

Philip Lee Phillips Society

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As Chairman of the Steering Committee, I am pleased to report that our annual conference *Visualizing the Nation's Capital: Two Centuries of Mapping of Washington, D.C.* was a great success. We received more than 600 RSVPs for the event, and over the course of two days, the conference halls were full. We heard a variety of interesting lectures on historical geography, current issues and the use of technology for scholarship and tourism. A complete wrap up of the conference appears in this issue of the newsletter.

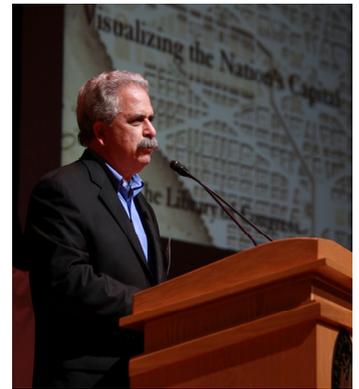
I believe that there were a few contributing factors that led to us hitting a homerun, which I would like to share with you.

We had the former mayor of D.C., the Honorable Anthony Williams, as the keynote speaker. He talked about the role of the mayor as city planner. We learned that he is a map enthusiast and spent his summer months while attending Yale University, selling maps throughout New England. We always like to hear about those kinds of connections.

The promotion was top-notch. An article appeared

in the May 14th edition of the *Washington Post* prior to the event. G&M Chief Ralph E. Ehrenberg, Assistant Chief Roberta Stevens and Reference Specialist Edward Redmond, worked closely with the reporter Michael Ruane. They pulled out all the stops, showing him interesting pieces from the collection and offered historical insight related to those maps. The *Roll Call* published an article as well. The Division designed a beautiful flyer, advertised the event online and in our very own newsletter. The Steering Committee has encouraged the Division to further develop their relationship with Mr. Ruane and other reporters.

Although we are happy about the results of our conference, we are not resting on our laurels. We will continue to send you a quarterly newsletter. We have prepared a variety of topics that should be of interest. In terms of next year's conference, we are considering subjects, including mapping the ocean floor and mapping Asia from the perspectives of West and East. For the scholars amongst us, we plan to publish two occa-

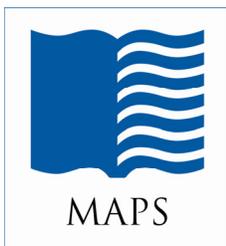


George Tobolowsky, Chair of the Philip Lee Phillips Steering Committee, opens the conference on Mapping D.C.

sional papers this year. Papers under consideration include maps of early American history, North Carolina maps, maps of the War of 1812 and World War I military and diplomatic maps.

Following the conference, the Steering Committee met to conduct the business of the organization. We received reports from Chief Ralph E. Ehrenberg and Assistant Chief Roberta Stevens on financial matters. Ryan Moore, the editor of our newsletter, gave a report on publications. Robert Morris provided an update on map acquisitions,

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News and information about the premier map collections of the Library of Congress.

Visualizing the Nation's Capital

Annual Map Conference a Great Success

Washington is a city of marvel and contradiction.

A city on a hill, she was built upon a swamp. She shines as a light of freedom, yet her shadows sheltered slavery and later racial divide. Her city plan is celebrated, but the face of her planner, L'Enfant, is mysterious – the only authenticated portrait that exists is a silhouette. She withstood the fires of war, but the future of her streets, waterfront and neighborhoods are debated.

Those were some of the major points made at “Visualizing the Nation’s Capital: Two Centuries of Mapping Washington, D.C.,” a conference that drew more than 650 people to the Library of Congress on May 18 and 19.

The event was sponsored by the Philip Lee Phillips Society and organized by G&M under the direction of Chief Ralph E. Ehrenberg, Assistant Chief Roberta Stevens and Reference Specialist Edward Redmond.

Librarian of Congress James H. Billington delivered introductory remarks, encouraging attendees to research and report on the 5,000 maps of the city held by the Library.

Two of the Library’s treasures – the manuscript of Pierre Charles L'Enfant’s plan of Washington, D.C., and the subsequent engraving by Andrew Ellicott, which was a modification of the sacked L'Enfant’s design – were centerpieces of discussion among the speakers. (*Editor’s note: Both maps appear on the next page.*)

Former D.C. Mayor Anthony A. Williams, delivering the keynote address, spoke about the mayor’s role as city planner. When gazing upon a map, he sees “tensions.” Chief among those issues has

been the lack of long-range city planning and input from all stakeholders, he said.

