the District of Columbia?

A: Pope Pius IX, who had backed the wrong side in a European war (**John Herron**)

Q: What second WWII ship was named for a D.C. figure?

A: Bandleader John Philip Sousa (**George Hutchinson** won a trip to Baltimore and a cruise aboard the *Liberty Ship John Brown*)

The President then introduced the day’s speaker, Carole Ottesen, whose topic is the Smithsonian Gardens. Ms. Ottesen is author of “A Guide to the Smithsonian Gardens,” an illustrated tour of the gardens surrounding the Smithsonian Institution. Her talk was well illustrated with photos. The speaker recounted the unexpected gift -- 11 boxes of gold sovereigns worth some \$12 million in current money -- by James Smithson that permitted establishment of the Smithsonian Institution. Dr. Joseph Henry, the first and long-time Secretary, and his family lived in the Castle. Andrew Jackson Downing, an early designer of the grounds, was tragically killed in a Hudson River steamboat disaster and never finished the job. The McMillan Plan of 1901 provided the impetus for the Mall that has remained to this day. Secretary S. Dillon Ripley, a prominent mid-century leader, paid special attention to the grounds and gardens, turning the Henry statue so that it faced the Mall rather than the Castle building. Significant changes in the landscaping have included the Hirshhorn Garden, which was redesigned to keep it from becoming too hot under the summer sun. The garden next to the American History Museum is called “Grandma’s Garden” because it contains a wide variety of items from family gardens around the country. The garden next to the American Indian Museum contains exclusively plants native to this country. Alexander Graham Bell personally brought the bones of

James Smithson back to the Institution, where they now rest. An ambitious, controversial plan by the Smithsonian Institution would see dramatic changes in the landscaping, removing a good deal of it in order to accommodate more buildings for staff and an underground garage. The Enid Haupt Garden behind the Castle Building would no longer exist. Garden lovers were urged to write to the Smithsonian and express concern if the most severe of the renovation options were to be implemented.

After the talk the President made several announcements:

- 1) There will be no New Year’s Reception, since the Dec. 5 gala will be a recent memory.
- 2) The next luncheon will be February 19, with Delores Mounsey, granddaughter of William Nixon, one of the last Presidents of the AOI Colored Incorporated, who will tell the story of her grandfather and his contribution to the AOI story.
- 3) Happy Thanksgiving!

Respectfully submitted,

John P. Richardson, Secretary

AOI’s Sesquicentennial Gala (Cont’d.)

...(including past AOI President John Clagett Proctor who wrote the “Rambler” column for the *Evening Star*), welcomed those attending by highlighting ads and stories which appeared in *The Post* in 1880 covering the gamut from tonics and ointments to theatre openings and social events. John noted that between 1877 and 1987 the AOI was mentioned 930 times in those 110 years.

The AOI’s Officers and Directors have worked for nearly two years to determine how best to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the organization. They had two goals for 2015 – their sesquicentennial year – one was to formally turn over to the Friendship Fire Association Museum (the official museum of DC Fire & EMS) a number of historic artifacts that the AOI had in its care since 1907. The second goal for 2015 was to determine how best to recognize a handful of organizations (including the FFA Museum) that have been long-time members and supporters of the AOI or by their own nature share the civic and preservation goals of the AOI. The Board recommended, again with the consent of the membership, to disburse \$25,000 to each of these six organizations for a total of \$150,000 in keeping with the organization’s 150th anniversary.

Representatives from each of the honored organizations were undoubtedly surprised when presented with their large, ceremonial checks and heard their AOI Board table hosts read the dedication to each. The first recipient and therefore probably the most taken aback was the President of the Military Road School Preservation Trust R. Barbara Johnson who, exclaimed, “I can’t believe this!” Together with their Secretary Theresa Saxton, their members and friends appeared overwhelmed.

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

Special February Election – The AOI Board has asked Thomas Neale to fill the unexpired term of our late Director Cindy Janke who died suddenly on October 22nd. Our by laws require a vote of the membership present at the next regular meeting upon being provided proper notice.

Directors:

Carl Cole 202-889-8813
Damon Cordom 301-215-7022
Margaret (Maggie) Hobbs 202-547-0964
Jessica Hodge 301-704-5133
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.