

HEART OF THE CIVIL WAR HERITAGE AREA



YEAR-IN-REVIEW
July 2023 - June 2024

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OLIVIA PETERSON, Heritage Area Assistant



(L–R) Chris Haley, Shuan Butcher, Elizabeth Shatto, Clint Smith, and Kristen McMasters at the November 2023 Year-in-Review.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

In fiscal year 2024, the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area (HCWHA) stepped assertively into the first goal of our strategic plan, to “embrace creative risk-taking....” The goal’s intent is to encourage enhanced product development among our partners, and we choose to lead by example.

We expanded and enhanced our team, welcoming Olivia Peterson as our Heritage Area Assistant and promoting Emily Huebner to the role of Director of Operations and Programs. Our Board of Directors recognized these steps as necessary to meet increasing demand for heritage area services. Throughout this report it will be clear that deepening our capacity extends our impact in Carroll, Frederick, and Washington counties.

In November 2023, the largest and most diverse audience for our annual Year-in-Review turned out to hear best-selling author Clint Smith and participate in a fireside chat-style conversation moderated by Chris Haley, Maryland State Archives Director of the Study of the Legacy of Slavery in Maryland.

Strides were made, guided by our Finance Committee, to create new paths for individuals, businesses, and others to contribute to the sustainability of the heritage area. New long-term investment vehicles include the Legacy Leaders Circle (planned giving) and the HCWHA Agency Fund with the Community Foundation of Washington County. An additional allocation of Maryland Community Investment Tax Credits created more advantage for annual fund supporters.

As always, we encourage you to explore the powerful places of our three-county area. In doing so, you help bring our vision closer to reality: “**A vast and diverse audience engages meaningfully with the past and present in the HCWHA, carrying their experiences here into the future.**”

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Scott Shatto
Executive Director

Shuan Butcher
President of the Board

GRANTS

MARYLAND HERITAGE AREAS AUTHORITY (MHAA) PROJECT GRANTS

MHAA grants are only available to those located within the boundary of a certified heritage area. **Projects advance heritage tourism and grant awards must be matched by the applicant with non-State funds to increase public-private investment.** HCWHA staff coaches local applicants and provides technical support; the HCWHA Board, Advisory Council, and expert volunteers review local applications before they move on for MHAA consideration. A Maryland grant review panel determines final grant awards across the state.

Total awarded to projects in July 2023: \$461,899.37

CATOCTIN FURNACE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Stabilization for future interpretation of the Ironmaster’s Mansion

\$80,000

CIVIL WAR PRESERVATION, INC.

Acquisition of Jacob Avery Tract at Antietam National Battlefield

\$90,000

FRIENDS OF CUNNINGHAM FALLS STATE PARK AND GAMBRILL STATE PARK, INC.

Civilian Conservation Corps Exhibit at Gambrill State Park

\$5,675.37

FRIENDS OF HALFWAY AFRICAN AMERICAN CEMETERY

Public access and fencing at Halfway African American Cemetery

\$13,000

HAGERSTOWN-WASHINGTON COUNTY CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

Legal rights and production materials for House on Jonathan Street documentary

\$25,000

MAIN STREET MIDDLETOWN, MD, INC.

Implementing recommendations from the Visitor Experience Plan for the Welcome Center at 19 W. Main Street

\$25,800

WASHINGTON COUNTY FREE LIBRARY

Preserve microfilm of rare historic newspapers

\$17,424



Guests attend film screening reception at Maryland Theatre for the House on Jonathan Street documentary.

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCES CULTURAL AND HERITAGE SOCIETY

Fabrication and installation of Amaze project

\$47,500

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

Phase II interior environment stabilization at historic Durbin House

\$90,000

TOURISM COUNCIL OF FREDERICK COUNTY

Frederick County Visitor Center exhibit redesign

\$47,500

WESTMINSTER CEMETERY COMPANY

Digital enablement of the historic Westminster Cemetery records

\$20,000



Quilt exhibit at the Carroll County Farm Museum, partially funded by an MHAA Project Grant.

HCWHA MINI-GRANTS

HCWHA directly administers mini-grants, which are supported by a block grant from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. Mini-grant projects are non-capital projects that **advance heritage tourism and the goals and priorities described in our Management and Strategic Plans.**

Total awarded to mini-grant projects in December 2023: \$23,728

CATOCTIN FURNACE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Acquisition of historically accurate marquee tent

\$2,028

THE WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL TRUST, INC.

