



The Association of the 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*

*Bulletin #92
May 7, 2010*

President's Message...

Reenactor (rē-ě-nak'-tēr) *n.*, a person who participates in reenactments of historic events...

Since I first saw Donise Stevens portray Mrs. Elizabeth (Aunt Betty) Thomas as the owner of the property seized for the site of Ft. Stevens, I have been intrigued by historians, guides, Park Rangers and enthusiasts who have taken on the role of an historic personality to bring history to life. Ms. Stevens' account of President Lincoln's promise to return Aunt Betty's property after the Civil War was a highlight of a Civil War tour arranged by AOI's past-president Dr. Phil Ogilvie for us back in 2002.

AOI members may recall the superb interpretation of Frederick Douglass by Michael Crutcher at Civil War symposia and other events sponsored by the Military Road School Preservation Trust. I have even tried my hand at reenacting by portraying past DC Police Chief and AOI Vice-president Ernest W. Brown as he recounted crimes, unrest and disorder in late 19th century Georgetown.

This month AOI members Patricia Tyson and Joyce Bailey will be joined by Theresa Saxton and their fellow reenactors of FREED (Female **REE**nactors of **D**istinction) to present our members and guests with their portrayal of African-American women of the Civil War era.

Living history is a means by which students, enthusiasts and devotees of historic periods bring the events and people of different eras to 'life' for visitors and other students of history. We appreciate and enjoy the efforts of reenactors to research and portray these characters from our past.

Bill Brown

May's Luncheon Event:

FREED: Female Reenactors of Distinction

Presented by Pat Tyson, Joyce Bailey, Theresa Saxton & Friends



Please join us...

Friday, **May 21st**, at the Channel Inn (free Parking) 650 Water Street, SW. (Maine Avenue via Metro Rail Green to Waterfront Station/SEU, Metro Bus 70 or Downtown Circulator Bus), Social Time (cash bar) 11:45 a.m., Luncheon served at 12:30 p.m. (**\$21 per person** - please have checks completed prior to arrival and made payable to "AOI" or bring exact change).

Reservations are a must! Otherwise your food preference may be unavailable. RSVP to our voice mail **202-342-1865**, no later than noon Wed., May 19, 2010.

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., 5/20, may 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 (Filet of Sole w/Scallops, Seafood Newburg, Chicken, Beef, Veggie Plate or Fruit Plate) and a telephone number where you may be contacted should we have a question or a last-minute cancellation.

>>>Note: We have had to re-price our luncheon to \$21 per person. Please bring exact payment!<<<

Future Meetings...

The AOI's 145th Year – Meeting dates and tentative speakers:

May 31, 2010 – Commemoration of the 90th Anniversary of 16th Street's World War I Memorial Grove. Assemble at 16th Street and Alaska Avenue NW at 10:30am.

June 18, 2010 – Dr. Joseph Browne and William Gilcher: Adolf Cluss and the Washington Barracks (Ft. McNair)

July 4, 2010 – Annual Palisades Fourth of July Parade -- Meet in front of Eng. Co. 29 (MacArthur/Whitehaven) at 10:30am to walk with AOI's 1905 American La France Steam Pumper

Sept. 17, 2010 – Reminiscences kicked-off by Lee Rogers with a slide presentation from the Truax Collection

Oct. 15, 2010 – To Be Announced

Nov. 19, 2010 – John Richardson presents, "Alexander Shepherd: Unresolved Issues." & Election of Officers and Directors

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, the AOI follows the closing schedule of the Arlington County Public Schools or call AOI at 202-342-1865 for last minute information.

If You Were Not At Our April 2010 Meeting...

The third luncheon meeting for this year was held at the Channel Inn on April 16. President Bill Brown noted that this is our 145th year. There were 86 members and guests attending.

A motion to approve the minutes as printed in the newsletter was accepted.

Bill announced that there were many applications for new memberships since the March meeting. This was partly due to the interest generated by John Kelly's recent column in the *Washington Post*. Of the 13 applications, 9 were as a result of the Kelly article. The new applications were for: **Ann McClellan** (last month's speaker); **Marion Redlich** (learned of AOI at the Franklin School roundtable); **Barbara Plummer** (nominated by Bonnie Duncan); and **Alice Kelly** (nominated by Leslie White). The applications due to the Kelly column are for **Robert H. Griffith**, **Gary Alston**, **Dianne Anderson**, **Daniel Harris**, **Judson MacLaury** (who lives in Seattle, Washington), **Charles Sharp**, **Michael Townshend**, **Dr. Albert Zanner**, and **Capt. Frank N. Hannegan**. A motion to accept the applicants as new members was made by **Carl Cole**, seconded by **Anne Renshaw**, and approved by all.

Bill noted the passing of former members **Louise Grass** and **John Journey**.

