

Water/Ways Local Exhibit Planning November 1, 2018

Present: Amanda Fenstermaker, Angela Mercier, Bill Christopher, Cheryl Hannan, Jermaine Anderson, Jim Duffy, Julie Gilberto-Brady, Katie Clendaniel, Linda Starling, Nancy Johnson, Pat Johnson, Shirley Jackson, Tina Johnson

Notes:

Brainstorming for the local exhibit began with a review of the themes and scope identified in the MHAA Grant: Economic, Environmental, Cultural/Social – past present and future in Dorchester County. Ideas generated from this meeting will be shared with the consultant who will be leading a planning workshop later in November for the local exhibit.

Brainstorming continued with a focus on the question: **What are the local stories that convey these themes best?**

- **Overview of Group Feedback from the Brainstorming Session:**

Economic

- Deepwater ports
- Aquaculture
- Oysters
- All seafood – crabs, fish, etc.
- Shipping – other commodities (logs, produce, etc.)
- Slave trade
- Trapping
- Tourism – cruise ships, water sports
- Native American History
- Steamships
- Colonialism
- Shipbuilding
- Railroads
- Farming
- Water quality
- Ferries
- Bridges
- Beer
- Changing roles and industry

Environmental

- Climate change
- Water quality
- Sea level rise
- Erosion
- Saltwater intrusion
- Oyster, fish, crab, sea life
- Agriculture
- Disease

- Resilient shorelines – landscaping, surfaces, paving
- Habitat
- Hurricanes
- Disappearing islands
- Invasive species – snakehead, nutria, sika deer, phragmites grasses
- Access
- Water treatment

Cultural/Social

- Travel & visitors
 - Boating
 - Water sports & recreation
 - Ironman
 - Watermen
 - Underground Railroad
 - Religion – baptisms
 - Cuisine – seafood
 - Festivals & entertainment
 - Land use patterns
 - Architecture
 - Disappearing villages & islands
 - Lost sense of community due to displacement
 - Isolation
 - Transportations
 - Slaves
 - Military use
 - Rural
 - Education
 - History
 - Art/music/poetry inspired by water
 - Death
 - Respect for inherent danger
 - Access for household use – washing, drinking
 - Tradition & storytelling – Big Liz
 - James Adams Floating Theater (inspiration for Edna Ferber’s “Showboat” and John Barth’s “The Floating Opera”)
 - Watermen
 - Native Americans
 - African Americans
 - English
- **Idea Discussion:**
 - **Settlement Patterns**
 - Map patterns
 - Immigration – crab pickers affected by H2B Visas
 - How goods were moved
 - Impact on government

- **Traditions**
 - Settlement
 - Storytelling
 - Food
 - Festivals
 - Arts & Music
 - Big Liz
 - Religion
 - Hunting - Dorchester Outdoor Show & Lodge at Black Pearl
 - Entertainment & Recreation
 - Boats – power, sail, kayak
 - Paddleboats
 - Birding
 - Boat building (also slaves used on Holland Island for boat building)

- **People & Stories:**
 - Harriet Tubman
 - Pastor Mary Anne Farnell who had to travel by water from island to island
 - Rhonda Aaron – muskrat trapper, eel pot weaver
 - Kermit Travers – last black skipjack
 - Jim Richardson – shipbuilder
 - Wylie Abbott – waterman
 - Ming Li – Horn Point Laboratory Professor focusing on regional impact of climate change and extreme weather events on estuaries and coastal oceans
 - John Barth – Cambridge novelist (“The Floating Opera”)
 - James Michener – “Chesapeake” author
 - DuPont Family – prominent industrialists, financiers, philanthropists, who owned property in Dorchester; Cambridge Yacht Club
 - Johnny Shockley, waterman, co-founder Hooper’s Island Oyster Aquaculture Company
 - Bronza Parks – boat builder, last builder of Skipjacks
 - Tom Fisher- Horn Point scientist who studies water quality of the Choptank River
 - Dr. Claud Anderson - founder and CEO of Waterland Fisheries in Hurlock
 - Bobby Ruark – boat builder
 - Five governors from Eastern Shore
 - Brooks Family – crab packing
 - Jackson Family – Emily’s Produce
 - Webb Family – farmers in Vienna
 - Nicholas Family – farmers
 - Herschel Johnson – farming family
 - Webster Family – factory owners in East New Market
 - George Radcliffe – related to former U.S. Sen. George Radcliffe; involved with historic Spocott Windmill
 - Phillips Family – packing houses

- **Reflections from Shirley Jackson** on what water means to her:
“It means survival. It means pleasure, travel. The last one would be religion.”

“I think about Handsell. The Nanticoke River provided ships to bring the English, along with the slaves. I think about food. People in the area are going fishing, trapping for muskrats, along with

shipping. I think about transportation. With boats, you could go from one community to another. It helped with pleasure, as well as making a living. Religion would be the congregation going down to the river to be baptized. I think about the calmness, looking at the color of the river, listening to the birds. The pleasure would be going out to catch crabs.”

“It is important now for the younger generation. We have got to leave them something so they can remember the generation before them.”