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Baltimore—Charm City

An introduction to the City of Neighborhoods

We're looking forward to you joining us in Baltimore for the ACRL 2017 conference, "At the Helm: Leading Transformation." While the conference will take place in Baltimore's Inner Harbor, we hope that you'll take time to explore the city and the surrounding area. Over the next few months, we'll introduce you to places and things to do that we think make Baltimore special—and make us proud to call it home.

Known as a colorful and diverse city, Baltimore is the largest city in Maryland and serves as its economic hub. It offers plenty of options for entertainment and inspiration. Whether you're checking out historic sites, museums, relaxing in one of our excellent restaurants or bars, listening to music, watching a play or sporting event, or seeking opportunities to make a difference—we'll bring you some tips on navigating Baltimore through the coming months.

Like other urban cities in the United States, Baltimore is faced with many of the same challenges and opportunities. We hope that while you're here, you'll lend a hand and contribute to our city through some of the options available to you. We'll cover this topic in one of our upcoming articles on social justice in Baltimore.

Layout of the city and getting around

Baltimore is divided into nine regions with Charles Street serving as the east/west divid-

ing line. The major tourist area is along the Inner Harbor that sits at the end of the Northwest Branch of the Patapsco River. The Inner Harbor describes the area within the boundaries of President Street, Lombard Street, Light Street, and Key Highway. Water taxis connect the Inner Harbor to the neighborhoods of Fells Point and Canton, as well as historic Fort McHenry. North and South of the Inner Harbor are notable business districts. Further north is Mount Vernon, the cultural center of the city. West of the Inner Harbor is the Convention Center and Oriole Park at Camden Yards.

The Charm City Circulator (www.charmcity-circulator.com/) runs four bus routes and a water taxi route. Rides are free and run very near the Convention Center and conference hotels. The Circulator is useful for trips from downtown/Inner Harbor to Federal Hill, Mount Vernon, Charles Village (purple line), Hollins Market, Little Italy, Harbor East (green line), Harbor East, Fells Point (orange line), Federal Hill, Locust Point, and Fort McHenry (banner line).

The MTA Light Rail runs from BWI airport to the Conference Center and north through



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the city into the far suburbs. In addition to the airport, the Light Rail can be used to get to Penn Station and the Mount Vernon, Woodberry/Hampden, and Mount Washington neighborhoods. The MTA buses and subway line run various places around the city. Google Maps integrates schedules and schedule times or take a look at <http://mta.maryland.gov/>. The fare is \$1.70 or \$4.00 for a day pass that gives you access to buses, light rail, and subway.

Baltimore's history

Settled in 1661, Baltimore grew steadily with the Port of Baltimore, which was authorized in 1706 and is now known as the Inner Harbor. The town of Baltimore was established in 1729 and continued to grow, eventually becoming the largest city in the Mid-Atlantic between Philadelphia and Charleston, South Carolina. Temporarily home to the

Second Continental Congress during the Revolutionary War, Baltimore's strategic location contributed to its economic growth.

The War of 1812 found Baltimore attacked by the British during the summer of 1814. Francis Scott Key, a Maryland attorney, who was on a ship during the battle in an attempt to negotiate the release of a prisoner, wrote the poem "The Star-Spangled Banner" to commemorate the battle. Later set to music, it would become the national anthem. Fort McHenry National Monument Historic Site, a strategic location in the War, continues to be a popular visitor's site.

Baltimore soon became the largest city in the South and the nation's third largest

city, although it began to feel the effects of northern competition. Deciding that the way west was key to Baltimore's economic success, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad was founded. It became the first chartered railroad in the United States and eventually became the first rail line to reach the Ohio River from the east in 1853.

Located south of the Mason-Dixon line, Baltimore found itself divided between Northern and Southern philosophies by the beginning of the Civil War. While Baltimore had the largest free black community in the United States, that didn't prevent Confederate sympathizers from attacking Union troops marching

through the city in 1861. The Baltimore riot resulted in the first casualties of the Civil War and caused the city to be under federal administration until the war ended in 1865.

By 1880 manufacturing replaced trade as the economic driver, and the city became an

important industrial center attracting immigrants from Poland, Russia, and Italy, among others. The reminder of these pockets of immigrants can be seen today in the nicknames of some of Baltimore neighborhoods, including Little Italy and Little Lithuania.

Baltimore is considered by some to be the city that gave rise to modern philanthropy. Johns Hopkins, George Peabody, and Enoch Pratt are names that are most often mentioned in this regard. Other unsung leaders of philanthropy included community beneficial societies and African American churches. A timeline of philanthropic organizations can be found at <http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/speccol/photos/philanthropy/html/timeline1.htm>.



