

Foundations & Perspectives

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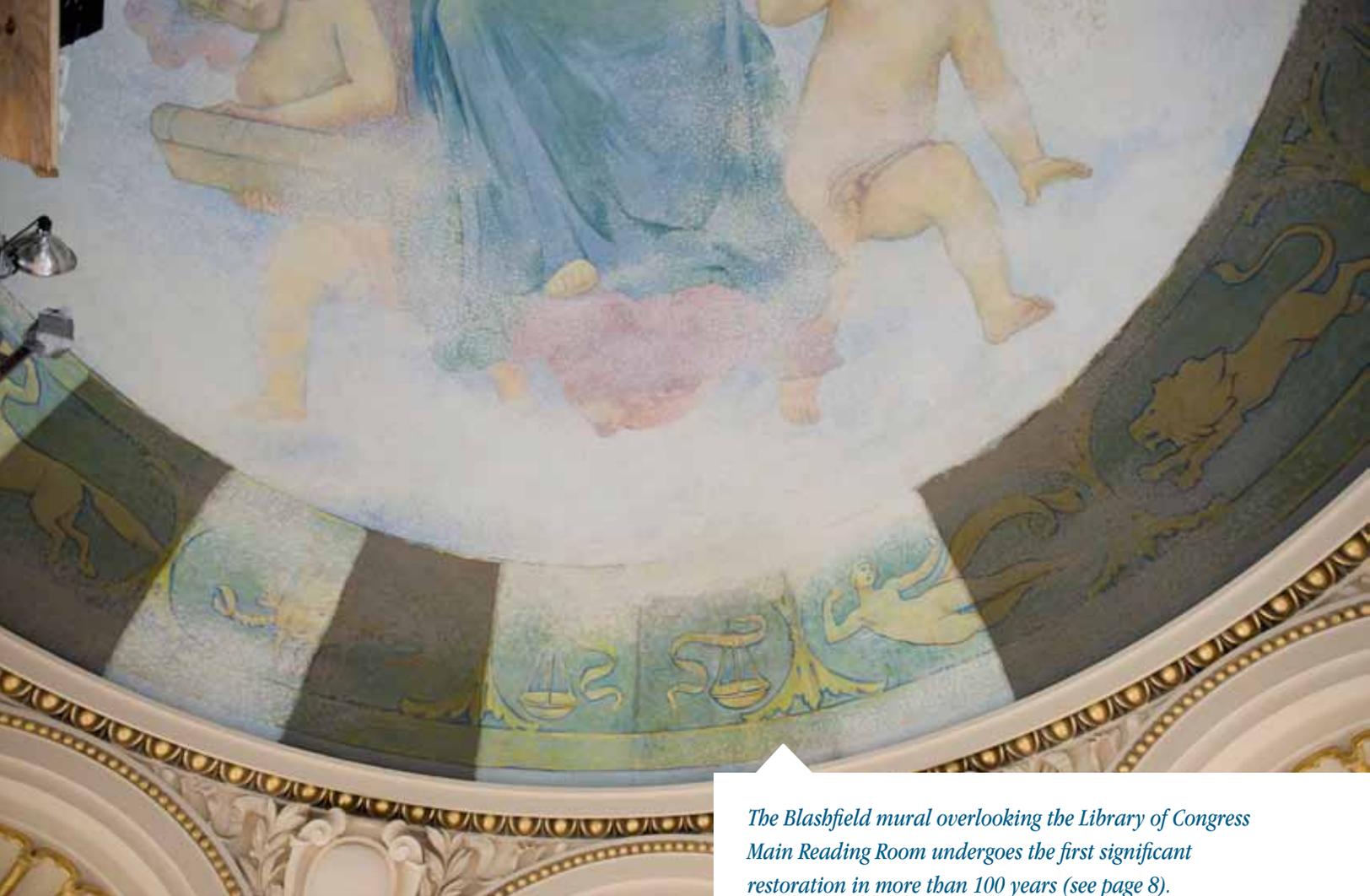
Inside:

Women in Non-Traditional Roles

Capitol Power Plant:
A Century of Service



ARCHITECT
OF THE CAPITOL



The Blasfield mural overlooking the Library of Congress Main Reading Room undergoes the first significant restoration in more than 100 years (see page 8).

Photo by: Steve Payne



Photo: AOC Archives

A worker inspects a valve in the Capitol Power Plant, which turns 100 years old this year.

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Front Cover: Photo by Susanne Bledsoe
AOC Electrician Linda Henson works on the wiring for the voting displays in the U.S. Capitol.

Letter from the Architect



Dear Colleagues,

We are an organization on the move. As you receive this edition of *Foundations and Perspectives* we are well into our very unique biennial migration of congressional offices, an elaborate synchronization of work across the AOC and with our partners to ensure that the offices are ready for the start of the next Congress.

The work we do during this brief, but intense period, is emblematic of the best of our agency. The teamwork, camaraderie and the overall attitude of “we get it done” is a shining example of the amazing things we can achieve together. This mindset is also on display in the teamwork that AOC employees, like our Senate Floor Care Crew, are demonstrating everyday (see page 20).

“The teamwork, camaraderie and the overall attitude of ‘we get it done’ is a shining example of the amazing things we can achieve together.”

