6-1-2011

Society for Historical Archaeology Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology

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Society for Historical Archaeology
Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology
Baltimore, Maryland, January 4-8, 2012

Conference Theme: "By the Dawn's Early Light: Forging Identity, Securing Freedom, and Overcoming Conflict." The year 2012 marks the bicentennial of the War of 1812, which makes Baltimore the ideal location for this year's conference. The Battle of Baltimore was one of the most significant turning points in the war. American forces successfully repulsed a sea invasion of Baltimore, and defeated the invading British army forces on land. The bombardment and defence of Baltimore's Fort McHenry during the battle inspired Francis Scott Key to compose the poem "The Star-Spangled Banner," which, once set to the tune of a popular English drinking song, became the national anthem of the United States of America.

The Battle of Baltimore was a seminal and symbolic moment in American history, when our new government was tested along with our identity as a nation. But other battles were being fought and lost, identities were being defined and redefined, and other conflicts persisted within the state of Maryland. In its early colonial period, Maryland offered religious tolerance to Catholics and Puritans who were driven out of other colonies, to become one of the few places within the English Empire where Catholics held positions of power. The Mason-Dixon Line, drawn during a land dispute between Maryland and Pennsylvania, took on new significance following the first emancipations of slaves in northern states. Maryland remained with the Union in the Civil War, but many Marylanders sympathized with the South during that conflict and actively worked for the Confederacy. Other Marylanders, including Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman, worked against slavery. These kinds of tensions are part and parcel of Maryland history; the state has always been remarkable for its decidedly contentious and contradictory nature.

The regular abstract submission period is from May 1, 2011 to July 10, 2011. Individual contributors, symposium organizers and presenters, and forum
organizers are asked to respond to the 2012 Call for Papers online through the SHA website, http://www.sha.org/about/conferences/2012.cfm.