View of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. Photo credit: David Davies (www.flickr.com/photos/davies/5047932/), CC BY-SA 2.0.

The Great Fire of Baltimore took place in 1904 when fire consumed most of downtown in 30 hours. Fortunately, no lives were lost, and the fire was later characterized as the great disaster that allowed the rebuilt city to be a better planned city. Once rebuilt, the city became a shipbuilding center during the two world wars, and the city's population grew as immigrants were attracted by the work at the shipyards and the steel industries.

Baltimore became more diverse with the rise of industrialization, however, the pace of life continued to be slower than its northern industrial neighbors. It also retained the feel as a



Row houses in the Bolton Hill neighborhood. Photo credit: Preservation Maryland (www.flickr.com/photos/presmd/20982448093/), CC BY-SA 2.0 .

small town, giving rise to its nickname "S'maltimore." In later years, Baltimore overturned Jim Crow laws, integrating schools and public places. Its urban renewal started in the 1970s and resulted in a transformation of the Inner Harbor area, including office buildings, hotels, entertainment centers, Harbor Place, the Maryland Science Center, and the National Aquarium. State-of-the-art facilities were built nearby for the Baltimore Orioles and the Baltimore Ravens and not too far away are biotechnology parks that attract leading scientists. Today, Baltimore is known as a center for healthcare, education, and the arts.

The list of educational institutions in the wider Baltimore area includes Johns Hopkins University, Goucher College, Loyola University-Maryland, Notre Dame of Maryland University, Morgan State University, St. Mary's Seminary and University, Coppin State University, Towson University, and the Uni-

versity of Baltimore, along with the law and medical schools of the University of Maryland Baltimore, University of Maryland Baltimore County, Maryland Institute College of Art, and Stevenson University.

Cultural attractions beyond the Inner Harbor include the Lexington Market, the world's largest, continuously running open-staff food market that's been in operation since 1782 at the same location. Mount Vernon, the cultural district identified by the newly refurbished

Washington Monument, is easily walkable as is the Walter's Art Museum, the George Peabody Library, the Maryland Historical Society, the Jew-

ish Museum of Baltimore, and the Enoch Pratt Free Library, which is undergoing renovation.

Other local attractions include the Baltimore Museum of Art and the Visionary Arts Museum. There are a number of smaller museums throughout the city, including the B&O Railroad Museum, the Evergreen House on North Charles Street (once home to John W. Garrett, president of the B&O Railroad), and the Edgar Allen Poe house.

Unique to Baltimore

There are a number of foods, architecture, places, and slang that we like to call our own in Baltimore. If you haven't had sauerkraut with your turkey for Thanksgiving, then you're not from Baltimore. Some other Baltimore culinary favorites that you might find during your visit in March include blue crab, pit beef, bull and oyster roast (taking place when oysters are prevalent

from September to April), Berger Cookies, and Natty Boh, aka National Bohemian beer. Baltimore also has a burgeoning craft beer scene (www.beeradocate.com/place/city/2/).

Baltimore is known as a “foodies” paradise. We have a number of critically acclaimed chefs in town, including 2016 James Beard Award nominee, Cindy Wolf.

Architecturally, Baltimore is known for its row houses and what covers some of the area’s row houses. Formstone, a stucco veneer can be molded and gives a stone-like appearance to house, was introduced as a labor saver, since it covered leaky and porous brick. Check out some of this architecture in Hampden.

Another Baltimore tradition is painted screens. Started in 1913, screens are painted on the exterior side of a screen. The painting prevents people looking in from the outside, while giving the inhabitants an unobstructed view to the outside. The American Visionary Art Museum has an exhibit and video about the painted screen tradition and a local organization is dedicated to keeping the tradition alive (<http://www.paintedscreens.org>).

Tours and sightseeing

One of the best ways to visit a city is through walking tours. Baltimore offers a number of these tours, including those of Mount Vernon, Pennsylvania Avenue, and Fells Point neighborhoods. Or, if you’d like, you can trace the history of Baltimore during the War of 1812. The National Park Service provides a link to a number of walking tours (<https://www.nps.gov/balt/planyourvisit/guided-walking-tours.htm>).

Music, Arts, theater, and museums

Baltimore has a vibrant arts and culture scene. Whether you’re interested in the famous Baltimore Symphony directed by Marian Alsup, jazz, indie, or other types of music—you’ll find venues throughout the city with many located in Station North, Fells Point, and Federal Hill. Or check out the expansive theater scene and wonderful

art museums. Baltimore has something for everyone.