Develop a strategic interpretive plan, brochure, and wayside marker for the circa 1800 Saylor House

\$3,400

SGT. LAWRENCE EVERHART CHAPTER, SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Erect historical markers to commemorate the march of Gen. Anthony Wayne and his PA Continental troops through western Maryland

\$2,200

WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Fund work and improvements to assure the appropriate long-term care, storage, and display of the WCHS's Civil War artifacts

\$5,000

NATIONAL ROAD HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Support the setup of the reception area for the National Road Museum and Boonsboro Welcome Center

\$5,000

HOOD COLLEGE

Enable the digitization of 19th and 20th century Frederick Female Seminary and Hood College documents

\$4,000

WASHINGTON COUNTY FREE LIBRARY

Fund essential cleaning and repair of an original 1859 map of Washington County

\$2,100

More good news!

Fiscal year 2025 grantees include projects from **Carroll, Frederick, and Washington Counties.** Details will be provided in next year's report.

HCWHA is an indispensable resource to local government and nonprofit partners, providing technical assistance in different forms.



(L-R) Richard Turner, Nick Redding, Del. Christopher Eric Bouchat, Elizabeth Shatto, Dr. Cheryl Gooch at the USCT Commission bill hearing.

HCWHA staff works closely with local applicants to the MHAA grant program, but the relationship and assistance goes beyond the financial benefit of being located within a Heritage Area.

HCWHA is frequently consulted to provide advice and guidance regarding collections, strategic planning, nonprofit administration and Board management, historic preservation resources, sources of funding beyond MHAA, and many other unquantifiable aspects of maintaining our vibrant heritage tourism ecosystem.

During fiscal year 2024, HCWHA testified in Annapolis to **support the creation of a Commission to Study African American Civil War Soldiers.** The Commission is tasked with studying African American Civil War soldiers in Maryland and making a recommendation regarding the creation of a memorial to honor those soldiers. Board member Tereance Moore will represent HCWHA on the Commission.

TESTIMONIALS

"... I would like to thank you for taking time out of your very busy schedules, for your guidance and assistance throughout this process. This would have been a much more arduous undertaking without your insight, encouragement and can-do attitude. Please accept my deepest gratitude."

THADDIOUS GOODMAN

on behalf of historic Quinn Chapel AME Church in Frederick,
following technical assistance with historic preservation grant pursuits

See more on page 12.

HCWHA VISITOR CENTER AT THE NEWCOMER HOUSE

The Historic Newcomer House on the Antietam National Battlefield has served as the Heritage Area's Visitor and Exhibit Center since 2010. It is often the first stop for battlefield visitors, and they are met by **one of our approximately 40 dedicated volunteers.**

Newcomer House docents come to us from many walks of life, **each bringing their own special personality** to the interpretive opportunities at Newcomer House, and they are truly the heartbeat of our "home."



Vietnam War veterans participating in the Sharpsburg Memorial Day Parade.

Vietnam War veterans who are part of the volunteer cadre were among the special honorees at this year's Sharpsburg Memorial Day Parade and it was our delight to honor their service to our country.



Angela Crenshaw, Director of the Maryland Park Service, presenting at the Newcomer House.

Monthly Porch Programs continued in 2024 with the return of some favorites like authentic wet plate photography demonstrations and new additions that included a talk entitled "Harriet Tubman: The Ultimate Outdoorswoman." These programs enhance the stories told through visitation to the house.



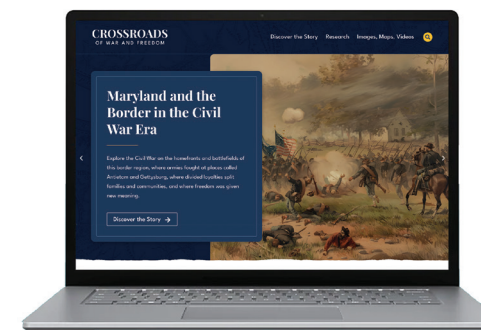
Greg and Nora Slick holding an Olympic torch.

