

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 90TH ANNUAL

The 90th annual AATF Convention was held July 16-19, 2017 at the Hyatt Hotel at the Arch in Saint Louis, MO and had as its theme, “Le Français dans une perspective globale: “The Finest Confluence in the World.””

The Executive Council spent two days doing the Association’s business before the convention on July 14-15. In addition, the seventh Future Leaders Fellowship Program with ten participants was held on those same days under the able direction of Janel Lafond-Paquin (page 35).

On Saturday, July 15, a group of participants attended a pre-convention art workshop. Following the morning workshop, led by art history and French professor Jeanne Zarucchi, the group headed to the Saint Louis Art Museum for a guided tour in French.



Mariette Monpierre

The convention opened officially on Sunday, July 16. AATF President Catherine Daniélou welcomed attendees. Following her remarks, she then introduced our keynote speaker, noted

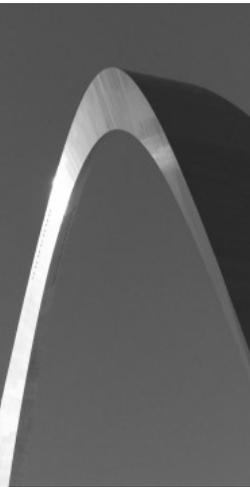


Workshop participants learning about Martinique & Guadeloupe

Guadeloupean filmmaker Mariette Monpierre. We were pleased that Saint Louis’ *Consul honoraire* Henry Biggs was able to attend.

After the opening *séance plénière*, more than 100 enthusiastic *congressistes* attended the Welcome Luncheon, cosponsored by the AATF and the Embassy of France. It was held on the top floor of the hotel overlooking the Mississippi River. Following five afternoon workshops, participants were able to have a first look at the Exhibit Hall (find out more about our exhibitors on the AATF Exhibitor Web page at [www.frenchteachers.org]) during a wine and cheese reception. As they do each year, members of the Executive Council were present at the AATF exhibit booth to be photographed with attendees, who then receive a press release and the photo to publicize their attendance at their schools and in their local newspapers. In the evening, the American Society for the French Academic Palms held its annual dinner.

Day 2 was a full day of sessions, many highlighting the theme of the convention or previewing next year’s convention in Martinique. During the lunch break, members participated in the eleventh annual *Dictée* organized by President Catherine Daniélou (See the list of winners on page 4). Monday evening, we arranged a special showing of Mariette Monpierre’s film, *Le Bonheur d’Elza*, followed by a Q&A session.



Guest speakers at the convention included Bill Rivers, Executive Director of the Joint National Committee for Languages/ National Council for

Languages and International Studies (JNCL-NCLIS), Emmanuel Kayembé, University of Botswana, Robert Moore, National Park Service Historian at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, and Lorraine Boissoneault, author of *The Last Voyageurs*. Other special sessions and meetings included numerous exhibitor and commission sessions as well as meetings of the National French Contest Administrators and *Société Honoraire de Français* sponsors (see the complete program on the AATF Web site). Two groups of participants headed off at the end of the day on a Walking Tour of historic downtown Saint Louis organized by Saint Louis native Anne Craver.

Day 3 of the convention was equally busy. There were coffee breaks in the exhibit hall, and two raffles were held during the breaks where lucky



Statue of Saint Louis

attendees won valuable prizes. We would like to thank all of our exhibitors and especially Vista Higher Learning for sponsoring the badges.

In the afternoon, the Assembly of Delegates met to ratify the decisions of the Executive Council and to discuss ideas for strategic planning.

That evening over 100 participants attended the AATF Awards Banquet where those receiving special recognition for their achievements in 2017 were celebrated. These included our outgoing Executive Council members:



CONVENTION IN SAINT LOUIS

Managing Editor of the *French Review* Nathalie Degroult who finished her term on June 30, 2017, and Regional Representatives Eileen Walvoord (VI) and Ryan Rocque (VIII) who will finish their terms on December 31, 2017. We also welcomed three new honor-



Current and former *National Bulletin* editors, Megan Diercks and Jane Black Goepper

ary members, AATF Past-President Mary Helen Kashuba, SSJ, AATF Life Member Ruth Doyle, and AATF member Reid Lewis. Reid Lewis was the organizer of the 1975-1976 LaSalle Expedition II re-enactment of LaSalle's 1681-1682 journey from Montreal to the Gulf of Mexico which was the subject of Lorraine Boissoneault's book, *The Last Voyageurs*.



2017 *Dictée* Winner Randa Duvick

Among the award recipients were Betsy Taylor (TN) and Stacey Weber-Feve (IA) who received the 2017 AATF Dorothy S. Ludwig Excellence in Teaching Awards at the secondary and post-secondary levels, respectively (see page 22). Outstanding Chapters

for 2017 (see page 22) and Outstanding Chapter Officer, Michèle Roberts, Western New York Chapter (see page 23), were recognized. We also honored the first recipient of the Rebecca & Jean-Paul Valette AATF Legacy Award, Jeff Loughary (see page 23).

Following the award ceremony, the attendees were treated to a concert by historian and musician Dennis Stroughmatt. His work as the living memory and ambassador for the French music and language of Old Mines, Missouri has been invaluable in its preservation.

Those who did not have early departures were able to take advantage of the final half-day of sessions. In the afternoon, 20 attendees stayed to participate in the overnight post-convention excursion to historic Sainte Genevieve and the French Creole Corridor. The group toured colonial houses in Sainte Genevieve, stayed in several Bed & Breakfasts, and after a brief stop to see the Liberty Bell of the West on Kaskaskia Island, crossed the Mississippi River to tour historic sites on the Illinois side of the river. These included Fort Kaskaskia State Park, the Pierre Menard Home, the Boismenu House in Dupu, IL, and the Historic Courthouse and Holy Family Church in Cahokia.

We would like to thank the Local Committee, Sue Hendrickson, Chair, Anna Amelung, Karen Bettis, Bill Hendrickson, Audra Merfeld-Langston, Jennifer Tadsen, and Violaine White, for all they did to help organize a memo-

orable convention.

In short, the 225 participants were able to enjoy 75 sessions, including 6 exhibitor sessions and 6 commission sessions, five workshops, 20 exhibit booths, two raffles, and several unique excursions and activities. The AATF would like to thank the staff members who helped make the con-



The Liberty Bell of the West



Dennis Stroughmatt

vention such a success, Lindsey Gibson and Jerika Hurst, as well as Christy Brown who helped us throughout the process of planning and running the convention. Staff members were aided in their work by all the members of the Executive Council (see page 7) and the personnel of the Hyatt Hotel. We also would like to thank our AV technician Jake Brand. The AATF would like to thank the speakers, exhibitors, and sponsors without whom the convention could not have happened.

We invite everyone to join us in 2018 as we visit Martinique (see page 5).



Workshop participants learning about the cuisine of Martinique