Treasurer **Hulit Taylor** presented a brief report. There

are 304 paid-up members. Income from member dues and member contributions are up compared to last year. Recent disbursements include \$500 to George Washington University for the Phil Ogilvie award, \$100 to the Committee of 100 (dues), a deposit for the Shepherd statue plaque was placed. Over the past 5 years members' contributions are sufficient to pay for the plaque. Our investment account increased in value by approximately \$8,500.

Bill introduced first timers and guests and discussed other meetings of interest to our members.

Our speaker today was AOI member **Dr. Mark N. Ozer**, who is the author of "Washington D.C. Politics and Place: The Historical Geography of the District of Columbia." Although he is a professor of neurology, he was extremely interested in the growth of cities, and after moving to Washington in 1964 he soon found himself teaching a course in Capital history. Mark presented a very interesting illustrated tour of the interaction of history and politics in DC, starting with the 1790's up to the present time. He has stressed answering questions of Who, Why, What, Where, and When in his overview of the development of the national capital. His views offer different insights regarding the motivating forces in the growth of DC. For example he considers that the most important building built in DC after the Civil War era was the State, War, and Navy Department Building. The reason for this belief is that this construction was a commitment by the government to maintaining Washington DC as the seat of government executive departments, at the time when political power was being brought to move to St. Louis. Mark's lecture was replete with many such insights. The audience very much

enjoyed the presentation, which frequently displayed his erudition as well as his humor.

Respectfully submitted by
Seymour Selig, Secretary

Please visit us at our web site at <http://www.aoidc.org> or simply "Google" Governor Shepherd and we'll pop-up!

Our e-mail address is: aoidc@verizon.net

AOI's newsletters and publications are printed and assembled by the staff of FedEx Office of Georgetown.



AOI is a member of Cultural Tourism DC:



Historic Mount Pleasant Applies to Humanities Council for Grant, Seeks AOI Members' Reminiscences and Recollections...

Mount Pleasant has been a designated historic district under D.C. Law 2-144 since 1987. Historic Mount Pleasant proposes to research and document the evolution of both its physical and commercial features and to place these developments within their broader historical context. Information from building permits, including original drawings, will be compiled along with the identities of individual property and business owners and the nature of business conducted at particular locations and their dates of operation. The distinguishing architectural features of the buildings will be identified and described. Residents and former residents of the neighborhood will be invited to provide personal recollections of interactions with Mount Pleasant businesses.

The primary goal is to educate and inform both merchants and residents of the rich history in their midst, hopefully inspiring a respect for the architectural heritage and informing revitalization plans. The current condition of the commercial corridor is an issue of utmost concern to many residents of the neighborhood. In addition to alterations that obscured or obliterated architectural details, buildings have long been allowed to deteriorate, to the point where in many cases the original appearance is not apparent. Further, recent fires and business closings have created dead spaces along the street.

HMP has informed the Mount Pleasant Business Association and Mount Pleasant Main Street of its intention to undertake this research and has also obtained the agreement of the Association of Oldest Inhabitants (AOI) to publicize these activities through its network and provide a letter in support of the grant application.

While volunteers assist with the historical research, HMP will publicize their efforts by visiting businesses and showing them primary source material for their locations as it is identified and copied. Distribution of the pamphlet in the fall will be made by personal delivery to the businesses, and several will be selected as points of distribution for the pamphlet. The pamphlet will announce the availability of the research paper on our website. Hard copies of the research paper will also be placed in the HMP file at the Mount Pleasant Library.

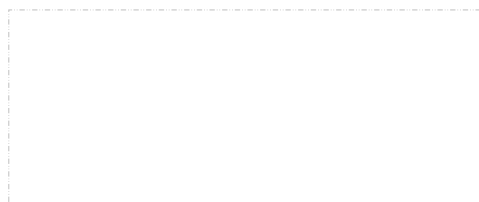
AOI members who have recollections of Mount Pleasant and would be willing to share them and become a part of the research in this important project are asked to contact Fay Armstrong at historicmtp@aol.com and 387-2734.

Al Wheeler Recognized by DC City Council...

On April 20th, the DC City Council recognized AOI's Past-president with a Ceremonial Resolution naming March 2, 2010 as "Al Wheeler Day." Among his many friends and associates were several AOI members, Al's son Jim and a number of Al's former tennis buddies. The Resolution was presented by its sponsor Ward 2 District Councilmember Jack Evans.

Address Correction Requested

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- ◆ Help keep AOI alive and strong: invite friends to join and be sure to renew your membership!
- ◆ Visit the Historical Society and Kiplinger Research Library at the Historic Carnegie Building. www.historydc.org. Library hours: Tue-Sat, 10-5
- ◆ Support the Restoration of Documents & Artifacts at Historic Peabody Room www.dcpfoundation.org



The Heurich House Museum is the former home of the Historical Society of Washington and served as AOI's headquarters from 1956 until 2003.