

The MONTEBELLO Voice

an independent gazette

mixtape

October 6 2022



Calling all writers

By *Rebecca Hayden*

A group of writers met recently to establish the Montebello Writers Association (MWA). The only requirement for participation is that you are a writer, simply defined by Merriam-Webster as “one who writes.” Interested writers may be published or unpublished, of any genre, academic or scientific work, fiction, poetry, memoir, history, or other.

Writers in attendance included Kris Amundson, who took the initiative in establishing the group. Rodney Fisher, Shuja Nawaz, Heather Long, Donna Fowler, and Rebecca Long Hayden also participated. Several others expressed an interest but were unable to attend.

The group is working with Montebello to sponsor a book fair offering writ-



ers the opportunity to showcase their publications and make them available for purchase and inscription. The idea was well-received, and several dates were discussed. Anyone with a book to display would be encouraged to participate.

The group also explored future directions the association might take, such as subgroups for creative writing, and possibly community center readings by authors from time to time. Small genre-specific discussion groups might form for works of historical fiction, literary fiction, biography/autobiography, politics, or science fiction. Interest in any of these would be self-determining over time.

We’re compiling an email list of those who would like to receive announcements of MWA events or activities, and it would be useful to hear from anyone who might have a book to include in the fair.

If interested, contact Rebecca Hayden at viarebecca@aol.com, or call 703-624-2888. 📞



Frank and Stormy

Photo by Dian McDonald

On the cover: A lily or tulip magnolia (Magnolia liliflora) enjoying the last days of summer near the playground.

Photo by Patricia Jacubec

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Cannon fodder

By Chester Taylor

Putin is carrying out what he describes as a partial mobilization of 300,000 reserves to fight in Ukraine. Foreign media sources within Russia are now saying it could be much larger. No one knows for sure. It could also be much less, since potential soldiers are fleeing the country as fast as they can. Many of those are Russia's better educated. Is this a turning point?

Jack Barsky, a former KGB agent, said recently during an interview that despite the Western media reports on the Russian anti-war protesters, young men trying to cross the border by Aeroflot or car, and crippling effects of sanctions, most of the Russian people believe state-run TV and Putin's lies.

Sir Antony Beevor, a former British military officer and a well-known military historian, also warns against "excessive optimism." Russia is not yet close to a revolution. He believes that Ukraine should take small steps to beat the Russians forcing Putin into a deal before things get worst. Perhaps Putin gets to keep Crimea and some security

guarantees. Ukraine gets the rest.

The recent satellite, drone, and media photos of the Russian borders have given us pause. Over 200,000 Russian nationals have fled to neighboring Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Finland — most often by car, bicycle or on foot. All flights to countries that don't require visas are sold out and many of Russia's 65 border crossings have reported lines of several thousand cars each day. Now Russian security forces are snaring those young men trying to leave Russia.

How do you equip and train a force of 300,000? That's twice the size of the operating forces of the U.S. Marine Corps, a force that is well-trained, well-equipped, well-organized, and supported by over 1,000 aircraft. Russia's solution is giving each reserve an AK-47 rifle, a uniform, no rations, and little else, and bussed to the front with no training. They are not provided sleeping bags or even bandages. The first of these reserves have reached Ukraine where it is raining and cold. It is a desperate situation.

The United States has sent 60 billion dollars' worth of aid to Ukraine. It will not be able to sustain that much longer.

Certainly not with 30 trillion dollars of U.S. debt. Germany, the United Kingdom, Poland, and others have stepped up to aid Ukraine straining their resources and budgets. The EU nations are trying to stick together facing rising prices for food and fearing the high cost of energy for heat for this winter. The European Commission President just announced another proposed ban on Russian products that would cost Russia \$6.7 billion and deny them key technologies. Other foreign countries like India and China have expressed their "concerns" directly to Putin. Turkey's President Erdoğan bluntly told Putin to end the war and return all the land that was invaded, including Crimea, back to Ukraine. Turkey's last three major banks have pulled back from processing Russian credit cards. Hopefully these external pressure from the world's nations coupled with the internal political and economic pressures within Russia will be enough to implode and cause a regime change. On top of the 75,000 Russian soldiers already killed in Ukraine, expect to see several hundred thousand more Russian men end up as Putin's cannon fodder. 📌

Golf courses with native plants and less water

By Chester Taylor

Many golf courses in the United States are using native plants to promote nature, reduce water consumption, and save money. Native plants are easier to grow and require less watering and almost no fertilization. Native plants also provide food sources and breeding habitats for North American insects and birds far better than plants from other continents.