Historical Lessons

Settling on a location for the nation’s capital divided early lawmakers – some 30 places were suggested, said Richard W. Stephenson, who spent 45 years in G&M as a specialist in acquisitions and reference.

In 1791, George Washington picked the exact site. Ellicott was commissioned to survey the border lines and L'Enfant charged with creating a city plan. News of the coming federal capital led speculators to purchase land that was described as “wavy and uneven.” It required draining and cleansing because of the swamps, Stephenson said. The swamps would dog the city’s residents for decades to come.

Ellicott’s surveying work was a difficult task, Chas Langelan, a professional surveyor and Director of the Surveyors Historical Society reminded the audience. He pointed to the inhospitable environment and the limitations of the tools at Ellicott’s disposal.

Despite the daunting odds, Ellicott was prepared for the challenge, because he had received excellent training. His teacher was David Rittenhouse who learned from the famous surveyors Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, the men responsible for the 1763-1768 Mason-Dixon Line survey.

Benjamin Banneker, an African-American mathematician and astronomer, assisted Ellicott. In order to determine their geographic position, the



Former D.C. Mayor Anthony A. Williams delivered the keynote address on the topic of mayor as city planner.

men had to use instruments to look directly upwards to observe the heavens. This meant a man was reclining on his back in the elements, often waiting for hours on end, to get a reading.

The survey work was exceptional. “Ellicott’s survey of Washington was three times better than the Colonial-era norm,” Langelan said, “The measurements of longitude and latitude were within 200 feet.”

The Civil War accelerated the city’s growth. The population burgeoned from some 60,000 people to more than 200,000. The modern city began to take shape, in ways deviating from L'Enfant’s plan.

In 1901, the Senate Park Commission Plan, often called the McMillan plan, aimed to reconcile competing visions of the city. Major projects, such as the National Mall and Union Station, were completed. Nearby slums were razed, inspired by the City Beautiful movement, which aimed to build civic virtue through grand architecture. The

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Mapping the Capital



L'Enfant Plan

Maj. Pierre Charles L'Enfant, a French artist, engineer and a wartime friend of George Washington, was commissioned to create a plan for America's new capital city. The task was Herculean: The capital was intended to stand for the power, liberty, and prosperity of the new republic, incomparable to any other city. The map depicted here is a facsimile, as the original is faded and difficult to view.



Ellicott Plan

Andrew Ellicott succeeded L'Enfant and revised portions of the plan by realigning and straightening Massachusetts Avenue, removing several plazas and short avenues, and reconfiguring the borders of the future Judiciary Square. Ellicott's revisions shaped the capital city's development.



View looking northwest from Anacostia

John L. Trout's 1901 bird's-eye view of Washington, D.C., depicts the capital on the verge of transforming into a modern city. The focal points include the Capitol building, White House and Washington Monument. The obelisk was completed in 1888 and a year later was superseded by the Eiffel Tower as the world's tallest structure.

Michler's Plan for Rock Creek Park

Need to Escape Disease and "Bad Air"



In 1866, Maj. Nathaniel Michler searched for a location for a presidential mansion away from pestilential conditions near the White House and appropriate land for a grand city park. Although no action was taken on Michler's report, it helped propel the idea for the construction of Rock Creek Park, which eventually opened in 1890. Today, the park's some 2,800 acres are used by more than two million people every year.

G&M Assistant Chief Retires

Roberta Stevens, Assistant Chief of G&M, retired in July. She has worked in libraries for 38 years and 27 of those were spent at the Library of Congress, where she managed the Bicentennial and National Book festivals. In recognition of her excellent work, she received the Library's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award.

Ms. Stevens is the sixth person in the history of the Library to have been elected to the presidency of the American Library Association. She initiated programs to engage famous

authors to speak in support of libraries and to develop fundraising skills to help libraries supplement their traditional resources.

Ms. Stevens was the first former graduate of the MLS program of the State University of New York at Buffalo to have been invited as its commencement speaker and was named its recipient of the 2009 Distinguished Alumni Award. She received the 2009 Ainsworth Rand Spofford Presidential Award from the District of Columbia Library Association for contributions to the development or improve-

ment of library and information services.

Ms. Stevens began her career working at a technical school where she established a library and created a bibliography of resources that she shared with neighboring schools.

