



April 2009

TREASURY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

# NEWSLETTER

## Inside this Newsletter...

- **THA Loses Long-Term Board Member.** Former Commissioner of IRS Donald C. Alexander served on THA Board for over a decade and was one of the last 12 original 100 "Charter Members" of THA who joined the Association at its inception 35 years ago.
- **Capital Development Campaign Project Will Greet All Who Enter the Treasury.** The next historic restoration project that THA will fund from donations to its Capital Development Campaign will be the North lobby of the Treasury Building.
- **Time to Renew Your THA Membership with a Tax-Deductible Contribution.** See our reminder on page 4, if you have not renewed for calendar year 2009 yet.

## Treasury Building History Closer to Publishing Date

For the past 7 years, THA has engaged architectural historian Pamela Scott, Ph. D., to research and develop a book on the history of the Treasury Building. After extensive research in Treasury Department records, the National Archives, Library of Congress, and other resource centers throughout the country, THA's book is getting close to the next step – publishing.

Under the working title of *Fortress of Finance: Building the United States Treasury*, the book covers the Department's first building in Washington, DC (1800 – 1833) called the Treasury Office, one of four almost identical Executive Office Buildings that surrounded the Executive Mansion. Each of the four wings of the current Greek Revival Treasury Building has an individual chapter on its design and construction.

Complementing Ms. Scott's architectural history of the building is the history of many Treasury organizations, both current bureaus and organizations that have "spun off" to become part of other agencies. This chapter has been prepared by Government historian Mark Walton.

In addition to providing material for the writing of the book, Dr. Scott's extensive research has resulted in the collection of new data that was not previously known to the Treasury Curatorial staff and that offers valuable information from a variety of sources.

Currently, THA is in discussion with a number of publishers and hopes that negotiations can be concluded before the Summer begins. Production time of the estimated 375 page book with 200 images varies by publisher, but THA anticipate a six- to nine-month publishing timeline, which should have production copies available for members in late 2009 or early 2010.

## THA Annual Meeting Included Historic Riggs Bank Collection

The annual full membership meeting of the Treasury Historical Association was held on December 5, 2008. As required by the Association's by-laws, the officers and committee chairs presented a summary of THA's 2008 activities of the Association and of its component committees to all in attendance.

As is customary, following the business portion of the meeting, THA's invited guest lecturer provided a presentation to THA members and their guests. THA's guest speaker for this year's annual meeting was Mary Beth Corrigan, Ph.D., historian and collections management specialist of PNC Bank, which took over the Riggs National Bank in 2005, including its headquarters building across Pennsylvania Avenue from the Treasury Building's North Wing.

Dr. Corrigan provided a slide-show lecture on various historic checks and other financial records and instruments of the 19th Century. The Riggs Bank Collection includes original, cleared checks of many U.S. presidents, Congressional members, and other historic personalities. These include a number of checks of Abraham Lincoln, David Crockett of Tennessee, Dwight Eisenhower, and many others. The Riggs National Bank was established in 1836 (the year that the construction of the oldest wing of the Treasury Building was begun) by W.W. Corcoran (whose also founded the Corcoran Gallery). Riggs had been known for decades as "the bank of presidents" since 22 of the Chief Executives had accounts there.

In addition to Dr. Corrigan's presentation providing a captivating view of presidential bill paying instruments, the lecture also presented an excellent history of banking in general, as the audience learned about the processing of checks through the clearance process and how the process has changed over the past century and a half.

Following the lecture and question-and-answer period, attendees were invited to remain for light refreshments and an opportunity to talk to Dr. Corrigan and to see an exhibit of the actual historic checks that were included in the lecture and slide presentation.

THA has been in discussions with PNC Bank, in the hopes of being able to coordinate a special exhibit of historic presidential checks and other important financial instruments at a Treasury bureau facility in the near future.

## Treasury's Main Entrance Is THA's Next Restoration Goal

The North Lobby is one of the most important and impressive spaces within the Treasury Building. As the main entrance lobby to the Treasury Building from Pennsylvania Avenue — and its official address of 1500 —, it is the first interior space that is seen by visitors and guests. It is also a space that is immediately adjacent to the Cash Room, the principal meeting space in the Treasury Building.

Recognizing the importance of the North Lobby, the Office of the Curator in 1987 – 1988 conducted an analysis of the historic finishes that by that time had been covered with layers of white paint. Utilizing the most advanced technology available at the time, the Curator's Office developed the present decorative paint scheme for the North Lobby. It was believed at the time that the lobby, designed by the Supervising Architect Alfred Mullett, was a true product of the gilded age in keeping with Mullett's work both at the Treasury Building and at the State, War and Navy Building (later titled Old Executive Office Building and the Eisenhower Executive



### Treasury North Lobby Ceiling Medallion

Office Building) on the opposite side of the White House, on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Fast forward twenty years later when Mullett's 1869 Cash Room ceiling has been fully restored along with Mullett's magnificent West Dome and adjacent West Lobby. Like the North Lobby, these three subsequent restorations required extensive finish analysis and were done at different times, working with a variety of conservators to determine each space's finish history. What was revealed in the finish analysis of the Cash Room, West

Dome and West Lobby is the fact that Supervising Architect Alfred Mullett used a similar finish palette in all three spaces. That same finish, a light brown, tan and cream paint complemented by bronze and gold gilding, essentially became the building standard for the year, 1869, the same time that the North Lobby was finished and decorated.

Why then is the North Lobby a different finish palette?

Twenty years ago, when the finish analysis was undertaken on the North Lobby, both the conservation technology and subsequent space restorations of today were not available to the professions who worked on the space's

finish history. Evidence was found of decorative finishes, but it is now believed that that finish history ultimately selected for replication was after the original Mullett finish palette, which would have been consistent his work in the other 1869 spaces — the West Dome, Cash Room and West Lobby.