Building and maintaining golf courses is expensive and requires good management. To survive, they must not only manage for today, but look down the road 30 to 40 years out. Many man-

agers are noting the rising temperatures and are dealing with the scarcity of water. This has changed how they look at the layout of tee boxes, fairways, and greens. They are reducing their size, using more drought-tolerant turf like Bermuda grass, and using native grasses like buffalo grass to form the roughs surrounding them.

Many courses let the turf on their fairways go dormant in the winter, watering only the tee boxes and greens. These efforts alone will save the course between 25 to 40 percent in water costs. About 40 percent of the courses in Arizona, California, and southern Nevada use recycled water.

Some golf courses are also becoming more environmentally aware and using their golf courses to create habitats for pollinators. One club, Goat Hill Park Golf Club, in Oceanside, California, began eight years ago to be as environmentally friendly as possible. With help from a sustainability expert, the course established a beekeeping program. They felt that healthy bees signal a healthy ecosystem. Now that place is a buzz with bees. The course is working with researchers from University of Michigan to identify other areas that could support pollinators. 📌





Photos by Dian McDonald
October 6, 2022



Inside the barbed wire, part III

By Bob Shea

Recap: Korea, 1952. Resolution of repatriation of over 140,000 Korean and Chinese POWs stalls peace talks at Panmunjom; the American commander of Kojé Do has been taken hostage, released, and demoted; the new commander has signed a statement agreeing to “stop coercing and torturing its captives;” the world’s press is taking note of the discord; the POWs are continuing to organize.

Had the inmates taken over the institution?

On May 11, Brigadier General Haydon L. “Bull” Boatner was summoned to the Dai Ichi, General Mark W. Clark’s headquarters in Tokyo. BG Boatner was ordered to Kojé Do to take command with explicit orders to bring the POWs under control using all force necessary. General Clark stated that bloodshed would probably be required and that he concurred in its use.

At last the Kojé Do commander was given clear orders and enjoyed strong command backing, something neither Brigadier Generals Dodd or Colson enjoyed. Prior to his departure from Tokyo, BG Boatner invited representatives of the United Nations Inspection Team, the International Red Cross, and multiple news services to join him on the island. He wanted eye witnesses who could document his planned actions.

Brigadier General Boatner had graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1924. He had spent most of World War II in China and Burma with General Joseph Stillwell and spoke fluent Mandarin. He was looked upon as a man who understood Asia, its people, and their phi-

losophy. He was, in military-speak, an “old China hand.”

On the day BG Boatner arrived on Kojé Do, Brigadier General Coulson, now aware of the dilemma he had created, left for Pusan. He followed Dodd with demotion to colonel and early retirement. Commanding the POW camp was certainly not a career enhancing assignment for senior officers.

Coincident with BG Boatner’s arrival on Kojé Do was the planned deployment of the Army’s 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team as well as elements of Canadian, British, Greek, and Turkish forces. The island would no longer be the unique problem of the U.S. Army. General Mark Clark



Brigadier General Haydon Boatner in Korea

also committed \$3.5 million for camp construction. Kojé Do finally had the attention of the UN Command despite the on-going war.

BG Boatner was aghast at the apparent alternative reality in which the Americans on Kojé Do seemed to live.

The senior MP officer who had been on the island for fourteen of BG Boatner’s predecessors approached him to ask what would be the prescribed uniform for the welcoming cocktail party, explaining that the profits from the bar at the officers’ club profits would be used to cover the costs. BG Boatner felt he was sitting on a volcano and his subordinates were concerned about a cocktail party. Reply: “No cocktail party!”

Also, the headquarters personnel wore dress uniforms while others wore fatigues but carried no weapons. When asked about that, BG Boatner was told that his troops were not armed to avoid accidental discharges of weapons. The Kojé Do contingent was largely made up of officers who had been relieved in combat units and the replacement pipeline was funneling some of the less desirable soldiers to the island. He had to harshly deal with problem soldiers on both sides of the barbed wire.

In a word, Brigadier General Boatner had a huge problem.

Camp pacification was Phase I of Brigadier General Boatner’s plan.

A riot involving over 6500 Chinese POWs caused BG Boatner to threaten the U.S. soldiers and their officers who were standing outside the wire watching as if it were a 4-alarm fire. His salty language was direct and to the point. He left no doubt in anyone’s mind who was in charge and what his standards were. He was prepared to act regardless of what uniform the soldiers wore.

