

Currents

The newsletter of the Four Rivers Heritage Area

ANNAPOLIS

LONDON TOWN

SOUTH COUNTY

Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Grants Support New Exhibits and Interpretive Website



In July, The Four Rivers Heritage Area announced new grants from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) to local Annapolis and Anne Arundel County non-profit organizations. The four local grants are among 50 FY18 matching grants totaling \$2.695 million that were awarded to Maryland non-profits, local jurisdictions and other heritage tourism organizations including museums, and historic preservation, natural resources, cultural, and educational organizations.

The grant funds from MHAA, which are all fully matched one-to-one, support heritage tourism projects, historic preservation, natural resource protection, and educational programs and activities that expand economic development and tourism-related job creation.

ANNAPOLIS MARITIME MUSEUM, INC.



A Non-Capital grant was awarded to Annapolis Maritime Museum (AMM) for the exhibit entitled, "White Gold: Fishing and Farming the Maryland Oyster" in the amount of \$35,000. Funds will support the development of exhibit plan elevations; sample graphic layouts, graphics hierarchy, design drawing and specifications for structures; exhibit prototypes; and lesson plans and programming materials that incorporate exhibit content and are used in educational curriculum by the Museum's education programs.

HISTORIC ANNAPOLIS, INC.

A Non-Capital grant was awarded to Historic Annapolis (HA) for exhibit design and development for the upcoming exhibit, "A History of Annapolis in 99 Objects," in the amount of



\$50,000. Funding will support the design development portion of the project. Funds will be used to hire a visitor evaluation expert, a research historian, and retain an experienced exhibit design firm. The concept behind the exhibition is to use objects to illustrate and connect visitors to key people, events, ideas, and themes represented in Annapolis's four centuries of rich history.

LOST TOWNS PROJECT, INC.



A Non-Capital grant was awarded to Lost Towns Project, for an interpretive website project entitled, "A Multi-Media Enhancement of Four Rivers' African-American Heritage Trail," in the amount of \$34,000. The project will enhance the African American Heritage

Trail of the Four Rivers Heritage Area by producing an online Story-Map tour (a web-based, multi-media, interactive map), a companion guidebook, three hands-on, interactive workshops, and 20 MIHP/MASS forms. This virtual map will provide location history, photographs, original archival documents, and audio of oral history, all made available through mobile technology that will provide a more enriching experience for visitors.

In addition, Four Rivers received a Management grant for \$100,000, making a total of \$219,000 in MHAA funding to the Four Rivers Heritage Area for FY18, for projects totaling more than \$481,000. The Management grant to the Four Rivers Heritage Area supports the annual mini-grants program, the annual heritage awards, interpreter training, networking meetings, educational workshops, online resources, and new collaborative initiatives.



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LONDON TOWN,
AND SOUTH COUNTY

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Four Rivers Mini-Grant Projects Demonstrate Impact and Reach

Recent mini-grant projects have again demonstrated a rich variety of outcomes, impacts, and reach into the community, and beyond. These include:

Annapolis Maritime Museum, "Phase 1 of the Back Creek Nature Park Site-Readiness Project."

Funds supported necessary efforts to help the museum ready the site of this 12-acre nature park on Back Creek for use as an educational site for the museum's programming. The project's components included the development of a Park Master Plan and Architect Assessment, five volunteer workdays that contributed to cleaning up the site, and construction of two indoor classroom spaces for educational programming. During the grant period, over 750 individuals utilized these classroom spaces, and their use is projected to be more than 15,000 annually.

Charles Carroll House of Annapolis, "Marketing Strategies for the Charles Carroll House."

The project components included review and evaluation of the historic house's existing strategies and new approaches and materials developed. Both a new rackcard and a new interpretive brochure were developed, printed, and distributed to better promote the site. The Carroll House saw a 30% increase in visitors in FY17 as compared to the previous year, in addition to visitors attracted by special events, including more than 600 visitors attending the innovative "Shakespeare in the Gardens" performances offered in partnership with the Annapolis Shakespeare Company.

Charles Carroll House of Annapolis, "Carroll House Front Entrance Interpretive Signage Project."

The newly-restored front entrance to this historic house (see Fall 2016 Newsletter) is enhanced by interpretive signage in the form of a bronze plaque describing the "Charles Carroll House North Porch." The plaque is to be mounted on a stone base next to the entrance. The signage, developed by the Charles Carroll House

Board of Trustees, was reviewed by the Annapolis Historic Preservation Division and the City of Annapolis Heritage Commission. It gives visitors an overview of the Carroll House's appearance in the 1770's and its changes over time. The estimated number of viewers who will visit this shared site is 15,000 annually.

The Chase Home, Inc. (Chase-Lloyd House), "Visitor's Brochure – 'The Chase-Lloyd House: A House and Home of Maryland History.'"

The components of the project included many hours of research, writing, editing and preparation of images, design, review, printing and distribution of an interpretive brochure, available to visitors at the site, and now offered at area visitor centers. It is also available for download from the site's website. More than 120 hour of volunteer time were contributed; the research of University of Maryland graduate students also contributed to the project.

The Key School, "Annapolis Book Festival."

Mini-Grant funds supported promotion of the popular annual Annapolis Book Festival to a broader, more diverse audience than reached in the past. Festival programming highlighted heritage themes. On a beautiful spring day, approximately 3,000 people attended the 2016 Annapolis Book Festival, which also included live C-SPAN coverage over C-SPAN Book TV as well as several rebroadcasts scheduled over a series of months, allowing access to millions of viewers nationally. The Book Festival program was distributed to all attendees; event planners contributed 54 volunteer hours, and on the day of the event, coordination was handled by 110 Festival volunteers.

