

# STORIES FROM SOWEBO



**History** is a massive book of blueprints. A narrative captured and used to lay the foundation of the future. In South West Baltimore, these blueprints are scattered. Tucked away in the bass and falsettos of long time residents vocal cords, hidden in once thriving soon to be redeveloped vacant buildings, and a handful of brick and mortar shops who have made a way through various periods of change, disinvestment, and challenges. These spaces, hosting walls full of memoirs, are the ones who shape culture as places of gathering from past to present have have always been the foundation of community. And here, in SoWeBo, a phrase coined to show solidarity...(cont on page 32)

The Hollins Market (also known as Hollins Roundhouse) neighborhood is a historic community located in southwest Baltimore, which

also includes the neighborhoods of Poppleton, Union Square, Barre Circle, Mount Clare, Franklin Square, and Pigtown...(cont on page 2)



**SOWEBO FESTIVAL !  
MAY 27th 2018**

# A JOURNEY THROUGH HOLLINS

A Journey Through Hollins is a research-based project documenting the history and ongoing changes in the Hollins Market neighborhood of southwest Baltimore (Sowebo). Through experiential learning, UMBC students conduct historical research and interviews to better understand the diverse stories of the people and places in the community. Based out of the university's downtown classroom, students will host an event presenting a zine and walking tour as a form of community building and public outreach.

**Date:** Saturday, May 12, 2018

**Time:** 2:00pm-4:00pm

**Place:** Lion Brothers Building (875 Hollins St.)

## PLACE STORIES

UMBC students in Professor Nicole King's American Studies course Preserving Places, Making Spaces in Baltimore have been working on a public humanities project focused on the Hollins Market area of Baltimore during the spring 2018 semester. A Journey Through Hollins is a research based project documenting the history and ongoing changes in the Hollins Market neighborhood of southwest Baltimore (Sowebo). Students conduct historical research and interviews to better understand the diverse stories of the people and places in the community. Based out of the university's downtown classroom, students will host an event presenting a zine and walking tour as a form of community building and public outreach on May 12. For the first part of the semester, students have researching place stories and profiles for a newspaper that is part of Malaika Clements' Light City project Stories from SoWeBo.



## HOLLINS MARKET

### The Hollins Market

(also known as Hollins Roundhouse) neighborhood is a historic community located in southwest Baltimore, which also includes the neighborhoods of Poppleton, Union Square, Barre Circle, Mount Clare, Franklin Square, and Pigtown. The area was once home to Irish, German, Lithuanian, and other recent immigrants who worked at the Baltimore & Ohio (B&O) Railroad and other industries in the area. Currently, the community has a predominately African American population. Today one of the main attractions is the historic Hollins

Market, the oldest extant public market building in the city dating to 1877. In addition to stalls inside the market offering fresh produce and meats, the Market District area is home to local restaurants such as Zella's Pizzeria and Mi Ranchitos as well as small businesses such as the clothing store City of Gods, the Umri Siki (New Day) African Store, and the New Beginnings Barbershop. Each local business has transformed and developed overtime, while still serving its individual purpose and contributing to the local community of southwest Baltimore.

# LITHUNAIN HALL



Photograph via Google Maps

## The Lithuanian Hall

at 851-853 Hollins Street opened on February 1921 in the Poppleton neighborhood of southeast Baltimore. The new building at Hollins Street was actually the second location of the Lithuanian Hall. The original, smaller building, was located nearby at 506-510 Barre Street where it served Baltimore's Lithuanian community from 1913 until the new Hall opened in Hollins Market. Lithuanians began arriving en masse in Baltimore in the 1880s. They worked primarily in the textile industry. By the beginning of the 19th century the population numbered roughly 3,000 and continued to grow. By 1921, the number of Lithuanians in Baltimore had risen to over 8,000. The newer and larger Lithuanian Hall was meant to accommodate this growth. For the first thirty years of its existence the Hall served as an event and social hall for Baltimore's insular Lithuanian community. However, many of the events that took place within its walls were a reflection of the broader tumultuous state of American and the

world at the time. For example, during Prohibition it operated an illegal bar and was on occasion busted by police for doing so. It was a staging location for Baltimore's labor movement during the Red Scare of the 1920s. During World War II, it hosted the exiled president of the Lithuanian Republic, which was first occupied by the Nazis and later the Soviets. After the 1954 Brown v. Board decision to desegregate schools, the Hall's usage waned as many of Baltimore's Lithuanians joined in the growing white exodus to suburbs. Recently the space has seen a resurgence as a music venue and dance hall, a tradition that carries on to this day with popular events like the Save Your Soul Vintage Funk Night. Today the Hall can be rented for private events by anyone, Lithuanian or not.

