

“The Connections” that Preserve and Protect African American Institutions Augmented by International Humanitarian Gifts of Brotherhood and Friendship

People Affected by The Belgian Friendship Building on The Campus of Virginia Union University, a gift from the Government of Belgium to Virginia Union University; dismantled by a donation by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and sent to Richmond. Its carillon was extracted before the building left NYC and given to Herbert Hoover for his Alma Mater, Stanford University:

- More than 25 million individuals who attended the 1939 New York World’s Fair during 1939, its opening year, who visited the Belgian Pavilion and from within New York and from points around the world. (research by Watkins)
- Veterans and the families of WWII

The 161,000 men of all races who were processed by the United States War Department through the Belgian Friendship Building between 1943 and 1947 for WWII; Out of that number more than 41,000 were inducted into the United States Armed Forces and deployed throughout the world; The untold numbers who gave exemplary years of service (research by Watkins)

- The principles of Dr. John Malcus Ellison, of Virginia, the first African American President of Virginia Union University, and his wife, Elizabeth Balfour Ellison, of New York, are highlighted. They committed their lives to building “a more excellent way” for countless the adults and children, who now live all over the world through educational excellence, spirituality and the fine arts

(Dr. Ellison attracted African students, many of whom returned to Africa, and to stellar careers, and one of whom named a Nigerian hospital in his name in 1978. Admiral Samuel L. Gravely, first African American Admiral, graduated from VUU in 1948 and Former Virginia Governor and Richmond Mayor L. Douglas Wilder, graduated from VUU in 1951.) (research by Watkins)

- Virginia Union University National Alumni Association and its Alumni who live all over the world

The descendants of those who began their education in 1865 in Lumpkin’s Jail, the first classes that originated Virginia Union University, whose descendants live around the world

The descendants of untold numbers of men, women and children, many of whom were processed into slavery from the banks of Richmond’s James River, specifically through Lumpkin’s Jail, a slave holding pen for captured runaway slaves that closed in 1865, whose ascendants live around the world

- Citizens who live in Virginia, and thousands more in the surrounding areas
- Stanford University Alumni who live all over the world and who have heard the Stanford Carillon including World Heads of State, national elected officials, illustrious presidents of corporations, the Palo Alto Community and Citizens of San Francisco (marketing by Bells for Peace)
- Readers of such publications as: the Richmond Times Dispatch, The Richmond Free Press, North of the James Magazine (Richmond Regional Publication), Trans Lux Magazine (a publication of The Art Deco Society of Washington, DC), Carillon News (Guild of Carillonners of North America), the 1939 New York World’s Fair web pages, Belgium Today (The Embassy of Belgium Newsletter), Chicago Defender Daily News, and Pittsburgh Courier Newspaper, radio and television. Associated Press story on January 20-21, 2007, other Virginia publications (Bells for Peace Marketing)
- Survivors of the USS Robert L. Vann Liberty Ship

Workers of the Portland, Maine Ship Building Enterprises and Citizens of Ostend, Belgium and England Ports

(Robert L. Vann, for whom the Belgian Friendship Building Tower is named, was a former Virginia Union University student, received a fellowship to the University of Pennsylvania, and continued to become the famed editor and publisher of the Pittsburgh Courier, and Assistant Attorney General for President Franklin Roosevelt. The USS Robert L. Vann Liberty Ship was named for him in October 1943. Launched from Portland, Maine, the ship was sunk in March 1945 off the coast of Belgium at the wealthy resort community of Ostend.) A replica of his ship is in San Francisco Harbor. The SS JEREMIAH O'BRIEN is one of two remaining fully functional Liberty ships of the 2,710 built and launched during WWII. The O'BRIEN has the distinction of being the last unaltered Liberty ship and remains historically accurate. Moored at Pier 45, [Fisherman's Wharf](#), she is a premier San Francisco attraction. (Research by Watkins)

- Government officials and countrymen of the United States, Belgium, France, England, the Congo and other nations
- Educators, Historians, Artists, Preservationists, Historical Architects, Museums the includes the International Congress of World Art Deco Societies, Barbara Capitman, Founder