



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 #134
September 2016**

President's Message...

On July 16th, the Military Road School Preservation Trust presented their annual Donnesa Lucas Memorial Scholarships to six deserving college students. The schools they will be attending are: Goucher, Grinnell, DePauw, Montgomery College, U. of Chicago and U. of Pennsylvania. Their areas of study include: biology, computer science, music, engineering, history and chemistry.



(L-R) Erica Morton, Arica Shepherd, Daniella Butler and Philip N. O'Sullivan. Alaya Hardy & Robel Abza, not present. (Photo by John Saxton)

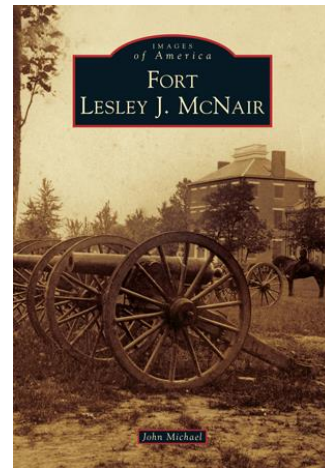
This scholarship program is one of several initiatives of the MRSPT to recognize and reward scholastic excellence and is named in honor of Mrs. Lucas, one of the founding members of the Military Road School Alumni Association.

As one of AOI's \$25,000 Sesqui-centennial grants in December 2015 was to the MRSPT, the donation should help provide similar scholarships in the future.

Bill Brown

September's Luncheon Event:

"The History of Ft. Leslie J. McNair" with John Michael



Please join us...

Friday, Sept. 16, 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., Sept. 13, 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., 9/15, 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:

- Oct. 21, 2016 – David Hamilton, “Memorials in Washington, D.C.: Controversies & Considerations”
- Nov. 18, 2016 -- Melanie Choukas-Bradley, “The History of Rock Creek Park”; Anne McDonough, “Update on AOI Gift”
- Sun., Jan. 1, 2017 – Tentative: Annual New Year’s Day Breakfast/Brunch (details to follow)
- Feb., 17, 2017 – John Richardson, “Governor Alexander R. Shepherd Biography Highlights”

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 Sept 16, 2016 luncheon.]

The Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia (AOI) held the fifth luncheon meeting of its 151st year at the Capitol Skyline Hotel at Noon on Friday, June 17, 2016. President Bill Brown welcomed the attendees and called for approval of the minutes of the May 2016 meeting, which were printed in the June newsletter. **Robert Barbuto** noted that one trivia question was omitted: Q: Which university has the largest area/acreage? A: Catholic; however, Nelson countered that was not one of the ‘official trivia questions’ for which there was a prize. After a motion made by **Barbara Drechsler** and seconded by **Mary Brown**, the minutes were approved as distributed.

New Members: Bill Brown presented the names of four new members: **Al Brault** (husband of member **Dorothy Brault** and native Washingtonian); **Rebecca Finlay** (joined after being provided research assistance via our web site); **Judith Anderson** (member Francine Berkowitz’s sister); and, **Monica Ray** (Exec. Dir., Congress Heights Citizens Association nominated by Phil Pannell). **Phil Pannell** moved for acceptance of the new members and the motion was seconded by **Barbara Bates** and the new members were approved.

Treasurer’s Report: Presented by Treasurer **Hulit Taylor:**

Membership

- Our budgeted membership is 340
- We now have 297 members, 15 of whom are new
- 60 have not yet renewed and were sent a “final reminder” in their June newsletter

Non-Routine Expenses since March Luncheon

- \$71.80 to Weebly for our web site (2-year

subscription)

Luncheon Report

- 59 attended our May luncheon

Bill introduced **Joan Beasley Gibala** who was admitted back in April and is not only one of his Cady ancestral cousins but also of **John Cady and Laureau DiJoseph**, AOI members. We welcomed back **Carroll Green, Brenda Kelly Nelum and Dorothy Hartland** who we haven’t seen in a while. There were a number of guests who were recognized along with their hosts: **Rodney Ross** was to be **Jan Evans’** guest, but Rod who just recently retired about 41 years with the National Archives not only ventured out on his own to join us today but brought copies of the Illinois State Society of Washington, D.C., which was founded in 1854, brochure of Illinois-centric memorials, monuments and places of interest here in Washington. **Pauline Hazen** was **Mary Brown’s** guest; **Dr. Patricia Fisher** was **Brenda Nelum’s** guest; and, **Elizabeth Wright** was **David Levy’s** guest. We also had a number of member spouses with us today including: **Pat Bitondo, Gwynne Cady, and Catherine Mattingly.**

Bill noted 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 Mayor Tony Williams, the Meyer Foundation, Maguire Funeral Home and *Washingtonian Magazine*. There will be more information in our September newsletter but we hope you will support the event whether or not you are able to attend. And the Walter Peirce Park remembrance event originally scheduled for June was rescheduled for July 16.

