

# BALTIMORE GASLIGHT

Newsletter of the Baltimore City Historical Society

VOLUME 13, NUMBER 1

Spring 2014

*In this multi-anniversary year, we look in on Baltimore during epochal times--its climactic battles 200 years ago during the War of 1812, the Civil War fought 150 years ago, WWI begun in 1914. For leavening, the Peale Museum also opened in 1914, plus, with spring baseball, recalling a game player in his season.*



Photo by Lewis H. Diuguid

*Atop a rejuvenated Battle Monument, a stand-in Lady Baltimore looks to the harbor, with the Court House on her right and the 1812 Star-Spangled Banner in the wind.*

## Abe Sherman on the Square-- Pt. I Newspaper Hawker and Hero

*First of two Articles*

By Paul J. Travers

Since 1822, Lady Baltimore had faced the harbor, high atop Battle Monument Square at Fayette and Calvert Streets, casting her gaze south toward Fort McHenry, which in 1814 inspired the National Anthem. Weather took its toll and she was removed last year in favor of a stand-in. But Lady Baltimore was not the lone sentinel. Standing in her shadow for five decades was the city's iconic curmudgeon, newsstand operator Abe Sherman.

What a lovely but *(Continued on Page 5)*

## Star-Spangled Monuments-- CHAP's Stewardship Legacy

By Kathleen G. Kotarba, Executive Director  
Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation

Baltimore was designated the "Monumental City" by a presidential toast in the same year that the Battle Monument was selected for the city's seal, 1827. Fittingly, Baltimore was also the first municipality in the United States to create a comprehensive program for the preservation of its outdoor monuments. The city's Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) created this stewardship program and has completed *(Continued on Page 4)*

## May 2 Conference on NAACP; Membership Meeting June 21

By Don Torres

The Baltimore City Historical Society will hold two major sessions this spring, cosponsoring a conference on the local branch of the NAACP on May 2 and bringing the BCHS membership together for its annual meeting at Zion Church on June 21.

In conjunction with Morgan State University and the Maryland Humanities Council, the Society will present "The Baltimore Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and Civil Rights in the 20th Century," from 9AM to 3PM on Friday, May 2, at Morgan's Student Activity Center. Registration is free at the door or: [baltimorehistory@law.umaryland.edu](mailto:baltimorehistory@law.umaryland.edu). The NAACP was founded in 1909 and has been headquartered here since 1986. It has been a major defender of racial justice in Baltimore, particularly since the rise of future Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall through the local then national organization.

Food can be purchased at the Activity Center on the Morgan campus, 1700 E. Coldspring Lane, and parking for pay is close by. Coordinator of the conference is Garrett Power of BCHS and law professor emeritus at University of Maryland.

The Saturday, June 21, membership meeting, from 9 to 11:30AM, will allow attendees to tour two of Baltimore's historical treasures, first at the historic Zion Lutheran Church, Lexington and Gay Streets, across War Memorial Plaza from City Hall. There is free parking on the church parking lot off Gay Street, just north of the church, and metered parking on the surrounding streets. All members and friends of BCHS and Baltimore history are invited to attend.

Following a brief business meeting in the church's Adlersaal (Eagle Hall) to elect officers and board members for the coming year, all are invited to tour the church complex--led by BCHS member Bernard Penner, who grew up in the church while his father, the Rev. Friedemann Heinrich Penner, was pastor from 1953 until his death in 1984. The Zion congrega- *(Continued on Page 3)*

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**From The President at Term's End**  
**Waverly's Run-Up to War;**  
**Antic 1812 on Stage**

By Joe Stewart

The War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration in Waverly took the form of a walk along the old York Turnpike while local history was revealed. It began at the site of a former American Revolutionary army barracks and powder magazine, later used by Protestants to organize village congregations. Other stops were Waverly Fire House, which has continually protected and served the community for more than 100 years, the last US Post Office building inside the village and the old town hall. Then Baltimore City Police Commissioner Frederick H. Bealefeld III spoke on General Sam Smith, his role in the defense of Baltimore, his military service in the American Revolution, his service in Congress and as mayor of Baltimore when he was in his 80s. Other speakers described what Waverly looked like over 200 years ago.

Land grants by Lord Baltimore in 1688 to Tobias Stansboro and Charles Merryman, called Huntington and Merryman's Lot, described them as going "into the barrens." The first recorded residence, Homestead, was built by Thomas Gorsuch in 1736. By the 1740s improvements were being made along a York Road, enabling Pennsylvania farmers to get their wagons to market in Baltimore. Between Jones Falls and Herring Run along the elevated piedmont above the coastal plain was known as Brittain's Ridge.

After American colonists were successful in the first War of Independence, subdivisions of the the land grants resulted in the appearance of estates belonging to wealthy merchants from Baltimore. Yellow fever epidemics in 1797, 1799 and 1800 also influenced the building of homes on the hills north of town. Out of the barrens emerged county seats with farms and pastures amid forests, meadows and streams. In 1801, Charles Carroll wrote his son concerning construction of Homewood, "While you live in Baltimore it will be necessary for the health of your family and for the exercise of your mind and body

to have a house on Homewood to retreat to in summer and autumn."

To the east stood Montebello, built by Sam Smith as his summer home. Cloverhill to the west was the manor farm of John Meryman. South of Montebello was the Clifton estate of Henry Thompson, later summer home of Johns Hopkins. Down the York Road was Robert Oliver's Green Mount, now the cemetery. To the east and west were William Patterson's Cold Stream and William Gilmore's Vineyard. On what was referred to in a deed from Sam Smith to James Biays as Ensors Inspection, and would later be the site of the Brady Mansion, James Biays fashioned his Mt. Jefferson--from which he could climb to a copula to watch his ships come into port.