The current analysis, which is being funded through the THA's Capital Development Campaign and the generosity of its donors, will consist of two parts: an examination of the condition and the finishes of the central plaster ceiling medallion above the North Lobby chandelier and an investigation (with some minor repairs) of the decorative borders and wall finishes of the North Lobby.

The decorative plaster ceiling medallion was first examined in 1985; prior to that time it was painted a multi-color scheme with selective gold painted accents. During the recent major renovation project, the acanthus leaves nearest the stem of the chandelier fixture were broken and hastily repaired. The current restoration project will make a more detailed assessment of the stability of the intricate decorative elements and combine new research results with the 1985 report to evaluate the appropriate finishes for the medallion.

The cornice decorative border of the main entrance space and the segment of corri-

dor between the North Lobby and the Cash Room will also be examined in a new study. For the entirety of the space, a critical discovery, whose material evidence came to light in examining the Cash Room ceiling during the recent renovation project, was that in 1869 there was a rushed interim palette of finishes quickly applied to make the spaces presentable for the Inaugural Ball of President Grant.



### Detail of Lobby Ceiling Medallion

Shortly after the 1869 Inaugural Ball, another set of finishes and gold leaf designed by Mullett was applied as a more permanent decorative painting scheme. In the earlier analysis from 1985, the relationship between the first "historic" layer of finishes and those that followed was less clearly understood, confusing some of the chronological periods.

The two studies will make recommendations about the long-term stability of this historic space and what options are available to reconsider the existing decorative finishes. The options will be to either make a complete change to some of the existing finishes or determine how to best integrate them with minimal changes into the c.1869-70 Mullett color palette used around the rest of the Treasury Building.

*THA wishes to express its appreciation to the Office of the Curator, Office of the Assistant Secretary (Management), Office of Headquarters Operations for its assistance in providing the materials for this article.*

**Editor's Note:**

The work to be done, as described in the article on page 2 of this newsletter, is part of the project cited on page 12 of THA's Capital Development Campaign booklet.



THA's Campaign project booklet was distributed to all THA members in December 2007, along with a donor card and return envelope. If you did not receive your copy — or if you need an additional copy for yourself or for another potential donor or gift-matching opportunity of your employer, please contact THA at the telephone number listed below, and we will send you one promptly.

We hope that you will review the Campaign project booklet and either identify a project of particular interest to you or consider a non-designated project donation to THA in the near future. Contributions of any amount are appreciated.

Thus far, THA has contributed to Treasury funds in the amount of \$100,000, for the Treasury Collection Endowment (10% of our total goal for this particular initiative), in addition to the funding for the North Lobby project described in this Newsletter.

Thank you, in advance, for your generous support of this THA initiative to help the Department of the Treasury .

**Treasury Historical Association**  
**P.O. Box 28118**  
**Washington, DC 20038-8118**

*Message Line: (202) 298-0550*

*Website Address:*  
[www.treasuryhistoricalassn.org](http://www.treasuryhistoricalassn.org)

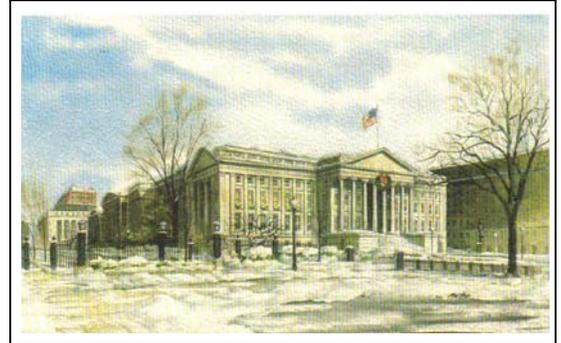
*E-mail Address:*  
[info@treasuryhistoricalassn.org](mailto:info@treasuryhistoricalassn.org)

***THA'S NEW LIMITED EDITION OF PRINTS OF THE HISTORIC TREASURY BUILDING, BOTH SNOW SCENE AND SPRING SCENE, SIGNED/NUMBERED BY ARTIST KEN FRYE***

As noted in our December special flier, THA has engaged noted watercolorist Ken Frye to create a new series of framable prints of the Treasury Building, limited to 200 signed/numbered copies.

The snow scene is identical to the 1,000-copy series that THA previously sold starting in the early 1990s, except that the new series' print is smaller.

The print image is 8 x 11 inches, with x/200 numbering and artist's signature below the image, produced on quality paper 11 x 14 inches (ready for standard-size frame).



The Spring scene is the same size as noted above. This is the first print series that THA has had of the Building in a Springtime setting.

The prints are enclosed in cellophane, with card backing, sent via First Class Mail in a protective cardboard mailer.



To order your print(s), please complete the form below and mail it with your payment to THA at the address shown in the box to the left. Please allow up to 6 weeks for delivery.

THA Current Member Price is \$24.00 per print, which includes shipping and handling charges.

If you order both prints, we will make every effort to have each print

bear the same copy number in the 200-copy series. If you ordered the snow scene print at the end of 2008, and are now ordering the Spring scene, we will try to send you the matching numbered print of the Spring scene. However, we may not be able to reserve matching print copy numbers for orders received after June 1, 2009, so please order early.

**ORDER FOR TREASURY BUILDING PRINTS** Date of Order: \_\_\_\_\_

Spring Scene \_\_\_\_\_ @\$24.00 each, for a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Print No., if you ordered Snow Scene at end of 2008 (for matching): \_\_\_\_/200.  
 Snow Scene \_\_\_\_\_ @\$24.00 each, for a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## THA Renewal Form

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

Cit/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Evening Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Home E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal Amount (& Type) Enclosed:  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)

**Appreciation Gift Selection:** for those renewing above General level of membership: \_\_\_\_\_

\* \* \* \* \*

## Gift Membership Form

Name of Gift Recipient \_\_\_\_\_

Recipient's Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Evening Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Recipient's Home E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Gift Membership Amount (& Type)  
Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)

Gift-Giving THA Member's Name \_\_\_\_\_

\* \* \* \* \*

## 2009 Membership Dues

**General (GEN):** \$20 per year  
or \$50 for 3 years

**Supporting (SUP):** \$60 per year

**Patron (PAT):** \$120 per year

**Life Donor (LFD):** \$1,500 or more, one time. (Payment arrangements are available in 3 installments within a year for Life Donor amount, if desired.)

