



Walk over the Harvard Bridge (on Massachusetts Avenue) to get a sweeping view of Boston's skyline, as well as an up-close gander at the only bridge measured in smoots.

Boston on Foot

*Explore Boston's
Historic and Cultural
Treasures with Simply
Your Own Two Feet*

by John Pedini

The 97th AALL Annual Meeting and Conference, “Boston to Mumbai—The World of Legal Information,” will be held on July 10-14 in the John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center, located in Boston's historic Back Bay neighborhood. While the convention offers a world of legal information, Boston in the summer offers a world of adventure.

Boston is, after all, considered the “Hub of the Universe,” and radiating in all directions are links to historic and picturesque sights both near and far. For those convention attendees who want some brief and casual diversions, we have assembled the following suggestions for your enjoyment, beginning with places within walking distance. In next month's *Spectrum*, we will feature longer excursions by train or car.

If you want a more organized experience, you may want to investigate the “Tours and Excursions” section of the convention program. But for those of you who love to explore on your own, read on. Where available, Web sites to the attractions mentioned are listed on page 20.



The famous and popular Faneuil Hall Marketplace (now called Quincy Market), with its busy warrens of charming food stalls, restaurants, and boutique shops, offers live performances of all kinds every day around noon.

Pack Good Walking Shoes

Boston is an eminently walkable city. In fact, you can span the main part of it during a leisurely stroll. This is perhaps the best way to see the sights up close and in a relaxed fashion.

If you were to consider the city a hub, like Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. did, imagine the center of the hub being the convention center. (There actually is a plaque embedded in the pavement in a downtown location depicting the true center, but for convenience purposes we'll assume the convention center as the starting point).

Get familiar with the points of the compass, and follow along. You'll only need a few hours in any direction to discover a world of intrigue and interest.

Go West

A few blocks to the west on Commonwealth Avenue is the area known as Kenmore Square, home to nightclubs, restaurants, thousands of Boston University students (when classes are in session), and a baseball club called the Red Sox. Left off Commonwealth and down Brookline

Avenue a bit sits venerable Fenway Park, the location of the Curse, the Impossible Dream, Duffy's Cliff, Pesky's Pole, and the Green Monster, to name a few.

Planning to come early? The Sox have a home stand July 6-11, playing Oakland and Texas. If you order tickets ahead or show up alone or in pairs, you'll probably get in. You can experience the oldest Major League ballpark—visit a place where guys like Cy, Yaz, Teddy Ballgame, and Pudge played and check out the Green Monster, a 37-foot-tall left field wall (now crowned with seats). If you can't get into a game, tours are available 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and come highly recommended.

Go South

What's that you say, baseball's not your style? Head due south of the convention center and you will walk right into the Mother Church, the world headquarters of the First

Church of Christ, Scientist. Outside the main buildings is a giant reflecting pool and fountains. Inside is the world-famous Mapparium, a three-story stained glass globe that has the map of the world as it was in 1935. Visitors can walk through the globe and marvel at its amazing visual and acoustical properties (sounds are exaggerated in the glass sphere—a whisper can be heard from several yards away).

Head west along Huntington Avenue (past Symphony Hall and the Huntington Theater), and you come upon the two inspiring cultural gems of the area, the Museum of Fine Arts and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the latter with its enchanting courtyard. Behind the Gardner is Simmons College where many a law librarian got his or her degree. Across from Simmons is a modest expanse of water, grass, and woods called the Fens.

district—eight blocks of international fashion, fine dining, art galleries, obscure artifacts, antiques, and jewelry, as well as Avenue Victor Hugo, a landmark bookstore specializing in rare and used books. Besides the shopping and dining experience, you can enjoy the architecture of the brownstone rowhouses and classic late-19th century buildings.

Stepping a few blocks north, you'll reach the *grande dame* of Boston walkways, the Commonwealth Avenue Mall. From the imperious likeness of Leif Eriksson (complete with runic inscriptions) gazing west at the Charlesgate end, to a galloping George Washington at the entrance to the Public Gardens, the mall is dotted with statues of prominent figures in Boston's history. Leif Eriksson?—it's a long story.

The mall is a fine way to traverse the breadth of one of Boston's most

up-close gander at the only bridge measured in smoots.

On the other side of the Charles is the campus of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the geographical beginning of the "People's Republic" of Cambridge. If you're feeling adventurous, a 15-minute walk north on Massachusetts Avenue will bring you through the heart of that city and into Harvard Square with an ever-changing array of shops and restaurants, as well as the storied campus of Harvard University.

Go East

To get outside and begin a proper walking tour eastward, start at the main entrance to the convention center on Boylston Street. This broad, busy street can take you all the way into Chinatown and the Theater District. Along the way there are many attractions, fine and funky restaurants, all types of shopping, and the hustle and bustle of people going about their business.

