

Today's annual meeting topic is about "Telling the Technical Services Story."

So, for this historical moment, I decided to focus on telling our story – by looking back at some of the locations where we have held the annual meeting, and what those locations say about the changing architectural landscape of the last 94 years.

## PTPL venues by type of location

▶ Academic Institutions	31
▶ Hotels, Motels, or Inns	21
▶ Federal libraries, state libraries, or government buildings	17
▶ Historic homes, sites, or societies	6
▶ Special libraries	2
▶ Clubs	2
▶ Churches	2
▶ Public Library	1
▶ Think Tank	1
▶ Consortium	1
▶ Art Gallery	1
▶ Restaurant	1

To research this historical moment, I visited the PTPL archives at Catholic University and took a look at our website to categorize the types of locations we've been to and found the following:

Academic Institutions		31
Hotels, Motels, or Inns	21	
Government libraries, state libraries, federal or state government buildings		17
Historic homes, sites, or societies		6
Special libraries		2
Clubs		2
Churches		2
Public Library	1	
Think Tank	1	
Consortium	1	
Art Gallery	1	
Restaurant		1

The list does not add up to 94 as some of the locations are not clear in the historical

record.

Early on, we tended to meet at non-academic locations. Hotels, in particular, predominated. I wonder if this might have been the case as perhaps academic institutions of the time may not have had large conference rooms or centers, such as they do today, to accommodate groups of 60 or more people. Or, perhaps they would not have been as welcoming to host an outside organization back then. I decided it might be fun to take a look at some of the grand and interesting hotels we have met at in the past.

## Grace Dodge Hotel, Washington, D.C.

image courtesy of Greater Greater Washington



The very first hotel we met at was the Grace Dodge Hotel, formerly located at North Capitol and E Streets, in Washington D.C., where catalogers from throughout the region had a dinner rally in 1923 to create what was to become in 1924 the Maryland, Virginia, and District of Columbia Regional Group of Cataloguers and Classifiers, our previous name.

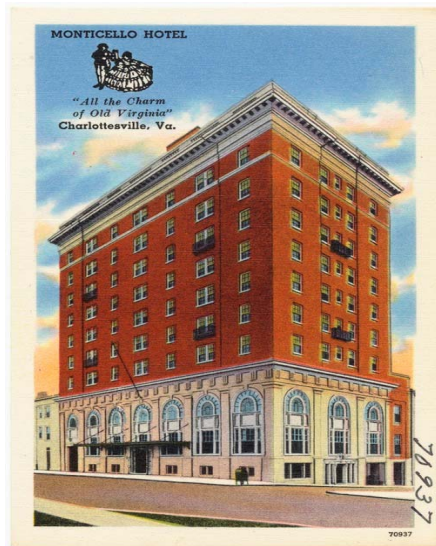
The Grace Dodge Hotel was built to be a women's only space, although eventually it welcomed men too. The owner Grace Hoadley Dodge was a wealthy philanthropist and president of the YWCA.

Famous women, including birth control advocate, Margaret Sanger, stayed at the Hotel for a lengthy period of time, and First Lady Grace Coolidge visited there. Our group returned to the hotel in 1934 and 1939.

Sadly, this grand and historic hotel was demolished in 1972.

## Monticello Hotel, Charlottesville, VA

image courtesy of digitalcommonwealth.org



In 1931 we visited the Monticello Hotel in Charlottesville, which had opened five years earlier in 1926.

On opening night of the hotel it was noted by the Daily Progress, that one of the most brilliant banquets in the history of Charlottesville was enjoyed by the attendees.

At our meeting in 1931, we had an address on Thomas Jefferson and a discussion of the ALA Catalogue Rules.

We made a second visit to the Monticello Hotel in 1948.

## Longfellow Hotel, Baltimore, MD

image courtesy of Baltimore Sun



In 1941 we found ourselves at the Longfellow Hotel in Baltimore, Maryland, which later became the Park Plaza hotel and had a devastating fire in 2010. Fortunately, the Park Plaza Building, was restored and is now a trendy apartment building in the Mount Vernon area of Baltimore. Our topic in 1941 was “The cost of cataloging.”