The AOC is also on the move in a number of other ways; from our recent relocation of the Magna Carta (see page 18), to our continual modernization of historic buildings (see page 14), to our support of opportunities for all employees to move forward in their trades (see page 2).

We are also moving our agency forward through two exciting efforts: the development of a strategic plan to guide us for the next five years and across-the-board

improvements to our communications to AOC employees, the Congress, and the public. This work includes an updated emblem to represent our agency, the first such update in more than a generation.

Lastly, while we press forward to become a modern workplace with a best-in-class workforce, we never forget our heritage. This is demonstrated by AOC employees like those at the Capitol Power Plant (see page 10) who not only are modernizing the 100 year-old facility, but have also ensured for that entire century that there was never a disruption of service to the Capitol.

I look forward to progressing together in our work as the builder and steward of America’s Capitol, so we may continuously improve our service to the Congress and the Supreme Court, ensuring the home for American democracy meets the needs of current and future generations.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen T. Ayers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Stephen T. Ayers, AIA, LEED AP
Architect of the Capitol

Women have a long history of working in non-traditional roles for the Architect of the Capitol (roles that have long been filled primarily by men), starting with the first recorded occurrence in January 1877, when Bridget Shaw is listed as a “Carter,” working with a horse and cart for the same pay as male carters.

Transportation has advanced from horse and cart to automobiles and automated electric subways, but women continue to work at the AOC in non-traditional roles across the agency.

Women *in* Non-Traditional Roles



Photos by: Susanne Bledsoe

Electromotive Mechanic Maria Hanna keeps the trains running.



Women like Maria Hanna, who drives and maintains the Senate subway as an Electromotive Mechanic, was always good with tools and making repairs. “I was always fascinated with tools, especially power tools.”

Growing up in a small village in Guatemala, she insisted that her father let her do everything her older brothers did, including working on their motorcycles. “If I saw them do something, I tried to do it.”

This paid off when she came to the AOC and started her career working for the cleaning crew. After a short time, her supervisor saw Hanna’s mechanical skill and encouraged her to apply to work as an elevator and subway mechanic.

20 years ago, Hanna’s male colleagues were unsure if Hanna was a capable mechanic. “They put me to work painting all the tracks, cleaning all the tracks, and cleaning all the equipment in the machine room.”

Hanna didn’t mind, noting, “For me, it was a learning experience.” Later, when she advanced from operating the subway vehicles to performing maintenance and repairs on them,



Linda Henson ensures critical systems are operational inside the U.S. Capitol.

she already had knowledge of the equipment and machinery.

The background work paid off. Hanna’s supervisor said, “When Maria does a job, it’s done right. You don’t have to go back and check it.”

For Hanna — now greeted by name by U.S. senators — going from a small town “to where people dream of coming — I feel blessed.”

Similar to Hanna, AOC Electrician Linda Henson, says, “I hope I never get over the awe of the Capitol’s artwork and architecture, the beauty.”

Henson has had the opportunity to see most of the Capitol, inside and

out, working on projects from inside the attic — to under the floor of the House chamber — where she had just been crawling and pulling wires, before speaking with *Foundations and Perspectives*.

Having been an electrician around the country, from Florida to Arizona, working in many different environments, Henson doesn’t mind the close quarters she sometimes finds herself in. She says, laughing, “I like being out of the weather.”

“I was always fascinated with tools, especially power tools.”



Fire Protection Engineer Keena Keith ensures the safety of all who work and visit the Capitol.



Keena Keith, fire protection engineer, agrees that her work requires knowledge, planning and hard work.

That doesn't mean that her work is without challenges. Because the electrical systems in the Capitol have been installed over a long period of time, Henson works with systems that range from those of another age to the cutting edge — and she has to make them all work together.

Henson says, "You have to put a lot of thought into it and think through what you're doing before you start working on it."

Like Henson, Keena Keith, fire protection engineer, agrees that her work requires knowledge, planning and hard work. "Someone has to do the tough job. You have to walk your sprinkler system and get up above ceilings." Despite the hard work it requires, Keith clearly loves her job, becoming animated as she describes it.

Keith didn't always know she would enjoy her job — she didn't even know that such a profession existed. Similarly, Edna Pate-Cloutier, project architect, had no idea that after starting out creating window displays for Armani Exchange stores in New York City, she would one day be designing office layouts for U.S. senators.



Project Architect Edna Pate-Cloutier keeps things moving in the U.S. Senate.

Both Keith and Pate-Cloutier know what it takes to succeed as women in their fields, which have traditionally been filled by men. You have to “have a backbone and stand for something,” according to Keith.

Pate-Cloutier agrees that, “You need to stand your ground. You can’t just be the alpha dog and bark out orders to everyone. I’ve earned respect from everyone, and I give respect to everyone.”

Keith, who inspects buildings across the Capitol for fire safety, agrees, “I want the best for you on your behalf. Clients here respect that.”

Her interest in fire safety having been sparked initially by learning that some fire protection engineers test children’s clothing for flammability, Keith takes her responsibility seriously.

She observes that every building on the campus has a wide range of occupants and visitors, including

children, seniors and persons with disabilities. “If an emergency happens, I want you to be able to get out of the building.”

Similarly, Pate-Cloutier believes it’s important to “plan for the future — for what’s not obvious, but what the potential is for the future.” This planning led her to set standards for office fixtures, thereby improving efficiency, knowing that office moves are inevitable. Pate-Cloutier’s success in standardizing office components and guidelines has led other agencies to benchmark from her program.

