



Touring the Region

by Lisa Harrington and Maureen Stellino

This year AALL's Annual Meeting is at the crossroads of a unique region. From the authentically restored town of Colonial Williamsburg to the majesty of Maryland's shores to historic Civil War battlefields, the area offers something for all.

So come along. Put the maps in the glove compartment and fasten those seatbelts. Let your imaginations soar at the Crossroads of the Region.

Colonial Williamsburg

From about 1699 until 1780 Williamsburg was the crossroads of America. Today Williamsburg lives again, faithfully restored to the 18th century on the eve of the American Revolution. The town consists of 88 original buildings and 50 major reconstructions. Be sure to take the time to visit the shops featuring historic trade and craft presentations, including the Printing Office, the home of the colony's first newspaper.

Richmond

During the Civil War, Richmond was home to Jefferson Davis and the Confederate Congress. The **Museum of the Confederacy** houses one of the most comprehensive collections of Civil War memorabilia in the world.

Between 1861 and 1865, Union armies repeatedly set out to capture Richmond and end the Civil War. The **Richmond National Battlefield Park** commemorates eleven different sites associated with those campaigns.

There are also "modern" attractions in Richmond to keep visitors busy. The **Virginia Museum of Fine Arts**, one of the region's finest art museums, features the largest public collection of jewel-encrusted Faberge Imperial eggs outside Russia. The **Edgar Allan Poe Museum** offers a memorial to this strange, but very talented author.

Charlottesville

This area is closely tied to Thomas Jefferson, our country's third president. **Monticello**, the domed residence recognizable on the face of every nickel, was long in the making: Jefferson spent over 40 years on the project. Its rooms are imbued with the tinkering, restless curiosity of a true Renaissance man apparent from the weighted clock in the entrance hall, to the letter copier he invented, to some of his cherished books. The grounds are as fascinating as the interior. The Jefferson-designed landscape is completely re-created and includes ornamental flower gardens and a 1000 foot vegetable garden.



Jefferson founded and designed the **University of Virginia**. The historic heart of the university is the neoclassic Rotunda that Jefferson designed in the 1820s and modeled on Rome's Pantheon. Behind the rotunda, flanking a shaded green, are the Tuscan colonnades and brick pavilions of Jefferson's academic village. "The Lawn" has been singled out by the American Institute of Architects as "the proudest achievement of American architecture in the past 200 years." As Jefferson intended, students still occupy the small rooms, while the pavilions continue to house senior faculty and some classes.

Shenandoah National Park

West of D.C. is the Shenandoah National Park with the famous 105 mile **Skyline Drive**, which runs along the northern portion of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The nearby **Luray Caverns** feature stunning stalactites and stalagmites created by water seeping through the limestone and clay for thousands of years.



Mount Vernon

George Washington's plantation began as a small farmhouse built by his father in the 1730s. George acquired the land in 1761 and spent years expanding and decorating the red-roofed mansion. Many of the rooms feature original furnishings, including Martha Washington's tea service and some original volumes from George's library. The real treasure of Mount Vernon, however, is the view from the house's riverside porch, which looks out over the land sloping down to the Potomac River. This year marks the bicentennial of Washington's death; many special events and exhibits will be held on the grounds throughout the year.

Annapolis

A visit to the region wouldn't be complete without visiting Annapolis, the capital of Maryland. Often called the "sailboat capital of the world," the city is located on the Chesapeake Bay at the mouth of the Severn River. Not only is Annapolis home to the U.S. Naval Academy, but here you can find the **Maryland Statehouse**, built in 1772 and the oldest state capital in continuous legislative use. In the downtown historic area you will find many shops and restaurants. On weekends and evenings you can see a steady flow of expensive yachts docking at "City Dock."

Maryland's Eastern Shore

Separated from mainland Maryland by the Chesapeake Bay and bounded on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, this peninsula is a land apart.

Eastern shore museums include Cambridge's **Meredith House and Nield Museum**, where you can find artifacts from the six Maryland governors born in the area as well as collections of agricultural and Native American artifacts. The history of the Bay, boat building, and fishing are explored at the **Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum** in St. Michaels. Exhibits include a restored log-bottom bugeye (a two-masted skipjack native to the Bay) and a racing log canoe.

Assateague Island is a 37 mile National Seashore that extends from Maryland into Virginia. In addition to the pristine scenery, as many as 300 species of birds can be seen here. The island's best-known residents are the wild ponies, which are driven across the channel in July to Chincoteague Island to be placed at auction. (Those that remain unsold swim back home to Assateague.)

Western Maryland

This area was the westward gateway of the early Americans as they headed their covered wagons for Ohio and beyond.



The 250-year-old town of Frederick has a 33-block historic district. The town was made famous by the heroics of a 95-year-old widow whose memory is still alive at the **Barbara Fritchie House and Museum**. A prized tea set Fritchie used to serve George Washington is among the items on display.



Amid the fields and woods surrounding Sharpsburg is the **Antietam National Battlefield**, where Union and Confederate troops fought on the bloodiest single day of the Civil War. The visitor's center offers a short film about the battle as well as rental cassettes with narrated driving tours. An observation tower provides a panoramic view of the battlefield, where some 23,000 men fell in one day.

About 20 miles north of Thurmont, Maryland (site of Camp David), and just across the Pennsylvania border is one of the nation's most hallowed sites—**Gettysburg National Military Park**.

From July 1 to 3, 1863, the worst battle of the Civil War raged here, claiming more than 50,000 casualties. Surrounded by all the historical sites and buildings here, you'll feel like you've been catapulted back in time to the Civil War days.

You can see we are truly at a regional Crossroads. Maryland and Virginia, along with Washington, stand side by side evoking different histories, different cultures and different attractions.

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Visit these sites to plan your day trips from Washington:

Colonial Williamsburg

<http://www.williamsburg.com/wol/tour/tour.html>

Richmond

<http://www.richmondva.org/>

Museum of the Confederacy

<http://www.moc.org/>

Richmond National Battlefield Park

<http://www.nps.gov/rich/home.htm>

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

<http://www.state.va.us/vmfa/>

Edgar Allan Poe Museum

<http://www.poemuseum.org/>

Charlottesville

Monticello <http://www.monticello.org/>

University of Virginia <http://www.virginia.edu/>

Shenandoah National Park

<http://www.nps.gov/shen/>

Skyline Drive

<http://www.shenandoah.national-park.com/sights.htm>

Luray Caverns

<http://www.luraycaverns.com/home.html>

Mount Vernon

<http://www.mountvernon.org/>

Annapolis

<http://visit-annapolis.org/>

U.S. Naval Academy

<http://www.nadn.navy.mil/>

Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

<http://www.cbmm.org/>

Antietam National Battlefield

<http://www.civilwarships.com/>

Gettysburg National Military Park

<http://www.gettytsbg.com/>