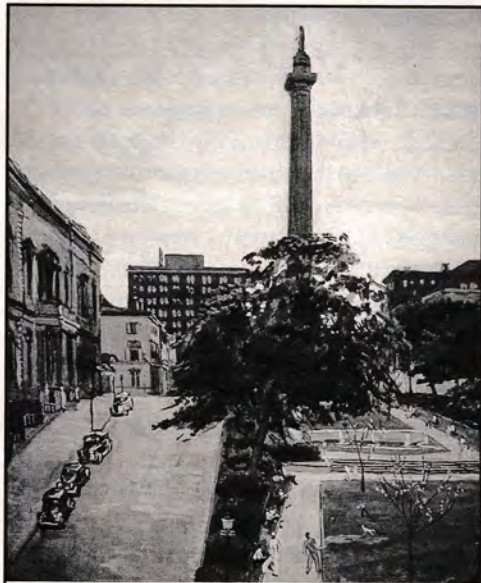


BALTIMORE GASLIGHT

Newsletter of the Baltimore City Historical Society

Volume 7, Number 1

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Mt. Vernon almost 70 years ago.

Enlightening Name For The Newsletter

By Lewis H. Diuguid

The Society's board, the Newsletter's staff, and responsive members, but one, stumbled for six years over founding Chairman John C. Byrnes' admonition to come up with a proper name for this semiannual publication. Martha M. Yeager, a widow at Charlestown in Catonsville, had the answer: Baltimore Gaslight. Evoking a last-century image at once soft yet suffusing, the title also reaches back to the now shuttered icon of the Society, the Peale Museum. It won the vote of the membership at the Mayor's Reception on Nov. 11.

Ms. Yeager awaits her prize, a crab feast with Judge Byrnes. It's rumored that the entree is negotiable. Asked by the Society's Donald Torres how she came up with the name, she replied, "It just came to me. I've been a BCHS member since 2003," and thereby a charter member. Ms. Yeager, 85, grew up at St. Paul (Cont. on Page 4)



Cavaglieri's capture of Gay Street included ads for Arrow and Gunther beers.

Italian's Paintings of City Return in Gift to Society

By Donald Torres

BCHS Corresponding Secretary

In 1943, 32-year old Giorgio Cavaglieri, artist, architect, and future urban preservationist, returned to New York City with his Baltimore wife, Norma Sanford, whom he married in 1942. He had come to work in Baltimore after emigrating from Italy three years earlier. Now, after 65 years, 12 of his "Baltimore Views" have been donated to the Baltimore City Historical Society.

Mr. Cavaglieri died at 95 on May 15, 2007. He bequeathed all of his art works to his companion Natalie Meadow (his wife died in 1971), and she has generously returned his Baltimore gouaches to their home city. They include sites that were favorites 65 years ago, Mt. Vernon, the Basilica, Druid Hill Park, and that remain so today.

To add even more interest to these paintings, Mr. Cavaglieri had kept two '42 Sunpapers articles and Bulletins printed by the Municipal (Peale) Museum in '42 and '43 describing exhibits of his paintings at the Museum. On the cover of the 1942 Bulletin is Cavaglieri's painting of Preston Gardens. For Society members—dedicated to revival of the historic, shuttered Peale—the Bulletins offer snapshots of the Museum in the 1930s and 1940s. The logo on the Bulletins reads: "The Municipal Museum of the City of Baltimore—1931". (Cont. on Page 4)

U of Baltimore Session April 3-5 to Reassess Impact of 1968 Riots

By Jay Merwin

Forty years ago, at the news of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., cities across the country convulsed in rioting. In Baltimore, the violence began that night, April 4, 1968, with Molotov cocktails tossed into a Northwest Baltimore tavern, and fires at a Cherry Hill shopping center, a vacant downtown office building and elsewhere. The next day was quiet, with the National Guard on standby.

On April 10, violence flared on Gay Street, with greater breadth, as rioters smashed windows, looted stores, set fires and confronted police for nearly two weeks. National Guard and regular Army units deployed to several parts of the city to quell it. In the end, six people died, many more were injured, merchants suffered extensive property damage and the city's racial climate was altered indelibly.

Scholars, eyewitnesses, civic and religious leaders of the time will convene at the University of Baltimore April 3-5 to sift the meaning and enduring consequences of those tumultuous days. The conference, "Baltimore '68: Riots and Rebirth" will examine in detail the causes of the riots, the effects on the city and the results of the attempts to heal the breach, in the immediate aftermath and as they continue today.

Speakers include: Peter Levy, a York College historian who was in residence at UB last year for preparation of the conference; Maryland state archivist Edward C. Papenfuse Jr.; Fraser Smith of WYPR-FM, and Carl Snowden, director of the Maryland Office of Civil Rights.

