



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 – Celebrating Our 150th Year!***

***Bulletin #123
March 2015***

President's Message...

There are several commissions charged with the protection and oversight of the Potomac River, its tributaries and environs. Past AOI President Phil Ogilvie served on the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin. Phil wrote a comprehensive book "Along the Potomac" in 2000. Don Briggs of the Potomac Heritage Trail has spoken at our luncheons. AOI member and author Garrett Peck has written and spoken on "The Potomac River: A History & Guide." Yours truly served as both a volunteer and Seasonal Park Ranger for the C&O Canal National Historical Park from 2000 until 2011. There is obviously a strong connection between the AOI and our major river.

Many may recall that we supported Gail Spilsbury's research and publication of "A Washington Sketchbook: Drawings by Robert L. Dickinson, 1917-1918," hosted Gail as a speaker when her beautiful work was published and underwrote the music composition for Don Rothacker's cable and DVD production based on Gail's book and Dickinson's sketches.

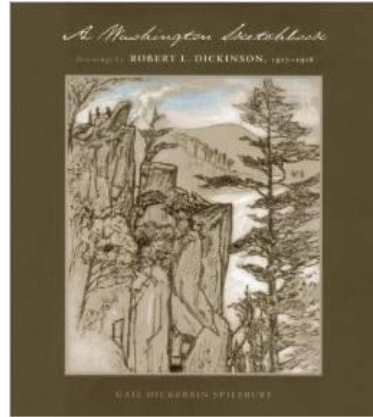
While not the broadcast premiere of Don's and Gail's video, this month's luncheon will feature the 28 minute production with additional commentary and remarks provided by Gail and Don.

So, since we are awash (excuse the pun) in Potomac River business, it is only fitting that the AOI would weigh in on nominations for the C&O Canal National Historical Park Commission with a letter to the Mayor. Please see page 3.

Bill Brown, President

March's Luncheon Event:

Gail Spilsbury and Donald Rothacker Present "The Potomac River & Environs" based upon Gail's book, "A Washington Sketchbook"



Please join us...

Friday, **March 20**, 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 17, 2015 – EARLIER RSVP TIME!!

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 (***Sun Dried Tomato Pesto Crusted Flounder, 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 150th Year -- Meeting dates and tentative speakers:

- April 17, 2015 – Rear Admiral Markham K. Rich, “The Navy Yard and the Naval District of Washington”
- May 15, 2015 – Jerry McCoy, "Peabody Room/Rebirth of a Special Collection: Georgetown Neighborhood Library Fire"
- June 19, 2015 – Rex Passion, “The Lost Sketchbooks: A Young Artist in the Great War”
- Sept. 18, 2015 – Rohulamin Quander: “The Quander Family: Since the 1670s, an Enduring African American Legacy”

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 20, 2015 luncheon.]

AOI held the first meeting of its 150th year at the Capitol Skyline Hotel on February 20, 2015, with 58 registered attendees.

The **Minutes** of the November 21, 2014 luncheon meeting were approved as distributed in the February AOI Newsletter. Moved & seconded by **Ann Renshaw** and **Barbara Ioanes**.

Membership Report: Five new members were approved, as follows: **John R. Cady** (retired Mont. Co. Homicide Detective, Bill’s cousin); **Fynnette Eaton** (Friends of DC Archives, Archivist); **Joy Holland** (new D.C. Deputy Secretary of State); **David Levy** (Dudley Brown); and, **Sarah Jane Schoenfeld** (Mara Cherkasky). A motion was made by **Allen Beach** and seconded by **Rohulamin Quander**.

Treasurer’s Report: Hulit Taylor provided the following Treasurer’s Report:

Grants

- The AOI membership contributed generously to our restricted funds – the Historical Society of Washington - Kiplinger Library, Phil Ogilvie Award, and Shepherd Statue – and to our Unrestricted Fund.
- From these funds, we disbursed \$3,250.
- The Board is most appreciative of your generosity.

Investment Account

- Last year, the total value of our investments increased by \$14,000.
- In addition, we invested \$11,000 from the sale of the 1862 Arnold Map of the Defenses of Washington.

Non-Routine Expenses

- A \$100 grant was given to the Friends of the DC Archives to assist them with setting up a website.

Investment Account

- Last year a member donated \$7,000 for maintenance of the Shepherd Statue. This money, plus \$2,613

which we had in our designated fund for the statue, has been invested in a mutual fund restricted to the Shepherd Statue.

Membership Report:

- 367 members last year. A record, by one.

Average Meeting Attendance for 2014

- The average attendance at our luncheon meetings last year was 96.

Renewals: Two-thirds of our members have already renewed this year; four new members have joined. If you have not yet renewed, we encourage you to do so as soon as possible.

Announcements: First-time members and guests were introduced, followed by some announcements that included:

Dudley Brown is recovering at the Washington Home from a series of falls.

The Washington Arsenal Explosion is featured in an exhibit at the Smithsonian’s Anacostia Community Museum: “How the Civil War Changed Washington.” The exhibit runs thru October 18, 2015, with a section of the exhibit dedicated to the Arsenal Explosion.

