

# BALTIMORE GASLIGHT

Newsletter of the Baltimore City Historical Society

Volume 19, Number 2

Fall 2020

## 20<sup>TH</sup> Annual BCHS Baltimore History Honors

Bradley Alston, *Chair, History Honors Selection Committee*

The 20th Annual BCHS Baltimore History Honors Program and Reception, normally occurring in late October, has been cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, honorees were selected and will receive their awards by mail. They will also be recognized on the BCHS website and Facebook pages. We hope to return to in-person ceremonies in 2021 and the 2020 History Honors awardees will also be recognized at that time.

The BCHS History Honors are presented in three categories: *Historian/Scholar Honors* - to persons who have published and are respected in the academic and professional community; *Living History Honors* - to persons whose lives exemplify the civic values of community involvement and enhancement; and *In Memoriam* - to deceased persons who deserve recognition for their special contribution to Baltimore history. Following are this year's recipients.

### HISTORIAN/SCHOLAR HONORS

**Josh Cutler**, an attorney, former newspaper editor, and Massachusetts State

Representative for the 6<sup>th</sup> Plymouth District in the legislature, published *Mobtown Massacre: Alexander Hanson and the Baltimore Newspaper War of 1812*. Hanson was a newspaper editor and a Federalist, a minority party in Baltimore. After Hanson published an attack against the American declaration of war against Britain in 1812, a mob set upon Hanson and his supporters, killing General James Lignan, badly beating a dozen others, including "Light Horse" Harry Lee. Both Lignan and Lee (father of Robert E. Lee) were respected heroes of the American Revolution. Josh Cutler has added to our knowledge of the extreme political passions in early Baltimore.

**Dennis Patrick Halpin** is an associate professor of history at Virginia Tech where he also serves as Associate Chair of the Department of History. He earned a B.A. in 2002 and an M.A. in 2004 at Florida Southern University and completed his Ph.D. in 2012 at Rutgers University. He is the author of *A Brotherhood of Liberty: Black Reconstruction and Its Legacies in Baltimore, 1865-1920*. An earlier essay, "For

My Race Against All Parties," was awarded the Joseph Arnold Prize by the Baltimore City Historical Society in 2015. The paper later appeared in *The Maryland Historical Magazine*. He has been awarded research grants by the Mellon Foundation and was named a Lord Baltimore Fellow by the Maryland Historical Society.

**Martha S. Jones** is the Society of Black Alumni Presidential Professor and Professor of History at The Johns Hopkins University. She is a legal and cultural historian whose work examines how Black Americans have shaped the story of American democracy. Professor Jones holds a Ph.D. in history from Columbia University and a J.D. from the CUNY School of Law. Prior to the start of her academic career, she was a public interest litigator in New York City. She is being honored for her book *Birthright Citizens: A History of Race and Rights in Antebellum America*, winner of the Organization of American Historians Liberty Legacy Award for the best book in civil rights history.

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## Announcing the 9<sup>TH</sup> Annual Joint Program of the BCHS & HSBC "Baltimore Mid-Century – The 1950s"

November 15, 2020, 2-4 PM via Zoom

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Joint Program of the Baltimore City Historical Society and the Historical Society of Baltimore County and will take place online via Zoom from 2 pm to 4 pm, Sunday, November 15, 2020, with Jack Burkert, formerly with Baltimore Museum of Industry. The topic will be Baltimore Mid-Century – The 1950s.

A decade of dramatic change, the 1950's in Baltimore largely reflected the changes occurring nationwide, many of them with a local aspect. But more than the changing

national scene, Baltimore rebuilt, restored, revised, and occasionally endured a series of changes that forever changed the fabric of the city. This unexpectedly dynamic decade made lasting, fundamental changes to the way people lived, where they lived, how they moved in and around their environment, and to many of the places they gained employment.

