



**BEACH
to BAY**
HERITAGE AREA

YEAR IN REVIEW

2023



**Celebrating a year of
new projects and record funding**



OUR MISSION:

Promote, preserve and protect the cultural heritage, historical linkages and natural assets of Maryland's lower eastern shore.

OUR VISION:

Maryland's Beach to Bay Heritage Area unifies, elevates and celebrates the collective stories of the lower eastern shore's heritage, cultural traditions and natural resources.

LETTER FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

The Beach to Bay Heritage Area will be celebrating our 30th anniversary in 2024! We have continued to strive to expand our programs, special projects and offerings to our region. It's our mission to promote, preserve and protect the cultural heritage, historical linkages and natural assets of Maryland's lower eastern shore. We had many high points in 2023:

- Created and expanded African American interpretive materials
- Received record funding from federal, state and local government and private foundations
- Took advantage of marketing dollars to create positive awareness
- Hired a half-time Americorps Volunteer

As we look to 2024, we have a lot of new projects in the works, including the development of a museum passport, certified interpretive guide training and the development of more public murals.

We will continue to stay on course with our five-year strategic plan as our guiding principle, allowing us to chart our course for the future and continue to elevate, celebrate and sustain the stories, traditions and natural heritage of the Beach to Bay Heritage Area.

We hope you'll be able to take part in one or more of our programs and projects and learn firsthand the pride we take in showcasing our heritage!

Sincerely,

Kristen Goller
President

Lisa Challenger
Executive Director



FUNDRAISING AND GRANTS

BBHA RECEIVED RECORD FUNDING

The Beach to Bay Heritage Area (BBHA) received nearly \$400,000 in funding during the year. Some of the grants are dedicated to special projects, while others are for general operating support.

The Office of Tourism grant was targeted for African American heritage interpretation and new product development. Some of the products to come out of this grant include new interpretive markers, Delmarva Public Radio programming with “Rarely Told Stories” segments and more public art with murals.

BBHA was awarded a Maryland Agricultural Education Rural Development Assistance Fund grant through the Rural Maryland Council (RMC) for marketing of the heritage area to allow us to expand our reach and awareness across our region. Funding will be used to market previously funded projects by the RMC including African American Heritage Tourism, augmented reality programs with our museums and public media programming and to continue to showcase our museums and attractions. We’re so excited to have these crucial marketing funds to promote all of our heritage assets!

This year marked the first time that the Beach to Bay Heritage Area received a Marketing and Block grant from MHAA. The Block Grant funding allowed us to increase our mini grant program to \$25,000 annually.



Rackliffe House Colonial Harvest Festival



Art League event

MINI GRANTS AWARDED

The BBHA was proud to increase funding of our mini-grant program by \$10,000, raising the total awards to \$25,000. Recipients in 2023 included:



ORGANIZATION	MINI GRANT PROJECT
Art League of Ocean City	Beach to Bay Heritage Exhibit and Heritage-themed Event
Community Players of Salisbury	Production of “Uncle Tom’s Cabin and the UGRR of the Eastern Shore”
Delmarva Discovery Museum	Steamship Exhibit Updates
MD Coastal Bays Program	Community Science and Volunteer Supplies
Pemberton Hall Foundation	New Entrance Sign
Rackliffe House Trust	Colonial Harvest Festival
Sturgis One Room School	Signage and Brochures
Crisfield Heritage Foundation	Crisfield Heritage Festival
Whitehaven Heritage Association	White Haven Walking Trail Signage

MHAA FUNDING FOR THE HERITAGE AREA

The Maryland Heritage Areas Authority granted more than \$320,000 to lower eastern shore organizations.



ORGANIZATION	MHAA PROJECT	AMOUNT
Beach to Bay Heritage Area	Operations, Marketing, Mini-grant Program	\$134,600
Pocomoke Indian Nation	Spheres of Influence	\$13,000
Somerset County Historical Trust	Eastern Shore Voices: Papers of Elizabeth Upshur Teackle: Phase I	\$47,500
Town of Snow Hill	Bank Street Promenade	\$78,279
Tyree African Methodist Episcopal Church	Tyree AME Church Rehabilitation Phase II	\$56,222

TOTAL MHAA AWARDS \$329,601

FUNDER	AMOUNT
Maryland Office of Tourism Development	\$110,045
Rural Maryland Council	\$30,000
Maryland Heritage Areas Authority	
Management Grant	\$84,600
Block Grant	\$25,000
Marketing Grant	\$25,000
Additional Open Grant	\$38,461
Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore	\$11,636
Maryland Humanities	\$10,000
Giving Tuesday	\$2,795
TOTAL FUNDING RECEIVED	\$337,537

MARKETING

RARELY TOLD STORIES

The BBHA partnered with Delmarva Public Media and the Rural Maryland Council to produce a series of stories titled “Rarely Told Stories of the Eastern Shore.” The segments aired in May as part of NPR Morning Edition during the local news. These included:

- [The Man Who Helped Preserve Assateague Island](#)
- [Furnace Town](#)
- [San Domingo: A Small African American Community](#)
- [Mardela Springs: A Rich History](#)

You can listen to them at beachesbayswaterways.org.



