

CATOCTIN FURNACE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC. **2021: THE YEAR OF THE UNVEILING**

In 2021, events were again able to be held in person, and the Museum of the Ironworker opened to visitors. The highlight of the year was “Forged in Iron and Bone: Unveiling Faces of the Enslaved,” an event held at Delaplaine Center for the Arts, where facial reconstructions were unveiled of two people who were once enslaved at the Catoctin Furnace in Thurmont: a woman who experts estimate was about 35 years old when she died and a boy believed to have been about 15. The sold-out event was amazing!!!

VISITORSHIP

Approximately 35,158 visitors came to Catoctin Furnace in 2021, visiting the ruins, walking the African American Cemetery Interpretive Trail, and visiting the village. Approximately 1,653 visitors have toured the Museum of the Ironworker since it opened at the beginning of July (the Museum was closed for two weeks in August and on Christmas weekend).

EVENTS

Maryland Iron Festival (virtual) - The May festival was a great success, with nearly 100 attendees and many more views in the months following. Many thanks to Anne Comer and to all the participating sites! Please visit our YouTube channel to see the program.

Forged in Iron and Bone: Unveiling Faces of the Enslaved – held at Delaplaine Arts Center on June 24. Simply an amazing event that was a long time coming!

Green-walled Garden Club wayside dedication: The dedication, held on June 27, was well-attended. Chris Gardiner’s remarks included memories of his mother, Harriet, for whom the garden is named and dedicated.

Maryland Iron Festival (live) – Saturday, September 18, and Sunday, September 19 - a **Great Success!!!** Between 2,500 and 3,000 people attended, and the volunteers were amazing including Harriet Chapel’s inaugural chapel tour docents!

Fallfest - Friday, October 8, and Saturday, October 9. Apple butter was made and blacksmithing demonstrated.

Spirits of the Furnace - Saturday, October 16. A great, well-attended event with fabulous costumes, courtesy of a HCWHA mini grant! A special thanks goes out to Silver Oak Academy and Cunningham Falls State Park volunteers!

Traditional Village Christmas - Saturday, December 4. Beautiful weather accompanied this event with museum visits, 7 outside vendors, wreath-making, children’s activities, a bake sale, a visit from Belsnickel, and blacksmith demonstrations. BBQ food was provided from the Sauced Savage. In addition, gift baskets filled with northern Frederick County goods (a Catoctin Furnace sticker, a postcard with the village map, homemade apple butter, local maple syrup, McCutcheon’s baking mix, a punched tin ornament kit, and a bag of homemade “hard tack” Christmas candy--a Catoctin Furnace tradition!) were for sale. There were an estimated 500 attendees, with great sales for both the organization and vendors.

GRANT SUCCESSES!

Delaplaine Foundation, \$15,000 – Museum of the Ironworker – Finish It!: This grant assisted us in completing the exhibits in the Museum of the Ironworker.

Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr. History Fund – Maryland Center for History and Culture, \$20,000 – Forging the Future: Ensuring Catoctin Furnace’s Long-term Financial Health: With funding from this grant, we are working with consultants to explore the development of an endowment.

William G. Pomeroy Foundation, \$25,000 – to design and fabricate 12 waysides along the Iron Trail between the Ironmasters Mansion and the Manor area: The Iron Trail complements the cemetery trail waysides as well as waysides in CATO and Cunningham Falls State Park, including information about geology/geomorphology of the area, socio-economic conditions surrounding ironmaking, ecological factors (trees/vegetation), transportation, native plants, conservation movements, WPA/CCC, Little Hunting Creek, connections with President Hoover/fishing, the iron industry in Africa and Europe, village children’s activities (Locust Pond, etc.), and folk medicine.

FY 2021 Certified Local Government and MHT non-Capital grants, award of \$75,000 – Recovering Identity: Northern Frederick County African American Resources Survey: This important historical and architectural survey is identifying and documenting African American dwellings and structures in northern Frederick County.

FY22 TRIPP Grant, \$6,288 – Advertising: Continuing to Entice them back: Ads during COVID and its aftermath.

FY22 TRIPP Grant, \$2,500 – Everyday Treasures Beneath the Floorboards: An Archaeology Exhibit at the Forgeon’s House.

FY21 MHT Historic Preservation Capital Grant Program, \$100,000 – Restoration of the F.W. Fraley Store.

FY 2021 Maryland Humanities, \$10,000 – Braided Lives: Troublin de Water, Catoctin Furnace’s Enslaved through Poetry, Song, & Narrative: This grant funded a two-part program featuring the poetry of Elayne Bond Hyman and the music of HALO Quartet.

FY 2020 HCWHA repurposed mini grant, \$812.50 – for COVID-19 related operating expenses: This grant was originally intended to fund continuing education but was repurposed during the pandemic.

Bond Bill – Museum of the Ironworker, \$50,000 reimbursement received: These funds completed restoration of the Museum of the Ironworker.

FY21 MHAA – Finish It & Dirty and Dangerous: Museum of the Ironworker Phase III and Exhibits: These funds completed the exhibits prior to opening the Museum.

Frederick County Bounce Back, \$10,000: This grant money pays college students to staff the museum as docents as well as for utilities and maintenance.

FY22 SHA Recreational Trails Program Grant, \$55,680 – The Iron Trail: Connecting the Catoctin Furnace Ruins to the Manor Area of Cunningham Falls State Park: This trail renovation and construction project will take place during 2022. Twelve waysides have been designed with the help of intern Maya Wasserman, under the supervision of Cindy Poole.

Maryland State Arts Council Presenting and Touring grant, \$1,900 – to support Maryland Iron Festival performance of Slim Harrison: Slim presented two programs during the Maryland Iron Festival.