Admission will be free for BCHS and HSBC members. A link to join the Zoom presentation will be made *(Continued on Page 5)*



Jack Burkert

## BALTIMORE GASLIGHT

Newsletter of the Baltimore City Historical Society

Chair of Board of Directors . . . . Edward Papenfuse  
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## From the BCHS President

Heather Hairston

Quarantine, BLM, virtual happy hours, social justice protests, pandemic pods, and asynchronous learning. These events and the language of early 2020 changed not only our topics of conversation but also the means by which we have them. Covid-19 has introduced new opportunities in the world of virtual programming and this increased familiarity with online lectures presents the BCHS with a means to engage a wider audience and address barriers to accessibility. In June, the BCHS launched its YouTube channel where several of the *History Evenings* talks are already available. Students, families with young children, home-bound individuals, and Baltimore history lovers who are otherwise unable or unlikely to attend in-person events can now simply log in to engage with the BCHS.

Our attempts to engage a broader community also include expansion into family programming, an increased social media presence, and stronger partnerships with local bookstores and organizations. For example, our well-attended *History Evenings* may expand into *History Afternoons* with content suitable for Baltimore history lovers of all ages. Another example is our *BCHS Supporter Cameos*, which are posted monthly on Facebook. Through these interviews, we are able to learn about our supporters and see the value of BCHS from their perspectives. We're also exploring ways to translate the tremendous knowledge base of the BCHS Board into content to support virtual learning. 2020 has also reminded us that we have many more Baltimore stories to share. We are acutely aware

that the BCHS exists to explore the under-represented or quieter corners of Baltimore history and our Board members are working to curate an exciting slate of content.

As the new board President, I am excited to help BCHS build upon its well-established programs to continue our mission of "Preserving & Telling Baltimore's Stories." I look forward to greeting our supporters in person, but until it's safe, we'll see you virtually! ■

## From the Desk of the Chairman of the Board

Edward C. Papenfuse, Ph. D.

The optimism of the last issue of the *Gaslight* has been tested by the plague that has descended upon us. In-person meetings have become Zoom gatherings, along with our outreach programs, originally designed to bring people together. Zoom and the continuing widespread interest in the BCHS's use of social media, especially the Facebook page, and other on-line means of communication, have given us the opportunity to spread interest in, and respond to, those who want to know more about Baltimore's history. The BCHS's reach has also broadened as some of the poorest neighborhoods in Baltimore are getting WiFi thanks to community advocacy, such as Cherry Hill, where the efforts to achieve internet access were featured on MSNBC and in a local online newsletter (<https://technical.ly/baltimore/2020/06/25/elev8-baltimore-and-rowdy-orb-it-bring-free-wifi-to-cherry-hill-digital-access/>).

The BCHS Zoom History Evenings at the Village Learning Place with neighborhood history from Cherry Hill to Canterbury have brought us larger audiences than ever before, as well, thanks to promotion by Chris Whitaker on the BCHS website and the BCHS Facebook page overseen by Mike Franch. Through email, Zoom, and social media, both Chris and Mike, along with other BCHS Board members, have replied to the many inquiries that come our way from family historians and academicians who are attempting to place Baltimore in the larger context of American and world history.

Recently, with primary, secondary, and higher education schools becoming virtual, we have an even larger opportunity to

reach out to the community through distance learning, building on the knowledge base of the Board and links to teachers and administrators who are eager to introduce their students to research and writing about local history. In the planning stages are Zoom meetings for individual researchers and group sessions that assist teachers in introducing their students to Baltimore's rich and diverse history. Stay tuned. ■

## Editor's Note

The current issue of the *Gaslight* highlights BCHS events of the first ten months of 2020. As is noted in both the Chairman's and President's columns, it has been an unusual year because of Covid-19, one of many challenges, which have created a great deal of innovation in programming. However, the rhythm of our calendar has been sustained throughout: board meetings have been held, *History Evening* presentations offered, and History Honors and Arnold Prize recipients selected.

In *Discovering Baltimore* in this issue, an article by BCHS Board member, Savannah Wood, discusses the history of the *Afro-American Newspaper* and its collaboration with its sister organization, Afro Charities. This year, in celebration of the centennial of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution, edited by Savannah, they published *To the Front: Black Women and the Vote*, a special edition magazine focusing on Washington D.C. and Maryland's Black women suffragists.

Two other BCHS Board members have new books, as well. Kristina Gaddy published *Flowers in the Gutter: The True Story of the Edelweiss Pirates, Teenagers Who Resisted the Nazis*, a photo-illustrated work of non-fiction for teens and young adults. In October, Ron Cassie's *If You Love Baltimore, It Will Love Back: 171 Short, But True Stories* appeared with stories that are "culled from a decade of lugging a notebook around this city for *Baltimore Magazine*."

