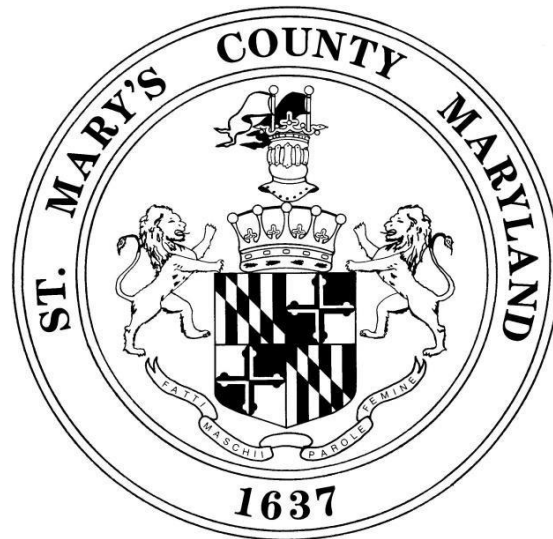


St. Mary's County Museum Division Board of Trustees



2024 Annual Report

Conner Wolfe, President
Michael Brown, Vice President
Michael Blackwell, Secretary
Kathy Bailey
Catherine Bowes
Lynn Fitrell
Robin Finnacom
Laura Friess
Jessica Hale
Karla Langhus
Emily Lewis
Kate Ross
Caitlyn Socrates

Karen Stone, Museum Division Manager

January 9, 2024

INTRODUCTION

The St. Mary's County Museum Division Board of Trustees (MDT) is an eleven (11) member group appointed by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County (CSMC) to "promote through the establishment and maintenance of a Museum and allied projects, programs which will bring about a better understanding and appreciation by the community of history, art, and the sciences indigenous to its area." The Trustees serve in an advisory and not a governing role. We ask questions and provide a public voice on Museum Activities. Museum Board of Trustees' meetings are normally held on the second Monday of every other month, beginning in January, typically in Room 14 inside the Potomac Building, 23115 Leonard Hall Drive, Leonardtown, MD.

In 2024, the Museum Division consisted of four sites: St. Clements Island Museum; Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park; the Drayden African American Schoolhouse; the Old Jail Museum in Leonardtown.

Board Membership

2024 saw changes in membership. Lilyanne Ohanesian resigned due to conflicts with work time. Thank you for your contributions, Lilyanne. Members beginning service in 2024 include Kathy Bailey, Emily Lewis, Kate Ross, and Caitlyn Socrates. Welcome, all! Conner Wolfe began a term as Board President and Michael Brown as Vice President. Michael Blackwell continued as Secretary.

SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE MUSEUM DIVISION FOR 2023 ON WHICH THE BOARD ADVISED AND BOARD OPERATIONS

- Boards, Commissions, and Committees Compliance Report: the County periodically sends a compliance report with areas that boards must meet. The Museum Board complies in all areas.
- One important project the Board is excited to continue assisting with is replacing the current St. Clements building with a new two-story building. The Board has seen the plans as they develop and provided thoughts. The project has had a few delays from its original construction schedule. A substantial completion date of December, 2025 may still be realized.
- In autumn of 2023, the Board approved a motion for the Museum Division's FY25 budget. The budget was approved in Spring of 2024 and put in place in July of 2024. Funds for additional staff were approved, a fact which allows for Drayden African American Schoolhouse and museums be open more often. Additional funding for more full-time staff will be requested in future years and should be likely

once the St. Clements Island Museum fully reopens. The Board advised on the Fiscal Year 2026 budget and will provide a letter of support for the request. Funds are requested each year for preservation, and this constant line-item remains a priority. Much of the budget goes to essentials: utilities, memberships, insurance, etc. For next year, it is hoped to make a Boat Captain position fulltime and to add a Mate position.

- The Board advised on plans to upgrade the boats that ferry passengers to St. Clements Island. The tragic hurricanes in Florida necessitated a new plan for the boat, which will now be built more locally but at some saving in cost.
- Helped promote the museum activities in the community and volunteered for service at 2024 events.
- Held a joint meeting with the Friends of St. Clement's Island & Piney Point Museums. The Friends are making efforts to expand membership, including former members and Museum Board Members; Friends staff are visiting businesses to look for sponsorships; it would be appreciated if any Board members who have business contacts would help pave the way for a Friends visit. There is a special Friends Christmas ornament ~~are~~ which is not for sale but is available to members. The Friends are helping with various events throughout the year. The Division also gets grants to support these events; the Friends often provide matching money and often serve as an applicant/passthrough on grants. The Friends also run the Museum stores, which offer local crafts and books. Online sales began during the pandemic and are continuing well. Volunteer help from the Museum Board is welcome. The Friends (and Division) are planning for events commemorating the USA's 250 and Maryland's 400th anniversaries.
- Supported the Museum's effort to portray a more diverse picture of county history, looking beyond the tragic history of the enslavement to note the many accomplishments and contributions of African-Americans. The division met with the Unified Committee for Afro-American Contributions (UCAC) to renew the MOU on the Interpretive Center; the UCAC will look for funding for exhibits, and Museum Division will provide staffing, working towards having the Drayden Schoolhouse and the Interpretive Center open more hours.

Activities for 2025/Plans for the Future

- As possible, attend budget hearings to indicate support for the division in the process.
- Support Museum activities as appropriate.
- Follow and advise on building plans for the St. Clements Island Museum.

- Follow and advise on the new boat.
- Work for greater diversity in programs with an aim to celebrating the contributions of all to the county.
- Review strategic plan for possible action items.
- Support budget increases for Fiscal year 2027.