---Written by Zachary Utz---

# AMBROSE LAUKAITIS

## Ambrose Laukaitis

was one of the most prominent stewards of the early Lithuanian community in Baltimore City. As a real estate entrepreneur, he was instrumental in the growth of the Lithuanian ethnic enclave in the Poppleton neighborhood of southwest Baltimore. As a civic leader, he helped to both found and lead a number of important local Lithuanian institutions, including the First Lithuanian Republicans Club and Lithuanian Hall at 851 Hollins Street. Ambrose was born in Lithuania on March 23, 1874. When he was 18 he emigrated to Baltimore City, where he worked as a tailor in his cousin Pius Laukaitis' shop at 302 South Broadway in East Baltimore. Soon after arriving in Baltimore, he met another young immigrant named Sophia Bogdan of Poland. The two began courting and soon after married in 1899, when Ambrose was 24 and Sophia was only 19. He was naturalized as a US citizen the following year. In 1906, Ambrose was one of the founders of First Lithuanian Building Association, which helped many Lithuanians in Baltimore purchase their first houses, the majority of which would be located near Hollins Market in southwest Baltimore. In the coming decade he would also help native Lithuanians make across the Atlantic to Baltimore with his steamship business. By 1920, he was one of the most highly regarded members of the Lithuanian community in the city, eventually becoming president of the newly incorporated Lithuanian Hall Association. The following year, the Association oversaw the opening of the brand new Lithuanian Hall at 851-853 Hollins Street. At which point, Ambrose and his wife resided nearby at 637 Paca Street with their 10 children. Sometime before 1930 Ambrose retired from real estate and moved to a large estate at Oak Grove Avenue in the Lansdowne neighborhood of Baltimore County, which would later serve as popular destination for many aging Lithuanians leaving Baltimore City in the coming decades. His wife Sophia died there on December 5, 1951. Ambrose followed just over six months later on July 30 1952. He is buried at Saint Stanislaus Cemetery in southeast Baltimore City.





# NEW BEGINNINGS BARBERSHOP

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The structure at 1047 Hollins Street was built in 1845 and is a three-story high and three bays wide Italianate attached building constructed of masonry in scale with Hollins Market. Since its construction, the building has served many purposes in the community. In 1872, the structure served as the location of the C.D. Kenny Company, owned by Cornelius Kenny a native of Ireland who immigrated to Baltimore. His company sold coffee, tea, and sugars. Following the C.D. Kenny Company, in 1890 the building served as a local pharmacy and by the beginning of the 20th century it was a drugstore owned by Charles M. Benson.

Throughout the early 20th century there were two storefronts on the first floor hosting businesses such as a tea store, restaurant, and grocery and meat shops while also renting out four rooms on the second and third floors. In the late-1940s the space was for sale for a period and then used to host a variety of events and fundraisers women societies in the 1950s and 1960s. There was a period of vacancy and then the building became a central part of a neighborhood redevelopment effort led by New York lawyer and antiquarian Stephan Loewentheil in the mid-1980s.

He opened The 19th Century Bookshop, which featured rare books in the store front and rented out the rooms above. After The 19th Century Bookshop closed and Loewentheil left southwest Baltimore in the 1990s, the Great Gift Book Shop took over the space. In 2008, the New Beginnings Unisex Barbershop arrived and has had a major impact on the community during the past decade. The business is far more than just a barbershop; it has become a

community hub by featuring art of local students, hosting health screenings, and various events for neighbors to discuss ideas and community issues. Like its name suggests, the New Beginnings Barbershop represents the great potential for a rebirth of community and energy in the Hollins Market neighborhood and southwest Baltimore.

--- Written by Jameka Wiggins ---



# YES, THIS WILL BE THE PLACE

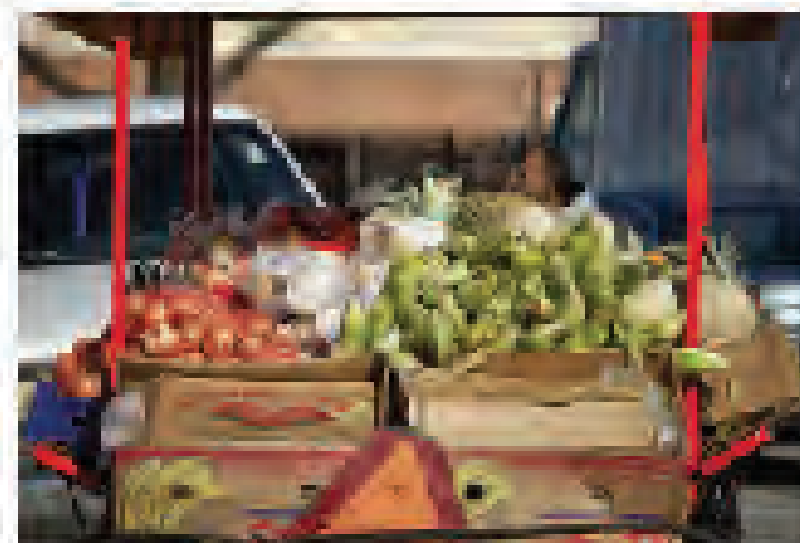


When walking through Hollins Roundhouse, I can forget that I'm in Baltimore City. As a native of West Baltimore, this small and historic community feels like a replica of a place I've read about in the history books. Small traditional row homes that have been well kept line somewhat narrow streets and I'm reminded of the ways people must have lived centuries ago. If you really pay attention to place you know that how we live is truly dedicated by the lines in the concrete, the stack of bricks that make a home and how close that home is to a green plot of grass. In Hollins Roundhouse there seems to be a corner of a park on almost every block. The homes sit close together as if they all showed up at the same time and decided, "Yes, this will be the place." I imagine immigrant communities said the same thing when they got to Baltimore. With the promise of employment through the B&O railroad, they must have brought their entire village from Germany, Ireland and Lithuania and said, "yes, this will be the place."

I forget that I'm in Baltimore City because

for me, Baltimore City, is specifically West Baltimore. A world vastly different than Hollins, with our widespread streets lined with thick trees and our separate homes. My part of Baltimore used to sit right on the county line. I imagine the legislators at that time were cutting up the city like cake, handing each other slices, telling themselves, "Yes, this will be your piece." And as the Port of Baltimore bustled, becoming the second largest gateway into America, (the first was Ellis Island) that slice of cake that is Hollins Roundhouse began to develop a flavor. I imagine it would taste like a meatpie. Savory and stuffed with sauteed mushrooms and beef and rolled into grated potato dough dumpling. Flaky on the outside but smoky and hearty once bitten into, this particular piece of Hollins Market was especially edifying to those who ate it. And like the actual neighborhood, it satisfied generations of immigrant communities for generations to come.

