

Catherine Von Elm and Elizabeth Ten Have

Introducing Philadelphia

Libraries, liberty, and brotherly love

ACRIL 2011 will be held in Philadelphia, March 30–April 2, 2011. Conveniently located halfway between New York City and Washington, D.C., Philadelphia offers a bounty of attractions and activities to complement what promises to be a simulating gathering of academic and research librarians. The conference theme, “A Declaration of Interdependence,” reflects the promise and the challenge of the delegates to the Second Continental Congress, the Founding Fathers, who hammered out the tenets of the nation’s democracy in Philadelphia. To be successful, libraries must cooperate with each other and interconnect with their campus communities. Philadelphia, brimming with historical and contemporary examples of the benefits that interdependence can bring, will inspire you beyond the conference program.

Best known as the birthplace of the United States of America, Philadelphia is now a diverse city, home to more than 1.5 million people and scores of colleges, universities, and institutes of learning. Much of Philadelphia’s role in early U.S. history is well known—the birthplace of the Declaration of Independence and the American Flag, site of the first U.S. Congresses, longtime residence of Benjamin Franklin, and home to the Liberty Bell.

The region now known as Philadelphia, located on the two-mile wide land mass between the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers, was occupied for generations¹ by the Lenape peoples before the arrival of the first European settlers in the early 1600s. In 1681, King Charles II of England granted a charter for a large tract of land in the new world to

William Penn as payment for a debt owed to Penn’s father.² Penn arrived in this wooded area (*Pennsylvania*) on the ship, *Welcome*, in 1682, with a plan for his new city already in hand. Penn’s intention to live at peace with the native inhabitants of the land was a testament to his Quaker (Religious Society of Friends) principles, and his insistence on religious tolerance and openness.

Penn had envisioned a moderately populated city, but the commercial potential of the Delaware River drew early settlers to congregate more densely to the east, making it the oldest commercial and residential section of the city, and its historic hub.

This neighborhood is also home to the Liberty Bell, the National Constitution Center, and Independence Hall.

Like the Philadelphia of today, local allegiances were strong in the months and years prior to the Declaration of Independence. Numerous non-English immigrants living, working, and trading in Philadelphia had no particular loyalty or strong love of the British king, and they and their better heeled fellow subjects, who were steeped in the ideas of the Enlightenment, led the charge to liberate the colonies from the Crown, and establish a sovereign democracy.

Now known for its wineries and its Wyeths (the painters, N.C., Andrew, and



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Jamie), Chadds Ford, some 30 miles outside of Philadelphia proper, saw General Washington defeated at the Battle of Brandywine. Followed by further local losses at Paoli and Germantown, the would-be first leader of the nascent country and his troops fell back and regrouped at Valley Forge, just over 20 miles up the Schuylkill from Philadelphia. Further forward chronologically in 1799, and a few miles further down the Delaware River from Chadds Ford, in Wilmington, Delaware, a nobleman and refugee of the French Revolution named Pierre Samuel du Pont established the foundation on which one of America's richest families built their business, fortunes, and their mansions, including Winterthur and Nemours, renowned for their architecture, antiques, and gardens—well worth the half- or full-day trip to take in the sites, history, fineries, and wineries.

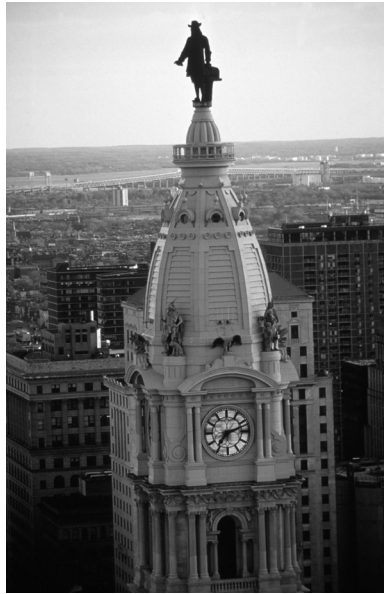
The Industrial Revolution saw a strengthening of neighborhoods in Philadelphia. As the labor movement took root, and factories sprouted up around the city, neighborhoods such as Manayunk, Frankford, and Port Richmond became known for their thriving working class populations, and fixed Philadelphia's reputation as a blue collar city. Today, many of Philadelphia's factories have been transformed into city lofts, and neighborhoods that once relied on manufacturing are now micro-brewing, and bringing residents and visitors together in trendy restaurants and tap-rooms.