G&M benefited from her wide range of experience in librarianship, exceptional leadership and management skills. She helped the Division face the challenges of changes in the discipline and budget reductions. She has greatly contributed to the recent con-

ference, publications, such as the newsletter, and handling personnel matters.

Ms. Stevens will continue to work with G&M as a member of the Philip Lee Phillips Society Steering Committee.

"We were fortunate that Roberta chose to spend the last eight months of her distinguished career with us," said Chief Ralph E. Ehrenberg, "She made my return to the Division easier and smoother, and improved significantly every assignment or job that she undertook."

G&M Maps in the World Digital Library

The World Digital Library – www.wdl.org – displays online the most important primary source documents from all countries: rare books, maps, manuscripts, prints and photographs, films, and sound recordings. Librarian of Congress James H. Billington proposed the project in 2005 to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and it quickly embraced the project. The WDL's goals include promoting international understanding and awareness, expanding multilingual and culturally diverse content on the Internet, and providing resources to students and teachers for educational purposes. The site was launched in 2009.

Maps and atlases are among the most educationally useful and visually attractive of the content on the WDL, especially popular with users. The site currently features about 6,000 items and is working toward a goal of 100,000. Approximately 400 maps or atlases currently are displayed on the WDL, of which about half -- 201 -- are from the collections of G&M. Each map or atlas is accompanied by detailed metadata based upon its original catalog record, along with a paragraph-length description of the item that explains its importance.

Many of the G&M maps chosen for early inclusion in the WDL are top treasures, selected for their great cultural or historical importance. Examples include the Wald-

seemüller world map of 1507, the Oztoticpac lands map of circa 1540 (*Editor's note: the map was highlighted in the Spring edition of 2012*) and Champlain's map of New France of 1607.

Maps from G&M also played a major role in enabling the WDL to achieve the politically and symbolically important goal of providing universal coverage from "day one." Already at the time of its launch in 2009, the WDL included at least a few items about all 193 UN member states. Because the site is only gradually building its global network of partners, it relied on the Library's own collections to provide early universal coverage. Along with photographs from the Prints and Photographs Di-

vision and books from the general collections, maps from G&M were the most readily available source for displaying on the WDL selections of items about, for example, Eritrea, Brunei, or the countries of West Africa.

The WDL plans to add many thousands more maps, both from partners around the world and from the collections of the Division. For G&M, the WDL provides a new vehicle to expand access to and awareness of its rich collections. For the WDL, bringing these maps to a global audience is an important part of its international mission.

By John Van Oudenaren,
Director, World Digital Library

Steering Committee & G&M Staff



G&M Chief Ralph E. Ehrenberg addresses conference attendees.



Steering Committee Vice Chair Dianne Powell and her husband, Boone, examine a historical surveyor's compass.



Bohdan Kantor of the Library of Congress (left), Jay Lester of the Steering Committee (center) and Vincent Varga, cartographic historian, inspect *Trout's Bird's Eye View of Washington*.



Ray Wolf, former President of the Washington Map Society (left), Edward Redmond of G&M (center) and Murray Hudson, antiquarian map dealer, discuss map exhibits.

Steering Committee Update

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and Diane Schug-O'Neil gave a demonstration of the Phillips Society website.

We approved a budget for 2012 and have decided to move to a calendar year rather than operate on a fiscal year.

Growing the membership is important, and we discussed ways to increase it, including lowering the cost to attract students and others in this difficult economy. We also plan to recognize our members in the Fall edition of the newsletter.

We express our gratitude for your donations and support. We have used those funds for conferences, publications and the purchase of maps. I wish to stress that these monies have had meaningful impact, espe-

cially in terms of acquisitions, helping to supplement the Division's budget.

The last major piece of business, and a very important one, was the selection of Dianne Powell as Vice Chair of the Committee. She is the former President of the Texas Map Society and former President of the Texas State Historical Association Board. We look forward to Mrs. Powell's leadership and are excited about hearing her ideas.

Looking forward, our bylaws require the Committee to meet twice a year. We are considering a number of options to fulfill this obligation. The Texas Map Society meets in October and that may serve as a meeting location. We also discussed having a teleconference.

Before I close, allow me

to turn to two sad pieces of news related to our organization: the passing of Steering Committee founding members Louis De Vorse (1929-2012) and Virginia Garrett (1920-2012).