The rustic nature of the countryside can be seen in a 1813 public notice of the American and Commercial Daily Advertiser reporting "a trespassing stray Cow, on the farms of James Biays, a short distance from Baltimore, on the York Turnpike road, he being Farmer & Manager there, represents the back and sides of the Cow to be black, her belly and legs white. The owner is desired to come prove property, pay charges and take her away." Across the road from the army barracks was added in 1808 the first tollhouse and tollgate along York turnpike. South of the barracks, Mt. Jefferson was known as a rendezvous for cavalry. The National Register of Historic Places has just added Waverly Main Street Historic District to its list.

Serving in the War of 1812 from Montebello, Clifton and Mt. Jefferson were General Sam Smith, Captain Henry Thompson of the Flying Artillery 3rd Maryland Brigade and Colonel James Biays, who commanded the calvary at the Battle of North Point.

The Waverly walk was a quaint, small way of remembering the bicentennial, which was celebrated on a grand scale downtown during the city's Star-Spangled Sailabration with tall ships, Blue Angels and a Baltimore Symphony concert premiering "Overture for 2012" by Baltimore-born minimalist Philip Glass.

My favorite celebration, however, was the raucous musical put on not far from Hampstead Hill at Creative Alliance in the

**Environment, History April 26**

BCHS, Friends of Maryland Olmsted Parks & Landscapes, and Creation Care at the Cathedral continue their lecture series on urban environmental history at 1PM on Saturday, April 26, in the Peabody Room, Cathedral of the Incarnation, 4 E. University Parkway, with John McNeil on "Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History of the 20th-Century World." Session, parking are free.

Past president of American Society for Environmental History, McNeil is a Georgetown University professor of world, environmental, and international history. He is the author of "Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914."

On Saturday, June 7, also 1-3PM, Dawn Biehler and Robert Gioielli will offer "Public Health Challenges: Urban Pest Control and Inner-City Highway Construction." Biehler is an assistant professor at University of Maryland Baltimore County who recently published "Pests in the City: Flies, Bedbugs, Cockroaches, and Rats."

Gioielli is an assistant professor of history at the University of Cincinnati, where he teaches American and environmental history. His "Environmental Activism and the Urban Crisis: Baltimore, St. Louis, Chicago" will be published in May by Temple University Press.

old Patterson Theater, where David Dudley and David Israel with help from the Baltimore Rock Opera Society produced "1814: The War of 1812 Rock Opera." It was deservedly awarded City Paper's "Best Historical Re-Enactment," with rock-n-roll, mad costumes and good-hearted satire. The characters included Rear Admiral George Cockburn singing "Burn Down the White House" while First Lady Dolly Madison sang "I'm No Cupcake."

Most of the action took place in scenes in and around Baltimore, like one with Mary Pickersgill and Major General George Armistead in the duet, "What I need is a big ass flag" and General Sam Smith's "Black Powder." A modern-day Narrator tells the story his father told him as a boy on their visit to Fort McHenry. He asks, "When all the heroes are names in footnotes and history has moved on, as the twilight's still gleaming who will remember their song?" Then a rousing Ensemble comes on stage in a stirring "I'll Hold My Ground," ending with "I won't give up on my hometown, If you stand by my side I'll hold my ground." Bravo to the creators for bringing the Battle of Baltimore and Star-Spangled Banner to life in a fresh, fun-loving and smart way!

## Peale Center Emergent In 200th Year of Museum

By James D. Dilts, President,  
Peale Center for Baltimore History and Architecture

The Peale Center for Baltimore History and Architecture, a nonprofit corporation, expects to sign a lease soon with the City of Baltimore to renovate and restore the vacant Peale Museum building. The goal is to reopen it in 2016 to coincide with the bicentennial of the Baltimore Gas and Electric Co., which essentially was founded in the building. The Peale Museum will celebrate its own bicentennial this fall with a major art exhibit.

A \$4 million capital campaign has begun, with the Center also in line for City and State bonds of \$250,000 each. The City plans to put on a new roof this spring.

Efforts to reopen the Peale began with the establishment by John Carroll Byrnes of the Baltimore City Historical Society in 2001. Internal disagreements over the best way to proceed led to formation of a separate 501©3 nonprofit corporation, the Friends of the Peale, in 2008. In 2012, this group joined some in BCHS to form the Peale Center.

But the building's story begins with its first occupant, artist Rembrandt Peale. Enconced in his new museum building on Holliday Street, with his pregnant wife, Eleanor, and their seven children, he likely did not see the bombs bursting in air over Fort McHenry the night of September 13-14, 1814. He reasoned that if the British burned Baltimore, as they had Washington, they might think his museum was a residence, and spare it.

Rembrandt was a pacifist, but Baltimore evidently did not hold this against him. In 1816, the City Council commissioned the young artist to paint portraits of the heroes of the defense of Baltimore: Mayor Edward Johnson, Gens. Samuel Smith and John Stricker, and Lt. Col. George Armistead. These portraits were the basis of the famous Peale collection of paintings that hung in the museum until 1997.

Also in 1816, Rembrandt lit one of his museum galleries with "carbureted hydrogen gas," manufactured on the premises. He then formed, with investors including Robert Cary Long, architect of his museum, the Gas Light Company of Baltimore, ancestor of BGE. Baltimore was the first city in the country to light its streets with gas.

