



# Nashville: Music city— and more!

By Shirley Hallblade

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## *A profile of the city that will host ACRL's 8th National Conference*

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**N**ashville! Known around the world as the home of country music and the Grand Ole Opry, Tennessee's capitol city offers this heritage along with many other attractions for those who attend ACRL's 8th National Conference, April 11–14, 1997. Spring is an exceptionally pleasant time to visit this growing, dynamic city situated on the Cumberland River amid the rolling hills of Middle Tennessee.

Developing from its roots as a transportation and trading center, Nashville today is a vibrant Mid-South city whose major industries include tourism, printing and publishing, music production, education, health care management, and automobile technology. The Nashville/Davidson County area served by a metropolitan government has a population of approximately 530,000. More than one million people live in the eight-county Metropolitan Statistical Area, the fastest growing in the state.

The Nashville area is intersected by three major Interstate highways. Its modern airport is served by 16 airlines. It is accessible, easy to reach, and a great place to visit . . . if not stay.

Fifty percent of the nation's population lives within 600 miles of Nashville. The city's strong and diversified economy prompted *Inc.* magazine to list Nashville as one of the ten best cities in which to start a business.

### **Capitol of the "Volunteer State"**

In 1796 Tennessee became the 16th state admitted to the Union. The state earned its nickname after the call went out in 1848 for volunteers to fight in the Mexican War. Tennessee's quota was 2,800; more than 30,000 Tennesseans responded.

Settled in 1779, Nashville served as the state's capitol from 1812–15, and then permanently, beginning in 1843. The stately capitol building, perched on a hill overlooking the downtown area, is a symbol of Tennessee's rich history and Nashville's part in it.

The capitol was the site of major debate and the focus of national attention in 1920 when Tennessee became the 36th and deciding state to approve passage of the bill granting women the right to vote. In June of this year, on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of Tennessee's statehood, the new Bicentennial Capitol Mall was dedicated as a permanent monument to the celebration. A 19-acre urban park and outdoor history museum reaching north from the capitol, the new mall offers a 250-foot granite map



**A glimpse of Nashville.**

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of the state, an amphitheater, and other attractions.

Nashville's skyline offers a mix of modern and historic buildings. The city has a rich African American heritage. There are more than 70 parks in Nashville and many lakes and other outdoor recreation opportunities in the area. The surrounding area has dozens of sites relating to the Civil War. The Natchez Trace Parkway, a 450-mile historic trail beginning in Natchez, Mississippi, has its northernmost terminus in Nashville, and was completed in June of this year.

### **"Athens of the South"**

This nickname was first attributed to Nashville because of its early reputation as a center of trade and education in the Mid-South. The name became more permanently associated with the city after a replica of the Parthenon was built as part of the state's centennial exposition in 1896. Nashville's Parthenon is the world's only full-size reproduction of the original Greek temple. It stands today in Centennial Park as a cultural landmark housing art galleries and exhibitions. In 1990 a 42-foot statue of Athena was added and now graces the Parthenon's interior. It is said to be the largest indoor statue in the Western world.

Nashville's reputation as a geographic center of education continues. The Middle Tennessee area has more than 20 colleges and universities and myriad technical and training programs. Nashville itself is home to more institutions of advanced learning per person than almost any other city in the country. Eleven institutions offer graduate studies programs.

The city's artistic and cultural heritage is enhanced by several fine art museums, historic homes, and venues for the performing arts.

### **"The District"**

Nashville's downtown area is experiencing major development and offers a dynamic, vibrant setting for ACRL's conference. An area newly dubbed "The District" includes Second Avenue (formerly Market Street), lower Broadway, and historic Printer's Alley. This area has one of the largest concentrations of Victorian commercial structures in the U.S. Recent developments include dozens of restaurants, ven-

ues for dancing and listening to music, the renovated Ryman Auditorium (original home of the Grand Ole Opry), and a new 20,000-seat arena. In just the past two years, downtown Nashville has seen high-level activity in historic building

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renovation, relocated local businesses, and high-profile additions like a Hard Rock Cafe and Planet Hollywood.

A self-guided, two-mile walking tour, courtesy of the Metropolitan Historical Commission, offers visitors the opportunity to trace the urban history of Nashville. The tour starts at Fort Nashboro, a log stockade that was the site of the original settlement that later became Nashville. The route is marked on city sidewalks with a bright green line. Downtown trolleys offer visitors another way to view "The District" as well as the Music Row area.