Dr. De Vorse earned his doctorate in historical geography from the University of London. Deeply involved in research, he published numerous books and essays, including the publication *The Indian Boundary in the Southern Colonies 1763-1775*. We plan to posthumously publish his paper on the maps and papers of Johann Georg Kohl that relate to the early history of America.

Mrs. Garrett was a distinguished map collector. In the 1950s and 1960s, she became an expert collector of all things Texas, such as

books, manuscripts, newspapers and other materials. On her trips around the country, she developed an interest in maps and cartographic material. Maps that depicted Texas initially fascinated her. Later, she collected maps that showed the land that would become the state. Over several decades, she amassed 375 atlases and some 900 maps, dating from 1500s to 1900. The collection is part of the University of Texas Arlington Library's Special Collections and is called the *Virginia Garrett Cartographic History Library*.

Sincerely,

George Tobolowsky



From Left to Right (seated): Roberta Stevens, J. Thomas Touchton, John Wolter, Wesley Brown, Dianne Powell (Vice Chair), Ralph Ehrenberg, William Wooldridge, and Joseph Fitzgerald. Standing: Gary North, George Tobolowsky (Chair) and Jay Lester.



PLP Newsletter Staff

Ryan Moore, Editor

Ralph E. Ehrenberg, Managing Editor

The *Philip Lee Phillips Society* was established in 1995 to further develop, enhance and promote the collections of the Geography and Map Division by encouraging financial donations to supplement appropriated funds for the acquisition of rare maps; by stimulating interest among map collectors, map producers, geographers, cartographers and historians in order to make the vast resources of the nation's premier cartographic and geographic collections more widely available; by facilitating gifts and bequests of significant geographic and cartographic materials to further develop its collections; and by advancing the Geography and Map Division's publication, education and exhibition programs.

The Society was named in honor of Philip Lee Phillips, who was the first to recognize the value of the Library's cartographic materials and to organize and care for them. Even before being named the first Superintendent of Maps when the Hall of Maps was established in the new Library of Congress building 1897, he devoted what time he could to the map and atlas collections that were stored in odd corners of the Capitol – sorting, arranging, cataloging and serving required items to congressional and other readers.

Two Centuries of Mapping Washington, DC

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planners believed they were continuing to realize L'Enfant's plan.

Decoding L'Enfant's plan, however, is difficult and is often misunderstood, said Don Alexander Hawkins, an architect and historian. The plan was not the renowned planner's final word but rather a draft. Nonetheless, it owes little to outside inspiration.

The plan's "unexemplified expressiveness" celebrates the ideals of the American nation. Pointing to the plan, Hawkins said three large spokes that connect major avenues and roads represent the presidency, Congress and the people. L'Enfant envisioned that people would appreciate the city's grandness as they approached from the water or from the air. The planner had floated in a balloon over Paris, which likely helped to inspire the idea.

Current Problems, New Visions

Historic places such as Notley Young's plantation serve as reminders that Washington began as a city of slaves

and slave owners, Dr. Gail Lowe, a Senior Historian at the Anacostia Community Museum, said. Since then racial inequality and segregation have shaped the city. The Anacostia River has served as a symbol of the divide. "Nobody lives over there," Dr. Lowe said, referring to how blacks living east of the Anacostia River have been seen as "other."

Problems related to race and city planning persist today, argued Iris Miller from the School of Architecture at Catholic University of America. The city's development has been heavily slanted towards the western parts of the city at the east's expense. She pointed to pollution in the Anacostia; the lack of good waterfronts; and the impact of major roadways that have divided communities.

Paris could serve as inspiration for reconfiguring negatively impacted spaces, Ms. Miller said. She advocated for more common areas where people could interact, dine and enjoy the city.

Maps to Apps

The growth of mobile technology is allowing for new ways to understand and appreciate the city's beauty, said Thomas Patterson, a senior cartographer of the National Park Service.

Patterson demonstrated the free application for Apple iPhone and Google Android called *NPS National Mall* that has maps and software that utilizes the phone's camera to identify major landmarks on the National Mall.

Computer simulations are assisting in scholarship of the city. Don Bailey, Director of the Imaging Research Center at the University of Maryland Baltimore Campus, has paired historic maps, reports from archeological digs and imaging software to recreate the city's historical landscape in 3D.

His work on Notley Young's Plantation can be seen at www.visualizingdc.org.

By Ryan Moore