The St. Patrick's Day parade Sunday March 15, 2015, at noon on Constitution Ave. from 7th to 15th Streets NW, will feature the 1905 American LaFrance steamer in the parade following the DC Fire Department Emerald Society Pipes and Drum Band.

The FFA museum held an event for members of the HSW on January 10 that was well attended and very successful. Hopefully this will be repeated in the fall.

To the dismay and puzzlement of many, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser has pulled the plug on the city’s commitment to convert Franklin School to a contemporary arts facility. Bill urged AOI members and others concerned about this development to contact the Mayor’s Office and let their views be known.

Nelson Rimensnyder asked two trivia questions:

- 1) What happened on December 7, 1865 besides the founding of AOI?

Answer: The 13th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified by the states (Tom Neale).

- 2) What did D.C. Senate Committee Chair Thomas Eagleton do in 1970 of special interest?

Answer: He raised the D.C. dog license fee by \$5.00 (Rohulamin Quander)

Today's Program: The featured speaker was **Hayden Wetzel**, who spoke about "Mangy Curs and Stoned Horses: Animal Control in the District of Columbia from the Beginnings to About 1940." Hayden has served as an archivist and curator at the Sumner School Museum & Archives and has been with AOI at several of AOI New Year's Day receptions. Bill pointed out that the former Pound was for a number years located across "I" Street from the Capitol Skyline Hotel. The talk consisted primarily of Hayden reading brief news accounts about animal control in the District of Columbia over a century and a half. The speaker distributed copies of a useful document providing time lines, historical highlights, supporting organizations, and unusual animal anecdotes in addition to those cited in the talk.

In the early days Washington had wide-open spaces, and various kinds of animals roamed free: pigs, horses, cattle, goats, and – always – dogs and cats. Little by little, regulations were introduced to rein in the problem; although farm animals were usually claimed by their owners, dogs were summarily killed by the police or animal control officers. An invigorated Board of Health during the territorial government period (1871-1874) instituted comprehensive guidelines for animal control, removing the vast majority of roaming animals from the city streets. Long-time animal control czar Samuel Einstein oversaw the process, which was aided by growing urbanization of downtown Washington and reduced open spaces. More distant areas were slower to see rules implemented.

A \$1.00 dog tax was instituted in the 1820's, along with a tag; the fee doubled in 1878. Tag theft was a continuing problem, as were periodic "mad dog scares," most of which proved unfounded. In 1917 a motorized van was added to the animal control department, although young boys would often run ahead of the van and warn pet owners to corral their animals. A valuable addition to animal control in Washington was implementation of anti-cruelty regulations, which applied mainly to the dog population. Animal support groups added an important dimension of humane behavior.

Respectfully submitted by
John P. Richardson, Secretary

AOI's newsletters and publications are produced by:



AOI Recommends Canal Commissioners...

February 16, 2015

Dear Mayor Bowser:

President Obama signed legislation on September 26, 2014, reauthorizing the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Commission. From the time the park was established in 1971, this commission has provided a forum for citizens of nearby communities to participate in the formulation of park policies, to voice their ideas and concerns.

Nearly 5 miles of the C&O Canal National Historical Park lay in the District of Columbia from the DC-MD line to the Tide Lock at Rock Creek Park in Georgetown. For nearly 45 years District residents, volunteers and visitors have both enjoyed and helped to operate the reproduction mule-drawn canal boat in Georgetown and have provided interpretive programs to illustrate the rich history of the canal, its impact on commerce, its role in the Civil War and in the struggle for emancipation and freedom from slavery.

As Mayor of the District, you are entitled to appoint two representatives to the commission. The Association of the Oldest Inhabitants nominates two, dedicated individuals who have demonstrated their knowledge, concern, stewardship and concern for the care, preservation, promotion and maintenance of this national treasure within our city. They are:

Ms. Alma Gates -- ANC Commissioner, Palisades resident, Committee of 100 member and zoning authority; and,

Mr. Paul Hagan – environmental attorney, Alice Ferguson Foundation volunteer, advocated for wildlife protection along the Potomac.

We believe these two District residents would provide knowledgeable and authoritative representation for the District of Columbia on this important commission.

The Potomac River watershed, the Potomac River Gorge, the river's tributaries and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal are all natural and man-made resources precious to our region and all deserve the attention of our elected representatives and our citizens.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. N. Brown".

William N. Brown, President

Our e-mail address is: aoiofdc@gmail.com

Our web site is <http://www.aoidc.org> or simply "Google" 'Governor Shepherd' and we'll pop-up!

Address Correction Requested

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Past President:

A. L. Wheeler 202-337-0030

Luncheon RSVP Voice-mail: 202-342-1865

Weekend Research at the Historical Society --

Saturday, March 21st, 10am to 2pm at the Kiplinger
Research Library of the Historical Society's Carnegie
Building. To make an appointment, contact them at:
library@dchistory.org

SAVE THE DATE! Saturday, December 5, 2015 –
AOI's 150th Anniversary Gala. Mid-day event, reception,
elegant luncheon, entertainment, awards and more.
Mark your calendars now!

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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.**