In 1876, Philadelphia hosted the nation's Centennial Celebration in Fairmount Park, the world's largest landscaped urban green space. Within the park there are nearly 9,000 acres of winding creeks, green meadows and 100 miles of rustic trails, as well as early American mansions, historic landmarks, outdoor sculptures,

open-air theatres, and vistas depicted in the paintings of Thomas Eakins.

Fairmount Park also encompasses America's first zoo. Hosting more than 1,600 creatures from around the globe, the Philadelphia Zoo and its Victorian gardens, outstanding art, and historical architecture provide picturesque settings in which to learn about the world's animal population. Fairmount Park's liveliest section can be found behind the Philadelphia Museum of Art, along Boathouse Row, where the Victorian homes of the "Schuylkill Navy" rest peacefully between scullers of the river and runners, roller-bladers and bikers on Kelly Drive.

The late 18th century also saw the construction of Philadelphia's City Hall, touted either as a triumph or a tragedy at the time of its construction, depending on the critic's affinity for Second Empire architecture, and interest in a hyperbolic sense of scale. Among the 250 statues, created by Alexander Calder, which adorn the tallest masonry-bearing building in the world are eagles with 15 foot wingspans, 24-foot tall depictions of Native Americans and Swedish settlers, and 37-foot tall bronze statue of Billy Penn himself, towering over the city he founded. A stone's throw from the Convention Center, City Hall's observation



Philadelphia's City Hall. Image courtesy of PCVB.

deck offers a great place from which to get your bearings. Observing the structure's exterior while under construction, Walt Whitman was prompted to call City Hall, "A majestic and lovely show there in the moonlight . . . silent, weird, beautiful."³ Inside, however, in the early 20th century, was a different story. Political dealings in the early years of the 20th century prompted muckraking journalist, Lincoln Steffens, to famously label the city as "corrupt and contented."⁴ Philadelphia saw

its share of bootlegging, organized crime, and corruption that gutted the city's payrolls that threw neighborhoods into poverty just as the Great Depression hit. Rebounding with the increased demand for manufacturing unfortunately brought about by World War II, Philadelphia began to right itself, and continue in the course set by its founder.

Around the meeting site

ACRL 2001 will be held in the Center City at the newly renovated and expanded Pennsylvania Convention Center (PCC), which is a five-minute walk from City Hall. Unless, of course, you stop on your way to see the Grand Court in the John Wanamaker building, which now houses a Macy's department store, on Market Street, just off City Hall. Visitors are treated to grand views of the seven-story atrium done in Florentine style, and occasionally to the grand sound of the largest working pipe organ in existence. Very conveniently located near the conference hotels, the PCC is also within walking distance of Philadelphia's major historic sites, cultural venues, and a diverse range of restaurants and eateries. Close at hand is a longtime favorite of residents and visitors alike, the Reading Terminal Market.

The nation's oldest continuously operating farmers' market, Reading Terminal is home to more than 75 merchants. It offers an incredible selection of farm fresh produce, prepared and ready to eat foods featuring local specialties, from cheesesteak hoagies to Amish apple dumplings, as well as international delights. Reading Terminal Market's merchants also offer baked goods, confections, kitchenware, cookbooks, jewelry, and crafts.