### **"Music City, USA"**

There is no denying that Nashville and music, especially the traditions of country music and bluegrass, are intertwined. Today, a wide spectrum of music is performed and recorded here, transforming the "Nashville sound" and expanding well beyond its roots.

The country stereotype is understandable. Music Row is the center of the country music industry; Nashville-based country artists are known around the world. Contemporary recording artists such as Vince Gill, Reba McEntire, and Garth Brooks make their home in Nashville. Tourists flock to visit Music Row and the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, as well as the Grand Ole Opry, now located in the Opryland complex near the airport.

Music Row includes many recording studios, the most famous being RCA's historical Studio B, preserved as a museum. This is the place where Elvis, Dolly Parton, and Roy Orbison recorded some of their biggest hits. Reopened this year after major renovation, Studio B has begun to turn out live recordings again.

Nashville has become a recording and marketing center for contemporary Christian mu-

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its version on July 10; \$2.17 billion was appropriated to pay for the operations of the House, Senate, and legislative branch agencies, including the Library of Congress and the Government Printing Office.

The House report language stressed the use of electronic format and telecommunications technologies and that the Legislative Branch was "striving toward a CyberCongress mode whereby information can be shared more easily among the agencies and with the public at large."

**Government Printing Office.** The Senate accepted the spending levels approved by the House: \$29,077,000 for the Office of the Superintendent of Documents. The largest share of this goes for the operations of the Federal Depository Library Program. This is a reduction of \$1,230,000 from FY 1996 and \$1,750,000 less than the Public Printer requested. Congress denied the \$500,000 requested for technology grants to help depositories make the transition to a more electronic program.

The report also reflects the House acceptance of a five- to seven-year time frame for

the move to electronic format recommended by the Government Printing Office, the library community, and others (reversing last year's push by the House for a two-year transition to a more electronic depository program).

**Library of Congress.** The Senate passed a total of \$331,758,000 for the Library of Congress in FY 1997. This includes \$62,641,000 for the Congressional Research Service; \$44,964,000 for books for the blind and physically handicapped; and a total of \$33,402,000 for the copy-right office (including the authority to spend \$22,269,000 in receipts.) The Senate included \$928,000 for the American Folklife Center (same level as FY 1996). The Senate passed its version of H.R. 3754 reauthorizing the Folklife Center for two years. In passing its version of H.R. 3754, the House instructed the Library of Congress to prepare a plan to transfer the Folklife Center to the Smithsonian Institution. Differences in the two versions of the bill will be resolved in conference between the Senate and House. The House version of the bill includes a total of \$330,758,000 for the library. ■

(Nashville cont. from page 509)

music and many types of music are performed and recorded here. It is a significant player in the music "jingle" field and is home to several artists and acts with pop, rock, and rhythm & blues emphases. Nashville musicians are significant parts of the road entourages of many out-of-town performers, and many music videos are taped here. Bluegrass, blues, jazz, pop, classical, and opera—it's all part of the Nashville music scene.

### Convention city

Tourism brought more than nine million visitors to Nashville in 1995. Nashville has become a popular convention site for associations and meetings of all kinds. ACRL's 8th National Conference site is headquartered in the heart of downtown Nashville at the Convention Center and the adjoining Renaissance Hotel. Other hotels, along with restaurants, shops, and a variety of entertainment options, are available within walking distance. A short ride by



**This replica of the Parthenon is the only full-size one in the world.**

trolley or taxi offers visitors more options.

The local arrangements committee has planned a number of events and tours designed to acquaint conference attendees with Nashville and its surroundings. Future articles in the *News* will provide further detail about aspects of Nashville's cultural attractions, including art museums, libraries, musical heritage, local restaurants, and the entertainment scene. In the meantime, you can learn more about Nashville by visiting its Internet sites. (*Ed. note:* the ACRL National Conference homepage at <http://www.ala.org/acrl.html> is

linked to the Nashville Convention and Visitors Bureau homepage at <http://nashville.musiccityusa.com/tour>.)

Your Nashville area library colleagues are delighted that ACRL has chosen to hold its 1997 conference in our capitol city. Come join us in "Music City, USA" and enjoy all that Nashville has to offer. ■