The BCHS *History Evenings* series will begin again in January, 2021, taking place virtually and, when it is again safe, in-person at the Village Learning Place. Please refer to the BCHS Facebook page (Baltimore History – Baltimore City Historical Society) or our website ([www.baltimorecityhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.baltimorecityhistoricalsociety.org)) for notices of these and other upcoming public events. – Catherine Evans ■



## DISCOVERING BALTIMORE

## The Afro-American News Archives

Savannah Wood

In 2020, the *Baltimore Afro-American Newspaper* celebrated its 128th anniversary. Founded in Baltimore in 1892, it is the oldest continuously-operating, family-owned Black newspaper in the country. During its most prominent period, the paper was a vehicle for social change: its editorials were used to advocate for Black Americans' social and economic equality, and its publisher, Dr. Carl Murphy, was in close community with several of Baltimore's, and the country's, most prominent civil rights leaders.

The AFRO's intimacy with Black political movements has helped to shape a rich and unique archive that tells the story of Black life from the inside: experience rather than observation. When compared to white owned and run historical newspapers, we often see two very different views of the same event. For example, in the coverage of the lynching of George Armwood in 1933 on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, an article in the *Baltimore Sun* reads like a list of facts, devoid of personal details. In the AFRO, we hear directly from the victim's mother in an interview conducted in her kitchen. There is a description of her home, and we know what she had for breakfast — the fullness of her humanity and the gravity of her loss are rendered in empathetic detail, a rare grace in a country where we are still arguing over whether or not Black lives matter.

This closeness also offers plenty of surprises. As Director of Afro Charities, a nonprofit organization producing artistic, educational and direct aid programs, and Archives Director for the AFRO, I have spent the better part of the last year getting acquainted with the range and content of the holdings. While thumbing through some boxes that had recently been returned to the archives from Howard University's Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, for example, I came across several Soundscriber discs — flexible, bright green grooved discs used to record personal conversations and notes-to-self on a desktop dictation machine. The only identifying words on the discs were "Mr. Thurgood Marshall." Were these recorded in Carl Murphy's office? Could

they be notes on what strategies to use in order to fund civil rights campaigns? If all goes well, we'll soon know. These recordings, in addition to several reel-to-reels with similarly tantalizing, minimally descriptive labels, are slated to be digitized by the end of the year, offering us the opportunity to hear the recordings for the first time in several decades.

What else is waiting to be uncovered in those boxes? While our collection is pretty well-organized, there is no complete catalogue of contents. So every now and then, I wander a bit in the archives. I'll open a box looking for one thing and find a folder I would have never known to search for. Or, as on one afternoon, lift a lid and see the image of my great-great-grandmother staring back at me.

Some stories get told so frequently that unique details get lost in the retelling. The story of the AFRO's founding is no different: Martha Murphy lent her husband John \$200 to buy the AFRO name and the printing press; the AFRO became prosperous; our family still operates it; the end.

But where did that initial money come from 128 years ago? Was it common for a Black woman to have \$200 (about \$5000 in today's dollars) to invest in a new venture? I had shelved these questions in the back of my head, adding them to a running list of research curiosities that I would get around to when I had time. But Martha had other plans. One afternoon, after opening an unusually-shaped box, there she was in her funeral scrapbook, with a full obituary laid out before me. She was born enslaved in Montgomery County. Her father had died a wealthy farmer and philanthropist, a far cry from his early life as the human property of slave traffickers with prominent family names. Upon his death, Martha received a portion of his land, which she, in turn, sold to her brother. That sale enabled the purchase of the AFRO. Her story was well-documented, but could use a good retelling. This retelling has become an important part of my creative work.

In this way, my professional, genealogical, spiritual and creative interests have



Martha Howard Murphy, Courtesy of the *AFRO American Newspapers Archives*

all converged in the archives. As the descendant of the AFRO's founders, it's no surprise that a lot of my own family history is documented there. But what I am equally thrilled about is the possibility that other Baltimoreans in my generation might have this same experience by working with this collection. After all, the newspaper's purpose was to chronicle the lives — birthdays, marriages, out-of-town visitors and more — of Black Baltimore (and D.C., Richmond, Philadelphia, Newark and New York), reflecting our full humanity back to ourselves. What might my peers uncover in these files? What might they create with this content? These questions provide a loose framework for the new creative projects coming out of our archives.