Meeting outside the wire with the senior Chinese officer in the camp, BG Boatner patiently listened to a long



harangue about torture, Panmunjom, repatriation, the Geneva Convention, and coercion. Then, in flawless Mandarin, he said that the accusations were the Mandarin equivalent of “bulls--t” and described in detail the violence he was prepared to inflict to restore order. The Chinese officer returned to his compound crestfallen but the rioting stopped for the moment.

He next ordered that the POW pictures and banners hanging in Compound 76 were to come down. As expected his ultimatum was ignored. A reinforced infantry battalion supported by tanks quickly removed the offending material. One by one, BG Boatner did this in each of the other compounds without incident.

Each day tanks rolled just outside the wire while infantry troops in full battle dress conducted bayonet drills within sight of the POWs. The no-nonsense commander kept the lid on Kojé Do without incident or injury during the time required for completion of Phase II, reconstruction of the camp into smaller, more manageable sub-compounds. BG Boatner still expected violence from the fanatics.

He began Phase III on June 10, 1952 – moving the POWs into the new and smaller enclosures that would separate the POW leadership factions. Compound 76 would be the first one to be broken up. The 187th Infantry supported by four infantry battalions dug in along the road outside Compound 76

setting up mortars and machine guns. They then made a mock advance into an adjacent and empty compound using fixed bayonets and flamethrowers.

BG Boatner notified the Chinese commander of his intentions as well as using a camp public address system to describe in Chinese what was about to happen to move the

POWs, stressing that all force that was necessary would be used. At 0615 on June 10, the operation began in Compound 76. UN forces were to sweep the POWs into the new smaller compounds. As expected, there was resistance. The POWs occupied defensive positions brandishing spears, knives, and other crude weapons. On order, the infantry used tear gas and concussion grenades, causing the majority of the POWs to enter passageways into the new smaller compounds.

However, 150 of the most fanatic POWs were holdouts and prepared to fight using spears, rocks, and Molotov cocktails. Huts were set ablaze. Smoke filled the compounds. Eventually the resistance was crushed. Manageable compounds of 500 POWs were established but not without cost – 43 POWs were killed and 135 were wounded, many by their own leaders who took revenge on those

who broke ranks and ran. Allied casualties were minimal with no deaths.

Inside Compound 76, the senior Chinese officer was found hiding in a sewage ditch. He was dragged to the new compound and left in smelly disgrace. The Americans also found a detailed written POW plan for a mass escape and slaughter to take place on June 20.

The same segmenting process was used on subsequent days without serious incident, and by June 13, relocation was complete. BG Boatner was at last in command of Kojé Do.

BG Boatner later found a sign marking his jeep’s parking space outside his headquarters. On the reverse side from Brigadier General Boatner was painted Colonel Boatner. A forward-thinking GI sign painter had been prepared should Brigadier General Boatner have followed his predecessors into disgrace. By seven days he had avoided their fate.

Repatriation issues were later resolved at Panmunjom.

Brigadier General Haydon L. “Bull” Boatner retired with honors in November 1960 as a major general, having later commanded the 3rd Infantry Division and served as the Army’s Provost Marshall. He kept the parking sign as a reminder of what his fate might have been had