Greg Slick, a retired high school teacher and wrestling coach, suspended his Newcomer duties this July to attend the 2024 Paris Olympics to cheer on his former student, Hagerstown's Aaron Brooks, who brought home a bronze medal! Read Coach Slick's reflections on his travels and volunteering at the Newcomer House on the Year-in-Review's back cover.

PROJECTS, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND EDUCATION

CROSSROADS OF WAR AND FREEDOM WEBSITE

The newly renamed website is being updated with new database entries, additional and updated essays, and a brand new visual identity. This project is funded by a National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program grant.



GEOTOUR

HCWHA has been awarded funding from Visit Frederick's TRIPP grant program and the Rural Maryland Council to lead the creation of a GeoTour to guide visitors through 250 years of history, taking them to Geocaches at historic sites, Main Streets, and more. This project builds on the success of the nearly decade-old HCWHA GeoTrail, which was traveled by 2,000 accounts, representing participants from 45 states and 13 countries.

US 250TH ANNIVERSARY PLANNING

Biannual 250th gatherings have continued in fiscal year 2024, bringing history organizations, local governments, and others together across all three counties to share progress, resources, and funding sources.



SCAN TO SEE THE HCWHA 250TH TOOLKIT.

STANDARDS FOR EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

HCWHA hosted simultaneous viewing sessions in all three counties to learn more about the Standards for Excellence Program (American Association for State and Local History–AASLH–curriculum) and explore the possibility of creating a cohort to participate in the program.

2023 ANNUAL YEAR-IN-REVIEW

The 2023 Year-in-Review was our largest audience yet at Frederick's Weinberg Center for the Arts. Best-selling author Clint Smith participated in a fireside chat-style conversation moderated by Chris Haley, Maryland State Archives Director of the Study of the Legacy of Slavery in Maryland.



Record turn-out for the 2023 Annual Year-in-Review at the Weinberg Center for the Arts.



(L–R) Chris Haley and Clint Smith at the 2023 Annual Year-in-Review.

2024 MARYLAND HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD

Antietam National Battlefield and the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area were recognized jointly with a 2024 Maryland Historic Preservation Award for "Engaging Visitors through Battlefield Exhibits."



Photo Credit: AAIC Visual Perceptions (@aaicdrones)

HERITAGE AREA DESTINATION MARKETING

HCWHA works together with our Destination Marketing Organizations in Carroll, Frederick, and Washington counties to create our annual marketing plan to promote the region to visitors.

Sponsored content included: An itinerary of historic and scenic landscapes to enjoy fall foliage in the heritage area (Blue Ridge Outdoors), a guide to historic sites in the heritage area that offer garden experiences (WTOP Spring article), and a guide to Network to Freedom Underground Railroad sites in the heritage area (MD Road Trips and Philly Magazine article).

SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS CURRENT FOLLOWER COUNT

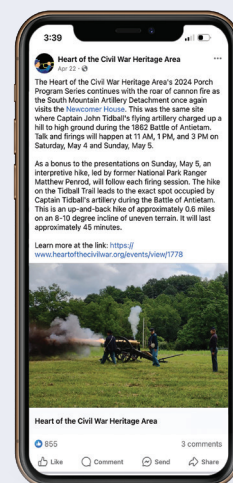
FACEBOOK
3,139 followers

INSTAGRAM
1,911 followers

159,000

Google Ads impressions, an in-kind donation **valued at \$63,300**

TOP PERFORMING CONTENT



FACEBOOK

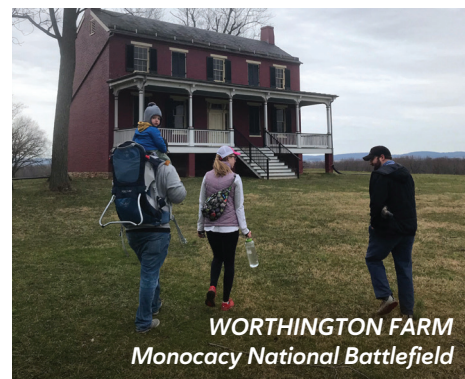


INSTAGRAM

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS

Fiscal year 2024 marked two years of progress on a six year plan. HCWHA has been advancing all goals and objectives identified within four strategic areas: Product Development, Building Partnerships, Regional Identity, and Organizational Development.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:



GOAL: Support and coordinate the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the United States across the Heritage Area.