Peale's Museum and Gallery of the Fine Arts, "an elegant rendezvous for taste, curiosity and leisure," also featured Indian and military artifacts, and stuffed birds, animals, and fish. Rembrandt had gone deeply into debt to construct the building, and art and



Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division  
*The Peale before the 1931 restoration.*

natural history were not enough to sustain it. In the 1820s, he turned it over to his brother Rubens, who tried to bring in the crowds with more popular, circus-like attractions, but in 1829 creditors put the building up for sale.

The city bought it and for 45 years it was Baltimore's first real City Hall. After that, it became the Male and Female Colored School No. 1, which marked the beginning of public secondary education for African-Americans here. The water department and various private shops occupied the building before it was condemned in 1928 to be sold but the public persuaded the mayor to restore it.

Its best use was determined to be a museum devoted to the City's history and development. The 1931 ordinance that created the Municipal Museum of the City of Baltimore said its purpose was to preserve, collect, and house "pictures, objects of art, and other articles reminiscent of official and industrial life and history" in the city.

And so the City administration, during the Depression, paid to restore a historic building and create a museum dedicated to telling people about Baltimore. John Henry Scarff, one of the original museum trustees, was its restoration architect. He rebuilt the front wall and the interior, using recycled materials from houses of the same era.

The building we see today is basically the one Scarff designed in the Federal Revival style in 1931. In 1933, he became the Maryland District officer for the Historic American Buildings Survey, the New Deal agency that put unemployed architects to work.

The Municipal Museum, commonly known as the Peale, enjoyed a longer tenure in the building than any other occupant. Wilbur H. Hunter, its director 1946-1978, built up the art collection and held annual

exhibitions featuring Maryland artists. In later years, the Peale mounted exhibits combining history and architecture, such as the nationally acclaimed "Rowhouse: A Baltimore Style of Living." The Peale closed in 1997 with the demise of the City Life Museums and has remained vacant since.

### May 2 Conference - Continued from page 1

tion, dating from 1755, has remained steadfast at this general site since 1762, through flood, fire, war, and social unrest. The current church dates from 1840, and Adlersaal was dedicated in 1912, eight years after the Baltimore Fire.

The day's other must-see is the historic Peale Museum Building next door on Holliday Street. Its closure was a prime factor leading to creation of BCHS. The leader of current restoration efforts, historian and former Baltimore Sun reporter James D. Dilts, will lead a tour of the still-shuttered building. His account of that quest appears on Page 3 of this issue.

The slate of nominees to be placed before the business meeting includes, for chairman, current Chair John Murphy; for president, retiring State Archivist Edward Papenfuse; vice president, Nicholas Fessenden; treasurer, Patrick Madigan; secretary, Paul Travers, and director of operations, Donald Torres. Joe Stewart is completing his term as president and founding President John Carroll Byrnes continues as chairman emeritus.

Moderator of the NAACP conference at Morgan is Debra Newman Ham, professor of history at the school. Speakers include:

\* Prof. Howell S. Baum, Urban Studies and Planning, University of Maryland: "The NAACP's Role in Baltimore School Desegregation."

\* Prof. Emeritus David S. Bogen, University of Maryland Law School: "Ashbie Hawkins and the Establishment of the Baltimore Branch."

\* Assistant Prof. Prudence D. Cumberbatch, Brooklyn College, CUNY: "'I've done a lot of living and a lot of fighting': The Journeys of Lillie May Jackson and Juanita Jackson Mitchell."

\* Louis Diggs, historian and author: "The Baltimore NAACP's Role In Securing African American Students in Baltimore County a High School Education."

\* Prof. Larry S. Gibson, University of Maryland Law School: "Young Thurgood Marshall's Baltimore Civil Rights Cases"

\* Lee Sartan, senior lecturer, University of Portsmouth, U.K.: "'Considered Respectable?': The Baltimore NAACP during the 1960s and early 1970s."

\* Prof. Andor Skotnes, chair, Department of History and Society, The Sage Colleges, Troy, New York: "The Baltimore NAACP, the Workers Movement and Radicalism."

## Monuments - *Continued from page 1*

annual monument conservation for more than three decades. In anticipation of the current National Star-Spangled Banner Bicentennial, CHAP chose the nationally significant Battle, Samuel Smith and Armistead monuments for restoration. These three complex and challenging projects were completed in 2013 and are dedicated to the courageous Baltimoreans who saved a city and a nation in 1814.

Stewardship of public monuments began in 1977 when Mayor William D. Schaefer asked CHAP to prepare an inventory of all city-owned monuments and historic buildings. This document was to be used for monitoring the maintenance, condition and in some cases operation of such sites. In 1980, five Mount Vernon Place bronzes by Antoine Louis Barye—War, Peace, Force, Order and Seated Lion—were determined to be priorities. Their aesthetic and historical importance, coupled with their apparently poor condition, warranted immediate attention.

Prominent metals conservators were invited to advise on the condition of these monuments. Their study was followed by a symposium to inform officials, conservators, museum staff, artists and concerned citizens of the nature of the conservation problem and possible treatment. The first phase began in the Mount Vernon Place Parks the following spring. The four park squares, and buildings surrounding the Washington Monument, are considered to be among the finest urban spaces in the nation, and the focal point of both a National Register and a Baltimore City Historic District. Conservator Steven Tatti was selected by the city to complete the project. His expertise in developing the hot-wax treatment method and his background in monument conservation guided the selection.