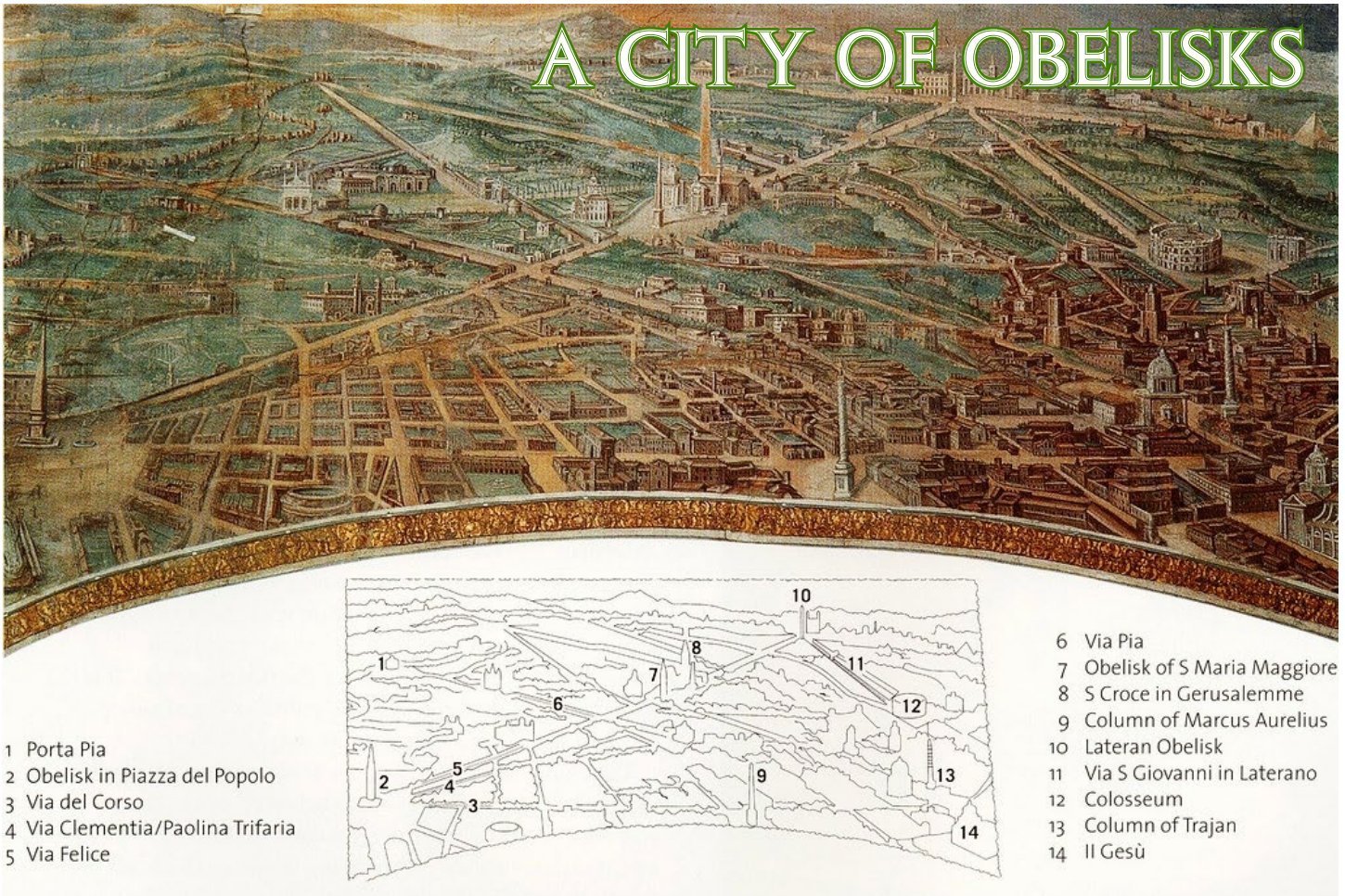


General Haydon Boatner
October 8, 1900 – August 9, 1994

he not brought Kojé Do under control. Some stars fell on Kojé Do, but not his.

And, now you know the rest of the story. 📖

A CITY OF OBELISKS



- 1 Porta Pia
- 2 Obelisk in Piazza del Popolo
- 3 Via del Corso
- 4 Via Clementia/Paolina Trifaria
- 5 Via Felice

- 6 Via Pia
- 7 Obelisk of S Maria Maggiore
- 8 S Croce in Gerusalemme
- 9 Column of Marcus Aurelius
- 10 Lateran Obelisk
- 11 Via S Giovanni in Laterano
- 12 Colosseum
- 13 Column of Trajan
- 14 Il Gesù

By Joe de Angelis

If you have ever been to Rome, you most surely have encountered an Egyptian obelisk or two, especially if you have been to St. Peter's Square. There are 13 obelisks in the city of Rome, more than in any other single place in the world. Eight are ancient Egyptian obelisks taken from Egypt by the Romans, the other five obelisks were made in Egypt by order of various Roman Emperors.

The ancient Egyptians are believed to be the first to have constructed an obelisk, the first of which appeared during the Old Kingdom period of Egypt, circa 2300 BC. The Egyptians called them *tekhenw*, meaning to pierce, and they were symbols of the sun god, Ra, as well as of the power of the pharaoh, symbolizing his relationship to the gods. For the ancient Egyptians,

the obelisk was also the umbilical cord between the gods and humanity.

Herodotus (484-425 BC), a Greek historian and geographer, is believed to be the first to have written about Egyptian obelisks. Herodotus, however, used the word *obeliskos* meaning "skewer" or "spit" when describing these Egyptian monoliths because they reminded him of a long pointed piece of wood used for cooking. The word *obeliskos* eventually passed into Latin and ultimately into the English language as obelisk. Specifically, an obelisk is a tall, four-sided, narrow, tapering monolithic monument, which ends in a pyramid shape at the top and may or may not be inscribed with hieroglyphics.