Purchasing the Miller House – Saving a worker house in historic Catoctin Furnace

MHAA Emergency Grant, \$100,000.

Delaplaine Foundation, \$25,000.

Ausherman Family Foundation, \$100,000.

These funds facilitated purchase of the Miller House, future home of the Furnace Fellows program. CFHS, Inc., is only the third owner of the house.

Collections Assessment for Preservation (CAP) program grant, \$8,000: from the Foundation for Advancement in Conservation (FAIC) to inventory and assess conservation needs of our collection.

HCWHA Mini grant, \$5,000 – Windows into the Past: A Clear Visualization of Two Lost Structures in Catoctin Furnace: This grant provides funding to construct two clear panels with outlines of missing structures.

Sustaining the Humanities through the American Rescue Plan (SHARP) Recovery Grant, \$10,000 – Maryland Humanities: This grant is earmarked for recovery from the effects of the pandemic.

MISCELLANEOUS HIGHLIGHTS!

Recovering Identity – Northern Frederick County African American resource study: We are working on the research phase of this project with AARCH and Frederick County. Rick Smith is compiling spreadsheets for each US Census (1790-1880) of free negro households, including names and numbers of individuals in each household. Next, he will be compiling enslaved and owner information from each of the censuses. Edward Quinter is translating the Moravian diaries from old German for us. Marilyn Veek is working on title searches, beginning in the Lewistown area. Edie Wallace is writing a context report for the north county. John Murphey will undertake an architectural survey of extant structures.

Congratulations to the Green-walled Garden Club: The club's 5:24 minute video, "Walking Tour - Historic Gardens at Catoctin Furnace with the Green-walled Garden Club," won first place in the National Garden Clubs, Inc., video contest! The club created the video during the height of the pandemic, and it was part of the 2020 Maryland Iron Festival. It may be viewed on our YouTube channel. And, while you are there, check out their 2021 Maryland Iron Festival video, entitled "Growing Strawberries with the Green-walled Garden Club." Congratulations to the Green-walled Garden Club, part of The Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland, Inc.

Smithsonian Institution – Mission Critical Film – *Forged in Iron and Bone*: Filming has been ongoing throughout 2021. The film should be released in early 2022.

Acquisition of the Miller house, next door to the museum: On December 23, 2021, funding from MHAA, the Delaplaine Foundation, and the Ausherman Family Foundation allowed CFHS to purchase this ca. 1820 log worker dwelling. Future use of the dwelling will be to house Furnace Fellows in an innovative, one-year, paid residential research and professional development program. Each year, two new Fellows will join the site and participate in research, public interpretation of the industry and workers, and hands-on historic preservation, including building maintenance and restoration. Through research, seminars, and hands-on projects, Furnace Fellows will conduct significant primary research, gain professional museum experience, and learn about heritage tourism, including:

- *Attending an initial, intensive one-week seminar with leading scholars and heritage tourism professionals*
- *Conducting in-depth, yearlong research that leads to a major project and /or paper based on their work*
- *Leading tours of the historic site, buildings, and landscape, and having full engagement in interpretive programming*
- *Working closely with the CFHS board and staff on projects that will include heritage tourism, museum and historic site management, collection care and research, exhibition planning, educational programming, and special events*
- *Participating in various events and staff/board meetings to learn about the structural, economic, strategic, and creative decisions involved in the day-to-day operations of a historic site and museum*
- *Attending monthly field trips and site visits to museums, heritage tourism sites, and cultural venues and benefiting from professional development opportunities, including resume review and next-step planning based on individual career goals.*

The furnace fellowship program will provide training and mentoring to emerging professionals in the heritage tourism industry. Fellows will be recent college graduates and/or graduates from the National Park Service Traditional Trades Apprenticeship Program, The Frederick Community College Building Trades Technology Certificate Program, or The Campaign for Historic Trades Program.

Field trip to upper mine bank with Tim Rose, Smithsonian Institution: The trip was enjoyable and a success. In addition to finding the iron-bearing strata and limestone formations we were seeking, we also found multiple rails from the old dinky railroad and revisited an old boiler.

Outdoors Maryland: filming by Robert Ferrier with Backfin Media. This excellent 8-minute feature aired in November on Maryland Public Television.

***The New Yorker* article by Jill Lepore:** this article about cemeteries of enslaved persons, including the Catoctin Furnace cemetery, appeared in the October 4 edition.

Social Media: A huge thanks to Anne Comer for upping our presence on these platforms in 2021: Instagram (385 followers), Facebook (1,653 followers), Twitter (52 followers,) and YouTube (106 subscribers). Remember to follow/subscribe and like and share our posts!

Interns: Twelve amazing interns/emerging professionals from universities across the United States worked with CFHS mentors this year: Kaylie Bergeson, Michael Brandon, Brooke Petrucci, Anne Stanley, Tiffini Eckenrod, Maya Wasserman, Kennidi Green, Kaycee A. Conover, Tamara Pilson, Dana Gordon, Destiny Fairless, and John Wilhide. Their project topics included material culture, social media, African American genealogy, game development, historical research, curriculum development, vernacular architecture, and other exciting projects.

Special Tours for visitors:

In addition to individual visitors, we welcomed several group tours and special guests, including Bollman Bus; Elite Coach; two groups from Buckingham's Choice; UMBC Public History Citizen Historians group; Boyds Historical Society Vice President Miriam Schoenbaum; DNR Secretary Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio and Carrie Cook, Executive Assistant, Office of the Secretary; Mark Widmyer, Office of the Governor Western Maryland Outreach Coordinator; Leadership Frederick; and Grace Stanislaus, AARCH Interim Manager, and Seaven Gordon, AARCH Vice President.