During the next three decades, CHAP coordinated annual conservation of public monuments through the city's Capital Improvement Program, the Adopt a Monument Program, and partnerships with others. The following is a summary of the War of 1812 projects, completed by CHAP as a contribution to the national celebration:

### **Conservation of Lady Baltimore**

If the Battle Monument were a song, it would be the Star-Spangled Banner. Of the many monument projects that I have administered over three decades, I consider "rescuing" Lady Baltimore and restoring the Battle Monument to be most significant.

The Battle Monument, begun in 1815, and completed in 1825, is the first signifi-



Photo by Lauren Schiszik, CHAP  
After 1888 years on Calvert Street, Lady Baltimore retired last year to the Maryland Historical Society.

cant war memorial built in the United States. It commemorates those who died defending the city from the British attack of September 12-14, 1814, the same attack that was the occasion for the writing of the National Anthem. The Baltimore Battle Monument is extraordinary for many reasons:

\* It commemorates all 39 Baltimoreans who died in the conflict, regardless of their rank. The friezes present the two battles, at Fort McHenry and North Point.  
\* It is considered by some to be the first "Egyptian structure" in America, and its combined use of Egyptian and Classical elements in the design is unusual. The base is particularly Egyptian in form, with the black doors evoking the quality of a cenotaph or sarcophagus. The winged globe on the cornice symbolizes eternity and the flight of time. The column consists of the Classical Roman form of a fasces, or bundle of rods, symbolizing unity.

\* This monument is the official emblem of the city, having been adopted for the seal in 1827. For that reason, the image of the Battle Monument is seen everywhere—city buildings, signs, printed materials.

\* The Battle Monument and the Washington Monument prompted President John Quincy Adams to toast "To Baltimore the Monumental City" in 1827. No other American city had such monuments at that time.

The monument was designed by Maximilian Godefroy (1765-c.1838), who also designed St. Mary's Seminary Chapel (1806), the First Unitarian Church (1819) and significant tombs in the Westminster Church Burial Ground. Born in France, Godefroy was one of the most important architects to work here during the first half of the 19th century. He was also a civil engineer and worked on the fortifications at Fort McHenry. The images of his extraordinary war memorial appeared in Benjamin Tanner's 1816 engraving and received publicity nationwide.

"Lady Baltimore" sculpted on the top of the monument, the griffins, and the two sculpted reliefs on the shaft are by Antonio Capellano (1780-1840), and are among the

oldest existing monumental sculptures in the nation. Capellano was a student of Italian Antonio Canova. He also completed sculpture at the U.S. Capitol and at Baltimore's First Unitarian and St. Paul's Churches.

The female figure symbolizes Baltimore, hence "Lady Baltimore." She wears a crown of victory and holds a laurel wreath, a symbol of glory, in her raised hand. Her lowered hand holds a rudder, symbolic of navigation and stability. She faces the harbor, a source of Baltimore's prosperity. Her two current arms are "prosthetic" and were created by two of Baltimore's important sculptors: The reproduced raised arm is by Hans Schuler and the lowered arm by Rueben Kramer. Both original arms had to be replaced due to storm damage and deterioration.

This was CHAP's largest and most challenging monument project. In 2011, CHAP completed restoration of the architectural elements. The 2012-13 phase included preservation of Lady Baltimore by moving her to an indoor museum setting at the Maryland Historical Society, creation of the sculpted reproduction of Lady Baltimore, its installation atop the monument and reconstruction of the four Griffons onsite. Conservator Tatti, with Crump & Kwash Manufacturing LLC, completed this restoration, with the highest standards of conservation craftsmanship.

CHAP was thrilled to work with the Maryland Historical Society to preserve and showcase Lady Baltimore for future generations. In October 2013, the nearly 200-year-old and 2,750-lb. Lady was placed in a specially designed cage and lowered from the monument. The George Young Co. transported her to the Society, where she was installed atop a 500-lb. steel-reinforced platform in the second-floor gallery of the Beard Pavilion. Passersby on Park Avenue can view the 8-foot statue through the windows. At night, she is illuminated and in the words of Burt Kummerow, president of the Society, "she will remain a beacon for the city only two blocks from another early Baltimore icon, the 1815 George Washington Monument."

### **Samuel Smith Monument**

The Major General Samuel Smith Monument in Federal Hill Park was sculpted by Hans Schuler (1874-1951), in 1917 through a grant from the National Star-Spangled Banner Centennial Commission. It was one of several sculptural monuments commissioned in recognition of Baltimore's Centennial of the War of 1812. General Smith was commander of the Maryland forces that repulsed and defeated the British in the Battle of Baltimore at North (*Continued on Page 7*)

## Abe Sherman - Continued from page 1

unlikely couple! Lady Baltimore stood 8 feet tall and weighed over 2,700 pounds, Abe 5'3" and 130. Besides location, the two shared a heroic bond of blood and battle forged in the name of freedom. Lady Baltimore, wearing a crown of victory and holding a laurel wreath above her head, was dedicated to honor the soldiers who lost their lives during the Battle of North Point and the bombardment of Fort McHenry in September 1814. Abe, sporting suspenders, a newsboy hat, bulky horn-rimmed glasses and a stogie clenched in his teeth, was dedicated to the honor of the 29th Infantry Division.

Abe Sherman (just Abe for a first name) was born in Baltimore on March 21, 1898, and raised on Pennsylvania Avenue near the Lafayette Market. His father, a Jewish immigrant from Lithuania named Moses, ran a small shoe repair store, but it wasn't enough to support the family. Abe hit the streets in search of work at age 8 and became cheerfully recognized as a street-wise newsie.