## John Marshall Hotel, Richmond, VA

image courtesy of Wikipedia.org



1945 found us in Richmond at the glamorous John Marshall Hotel, which for some time was the largest in Virginia and according to an article from the Richmond Times-Dispatch had numerous famous guests including Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Richard Nixon, Elizabeth Taylor, Elvis Presley – and of course, us!

It is now an event space with residences.

The discussion in 1945 was on “Post War Cataloging at the Library of Congress.”

## Jefferson Hotel, Richmond, VA

image courtesy of traveladdicts.net



In 1956 we met at the historic Jefferson Hotel in Richmond, Virginia, which is now on the Register of Historic Places and was renowned for having live alligators in its lobby pool.

I've actually had brunch at the Jefferson Hotel and can attest to its grandeur, although they no longer have live alligators.

The one in the photo is a model.

Our program in 1956 was on the American Library School Today.



## The Belvedere Hotel, Baltimore, MD

image courtesy of Baltimore Magazine



1959 found us at another grand hotel that is on the Register of Historic Places – the Belvedere Hotel in Baltimore.

According to its Wikipedia page, the Belvedere was the pre-eminent hotel in Baltimore through the first half of the twentieth century, hosting many presidents, including Theodore Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, and Woodrow Wilson. Other luminaries who stayed at the hotel were Wallis Warfield Simpson, the Duchess of Windsor, General Douglas MacArthur, and Clark Gable.

The year we held our meeting at the Belvedere we had a “Cataloging Clinic” for our members.

## International Inn, Washington, D.C.

image courtesy of Getty Images



In 1963, three years after our name change to Potomac Technical Processing Librarians, we chose to go modern and held our meeting at the International Inn in Washington, which had just opened the year before.

As you can see, the hotel is quite a change from the architectural styles of those we visited in the past with a decidedly Jetsons feel with the domed swimming pool.

This is now the Washington Plaza Hotel.

The theme of our meeting in 1963 was “The Rationalization of Centralized, Indexing, Cataloging, and Processing at the National or International Level.”

## Marriott Twin Bridges Motel, Alexandria VA

image courtesy of Then and Now - Live Journal



The following year in 1964 we went to a motel – The Marriott Twin Bridges Motel, in Alexandria, Virginia which was actually the first Marriott lodging facility that would eventually lead to the Marriott empire of hotels.

According to Wikipedia, Bill Marriott later claimed that it was "one of the very first airport hotels in the country," due to its proximity to National and Dulles Airports. In addition to 1964 being our first visit to a motel, we also had our first presentation on automation that year.

At the meeting, there was a luncheon speech on "Computerization at Florida Atlantic University."

This amazing example of 1960's roadside architecture was torn down in 1990.

## Boar's Head Inn, Charlottesville, VA

image courtesy of Agoda.com



Probably one of my favorite choices for a meeting location occurred in 1973 when we went to the Boar's Head Inn in Charlottesville, Virginia, which is now the Boar's Head Resort.

The Boar's Head Inn is steeped in Virginia history, going back to 1800 when Thomas Jefferson encouraged a friend of his to purchase the property that later became the Inn.

It looks like a perfectly beautiful and relaxing spot to discuss the acquisitions and cataloging of audio-visual materials, which was the topic of the meeting that year.

## 1970's-1980's: Chain hotels

image courtesy of Booking.com



Hotel chains were common locations for our meetings throughout the 1970's and 1980's with us meeting at Sheratons, Hiltons, Hyatts, and Holiday Inns.

The last hotel that served as a location for a PTPL meeting was probably the most generic – the Quality Inn in Frederick, Maryland, in 1990.

The topic that year of “Managing Chaos” was not particularly uplifting either.

The days of our group meeting at first unique, glamorous, historic and later more utilitarian hotels had seemed to come to an end.

After 1990, all of our meetings have been at academic institutions, government libraries, or government office buildings with one detour to the Virginia Historical Society in 2007.



But, maybe next year, our incoming Board will decide to reverse the trend and choose a hotel, motel, or inn in the state of Virginia.

If you have suggestions of great locations to visit and hold the meeting – regardless of type of venue -- please include them in your evaluation form or talk to a member of the Board.

Who knows? Maybe your selection will be chosen for our next gathering.

Thank you very much!