## Membership Renewal Time

Please renew your membership in THA for 2009 by May 31, if you have not already done so. This will help reduce THA postage expenses of sending reminders. Early renewal also helps us in planning our 2009 budget and activities better.

Gift memberships may also be requested. THA will send the gift-giver a tax deduction receipt and send the gift recipient an announcement of the gift, identifying the giver.

Members renewing above the General level may select a THA appreciation gift from the following:

- a rosewood pen/pencil cup,
- a black leather mousepad,
- a black leather business card case,
- or a commemorative holiday ornament from THA's series of the 1990s, excluding 1993 (IRS), 1995 (Secret Service) and 1996 (Customs Service) which have been depleted.

To renew and/or to give a gift membership, please cut out or photocopy the column to the left and mail it to THA at the address shown on page 3, along with your tax-deductible donation check, payable to THA.

## On-Line Annual Reports Available in Print As Well

A few years ago, THA began posting its Annual Reports on-line, on the THA website (see page 3 for our website address). The purpose was to reduce THA's printing and postage expenses, as a further effort following a decision to combine two years' reports into one document.

With the realization that some of our members and dedicated donors might not have access to the Internet, THA will provide printed copies of the report on request. The currently posted report on THA's website covers the two-year term of 2006-2007.

To obtain a printed copy of THA's annual report, please call our voicemail line and leave a message with your name and address. Please allow two weeks for printing and delivery to you.

## A Message from THA's Chairman:

### **Long Term THA Director and Former IRS Chief, Donald C. Alexander**

THA was saddened to learn that, on February 3, 2009, Donald C. Alexander, former Commissioner of Internal Revenue and long term member of the THA Board, passed away.

Don first joined our Board of Directors at the Association's inception and served as until 1975. After a 21-year hiatus, he rejoined the Board and served from 1996 through 2005 – rarely missing a meeting, despite the



continued hectic schedule of his private tax law practice obligations and his on-going service as an expert witness on taxation for Congressional hearings.

Don helped THA on a number of non-profit organization tax-related issues and many officers relied upon him for his sage counsel; and, he served as a great mentor to those of us trying to understand the mysteries of the Internal Revenue Code on nonprofit organizations.

While serving THA, Don displayed his characteristic absolute candor, high energy level, and a strong public service mindset — personal attributes that marked him as a great public servant.

THA has been fortunate to have had Don Alexander's assistance and to have had the opportunity over so many years to work with such a gentleman of character, energy, and ethical standards.



August 2009

TREASURY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

# NEWSLETTER

## Inside this Newsletter...

- **Special Holiday Card Offer for Current THA Members.** As the holiday season approaches too quickly, THA members are offered an early-order special discount on the three types of holiday cards featuring the Treasury Building in a snow setting..
- **Capital Development Campaign Project to Restore Two Under Secretaries' Offices.** One of the future historic restoration projects that THA will fund from donations to its Capital Development Campaign will be the restoration of rooms used by the Under Secretary and Under Secretary for Monetary Affairs (currently the Deputy Secretary's office).
- **Save the Date—November 18 — for THA Annual Full Membership Meeting.** Details to follow as plans are firmed up. See our preview on page 4.

## THA Lecture Series: New Beginning for Future Opportunities

This past Spring, THA reinstated its practice of having educational lectures at noontime in the Cash Room for its members and guests.

In April, our speaker was Burris M. Carnahan who spoke on Abraham Lincoln. Mr. Burris is the author of a book titled Act of Justice: Lincoln's Emancipation and the Law of War. As a Civil War scholar (as well as an attorney for the State Department), Mr. Burris' book considered the legal, political and military circumstances that surrounded Abraham Lincoln's decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation.

In May, THA's speaker was Dr. Franklin Noll, whose lecture was titled Financial Hard Times: The Evolution of the World War II Bond. Dr. Noll is the historical consultant to the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and the author of a number of papers dealing with Treasury-related and financial-related topics.

Many members and guests attended both of the events, which were followed by a brief period of refreshments where members could speak to the lecturers personally.

Members are invited to suggest topics that they would like THA to present at future noontime lectures as well as to recommend specific speakers who might consider being THA's guest lecturer at future events. Suggestions for either may be forwarded to THA at any of the contact points listed on page 4 of this newsletter.

## Treasury and Its WWII Songs by Irving Berlin

In June 1941, world famous composer and lyricist Irving Berlin wrote a song titled "Any Bonds Today?" in response to the Treasury's request for his assistance. The song was composed to help the Department in its efforts to promote the National Defense Savings Bonds Program (which included small denomination savings stamps) for American citizens to support the war effort. Mr. Berlin generously declined any copyright royalties to the song and transferred the complete copyright to Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr. The song, with the Uncle Sam theme throughout, was sung by a number of top performers of the day, including Barry Wood, Bing Crosby, the Andrews Sisters, Dick Robertson and Kay Kyser, with instrumental by the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra.

After its premier performance on June 10, 1941 at the War College in Washington, DC, this song was played frequently on radio stations throughout the United States and at Savings Bonds rallies in many cities. Born in Russia in 1888, Irving Berlin had developed a strong patriotic sentiment for his adopted country and wrote several other songs that were dedicated to U.S. Government agency programs during the war.

THA members with access to the Internet may view a nostalgic presentation of "Any Bonds Today?" on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4mKZaXOxiQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4mKZaXOxiQ).