A website, www.ubalt.edu/baltimore68, has links including directions for a driving tour of former riot-torn areas, photos from the now-defunct News American, and a detailed timeline that is the source of the historical summary above. To attend, register at the website or contact the chief organizer, UB history professor and associate provost, Jessica Elfenbein, at 410.837.5340 or jelfenbein@ubalt.edu.

From the President: **Images Recall A Past Shared By the Peale**

By Sally Johnston
President, BCHS

The gift of 12 paintings of Baltimore done between 1939 and 1942 by Giorgio Cavaglieri (see article on Page 1) came out of the blue and provided a stirring transport into the past, both visually and bureaucratically. The charming scenes of the city's monuments and neighborhoods are remarkably unchanged today. The constancy of the images is somehow reassuring in an age when things seem to be changing so rapidly about us. Accompanying the paintings was a small brochure describing the 1942 exhibit of the paintings at Baltimore's Municipal Museum—or the Peale Museum, as we know it today. The brochure was a sad reminder that Baltimore City no longer has a municipal museum.

What fun it would be to proclaim the return of these paintings to Baltimore with a small exhibit of them in the building where they were first exhibited 66 years ago! BCHS committee members and city officials have spent long hours developing a plan to reopen the Peale, which has been closed for ten years. Over \$400,000 in city, state and private funds have been raised. Roof repair work has been done to prevent leaking, but much needs to be done and the outcome remains uncertain. A lease must be secured, another \$2 million raised, restoration work completed and the building made handicap compliant before the Peale can reopen to the public. BCHS will be counting on the support of its members, community foundations and organizations as well as Baltimore City to achieve its goals.

Should a viable plan be realized, Cavaglieri's paintings will again be displayed at the Peale for all to enjoy.

Rec Pier Comeback Awaited, But the Tugs?

By James D. Dilts
Co-Author of "A Guide
to Baltimore Architecture"

It is taking nearly 100 years for Recreation Pier in Fell's Point to evolve from a city-owned maritime and recreation facility to a privately owned hotel, about the time needed for Baltimore's harbor to change from an industrial port to an attractive destination for tourists and residents. City government also has undergone a sea change. While middle-class taxpayers fled to the suburbs, the provision of public services, such as recreation, declined and Baltimore adopted a more corporate model.

Municipal attitudes, and finances, were different when the city built the Commercial and Recreation Pier as a public facility, the waterfront then "being entirely owned and controlled by the railroads, private corporations and individuals," according to an early engineering report. The pier opened in 1914, the lower deck for commerce and the upper for recreation.

Designed by architect Theodore Wells Pietsch, it was a handsome and substantial steel-frame building, 150 feet wide and 500 feet long, resting on hundreds of reinforced concrete piles. The three-story head building, brick with granite trim, featured a wide central arch of 50-foot span below a colonnade. Behind this was the main interior space, a 40-by-84-foot "assembly hall" or ballroom, and out back, an open promenade deck with awnings and shelters "somewhat in the manner of the great steel piers at Atlantic City."

The ground floor of the pier was a warehouse and docking service area. Reinforced concrete columns and deep steel roof beams defined this open area, which resembled a trainshed. Eastern Shore produce delivered by boat was in fact distributed by rail.

For as long as anyone can remember, tugboats ringed the pier and the citizens recreated themselves upstairs. Dances were held in the ballroom, immigrants learned English in the library, and hundreds of Baltimore schoolchildren played games inside and on the open deck. In 1970, the Fell's Point Preservation Society held its first black-tie ball there.

Things began to change in the 1980s. An engineering study found that the pilings were severely deteriorated; to restore



Pier included "Rec" use in 1970's.

them would cost \$1 million. Maintenance and staffing at the rec center were cut back. The Fell's Point community opposed plans to convert the pier to a performing arts center or a fish market. In 1985, following closure for repairs, the pier was rented to a documentary film crew. After that, a brief neighborhood effort to restore the original maritime and recreation uses collapsed, partly due to a proposal that the pier be turned over to a private owner for commercial redevelopment. In 1992, the city closed the place and gave the space to "Homicide" for a seven-year, rent-free run.

The residents again tried to reclaim the pier for its original purposes, but the city was uninterested, and in 2003 announced a search for developers. J.J. Clarke Enterprises, Inc. with others was selected the following year. The estimated cost to stabilize the pier had risen to \$8-9 million. In 2006, H&S Properties Inc. joined the redevelopment team.