Initially, introducing the idea of standardized fixtures was met with some resistance, which Pate-Cloutier understands. “Nobody likes change,” she observes, adding, “The first step is to get the client to trust you.”

Communication is an essential part of this process, and Pate-Cloutier believes in “listening to what other people have to say to make

“I’m only as good as my team.”

the project better.” This constant communication over the course of a project allows her to develop close relationships with her clients. “I could be their bridesmaid. The relationship is that close.”

All these women noted that, while it takes individual strength to succeed, they couldn’t be successful without their fellow colleagues. Many of them echoed Keith, when she said, “I’m only as good as my team.”

The AOC values a diverse workforce — including the women who work in non-traditional roles — a path that was first blazed by Shaw over 130 years ago. Through their passion, intelligence and persistence, these women are making the AOC and the Capitol a better place for everyone.

— *Franklin Bradley*



Meet the COO

On Tuesday, August 24, 2010, Architect of the Capitol Stephen T. Ayers, announced that Christine A. Merdon, PE, CCM, had been hired as the AOC Chief Operating Officer and is the first woman to hold the role.

Photo by: Chuck Badal

The Chief Operating Officer serves as the “second-in-command” to the Architect of the Capitol with a wide-range of responsibilities for oversight of AOC programs and initiatives. This includes all operations and maintenance activities, strategic planning, performance management, worker safety, customer satisfaction, and service quality.

Merdon comes to the AOC with a wealth of experience in both the public and private sectors. She began her Federal career in 1981 as a cooperative education engineering student for the U.S. Navy. After earning her Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Maryland in 1987, she continued her career with the Navy as a project engineer and project manager. In 1998, she received a Master of Science degree in Civil Engineering.

Early into her tenure, she sat down with *Foundations and Perspectives* to share some thoughts on her new role.

What brought you to this role at the Architect of the Capitol?

I had managed projects up and down the National Mall from the White House, to the restoration of the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials, the new Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Eisenhower Memorials, as well as the National Museum for African American History and Culture. I had always aspired to work on projects for the Architect of the Capitol. I was fortunate to meet Stephen Ayers in professional settings and was impressed by him personally and the work of the AOC and always thought it would be a great place to work.

What are you most excited about with the new role?

First, I have to pinch myself everyday when I walk into the Capitol thinking, “this is where I work?” I am happy to be here and everyone has really welcomed me into the family. But

what I am most excited about is opportunity — the diversity of services we provide, the diversity of our people and their trades — all give us the opportunity to capture their ideas to help us drive change and shape a strategy for the AOC moving forward.

How will you help shape the strategy and vision of the AOC?

I hope to bring my experiences from the public and private sectors, and share the lessons and best practices that have worked elsewhere, applying them here to make the AOC better for everyone. However, what I want most is to encourage employees at every level and every role to participate — we need their thoughts and ideas to help shape the future of the AOC.

What do you see as the biggest challenge?

For me — getting to know all 2,600 people who work here. I see communication as both our biggest challenge and opportunity. I want to improve that, I want to reach out to everyone and let them know that we

are here for them — to support them and the great work they do.

What do you most want people to know about you in this role?

I care about what employees think. I want them to be able to do their work safely and efficiently. If they have ideas how to do that better — I need to know. With their input I can look for the common themes and areas for improvement and prioritize our efforts.

What are the lessons you have learned that you hope most to bring to the AOC?

First, in order to manage something — you need to measure it. Second, you need to do early planning and communicate across the organization — no silos. Solve problems early and take responsibility. That is huge. If you take responsibility for a problem then you are empowered to solve it. If you avoid it you will never have that opportunity.

Is there anyone that has inspired you in your role?

Yes, I have many great mentors, but my last boss, Ms. Deryl McKissack, owner of McKissack and McKissack, taught me about vision and perseverance. She is an African-America engineer, and together we

were able to expand her D.C. based firm to Baltimore, Chicago and Los Angeles. It was very difficult and there were many challenges encountered, but she always stayed positive and encouraged me not to let those obstacles stand in the way of my dreams.

Do see any unique challenges/opportunities as a woman in what has been traditionally a male role?

I don't think there is any difference on how it changes the dynamic. I look at the work that has to get done. When I walk in a meeting people never assume that I am an engineer, even with 30 years of experience (including in the field wearing boots and a hardhat), and have overseen over \$11 billion in design and construction projects. So that is something that I have always had to overcome, but once we start working together as a team they do begin to appreciate my background and education.

What would you say to other women aspiring to this role?

It is a great career. Don't let being the minority in the room dissuade you. There will be many people along the way who will provide encouragement. Make sure you seek out other women in the field as a sounding board.

What are your near-term priorities?

Asking a lot of questions, site visits and building relationships. I am evaluating the large items on our plate such as the Cannon Building renovation and getting the AOC strategic plan underway. I also want to get those big ideas from employees and visit the shops. I want people to continue to invite me to visit their area so I can learn more about the work AOC does.

Favorite past-time outside the office?

It all has to with my daughter — I am a mother of a seven year-old — so soccer, swimming and birthday parties are a few of the things we do. I spend a great deal of my time off with my family, many who live nearby.

What do you most want to achieve in your tenure?