--- Written by Nia Hampton ---



MAXgallery  
presents

## A BLACK PARTY for ARABBERS & HORSE LOVERS

Saturday, April 7, 2018  
12:00 pm - 5:00 pm

126 N. Madeira Street  
Baltimore MD 21231

PONY RIDES! FOOD! ART!  
MUSIC! CRANKIE SHOW!

- 12:00 - 2:00: Food  
Pony Rides (free small fee)  
Art Exhibit
- 2:00 - 3:30: Arabber Talk, Q & A
- 3:30 - 4:30: Live Music -  
Brooks Long
- 4:30 - 5:00: Crankie Show

Contact:

Robert Sullivan, Organizer  
202-509-8733 | [sullivanrj@icloud.com](mailto:sullivanrj@icloud.com)  
Maxine Taylor, Gallery | 410-306-7459  
[maxine@maxinataylorfinearts.com](mailto:maxine@maxinataylorfinearts.com)

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# New Day or Urimi Siki Gallery

Since 2000, Robert Williams has run New Day or Urimi Siki Gallery at 1100 Hollins Street offering customers a plethora of unique African Art. In 1891, the building was an independent grocery store and staple in the community. Owned by Christian and William Eitemiller, Eitemiller Bros Grocery was a family-run grocery store. Christian Eitemiller was the Individual Grocery Association President and the local store was the model of success for a local business for over fifty years. With the impact that this grocery store had on the community it was no wonder that the Eitemiller's were celebrated after their retirement in 1942 with a celebration of their 50th anniversary. After their retirement the building was then thought of as a preservable landmark and there was an application filed for the building to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. The application explains how 1100 Hollins Street was one of "several substantial retail stores built as one of the business attracted by Hollins Market." While also mentioning the historic story of how the "Eitemiller brothers were involved in the independent grocers association and its struggle against chain grocery stores." If you look at the building at 1100 Hollins you can see both the past local grocery store started by German immigrants to Baltimore and its current life as an important and flourishing business featuring the rich history of American American business owners in Baltimore and the art and culture of Africa.

--- Written by DeAndre Bright ---



Photograph by: J.M. Giordano

# ROBERT WILLIAMS

Robert Williams is often seen standing outside his store Umiri Siki (or New Day) Gallery at 1100 Hollins Street. He sells African masks and sculptures and African-American collectables. Williams acts as a guide often bringing items out to the sidewalk to connect his customers with the pieces they desire. Inside the store is packed full of interesting items.

In Williams' view, the spiritual traditions and beliefs of numerous communities from all over the African continent, mainly from its Western regions, mix and mingle with those of West Baltimore, where he was born and raised. Displayed in the windows along with the African objects are photographs of influential blues, doo-wop, and jazz musicians. Williams plays the saxophone.

"See that guy right there," Williams points to a picture of local jazz legend Mickey Fields. "It's very important to me because he taught me how to play. I came up under him." Williams' father and grandfather were also musicians, and he played with his siblings as the Williams Brothers. "I came up in a time when every corner had a band," says Williams. "On my block, in my neighborhood, we

had four different bands. Everybody was playing."

In 1997, Williams accompanied a friend to an auction in Virginia and bought a container of African artifacts. He was hooked and soon began selling masks and sculptures from his car. Williams says he sells "black antiques," which he defines as "anything old that was given to me by black people, or represents black people." Williams appreciates the complex histories of these objects. In 2000, Williams rented out the corner space that bring a unique presence to the neighborhood. "You know, I grew up close to the kids and the people," Williams says. "I wouldn't say I'm any type of leader or anything like that. I'm just a presence, a different kind of presence." Still, Williams finds a lot of support on the street around Hollins Market and has become a fixture representing the long spirit on entrepreneurship in this part of southwest Baltimore.

--- Written by Nicole King ---

# EITEMILLER BROTHERS

The Eitemiller family opened a local grocery store, Eitemiller Bros Grocery, at 1100 Hollins Street in 1891. Born in 1874 in Baltimore Maryland, Christian was the youngest of the two brothers, William was born in 1870 both were the sons of German immigrants to Baltimore. With their families in mind, Christian and William knew they needed to run a solid business to provide. Christian and his brother William opened up Eitemiller Bros Grocery by Hollins Market after a friend of theirs let them know of someone looking for a buyer for the space. The brothers took their life savings and decided to use that money, plus money from a loan to "buy groceries and stock the store."

Once they opened their business, they never looked back as they went on to become one of the most successful independent grocery stores in that era during a time when the grocery business was just emerging in Baltimore. Over the time that the Eitemiller brothers establishment was open for business, they were active in numerous community organizations and helped organize functions such as the Centennial Anniversary of Hollins Market in 1936. Christian Eitemiller was a member of the board of the Merchants Association, which hosted the celebration and organized the largest parade to ever proceed through streets to celebrate 100 years of business at Hollins Market. The Eitemiller family was an important part of the foundation of the Hollin Market area and its spirit of entrepreneurship.

## Zella's Pizzeria

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The three-story brick building at 1145 Hollins Street was destined to be a gathering place for members of the community of southwest Baltimore as it is located at the southern intersection of Hollins and S. Carrollton Avenue. In the early late-19th century through the early 20th, local resident and grocer John J. Ullrich ran a grocery store in the space until his death of 52 in 1912. The building also housed the Williams Bros. meat and seafood distributions business. A combination of competition from Hollins Market and the economy of the Great Depression most likely impacted the Williams Bros. business. There is a gap in the historical record for 1145 Hollins Street from the mid-1930s when the building was for sale until the 1980s, when the space became a restaurant specializing in New York-style wood oven pizza, the Tell-tale Hearth. The Tell-Tale Hearth was opened during the redevelopment of the area as a hip arts district in the 1980s and 1990s. The Tell-tale Hearth was the first business in this space to incorporate both artwork and food, as it was the home for many different types of readings and art shows. In the 21st century, Zella's Pizzeria opened in the historic storefront to serve the Baltimore community delicious pizza and provide a gathering space near the historic market. Zella's Pizzeria is a thriving business that welcomes people from all walks of life, and works with the local community to host art shows, local university students, and community events.