In 1912, when the Democratic Convention was held at the 5th Regiment Armory, Abe hustled newspapers for the Christian Science Monitor. "Good job," he quipped. "The guy gave me \$5 a day, plus all of what I got for the papers, plus tips. That was a lot of money then. Lots of people worked for \$5 a week." Bolstered by his success on the street and lack of it in the classroom, Abe quit City College to sell racing forms, deliver newspapers, set up duckpins in a bowling alley, and run errands for "ladies of the night" in the red-light district. One of his cherished memories was chatting with Babe Ruth, who always bought a noon edition of the Baltimore Star as he waited for the No. 7 streetcar to the ballpark.

World War I began in 1914 and when the United States entered in 1917, Abe found his true calling as a doughboy. Ever the opportunist, Abe beat the draft by enlisting in the Army. He spent most of the war in France with the 28th Engineers, filling in cratered roads along truck routes damaged by German artillery. Discharged in 1919 with the rank of corporal, and two battle stars from the campaigns of St Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne, he returned home to resume his other career.

With his Veterans Bonus, he opened a newspaper business under the outstretched arm of Lady Baltimore. From the green wooden kiosk, often referred to as a "Hooverville" shack, Abe dispensed common sense, barked insults at browsers, traded barbs with politicians, and sold newspapers and magazines from all over the country and the world.



Abe Sherman

He hired his father, who, unable to read English, quickly picked up the nuances of the business. He could find an out-of-town newspaper from one of the many racks and make the correct change without batting an eye. Printer's ink was in their blood.

Abe next married Ann, in 1923. "I have only one regret. I didn't do it sooner," Abe remarked. For 40 years, he tipped his wife for breakfasts, packed lunches, and dinners. "Why not tip your wife for the wonderful things she does?" was his response to questioners. When Ann died in 1963, a week before the Kennedy assassination, the tips totaled more than \$2,500. She had planned a European vacation for her and Abe. Instead, Abe used the money to bury his beloved wife.

For the next two decades, Abe manned his kiosk and watched the well-heeled and worn-heeled parade through the city's financial and judicial district. Frequent customers, such literary notables as Scott Fitzgerald and H. L. Mencken, became friends. "People are all the same. I never get excited about who's mayor, governor, or anything else. I've seen them all. And on the way up the ladder, they knew me." It was often said by newspaper reporters that if you wanted to feel the pulse of the city, just press your thumb on Abe. During Prohibition, if you wanted a drink, stop by the newsstand. Abe stored bootleg whiskey in his stockroom.

On December 8, 1941, though, Abe sold the headline that read: "Japs Bomb Pearl Harbor! War Declared," not knowing that three years later, he would be the headline. Abe announced to his family that he joining the fight. In early 1942, he again beat the draft by reenlisting, with his beloved 175th Regiment of the 29th Infantry Division (Blue and Gray). Told he was too old to serve overseas, Abe called his friend Senator Millard E. Tydings, chairman of the Armed Services Committee. An hour later, Abe had his answer and exemption. He could now fight the Nazis in France, while his brother and son Philip operated the newsstand. Despite being assigned to clerical duties, compiling casualty reports for the headquarters company, Abe soon was decorated three times for bravery and heroism in combat.

His unit received a Presidential Citation

for the heroic defense of Hill 108, named for sloping terrain 350 feet above the sea. On June 16, 1944, 10 days after the Allied invasion at Normandy, the 1st Battalion was ordered to take the high ground north of St. Lo, the strategic crossroads for the invasion force. For three days, the battle raged on the gentle hillside dotted with orchards, fields, and impenetrable hedgerows. Throughout, men from the battalion held their position while rescuing and treating the wounded under heavy artillery fire. When the hill was finally won, the battalion had suffered one of the highest casualty rates of the war, with 164 killed and over 400 wounded. To the men of the 1st Battalion, Hill 108 would be forever remembered as "Purple Heart Hill."

In July, Pfc. Sherman came under enemy artillery fire while guiding ammunition trucks to front-line distribution points. For his heroic actions, he received the Bronze Star.

On July 30, now-Sergeant Sherman again distinguished himself individually and was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry. The citation read: "In the vicinity of Villebaudon, the 175th Infantry regimental command post was subject to intense enemy artillery, inflicting casualties. Shortly thereafter, the enemy fiercely launched an attack which seriously threatened the encirclement of the command post. Realizing the gravity of the situation, Sgt. Sherman gathered all the available men in his vicinity and promptly aided others in the reorganization of the inner defenses. Shortly thereafter, Sgt. Sherman, acting on his own initiative, braved devastating enemy fire while carrying forward urgently needed ammunition to the men on the line. Throughout this fiercely contested engagement, Sgt. Sherman, with complete disregard for his own safety, exposed himself to enemy fire while moving among the men, distributing ammunition and ever inspiring them to close with the enemy. The . . . courageous actions taken by Sgt. Sherman aided materially in the successful repulsion of the enemy."

The citation accurately documented Abe's heroism but, as with any official battle report, it lacked the descriptive details. Newspaper articles reporting on the battle filled in the blanks. The German artillery barrage that hit the headquarters killed a large number of the high-ranking officers. As the remaining men took cover in foxholes, artillery fire was replaced by the rattle of rifle fire. German infantry was quickly advancing across the last open field. If the headquarters was captured, secret maps, documents, and communications codes would fall into German hands.