Regular 250th anniversary convenings to gather partners from all three counties in a unique opportunity to discuss progress and share resources.



SCAN TO VIEW AND DOWNLOAD OUR STRATEGIC PLAN.

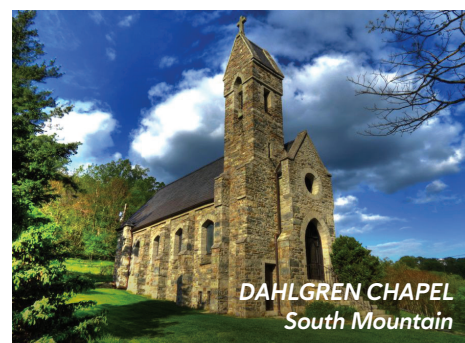
GOAL: Ensure that experiences in the Heritage Area are appealing and welcoming to diverse audiences that reflect future visitation trends.

Developed a Spanish-language landing page on our website, hcwha.org, to pair with a Spanish-language radio advertisement. Crossroads of War website update project highlights new research on African American history in the region.



GOAL: Support capacity building through technical assistance for heritage and cultural tourism organizations in the Heritage Area.

HCWHA hosted simultaneous sessions in all three counties to explore the possibility of implementing a Standards for Excellence Program (American Association for State and Local History–AASLH–curriculum) cohort, collecting feedback and sharing the program with stakeholders. Participated in local strategic planning efforts, introduced partners to resources to preserve and develop heritage tourism products.



GOAL: Develop and implement a plan for sustainability for the Heritage Area.

Establishment of the Legacy Leaders Circle. This circle of donors include HCWHA in their estate planning. Secured an additional \$10,000 of Community Investment Tax Credits to award to eligible donors. Created an Agency Fund with the Community Foundation of Washington County.



GOAL: Align the human resources of the Heritage Area with its future needs.

The addition of a Heritage Area Assistant to HCWHA staff increased the organization's capacity, allowing staff to devote additional time to the core mission: working together with our fellow nonprofits and government units to preserve and promote our region's unique history.



GOAL: Facilitate/support platforms and methods to connect and weave assets of Heritage Area together into cohesive experiences and products.

Began the redesign of the HCWHA website and brochure, to be completed in fiscal year 2025. Pursuing the creation of a three-county GeoTour to commemorate the US 250th anniversary.



GOAL: Provide support for vulnerable collections and sites.

Active in local discussions about the growing need to future proof collections storage among local repositories; including environmental and security standards.

GOAL: Embrace creative risk-taking and utilizing solid data to support and encourage enhanced product development among partners.

Projects in the HCWHA broke new ground with new ways of visualizing buildings that have long disappeared from the landscape with digital and ingenious physical recreations, a mobile app integration to the experience of a historic cemetery, bilingual signage, and collaborative community storytelling through theatre.



GOAL: Engage local residents in knowing, preserving, and promoting the Heritage Area themselves.

As our region faces increasing development pressures, HCWHA contributes to Section 106 requests with the guidance of our county advisors.





Annapolis Rock, South Mountain State Park.
Image credit: Charissa Hipp

HCWHA NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

It's true. As a nonprofit organization, to deliver high impact services (including access to grant funding) to our communities your support is necessary. We need:

- Financial gifts to meet our annual bottom line.
- Support for long term sustainability through (1) the Legacy Leaders Circle (planned giving) and/or (2) gifts to our Agency Fund with the Community Foundation of Washington County.
- Your voice and advocacy. Please rally to the call for Maryland Heritage Areas Authority budget and policy changes—coming soon!

Who are WE? All of us! Those who care for our historic, cultural, and natural resources. The young and not-so-young, who gain perspective on the present by exploring the presence of the past in Carroll, Frederick, and Washington counties. Taxpayers, businesses, and job seekers who benefit from the economic impact of heritage tourism.

By contributing to our work, you extend Heritage Area benefits to local partners, making outcomes described throughout this report possible.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

While supplies last, unrestricted gifts of \$500 or more may be eligible for Maryland tax credits. Potentially, 50% of your gift will be returned to you as a voucher against your Maryland tax liability.