Crisfield Protests of 1961 sign



Houston Cemetery sign

AFRICAN AMERICAN INTERPRETIVE SIGNS COMPLETED FOR LOWER SHORE

Five new interpretive signs were created covering sites and people of African American significance to the region’s heritage. The five interpretive signs feature:

- [Metropolitan United Methodist Church – Princess Anne](#)
- [Mt. Zion Memorial Church – Princess Anne](#)
- [Crisfield Protests of 1961](#)
- [Stephen H. Long – Pocomoke City](#)
- [Houston Cemetery – Salisbury](#)

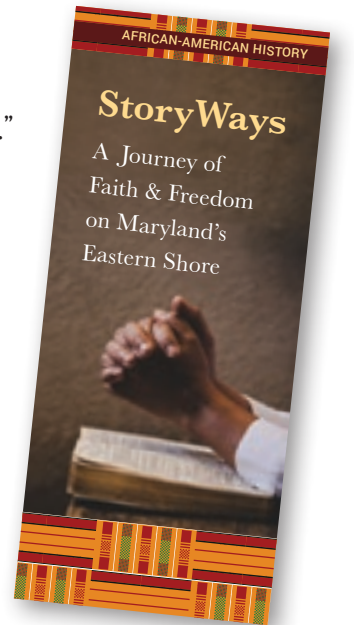
These interpretive signs were funded by grants from the Rural Maryland Council and Choptank Electric Trust.

HISTORY ON THE SHORE SERIES

We began a new monthly series in our e-newsletter entitled “History on the Shore.” Each month showcases a piece of African American history here in the heritage area. Content is produced by Dr. Clara Small and Andre Nieto Jaime.

NEW BROCHURE HIGHLIGHTS HISTORIC SITES AND PEOPLE

More than 300 years of African American history lives here. Our new brochure, “Storyways: A Journey of Faith & Freedom on Maryland’s Eastern Shore,” is designed to explore prominent themes within African American history, and present in a brief, accessible way the meaning and contributions that many properties and people have had in the overall history of the lower eastern shore. Nearly 30 sites are showcased on this self-guided driving tour experience. You can view or download the brochure at beachesbayswaterways.org.



HOLOTWINS IS NEW TOOL FOR TELLING HERITAGE STORIES

Working with Unscene Productions and RealityBLU, which creates holotwins through its WorldViewAR platform, BBHA developed three holotwins for use in the heritage area: Tindley Choir, Accohannock Indian Tribe clan leaders, and a broom maker at Furnace Town. Holotwins, or “holographic twins,” are digital “twins” of people, animations, or even videos superimposed over the viewer’s real-world environment as seen through their cellphone screens. To see the holotwin, the viewer scans a QR Code or clicks on a link in a text message, answers a few prompts, and the image of the person or thing pops up in their screen and starts speaking as if they were right in the room with them. Holotwins are as close to in-person as you can get without a full holographic image. This is a new tool for telling the stories of the heritage area, offering a more engaging experience for those who come to visit.



Filming for Accohannock Indian Tribe Holotwin

ADVERTISING IN HEARST PUBLICATIONS AND WASHINGTON POST

The BBHA advertised our Storyways brochure in Hearst Publications and the Washington Post, receiving 1,011 requests for the new brochure and sending 1,267 readers to our webpage.

ANNUAL MEETING WITH A NEW SPIN

The Beach to Bay Heritage Area held our Annual Meeting at the Historic Marva Theater in April. New this year was a storytelling event: Watermen, Movies and a Fight for Freedom. The program included three separate storytellers. More than 100 people attended, making this one we will repeat in the future.



NEW MEMBERSHIP APPRECIATION

BBHA held our first ever Board and Membership Appreciation event at Furnace Town this fall, drawing about 40 attendees.

EASTERN SHORE DELEGATION PRESENTATION

BBHA Director, Lisa Challenger, made a presentation to the Eastern Shore legislative delegation, updating them on projects and thanking them for their support of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.



BBHA ADDS AMERICORPS VOLUNTEER

BBHA received funding to hire a half-time Americorps Volunteer. We are thrilled to be working with Andre Nieto Jaime. Andre is a Salisbury University graduate with a B.A. in history. He is passionate about the history of underrepresented groups. He strives to uncover and write about often overlooked history to make a difference in people's perspectives on history and the present day. Andre will be working closely on a grant-funded project for African American history and heritage tourism.

NEW OFFICE EQUIPMENT LOANS FOR NON-PROFITS

Beach to Bay Heritage Area received a mini-grant to purchase laptops and printers to loan to small heritage-based nonprofits lacking the resources to accomplish their day-to-day mission. The BBHA will serve as a repository for this equipment, which will hopefully level the playing field when these smaller organizations are applying for and managing grants. The first organization to take advantage of this new loaner program is the Mt. Zion Historical Society.



Dedication of the Smith Island Cake sign in Ewell.

PARTNERSHIPS

We partnered with the Rural Maryland Council to host an **Electric Vehicle Symposium** in February. BBHA is supporting charging facilities along our scenic byways.