Nelson preceded his series of trivia questions with a brief report of his field trip for trivia award winner **George Hutchinson** to the *SS John Brown*

learning that, in fact, George had returned from WWII upon just such a Liberty Ship! The trivia questions for everyone's consideration:

Q: Did the DC government ever purchase a clock for the guard house in 1859? Anyone providing the correct answer will receive a dinner for two, initially offered at the Old Post Office Pavilion (Trump Hotel) or an agreed-to alternate location in the fall.

All questions relate to local luminaries for whom WWII liberty ships were named: Q: Who designed White House? A: James Hoban – **Charles Szlenker, Pat Clark's guest.**

Q: Immigrant, officer under George Washington, architect? A: L'Enfant – **Barbara Bates** provided the correct response.

Q: Long career as editor-in-chief of the Star? A: Crosby Noyes – **Larry Feinberg** provided the answer.

Q: Distinguished poet, African American, public school bears his name? A: Dunbar – Vernon Tancil.

Q: Won a design competition for the US Capitol? A: Thornton – **Herb Mintz** provided the answer

Q: Donald Trump says he will erect a statue to himself. Where does he propose to have it erected? A: near the Jefferson Memorial – uncertain who provided the answer.

Today's guest speaker member **Earl P. Williams, Jr.**, a loyal member of AOI, was this month's speaker. His topic was "A Civil Servant Designed our National Banner."

School children are taught that the American flag was the work of a single person, Betsy Ross. The story goes that George Washington felt that a flag for the Colonies would be an inspiration for the soldiers and citizens as the War continued. Washington asked who would be able to create this kind of flag. Betsy Ross, a well-known and respected seamstress was everyone's choice and the flag was made. That story is a myth passed down by Betsy's family and friends into our present time. A civil servant named Hopkinson recognized the need for an American flag and set to work.

Thomas Hopkinson was a man of many talents; he was a lawyer; a musician; a student of heraldry (the study of coats and arms and banners); and a self-taught artist. Mr. Hopkinson not only found heraldry interesting, but he also realized the value of flags and banners during war times for communication and morale building.

Hopkinson designed three different flags over time with the help of a Committee which argued and pouted and was no help. Each flag showed artistic improvement as well as a better understanding of the various roles flags play in a community. The third flag was chosen. It was the only flag with the phrase, "E Pluribus Unum" on it.

Interestingly, Mr. Hopkinson did all of this work on the flag pretty much for free. Eventually he asked the US Government to pay him for his work. Unfortunately, Mr. Hopkinson was not good at record keeping; there were no plans or money requisition forms for the work. This argument between Mr. Hopkinson and the government went on for many years with lots of anger and bad feelings, no resolution was ever reached in Hopkinson's lifetime.

Finally in 1917 Francis Hastings who was at the Library of Congress doing research for his dissertation, a biography of Mr. Hopkinson stumbled across a bundle of papers that had been shoved in a book. This was the paperwork, plans and notes that showed very clearly that Mr. Hopkinson had been the leader of all of the work on the flag.

Williams shared with the audience the story of how he became so interested in the flag and its origins. Fifth graders studied symbols and myths in America so Williams started looking up the symbols on Betsy Ross' flag in his new World Book Encyclopedia. That study became a lifelong interest of Mr. Williams and his next project is to correct the story of the creation of the American flag and give credit where it belongs.

Submitted by Bill Brown and Maggie Hobbs on behalf of John P. Richardson, Secretary

AOI's Newsletters are printed and distributed by:



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

Check out our redesigned Home Page and listen to the audio of 2016 luncheon talks by our esteemed guests.

Address Correction Requested

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Luncheon RSVP Voice-mail: 202-342-1865

The Historical Society's Annual Making History Awards and Gala: Friday, October 7, 2016

- Honoree Reception 6-7pm
- Seated Dinner & Presentations 7-9pm
- Flashback DC – Open Bar/Dancing in a 1930's Art Deco Theme 9-11:30pm

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

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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.