"It's in remarkably good shape," said J. Joseph Clarke, as he led the way up the Recreation Pier's grand staircase to the ballroom, its unblemished floor laid with hardwood maple on edge, like a bowling alley. This space and the high-ceilinged rooms on either side are to become a restaurant and kitchen area. The roof in back will be open to the public, as before, although with two atrium spaces cut out to bring light to the double level of hotel rooms, 130 in all, to be built on the pier itself. The building's appearance will not change much, only its use. Despite community efforts, though, the tugboat dockage seems to be living on borrowed time.

The city will sell the pier to the developers for \$2 million with an initial, non-refundable deposit of \$350,000. However, if expenses to repair the pier exceed \$8 million, as is likely, the balance of the sale price will be reduced or eliminated. The total cost of the hotel makeover, which has received some \$10 million in state and federal tax credits, is \$45 million and the estimated completion date 2010.

Where Marshall Trod Almost 100 Years Ago

By Phillip Merrill
President, Nanny Jasck & Co.

July 2 will mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of Thurgood Marshall, the first African American to serve as justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. We can expect that this occasion will spark renewed interest in Marshall's life and curiosity about the places in historic West Baltimore where Marshall lived, worked and learned as a boy and young man.

Marshall grew up in what is now known as the Old West Baltimore District, northwest of downtown. This area is on the National Register of Historic Places and comprises 175 blocks, including the Harlem Park, Druid Heights, Upton, Sandtown and Madison Park neighborhoods. Virtually every prominent black Baltimorean lived and worked here during the century following the Civil War. Several buildings connected to important figures in African American history still stand—including Marshall's boyhood home at 1632 Division Street. Other buildings with links to the early Marshall years have been demolished, such as Marshall's Grocery, owned by relatives of the future jurist, at 535 Dolphin Street, and the home where Marshall lived with his first wife, the former Vivian "Buster" Burey, at 1836 Druid Hill Avenue.

Like several generations of African American Baltimoreans, Marshall walked just a few blocks to reach his elementary, junior high and high schools—all of which were segregated. His elementary, Public School #103, was at 1305 Division Street, just three blocks from his home. The building currently is vacant, with plans in the Mayor's Office to reopen it with a new use to highlight its civil rights heritage and a focus on Marshall and his peers.

Frederick Douglass High School, which produced many prominent African Americans, was at 1645 Calhoun Street in Marshall's time. Today, The Frederick Douglass Apartments occupy this historic site. Other well-known Douglass graduates include opera singer Anne Wiggins Brown, civil rights lobbyist Clarence Mitchell Jr., civil rights activist and lawyer Juanita Jackson Mitchell, entertainer Cab Calloway, and attorney and Judge William Murphy Sr.

After graduating from Douglass, Marshall matriculated at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. He initially tried to

follow his mother's urging to become a dentist but failed the necessary classes. Recouping from this experience, he graduated from Lincoln cum laude in 1930. While at Lincoln, Marshall returned to Baltimore for functions including a Morgan College party in 1927 at 1426 McCulloh Street, home of Miss Vandola Henderson, and an educational event at the historic Bethel AME Church on Druid Hill Avenue.

After undergraduate education, Marshall enrolled in Howard University Law School. He often awoke at 5AM to take the train to Washington and returned to Baltimore after midnight. In 1933, he graduated magna cum laude and was admitted to the Maryland Bar. In 1934, as a member of the Baltimore Lincoln University Alumni Association, Marshall attended meetings at 1318 Druid Hill Avenue, owned by the prestigious Harry S. Cummings family.

These sites are just a few of those connected to the early life of Justice Marshall. Baltimoreans should identify, document and preserve other sites connected to "Mr. Civil Rights" before it's too late.

Among events anticipating the Marshall centennial is the University of Maryland Law School's Second Black Law Alumni Reunion & Symposium, September 19-20. The Thurgood Marshall Law Library is planning a program on civil rights research, the law school will unveil a new Marshall exhibit, and there will be special guests with connections to him.

Correction: Right Victor, Wrong Name

The fall 2007 Newsletter announced the winner of the Joseph L. Arnold Prize for the best essay on Baltimore but mistakenly attributed it to Lauren P.



Lauren Morton

Morgan. Her surname is Morton. We apologize. Her topic was "Baltimore's First Birth Control Clinic: The Bureau for Contraceptive Advice, 1927-1932." Morton is now an academic editor with LexisNexis in Bethesda.

Society Programs

Baltimore Historians' Workshop— Friday, May 9, from 9AM to 3PM at the Reginald Lewis Museum of Maryland African History and Culture, Pratt and President Streets. It is co-sponsored by The University of Maryland Law School and BCHS. The \$10 fee includes refreshments and lunch for "Baltimore Works in Progress." A partial list of presenters includes Antero Pietila, Howell Baum, and Jessica Elfenbein. Maryland Archivist Edward Papenfuse will be the lunch speaker. The winner of the annual Joseph L. Arnold Prize for Writing on Baltimore History also will be announced. Contact Mike Franch at franch@juno.com.

