

# Currents

*The newsletter of the Four Rivers Heritage Area*

ANNAPOLIS

LONDON TOWN

SOUTH COUNTY

## Four Rivers Spring Initiatives Build Capacity Four Ways

**In the Four Rivers Heritage Area this Spring, four very different efforts succeeded in taking our activities to the next level!**

### Website

Our completely revamped and updated website, made possible through a Marketing Grant from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA), was launched on March 23, just in time for the popular Maryland Day Celebration (see page 4). The website is bright, colorful, and easy to navigate, with six major themes presented in bold colorblock-icons to engage with the visitor's interests. These become a "dashboard" for connecting with the heritage attractions and magazine-style articles in our database of options. An Events Calendar, another popular feature, helps visitors plan for upcoming activities.

### Project Funding

Four Rivers offers our partners two levels of funding opportuni-

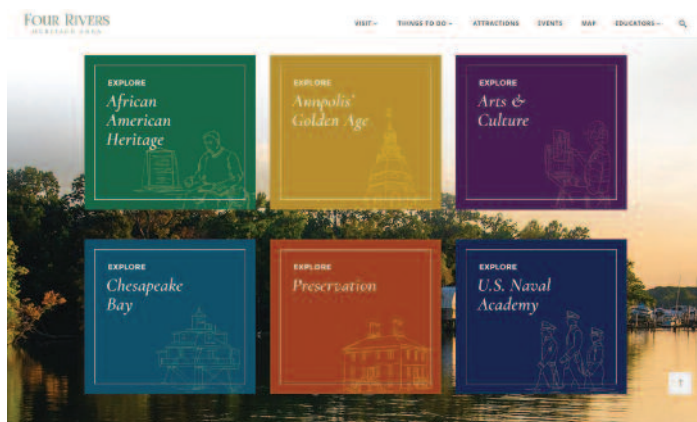
ties for their heritage-related projects – the larger grants are available once each year and are offered through the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, only to organizations within a certified heritage area. In addition, we have a mini-grant opportunity usually offered twice each year (October and February). Grant projects help our partners in a variety of ways: to preserve a physical place or building, or preserve a tradition or community resource (Preservation projects); to strengthen resources and offerings (a website, a brochure, a new program, etc.); or provide much-needed funding for new or enhanced exhibits and attractions (see page 3 for a list of new grant awards).

### New Visitor Product

The local arts scene is more vibrant than ever before, and one popular event, the First Sunday Arts Festival attracts thousands of visitors to the first block of West Street on the first Sunday of each month between May and November. Four Rivers debuted a new flyer/map for festival visitors about all the history and heritage attractions that are open on Sundays, to help them make the most of their day in town. You can download a copy of the flyer by visiting our website and clicking on "Visit > Brochures > First Sunday Arts Festival."

### Collaborative Initiatives

One of our most popular collaborative initiatives is the Maryland Day Celebration, a three-day event that marked its 10th year in March. Also this spring, Four Rivers debuted a new collaborative series called "Pop-Up Heritage" – more details appear on page 3, and events are listed on our website under "What's New." As ever, there's always something new in the Four Rivers Heritage Area!



Detail, website

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Maryland Day 2017



THE HERITAGE AREA OF  
ANNAPOLIS,  
LONDON TOWN,  
AND SOUTH COUNTY

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## MHAA FUNDING IN ACTION

# Interpretive signs detail the histories of early 20th century beach resorts



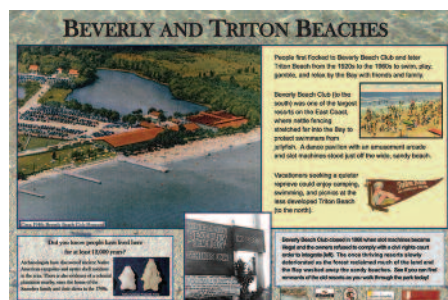
Mayo Park Sign dedication CREDIT: VALEU PHOTOGRAPHY

On April 26th, the County Office of Planning and Zoning's Cultural Resources Division, in cooperation with the Department of Recreation and Parks, dedicated two outdoor interpretive signs at Mayo Beach Park and Beverly Triton Beach Park in Edgewater. The signs are part of a project entitled, "Before the Bay Bridge: Anne Arundel County's 20thC. Beach Resorts," funded in part by grants from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority and Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation. The signs were unveiled at a formal dedication ceremony attended by a variety of stakeholders, including government officials, heritage professionals, community organizations, researchers, and local residents.