I want the AOC to be model for the nation. I want this to be a place that people seek to work. That we are seen as a progressive agency that sets best practices in project management and applying technology in ways that help us achieve that vision.

How do you want employees to work with you?

Approach me — stop me in the hall, e-mail me, call me. I want you to share your ideas with me on how to continue to improve the AOC. And most importantly be up-front and honest — a problem never gets better with time.

— *Matt Guilfoyle*

“I want to reach out to everyone and let them know that we are here for them — to support them and the great work they do.”



Photos by: Steve Payne

Restoring **Luster** to the Lantern

Painting conservators, including Maura Duffy, used low-tech equipment to clean every square inch of the painting.

“It will be exciting to unveil the painting in the condition it was meant to be seen.”

On the way to supervise his latest project, Ira Levinrad rides on a small freight elevator from the basement of the Library of Congress Thomas Jefferson Building to the top floor. The elevator only takes him part of the way, though. Before beginning to climb more than 100 steps up a narrow and winding staircase, he makes a quick call to the Capitol Police, alerting them of his intent.

He’s about to go where few people ever have — the space known as the lantern — located directly below one of the most recognizable exterior features of the Jefferson Building, the Torch of Learning, and directly above one of the most recognized interior spaces in the world, the Main Reading Room.

“I walk up and down these stairs sometimes two or three times a day,” said Levinrad, project manager for the AOC Library Building and Grounds. It proves to be quite the cardio workout.

Now imagine walking up all of those stairs, but this time carrying a 200-pound pane of glass 3-feet by 8-feet in size. That’s what a crew of five AOC construction workers will do 16 times during the course of the lantern work. Their combined strength is what is required to replace all eight windows within the lantern, just below the 113-year-old mural within the eye of the Library’s Main Reading Room.

Ira Levinrad and Richard Kahl inspect the window replacement and painting conservation work in the lantern.

“Every time we carry a window, we get a little bit better at it,” noted Richard Kahl, supervisor of the lantern construction crew. It’s a grueling job, but one that’s necessary to ensure that the work has as little impact on the business of the Library as possible.

The project never would have taken root without the eagle eye of Architect of the Capitol Stephen T. Ayers. Reviewing a photo of the exterior of the Jefferson Building one day, he noticed that the windows in the lantern were in dire need of repair. A coordinated effort between the AOC’s Architecture Division, Construction Division, and the Library Buildings and Grounds was required to get the project off the ground.

After extensive planning for the project, Levinrad realized that the scaffolding necessary to replace the windows could serve a dual purpose. Although most of the other murals throughout the Jefferson Building were cleaned and preserved during the past two decades, conservators had never touched the Blashfield mural on the ceiling of the lantern.

“It made sense to kill two birds with one stone, so to speak, and preserve the mural while we had the scaffolding in place to fix the windows,” said Levinrad.

Dr. Barbara Wolanin, AOC curator, enthusiastically agreed with the plan,



and provided guidance for arranging a team of painting conservators to tackle the task of removing the greasy soot that had accumulated on the painting over more than 100 years. The oil painting on plaster, completed by Edwin Blashfield in 1897, depicts a female figure representing human understanding. She is lifting the “veil of ignorance” and looking forward to intellectual progress. Over time, however, a black veil of grime has slowly obscured the work of art, making it hard to distinguish from 160 feet below in the Main Reading Room.

“It is hard to fully appreciate an artist’s true intent when a piece of art is covered in dirt,” noted Dr. Wolanin. That is why a team of painting conservators used a mild cleaner to painstakingly remove grimy soot inch by inch. Even such things as dead flies can accumulate and become etched into the painting over time.

Given that the mural has been left untouched since 1897, the conservators were not sure of the condition of the painting. It turned out the work of art was in excellent shape and simply needed a good cleaning, according to Maura Duffy,

senior painting conservator in charge of the conservation project.

With the conservation work and window replacements expected to be completed in January, the improved lantern will be revealed to both visitors and LOC employees alike.

“It will be exciting to unveil the painting in the condition it was meant to be seen,” said Duffy, echoing the feelings of the many workers involved in this project.

— *Kristen Wandell*



AOC workers repaired the window frames and replaced the glass panes that enclose the lantern.

Capitol Power Plant

A Century of Service



Photos: AOC Archives

This year, the Capitol Power Plant marks 100 years of steady service of steam and chilled water to heat and cool the Capitol. In that century of service, the plant has undergone significant changes as new buildings were built, and more modern and efficient equipment was installed.

What hasn't changed over the years is the commitment of the staff to ensure that the Capitol Power Plant continues to provide these necessary services.



A Brief History

The need for a central heating and electric plant became apparent in the beginning of the 20th century when planning began for the first House Office Building (Cannon). Superintendent of the Capitol Elliot Woods made plans to construct a new power plant that would be connected to the Cannon Building to serve it, the U.S. Capitol, and the Library of Congress. Prior to the central plant's construction, the U.S. Capitol and other buildings each had its own "power plant," but it was determined that a central power plant would be much more efficient in meeting the increasing demands as more new buildings were being planned and built. Congress authorized its construction with the passage of the Act of April 28, 1904.

The plant was sited, according to Bill Allen, AOC historic preservation officer, on public land that was near the railroad tracks so deliveries could be easily made, and close to the Anacostia River from which water was pumped to produce steam for heat.

