***Beach to Bay Heritage Area Accomplishments***

**New Branding**

Thanks to a generous grant from the Rural Maryland Council; Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund in the fall of FY20, we hired a consultant to facilitate an inclusive strategic planning and outreach process resulting in our development of an authentic marketing position for our heritage area. This new brand reflects and represents stakeholder input which supports our mission to: Preserve, protect and promote the cultural, natural, and historical heritage of Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester Counties. The new branding ‘Beach to Bay Heritage Area’ and the new website [www.beachesbayswaterways.org](http://www.beachesbayswaterways.org) is the outcome of our strategic planning process.

**New Web Site**

The new website offers options for telling the story of “our ways” whether it be art ways, bike ways, byways, fly ways, folk ways, food ways or waterways, we are now offering engaging content on these subjects. Content changes monthly to coordinate monthly e-news content.

**Monthly e-newsletter**

The Beach to Bay Heritage Area is currently issuing a monthly newsletter engaging to nearly 600 subscribers. Each month new features cover seasonal and current events in addition to standard information such as granting agencies and partners.

**Mini-Grant Funding**

Our mini grant funds of $15,000 annually helps fund projects across the lower shore.

Mini grant awardees over the past three years include:

 All Hallows Church, Worcester County

 Assateague Island Alliance, Worcester County

 Berlin Heritage Foundation, Worcester County

 Crisfield Heritage Foundation, Somerset County

 Friends of Poplar Hill Mansion, Wicomico County

 Furnace Town Living Heritage Museum, Worcester County

 Green Hill Church, Wicomico County

 Julia A. Purnell Museum, Worcester County

Lower Shore Land Trust, Tri-County

 Ocean City Lifesaving Station Museum, Worcester County

 Parsons Cemetery, Wicomico County

 Rackliffe House Trust, Worcester County

 Salisbury Art Space, Wicomico County

 St. Martins Church, Worcester County

 Town of Snow Hill, Worcester County

 Ward Museum, Wicomico County

 Westside Historical Society, Wicomico County

 Whitehaven, Wicomico County

 Wicomico County Parks and Recreation

Projects range from exhibits, to new websites to structural reports and interpretive signage.

This funding reflects a total of $40,523 awarded for projects totaling nearly $133,000.

Virtual Video Tours

The Beach to Bay Heritage Area received another round of funding from the Rural Maryland Council- Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund to help fund a series of virtual video tours of our museums and historic sites. COVID-19 is keeping people at home so heritage sites and museums are creating online tours across the country. This is a new project for the region and being done in order to encourage visitation to our sites and improve the economic viability of our heritage tourism partners and the region itself. The BBHA is producing one long version (5 minutes) and one :30 version better adapted for use on social media channels. The tours will be available on our YouTube channel in addition to tourism websites of each county and through the heritage site itself.

**Economic and Programmatic Impact Study**

The BBHA participated in a year-long study with the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority and the other 12 state certified heritage areas throughout the state to quantify the impact of the economic activity and the programmatic value of our technical and financial assistance. The study can be found here.