For those without Internet capabilities, below are excerpted lyrics:

*The tall man with the high hat and the whiskers  
on his chin  
Will soon be knocking at your door, and you  
ought to be in.  
The tall man with the high hat will be coming  
down your way;  
Get your savings out when you hear him shout  
"Any bonds today?"*

*(Chorus) Any bonds today?  
Bonds of freedom, that's what I'm selling;  
Any bonds today?  
Scrap up the most you can,  
Here comes the freedom man,  
Asking you to buy a share of freedom today.*

In 1942, following the bombing of Pearl Harbor Naval Base, the wave of patriotism flourished throughout the country. The war effort was supported by the general population to extremes not experienced since. People were making huge sacrifices to support the war effort, surrendering the unlimited use of many items previously and subsequently taken for granted.

**Continued on Page 4**

## A Decorative History of Room 3314 — One of THA's Future Restoration Goals

As a National Historic Landmark, the Treasury Building is rich in history, celebrated for its commanding neo-classical exterior and renowned for its magnificent interiors. Indeed, the Building's interior spaces offer a glimpse into the Treasury's history, both through the events that occurred within them and their high artistic merits. One excellent example of this is the office of the Secretary of the Treasury, which moved throughout the Building during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Because the office housed one of the Federal government's most influential positions, it was the site of several important historical moments: the Salmon Chase Suite was where Secretary Chase met with President Lincoln and the Johnson Suite acted as the Office of the President for six weeks in 1865 following Lincoln's assassination. Accordingly, these suites also are some of the Building's most elaborately decorated offices, befitting of high-level Federal government executives.

Located on the third floor of the South Wing portico, East of the recess, Room 3314 joined this lineage in 1875 when it became the Office of the Secretary. The suite, then known as Room Number 7, offers impressive 180 degree views of the National Mall and Washington Monument, which may have convinced Secretary Benjamin Brewster to relocate there, although the exact reason for the move from the West-facing Johnson Suite is not documented. A series of office moves during this period to alleviate growing Treasury offices and cramped working conditions suggests a general trend that the Secretary could have initiated or been part of. In any event, Room 3314 housed twelve Secretaries over a period of 22 years and, like its predecessors, was decorated to a level worthy of its occupant. Photographs from the 1890s show a curved ceiling with stencil work, two large mirrors (one in between two windows and another over the fireplace), a large marble mantel with a projecting, carved eagle, and a glass globe chandelier. However, the room's current white Federal-style drop ceiling (added in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century) hides the designs, which are only hinted at by a small glass porthole. The mantel and one of the mirrors are still located in the suite, offering a clue to the room's previous life.

Room 3314's architectural history thus offers an opportunity to study a significant Gilded Age office suite; in particular, two noted period designers were connected

with the space. The first was William McPherson, a Boston interior painter, designer, and glass worker, who completed work on the room in 1875. The second was Pottier & Stymus, a renowned New York City furniture and design firm, in 1884. Each was selected by the Treasury's Office of the Supervising Architect (OSA) to complete the work. As a result, the story of Room 3314 during this era is also one of the OSA, when the Treasury Department rapidly expanded and rose in significance. Along with working on the Main Treasury Building, the OSA was responsible for the design and construction of several of sub-treasury buildings, post offices, court houses, and customs houses. In order to keep up with its workload, the OSA contracted hundreds of craftsmen, such as McPherson and Pottier & Stymus, whose selection for Room 3314 resulted from their previous working relationships with the OSA on projects located throughout the country and their reputations for quality.

Shortly after the designation of Room 3314 as the Secretary's new office, the OSA hired William McPherson to ready the suite. He accepted the job on April 20, 1875, and agreed to submit a sketch and estimate for "decorating certain rooms now preparing in the Treasury Building to be occupied by the Secretary of the Treasury" (this ultimately meant decorating the Assistant Secretary's room across the portico (currently Room 3324)), as McPherson lists this additional room in a letter acknowledging payment). Interestingly, McPherson's association with the OSA began at least two years earlier for work at the Executive Mansion, although it seems he entrusted the work to his foremen and was reluctant to travel down to Washington, D.C., despite telegrams requesting his presence. He also provided then Supervising Architect Alfred B. Mullett with "bronzing preparations" (a mix of liquid and powder), although what this bronze was exactly for is not described. McPherson continues to surface in OSA letters during this timeframe, including one from August 1874 regarding the selection of a chandelier for the Portland, Maine customs house, and others from April-May 1875 concerning the glass ceiling for the New Orleans Treasury building, where his shipment of supplies had been damaged en route. Indeed, the OSA's familiarity with McPherson may have helped him secure the Secretary's office job. Just

prior to beginning work on Room 3314, McPherson was solicited for a similar job for the Postmaster and Assistant Postmaster's offices in New York City, but he lost that contract to a competing firm. However, McPherson won jobs at the Boston post office and sub-treasury building and completed additional decorative work at the Executive Office Building (West of the Executive Mansion), where he is credited with the office of the



Secretary of the Navy (now the Vice President's Ceremonial Office) and South Wing library. Supervising Architect William Potter and McPherson even discussed the possibility of him decorating the OSA offices within the Treasury Building with frescoes!

Potter ultimately decided against the idea, leaving McPherson to work on the Secretary's office from April to June 1875. The project totaled \$533.58. The exact design is unknown, but the requisition for the work lists "2 Packs Gold" and "2 lbs Gold size," suggesting that gold leaf-type stenciling was perhaps applied to the walls and/or ceiling. Given this, McPherson could have enhanced the room's previous mural work from the 1850s and 1860s, when the South Wing was decorated by several individuals, including August Kohler, Parker and Spaulding, Schutter and Co. and B. Ortle, the last of which submitted a bill for "Painting in distemper and encaustic of Rooms 2 & 7 – Second Story" in June 1861. Considering Room 3314's size, view, and relative location to the Chase and Johnson Suites, it is likely that it would have previously been an upper-level executive office (according to an undated floor plan locating the Secretary in the Johnson Suite, an Internal Revenue Branch executive named Gaines and a "Suprg. Special Agent" may have occupied Rooms 3314 and 3324) and thus

been painted in a similarly elaborate manner. Whatever the extent of his work, McPherson's "gold size" design was executed. He again appears to have entrusted most of the job to his foremen, understandable given his numerous contracts with the OSA during this period. One of the latest references to McPherson in the OSA records is an 1884 letter discussing plans and specifics for decorative work at the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, post office.

