

LUNCHEON SERIES

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024

We are pleased to announce our next lunch hour speaker.

Begins @ Noon

Kent Priestley

The Secret of the Speakman Brand

When Pennsylvania-born brothers Joseph and Allen Speakman arrived in Wilmington soon after the Civil War, they couldn't have imagined the role their upstart plumbing business would play in the nation's life. While never employing more than 500 workers, the Speakman Company contributed to Allied victories in both world wars, made research, industry, and space travel safer, and introduced millions of Americans to the pleasures of the "shower bath."

Speakman products have been a favorite of several U.S. presidents and a feature of many cherished national landmarks, from New York's Chrysler Building to the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. As a staple of luxury hotels everywhere, Speakman showerheads have been a balm to generations of road-weary travelers. For nearly 150 years, the Speakman Company remained in family hands, a modest yet remarkably influential enterprise guided by Quaker values and a commitment to being the "best in brass."

Join us as Kent Priestley, author of *Nature's Way Is the Shower: A Speakman Company History* walks us through the life of this remarkable Wilmington business and the traits that defined it—and inspired generations of fiercely loyal customers.



Kent is the author, with Jon Elliston, of *North Carolina Curiosities* (Globe Pequot Press, 2011), and his writing has appeared in many regional and national publications, including *Nature Conservancy*, *The Oxford American*, and *Garden & Gun*. His profile of musician John Engle, "Strange Machinery," was nominated for a 2011 National Magazine award. When he's not collecting vintage showerheads, he works as a copywriter at a local marketing agency. Kent lives in Wilmington with his wife, Moira McGuinness, and their daughters, Lydia and Bridget.

Menu

Turkey Creole Soup

BAKED HALIBUT FILLET, TOMATO COULIS
HERBED POLENTA - LEAF SPINACH, SAUTE

Berry Panna Cotta

Members will be billed for the cost of the Luncheon.