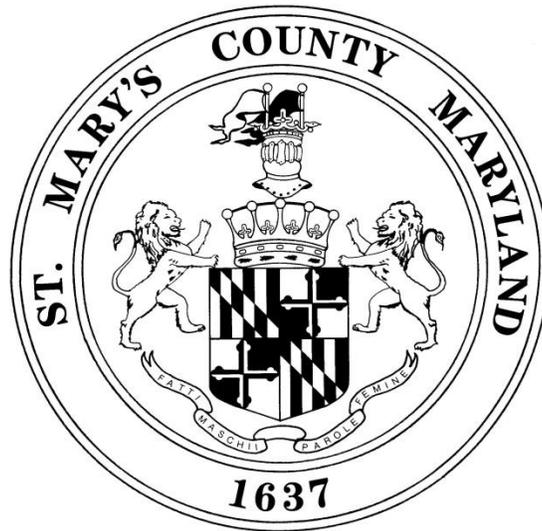


St. Mary's County Museum Division Board of Trustees



2020 Annual Report of the Board

Dale Springer, President
Peter Butt, Vice President
Michael Blackwell, Secretary
Amy Davis
Regina Faden
Lynn Fitrell
Victor Govier
Karla Langhus
Peter Neus
Jeanette Pettit
Karen Stone, Director
Arthur Shepherd, Parks & Recreation

March 8, 2021

INTRODUCTION

The St. Mary's County Museum Division Board of Trustees (MDT) Board 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. Museum Board of Trustees meetings are normally held on the second Monday of every other month, beginning in January, at 8:30 a.m. in Room 14 inside the Potomac Building, 23115 Leonard Hall Drive, Leonardtown, MD. However, given the COVID 19 Pandemic, starting in March most meetings were conducted via WEBEX. Normally one meeting a year takes place at the Piney Point Museum and Lighthouse and another at the St. Clement's Island Museum.

In 2020, the Museum Division consisted of four sites: St. Clement's Island Museum; Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park; the Drayden African American Schoolhouse and new this year was the addition of the Old Jail Museum.

Board Membership

2020 saw several changes in membership. Peter Butt and Peter Neus resigned from the Board in July. Dale Springer rotated off the Board in December. First term expired for Michael Blackwell and Victor Grovier. Both were reappointed for another term. Appointed for first terms in 2020 were Amy Davis in December, 2019 and Karla Langhus in July 2020. Appointed in December 2020 were Dr. Walter Boswell, Dr. Catherine Bowen, Michael Brown, Robin Finnacom, and Laura Friess. This brought the Board to full capacity.

At the November Board meeting the following were elected to office:

Lynn Fitrell – President
Amy Davis – Vice President
Michael Blackwell – Secretary

Board Attendance for 2020

<u>2020</u>	<u>Jan.</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Nov</u>
		Cancelled	(Held on June 8)		Held on Sept. 21)	
Amy Davis	x		x	x	X	x
Michael Blackwell (Sec.)	x		x	x	x	x
Peter Butt (V.P.)	X		x	vacant	vacant	vacant
Regina Faden	x		x	x	X	x
Lynn Fitrell	X		x	x	x	x
Victor Grovier	x					
Karla Langhus	vacant		vacant	x	x	
Peter Neus	x		vacant	vacant	vacant	vacant
Jeanette Pettit				x	x	x
Dale Springer (Pres.)	x		x	x	x	x
Arthur Shepherd (staff)	x		x	x	x	
Karen Stone (staff)	x		x	x	x	x

SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE MUSEUM DIVISION FOR 2020

2020 was a year like no other, to say the least. Yet, we survived, and, in some areas, actually thrived. The temporary closure of the sites pushed staff to explore new ideas as well as become creative and adaptive. Thank you for staying with us and continuing to support the Museum Division.

What the year 2020 was like for the Museum Division

- Administrative Staff (5 full-time employees and 2 part-time (Friends) employees teleworked completely from March through May then began coming in 1 day a week in June. After about 6 weeks, the staff began coming in more regularly as the sites were opened.
- Museum Assistants were laid off in March and the Water Taxi Captains were not hired for the season, which normally opens March 25th. All were brought back in June when the Water Taxi resumed. With the addition of the Old Jail Museum in June, several new Museum Assistants were brought on board in addition to bringing back all those already on the books.
- A new position was made available, Education Programming, and quickly filled.
- The St. Clement's Island Museum reopened in September, and Piney Point followed in November, just in time for the annual Holiday Open Houses and exhibits.

- While the indoor sites were closed to the public, some exciting changes took place at Piney Point
 - New flooring was installed on the first floor of the main museum building
 - Three new permanent exhibits were installed in the main museum building
 - A new temporary exhibit was installed in the main museum building
 - New interpretive panels were installed in the Keeper's Quarters

- Due to COVID 19 new protocols were put in place when the indoor sites were reopened to include: thorough cleaning of all surfaces on a regular basis and ensuring social distancing.

- The biggest challenge was making sure the public did not forget us!
 - We upped our presence on social media in a variety of ways, including:
 - Opening an e-store where many of the most popular items were available and where you can buy or renew your Friends membership
 - Beginning the weekly *Wayback Wednesday* series of local history stories on Facebook
 - Changing *Throwback Thursday* to a *From Our Collections* presentation of interesting and unusual items from the collections
 - People were encouraged to get outside and enjoy the beautiful parks, piers, picnic areas, walking paths and grounds that surround the museums

- The greatest accomplishment was the addition of the Old Jail Museum to our property list
 - It was put under the Museum Division on July 1st as both a museum and the official Leonardtown Visitor Center
 - It opened full time to the public in September and operates on the same schedule as the other sites
 - It served as the host site for a *Business After Hours* event for the Chamber of Commerce and has been open for all of Leonardtown's *First Friday* events

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED OR EXPECTED

- As we face the uncertainty of COVID 19 staff are planning a flexible schedule of events ensuring that programs continue in 2021. With their ingenuity events are being planned to return to in person but with a backup of virtual events and the inclusion of more virtual activities. COVID 19, though a challenge as rescheduling events that normally take place in person, brought about a new insight into how virtual events and education programs can be incorporated and expanded.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

The Board will continue to work with the Museum Division and provide support, spreading the word in the community about the County Museums and their activities.

One important project the Board is excited to assist with includes:

- Replacing the current St. Clements building with a new two story building.
- Finding spaces for staff to continue their work while the original building is being demolished and its replacement is being built.
- Storing the contents of the current building.