Just as McPherson's relationship with the OSA (and Room 3314) ended, another decorative firm, Pottier & Stymus of New York City, entered to take his place. Opening in 1859, Pottier & Stymus represented one of the Gilded Age's premier furniture manufacturers, decorating the homes and offices of the successful and influential. At one point, it employed 750 employees and made more than \$1 million. As a large and prominent design entity, Pottier & Stymus was also familiar with the OSA; letters between the two from as early as 1869 were found regarding furniture for the Springfield, Illinois courthouse. In 1884, just as it had done with McPherson, the OSA turned to a trusted, previously contracted designer for the Secretary's office. In October, Supervising Architect M. E. Bell requested a bill from Pottier & Stymus for "decorative work recently executed in the room of the Secretary of the Treasury in this Building." The bill totaled \$1,890.00 and again included both the Secretary and Assistant Secretary's rooms. This time, however, the two parties disputed over the amount charged for "expenses by rail and board of men." Several letters went back and forth, eventually compelling Pottier & Stymus to draft an additional statement of expenses with an affidavit certifying the amount charged for their workers' board. The OSA soon accepted the charges and M.E. Bell apologized for the administrative delay, stating the ordeal "...has been as unexpected as annoying."

Once again, the exact design and scope of Pottier & Stymus' work could not be found in the OSA records, but a few documents perhaps shed some light on the matter. Found in the same box as the rest of the Pottier & Stymus communiqué for the Secretary's office were four undated lists of "materials expended" in Rooms 1, 3, 7, and 9 on the second (now third, *ed.*) floor — a list of oil and lead paints in a rainbow of colors. The list for Room 7 is the longest and second-most expensive, including gold leaf and bronze, Venetian Red, Ivory Black, Yellow Ochre, Ultramarine Blue, and Indian Red. Although they do not specify the rooms' occupants, the lists' room numbers and inclusion with the

Pottier & Stymus records suggest a connection, perhaps being the colors used in the new decorative scheme designed by the firm for the Secretary's offices. The mystery continues with a late October 1884 letter from Supervising Architect M.E. Bell that disputes the amount charged by Pottier & Stymus for the design itself, citing, "...the fact that practically all of the material used was supplied by the Government and considerable help was furnished your Mr. Pyer [name unclear]." Such a curious statement questions the degree of Pottier & Stymus' involvement and control on the design and its execution, although it could have been possible that they were simply using colors provided by the OSA (hence the undated lists on plain paper included within the records), only later to have the OSA object to their being billed for such. Still, this fact, coupled with the labor billing dispute mentioned above, did not affect the amount of the bill in the end. What had originally been completed in September 1884 was paid in full the following December. Though the OSA used a well-respected and familiar firm, the nature of contract work in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century appears to have frustrated even them.

In its final years as the office of the Secretary, little appears to have changed for Room 3314. Architectural historian Dennis Lehman noted the addition of a quartered oak parquet floor worth \$291 in the fall of 1896 and \$900 worth of decorative furnishings and furniture in early 1897, consisting of "custom-made fringed velour drapes" for the six windows of his office and 13 rugs, mostly orientals, for the rooms of the Secretary and the Assistant Secretaries," ordered by outgoing Secretary Carlisle. Unfortunately, records confirming these last decorative touches (and as suggested by Lehman, Victorian courtesies) could not be located. Even if correct, these changes did not entice the new Secretary, Lyman Cage, who moved the office back to the Chase Suite in the

Southeast corner by June 1897. Thus, during its tenure as the office of the Secretary of the Treasury, Room 3314 was at least twice transformed, touched by some of the premier decorative talents of the Gilded Age.

While McPherson's and Pottier & Stymus' designs remains hidden for the time being, they will hopefully be recovered someday through restoration and conservation efforts. The unique fact that two renowned designers worked on the space during one of the Treasury's most noteworthy eras proves compelling; additionally, Room 3314 would complement the other restored Secretary's offices, the Chase and Johnson Suites, better telling the story of the Treasury Building and its influential occupants. And, although famous names are connected with the space, both through its occupants and its artists, the role of the OSA should not be overlooked. The relationships the OSA held with designers like McPherson and Pottier & Stymus point to its own significance, as it was able to contract the best, thanks to a huge résumé of projects in the Nation's Capital and across the country. Just as the Treasury Department's expansion can be reflected through the increasingly ornate decoration of its Secretary's office, the role of the OSA reflects the growth of the Treasury on a national scale.

*THA wishes to express its appreciation to the Office of the Curator, Office of the Assistant Secretary (Management), Office of Headquarters Operations for its assistance in providing the materials for this article.*

**The subject of this article is one of THA's Capital Development Campaign projects. Please see pages 8 and 9 of THA's Treasury Restoration Projects brochure.**

**For additional copies and donor cards for this Campaign, please contact THA by mail, phone, or e-mail — see box on next page for contact information. It may also be viewed on THA's website.**



## THA Holiday Cards

Current THA members may order Treasury Building holiday cards at reduced pricing for orders placed prior to September 30. Supplies are limited and orders will be filled in the sequence received.

The THA holiday card, measuring 4-1/4 by 5-1/2, top-fold, depicts the Treasury Building in a snow setting, holiday wreath on the South portico, with the Treasury Annex visible in the background.

There are three versions of this card:

- (a) blank inside for personal message;
- (b) Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for the New Year; and
- (c) Seasons Greetings and Best Wishes for the New Year.

There are 10 cards and envelopes per box. Regularly priced at \$12 per box (s&h included), THA members may purchase the cards for \$11 for one box, \$20 for 2 boxes and \$27 for 3 boxes.