*NEXT: A win on the home front.*

## City, Locked Down by Troops, Uneasily Sat Out the Civil War

By Edwin Cogswell, Historian

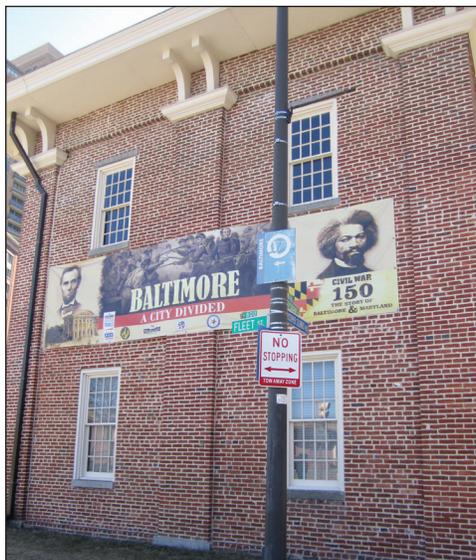
Less than a half century after Baltimoreans raised defenses against the British to save the Union in 1814, the question in early 1861 was whether Maryland would remain in the Union. This was of concern not only to city inhabitants but far more so for the new president, Abraham Lincoln.

At the time of the Civil War, 150 years ago and hence currently in commemoration, Baltimore was the third largest city in the country, behind Philadelphia and New York. It had many reasons for staying in the Union and there was little possibility of a secession majority taking hold. Built on the pattern of Northern cities, it included a large immigrant population. Even with its diverse influx, though, in the 1850s Baltimoreans would shudder at the thought of being considered Northerners. By 1860, Baltimore also had the largest free black population in the country, about 50,000. Slavery still existed here, many of those slaves being house servants.

While Baltimore was trade-oriented, the surrounding counties were agricultural. Baltimore had the largest industrial workforce in the South, sixth largest in the nation. All of this, coupled with Baltimoreans' fear of being the front line of any fighting, led many to reject secession.

Poised for national elections in 1860, the political parties convened amid sectionalism and the result was four such presidential candidates. The Democratic Party first convened in Charleston, South Carolina, but, unable to select a nominee, reconvened in Baltimore--the result being a divided party, with two candidates. The southern Democratic Party selected John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky, with a platform of slavery, states' rights over the federal government and praise for the rights of the South. The Northern Democratic Party nominated Stephen A. Douglas in Baltimore to lead its ticket on a platform of "opposition to congressional interference with slavery" and "support of the decisions by the Supreme Court on the slavery issue." The Republican Party drew its support from New England, the Northwest, some from the Atlantic seaboard and the Midwest, selecting the little-known Lincoln of Illinois and winning him the presidency.

Maryland's voting patterns were difficult to project because of factors including erosion of national parties and influences such as family, friends, acquaintances, business ties and party loyalty. In Maryland it was a two-way



*Civil War Museum is in ex-train station at President and Fleet Sts. Leaving Union troops were attacked in 1861.*

race between Breckinridge and moderate southerner John Bell, who between them received 91% of the vote. Breckinridge carried Baltimore City and five of 21 counties--46% of the vote, representing an extremist Southern attitude. The moderate South representative, John Bell, received 45% of the state vote, carrying 16 counties. Breckenridge was nominated in Baltimore by the southern Democratic Party after the party split. Nominated at the convention of the splinter Congressional Union Party, also in the city, was Tennessee Congressman Bell. It can be said that Maryland's vote reflected that of the states of the upper south that later seceded. No candidate received a majority in Maryland.

With this backdrop, President-elect Lincoln was preceding to Washington by train for his inauguration as the 16th president and quite possibly president of a smaller country--as Southern states seceded. Northern cities along the route invited the president-elect to celebrations. The last city he would transit before reaching the Capitol City was Baltimore. No official reception was planned, although private citizens led by the president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, John Garrett, organized a reception and dinner for him and his guests.

As tensions were growing, Samuel Felton of the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad hired the Chicago private detective Allan Pinkerton to investigate possible sabotage again the rail line. Pinkerton reported a plot against Lincoln to be carried out as Lincoln passed through Baltimore. A plan was arranged to secrete Lincoln through Baltimore late at night. His midnight ride provided pundits a windfall, and Lincoln was

said to have later regretted it. No one was arrested or charged.

On April 15, 1861, Lincoln issued a proclamation calling for troops to suppress the rebellion. As the first northern troops marched through Baltimore on April 19 -- changing trains for Washington -- a confrontation ensued along Pratt Street and both soldiers and civilian were killed. Mayor George Brown and Governor Thomas H. Hicks negotiated with the Lincoln administration to have future troops move to Washington without transiting Baltimore, but it soon became an occupied city. General Benjamin Butler moved up the rail line and positioned cannons on Federal Hill aimed at the heart of Baltimore, and its Battle Monument to 1814.

By June, a number of prominent citizens were imprisoned in Fort McHenry. Police Chief Marshal Kane was arrested, as were police commissioners. Eventually the mayor was arrested and held at Fort McHenry before transfer to Fort Warren in Boston. Businessman Joseph Spencer was the first arrested, for making "treasonable speeches" when he bragged that the Sixth Massachusetts troops would get worse than the thrashing of April if they returned to Baltimore. As the war waged on, arrestees included newspaper editors.

Lincoln first suspended the writ of habeas corpus in Maryland along the rail lines to protect rail transport, including movement of troops, but the suspension eventually encompassed the entire state. A constitutional crisis arose when Maryland farmer John Merryman challenged his incarceration. A writ was signed for Merryman's release by Chief Justice Roger Taney but it was ignored by military authorities. Civilians throughout Baltimore were distressed by this act, which was seen as tyrannical. Other arrestees refused parole on principle.