With the exception of Greece, no other country had a greater influence over the ancient Romans than Egypt. Egyptian gods even became members of the Roman pantheon. In total, there are eight obelisks that were taken from Egypt by Roman emperors and

brought to Rome. Of the 30 known Egyptian obelisks existing today, only 10 are located in Egypt, the remainder are spread out in major cities around the world: Vatican City, Paris, London, Rome Poznan, Poland, Beirut, Lebanon, Istanbul, Turkey, and New York City. Today, none of the obelisks are to be found in their original location.

Let us look at how and why Egyptian obelisks made their way to Rome. While the Roman Empire flourished, its emperors continued to remove obelisks from Egypt. However, after the fall of the Empire the obelisks virtually disappeared, not to be seen again for centuries. When they were rediscovered, it was the grand vision of the popes who re-erected them giving new life to the Eternal City.

The removal of Obelisks from Egypt began after the conquest of Egypt by the Emperor Augustus (r. 27 BC-AD 14) in 30 BC. Augustus and successive Roman emperors were fascinated

by Egyptian culture and history, with a special interest in their monuments and their symbolism. The most popular and sought after trophies of Egypt were the obelisks of the pharaohs, the symbols of their divinity. Obelisks were not only removed from Egypt, but new obelisks were also commissioned to be carved in Egypt using Egyptian granite, from Aswan. These obelisks were either completely or partially carved in Egypt and then sent to Rome. Some of these Roman obelisks were inscribed with hieroglyphics.

Circa 13 BC, Emperor Augustus conducted the first successful movement of obelisks from Heliopolis to Alexandria, Egypt. This movement was the precursor for transport to Rome, which occurred in 10 BC when two obelisks were successfully transported to Rome by ship, an absolutely Herculean engineering feat, even by today's standards. Pliny the Elder (23-79 AD) described how the Romans built three special ships to transport the obelisks from Egypt across the Mediterranean to Rome. "Two of the three rectangular ships were connected to each other by longitudinal beams and the obelisk was then fastened to the beams and held firm underwater. A third ship was tied to the front of the two ships and was tasked with steering the flotilla."

After the fall of the Roman Empire in AD 476, all of these obelisks were temporarily lost to history as many of them collapsed and were buried under the debris of a dying city. It was not until centuries later that a number of popes would resurrect these ancient monoliths, change their locations, and fold them into the prevalent and growing Christian tradition. Some 900 years later, as Rome was beginning to be rebuilt, these obelisks came to play an important part in the new city landscape.

The first of these ancient monoliths to reappear was the obelisk known as the Macuteo Obelisk. This 21-foot-tall obelisk was found in 1373 near the church San Macuto and was erected in the Piazza Macuta, hence the name. In 1711 Pope Clement XII had it moved

to the piazza in front of the Pantheon: the Piazza della Rotonda. It was erected over a fountain which increased its height to 48 feet. The Macuteo Obelisk was built by the Pharaoh Ramesses II (1279-1213 BC) and was originally one of a pair, the other being the Matteiano Obelisk, erected at the Temple of Ra in Heliopolis, Egypt. Both were possibly brought to Rome by the Emperor Domitian, circa 88, and erected in the Temple of Isis.

Also found in 1373 was the Matteiano Obelisk. But it was not until 1417 that it was erected near the Basilica of Santa Maria in Aracoeli. The lower part of the obelisk is made up of parts of several obelisks, which are of unknown origin, but the top part, the original 9-foot section, has hieroglyphics of Ramesses II. The overall height, with its base, is 41 feet. In 1587 the obelisk was presented to Ciriaco Mattei, an influential nobleman, by the Senate of Rome. Mattei then had it moved to his villa. As the villa fell into disrepair the obelisk toppled over and as time marched on, the obelisk was lost again. Fragments of the obelisk were rediscovered in 1817 and after being repaired, the obelisk was moved to its present location in the Villa Celimontana and re-erected on a base consisting of four lions.

The Matteiano Obelisk was built during the reign of Ramesses II (1303-1213 BC). It was originally one of a pair of obelisks at the Temple of Ra in Heliopolis, Egypt; the other being the above referenced Macuteo Obelisk. These obelisks were most probably brought to Rome circa 88 and placed as a pair at the entrance of the Roman Temple of Isis in the Campus Martius by Emperor Domitian.