In April, we kicked off the new initiative by producing a book called *To the Front: Black Women and the Vote*. To commemorate the centennial of the 19th Amendment, the AFRO and Afro Charities reached back into the AFRO archives to bring Washington, D.C. and Maryland's Black women suffragists into the national suffrage conversation. We also

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## ...DISCOVERING BALTIMORE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

connected their activism with that of their 21st-century counterparts to highlight the ongoing fight for unfettered access to the vote. Well-known Black suffragists from the late 19th and early 20th centuries like Frances Ellen Watkins Harper and Mary Church Terrell share space with lesser known figures like Baltimore's Augusta Chissell, as well as modern-day voting rights activists like Out for Justice's Nicole Hanson. By weaving their stories together in one publication, we can see their work as part of a continuum — an unfinished project in an imperfect democracy — and consider our own roles in this story.

The book's contributors are a multi-generational mix of poets, historians, journalists, lobbyists, archivists, lawyers and artists who each lend their unique perspectives to this project. In this centennial year, there have been a lot of necessary conversations about what the 19th Amendment accomplished *and* how it failed to enfranchise large segments of the population. We mince no words in our recognition of the racism that pervaded the larger suffrage movement. But to paraphrase Dr. Martha S. Jones in her interview in this book, when we focus on the exclusion of Black women from white suffrage organizations, we fail to see where they *were* organizing. This project attempts to lift up those stories, highlighting the ways Black women advocated for themselves and their communities on the road to the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment and well beyond. The AFRO archives provide rich source material from which to tell these stories.



Suffragists from *To the Front: Black Women and the Vote*, Courtesy of the AFRO American Newspapers Archives

For a second project, which began over a year ago, I commissioned three Baltimore-based artists, SHAN Wallace, Akea Brionne Brown and myself, to create new work

inspired by research conducted in the AFRO archives. The culmination was an exhibition of the work illuminated on the façade of the former AFRO building at 2519 N. Charles Street. From August 27 through October 9, 2020, *Close Read* screened nightly at Connect + Collect gallery. The work for this exhibition is also available in an online format, streaming on the Baltimore Museum of Art's [screening room](#).



Upton Mansion photographed in September 1936, Courtesy of Baltimore Heritage & LOC/HABS

Looking forward, long-term plans include establishing a new home for the AFRO, its archives, and Afro Charities. In February 2020, the city of Baltimore awarded the AFRO and Afro Charities the right to redevelop the historic Upton Mansion in Old West Baltimore. The Upton Mansion was built in the 1830s, likely by Baltimore architect Robert Carey Long, Jr., to be lawyer David Stewart's country house. It later served as the home of the Baltimore Institute for Musical Arts, an alternative to the Peabody Institute, which at the time did not accept African American students. (See <https://baltimoreheritage.org/tag/upton-mansion> for further information.) This multi-year, multi-million dollar redevelopment project is still in its early stages, but once complete, the restored Greek revival building will serve as the AFRO and Afro Charities headquarters, with office space for similarly-aligned organizations.

*To the Front: Black Women & the Vote* is available as a 90-page PDF download (\$10) or a 118-page fully-illustrated physical book (\$50) at [www.tothefront.us](http://www.tothefront.us).

Follow along on Instagram @afrocharities.

Savannah Wood is an artist and cultural organizer with deep roots in Baltimore and Los Angeles. As Director of Afro Charities and Archives Director for the 128-year-old AFRO American Newspapers, Wood is creating programming and infrastructure to

increase access to the AFRO's extensive archives. She is the editor and creative director of the newly released *To the Front: Black Women & the Vote*, which celebrates Black women's contributions to the suffrage movement and connects their activism with that of their 21<sup>st</sup> century counterparts. ■