The Mount Vernon area serves as a culture hub, and it’s where you’ll find the Walters Art Museum, the Contemporary Museum, and the Peabody Library. You’ll also find one of America’s first Catholic cathedrals, along with the Maryland Historical Society. The Station North Arts and Entertainment District includes the neighborhoods of Charles North, Greenmount West, and Barclay and includes artist living and working spaces, galleries, row homes, and businesses.

The Baltimore Museum of Arts, free to everyone, includes an extensive collection of Matisse works brought to the city by the Cone Sisters. The Walters Art Museum presents art from the third millennium B.C. to the early 20th century. The Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture, which is close to the Inner Harbor, highlights the history and living culture of Maryland’s African Americans.

The Baltimore theater scene is an eclectic experience. It includes performances at the Everyman Theater, Center Stage, the Single Carrot Theatre, and a variety of small theaters including the Strand, Spotlighters Theatre, Fells Point Corner Theatre, and The Vagabond Players, which is located in Fells Point and was established in 1916.

Baltimore neighborhoods

As noted earlier, Baltimore is known as the city of neighborhoods. Here are a few that you may be interested in visiting during your time here: Canton, east of downtown, includes eclectic restaurants and shops. You’ll also see some of the painted screens mentioned previously, and brick and formstone row houses. The Charles Street Scenic Byway leads you by the Station North Arts and Entertainment District, the Baltimore Museum of Arts, and the Maryland Zoo.

Federal Hill was an integral part of the War of 1812 and the Civil War. Today, it’s an area with fine restaurants and shops. Fell’s

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their willingness to partner with the Libraries, and it certainly laid the foundation for future collaborations.

The event partners helped to generate traffic by advertising the event throughout their channels of communication, including social media. They were also a great source of funding to subsidize decoration and refreshments costs. The panel moderator was very experienced with organizing campus forums, and his ideas, suggestions, and support were instrumental in shaping the format and success of the panel discussion. He conducted the discussion in a dynamic way that empowered the audience to speak freely on any topic of interest. His technique was brilliant and endearing, it stimulated fruitful conversations, which resulted in high levels of student engagement.

Conclusion

It is important that libraries of all sorts continue to be innovative and resourceful amid unrelenting budget constraints and rising inflation. The expo exemplified a cost-effective way to raise the Libraries' profile in the critical area of diversity and to publicize our resources to a broad array of students. Some students reported feeling empowered and enlightened by the discussion forum.

There was a general feeling of excitement and enthusiasm among the exhibitors. Many requested that it become an annual event and indicated that they would like to participate if

the event continues. The expo also enjoyed the highest attendance for a library event in recent years when compared to all other similar events, such as book swap, game night and film festival, animal therapy day, etc.

Libraries have long been recognized as the information hub and, in recent times, the cultural hub of the community. It is crucial that libraries leverage their prominence and influence to consolidate resources with external entities and make a collective impact on student success and community advancement. This outreach initiative has established a blueprint for long-term collaborations among students, faculty, and staff. It is low-cost, and the time commitment is comparable to planning a book swap. The return on investment is exponential, since it provides an opportunity to market library products and service, create strategic alliances or partnerships with stakeholders, create advocates, and expand the library's outreach efforts.

Notes

1. Xinran Y. Lehto, Liping A. Cai, Xiaoxiao Fu, and Yi Chen, "Intercultural Interactions Outside the Classroom: Narratives on a U.S. Campus," *Journal of College Student Development* 55 (8): 837–53.

2. Vincent Tinto, *Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987). *ZZ*

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Point is the home to 18th- and 19th-century homes. Seasonal walking tours are one of the highlights of Fells Point. Hampden, the center of kitsch, includes "The Avenue" (36th street) and has unique shops and a variety of restaurants. Little Italy, easily accessible from the Inner Harbor, has a variety of restaurants. Mount Vernon includes mansions from the Gilded Age that are now home to restaurants, museums, and galleries. The Westside/Bromo Tower Arts & Entertainment District is home to the Hippodrome Theatre and the Everyman Theatre. It's also is where you can find the

final resting place of Edgar Allan Poe, who is buried at Westminster Hall Burying Ground.

Visiting Baltimore in 2017

We hope you're making plans to join us in Baltimore for ACRL 2017. Besides the sights in Baltimore, we invite you to take a few days to explore Annapolis, the Eastern Shore, and the Civil War memorials and battlefields, including Gettysburg and Antietam.

Future issues of *C&RL News* will provide you with more information about "Charm City" and the opportunities that await you. *ZZ*