Philadelphia is a city of vibrant, walkable, and inviting neighborhoods. An easy walk east of the PCC, Independence Mall condenses

more than 400 years of colonial and revolutionary history into a few city blocks, featuring Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, the Constitution Center, and the Betsy Ross House, to name but a few of the highlights. Directly east of Independence Hall is the American Philosophical Society, the nation's oldest learned society, founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1743. To the southwest is Washington Square, an inviting residential neighborhood where quiet treasures present themselves to observant eyes. The Atwater Kent Museum, dedicated to Philadelphia's history, is located at 7th and Market Streets; Louis Comfort Tiffany's glass mosaic, the Dream Garden designed by Maxfield Parish, lines the wall of the lobby in the Curtis Center at 6th and Walnut Streets, where the *Ladies' Home Journal* and the *Saturday Evening Post* got their starts; and founded by Thomas Bond and—you guessed it—Benjamin Franklin, in 1751, the country's first hospital—Pennsylvania Hospital, at 8th and Pine Streets.

In fact, next to William Penn, no individual has left such a lasting impression on the city of Philadelphia than the great scholar, statesman, printer, inventor, and entrepreneur, Ben

Franklin. Among the famous firsts he brought to his adopted town was the Library Company of Philadelphia, at 13th and Locust Streets. The first lending library in the nation, and its oldest cultural institution, founded in 1731, the Library Company makes a wealth of rare books, manuscripts, broadsides, ephemera, prints, photographs, and works of art focusing on American society and culture from the 17th to the 19th centuries freely available to the public, and promotes the collections' use with programming and support for researchers.

A vibrant and delicious Chinatown borders the PCC, and beyond that Old City buzzes



The Pennsylvania Convention Center. Image courtesy of PCVB.

with art galleries, performing art spaces, and a variety of restaurants. Heading west of Broad St.—also known as Avenue of the Arts for its many theaters, concert halls, and academies to the north and south of City Hall, including the Kimmel Center, the Academy of Music, and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts—Philadelphians are rewarded with a mix of intriguing architecture from Frank Furness, Louis I. Kahn, and I. M. Pei, among others. Majestic brownstones hold their own amid their skyscraping neighbors around Rittenhouse Square, a tranquil green oasis surrounded by affordable haute restaurants and quick-bite take-outs, shoppotunities for all tastes and needs, and intriguing cultural centers.

With more than 130,000 manuscripts, including a complete, handwritten draft of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Bram Stoker's notes for *Dracula*, and a large collection of illustrations and manu-

scripts from Maurice Sendak, the Rosenbach Museum and Library offers research opportunities, tours, and engaging exhibitions, all nestled in the 19th-century home of two book dealing brothers at 20th and Delancey.

The conference itself will draw attendees into one of Philadelphia's newest attractions, the National Constitution Center, which will be the site of the All-Conference Reception. Opened in 2003, the center is home the permanent exhibition, "The American Experience," which includes a history of the Constitution and is composed of more than 100 multimedia and interactive exhibits. The Center also houses the Kimmel Theater, where ACRL conference attendees will be able to see the award-winning production, "Freedom Rising," which combines film, a live actor, and video projection on a 360-degree

screen. The National Constitution Center is just a ten-minute walk from the Convention Center—not far from the new Liberty Bell Center and Independence Hall.

Visiting Philadelphia in 2011

Start making your plans now to attend ACRL 2011 in Philadelphia. You will not be disappointed in the thought-provoking and useful program of speakers, panels, and poster sessions. There will be numerous opportunities to meet your colleagues in the bustling heart of Philadelphia, where you can take advantage of all our great city has to offer without travelling far. Look to this space in *C&RL News*

over the next several months for in-depth looks at Philadelphia's historical and cultural attractions, the neighborhoods that make up our city, and the amazingly diverse restaurant scene. Conference registration is open. Come to Philadelphia for ACRL 2011, and

experience all that your colleagues and our city have to offer. See you in Philadelphia!

Notes

1. Gary B. Nash, *First City: Philadelphia and the Forging of Historical Memory* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 14.
2. "William Penn," *Historic World Leaders*. Gale Research, 1994. Reproduced in Biography Resource Center. Farmington Hills, Mich.: Gale, 2010. galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/BioRC.
3. Walt Whitman, *Specimen Days in America* (London: Walter Scott, 1887), 214.
4. Lincoln Steffens, "Philadelphia: Corrupt and Contented," *McClure's Magazine* (July 1903): 21. ♪



Reading Terminal Market. Image courtesy of PCVB.