To order, complete the form below and return it to THA prior to September 30 with your check payable to THA. Please allow 4 weeks for delivery.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

### Treasury Building Holiday Cards

- \_\_\_ boxes cards, blank inside
- \_\_\_ boxes of cards, "Merry Christmas..."
- \_\_\_ boxes of cards, "Seasons Greetings"
- \_\_\_ Total Number of Boxes of Cards

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Prices: 1 box, \$11; 2 boxes, \$10 each; 3 boxes or more \$9 each.



## Treasury WWII Songs (Cont'd)

Limited or rationed use was imposed on gasoline, meat, milk, sugar, and countless other items, so that the military members who were fighting for freedom could have them instead.

The American public experienced a large tax increase to pay for all that was required to fight the war and protect America. Some Americans paid income taxes for the very first time in their lives.

To help the Treasury Department in instilling in the American public the importance of timely and accurate payment of income taxes, Irving Berlin, on his own initiative and not being asked by the Treasury, again took pen in hand to compose another patriotic song to help American citizens understand the importance of their tax payments. His song, "I Paid My Taxes Today," was also played on radio stations throughout the country. Again, Berlin generously transferred the copyright and all royalties to Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau.

Excerpted lyrics of this song are:

*I said to my Uncle Sam  
"Old Man Taxes, here I am"  
And he was glad to see me;  
Mr. Small Fry, yes indeed  
Lower brackets, that's my speed,  
But he was glad to see me.*

*I paid my income tax today  
I never felt so proud before  
To be right there with the millions more  
Who paid their income tax today.  
I'm squared up with the U.S. A.  
You see those bombers in the sky  
Rockefeller helped to build them, so did I  
I paid my income tax today.*

*I paid my income tax today  
A thousand planes to bomb Berlin.  
They'll all be paid for and I chipped in,  
That certn'y makes me feel okay.  
Ten thousand more and that ain't hay!  
We must pay for this war somehow,  
Uncle Sam was worried but he isn't now,  
I paid my income tax today.*

*I paid my income tax today  
I never cared what Congress spent.  
But now, I'll watch over ev'ry cent  
Examine ev'ry bill they pay  
They'll have to let me have my say  
I wrote the Treasury to go slow  
Careful Mr. Henry Jr. that's my dough  
I paid my income tax today.*

The following year, a strong advertising campaign was organized by Treasury and countless companies in the entertainment and advertising industries contributed to Treasury's efforts to convince all citizens to pay their taxes to help support the war effort. Walt Disney created a film showing that paying 'taxes to beat the Axis' was patriotic – a task that cartoon character Donald Duck did in "The Spirit" of '43.". This is the year that the pay-as-you-go tax payment (i.e., "withholding" of taxes from weekly pay envelopes) was introduced. The American public liked the idea and by the end of the year, almost 75% of the American working population was paying income tax – through withholding – to finance the war effort. The concept of pay-as-you-go through withholding is still with us, two-thirds of a century later.

### Save the Date: November 18 Annual Members Meeting

The Annual Full Membership Meeting of THA will be held on November 18, mid-day (exact time and location to be in announcement at later date).

This year's guest speaker will be John Mercanti, the Chief Engraver of the United States Mint. His presentation will show how the engraver's "hand" brings a concept to life, and will include his experiences under past and present design methods. He will talk on his journey as an understudy of Frank Gasparro to his efforts in bringing 21<sup>st</sup> century technology to the Mint. A portion of Mr. Mercanti's presentation will include the viewing of a new Mint education video on new technology and how it affects coin designs, comparing the century-old sculpting and engraving methods to new digital sculpting and scanning.

**Treasury Historical Association  
P.O. Box 28118  
Washington, DC 20038-8118**

Message Line: (202) 298-0550

Website Address:  
[www.treasuryhistoricalassn.org](http://www.treasuryhistoricalassn.org)

E-mail Address:  
[info@treasuryhistoricalassn.org](mailto:info@treasuryhistoricalassn.org)



December 2009

TREASURY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

# NEWSLETTER

## Inside this Newsletter...

- **THA Book—Fortress of Finance — in Final Stage of Development.** Final reviews and design work are in progress, as THA's first major publication is readied for printing in about six months. Special discount and inscription/autograph are offered to those who submit early reservations for the book by May 31 (see column to right and page 4).
- **Capital Development Campaign Project Visible in the North Lobby.** One of the 14 historic restoration projects in THA's CDC brochure is in progress and visible to all who enter the Treasury Building (see page 2).
- **Special Springtime Card Offer for Current THA Members.** THA members are offered an early-order special discount on note cards featuring the Treasury Building South Portico in a springtime setting (see page 3).

## THA Membership Meeting, New Board Election Held Chief Engraver of the U.S. Mint Spoke on New Design Processes

On December 4, the THA Annual Membership meeting presented the past year's accomplishments to members and their guests. During the meeting, the biennial election of the Board of Directors was also conducted.

Newly added to the Board were Rory Schultz of the Treasury CIO Office, Rob Coffman of the Departmental Offices Special Events Office and Franklin Noll of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing's Historian Office. Carried over for the 2010-2011 term of office were Cora Beebe, Suzanne Cosme, Jack Flood, Abby Gilbert, Gary Grippo, Dave Monroe, Jerry Murphy, Tom O'Malley, Charley Powers, Elaine Rand, Lori Santamarena, Mike Serlin, and Lillian Wright. In the forthcoming Board meeting, the directors will elect the officers for the next two-year term.

Following the regular business meeting and the election of the new Board of Directors, members and guests were provided a presentation by the Chief Engraver of the Mint, John M. Mercanti. A formally educated artist and sculptor, he joined the U.S. Mint in 1974. In Mr. Mercanti's presentation to the audience, which included a brief video of Mint operations, he described the remarkable advances in coin design in the recent three years or so, using digital technology. These advances have permitted the Mint staff to create the molds for coins in a small fraction of the time previously required when using historic processes that have been employed for many centuries.

