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Presentation by Violet Meek on November 4

“The Harlan Brothers in Black and White: Justice John Marshall Harlan, U.S. Supreme Court, and Rep. Robert James Harlan, Ohio House of Representatives”

Two men, raised in the same household in 19th century America, illustrate the confusing and malicious color lines that infect the nation’s history. Violet Meek will tell the incredible story of these two very accomplished men in her Torch paper on Thursday, November 4.

“For many Americans, our national history stops at Appomattox and restarts again with World War I with brief flashes of the Spanish-American War and, perhaps, the Gilded Age,” Violet says. “The lives of two remarkable men shed light on the history of that lost period and its impact on the way we understand our current times and our future.”



John Marshall Harlan
(Wikipedia commons)

John Marshall Harlan served on the U.S. Supreme Court from 1877 until 1911. He is best known now for his dissents in landmark civil rights cases, including *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the “separate but equal” case. He often stood alone as the court slowly tightened the segregation of non-white U.S. citizens. His dissents formed a basis for the Warren Court’s desegregation decision, *Brown v. Board of Education*.



Robert Harlan
(Ohio Statehouse Museum)

John Harlan had a brother, Robert. “Robert was an entrepreneur of great deftness,” Violet notes. “He was one of the few who came out of the California Gold Rush a richer man – much richer. He was a world traveler who took U.S. race horses to England to try them against the British breeds. He came back to the United States and became a political power

both in Ohio and nationally. He was a member of the Ohio House from Cincinnati. In fact, in our times he would surely have been recognized as the successful brother.

“But Robert was born into slavery, the son of an enslaved woman and, perhaps, John’s father or grandfather. He was raised as a brother to John and as a member of the family. Certainly, his life gave lie to the myth that African Americans were unable to benefit from education or to hold responsible positions. Surely knowing Robert had an impact on John’s view of the meaning of the Constitution.”

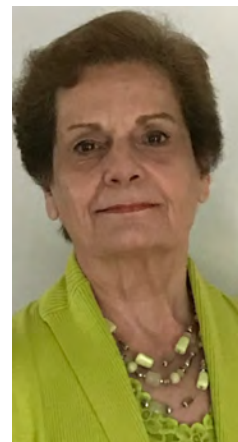
Biography of Violet Meek

Violet Meek has had a varied career as a chemistry professor, academic administrator, leader of a regional campus, and a minister.

An inorganic chemist by training, Violet earned her undergraduate degree from St. Olaf College and her M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Illinois, where she met her late husband, Devon W. Meek. She joined the faculties at Mount Holyoke College and Ohio Wesleyan University, leaving OWU as professor of chemistry and dean of educational services to become director of annual programs for the Council of Independent Colleges in Washington, D.C.

Violet returned to Columbus and, after a stint at The Ohio State University Research Foundation, became the dean and director of The Ohio State University at Lima. She led the regional campus from 1991 until her first retirement in 2002. She then became an ordained minister in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. She served a congregation in Logan, Ohio, for 10 years until attempting, with limited success, to retire again.

She has served on the boards of many arts, civic and service organizations, including Trinity Lutheran Seminary, the Columbus Rotary Foundation, and the Deaconess Community of the ELCA. She has been a Torch member since 2014 and was the club’s president in 2019-20. Her husband, Don M. Dell, served as the club’s president in 2015-16. They share five adult children and seven grandchildren.



Violet Meek

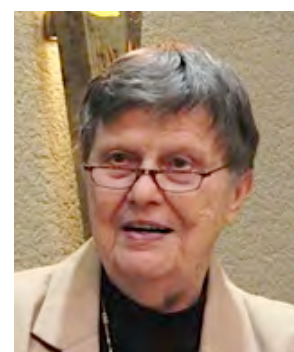
President’s message: The succinct purpose of Torch

It was so good to see everyone at our October meeting. The fellowship, the lecture, and the dinner were all excellent. November promises to be another great gathering of Columbus Torch Club.

When I dropped by to visit the International Association of Torch Clubs Board Retreat, the group was deep in a discussion of what Torch Clubs really do. I was interested because I have, on occasion, struggled to succinctly explain just that. It is not exactly an “elevator speech,” but I find this from the Richmond Club useful:

“Torch Clubs provide an opportunity for persons of different professions and disciplines to meet monthly for the interchange of professional knowledge, ideas, opinions, and fellowship. . . .”

Think of friends and colleagues who might enjoy joining us – and try it out on them. We are looking for good new members.



Nancy Wardwell

Torch Club board minutes now posted on website

Minutes of the monthly meetings of the Torch Club Board of Directors now are being posted on the club's website. Rai Goerler is the editor of the website. Here is a link to the website <http://www.columbustorch.org>. Go to the website's "About" page, then scroll down to the section on "Governance."