"Woods was scientifically inclined, so his interest in building a central power plant — which was a new and popular concept — featuring the latest and greatest technology was not out of

character for him," noted Allen. "What Woods didn't know at the time was that, although the plant was state-of-the-art for its time, he underestimated the future needs of the Capitol and that the plant would need to evolve to meet growing demands."

In the 1930s, air conditioning was quickly becoming an indispensable part of life on Capitol Hill. In 1935, Congress appropriated funds for the installation of central refrigeration equipment to circulate chilled water throughout the various buildings, thereby providing central air conditioning and allowing Congress to work during the hottest months of the Washington, D.C. summers. Its integration into the plant made it the first large-scale refrigeration plant in the world.

By the 1950s, the plant stopped generating electricity, but the addition of the Rayburn House Office Building, the House and Senate subway systems, the U.S. Capitol's East Front extension, and several other new projects in the late 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, necessitated several major upgrades to the plant's equipment and infrastructure, including the addition of the West Refrigeration Plant and the administration building.

By 2008, the AOC had expanded the West Refrigeration Plant to reliably



An AOC Capitol Power Plant employee inspects the equipment to ensure it is reliable every day of the year.

meet the future cooling requirements of the Capitol. This was necessary to meet the increased load of the Capitol Visitor Center and other building additions, renovations and modernizations. The expansion also increased the plant's overall efficiency.

Because the Capitol Power Plant plays a critical role in the AOC's long-term energy conservation and sustainability strategy, we are continually working to improve and upgrade operations there.

The need for a central heating and electric plant became apparent in the beginning of the 20th century.



Even at age 100, the Capitol Power Plant continues to serve the Capitol, expanding and modernizing to meet current needs.

Operations

This new and sophisticated equipment requires a well-trained and expert staff to ensure it operates effectively and efficiently year-round. The plant's staff are highly-skilled and extremely dedicated — many have worked at the plant for decades.

Roger Grooms (now retired) worked at the plant for 41 years, joining the staff in the 1950s. "Years ago we did most of our work by hand. To clean some equipment, a co-worker lowered you down on a rope. You'd clean the equipment and then they'd pull you back up."

Barry "Toby" Virts, general foreman and a 28-year veteran at the plant added, "When the box cars rolled up on the railroad tracks with bulk deliveries, we all had to grab hand carts and unload the cars by the cartful. When I started in operations,

there was no central control room. There was one desk in the middle of the room. You could literally hear the difference when you made an adjustment to the boilers; feel the heat. It took finesse to operate the boilers."

"You could hear the machines and were sensitive to any changes in the boiler room," added Roland Wright, operations supervisor, who has been at the plant for 24 years and with the AOC for 34 years. "Everything was hands on. You knew exactly where to go to make adjustments."

So, when the plant went fully digital in 2008, these hands-on professionals had to make some adjustments of their own.

"We had to learn to trust the instruments," noted Virts.

"And, we still make the rounds," added Wright. "We can still hear the finest steam leak by getting to know the plant and equipment, but with the digital controls, we've developed a new set of skills to run the plant."

Teamwork

When asked what it is about the plant that keeps them on the job so long, they all had the same reply: teamwork.

"The plant is my other family," said Wright. "We spend lots of time together and it's a privilege to work here and to serve Congress."

"My family was so proud of me and what I was doing," added Grooms, "that they always understood when I had to work late."

Gerald Evans, utility systems operator, who started at the plant in 1983, is a third generation plant worker. His grandfather, Robert Musgrove, Sr., started at the plant in 1942 and worked there for 30 years. Two uncles, Lewis Winfield and Robert Musgrove, Jr., worked at the plant for 10 years and 30 years, respectively. Evans' father, James, spent 19 years at the plant.

Evans said he's honored to carry on the family tradition. "Some of the guys that are still here have known me since I was three-feet high. I used to tell my grandfather about all of the changes — the new digital controls, the expansion of the West Refrigeration Plant — huge improvements, but the family atmosphere remains."

The Next 100 Years

Looking forward to the next 100 years, it goes without saying the plant will be experiencing more changes. Among

The plant's staff are highly-skilled and extremely dedicated — many have worked at the plant for decades.



Today, the Capitol Power Plant is monitored and controlled via a centralized room ensuring maximize efficiency.

those changes is a plan to co-generate electricity along with steam — which will, in some respects, return the plant to its roots.

Jim Burch, Assistant General Foreman, says the plant is ready for change. “We’re already moving forward with the upgraded digital control systems and other modern equipment in our operations. With newer technologies and more efficiency, we’ll be getting a greater return on Congress’ investment here.”

But what won’t change is that these unsung heroes who ensure that our offices are warm during the winter and cool during the worst of Washington’s heat and humidity, will continue to be on the job around the clock and will continue to take great pride in their work.

“When new employees come on board they always say, ‘We work for Congress? That’s so cool!’ said Burch.

— *Eva Malecki*

Capitol Power Plant Cornerstone — Art Repurposed



Photo: AOC Archives

The cornerstone of the Capitol Power Plant has a unique history all of its own. Before it supported the plant, it supported the Father of our Country — well, figuratively.

The cornerstone started out as the pedestal for the Statue of George Washington by Horatio Greenough (1841). Its granite base featured the raised inscription, “First in War, First in Peace, First in the Hearts of His Countrymen.” In 1908, Congress passed a resolution transferring the statue from the Capitol to the Smithsonian Institution. Because a new base for the statue was authorized, the original base wasn’t needed, and was taken to the site for the new Capitol Power Plant.