--- Written by Terece Young ---

# Zella's & A

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### 1. Why open a pizza shop?

We opened our pizza shop in 2007 after having worked in the restaurant business for years in New Orleans, Louisiana. Cem's Uncle owned multiple pizzerias, where Cem learned the art of pizza making and Julie had experience in restaurant management.

### 2. Why open a pizza shop in SoWeBo?

We started scouting locations for a pizzeria in 2006 and came across the boarded up building at 1145 Hollins Street. It was previously a pizzeria in the early 1990's, yet had a short run due to decline of the neighborhood. We were drawn to the building's character and it still retained some of the commercial equipment needed to run a restaurant. Beyond the building, we were charmed by the locals who freely showed their support and exuberance over the thought of another pizzeria returning to the space.

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### 3. What do you love most about your neighborhood?

Our community - we love its diversity and the kind spirits of our neighbors, who are active in many causes that plague our City.

### 4. If you could change one thing about the neighborhood, what would it be?

Crime.

### 5. Any advice to young women who want to open their own restaurant?

Find a mentor, who is willing to teach you everything they know.

--- Q&A Conducted by Nia Hampton with Julie of Zella's---



## Sowebo

E	I	N	E	V	I	T	A	E	R	C	V	E	S
F	G	E	E	D	I	N	H	A	O	T	G	I	S
N	B	L	A	C	K	C	H	E	R	R	Y	B	T
K	H	O	L	L	I	N	S	M	A	R	K	E	T
U	N	E	W	B	E	G	I	N	N	I	N	G	S
T	G	F	E	S	T	I	V	A	L	Y	T	L	S
I	N	N	E	I	G	H	B	O	R	H	O	O	D
T	O	S	D	O	G	F	O	Y	T	I	C	L	I
B	E	T	Y	T	I	N	U	M	M	O	C	E	R
I	E	Y	Y	L	I	G	H	T	C	I	T	Y	A
C	A	H	O	L	G	H	L	A	C	I	E	I	D
L	I	A	T	I	T	A	L	B	K	B	I	C	M
R	B	H	F	T	I	A	R	T	I	S	T	I	C
T	H	L	R	I	T	H	E	A	T	E	R	R	N

FESTIVAL  
 NEIGHBORHOOD  
 HOLLINS MARKET  
 COMMUNITY  
 BLACK CHERRY  
 THEATER  
 NEW BEGINNINGS  
 ARTISTIC  
 CITY OF GODS  
 CREATIVE  
 LIGHT CITY

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/312140/>



**Concetta Serio**, renowned “mom” of Hollins Market, was a notable resident and stall owner in southwest Baltimore. Born in Sicily, Italy in 1878, Serio emigrated to Baltimore in 1895 at the age of 17. After arriving in Baltimore, Concetta married Samuel Serio, an Italian sailor, through an arrangement made in Italy. Together, the couple opened a fruit and vegetable stall in the market. Even after giving birth to 18 children, 6 of whom died in infancy, the market was her world. Harry Potter, a fellow stall owner of 37 years, expressed to a Baltimore Sun reporter how “she’s the best person in the world. She always has a smile for everybody and she tries all the time to help people.” Officer Howard Kremeyer, patroller of the market for over 32 years, stated how “Mrs. Serio is always trying to help.” Contrary to her kindness, motherliness, and popularity in the market, others have described Concetta as having a fiery spirit. In 1914, an article in The Baltimore Sun, reported how disorderly conduct charges were made

against Concetta from a nearby neighbor. Though the case was more he-said-she-said, a testimony made against Concetta claimed that she used epithets that were not very complimentary towards the prosecutor. In contrast, a 1958 Baltimore Sun article quotes Mrs. Myrtle Bunting, a bakery stall owner of 15 years, describing how Concetta would break up fights and arguments in the street, even if it required her to physically get between the individuals who were fighting. Concetta, whether she is remembered as caring or tenacious, there is consensus among all that knew her that essentially she had an underlying love of life and people. According to her son, Frank: “She has been good to the poor when she was poor herself. Race, color or creed, it makes no difference to Mom.” And in her own words: “I want to live to 200. When I pray, I don’t pray for money—just for life. Because I like life—and I love people.” Mrs. Concetta Serio passed away on September 30, 1965 at the age of 87.



# CITY OF GODS



**In the year 1890,** toward the end of the 19th Century a building was constructed at 1118 Hollins Street. It was used mostly as a residence housing as was the theme for most of the buildings in the area during this time period. The first address was listed in 1899. During this time, the building was owned by a resident who had purchased the building in 1890. Going into the 20th Century, in 1906 the building became home to a resident by the name of George C. Stein. Stein would own the residence until he sold it in 1930 to another local merchant by the name of Wm J. Miller. Miller, who converted the downstairs part of the building to a butcher shop, which was featured in the 1936 program book for the Hollins Market Centennial and Parade. During the early 20th century butchers and meat shops were important and respected parts of local Baltimore neighborhoods and the business community surrounding the city's public markets.