See **Four Rivers Mini-Grant Projects**, continued on page 3

Four Rivers Leaders Receive National Recognition



Alice Estrada receives award at NonProfit PRO ceremony

Four Rivers Board member **Alice Estrada**, who is the Executive Director of the Annapolis Maritime Museum, was recently selected as *Executive of the Year* by the NonProfit PRO Organization at their National Leadership Conference in Philadelphia on May 17.

NonProfit PRO is a national monthly magazine that covers a wide range of topics related to nonprofit management and strategy. The publication also hosts an annual national non-profit conference. "I am honored and thrilled to receive this award," Estrada stated. "Returning to Annapolis and leading the Museum's superb staff and expanding programs continues to be an incredibly rewarding experience. Receiving this recognition is the culmination of a lot of hard work over the last four years, and a symbol of the unique impact the Annapolis community."

Four Rivers Coordinating Council member **Emily Oland Squires** of the Maryland State Archives recently received the *Victoria Irons Walch Leadership Award* from the National Council of State Archivists. This award recognizes the sustained leadership and outstanding contributions of an individual to the development of archives, including effectively meeting challenges of archival management and creating opportunities for others in the field; demonstrating collaborative and innovative approaches to archival science; serving her constituency in an exemplary way; exceeding normal expectations and providing a model for other professionals. Ms. Squires is currently the Director of Research, Education and Outreach and has been with the state archives for 22 years, having assisted in mentoring over 175 student interns during her tenure. She is the first-ever recipient of this prestigious award from Maryland and also the first ever who was not serving as a State Archivist.

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Emily Oland Squires holds the Victoria Irons Walch Leadership Award

Four Rivers Mini-Grant Projects, *continued from page 2*

Maryland Federation of Art, "Art in Historic Places."

Marketing funds supported five public art events in 2016, which brought visitors to downtown Annapolis and involved the public in interacting with the artists and judging the winners for some of the contests. The shows/events were "Paint Annapolis," "Off the Wall," "Midsummer Madness," "Fiber Options," and "American Landscapes." Promotional materials included street banners, postcards, and

social media campaigns. More than 7,500 people saw the artworks, and the competitions drew 257 artists from across North America to Annapolis to exhibit in these juried exhibitions. In addition, online components of the exhibitions allowed them to have an even greater reach. The events foster appreciation for the arts, increase regional and national awareness of culture-related businesses and artists in our local economy, and raise our area's profile as a cultural destination.

Lisa Robbins Joins Four Rivers Coordinating Council



Four Rivers is pleased to welcome Lisa **Holly Robbins** to the Coordinating Council. Lisa is a native to the Chesapeake Bay region, growing up in the Northern Neck of Virginia. She earned her B.A. degree in Anthropology from Washington College, and a Masters of Public Anthropology from American University. She began her career teaching archaeology and developing public programs for Historic London Town and Gardens. Lisa joined the staff of Historic Annapolis in 2014 as the Vice President of Education and Interpretation. She is responsible for collaboratively developing content for all programs, tours and a cohesive interpretive plan for Historic Annapolis. She is also the Project Director for HA's new permanent exhibit, "A History of Annapolis in 99 Objects," and looks forward to working with the local community to create an engaging and innovative exhibit that will tell a comprehensive and holistic history of the people who lived and worked in Annapolis. A long-time member of the Four Rivers Education Committee, she serves as the current Chair. Welcome, Lisa!

A Trip to Smith Island Joins Heritage Areas Together

On Friday, August 25th, a group made up of Four Rivers Board members, staff, and associates joined two Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) administrators and LESHAs Executive Director Lisa Ludwig on an excursion to Smith Island, to observe that historic, endangered place first-hand. The island, which is part of the Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area (LESHA), has long been on the "bucket list" of many of our group. On a sunny, calm day, the group enjoyed the hour-long boat ride on the "Chelsea Lane Tyler," which left from Crisfield, and a family-style meal at the Bayside Restaurant, which included Smith Island Cake, the official state dessert. We then explored the town of Ewell on foot or by golf cart, stopping to appreciate the Smith Island Cultural Center (where we were greeted by Executive Director Sherri Marsh Johns), and numerous interpretive panels funded in part by MHAA and LESHAs grants. We learned about the efforts of the local organization known as Smith Island United, and its Vision Plan, which includes 5 interdependent themes: sustenance and growth of the watermen culture; viability

of repair, and others well-maintained and welcoming. Many thanks to MHAA Administrator Jen Ruffner for coordinating the transportation from Annapolis (*and driving the van!*) and to MHAA Assistant Administrator Ennis



ity of the local economy; development and maintenance of infrastructure; development of reliable and sustainable transportation; and the need to grow the year-round population of the island. The group was struck by the isolated charm of the island, with historic old structures in various states

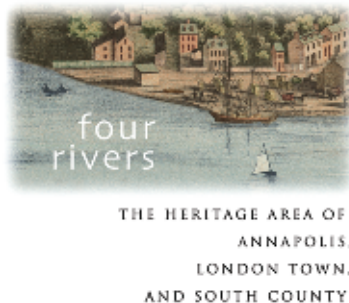
Barbery Smith, as well as Four Rivers Board members Gertrude Makell, Barbara Polito, Alice Estrada, and Elizabeth Ramirez; Coordinating Council member Constance Ramirez; and longtime Annapolis Maritime Museum staffer Mary Ostreye for sharing the journey!



Front row (L to R): Jenn Ruffner, Mary Ostreye, Gertrude Makell, Connie Ramirez, Carol Benson, Elizabeth Ramirez. Back row: Lisa Ludwig, Alice Estrada, Barbara Polito. PHOTO BY ENNIS SMITH



Lisa Ludwig with Heritage Area Signage



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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.