In 1527 both the Esquiline and the Esquiline obelisks were discovered together and excavated. The Esquiline Obelisk was moved to the Piazza dell'Esquilino behind the church of Santa Maria Maggiore in 1587 by Pope Sixtus V. The obelisk was set on a base that increased its height to 311 feet. While its twin obelisk, the Quirinal Obelisk was not moved until 1786

when Pope Pius VI had it moved to the Piazza del Quirinale on the tallest of Rome's seven hills: The Quirinal Hill. The obelisk was erected on top of a base that increased its height to 276 feet. These two monoliths are a pair of red Aswan granite obelisks, 158 feet in height, which once stood at the entrance of the Mausoleum of Augustus in the Campus Martius in Rome, built by Emperor Augustus circa 28 BC. Most likely Augustus had them made in Egypt for his mausoleum as evidenced by the use of red Aswan granite and the fact that they are uninscribed, that is, no hieroglyphics.

The next obelisk to reappear was the Pincian Obelisk which was found in three pieces in a vineyard near Rome's Porta Maggiore (Large Gate) in 1570. It was not until 1632 that the obelisk was given to Cardinal Francesco Barberini, and erected in the Palazzo Barberini, after which it became known as the Barberini Obelisk. In 1773, Donna Cornelia Barberini-Colonna, a descendant of the Cardinal, donated the obelisk to Pope Clement XIV who had it moved to the Vatican. In 1822 Pope Pius VII had it moved to, and erected on the Pincian hill. The 30 foot tall obelisk (57 feet with the base) has since been known as the Pincian Obelisk. The Pincian Obelisk, also known as the Antinous Obelisk, was commissioned by Emperor Hadrian between 130 and 136 and was initially erected in Tivoli, Italy for the tomb of Antinous, his close and dear friend. It was moved to Rome by Emperor Elagabalus (218-222) to decorate the *spina* of the Circus Vari-anus.

The 84-foot tall, 326 ton, Vatican Obelisk is the only ancient Egyptian obelisk in Rome that has not toppled over since its erection in AD 37. Resting on a base of bronze lions, the overall height, including the cross on top, is 135 feet. Because there are no hieroglyphs inscribed on the obelisk, its origin of time, place, and pharaoh, are unknown. However, it is believed that this obelisk is approximately 4,500

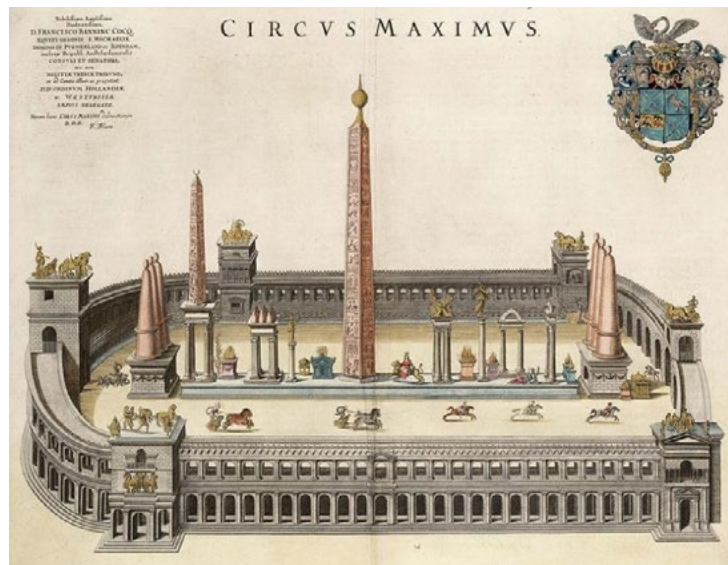
When in Rome

years old. In 1586 Pope Sixtus V had the obelisk relocated from its original position to the center of St. Peter's square, a distance of some 275 yards. It took 13 months, 900 men, and 72 horses to complete the move. It was raised in the Forum Iulium in Alexandria, Egypt by the Emperor Augustus, circa 29 BC and in AD 37 the Emperor Caligula brought it to Rome. Caligula had it erected on the *spina* of the circus he was constructing, but due to his death the circus was completed by Emperor Nero and subsequently known as the Nerone circo ludios (Nero's Circus). In 64, Saint Peter was crucified on the same *spina*, in the shadow of the obelisk.

Both the Flaminio Obelisk and the Lateran Obelisk were brought to Rome and erected in the Circus Maximus where they remained until the fall of the Roman Empire in the 5th century, after which they were buried under mud and earth for centuries until they were rediscovered in 1587. Pope Sixtus V ordered that the obelisks be excavated and restored. Two years later the Flaminio Obelisk was erected in the Piazza del Popolo. Sculptures of lion fountains were added to the base in 1818. In 1823 four circular basins were also added. The granite obelisk alone weighs 235 tons and is 67 feet in height, the overall height including the base is 100 feet. The Emperor Augustus removed two obelisks from Egypt and transported them to Rome, one of which was the Flaminio Obelisk, that dates to the reign of Pharaoh Seti I (1294-1279 BC), and is located in the Piazza del Popolo. It is made of Aswan granite and has hieroglyphs from both Seti I and his son Rameses II. Augustus initially had it erected on the *spina* of the Circus Maximus.