As World War II was ensuing, most local merchant shops like the one that Miller owned were converted to places entirely devoted to the War effort for the Navy. Following its Butcher Shop era in the 1930s-1950s, 1118 Hollins Street was sold again and was converted back into a regular residence. In 1970, the building was converted back to a two-family residence until the early 1990s. Fastforwarding to 2009, the building was again bought out and converted into a clothing store by three business pioneers: Frazier, Idris, and Mashari. The store was named City of Gods, and is known to be funded by local or established artists with the goal of portraying their culture-driven designs on every piece of clothing sold. The brand is even known to be funded by Kevin Plank and his very well-known athletic clothing brand called Under Armour. City of Gods clothing store constantly seeks to celebrate the creative minds that the DMV area encompasses. The local clothing store has grown to what is now the #1 Urban Apparel Shop. The store's motto is very fitting in that it is relatable to everyone where they say that "Life is too short, so why not be a God?"

--- Written by Jonathan Portuesi ---



# JOHN ROBERT SCHAFER

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Many merchants of Hollins Market followed in the career paths of preceding generations. John Robert Schafer was a third-generation butcher at Hollins Market. The Schafer Family, who immigrated to Baltimore from Germany, ran meat stalls at both Hollins and Lexington Markets, as was a common practice. The eldest Schafer opened his first stall at Hollins in 1865, the year that saw the end of the Civil War. Initially, John Robert Schafer's father served as his grandfather's helper, until it was his time to be the merchant and stall owner himself. Once Schafer's father took over the meat stall from his grandfather, John Robert Schafer then stepped up to become his father's helper. Although, John Robert Schafer did eventually become a butcher and stall owner; he first served in the Army during World War I. After serving in the Army, in 1908 Schafer became a butcher at Hollins Market. John Robert Schafer served as a butcher and stall owner, specializing in beef, at Hollins Market for 62 years, retiring in 1970. In November of 1980, J. Robert Schafer passed away at the age of 85 in his Pine Heights Avenue home. John Robert Schafer and the Schafer family represent the multi-generational history of the Hollins Market stall owners.

# HOLLINS LIQUORS

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Hollins Liquors: In the late-19th century a building was erected at 42 S Carrollton Avenue as part of the budding culture of entrepreneurship in the Hollins Market District. Around 1915 a business by the name of Knoblock Bros Grocery operated a grocery store at this prime corner spot by the entrance to the public market building. Knoblock Bros Grocery had a thirty year run and then the grocery store turned into Twin Food Stores around 1943 when corner stores were flourishing in Baltimore. Following the grocery and corner store era, 42 S Carrollton Avenue became a liquor store during the 1960s. In 1978, a new owner by the name of Thomas Boggan took over the building and decided to

keep it as a beer, wine, and liquor store renamed Hollins Liquors. In 2003 Boggan sold his business to the company Matadeiro LLC who kept the name Hollins Liquors. While the business remains a liquor store, the walls outside the building still have the ghost signs--fading advertisements on the outside historic buildings--from the Knoblock Brothers days. The past and the present blend together at this important and historic intersection for business and community activity.

---- *Written by Sydney McCain* ----

# HORSERADISH & COCONUT



Frances Liberto is a famous stall owner from Hollins Market renowned for her skills at skinning horseradish and coconuts as featured in a profile in the Baltimore Sun from April 1964, "Champion Horseradish Skinner and Coconut Cracker, Mrs. Frances Liberto at 70, 'Would Die If I Couldn't Work.'" Liberto was a woman who was proud to have worked her whole life and did not ever let the idea of old age get in the way of her enthusiasm for working at Hollins

Market. She told the Sun journalist, "I can do 50 of these horseradishes while you're doing one... I've done as many as 1,800 to 2,000 coconuts in one day... I'm the oldest woman in the market. Some people don't like to tell their age but I'm proud of mine. I'll be 70 this month." Liberto comes from a family of Italian immigrants. Her father was the first Italian immigrant to sell produce at Hollins Market.

# BLACK CHERRY PUPPET THEATER

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Black Cherry Puppet Theater is an important arts space in the Hollins Market neighborhood and speaks to the importance of preserving historic places. Located at 1115 Hollins Street the Black Cherry Puppet Theater addresses the importance of arts in southwest Baltimore. From 1920-1950, the building has residences on the upper floors, while the first floors were storefronts for diverse commerce and trade. During the 1950s, the buildings served as a tomato processing plant. The building was vacant for a period. Michael Lamason, the owner of the Black Cherry Puppet Theater acquired the property in the late 1990s. Lamason and his colleagues began putting on marionette puppet shows for the community. In 2010, the outdoor puppet theater, the Performance Garden, was

established to attract more of the surrounding community to events. The arts experience the theater brings to the area is something extremely unique. Artists from many different backgrounds and disciplines come and gather to play music, make small-talk, network with the community and other artists, and of course, to see the puppet shows. The Black Cherry Puppet Theater shows the importance of places surrounding the market as more than brick foundations and wooden frame buildings but as potential community spaces to bring people together.