The city did see a generous spirit arise during the war with the organization of the Baltimore Christian Association. Organized to bring spiritual comfort to soldiers here, it eventually assisted invalids with more basic needs of food and clothing.

War ended with the South's surrender on April 9, 1865, soon followed by the assassination of the president. The assassin lived in Baltimore City and County. Lincoln's funeral train transited Baltimore and his body lay in state here. Baltimore saw the first blood of the war. Next it saw the man who had secreted himself through the city lead his nation through civil war. Finally, lying in state, he was mourned by many in this divided city. During occupation, much intrigue occurred within its streets but in the end Baltimore remained in the Union.

## Monuments - Continued from page 4

Point and at Fort McHenry on September 12-14, 1814. Previously, Smith had been a hero of the Revolutionary War. After his exemplary military career, he continued his public service by serving 40 years in Congress and was president of the U.S. Senate, secretary of the Navy, and, at 80, mayor of Baltimore.

Prominent sculptor Schuler received three commissions during the Centennial. This sculpture presents the strength of the general, standing in his military uniform from the War of 1812. The 1917 monument has been relocated twice. Originally in the southeastern edge of Wyman Park, in 1953 it was moved to a park named for Samuel Smith at the corner of Pratt and Light Streets. In 1970, Smith's monument was removed to its current Federal Hill Park location, overlooking the grand view of Baltimore's harbor and skyline. His former park is now dedicated to ex-mayor and governor Theodore McKeldin.

In January 2012, CHAP determined that structural conditions within the monument's base required attention and engaged Conservator Tatti to conduct a comprehensive conservation. The bronze statue was removed and secured to allow for the dismantling of the granite base. The statue was carefully cleaned and the bronze received a heated-wax treatment. Granite sections of the base were dismantled and the structural pad was then cleaned and prepped, and the one broken section repaired.

The monument base was then reconstructed and repointed, course by course, to get each level. Once the granite base was reconstructed, the bronze statue returned. The project was funded by the city through CHAP's Monument Restoration Program in the Department of Planning, with additional contributions from the Maryland Military Monument's Commission.

### Armistead Monument

Colonel George Armistead's 1882 monument in Federal Hill Park was designed by the firm of G. Metzger and erected by Mayor Wm. Pinckney Whyte and the City Council,



Photos by Joe Stewart  
Gen. Sam Smith



- Made in Baltimore in July-August 1813 by Mary Pickersgill
- Commissioned by Major George Armistead, commander of Fort McHenry
- Original size: 30 feet by 42 feet
- Current size: 30 feet by 34 feet
- 15 stars and 15 stripes (one star has been cut out)
- Raised over Fort McHenry on morning of September 14, 1814, to signal American victory over the British in the Battle of Baltimore; the sight inspired Francis Scott Key to write "The Star-Spangled Banner"
- Preserved by the Armistead family as a memento of the battle
- Loaned to the Smithsonian Institution in 1907; converted to permanent gift in 1912
- On exhibit at the National Museum of American History since 1964
- Major, multi-year conservation effort launched in 1998
- Plans for new permanent exhibition gallery now underway

*BCHS Board members Charles Markell, who also represents Friends of Fort McHenry, Matt Crenson and Society Chairman Emeritus John Carroll Byrnes are among collaborators making this Battle Flag poster available free to schools, and for a fee to others. It can be ordered through [OURNATIONAL-ANTHEM.COM](http://OURNATIONAL-ANTHEM.COM). The flag's rent fabric resulted from swatches having been cut for gifts.*

originally on Eutaw Place. Armistead was commander of Fort McHenry during the British attack. The monument's shaft features an outline of his career. The marble block of 14 feet rests on a base a foot and a half high. This monument was commissioned as a substitute for a c.1828 tablet of commemoration.

Armistead's statue was moved from Eutaw Place after residents protested that its height did not harmonize with the loftiness of their homes. Today, the strong architectural presence of Armistead anchors the Federal Hill overlook close to Smith.

Last summer, CHAP engaged Tatti to conduct this conservation project. The original lower tier of the stacked-stone foundation was cleaned and shimmed. The stone foundation was repointed and the figure gently washed. The ornamental fence was then cleaned, prepped and repainted with alkyd black semi-gloss paint. The project was funded as was that for Smith, with additional support of the Adopt a Monument Fund.

Great cities are known by their culture and history. They are celebrated for their art

## Polonia Lecture on April 17

This sixth season of Baltimore History Evenings lectures, sponsored by the Society and the Village Learning Place, will continue on Thursday, April 17, with retired University of Baltimore librarian Thomas L. Hollowak offering "Researching Maryland's Polonia: Challenges and Rewards." It reflects his 30-year study of the city's Polish community. With a reception at 7PM and the talk at 7:30, the evenings are without charge at the Charles Village Learning Center, 2521 St. Paul Street.

On May 15, Executive Director Johns Hopkins of Baltimore Heritage will deliver the Center's Grace Darin Memorial Lecture on "Baltimore's Historic Places: Now What?" Ms. Marin, a newspaperwoman, gave Charles Village its name and her restorative efforts until her death in 2002. The sixth and final lecture this year will be on June 19, with Morgan State University Assistant History Professor David T. Terry on "Tinged With Hostility: Competing Agendas and Social Justice Reform in Baltimore, 1930-50."