The Lateran Obelisk, however, was found in three pieces. Originally weigh-

ing 455 tons, after it collapsed reconstruction, it weighed 300 tons and was 13 feet shorter, measuring 106 feet. The Lateran Obelisk was also topped with a Christian cross, bring the total height, including the base, to 150 feet. Upon completion of the renovation, the obelisk was then installed in its present location near the Lateran Palace where it replaced the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, which was moved to the Capitoline Hill. The Lateran Obelisk was made around 1400 BC in Karnak, Egypt, during the reigns of Pharaohs Thutmose III (1479-1425 BC) and Thutmose IV (1397-1388 BC). Originally taken from the temple of Amun in Karnak, it was brought to Alexandria, Egypt along with another



obelisk by the Emperor Constantius II, where it remained for several years. In AD 357 it was brought to Rome by Constantius II and erected on the *spina* of the Circus Maximus just as Augustus had done in 10 BC with the Flaminio Obelisk. The two obelisks stood side by side on the circus' *spina*. Today it is located in the Piazza di San Giovanni in Laterano across from the Archbasilica of St. John Lateran. It is one of the best preserved obelisks containing very fine and legible hieroglyphs. It is also the largest and oldest standing ancient Egyptian obelisk in the world and was the last obelisk to be brought to Rome.

The Sallustiano Obelisk was not found again until 1621 on the prop-

erty of Cardinal Ludovico Ludovisi, the nephew of Pope Gregory XV. The Ludovisi family had the obelisk moved to the Piazza di San Giovanni in Laterano in 1734, but did not have it erected. It was finally erected in its present location, at the top of the Spanish Steps, in the small Santa Trinita dei Monti Piazza, in front of the 16th century church of the same name. by Pope Pius VI in 1789. Emperor Aurelian (r. 270-275) commissioned this obelisk, which is a smaller copy of the Flaminio Obelisk, in the Piazza del Popolo, to include all of the hieroglyphics, because he was so impressed with the original. The 46-foot (100 feet with its base) obelisk was placed in the ancient Horti Sallustiani (Gardens of Sallust), in Rome, hence its name.

Discovered in 1648, Pope Innocent X had the Agonalis Obelisk moved to the Piazza Navona in Rome where it was repaired and erected as part of the Fontana dei Quattro Fiumi (Fountain of the Four Rivers) created by Gian Lorenzo Bernini in 1651. Resting upon the Fontana dei Quattro Fiumi, the 54-foot obelisk soared to a new height of 100 feet. The Agonalis Obelisk was a copy of an Egyptian obelisk commissioned by the Emperor Domitian (r. 81-96) and erect-

ed at the Temple of Isis. The Emperor Maxentius (r. 306-312) had it moved to the Circus Maxentius that he had built on the Via Appia. Although there are hieroglyphs inscribed on the obelisk, one should not think it of Egyptian origin as the names of Emperor Domitian, his father Emperor Vespasian, and his brother Emperor Titus are included in the inscribed hieroglyphs. Over time the Circus of Maxentius fell into ruin and the 54-foot obelisk collapsed, falling, and breaking into four pieces.

The Minerva Obelisk was discovered and excavated in 1655. With a height of only 18 feet, the newly discovered obelisk needed a base and Pope Alex-

When in Rome

ander VII asked Gian Lorenzo Bernini to submit a design for an appropriate base. After much deliberation Bernini submitted a design with an elephant as its base. His choice was inspired by the 15th century novel, “Poliphil’s Dream of the Love Battle,” written in 1499. In the novel, Polophil encountered an elephant made of stone carrying an obelisk. The design was accepted by Pope Alexander and work soon started on the new base. Although designed by Bernini, the elephant was actually sculpted by his student, Ercole Ferrata. The Minerva Obelisk is an excellent example of blending Egyptian, Baroque, Gothic Pagan and Christian elements of art. The restored obelisk, with its elephant base, was erected in 1667 behind the Pantheon in the Piazza della Minerva, in front of the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, where it has remained to this day. The Minerva Obelisk is so named because it stands on what once was the location of the ancient Roman temple of Minerva built by Pompey. The Church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva is the only Gothic church in Rome. Originally one of a pair of obelisks from Sais, Egypt, dating from the reign of Pharaoh Apries (589-570 BC). The Minerva Obelisk was brought to Rome by the Emperor Diocletian (r. 51-96) and erected at the temple of Isis. This obelisk is the smallest in Rome, with a height of only 18 feet; 42 feet with its base. It also has four lines of hieroglyphics.