## 2019 Arnold Prize Awarded

Ida Jones, *BCHS Arnold Prize Chair*

The 2019 Joseph Arnold Prize winner is John Tilghman, PhD, an Associate Professor of History in the Department of History and Political Science at Tuskegee University (Alabama). His research interests include African American history, the civil rights and Black Power movements, the African Diaspora, and urban and rural history. Dr. Tilghman, a Baltimore native, submitted an engaging entry titled "The Show of Strength Such Has Seldom Seen": Blockbusting and the Black Voting Bloc in 1950s Baltimore's West Side." His entry is an excerpt from a forthcoming publication tentatively titled: *Jim Crow from the Harbor: The Black Freedom Struggle and Downtown Baltimore*. ■

## BCHS Annual Meeting 2020

The Baltimore City Historical Society (BCHS) Board designated the May Board meeting the Annual Meeting for purposes of electing a new slate of officers and board members. It also considered extensive revisions to the BCBS By-laws, which were based on changes to the organizational structure decided during the prior months. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the May 2020 Board Meeting was virtual. An extensive Board update was distributed with a compiled list of subjects and committee reports for review and comment. Board members were instructed to send their emailed votes to out-going President Betsy Nix; both the Slate and By-laws changes were adopted.

**Nominating Committee Report from April 26, 2020** offered a Proposed Slate for 2020-2021, which was elected. See *profiles of Officers and Board members in a separate article in this issue*. The following members retired from the  
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**...BCHS ANNUAL MEETING***(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)*

Board: Ed Berlin, Matt Crenson, Jackson Gilman-Forlini, Lawrence Jackson, Betsy Nix.

**MEMBERSHIP.** The retirement in 2019 of the two Board members, Mary Jane Arnold and Don Torres, who had managed the membership records for years, required that there be conversations about how the membership would be handled going forward. The **Membership Committee** conducted extensive deliberations throughout 2019, ultimately recommending to the Board that it revise its model of organization from one that was membership-based to one based on sponsorship. It also recommended that the Membership Committee be renamed the Engagement and Support Committee. The Board voted to endorse these recommendations. These decisions necessitated extensive By-laws changes, which were conducted by a Task Force created for this purpose, including Catherine Evans, Allison Seyler, and Betsy Nix. Additional assistance was provided by Elaine Eff, Nathan Dennies and Heather Hairston. The changes affected the substance of three articles of the By-laws with smaller changes throughout the text for consistency. The substantive changes are as follows:

**ARTICLE II – Membership.**

Section 1. **Membership.** Members are individuals who are in sympathy with the goals stated in Article I of these By-laws and include, broadly, its supporters, volunteers, participants, donors, social media followers, etc.

**ARTICLE III - Meetings of the Membership.**

Section 1. **Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors.** The Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors is held in the month of May at the regular monthly meeting of the Board for the purpose of electing directors and officers and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting.

Section 2. **Annual Membership Open Meeting.** The Annual Membership Open Meeting is held in the month of June for the purpose of introducing the newly-elected directors and officers, for discussing topics of Baltimore history, and for promoting the programs and events of the BCHS.

**ARTICLE VII – Committees.**

Section 4. **Engagement and Support Committee.** The Engagement and Support Committee oversees and executes outreach efforts for the Society. The Committee supports the Programming and Communications Committees by sparking interest, ensuring participation, and encouraging donations. They primarily assist in efforts to increase participation in BCHS activities. The Committee is in charge of recording measurable outcomes of participation and maintaining a list of financial donors. The Board designates members of the Committee from among active members of the Society and selects a Chairperson of the Committee. In addition, the Committee may develop a pool of volunteers to assist in its work. ■

**Opportunities to Support the BCHS:**

**VISIT** [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and search “Baltimore City Historical Society” to subscribe to our channel and stay updated.

**JOIN** our Facebook group: *Baltimore History – Baltimore City Historical Society*

**ATTEND** the *History Evenings* or our other special events, such as the *History Honors*

**SHARE** your ideas for future programming at [admin@baltimorecityhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:admin@baltimorecityhistoricalsociety.org)

**VOLUNTEER** for an event and promote our activities

**DONATE** to our \$20 for ‘20 campaign (see *information on the back page of this issue of the Gaslight*) ■

**...9TH ANNUAL JOINT PROGRAM***(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)*

available sometime in October. For more information, please contact James Keffer at [jeffer@hsobc.org](mailto:jeffer@hsobc.org).