In 1909, the pedestal was placed in the plant’s foundation during construction and used as a cornerstone. Today, the words “First in Peace” can be seen at ground level — proving that repurposing old items has been at the “foundation” of the AOC’s sustainability practices for at least 100 years.



Photo by: Dewitt Roseborough



CSI:

Cannon Scene Investigation

On a rainy day in Washington, D.C., AOC Pipefitter Richard Dawson is at his busiest. As the only pipefitter on call during the day for the 102 year-old Cannon House Office Building, for Dawson, when it rains, it pours. If any water leaks, he answers the call.

“When it rains we get calls nonstop. It is my job to go and be as courteous as possible and solve the problem,” says Dawson.

Like a detective straight from a *film noir*, Dawson gets the call from the service center in his basement shop on his “retro brown” corded push button desk phone to go investigate a report of water leaking into a member’s office on the fourth floor of the Cannon Building. The fourth floor is no stranger to such leaks, residing beneath the offices added to the “roof” as part of a 1913 expansion. The aged windows of the floor above often leak during windy rainstorms into the office below (the AOC is currently leading a roof repair project).

Dawson grabs his tools on the way out the door and hurries to the scene of the leak. Using his tools, his experience and his gut, he determines the problem and the potential solution. Like a crime scene investigator, he may turn the case over to experts from different trades to help solve the problem. This often includes AOC plasterers and painters such as Shirlon “Elvis” Maynard.

The Plasterer Leader for the House Office Buildings’ day shift, Maynard and his team are responsible for

Richard Duncan using his tools to solve problems in the historic Cannon Building.

Photo by: Dewitt Roseborough

“We need to create an apprenticeship program to help cultivate the next generation of plasterers...”

nearly every wall and ceiling in the House Office Buildings. This includes projects such as finishing drywall installed in renovated spaces, touch-ups during office moves, and detailed ornamental plastering that is a unique and rare art. According to Maynard, ornamental plastering is such a rare art that when a 1992 fire destroyed historic spaces within England’s Windsor Castle, ornamental plasterers had to be brought from around the world as part of the restoration efforts a few years later.

“Anyone can just throw mud on a wall,” said, Maynard. “It is an art to do it [ornamental plastering]. It is hard work and you don’t learn it overnight. We need to create an apprenticeship program to help cultivate the next generation of plasterers to ensure we have the manpower to maintain this historic building.”

The trades that Dawson and Maynard represent would have been in high demand 104 years ago, when construction began on the building. On April 14, 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt came to Capitol



Photo by: Dewitt Roseborough

Hill to lay the cornerstone for a new congressional office building, the first of its kind for the House of Representatives.

“I would have loved to have been there when they built the building,” says Maynard. “You can imagine what they would have had to go through without the modern things we have today.”

The United States had grown from a population of around 4 million at the time the U.S. Capitol was begun in 1793 to more than 85 million in 1906. The Census of 1900 increased the membership of the House of Representatives to 391 congressmen

Plasterer Leader Shirlon “Elvis” Maynard helps the Cannon Building maintain its iconic stature.



Photo: Library of Congress



Photo: AOC Archives

President Theodore Roosevelt lays the cornerstone at the start of construction of a new House office building.

Joseph Cannon of Illinois who would become Speaker of the House later that year and for whom the building was named in 1962. Woods was tasked with overseeing the construction and all contractors for the building.

On April 11, 1904 the commission accepted Woods' recommendation to hire partners John Carrère and Thomas Hastings who were, according to Allen, "held in high esteem by the American Institute of Architects and would surely help Woods in any public relations problems that might arise in the future."

With the completion of construction in 1908, members drew numbers to decide who would occupy personal offices for the first time, a tradition that continues today. The Beaux Arts architecture, and exterior design inspired by the Gardes-Meubles on the Place de la Concord and the great colonnade at the Louvre in Paris, set a new architectural standard for the entire federal government.

As the steward of this architectural gem and a building that has served as a setting for numerous important events in American history, today the AOC is tackling head-on the immense challenge of meeting the modern needs of members and staff and



Photo: AOC Archives

“I would have loved to have been there when they built the building.”

representing the 45 states of the time. The growing population of the country increased both the size of Congress and the staff necessary to support it.

As AOC Historian Bill Allen writes in *History of the United States Capitol*, “Rearranging seats and buying smaller desks made it possible to accommodate members comfortably on the floor of the chamber but elsewhere overcrowding was a problem. Committee rooms remained in short supply, and restaurants, barber shops, and bathing rooms were severely taxed.”

Architect of the Capitol Elliot Woods proposed a new building in his 1902 annual report and the Civil Appropriations Act of 1903 authorized the creation of a bipartisan commission to oversee the work. The commission included



AOC's Cannon Building Renewal project team has undertaken a methodical and diligent approach to planning the effort.

If approved for construction, the work will be conducted in phases (parts of the building will remain open, as others are under renewal). As part of this phased approach an extremely complex “musical chairs” will be initiated, with selected groups relocated to Federal Office Building 8 — located near the Ford House Office Building, and currently undergoing renovation by the General Services Administration.