Lost in the fog of history, the 71-foot Montecitorio Obelisk, was not rediscovered until 1792 when it was located in the Piazza Montecitorio in several pieces and with portions of it missing. Pope Pius VI ordered the obelisk excavated and reconstructed after which it was erected on a base that increased its height to 111 feet. Today the obelisk remains in the location where it was rediscovered: the Palazzo Montecitorio. This obelisk, which dates to the reign of King Psamtik II (595–589 BC), was brought to Rome by Emperor Augustus in 10 BC and was intended to

commemorate his conquests in Egypt. It was erected in the Campus Martius and topped with a gilt-bronze sphere. It is also known as the Solare Obelisk because it functioned as the gnomon in the Solarium Augustae, which was a giant sundial dedicated to the Roman sun god Sol.

After being lost for centuries, this obelisk was found again in 1883 and was erected in front of the Stazione di Termini (Termini Train Station) to commemorate the 1887 Battle of Dogali, in Ethiopia, where 500 Italian soldiers were killed. In 1924 it was moved to its present location in the Einaudi Gardens. The base of the obelisk, which



increases its 9-foot height to almost 21 feet, is inscribed with the names of the 500 Italian soldiers who died in the Battle of Dogali during the Italo-Ethiopian War of 1887–1889. The Dogali Obelisk is located in the Einaudi Gardens between the Stazione di Termini and the Piazza dell Repubblica. This obelisk was originally one of a pair of obelisks erected at the Sun Temple in Heliopolis, Egypt by Pharaoh Ramess-

es II (1279-1213). It was brought to Rome by the Emperor Domitian, circa 88, and erected in the Temple of Isis.

After the fall of the Roman Empire in AD 476, many of the Egyptian Obelisks disappeared from sight, however, they were rediscovered centuries later and re-erected in the city over a period of 93 years. In 1585, when Sixtus V was elected pope, he immediately set about making major improvements to the city’s street plan. He built several large thoroughfares which transected the city and joined the piazzas of the four major pilgrimage churches: The Basilica di Santa Maria del Popolo, the Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano, the Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore, and the Basilica di San Pietro. His vision, starting with the Piazza del Popolo, which was the entrance to Rome on its north side, was to mark these major cross-roads with Obelisks which would be visible from afar, thereby allowing pilgrims easy movement and access to the seven major pilgrimage churches.

When visiting Rome, it is possible today to take a guided walking tour of the city’s obelisks for about \$100 to \$120. Such walking tours, which are a little over 9 miles, and can take up the better part of a day or two. In addition to the obelisks themselves, there are also several major churches adjacent to the piazzas where the obelisks are located. These churches contain many masterpieces from the Renaissance and Baroque masters and are well worth a visit. Of course, these stops will prolong your walking tour. You will also encounter many fine Italian eateries along the way, as well as small bars where you can quench your thirst as well as get something to eat.

Although Napoleon conquered Italy, he never set foot in Rome, but wanted to change the Roman landscape by planting trees. Napoleon is said to have asked Antonio Canova (1757-1822) the famous Italian sculptor, “Why don’t you plant trees in Rome?” Canova, quickly and curtly replied: “Because we prefer to plant obelisks.” 🏛️

Tales From The Clay Side!

Polymer Clay Make It! Bake It! Take It!

Tuesday Oct 11, 2-5pm
and of course : eat candy!

Where: The Underground CC

Join me for an afternoon of fun with Glow in the Dark clay!

We will be making pumpkins, ghosts and other scary stuff of your imaginations! Squish it, add glow in the dark eyes, or glow in the dark body and glue a magnet on the back for a little glow to add to your fridge!

Do come - just bring yourself - we have clay, tools and ovens - so you can complete your project and take it with you.

Of course — lets not forget the candy!



What is Polymer Clay?

Polymer Clay is a non-toxic synthetic clay that can be baked to strong hardness in a toaster oven. With lots of colors and a myriad of techniques, it can be used to make pretty much any type of art - whether it is wall art, jewelry, or home decor , or utility items.



See You In October!

AiM Polymer Clay Group



September 29 sunset

Photo by Robert Treadwell