Previous joint programs covered City/County boundary and jurisdictional changes, finding a safe and reliable drinking water supply, building storm water and sewer infrastructure, outward movement and suburbanization, Patapsco Valley heritage and Patapsco River history, City/County police history, City/County fire fighting history and women’s suffrage history. Under consideration for the 10<sup>th</sup>

annual program is a history of transportation in the city and county.

*The BCHS coordinator for the BCHS/HSBC Joint Program is Joe Stewart, who submitted the content of this article. ■*

**...20TH ANNUAL HISTORY HONORS***(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)***LIVING HISTORY HONORS**

**Nicholas and Brigitte Fessenden** led the effort that resulted in the opening of the Baltimore Immigration Museum in 2016. Located in Locust Point in the historic Immigrant House, where thousands of newly-arrived European immigrants found temporary housing and assistance during 1904-15, the Baltimore Immigration Memorial, Inc. operates the museum. Brigitte is President, and Nick is the Treasurer of the organization. Nick taught History at Friends School (1972-2010) and at various local colleges. Brigitte was an historic preservation planner for Baltimore’s Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (1993-2010). Together, they combined his historic and pedagogical background and her interest in Baltimore’s immigration history, to tell the little-known story of Baltimore’s role as America’s third largest port of entry from 1830 to 1914.

**Johns Hopkins** is the executive director of Baltimore Heritage. Originally from St. Louis, Johns earned degrees from Yale University (undergrad), George Washington University Law School, and the University of Michigan’s School of Natural Resources and Environment. He came to Baltimore to work on Smart Growth programs, including directing the State’s “Smart Codes” program that eliminated barriers to rehabbing older buildings. Since assuming the position at Baltimore Heritage in 2003, Johns has initiated projects that include: documenting Baltimore’s Civil rights history for the National Register of Historic Places; public archaeology in Lafayette Square and Patterson Park; coordinating nearly 500 in-person tours of over 300 historic places; launching [Explore.BaltimoreHeritage.org](http://Explore.BaltimoreHeritage.org), a free smartphone app and website with information and images on over 500 historic places in Baltimore; and successful advocacy to save the Baltimore Hebrew Orphan Asylum, Castalia (the headmaster’s

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## ...20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL HISTORY HONORS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

house at the Calvert School), and Read's Drugstore on Lexington Street (the civil rights lunch counter site). In response to the lockdowns precipitated by the Covid-19 pandemic, Johns has produced nearly 100 virtual *Five Minute History* tours of Baltimore.

**Dr. Joanne Martin** and her husband Dr. Elmer Martin are the founders of *The National Great Blacks in Wax Museum*. In the late 70's, the couple visited a wax museum in Florida and noticed very little Black representation. Returning to Baltimore, they used their savings to begin a collection of Black wax figures, which they exhibited at schools, churches, and other locations. In 1983, they opened a storefront museum on Saratoga Street with 21 wax figures. Since then, the collection has grown to over 150 figures and the museum is housed in a collection of buildings (a firehouse, a mansion, and two apartment buildings) on East North Avenue. Considered the oldest such museum in the nation, it showcases Black history and the importance of Baltimore's African American story. In 2018, Dr. Joanne Martin was the recipient of The William Donald Schaefer Baltimore Visionary Award from *Visit Baltimore*.

### IN MEMORIAM

**Evelyn T. Beasley** was the highly successful principal at Roland Park Elementary-Middle School. She began teaching in city public schools in 1954, and shortly thereafter, was asked to assist with the professional development of her peers by serving as a demonstration teacher and a supervisory teacher. In 1965, Mrs. Beasley was promoted to elementary specialist at the old city school headquarters on 25th Street, where she worked for four years, until being named assistant principal at Hazelwood Elementary School. Her experiences at Hazelwood served her well when in 1976 she was sent to Roland Park Elementary-Middle School as principal. She quickly turned the low-performing school around. So successful was Mrs. Beasley that by 1986 there was a front-page article about her and Roland Park Elementary-Middle School in *The Wall Street Journal*. Even though she ended her career in 1993, she continued to work for

the state Department of Education mentoring new principals.

**James Crockett**, a Baltimore native and World War II combat veteran, was a pioneer in many ways. He was one of the first Blacks to join the Baltimore City Fire Department, and eventually became president of the Board of Fire Commissioners. After resigning from the Fire Department in 1964, he opened a real estate office, and in 1971, the Maryland Senate appointed him to the Maryland Real Estate Commission, the first African American to hold that seat. He also served on Baltimore's Commission on Historical and Architectural Preservation, often advocating for maintaining the historic integrity of Baltimore's less affluent neighborhoods. He was 94 at the time of his passing.

