

St. Mary's County Board of Trustees, Museum Division

Annual Report, 2018

2018 was a busy year for the Museum Board of Trustees, as Recreation and Parks Director Arthur Shepherd and Museum Division Director Karen Stone moved dynamically to ensure accreditation, begin renovations and plan new exhibits, and work on capital projects.

- The Board advised on the negotiation of a lease and Memorandum of Understanding between St Mary's County, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and the St. Clements Hundred on the use of St. Clements Island. Negotiations between the groups ended with greater understanding of needs and an agreement that a formal MOU can wait till 2019. In the interim, the Museum is able to schedule events more efficiently than they were before, getting an entire calendar year approved at once rather than seeking approval for each event separately.
- The Board advised and approved plans for the renovation of the St. Clements Island Museum, including a study done to determine how work could best proceed and what capital funding from the county would be needed. At year's end, a report indicated that the structure was probably sound enough to add a second floor, which would lead to substantial possible savings over a complete leveling and rebuilding.
- The Board reviewed and approved the American Alliance of Museum (AAM) re-accreditation process and application; the museum was re-accredited and became one of 16 museums in MD with this prestigious accreditation (allowing us more visibility, greater ability to borrow historic items from other museums, etc.).
- The Board heard and approved of plans, including involving three federal agencies, to clear invasive species, make repairs, and put in a kayak launch and boat launch, and create walking trail in the St. Clements Island Museum area.
- The board heard and approved plans to acquire two additional plots of land to enhance parking for events at St. Clements Island Museum.
- The Board reviewed and approved many changes at the museums, including new exhibits at Piney Point Lighthouse and Museum and the hiring of a captain to improve service on the water taxi that runs to St' Clements Island.
- The Board heard with concern of issues that occurred at the Blessing or the Fleet event, held by the 7th District Optimists. The Museum pier was left a mess with fireworks residue. The Optimists are considering moving the event to June, which the Museum Division opposes. The event was poorly attended and few boats appeared to be "blessed." The Board approves entering into negotiations to take control of the event or at least improve its running.
- The Board promoted and attended Museum events, including the opening of the Drayden African-America Schoolhouse, Pirates on the Potomac, The Jazz Festival, and Holidays events.

Board Membership, 2018: Dale Springer, President; Brian Barthelme; Jeanette Pettit; Peter Butt; Peter Neus; Lynn Fitrell; Victor Govier; Dr. Regina Faden; Christopher Shea; Eleanor Slater; Michael Blackwell, Secretary