As this newsletter came together, author Mark N. Ozer discussed on March 20 his new book "Baltimore: Persons and Places," which follows several on Washington by the Georgetown University neurosurgeon. The earlier lecturers this year were Kathleen Ambrose of BCHS on her new book, "Remington: The History of a Baltimore Neighborhood," on January 16, and Deborah R. Weiner on February 20 with "Insiders and Outsiders: Baltimore Jews in the 1920s and 1930s."

and architecture. Baltimore is one of those great cities whose monuments reflect its influence on the nation's history. It has been a privilege to serve Baltimoreans by being a steward of these public monuments.



Armistead Monument

Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake appoints 11 of the 13 members of CHAP, one nominated by BCHS. Its current member, Charles "Buzz" Cusack, has resigned, saying, "It was an honor to be on the commission for many years and I thought it was time for me to leave." The BCHS Board is submitting three candidates to the mayor for her consideration: Catherine Evans, Michael Franch, and Elizabeth Nix. Each member of CHAP appointed by the Mayor serves four years.

## Baseball, Hotdogs, Crackers & Jack

By David Taft Terry  
Morgan State University

In 1946, Joe Black, a pitcher with the Baltimore Elite Giants of the Negro National League, walked into the lobby of the York Hotel, at Madison and Dolphin Streets in West Baltimore. He was there to meet one of the York's uneasy guests, Jackie Robinson. A former Negro-Leagueer himself, Robinson was in his first season with the Montreal Royals, a farm team of the Brooklyn Dodgers. Earlier that year, Robinson and his Montreal teammate, Johnny "Needle Nose" Wright, had signed contracts to become the first African Americans on the Royals, and more significantly, the first in all of modern "white" baseball. They were here to play the rival Baltimore Orioles.

Baseball may have been a national pastime in 1946, but the Major Leagues played mainly in the northeast; only two southern cities had Major League teams in the post-war years. Washington's Senators and St. Louis' Cardinals and Browns. To keep fresh talent available, each Major League club affiliated with lower-league teams. Baltimore, St. Louis and Kansas City were the only southern AAA teams.

The Orioles played as the International League affiliate of the Major League Cleveland Indians. In 1947 and '48, the Indians added black players. Curiously, however, neither of them, Larry Doby (1947) nor Leroy "Satchel" Paige (1948), played a minor league season before joining the "Majors" but came directly from the Negro Leagues. While perhaps understandable in the case of the veteran Paige, Doby was young, with limited experience. Why had he not started in the minors like others?

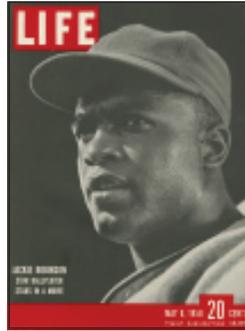
Cleveland's owner Bill Veeck likely had an eye toward ticket sales: "I wanted to get the best of the available Negro boys while the grabbing was good," he told reporters, "Why wait?" Still, Doby would only appear in 29 of 154 games for the Indians in 1947. If not the issue of his readiness for the Majors, then, perhaps the segregation culture surrounding the Indian's top minor league city factored in. Maybe Cleveland did not want to send Doby to Baltimore to be treated roughly.

In 1949, the Orioles had a new parent team, the St. Louis Browns. That organization had black minor-leaguers previously, but during its Orioles years, 1949-50, no black players came through Baltimore on their way to St. Louis. The Orioles switched Major League teams yet again in 1951-53, affiliating with Philadelphia Phillies. The Phillies had never signed a black

player, and would be one of the last to do so (1957).

But back in 1946, the Montreal Royals made three trips to Baltimore. On the first, a four-game series in April, after meeting Joe Black at the York Hotel, Jackie Robinson and his teammates took the field on a frigid night before only 2,500 spectators. The next day, better weather saw 10 times as many fans jam Municipal Stadium. Half of them were black. A solid proportion of the rest acted the part of rural rednecks and Deep South crackers – that segment of white fans that Afro-American sportswriter Sam Lacy described as "ignorant" and "unreconstructed."

Baltimore-style Jim Crow segregated hotels, school buildings, and lunch counters among other public spaces, but not seats in the stadium. Differing viewers thus found themselves seated side-by-side. The scene was surreal. Blacks supported the visiting team, or at least two of its players, while in equal parts whites cheered their Orioles and jeered that "nigger, son of a bitch" Robinson. Through it all, Robinson answered racist detraction – "You oughta be behind a pair of mules!" – with superior play. In one spectacular moment,



as whites booed, Robinson stole home. The blacks loved it, and several rushed the field attempting to carry him on their shoulders.

On the Royals' second trip to Baltimore, in June, things grew more threatening. White thugs stalked Robinson to the visitors' clubhouse door after a game. "Come out here Robinson, you son of a bitch," one shouted, "We'll getcha!" No security detail was on hand despite death threats against him. Three of Robinson's white teammates remained with him until well after midnight when the racists were finally out of sight. Believing it safe, the four minor league players quickly hopped on a streetcar together, but briefly. The three whites went downtown to their hotel; Robinson went uptown, to the York, where Jim Crow said he had to stay.

Ironically, largely on the strength of Baltimore's games with Montreal, the 1946 Orioles drew more fans than all other International League team in history. Whatever Jackie Robinson's feelings, he later reflected that the ugliness of Baltimore segregation culture had been useful for him in the long run. Baltimore was not the only southern city he played in that year. Because of him, the Royals went on to win the "Junior" World Series, defeating Louisville's Colonels 4 games to 2. But "the Baltimore experience hardened me," he would say. After that, "I was prepared for just about anything."

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