Annual Meeting— Saturday, June 7, 10AM to 1PM. Celebrate the 200th anniversary of the arrival of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Baltimore. The Society's meeting will be in St. Mary's Chapel, formally named the Chapel of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary in the Temple. It was designed in the French gothic style by Maximilian Godefroy. Following the meeting is a guided tour of Mother Seton's restored house, and the upper and lower chapels. All are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Light refreshments.

Jewish Museum of Maryland— Sunday, September 21, 1-3:30PM, at 15 Lloyd Street in the city's Oldtown. Visit "Voices of Lombard Street: A Century of Change in East Baltimore." The area surrounding the Jewish Museum was the center of immigrant Jewish life in Baltimore in the early 1900s. The exhibit chronicles a place of constant change, where people of different backgrounds lived, worked and created a community. Only remnants survive. Deborah Weiner, co-curator, will talk on the research, creation and ramifications of the exhibit. Light refreshments.

Mayor's Reception and History Honors— Saturday, November 8, 1 to 4PM. To honor the birth of Baltimore philanthropist Enoch Pratt, the Eighth Annual Mayor's Reception will be held at the First Unitarian Church's Parish Hall. Pratt, when treasurer of the church, donated the Hall building and the church organ, installed in 1893. Following the reception, a guided tour is offered of the Hall and Church. Light refreshments.

Turning On Gaslight

(Continued from Page 1)

and 27th streets, went to Roland Park Jr. High School, Eastern for part of her high school and St. Mary's (County) Female Seminary, now St. Mary's College.

The city's winsome glass-bowled gas street lights trace immediately to Rembrandt Peale, who built this country's first museum here in 1814. Two years later he lit it with gas—an innovation he had witnessed in London. His was the first in Baltimore, by all accounts.

Whether this was the first gaslight in the country is widely disputed, as is the question of who had the first gas streetlight. In 1817 Peale helped form a company, eventually to become Baltimore Gas and Electric, that installed this city's first streetlight nearby -- at Holliday and Baltimore Streets.

A classic city gaslight glows there today (see photo), a memorial to the flickering lamps that gave way to utilitarian electrification after World War II. Change had begun before the war, including installation of timers that, to the dismay of neighborhoods and their often beloved lamplighters, turned the gas up and down automatically. Then came the war's random air-raid drills, and the fellows with their ladders and valve turners came back in style. The bowls of lights facing the har-

Cavaglieri Painted This Town in Warm-Up for N.Y.

(Continued from Page 1)

Major events led to Cavaglieri becoming a temporary Baltimorean, as recounted in a major obituary in *The New York Times* last year. Born August 11, 1911, in Venice, he graduated with honors in engineering and architecture from Milan Politecnico. He began his career as an architect for the Italian government. Fascism was on the rise, and his father, an insurance executive, died, leaving Giorgio, then in his early 20s, as head of household. Increased oppression of Jews by the fascist government and its seizing of the family's assets forced Cavaglieri and family members to leave

bor were blackened on the waterside.

Many Baltimoreans who reach back to those times recall photos of street scenes that while dimmer than today floated a patina of romance lost to electricity. If readers care to share a favorite, send it to the Baltimore Gaslight in a future issue.

The Sun reported in 1957 that Mayor Tommy D'Alesandro had "snuffed off" the last gaslight in a ceremony. Firms did a brisk business for a while, buying up the rejected cast-iron street lamps with their glass bowls and installing them in people's gardens. When the supply ran out, one local firm began filling worldwide orders with an aluminum replica.

Italy. They arrived in New York in December 1939, where they rented a \$15-a-month apartment on Madison Avenue. He then left for design work in Baltimore.

While in Baltimore, he worked, painted and married. Upon returning to New York, and with the United States now at war, he enlisted in the Army and served in the invasion of Europe from Normandy to Berlin—where he employed his engineering and architectural skills testing bridges and adapting German barracks for Allied use. He was awarded the Bronze Star.

Following his discharge, Cavaglieri formed his own firm in New York, where he became a pioneer and leader in the city's urban preservation movement. He coined the term "adaptive re-use," said the Times, which has become a guiding principle for preservationists.

The architect's most famous work was restoration of the Jefferson Market Library in Greenwich Village in the '60s, which Douglas Martin of *The Times* said is "regarded as the first real instance of successful historic preservation in New York City." Among his positions was president of the New York chapter of the American Institute of Architects. He worked continuously until he was 93, painting left-handed after an arm injury.

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