--- Written by Anthony Portuesi ---



Photograph by: Markele Cullins

## THE HOLLINS MARKET STABLE

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The Hollins Market Stable, also referred to as the South Carlton Street stable, is located at 114-116 S. Carlton Street, and is one of the last remaining Arabber stables in Baltimore. Arabbers are historic street vendors who sell produce from colorful horse-driven carts throughout the city. There is little public information regarding the history of the South Carlton Street stables. Baltimore Arabbers are an independent and tight-knit group. The Hollins Market Stable is located in the rear-end of two lots; one that is a city-owned

(114) and the other that is a residential lot (116) owned by William O Murray. Furthermore, the stables are hidden between two dilapidated homes (112 and 118 S. Carlton Street), all of which is positioned on a side street off of Lombard. Even though there is absence of older newspaper reports on the stable itself, there has been more recent articles regarding the stables. In January 2015, City Paper, caught wind of activity at the Hollins Market stable in light of the Baltimore City Health Department raiding the stables, in which they took custody of all 14 horses and pressed legal charges on the Carlton Street Six horse owners. The following year it was reported that the Carlton Street Six were found not guilty of any charges of mistreating animals. By 2018, the stable at Carlton Street was back in business. Today, Baltimore Arabbers are still enduring the consequences of urban revitalization and challenges of keeping an important Baltimore Tradition alive. In efforts to preserve this unique Baltimore tradition, the Arabbers Preservation Society formed in 1994, with the initial goal of helping the Retreat Street stable comply with city ordinance. However, today the nonprofit is "dedicated to the support and preservation of Baltimore's horse-cart vendors and the functional horse-cart vending." The organization is based out of President Daniel Van Allen's home, located at 118 S. Arlington Street in southwest Baltimore.

--- Written by Lia Adams ---



Photographs by: Markele Cullins

# THE PRATT STREET CONSPIRACY

The Pratt Street Conspiracy, commonly known as The Conspiracy, was a hip clothing boutique and "head shop" aimed towards the youth market. It opened in November of 1970 and was at uu. The Conspiracy was developed as an economic development project by the Hollins Street Center. The aim of the Conspiracy was to provide fashionable clothing at the lowest possible price for the youth market, as well as to provide jobs for young teens seeking employment. Both teenage dropouts and students ran the boutique as buyers, sales people, and business managers. The Pratt Street Conspiracy was able to offer discounted prices to student's and people living in neighborhoods who purchased a membership card. Customers that were not residents of the

community could receive discounts by buying a membership card for a higher fee. Residents of Hollins Market could buy their membership cards for \$1.00 while non-residents could purchase one for \$3.00. The membership cards offered 20% all purchases. With a boutique run by the neighborhood youth, professionals from the University of Baltimore trained the teens in business and retail management, as well as developed a merchandising program for the teens to attend to further their business education. The Pratt Street Conspiracy represents an example of young people, counterculture, and social entrepreneurship.

--- Written by Liz Piet ---





(Mini crab cakes filled with lump crab, served over a bed of lettuce and lemon to taste)

# HOLLINS PLACE BAR & GRILL

**Making** you feel as at home as you would in your own living room Hollins Place brings relaxed sophistication to your neighborhood bar and grill.

Located at 1116 Hollins Street, former location of Mexican style eatery Mi Ranchitos, Hollins Place invites patrons to commune, dine, and unwind, by creating a welcoming family atmosphere paired with custom beverages and delicious yet reasonably priced food.

"I don't know anybody who doesn't come and order first, they love the food." says Rochelle Arlington, part of management of Hollins Place while referencing a menu full of difficult decisions.



( broccoli and shrimp alfredo)

Putting a classical spin on Baltimore style cuisine, the restaurant offers a variety of seafood dishes, pastas, and gourmet bar food such as wings, all prepared and presented with care and attention to detail.

Operating under the culinary training of Corey Moss, and Honesty Collins, two chefs who have worked together for 9 years, and have a combined culinary resume of over 30 years, the food at Hollins Place is a truly cohesive collaboration, giving diners hometown flavors with uncompromising quality.



( char grilled swordfish with roasted asparagus and homemade mashed potatoes )

# ISSAC SASS

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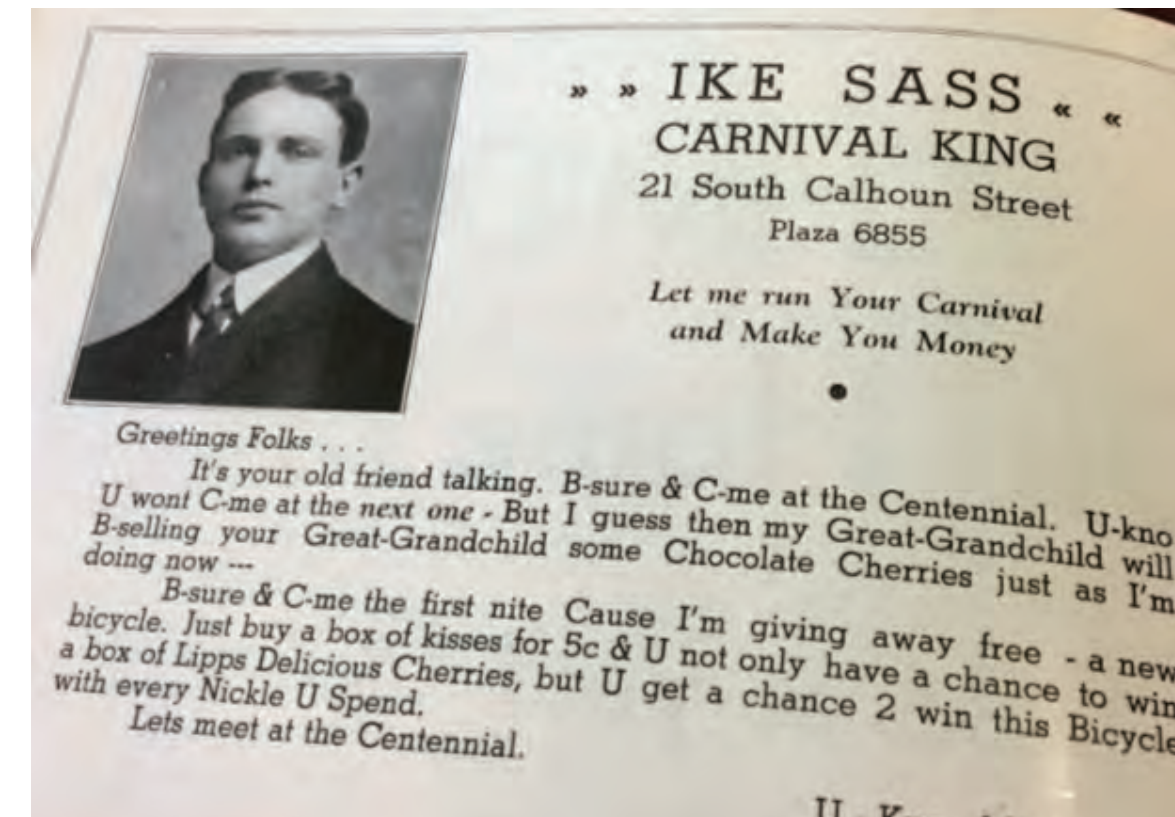
" We get a lot of our stuff from the market." says Corey. "Some of our fish, and produce, come from there. Our wings are hand cut, and are burgers prepared custom made to order. "

