



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 #135
October 2016**

President's Message...

For the life of me, I can't recall who placed this Aug. 5, 1915 *Evening Star* article into my hand at our last meeting, but I think it is quite interesting and timely for the season:

WANTED: LIVELY GHOST IN A HAUNTED HOUSE

Large Cash Bonus Offered for a Good and Consistent Performer

Any one knowing of a haunted house in Washington where a good, reliable ghost works about five nights a week can dispose of the information profitably to the Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District. This organization has been asked by a psychical research society in New York to locate such a house and is offered five times the assessed value of the property if it will guarantee it to be "haunted."

The unusual request was communicated to the association at its August meeting last night by John B. McCarthy, corresponding secretary. Mr. McCarthy said that the offer was a bona fide one; that the society in question is desirous of conducting some psychical experiments and that there is chance for the association to turn a nice little real estate deal if it can find a real ghost house.

On Trail of Two

The letter communicating the offer state that the society is informed there is a haunted house in Georgetown and another in the vicinity of the navy yard. It naturally expected the association, of all District bodies, to know of such property if it existed. The letter also requested the association to look for a small house in order that the observer could get into closer range with the workings of the ghost.

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October's Luncheon Event:

"Memorials in Washington, DC: Controversies & Considerations" with David Hamilton, former NCPC Staff Member



Please join us...

Friday, **Oct. 21**, 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., Oct. 18, 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., 10/20, 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 (***Sundried Tomato Pesto Crusted Salmon, 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:

- Nov. 18, 2016 -- Melanie Choukas-Bradley, "The History & Natural History of Rock Creek Park"; Anne McDonough, "Update on AOI's Sesquicentennial Gift to the Kiplinger Research Library of the HSW"
- Sun., Jan. 1, 2017 -- Traditional New Year's Day Breakfast/Brunch, 11am -- 1:30pm
- Feb., 17, 2017 -- John Richardson, "Governor Alexander R. Shepherd Biography Highlights"
- March 17, 2017 -- Panel: "Bonsai -- Stories, Inspiration, Art" with Anne McClellan, Steven Voss and Sandra Moore

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 Oct. 21, 2016 luncheon.]

The Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia (AOI) held the sixth luncheon meeting of its 151st year at the Capitol Skyline Hotel at noon on Friday, September 16, 2016. President Bill Brown welcomed the attendees and called for approval of the minutes of the June 2016 meeting, which were printed in the Sept. newsletter. After a motion made by **Allen Beach** and seconded by **Carl Cole**, the minutes were approved as distributed and their reading was waived.

New Members: Bill Brown presented the names of nine new members: **Rodney Ross*** (provided Illinois maps to us at our June meeting and was introduced to us by VP Jan Evans at a Navy Memorial event); **Judith Anderson** (nominated by Francine Berkowitz); **Virginia Baxter** (not certain of source); **Cornelius Brown***, **Linwood Brown** and **William Brown** (all recruited by their mother Mary Brown); **Joan Lee** (nominated by Molly Ruppert); **Monica Ray** (Phil Pannell); and **Kathleen Simons** (who found us via a Google search). **Barbara Ioanes** moved for acceptance of the new members, the motion was seconded by **Gordon Brown**, and the new members were approved.

Treasurer's Report, presented by Assistant Treasurer **Thomas Neale**:

2016 Financials to Date

Membership

- We had a number of renewals over the summer and now have 332 members.

- Those who did not renew have been dropped from our Membership List.

Non-Routine Expenses since the June Meeting

- \$500 to the Historical Society of Washington for half-page ad in History Awards Program

Luncheon Report

- Attendance at our June luncheon was 64.

Bill introduced **Mary Brown's** two daughters, **Marie and Mary**, who were her guests today in addition to son **Cornelius**, who was voted into membership; **Joan Chaconas** had with her **Tom Buckingham**; **Connie Kerwin's** guest was **Jude Howard**; **Brenda and Paul Pascal** were unable to attend, but their guest **John Holt** was present; **Wally Rossmiller and Ruth Cornelson** had with them **Bill Siebert**; **Mary Louise Bishop** was **Molly and Ray Ruppert's** guest; **Ruth Sando** had four guests with her, all Sandos: **Barbara, Ben, Frank and Paul**; and, **W. Earl Williams' guest** was **Cinque Culver**. We also had a number of member spouses or family members with us, including: **Gwynne Cady (John)**, **Mary Flarherty (Francis)**, **Alberta Gueli (Cindy)**, **Larry Margolis (Doris)**, **Catherine Mattingly (George)** and **Tim Moriarty (Mary Frances)**.