## Treasury History Book Slated for Summer 2010

After seven years of intensive research, THA's book author, architectural historian Pamela J. Scott, Ph.D., has completed the manuscript of our first major publication. Titled *Fortress of Finance: The United States Treasury Building*, the book is slated for release this coming Summer. Dr. Scott's research has yielded significant "new findings" that were not included in Treasury curatorial and archival records. All such new information has been provided to the Department of the Treasury for its records.

Following professional editing, the book's manuscript is now undergoing final proofreading and review by Dr. Scott, and THA's publisher, EEI Communications of Alexandria, VA, has begun the page layout and overall design development. Currently projected to be in the 300-320 page range, the book will have about 200 images, many in color. There will be five chapters, opening with the first Treasury Building (which was called the Treasury Office), constructed in 1800 on the approximate site of the current Treasury Building's South wing.

The 1833 destruction of the Treasury Office by arsonists, Treasury employees Henry and Richard White, prompted the plans for today's Treasury Building, one of the first fire-proof facilities in the Federal Government's inventory. The remaining chapters of the book cover each of the successive wings, East, South, West, and finally North, in the chronological order of construction between 1836 and 1869.

At this time, THA has not determined whether the book will be in hard bound format or durable paperback format (with four-inch folder-over covers), or both. This decision will, of course, impact the selling price of the book, which is now projected to be about \$50. The overall size of the book will be about eight by eleven inches, with high quality pages of either gloss or matte coated paper.

THA is offering a special additional 10% discount, plus personalization and autographing by the author, to those who submit advance reservation for the book. (Please see page 4 of this publication for submitting your reservation.) As soon as final decisions are made on the printed format, THA will apprise those who placed reservations of the printing format(s) and price(s) of the book, asking for confirmation of their orders by payment within a specified time.

THA will be marketing the book to museum shops and specialty outlets in the Washington, DC area. Also, a book-signing ceremony in the Treasury Building's Cash Room is in the early planning stage at this time.

## North Lobby Restoration — A THA Capital Development Campaign Project Begins

In THA's April 2009 Newsletter, we provided information on one of the 14 restoration projects in the Association's Capital Development Campaign (CDC) - the North Lobby research and restoration project. Since April, through the generosity of donors to the CDC, THA was able to offer to the Department of the Treasury sufficient funding for this project to be completed.

The North Lobby is one of the most important and impressive areas of the Treasury Building. It is the principal entrance to the Building and the locale of the Building's official address of 1500 Pennsylvania Avenue. This is the first part of the Treasury Building that is seen by visitors, and essentially a fitting and elegant antechamber to the magnificent two-story marble Cash Room, the principal meeting room in the Treasury Building, designed by Alfred Mullet and completed in 1869.

The North Lobby was one of the first areas of the Building studied in great detail in 1985-1986 after Secretary James A. Baker III authorized the establishment of the Treasury Curator's Office. An investigation of the historic finishes at that time led to the restoration of the North Lobby to the decorative scheme that is seen today: complimentary ceiling and wall colors, with multi-colored decorative accents, and selective architectural elements highlighted with gold leaf.

The North Lobby and the adjacent corridor in front of the Cash Room were restored in isolation from the rest of the corridors and public spaces throughout the Building. The period of the decorative paint scheme implemented was based on the historic layer, with the most visual evidence remaining from which to execute a reproduction of the decorative finishes. At that time, it was not a consideration that the historic period chosen for the North Lobby should in some manner relate to the finishes of the rest of the corridors and entrance lobbies of the Treasury Building.

Significant technical advances in historic paint analysis since the original finishes investigation 23 years ago and the completion of the extensive restoration and renovation of the

entire Treasury Building during the TBARR project have presented an opportunity to reassess the decorative finishes of the North Lobby. This new THA-funded study will also give the Department of the Treasury an opportunity to attempt to determine the date when the plaster medallion in place above the chandelier was added to the North Lobby ceiling.



**Treasury North Lobby Ceiling Medallion**

In addition to the historic finishes research, there is a practical component to the conservation work being performed in the North Lobby. A water leak in 2008, that has since been corrected, had damaged some of the ornamental plaster, paint finishes and gilding in the northeast corner of the lobby. The conservators will assess the overall condition of the plaster in this area, make isolated repairs, and reapply missing painted and gilded finishes.

The North Lobby project is scheduled for completion this month, December 2009.

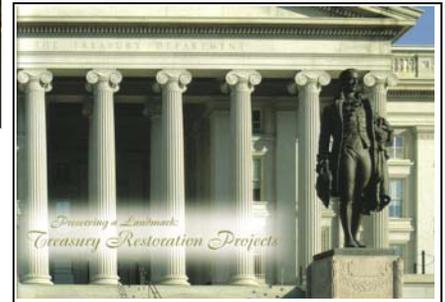


**Damaged Plaster In North Lobby to be Restored During Research Project**

### Editor's Note:

*THA wishes to express its appreciation to Treasury's Office of the Curator, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Headquarters Operations, Office of the Assistant Secretary (Management), for its assistance in providing the materials and images for this article.*

The project described in this article is one of THA's Capital Development Campaign initiatives. Please see page 12 of THA's brochure titled *Presenting a Landmark: Treasury Restoration Projects*. For additional copies of our brochure and donor cards for this Campaign, please contact THA by mail, phone, fax or e-mail — see box below for contact information. The CDC brochure may also be viewed on THA's website.



Please consider making an end-of-year contribution to THA's Capital Development Campaign. THA needs your help and no gift is too small to consider. Contributors may either designate a specific project for their donations or give on an undesignated basis and permit the THA Capital Development Committee to determine the use of these contributions for the Treasury Building restoration project that needs funding the most. This campaign is an opportunity for current and former Treasury employees to give something back to the Department, through THA, in appreciation for the career experiences gained through Treasury employment.