And with Hollins Market, Baltimore's oldest public market feet away to pull inspiration from, the renovated restaurant combines old and new, honoring the flavor of old time Baltimore while inviting new opportunities to connect, including crab nights and karaoke night.

"More businesses bring more life." says Eric one of the four owners of the bar and grill.

"We're hoping to create a cozy casual space for people to come eat and drink, but we also want to be an attraction. And we want people to enjoy themselves"

--- Written by Malaika Aminata Clements ---



Isaac Sass was born to a Jewish family in Russia and came to America as a child with his family to resettle in Baltimore. He later converted to Christianity from Judaism at age 18 after reading the New Testament. He married a Christian woman named Elizabeth Nicholson who was from New Jersey in 1905 and the two had three children named Anna, Donald, and Albert. Sass' father died when he was very young so Isaac was left to help his mother support their family. This is where Isaac's journey as an entrepreneur began. As a child he would assist his mother in setting up her stall at Hollins Market before he went to school and on the weekends would set up his own stall after helping with hers. When he was a boy Sass learned to cut out men's pants from someone in the market and also sold produce at his stand while his mother sold working men's hats and clothing. As Isaac got older he wanted to make more money; so, he would make candy and put it on each end of his produce stall. His homemade candy would attract people to his stall who he would then sell produce to. Eventually Sass was so successful with his candy that he stopped selling produce. His marketing and dedication to his trade was very admirable. As time went on Sass' candy became more and more popular and his slogan became "LOOK UP IKE Sass For Fine Chocolates". The slogan became very well known and placed on everything he sold his candy in such as boxes and bags. It is said that people would buy his candy just to show their friends and family his catchy slogan. His candy business was doing so well that he had stalls in every market as well as a store in rural Westminster. Through his successful candy business Sass became known around town as The Candy Man. He would even go to the local orphanage dressed as Santa Claus and give the children candy for Christmas. It is said by a descendant of Sass' that towards the end of the Depression Isaac Sass sold his confectionary business to Louis J. Rheb, the founder of Baltimore famous Rheb's Chocolates. Sass was very dedicated to his homemade chocolate business and you can see this transfer into the Rheb's brand today. The chocolates are still homemade, the employees are always kind, and Rheb's store is as original as Ike Sass and the chocolate they sell.

# WILLIAM H. BEVANS

William H. Bevans was known to be a Wholesale and Retail Dealer that sold "select home-killed poultry" of the finest quality. His stalls were located at 312 Hollins Market and 1009 Lexington Market. His usual residences were 1100 Arlington Avenue Govans, Baltimore, MD and 1029 N. Carey Street, Madison 3923 West. In the 1900's, he was seen as one of the few well-known black wholesale vendors in Baltimore. Among all the other vendors in the area such as the usual produce vendors, Bevans displayed a personal knack for his business and shifted his business model to supply the perfect quality poultry to the residents of Hollins Market, especially during the holidays, such as Thanksgiving and Christmas. Commonly featured in newspaper ads, Bevans displayed a professional demeanor that was paramount to his success with a bearing that was unfaltering and unwavering. Along with his counterparts, the Herndons, Bevans provided for the community around him a product that was seen not only as a commodity, but as a necessity.

Display Ad 49 - No Title  
African-American (1893-1994), Sept 5, 1933; ProQuest Historical Newspapers, The Baltimore Afro-American; pg. B-4

Bevans always believed in hard work and dedication to the tasks at hand. Other than his day-to-day position as a wholesale vendor, Bevans was also a director of the Masonic Choir in one of the eight "negro mason organizations" in Maryland. He took part in numerous singing events such as the "Negro National Anthem" and the direction of music for the 76th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. Other leadership positions were also frequent throughout Bevans's life, including being an African American juror. He was able not only to distinguish himself as a wholesale vendor among the many in the Baltimore area, but also as a distinguished black male providing for his community, a sense of purpose and direction in something as simple as chicken on the table, helping to foster the highest ideals of social progress. Even at the time of his death, other Maryland organizations such as the Maryland Pythians paid tribute to him and many others. William H. Bevans displays just how grit and determination in a particular craft can produce mounds of success.

# JAMES HENDERSON

James Herndon was born in the late-nineteenth century in Oxford, North Carolina and migrated to Baltimore for access to better opportunities. He married Eliza Burwell in 1903 and shortly after they went into the produce business. They began their business with a little store on Vine street near the Arch Social Club and later moved to Pearl street above the Lexington Market. The couple operated a successful produce business in Hollins and Lexington Markets for over five decades. They were deacon and deaconess at the Sharon Baptist Church. The Herndons had one son Ralph H. Herndon who took over the produce stall at Lexington Market after his father's death in 1961.