Until that time, the men and women of the AOC House Office Buildings — like Elvis Maynard and Richard Dawson — with support from AOC Planning and Project Management are working diligently to keep the building operating to support Congress and at the same time addressing a number of pressing fire and life safety deficiencies.

— *Matt Guilfoyle*

Architect of the Capitol Elliot Woods collaborates with Speaker of the House Joseph Cannon on plans for a new House office building.

ensuring the centenarian of a building meets 21st century safety standards.

Much like their predecessors a century ago, the AOC's Cannon Building Renewal project team has undertaken a methodical and diligent approach to planning the effort.

Additionally, similar to the bipartisan commission on which Speaker Cannon once sat, a Cannon Renewal Executive Group has been formed

which includes senior level decision-makers from the House Office Building Commission, the Committee on House Administration, and the House Committee on Appropriations to provide leadership and guidance on key issues.

Following completion of a program of requirements, the next step will be preparation of the design and construction documents.

A New Home for a

Capitol Treasure



Photo by: Steve Payne

The AOC Capitol Building Mason Shop successfully relocated the Magna Carta display to the Crypt.

It took both brawn and brains to move a beautiful (and hefty) treasure when the Magna Carta display was moved from the Capitol Rotunda to its new home in the Capitol Crypt.



Photo by: Steve Payne

In August, the AOC Capitol Building Mason Shop, with the support of a rigging company, spent 14 ½ straight hours — from 5:00 p.m. until 7:30 a.m. — moving the fragile presentation case to a secure storage room for conservation, and the stone pedestal to its new location in the Crypt for cleaning.

Challenges — those identified and unforeseen — were continuous. The gilded and bejeweled presentation case was both heavy (weighing in at 800-pounds) and extremely delicate, necessitating that the workers take extra care during its relocation.

The work also required that the stone pedestal, made of pegmatite stone on



Photo by: Dewitt Roseborough



Photo by: Chuck Badal

The conservation of the inside and outside of the display was all a part of the restoration process.

meticulously cleaned with a small amount of calcium carbonate powder and a cotton swab.

The Mason Shop workers cleaned the Plexiglas cover both inside and out, and then expertly “steam cleaned the stone to remove the dirt and hand oils that had built up over the years,” said Thorne.

The final work included replacing the presentation case back on the stone pedestal. Then, working together, the Stone Mason crew lifted the large Plexiglas cover and replaced it on the entire display.

“We are pleased that visitors to the Capitol can continue to enjoy the Magna Carta display and learn how the document helped form the foundation of our government,” said Dr. Wolanin.

— *Kristen Wandell*

The Magna Carta is a unique piece in the Capitol’s collection of artwork.

top and Yorkshire sandstone on the base, be separated and tilted to pass through the U.S. Capitol’s doorways.

“We were surprised by just how difficult this job turned out to be,” said Jeff Thorne, supervisor of the Mason Shop. The pedestal’s bulkiness combined with the rigging requirements created a very challenging situation for the workers.

The Magna Carta display is a unique piece in the Capitol’s collection of artwork and was a gift from the Parliament of the United Kingdom. It was presented at an elaborate ceremony to celebrate the U.S. Bicentennial in 1976. The Crypt provides an appropriate sense of scale for the display and its new location places it in a more suitable historical context.

“Its neighbors now include statues from the National Statuary Hall Collection that are from the 13 original states,” noted Dr. Barbara Wolanin, AOC curator. Six of these statues represent people associated

with the Declaration of Independence — a document that traces its roots to the original Magna Carta that was sealed in 1215 by King John of England.

Once the presentation case and stone pedestal were moved, the detailed work began. A conservator spent 2 ½ weeks performing a full cleaning of the presentation case, including making necessary repairs. The ornate gold panel and two medallions, depicting the seal of King John, were

Did You Know?

Louis Osman, the man who designed and created the Magna Carta display, also made the crown for the investiture of Prince Charles, Prince of Wales.

Pegmatite, a type of volcanic stone that the Magna Carta presentation case sits on, is believed to be over three billion years old — dating back to the time when Europe and North America were physically joined.

The sandstone pedestal is made of stone from Yorkshire, England, and was chosen to match the Virginian sandstone that covers the walls in the Rotunda and Crypt.

For more information about the Magna Carta display, visit: www.aoc.gov.

AOC Value: Teamwork

Senate Floor Care Crew: **A Shining Example**



Photos by: Steve Payne

It's early morning, well before sunrise, and the AOC's Senate Floor Care Crew has already finished its nightly marathon of buffing, burnishing, shampooing, mopping, sweeping and cleaning the miles of floors under its care. Responsible for the floors of more than 2.6 million square feet of Senate Office Buildings, this team of 24 takes immense pride in their work and value the role they play supporting the U.S. Senate.

"We are few. But we do the work of many," said Anthony Harley a member of the Floor Care Crew for three years and an AOC employee for the past five.

Led by Roy Thomas, the Senate Floor Care Crew has been a leading innovator at the AOC in their area of expertise, becoming among the first divisions to perfect the art of grinding and honing — a technique to remove scratches. Thomas seemingly walks 12 miles in an average night across the three Senate office buildings and garages inspecting, coaching, teaching and mentoring the crew.

The mileage the team covers is no exaggeration. To prove the point in fact, Darrell Griffin who has been on the Floor Care Crew for three years and with the AOC for four and a half years wore a pedometer one evening and he logged more than three miles in his area alone.