**Ethel Ennis**, was Baltimore's "First Lady of Jazz," who, during her seven-decade career, performed with such musical luminaries as Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway, the Miles Davis-John Coltrane Sextet and Wynton Marsalis, and thrilled audiences at the Newport and Monterey jazz festivals. She signed her first recording contract in 1951, and four years later, made her first album for Jubilee Records, "Lullabies for Losers," which earned her a national following and bookings across the country. In 1984, she and her husband opened "Ethel's Place," an upscale jazz club on Cathedral Street that featured local and national acts. She received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from the Johns Hopkins University, and last October she was given a star at Maryland Public Television's Walk of Fame at its Owings Mills headquarters.

**Edward Vincent Rutkowski**, was a retired electrical engineer who led the revitalization and economic stabilization of neighborhoods around Patterson Park. Born and raised in Highlandtown, after a career as an engineer with IBM, he decided he wanted to get back to Baltimore and moved to a three-story rowhouse on East Baltimore Street across from Patterson Park in 1986. He joined United Parcel Service as a software developer and worked to make drivers' routes more efficient and on creating electronic signatures. From his new home, he observed changes in the neighborhood that

alarmed him, including crime and vacancy. He left UPS and concentrated on making Patterson Park more economically stable. He and three other neighbors started buying properties, the first of hundreds of home restorations he would oversee in the coming years. In 1996, with the help of volunteers and community representatives, he formed the Patterson Park Community Development Corporation, which eventually grew to 25 employees, buying, rehabbing, and selling properties. He is widely regarded as a visionary whose work stabilized the area and prevented the growth of disinvestment and dilapidation that otherwise would have moved southward. ■

## Submissions

The Baltimore City Historical Society presents the annual Joseph L. Arnold Prize for Outstanding Writing on Baltimore's History, in the amount of \$500, given in memory of Joseph L. Arnold, Professor of History at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, thanks to the generosity of the Byrnes Family. Arnold was regarded as the "dean of Baltimore historians" at the time of his death in 2004.

Entries should be unpublished manuscripts between 15 and 45 double-spaced pages in length (including footnotes/endnotes). To submit an entry, address an e-mail message to:

- \* ArnoldPrizeBCHS@gmail.com;
- \* attach the entry as a single document in either MS Word or PC convertible format; and
- \* include any illustrations within the text of the document.

There will be a "blind judging" of entries by a panel of historians. Criteria for selection are the significance, originality, and quality of the research and the clarity of presentation. The winner will be announced in the spring of 2021. The BCHS reserves the right not to award the prize. The winning entry will be posted to the BCHS website and considered for publication in the *Maryland Historical Magazine*.

**Submission Deadline:** February 1, 2021

For further information send a message to Dr. Ida Jones at: ArnoldPrizeBCHS@gmail.com or leave a voice mail for her at 443-885-4294. ■



## Meet the BCHS Board 2020-21

### OFFICERS

**CHAIRMAN Edward C. Papenfuse** was Maryland State Archivist and Commissioner of Land Patents from 1975 until 2013. *Joined the Board in 2014. Previously BCHS President and Gaslight editor.*

**PRESIDENT Heather Hairston** is an architect with Trace Architects, formerly with the Patterson Park Community Development Corporation. *Joined the Board in 2018. Serves on the Branding and Engagement and Support Committees.*

**1<sup>ST</sup> VP Brigitte Fessenden** worked as a planner for the Regional Planning Council, the State Department of Planning and the Baltimore City Planning Department (CHAP); now the president of the Baltimore Immigration Museum and Acting Curator of the Mencken House Museum. *Joined the Board in 2018. Previously 2nd Vice President.*

**CO-2<sup>ND</sup> VP Catherine Evans** is the Church Historian at First Unitarian Church of Baltimore and has written extensively on the church's history and the role that its leaders (e.g. Peale, Peabody, Pratt) have played in shaping Baltimore. *Joined the Board in 2009. Editor of the Gaslight, Chair of the Nominating Committee, and on History Honors Selection Committee.*