The first encounter of note along Boylston Street is the Boston Public Library, with its modern entrance to the General Library (Johnson building) and the adjoining Research Library (the classic renaissance revivalist McKim building). Library management encourages first-time visitors to enter the General Library and familiarize themselves with the floor plan and the collection. Then one can travel by way of an interior courtyard to the older building and marvel at its beauty and many exhibit rooms.

Swan Boats and Cobblestones

Due east of Copley Square, along Boylston Street, is the beginning of the Boston Public Garden, with its trademark swan boats drifting lazily along an idyllic pond ringed by giant weeping willows and ornamental flower beds. Not too grand or elaborate, the Public Garden allows sweeping views and intimate peeks, whether you see the skyline from behind the mighty trees or find squirrels and ducks who have trained humans to feed them.

Next to the Public Garden is the Boston Common, a more utilitarian stretch of green that since 1634 has served as a public cattle-grazing area; a location for public executions, parades, militia drills, and anti-war demonstrations; and even hosted a visit from Pope John Paul II. The Common includes a frog pond that doubles as an ice rink in winter, a large playground, and a Visitor's Information Center. This is a place to discover more historic attractions and find out where the Freedom Trail begins.



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On a warm summer day, one could enjoy lingering in this tranquil part of town.

For more excitement, walk back to Symphony Hall, continue south down Massachusetts Avenue, and you'll find yourself in the beginning of Boston's South End, a vibrant neighborhood featuring the largest collection of bowfront rowhouses in the United States, as well as many intimate galleries, nightclubs, and modern eateries.

Go North

Taking a northerly tack from the convention center brings you immediately into the Newbury Street shopping

distinguished residential sections, view exquisite architecture, and even get a chance to experience Boston's only attempt at urban planning—alphabetically named streets in a predetermined grid pattern!

If you want to get a good river view, walk another three blocks north to the Charles River, whose grassy banks include bike and jogging paths, playgrounds, and the world-famous Hatch Shell, the scene of the Fourth of July Boston Pops extravaganza. Go the other way and you can walk over the Harvard Bridge (Massachusetts Avenue) and get a sweeping view of Boston's skyline, as well as an

Explore Online

Visit these Web sites to learn more about the attractions listed in “Boston on Foot.”

The City of Boston

www.aviewoncities.com/boston
www.boston.gov
www.boston.about.com

The Boston Historical Society and Museum

www.bostonhistory.org

Boston Red Sox

www.redsox.com

Church of Christ, Scientist

www.themotherchuch.org

The Leif Eriksson Memorial

[www.boston-online.com/
bizhistory.html](http://www.boston-online.com/bizhistory.html)

The “Smoot” as a Unit of Measurement

[www.mit.edu/museum/fun/
smoots.html](http://www.mit.edu/museum/fun/smoots.html)

The Big Dig

www.bigdig.com

Just north of the Common begins the venerable neighborhood of Beacon Hill, a landmark once nearly three times its original size until much of the land was excavated for landfill. Still, it is the site of many splendid and majestic homes as well as quaint and cozy little apartments. Some of the side streets, the most famous being Acorn Street, are still in cobblestone form, lit by authentic gas lamps.

Besides the usual antique stores and chic restaurants there are colonial and post-colonial attractions like the Harrison Gray Otis House (sampling life in the early 19th century), the African American Meeting House, the Boston Athenaeum, and the Massachusetts State House, which sits atop the most prominent point of the hill. From its gold-leaf dome to its sweeping elevated columns, it boasts an impressive edifice. Atop its imperious perch, it looks down the famous hill to the waterfront, where much of our pre-revolutionary history took place. The site of the Boston Massacre, the Old South Meeting House, Old North Church, Paul Revere’s House, King’s Chapel Church, as well as some very early Boston graveyards are all within a radius of several blocks.

In the distance are the old and the new. The famous and popular Faneuil Hall Marketplace (now called Quincy Market),

with its busy warrens of charming food stalls, restaurants, and boutique shops, offers live performances of all kinds every day around 12 p.m. More as a landscape than a destination, the brand-new, cable-stayed Leonard P. Zakim/Bunker Hill Bridge spans the entrance to the Charles River to the north, sporting its Bunker Hill Monument-style obelisks in an inverted “Y” configuration. At dusk it shimmers a deep red from the rays of the setting sun, and at night it glows a ghostly blue.

The Other Green Monster

Veteran Boston visitors will find one thing totally remarkable when they reach the end of Faneuil Hall Marketplace and head to the waterfront. Whether you veer left and hit the North End, with its many Italian eateries and European air, or veer right to the harbor and the aquarium, one thing will most likely shock you simply by not being there. The Central Artery, that hideous hulk of elevated highway tunneled under as part of the “Big Dig,” is slowly being removed from the landscape (most likely as a gesture towards that *other* convention in July). You should come to Boston, if only to see something that isn’t there.

John Pedini (jpedini@socialaw.com) is director of media services at the Social Law Library in Boston.