**Treasury Historical Association**  
P.O. Box 28118  
Washington, DC 20038-8118

Message Line: (202) 298-0550

Fax: (703) 425-1273

Website Address:  
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E-mail Address:  
[info@treasuryhistoricalassn.org](mailto:info@treasuryhistoricalassn.org)

## THA Springtime Cards

Current THA members may order Treasury Building springtime note cards at reduced pricing for orders placed prior to March 21. Supplies are limited and orders will be filled in the sequence received.

The THA springtime note card, measuring 4-1/4 by 5-1/2 inches, top-fold, depicts the south portico of the Treasury Building from a southeast vantage point. The cards are derived from an original watercolor painting of the Treasury Building by Ken Frye.

There are 10 cards and envelopes per box. Regularly priced at \$12 per box to current THA members (s&h included), THA members may purchase the cards for \$11 for one box, \$20 for 2 boxes and \$27 for 3 boxes.

To order, complete the form below and return it to THA prior to March 21 with your check payable to THA. Please allow 4 weeks for delivery.



### Treasury Springtime Note Cards

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Evening Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Total Number of Boxes of Cards

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Prices:** 1 box, \$11; 2 boxes, \$10 each; 3 boxes or more \$9 each.



## Capital Development Campaign Progress

The Capital Development Campaign (CDC) held its kick-off just two years ago, and a committee was established to manage the fundraising activities. Since that time, the Committee has solicited donations for this campaign from THA members, many former high-level Treasury appointees, and other potential donors. The campaign brochure (pictured on previous page) describes the 14 projects that collectively total approximately \$7 million in estimated costs.

As of November, THA has received almost \$175,000 from 83 donors. This has permitted THA to provide some of the gifts to Treasury, to permit funding — or at least “seed money” — for several of the listed projects. THA’s CDC gifts to Treasury thus far are as follows:

- \$100,000 towards establishing a \$1 million endowment for the maintenance of Treasury antique furniture, furnishings and fine art works (page 13 of the campaign brochure).
- \$2,500 towards the restoration of the northwest and southeast domes of the Treasury Building, with the balance of the project costs absorbed by the Treasury Department (page 3 of the brochure).
- \$13,385 to fully fund a north lobby research and restoration project, now in progress (page 12 of the brochure and page 2 of this newsletter).
- \$50,000 towards the restoration of the west wing twin spiral staircases’ marble and balustrade that had been damaged by the installation of the 1910 elevators which have recently been removed. Additional funds will be provided by Treasury to initiate this project, which will be performed on a floor-by-floor phased basis (page 2 of the brochure).

Through the Foundation Center’s library, THA has completed initial research into nonprofit foundations that provide grants for historic restoration projects, as well as education in history. We are in the process of preparing applications to a number of these organizations in the hopes to obtain their support and their donations for the campaign to complete the 14 projects in the Treasury Building.

## Seasons Greetings from THA

As the holiday season approaches, THA’s Directors wish to extend their best wishes to you for a happy holiday season and our hopes for peace and prosperity in the New Year, and to thank you for your support in 2009.

Instead of dealing with crowds at the shopping malls, you might consider a holiday gift membership in THA as a present to both the recipient and the Treasury Historical Association and, in turn, the Treasury Department, as we continue to aid the Department in restoring the majestic Treasury Building.

To provide a gift membership, please complete the following and return it to THA. We will send a special welcome package to the person you give a membership to, and a receipt to you for tax deduction purposes.



### Gift Membership Form

Name of Gift Recipient \_\_\_\_\_

Recipient’s Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Evening Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Recipient’s E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Amount (& Type) Enclosed:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)

Gift-Giving THA Member’s Name \_\_\_\_\_

### THA Membership Levels and Dues

**General:** \$20, 1 year; \$50 for 3 years  
**Supporting:** \$60 for 1 year  
**Patron:** \$120 for 1 year  
**Life Donor:** \$1,500, one time;  
 A payment plan of three equal installments within one year is available.

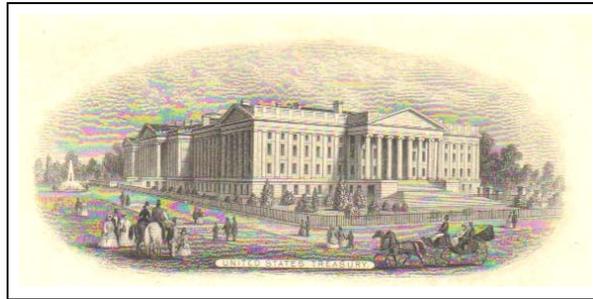
# COMING THIS SUMMER !!!

## Treasury Historical Association's

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# ***FORTRESS OF FINANCE: THE UNITED STATES TREASURY BUILDING***

Over 300 pages  
More than 200 illustrations, many in color



Special discount if ordered by 5/31/10

The Treasury Historical Association's book on the history of the Treasury Building and its predecessor called the Treasury Office is slated for release in the Summer of 2010.

The book is the result of years of research by architectural historian Pamela J. Scott, author of *Temple of Freedom*, a history of the U.S. Capitol Building and co-author of *Buildings of the District of Columbia*. She has developed a captivating account of the construction of our National Historic Landmark and its architectural features that have made it one of DC's most magnificent structures. Included is an appendix summary of Treasury's current bureaus and those that are now in other departments and agencies.

THA is now working with a publisher — EEI Communications — in preparing for the Summer release of ***Fortress of Finance***. Anticipated price will be approximately \$50. THA is offering a special 10% pre-publication discount to those who place their orders prior to May 31, 2010 — and their book(s) will be autographed and inscribed to buyer by the author. To take advantage of this offer, please complete the form below and return it to THA by U.S. Mail, e-mail, or fax: Treasury Historical Association, P.O. Box 28118, Washington, DC 20038-8118; e-mail: [book@treasuryhistoricalassn.org](mailto:book@treasuryhistoricalassn.org); or fax: 703-425-1273.

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I wish to order ***Fortress of Finance***, at the estimated price of \$50 less 10% pre-publication discount and have my book(s) autographed and inscribed to me by the author. Please bill me when the price is determined and my payment will confirm the order.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone(s) \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_