**CO-2<sup>ND</sup> VP Ida Jones** is the University Archivist at Morgan State University. *Joined the Board in 2017. Serves as Chair of the Arnold Prize Committee, and on the Nominations and History Honors Event Committees.*

**TREASURER Nick Fessenden** taught at Friends School from 1972 to 2010, chairing the Upper School History department, and served as Vice Chair of CHAP (1994-2006). *Joined the Board in 2012. Previously Vice President and Chair of the History Honors Selection Committee.*

**RECORDING SECRETARY Jerome C. Gray** is a licensed architect in Maryland and Washington, DC with 26 years of experience in educational, institutional, medical and commercial design and a practicing artist (Instagram "@jcgarch"). *Joined the Board in 2018.*

**CORRESPONDING SECRETARY Chris Whitaker** is a retired federal employee with 37 years of service. *Joined the Board in 2019. Manages the BCHS website.*

**IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT Michael Franch** is an affiliate minister at the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore. *Joined the Board in 2008. Served twice as President. Inaugurated (2009) and coordinates the BCHS's Baltimore History Evenings.*

### BOARD MEMBERS

**Bradley Alston** is the Former Director of Youth and Family Services, Housing Authority of Baltimore City and Operations and Community Relations Director, the Y of Central Maryland. *Joined the Board in 2016. Chair of the History Honors Awards Committee and coordinates the "Baltimore History" Middle School Essay Contest.*

**David Armenti** is the Director of Education at the Maryland Historical Society. *Joined the Board in May of 2020.*

**Elden Carnahan** is a retired federal employee with 36 years of experience in project management and communications. *Joined the Board in 2016.*

**Ron Cassie** is a senior editor for Baltimore Magazine. *Joined the Board in 2017.*

**Joshua Clark Davis** is Assistant Professor, Division of Legal, Ethical and Historical Studies at the University of Baltimore. *Joined the Board in May of 2020.*

**Nathan Dennies** is the Communications & Operations Manager for the AIA, Baltimore Chapter, and the Baltimore Architecture Foundation. *Joined the Board in 2017. Serves on the Engagement and Support and the Nominating Committees.*

**Elaine Eff**, Maryland Folklorist, served as director of the Maryland Historical Trust's Cultural Conservation Program and co-founded Maryland Traditions, now at the Maryland State Arts Council. *Joined the Board in 2016. Serves on the Branding and Nominations Committees.*

**Kristina Gaddy** is writer, whose work explores forgotten and marginalized histories. *Kristina joined the Board in 2018.*

**Kathleen Kotarba** served as Executive Director of CHAP from 1981 to 2014. A professional *en plein air* artist. *Joined the Board in 2015. Serves on the Nominating and History Honors Event Committees.*

**Eddie Leon** has been with (CHAP) since 1994. A *founding Board member who has served in many capacities over the years.*

**Garrett Power** is a Professor Emeritus at the University of Maryland Carey School of Law; his published work chronicles the governmental regulation of Maryland's environmental resources and Baltimore's urban development. *Joined the Board in 2005. Organized BCHS's academic and scholarly conferences and chaired the Arnold Prize Committee.*

**Steven Ragsdale** is a healthcare management and cultural competency consultant for Connecting the Dots Consulting. *Joined the BCHS Board in 2016. Serves as Chair of the Education Committee.*

**Lauren Schiszik** is an historic preservation planner for the Planning Department of the City of Baltimore. *Joined the Board in 2019.*

**Allison Seyler** is an archivist at the Johns Hopkins University. *Joined the BCHS Board in 2018. Serves on the Engagement and Support Committee and coordinates Zoom meetings.*

**Joe Stewart**, a retired attorney, is involved in promoting neighborhood history, preserving local landmarks, producing historic walking tours. *Joined the Board in 2010. Served two terms as President, three terms as Recording Secretary, and two years as Gaslight editor; organizes the annual joint meetings of BCHS and HSBC; and launched a series of programs called Exploring Environmental History.*

**Jean Thompson** is marketing consultant, writer, and editor at JE Thompson Communications. *Joined the Board in May of 2020.*

**Savannah Wood** is Director of Afro Charities and Archives Director for the Afro-American Newspapers. *Joined the Board in 2019. Serves on the Education Committee. ■*

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