Thomas' understated leadership is clearly valued and respected by the crew. Asked about who taught the crew the techniques in their jobs, Dorsey states, "Mr. Thomas taught



It takes teamwork to keep the floors of the U.S. Senate reflecting the dedication of the AOC employees that maintain them.

"We are few. But we do the work of many."

us all how to do it. Safety is always the priority — Mr. Thomas taught me that too," adds Dorsey.

The grinding and honing work is the team's favorite aspect of the job. The process was brought in-house about three years ago, previously the work had been done by outside contractors. The process of grinding using machines with abrasive pads to remove deep scratches and honing which removes minor scratches, generates results that Darrell Griffin describes as, "a mirror without wax."

"I like the results," says Brad Morse, a 27-year AOC veteran who cites working with the Floor Care Crew as the highlight of his career. "I like working for the U.S. Senate, it's like a family here."

One of the newest members of the team, Thomas Johnson, is excited about his job and team. "Working with these great guys, learning new skills. I love it. I am not just saying that. I am saying that because I love what I do. I work with U.S. senators."

Beyond the grinding and honing, the Floor Care Crew ensures that every hall is mopped, swept and anything that "sticks" is removed. The result by morning is the well recognized shine and crisp "click-clack" sound of shoes as U.S. senators and staffers walk the hallowed halls of Congress.



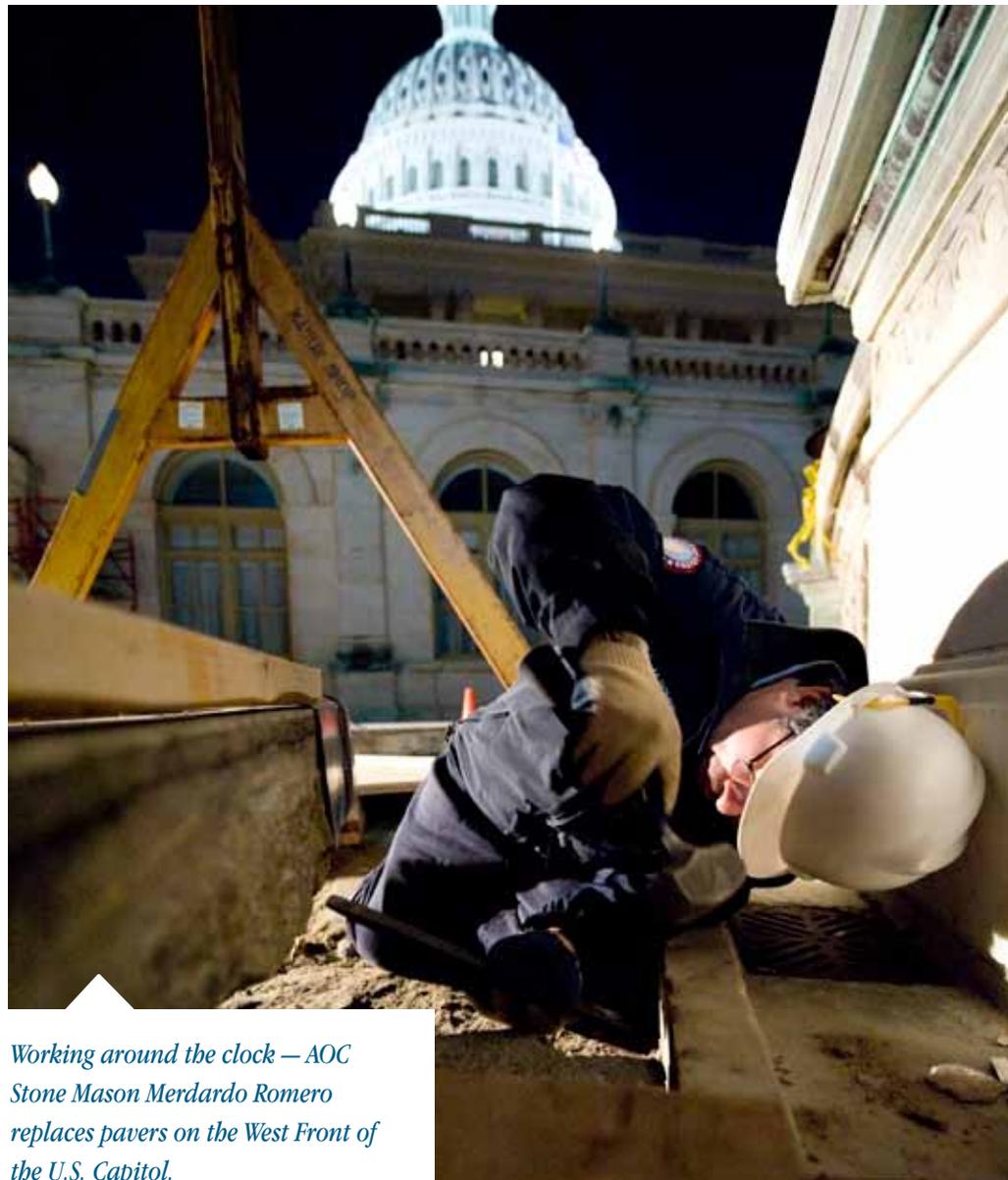
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Working around the clock — AOC Stone Mason Merdardo Romero replaces pavers on the West Front of the U.S. Capitol.

Photo by: Dewitt Roseborough