The sign that is located at Mayo Beach Park addresses the origin and history of notable beach resorts in Anne Arundel County. The second sign, installed at Beverly Triton Beach Park, describes the history of Beverly Beach Club and Triton

Beach. This collaborative grant project builds on a public program held in August 2016 at Mayo Beach Park that attracted over 500 visitors, and included planned lectures, tables hosted by local historians and researchers, and oral history interviews. The project also included public events held at Beverly Triton Beach, including a STEM archaeology day for 8th grade students from Central Middle School, a heritage hiking trail tour, and a day of plein air painting with artists from the Mid-Atlantic Plein Air Painters Association.

Four Rivers applauds the efforts of our Anne Arundel County partners to preserve what remains of this significant period in local history and the roles these places played in shaping communities and regional identity throughout time. For more information, visit Anne Arundel County Division of Cultural Resources, at [www.aacounty.org/cr](http://www.aacounty.org/cr).



Beverly Triton Beach Sign

CREDIT: Anne Arundel County Planning and Zoning



Mayo Beach Sign

CREDIT: Anne Arundel County Planning and Zoning







# Maryland Day 2017 was another big success!

Four Rivers partners had a beautiful weekend to celebrate the 383rd anniversary of our state. This year's theme was "Made in Maryland," with 31 participating sites offering activities that highlighted Maryland food, crafts, history and heritage, with an additional 19 businesses offering specials to Maryland Day visitors.

This year, the Chesapeake Children's Museum took over the organizational tasks, and collaborating partner Erik Evans, of the Inner West Street Association, worked to market and promote the programs through a wide variety of social media platforms. As a result, the event website and page views tripled and a new Facebook event page reached more than 100,000 people. Visit Annapolis and Anne Arundel County's Marketing team also provided significant marketing support, providing exposure on several TV networks that resulted in a notable rise in day-trip visitors.



Janice Hayes-Williams leads an "Our Legacy Tour"

Again this year, Four Rivers sponsored a Flag-Raising event in Susan Campbell Park that showcased the League cadets of the USNA Training Ship Mercedes and the Annapolis Drum and Bugle Corps, and was attended by Annapolis Mayor, Michael Pantelides. And Discover Annapolis Tours again circulated a trolley around downtown that shuttled visitors between participating locations.

Our partner sites worked hard all year getting their activities ready for the weekend, with their staff and volunteers collectively contributing more than 3,500 hours for a total of 58 events, making this year's event a truly collaborative, successful partnership. Thanks to all for your invaluable efforts and support!



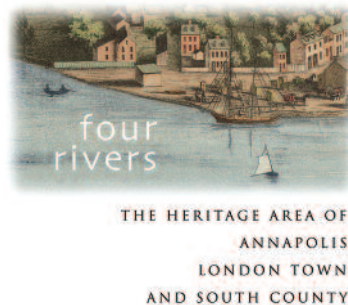
Mayor Michael Pantelides and the USNA League Cadets of the Training Ship Mercedes



Group visit at the Annapolis Maritime Museum



Celebrating "Cecily Foster Day" at the Flag-Raising Event



**Four Rivers: The Heritage Area of Annapolis, London Town & South County**  
Arundel Center, 44 Calvert Street  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-222-1805 • [heritage\\_area@aacounty.org](mailto:heritage_area@aacounty.org)  
[www.fourriversheritage.org](http://www.fourriversheritage.org)

Four Rivers is a 501 (c) 3, charitable non-profit organization. Your contribution supports the heritage sites and organizations that make a difference to our region's quality of life.