Renew your Torch membership for 2021-22

Dues for membership in the Torch Club of Columbus are \$240 for the 2021-22 program year. Dues for a two-person family are \$430. In recent years, the annual dues have been \$300, but the club's board decided to reduce the dues for 2021-22 because dinner meetings in April and May 2020 were canceled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Make your check payable to the Torch Club of Columbus, and mail your check to Howard Gauthier, Treasurer, 2751 Alliston Court, Columbus, OH 43220. Or you may bring your check to the Torch Club meeting on November 4.

Club's in-person meetings will be subject to health guidelines

The in-person monthly meetings of the Torch Club are subject to the health guidelines set forth by Ohio State University and state and local health authorities. In a letter to members in September, Club President Nancy Wardwell explained the current health protocols for the Torch meetings in the Faculty Club: "As of August, all visitors to OSU campuses are required to wear masks indoors, regardless of their vaccination status. Masks continue to be required for all unvaccinated individuals when they cannot maintain social distancing. Vaccinated people are not required to mask outdoors. All spaces will be cleaned and disinfected nightly."

Contact the Fellowship Committee if you need a ride to Torch meetings

If any Torch Club member needs a ride to a monthly Torch meeting or if you are willing to provide transportation for a member, please contact the club's Fellowship Committee. You may reach the Fellowship Committee through its chair, Diane Selby, at (614) 571-4226 and Dianeselby@gmail.com. To help arrange transportation, you also may contact any member of the Fellowship Committee: Jeff Caswell, Cecelia B. Costantiello, Tom Davison, Scott Doellinger, Joan R. Leitzel and Constance Oulanoff.

James Jones and William Studer died recently

James "Jim" Jones, athletic director emeritus at Ohio State University, died April 22, 2020. A celebration of life service was held for him on October 8 in Dublin. He was 83 and is survived by his wife, Linda, a daughter and two grandchildren. He was a member of the Torch Club since 1996.

William Studer, director of libraries at Ohio State for 22 years until his retirement in 1999, died October 14 at the age of 85. He is survived by two grown children. A memorial service to celebrate his life will be held at a later date. He is a former Torch member and was Torch Club president in 1993-94.

Responding to the Evite from Secretary Seelbach

Club secretary Thom Seelbach has sent you via electronic mail an Evite to attend the Torch Club meeting on November 4. Respond promptly to the Evite so he will have an accurate count of meals needed. You also may respond to him at tseelbach@gmail.com or (614) 457-5103.

The directions for responding to the Evite are:

1. After you click on the email from Evite, it will bring up a new window on the Evite website. You must click your response in this new window for Evite to register your response.
2. The guest count is the actual number of attendees. If only you are attending, the count will be 1. The cost for a guest to attend the meeting and dinner is \$30. A potential member may attend one meeting without charge.

Schedule of Torch Club speakers and their papers for 2021-22

October 7, 2021: **“It’s Not Your Grandmother’s Nursing”** by Elizabeth Lenz

November 4, 2021: **“The Harlan Brothers in Black and White: Justice John Marshall Harlan, U.S. Supreme Court and Rep. Robert James Harlan, Ohio House of Representatives”** by Violet Meek

December 2, 2021: **Holiday gala**

January 6, 2022: **“How Women and Men Differ in Their Work”** by Francille Firebaugh

February 3, 2022: Torch paper to be announced soon.

March 3, 2022: **“Considering Racism”** by Michael Wilkos

April 7, 2022: **“Talkin’ Trash: From Waste to Resources”** by Susan Tilgner

May 5, 2022: **“Celebrating Sparky – Charles Schultz and Peanuts”** by Lucy Caswell

Torch Club’s monthly meeting agenda

4:30-5:30 p.m. Board of Directors meeting
5:30-6:15 p.m. Cocktails and conversation
6:15-6:35 p.m. Business matters
6:35-7:30 p.m. Speaker
7:30-8:45 p.m. Dinner and table discussion

Meetings are conducted in The Ohio State University Faculty Club, 181 S. Oval Drive; (614) 292-2262.

Board of Directors for Torch Club of Columbus, Ohio, for 2021-22

President – Nancy S. Wardwell

President-elect – Susan Tilgner

Immediate Past President – Susan W. Smith

Secretary – Thom Seelbach

Assistant Secretary – Diane Selby

Treasurer – Howard Gauthier

Assistant Treasurer – David Lenz

Fellowship Chair – Diane Selby

Membership Chair – Dorothy Driskell

Nominating Chair – Susan W. Smith

Newsletter Editor – Steve Sterrett

Website Editor – Rai Goerler

Director-at-Large – Christina Atzberger (2022)

Director-at-Large – Rai Goerler (2022)

Director-at-Large – Paul Niswander (2023)

Director-at-Large – Dorothy Driskell (2023)

IATC Region 5 Director – Elizabeth Short