

REPORT TO THE LMA ANNUAL MEETING - 20 November 1990 - Sarajane S. Aber

A year ago at the time of the Annual Meeting of the LMA, my husband and I were in France for a three week self-conducted tour of exploration. For that reason I could not personally make the presentation of my "Architectural History of the LIBERTY MEMORIAL in Kansas City, Missouri, 1918-1935!" The book of nearly 200 pages which I inscribed 11 November 1989 to the LMA is the result of research of several years done largely here at the LM to fulfill requirements for a Master's Degree in Art History at UMKC. It is truly an exciting story of how this unique architectural WWI monument and museum came to be.

Evidence of just how unique our Kansas City LM really is was demonstrated on the afternoon of 22 April 1987 when Minister Georges Fontes, representing the People of France and a party of dignitaries came to KC and in this Memory Hall presented citations to some three dozen veterans commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the American Expeditionary Forces sailing from New York in 1917, General John J. Pershing, Commander-in-Chief. On the day before their coming to KC, citations had been presented in New York harbor aboard the French vessel, "Jeanne d'Arc" That KC's Liberty Memorial had been singled out as the only other setting for such an important ceremony indicated the high esteem in which this Memorial is held in France.

When Kenneth and I were planning our French trip last fall, it occurred to me that my architectural history of the LM would be of interest to French historians. Thanks to the kind assistance of Dr. Octave Merveille, Honorary French Consul and Honorary LMA Trustee, I had been able to make connections with the successor to Minister Fontes, M. Andre Meric and to present for their historical Archives there in Paris a copy of this history. My husband and I were extremely pleased with the reception we received and the high regard in which Kansas City and the Liberty Memorial are held. Warm regards were extended, specifically to Mark Beveridge, and I deliver them now.

I was particularly appreciative for the assistance in Paris of Colonel Jean Lery. It was he who had, in 1987 while stationed at Ft. Leavenworth, greatly facilitated arrangements for the splendid and moving event here in recognition of the 70th Anniversary of the Sailing of the American Expeditionary Forces. It was a pleasure to meet Col. and Mme. Lery and I extend their regards, also.

A new addition to my History is a postcard based on a beautiful water-color painting by Paulina Everitt, Mrs. Robert S. Everitt. It is mounted inside the front cover. I am proud to be a member of this distinguished body and I now re-present this History to you.