

The Victorian Society in America Washington
Metropolitan Chapter

**Invites you to an illustrated talk by Charles Robertson
on *Temple of Invention: History of a National Landmark***

The Patent Office Building closed in January 2000 and reopened July 1 of this year after a major renovation. In preparation for the reopening, the history of the building was thoroughly researched. Charles J. Robertson will present an illustrated lecture about that long and often difficult history.

Begun in 1836 and completed in 1868, the Patent Office Building is one of the oldest public buildings in Washington. Built on a site set aside by Peter L'Enfant for a national church or pantheon for heroes, the building instead became tribute to Americans' reverence for invention. Presidents, poets, architects, and heroes all bring the building to life. It was converted to barracks and a hospital during the Civil War and also hosted Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural ball in 1865.

By 1953 the building had been neglected for many years and was a target for demolition. President Eisenhower ordered that it be protected and in 1958 it was transferred to the Smithsonian. Ten years later, the National Portrait Gallery and American Art Museum opened.

Temple of Invention: History of a National Landmark will be available at the talk for \$20. Charles Robertson will autograph copies.



Charles J. Robertson, is the author of *Temple of Invention: History of a National Landmark*, an illustrated book about the historic Patent Office Building, and curator of the exhibit of the same name. The exhibit remains on view through July 8, 2007. Mr. Robertson is Deputy Director Emeritus at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and a Vice-President of the Victorian Society in America.

When: Wednesday , November 1, 2006, 7:00 p.m.

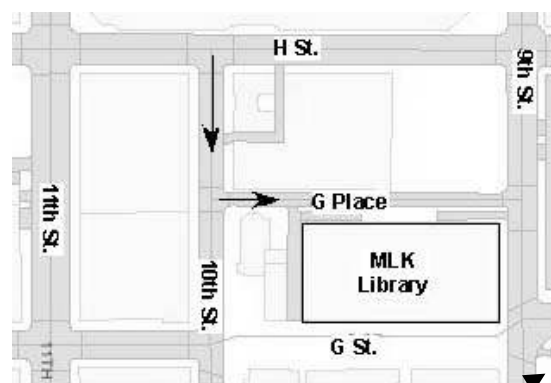
Where: Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library is the District of Columbia's central library. It is located on G Street between 9th and 10th Streets, NW. The talk will be held in Room A-5.

Directions on the back.

Parking: Free parking underground is available in the library garage. Entrance is from G Place which is one-way east with entrance from Tenth Street. Tenth Street is one-way south from H Street. There is an elevator, within the garage, to the A level and there will be a security guard on duty.

Metro Rail: Gallery Place/Chinatown, Red, Green, and Yellow lines. 9th Street exit is directly across the street from the library. Orange and Blue lines, Metro Center, one block away. Metro information: 202-637-7000



Attendees may want to visit the American Art Museum and Portrait Gallery before the lecture; those museums are just across the street from the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library and are open until 7 p.m., daily.

VSA Washington Metropolitan Chapter News:

January 2007. Twelfth Night. Still in planning stage.

Other happenings

A word of explanation about the **Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture**, the collective name for the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the National Portrait Gallery. Both of the museums retain their separate identities and staffs. The Donald W. Reynolds Foundation is the largest donor to the museums. In addition to the two museums, the Center also features the **Lunder Conservation Center and Luce foundation for American Art**—a visible art storage and study facility.

Exhibits at the Reynolds Center Open 11:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. daily.

National Portrait Gallery has specific areas that should be of particular interest to our members—the Civil War, the Gilded Age, and of course, the Hall of Presidents.

Smithsonian American Art Museum has particular strength in mid and late nineteenth century works—the Civil War, Impressionism, and the Gilded Age.

A special temporary exhibit, *An Impressionist Sensibility: The Halff Collection*, will provide a rare glimpse into a private collection of American art. The exhibit showcases 26 paintings by American artists such as William Merritt Chase, Childe Hassam, Winslow Homer, John Singer Sargent, and John Twachtman. On view from November 3, 2006 to February 4, 2007.

National Gallery of Art. *The Artist's Vision: Romantic Traditions in Britain.* Fine British prints and drawings from the late-18th through the early 20th centuries. November 19, 2006–March 18, 2007.

There is no charge and guests are welcome; light refreshments will be served, but to help our planning please call or email to register:

- Treasurer Darrell Lemke 301-530-4685 trautman.lemke@verizon.net or
- Chapter President Victoria Buckley 703-527-2401 vf Buckley@aol.com