CCAAR new logo and Interpretive Plan. The **Chesapeake Country All American Road** Committee chose a new logo and are in the process of finalizing a byway-wide interpretive plan.

Smith Island Cake Sign was approved by the William G. Pomeroy Foundation through their Hungry for History program. The sign nomination was a joint effort with Smith Island United.

BBHA has partnered with all of the museums in the heritage area to create a **Museum Consortium**. This group effort is allowing museums to share ideas, resources and marketing efforts.

AWARDS



BBHA won the Environmental Service Award from the Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce.



BBHA shared in the Partnership Award for Chesapeake Country All-American Road initiatives from the Maryland Tourism Coalition.

Many of our accomplishments have been led by our experienced board members and stakeholders who have committed countless hours of their time and energy to ensure the success of the organization. By empowering our Board and committee members, we have created a dynamic and energized Board of Directors who will move the Beach to Bay Heritage Area into the future with sound footing.

BOARD MEMBERS

Russell Blake
 Mindie Burgoyne, Treasurer
 Christina Carlson
 Matt Creamer
 Curtis Dale
 Kristen Goller, President
 Ann Hillyer
 Jack Lenox
 Aaron Levinthal
 Dr. Mona Margarita, Secretary
 Dr. George Ojie-Ahamiojie
 Melanie Pursel
 Carrie Samis, Vice President
 Dr. Clara Small
 Clint Sterling
 Cynthia Stevens
 Ivy Wells
 Lee Whaley
 Bill Wilson
 Liz Wist

LISA CHALLENGER, Executive Director



Lisa brings decades of tourism experience to the Beach to Bay Heritage Area. She was awarded Tourism Person of the Year by the Maryland Tourism Coalition. She also served on the board of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority as a Governor appointee. Having retired after 31 years as Worcester County's Tourism Director, Lisa brings her vast

knowledge and experience to help preserve, promote and protect the heritage of Maryland's Wicomico, Worcester and Somerset counties.

KRISTEN GOLLER, Board President



Kristen has been a driving force behind the successes of the Beach to Bay Heritage Area. Her ability to lead the board through these unprecedented times has been both comforting and remarkable. Her calm demeanor and straight-forward approach in garnering consensus at all levels of work has been one of the primary reasons

for our success. She juggles her responsibilities of the heritage area with her career as the Tourism Manager of the Wicomico County Recreation, Parks and Tourism Department.

We can't do it without you, our members. We thank you for supporting our mission and look forward to working together in 2024!

BUSINESSES & ORGANIZATIONS

Allen Historical Society
 Ayers Creek Adventures
 Berlin Heritage Foundation
 Bishop's Stock Fine Art, Craft & Wine
 Chesapeake Ghost Tours
 City of Salisbury
 Community Players of Salisbury
 Delmarva Discovery Museum
 Duke Marshall Group
 Gillis Gilkerson
 Janes Island State Park
 Lee Whaley Associates
 Maryland Coastal Bays Program
 Ocean City Chamber
 Ocean City Development Corporation
 Ocean City Lifesaving Station Museum
 Princess Anne Main Street
 Parsons Cemetery
 Rackliffe House Trust
 Riley & Company, LLC
 Town of Berlin
 Town of Ocean City
 Town of Snow Hill
 Somerset County Historical Trust
 Somerset County Tourism
 Smith Island United State Ventures, LLC
 Sustainable Visions, LLC
 University of Maryland Easter Shore (UMES)
 Westside Historical Society
 Wilson Realty
 Wicomico County Tourism
 Worcester County Chamber of Commerce
 Worcester County Tourism

INDIVIDUALS

Jack and Pam Alexander
 Jeff Bacon
 Geraldine Bell
 Regina Bell
 Joseph Benischek
 Russell Blake
 Ernest Boger
 Sylvia Bradley
 Mindie Burgoyne
 Christina Carlson
 Emmy Challenger
 Lisa Challenger
 Ladd Colston
 John Culp
 Curtis Dale
 Michael Day
 Gerald Gerlitzki
 Nancy Goldsmith
 Kristen Goller
 Jackie Gordon
 Jill Hall
 Josh Hastings
 Ann Hillyer
 Luke Howard
 Nancy Howard
 Glenn Irwin
 Jill Jasuta
 Laura Jenkins
 Deborah Keitt
 Bill Killingler
 Roberta Laynor
 Jack Lenox
 Aaron Levinthal
 Jefferson Moak
 Mona Margarita
 Hannah Miller
 George Ojie-Ahamiojie
 Cindy Patton
 Melanie Pursel
 Susan Pusey
 Gregory Pokrywka
 Barbara Robert
 Carrie Samis
 Deborah Scott
 Sharon Sorrentino
 Clara Small
 Carol Smith
 Clint Sterling
 Cynthia Stevens
 Ivy Wells
 Sonya Whited
 Bill Wilson
 Dave Wilson
 Liz Wist



BEACH to BAY

HERITAGE AREA

14 South Main Street

Berlin, MD 21811

info@beachesbayswaterways.org

410-251-3163

