



Dear Members and Colleagues:

Thanks as always to a remarkable group of member volunteers, the year 2019 was a successful one for the museum. Of particular importance, and impacting all areas of museum development, was the Board's decision to fund a part-time MWM administrator beginning March 2020. It is the Board's belief that a central administrative post answerable to officers and directors will contribute consistency and organization provided in larger museums by an executive director. The one-year appointment of Jeannie Bedwell to the position will allow the Board to assess the pragmatic and financial aspects of the new position and determine best practices for the future. Meanwhile, Jeannie will also continue to serve as paid part-time curator, a responsibility she has ably fulfilled for the past nine years. Additional accomplishments in 2019 included:

**Exhibits, Oversight of Collections**

- On April 27, MWM presented "It's a Shore Thing," an Opening Day celebration advertising tours of the Morattico shoreline and Tidal Marsh Enhancement Project. Although wind and water conditions prevented planned deadrise tours by Rappahannock Roundstern, visitors took advantage of outstanding presentations on the museum grounds and an on-site introduction to plans for the tidal marsh. Presenters on hand included the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Northern Neck Native Plant Society, and the Northern Neck Master Gardeners and Shoreline Evaluation specialists.
- With the help of Board member Steve Sykes, a new sign was installed calling attention to the tidal marsh project.
- Fifty appreciative participants attended docent training on May 4, followed by a festive luncheon prepared by Mary Beth Barrack with help from Marian Howell and members of the Docent Committee.
- In late 2019, the museum curator began plans for "Riverbred and Blest: Growing Up in a Fishing Village." The May 9 Opening Day gala will feature visits inside four Morattico homes with individuals who spent their childhoods in the houses sharing their stories.
- Throughout the year, the curator conducted research, oversaw and catalogued collection items, and monitored exhibits and acquisitions for security.

**Community Events, Outreach, and Communication**

- On March 16 the museum held its Annual General Membership Meeting, followed by a lunch for members in the pavilion. Lunch coordinator extraordinaire Mark Eldert and a group of amazing

local member-cooks provided lunch with “Taco ‘Bout a Cook-off.” All attending members were the beneficiaries.

- The Board continued its work in applying for a Virginia historical marker for the village of Morattico with a fall 2020 target date for completing the application.
- A Morattico Village Parade and potluck picnic brought approximately 200 guests to the James A. Vick Pavilion on July 6.
- Fortunate community members enjoyed educational tours of the village shoreline aboard an authentic deadrise on July 20, thanks to Richard Moncure and Rappahannock Roundsterns. Moncure provided the tours to compensate for those cancelled due to water conditions on Opening Day.
- Summer and early fall community activities sponsored by the museum included two Family Movie Nights in the pavilion, a “Paint and Sip” wine and cheese workshop with artist and educator Shauna McCranie, and an archaeological dig led by John Henry Taylor on the site of the original Morattico Plantation.
- Throughout the year, member Donna Hazzard composed and delivered “welcome baskets” to new residents in the village. Donna’s visits offered a friendly face to new arrivals as well as an introduction to the museum.
- Board member Linda Butler and helpers orchestrated a fine thank-you to MWM members and volunteers on December 3 with an outstanding New Year’s Eve Party in the museum building.
- Three newsletters, print news articles, emails, and an ongoing presence on social media-maintained contact with our members and the public.

### **Building/Grounds Maintenance and Improvements**

- Thanks to financial gifts from Steve Sykes and Connie Conley, substantial upgrades were completed in 2019 on both the James A. Vick outdoor pavilion and the bandstand.
- A new outdoor bar for events in the pavilion was designed and installed by member Jack Pettigrew.
- Board member Charlotte Silverman and others provided the impetus to introduce signage, receptacles, and routines necessary for trash recycling at museum functions.
- In August the Board met for the first time in the new second-floor conference room/curator’s workroom. The space is the result of the vision and labor of vice-president Clint Downing.
- Following a tour of the tidal marsh area, Lancaster County Director of Planning and Land Use and Environmental Code Compliance Brian Barnes responded in December to questions from coordinator Patricia Wilson of the Tidal Marsh Enhancement Project. His letter provided detailed descriptions and code references assuring that the projected future construction of access walkways and a viewing platform is a permitted use of tidal wetlands.
- Also, in December, Master Gardener/Shoreline Evaluation specialists offered an initial planting design for the entrance to the future walkway with suggestions for numerous native plants well-suited to the area.
- As they have in every year, the Building and Grounds Committee and their volunteers, unsung museum heroes, have been responsible for 24-7 maintenance and repair, overseeing building cleaning and exterior landscaping as well. And the Esso sign has been reinstalled!

## **Finances and Fundraising**

The museum continues to operate on a sound financial basis. 2019 income for maintenance and operation derived from fundraisers, membership dues, gifts, and sales of merchandise. Profits from volunteer-driven fundraisers were “Swine, Wine, and Beer” - \$3,431; Crab Feast - \$5,215; Oyster Roast - \$6,321. The MWM “rainy day” account currently stands at \$35,830.

Overall, endeavors in 2019 were a productive combination of the traditionally proven and exciting new creative ideas. Thank you to a membership which contributes, always, both the vision and the “legs” leading to such successes.

David Henley, President  
Morattico Waterfront Museum