Bill reminded everyone again that the AOI has been selected to receive a "Making History Award" at the Historical Society's annual event being held Oct. 7th... along with former Mayor Tony Williams, the Meyer Foundation, McGuire Funeral Home and Washingtonian Magazine. HSW is also premiering an exhibit of Washington, DC iconic photographs in "District II" which has an opening reception Thurs.,

Sept. 29th from 6-8 PM (no reservations required); and this year's annual History Conference is set for Nov 3-6 at the Carnegie Library.

Bill noted that **Craig Howell** shared that past AOI member **Steve Timlin** passed away in August.

Nelson Rimensnyder presented only one trivia question: "If DC is granted statehood according to its draft constitution, why would the Old Post Office (now the Trump Hotel) be exempt from taxes unless an amendment is made to the draft DC Constitution?"

Allen Beach was the only one to offer the correct answer: The boundaries for the proposed federal enclave would envelope or protect the Old Post Office property (Ed. Square 323] on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Bill Brown then introduced the day's speaker, John Michael, author of "Fort Lesley J. McNair (Images of America)," who summarized the book and showed a number of photos from it. From southeast Washington, DC, where the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers meet, this fort has continued to protect America's capital. In 1791, Pierre L'Enfant designated it as a military reservation. The post is the third oldest in continuous operation as an arsenal, a penitentiary, a hospital, and now, a military education center. It was renamed in 1948 to honor Lt. Gen. Lesley J. McNair, who was killed in World War II. Over the course of two centuries, the fort has borne witness to the British ransacking during the War of 1812; a Civil War explosion that killed female arsenal workers; and the incarceration, trial, and hanging of Lincoln assassination conspirators. Over time, it became the home of several artillery commands, the first federal penitentiary, the US Army Engineer School, the US Army Music School, the US Army War College, and the US Army Band (Pershing's Own). Today, it has evolved into the National Defense University, Inter-American Defense College, and the headquarters of the Military District of Washington. The speaker offered to sign copies of his book, which was on sale.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned until the October 21 luncheon.

Respectfully submitted,
John P. Richardson, Secretary

President's Message Continued...

For a midsummer meeting last night's session of the association was a well-attended one. Little or no business was transacted, but Harry K. Willard, one of the vice presidents, whose home for nine months of every year is in California, presided in the absence of President Theodore W. Noyes and entertained the members at a buffet luncheon...

The August 5th article goes on to describe Mr. Willard's involvement in and advocacy for parent teacher associations in San Francisco and San Diego, California. Three new members were elected, illnesses noted and three biographical sketches were read.

I thought this was an appropriate story for the Halloween season and the account of the meeting indicates to me that there was nothing substantive or newsworthy going on at the time.

Bill Brown, President

AOI Recognized for Historic Preservation...

On Friday, October 7th, the AOI of DC along with former Mayor Tony Williams, The Meyers Foundation, Washingtonian Magazine and McGuire Family Funeral Services was recognized for our contributions to the fabric of life in Washington, D.C. Up-dates, videos and coverage will be posted to our Facebook page and website.

AOI's Newsletters are printed and distributed by:



AOI's web address is: aoidc.org and our email address is: aioifdc@gmail.com

Please check out our redesigned Home Page and listen to the audio of 2016 luncheon talks by our esteemed guests at www.aoidc.org. And, follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/www.aioifdc.org which may contain more timely events and calls-to-action than our web site.

Address Correction Requested

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Luncheon RSVP Voice-mail: 202-342-1865

The **Historical Society's Annual Historic Studies Conference, Nov. 3-6** will focus on:

- 225th Anniversary of Washington, D.C.
- Culture of everyday life
- Immigrant Communities and Diaspora of and/or in the District
- Local politics and social movements
- Neighborhood history

Call 202-249-3955 for further information or check:
<http://www.dchistory.org/programs/annual-conference>

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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.