What is an Explore Baltimore Heritage story?

- Short story -
- Engages readers -
- Gives a sense of place through narrative -
- Focuses on the history of the person/place -
- Related stories can be organized into "Tours" -

What is an Explore Baltimore Heritage story not?

- A series of dates and names -
- Editorial-style writing -
- Lengthy analysis of cultural trends/issues -

Writing Guidelines

See our local history research guide for more information on local archives and materials before you start writing.

[TITLE]

Location-Based Stories

o Places best known by their historic name should use that name

E.g. use Hippodrome Theatre instead of France Merrick Performing Arts Center

o Places best known by their contemporary name should use that name

E.g. use Clipper Mill instead of Pool & Hunt Iron Foundry

Biographical Stories

o Include the name of the individual in the title

o If they are connected to a specific place, include that as well
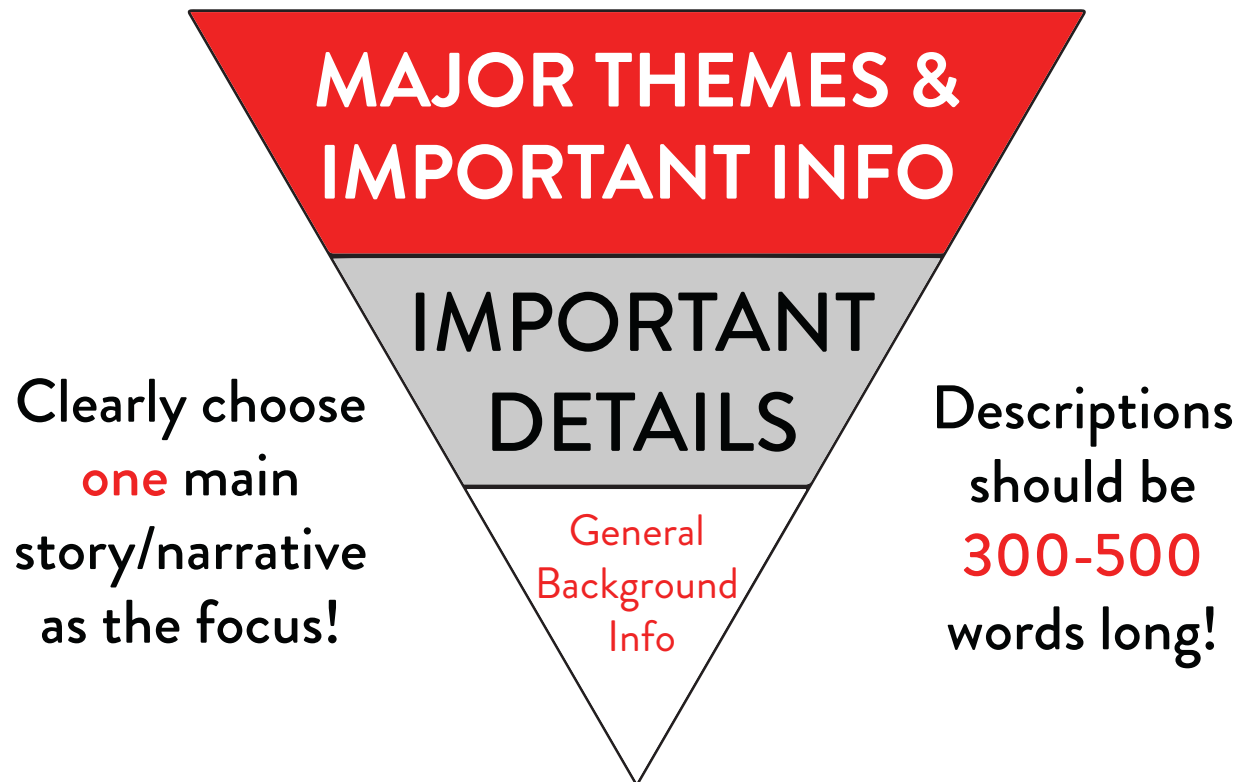
E.g. Ottmar Mergenthaler at 159 West Lanvale Street

[DESCRIPTION]

Use specific details to transform a simple timeline of events into an actual narrative story.

- Open with a hook like a compelling quote or surprising fact

E.g. "After a brief stint in New York, Ogden Nash returned to Baltimore in 1934 and wrote: 'I could have loved New York has I not loved Balti-more.' Nash grew up in Rye, New York and first came to Baltimore for love."