# MI RANCHITO

Built in the late-19th century, 1116 Hollins St. was a three-story brick building with a storefront on the first floor and rooms above located in Baltimore's fifteenth prescient of the fourteenth ward. The building was similar to the architecture surrounding the public market. In 1900 a resident of the building John V. Manning sued the United Railways and Electric Company following the death of his five-year-old daughter Mary who was hit and killed by a

streetcar. The storefront was the Dietz Feed store for much of the early 20th century until the owner sold the business due to health reasons. A. Kimper ran a butcher shop in the space. And then the space became a furniture store and then a glassware and pottery store known as Smitty's, and then Smith's Chinaware. In the 1980s the property was rehabbed with an Urban Development Action Grant (which also included 1106, 1108, 1116 Hollins and 13-21

Carrollton Avenue) to be commercial or artist galleries on the first store storefronts and artist studios and living quarters above. A café opened in the space known as The Cultured Pearl and then Mencken's Cultured Pearl, by New Yorkers brought to Baltimore by its cheap real estate and artsy potential, the Artscape festival started in Baltimore in 1983. Stephan Lowentheil was an investor and the cafe was run by fellow New York transplant Ted Gertzel. The Café was part of a redevelopment effort to make the area into a bohemian arts district in the southwest. The Cultured Pearl was a great success in the late-1980s and early-1990s with poetry readings, art opening,

and a general bohemian feel. The Café offered Mexican fare for good prices but as time went on and the southwest became an Empowerment Zone, a Clinton-era urban redevelopment program, the business began to suffer due to "perception issues" and a lack of attention by the city, according to Getzel. After the Cultured Pearl Café closed, the building space became home to a handful of businesses, like an electrical company, a sushi restaurant, and now to its current identity as Mi Ranchito, which still serves Latin fare and hosts the local community.

--- Written by Liz Ridinger ---

# Stories From SoWeBo



History is a massive book of blueprints. A narrative captured and used to lay the foundation of the future.

In South West Baltimore, these blueprints are scattered. Tucked away in the bass and falsettos of long time residents vocal cords, hidden in once thriving soon to be redeveloped vacant buildings, and a handful of brick and mortar shops who have made a way though various periods of change, disinvestment, and challenges.

These spaces, hosting walls full of memoirs, are the ones who shape culture as places of gathering from past to present have have always been the foundation of community.

And here, in SoWeBo, a phrase coined to show solidarity with Johannesburg, South Africa's settlement Soweto during the apartheid regime, a big reason people gather is for business.



Home to Hollis Market – the oldest public market in Baltimore city , B&O Railroad, The Irish history museum, Lithuania Hall, New Beginnings Barbershop, City of Gods Apparel shop, Zella’s Pizzeria, Hollins Place, one of two surviving Arabber stables and much more, these spaces serve as a meeting grounds of ideas, knowledge, and exchange.

But to gain knowledge you must first be willing to open the book.

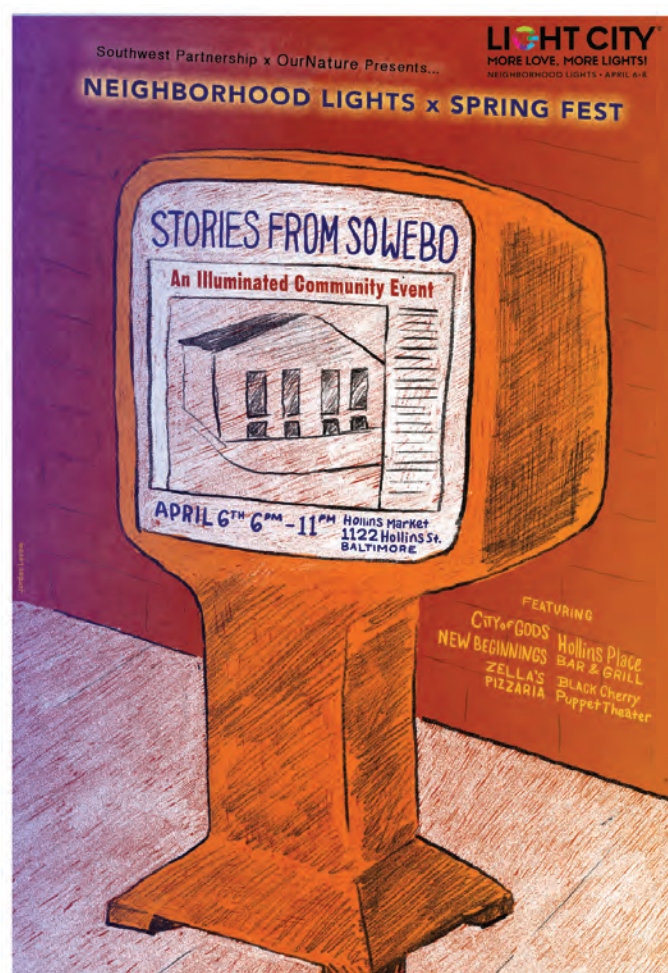
This event is an attempt to break down some of the silos we exist in. To not only step outside of the closed in spaces we grow accustomed to, but to step inside a space we are not so familiar with.

This means participating in events taking place in your neighborhood , talking to people you see on a daily basis, building relationships, voicing concerns, discussing solutions, and supporting the people and spaces who have made a commitment to do this all along.

It is only by being aware of the various narratives that surround us, that we get a clear picture on the best way to write our collective futures. I don’t know the best path, or even all the stories, but I hope this inspires us all to dig deeper, ask more questions, and acknowledge your own role in helping to shape the next chapter.

These are Stories from SoWeBo.

--- Written by Malaika Aminata Clements ---



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