Highlight themes or important events in the first few sentences!
Follow the chart below for guidance on structuring your story:

MAJOR THEMES & IMPORTANT INFO

IMPORTANT DETAILS

General Background Info

Clearly choose **one** main story/narrative as the focus!

Descriptions should be **300-500** words long!

- Don't say, show! Use examples to demonstrate significance
- When the story is about a person make sure to emphasize why the physical location associated with them is important
- Consult this guide on avoiding passive voice
- Consult this guide on writing concisely

[QUOTING]

- Paraphrase unless a quote is more effective
- Include the source in the narrative when quoting
    E.g. In 1914, the Baltimore Sun reported, "..."

[CITATIONS]

- Do not use footnotes or endnotes
- Incorporate references into the narrative where appropriate
- References that do not flow in the narrative should be included as related sources at the end of the article

[REVISIONS]

- Never submit a first draft. Let it sit overnight and return to edit with fresh eyes
- Eliminate extra words that are not important to the story
- Read it out loud to hear if it flows
- Consult the Purdue Online Writing Guide

Formatting

Adhere to the following guidelines to format your story before you submit.

- Plain text is required
    - Copy and paste text from Microsoft Word or a similar application into Notepad or another plain text editor to clear formatting
- Insert a hard return between paragraphs. Do not indent.
- Put a single space between sentences.
- Avoid "smart" punctuation characters, like those below. They cause errors, especially in the file captions

" Curly (or "smart") Quotes "

' Curly (or "smart") Apostrophes '

—— Em Dashes ——

– En Dashes –

[Square Brackets]

[CITATIONS]

Specific references are helpful to confirm the details of a story before it is posted. We can link to some in the final draft.
- Chicago Style
- Bulleted List
- List major sources, not minor sources like those used to confirm single dates
- Hyperlink online sources by embedding the URL i the title

[IMAGES]

Consult our image guidelines to include images/other multimedia in your description.

[TAGS]

Tags help readers sort through stories by subject.

- Examples of tags
    - o Neighborhood name
    - o Street name
    - o Architect or builder name
    - o Other proper names for related organizations, businesses, etc.
        - E.g. Independent Order of Odd Fellows
    - o A building or landscape type
        - E.g. Rowhouses, Churches, cemeteries
    - o Related themes
        - E.g. Literary heritage, War of 1812, Civil War
- See these Omeka resources on managing tags

[SUBJECT HEADING]

Each story should have 1-3 subjects that reflect the most significant part of the story. The subject should place it within a thematic category.

- E.g. Basilica of the Assumption has "Architecture, Religion" as it's subjects
- We recommend consulting the list used on Cleveland Historical

Submission Process

Before you submit, make sure you have: a title, description, location, one image with a caption, and credits.

- E-mail
    - o Put the title, description, caption, and credits in the body of the e-mail
    - o Attach a Word Document with the text
    - o Attach images as JPEG files separately
    - o Include a shared folder or link to download a ZIP file can also be sent via e-mail
    - o Do not embed images in Word Documents

After you submit:

All submitted stories are reviewed by Baltimore Heritage staff and volunteers. Stories requiring major revisions may be sent back to the original writer with revision suggestions, or they may be revised internally. Stories that are incomplete, have factual errors, and/or don't meet our guidelines may be refused publication and shelved indefinitely.

After you submit (cont.):

By submitting a story, you give us permission to publish your writing under a Creative Commons Attribution Share-Alike License. This open license helps to encourage reuse of the site materials for educational, research and interpretation. It maintains the requirement that a credit to you as the contributor remain with the story whenever it is reused.

Credit:

Stories will be credited with the name of the author and if applicable, the name of their affiliated institution. Author credit on individual stories are visible online, but are not currently available on the app. If a story requires substantial revisions, the writing credit may be assigned jointly to Baltimore Heritage staff or a volunteer working on revisions.

Additional Resources

-For Curatescape
- o https://github.com/CPHDH/Curatescape/wiki
-For Style Guides
- o http://www.artedit.org/styleguide.htm
- o https://www.apstylebook.com/
- o http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html
- o http://www.tameri.com/edit/style.html
-Other Content Creation Guides for students in an upper-level/graduate course:
- o http://souther311.clevelandhistory.org/files/2011/09/ch_content_guide.pdf
- o http://souther319.clevelandhistory.org/files/2012/01/content-guide-s12.pdf

Thank you for your submission!

BALTIMORE HERITAGE