The Legacy Leaders Circle invites you! No matter where you are on life's path, this emerging community welcomes you to consider ways you may help provide for HCWHA's future. Let's talk about ways you can include HCWHA in your estate planning.



NOW UNDERWAY



Comes to the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area on June 7, 2025 in Washington County. Gift certificates make great holiday gifts and are available now. Proceeds benefit HCWHA, specifically our work at the Newcomer House.

A three-county GeoTour will send thousands on the hunt for caches that will reveal fascinating moments and places associated with 250 years of U.S. history.

Early feedback from partners supports ongoing pursuit of a cohort option for local history organizations to participate in the national Standards for Excellence Program (STEPS).

Thank you to all who contributed to our success in the last fiscal year, July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024.

CHALLENGE GIFT OF \$5000

Kristen McMasters

LEADERSHIP GIFTS OF \$500 AND MORE

Bouchat Industries, Inc.
Cindy and Shuan Butcher
Brianna and Gary Candelaria
Elizabeth Comer
Curious Iguana
Geraldine and Clyde Hicks
Mallory Huard
Al Martin
George Messner
Tereance Moore
Save Historic Antietam Foundation
Elizabeth Scott Shatto
Kelley Villers
Amy Yingling
Dave Ziedelis

GIFTS OF \$499-\$100

Mary Ann Ashcraft
Mary Atwell
Joanne and Richard Baum
Jill Browning
City of Taneytown
George B. Delaplaine
Gary L. Dyson
John Fieseler
Dennis Frye
Sally Joyner Giffin
Kathryn Hauser and Shaun Donnelly
Sarah Hauver
Historical Society of Carroll County
Robert A. McCune
Saida Russell
Barry Salisbury
James Shriver
Town of Burkittsville
Town of Mount Airy
Richard Turner
Marlene and Mike Young

GIFTS UP TO \$100

Andrew Chamberlain
Kay M. Dicharry
Emily Huebner
Emily Kambic
James Morgan
Kathleen O'Connell
Alyssa Poulin
Martha (Babs) and Robert Savitt
Susan Trail
Leatrice Urbanowicz

UNRESTRICTED GRANTS AND MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Carroll County Economic Development
and Carroll County Tourism
City of Frederick
City of Hagerstown
City of Westminster
Hagerstown-Washington County
Convention and Visitors Bureau
Maryland Humanities
Marilyn Hatza Memorial SHINE Grant
Tourism Council of Frederick County

RESTRICTED GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Hagerstown-Washington County
Convention and Visitors Bureau
Kristen McMasters
Maryland Heritage Areas Authority
National Park Service
American Battlefield Protection Program
Rural Maryland Council
Tourism Council of Frederick County

MAJOR IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

Antietam Guest House,
Vernell and Timothy Doyle
Antietam National Battlefield
Antietam Creek Vineyards
Google Grants
Hagerstown-Washington County
Convention and Visitors Bureau
Maryland Nonprofits
Pepsico
Newcomer House Volunteers
Weinberg Center for the Arts
Kelley and Rob Villers

LEGACY LEADERS CIRCLE

Brianna and Gary Candelaria
Sylvia and Dennis Frye, *Founding Members*
Kristen McMasters, *Founding Member*
Robyn and Jonathan Sumner

HEART OF THE
CIVIL WAR
HERITAGE AREA

heartofthecivilwar.org
info@heartofthecivilwar.org

Offices
22 S. Market St., Suite 215
Frederick, MD 21701

**Visitor Center at the
Newcomer House**
18422 Shepherdstown Pike
Keedysville, MD 21756

GIVE TO HCWHA TODAY!

heartofthecivilwar.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/heartofthecivilwar/donation.jsp



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONT.

“The heritage area team helped us think through approaches to funding for preservation of American Hall, a Masonic Lodge with deep roots in Hagerstown’s Jonathan Street neighborhood. For 191 years the building served the African American community, including as a meeting place for African American Civil War veteran members of the GAR. Soon, the building will return to life as a hub of activity, including a museum and meeting facility contributing to the economic vibrancy of the neighborhood.”

BARRY D. HACKEY

Project Manager for the restoration of Historic American Hall

“The HCWHA team is doing great work bringing together and preparing the Carroll, Frederick, and Washington County communities for America’s semiquincentennial (250th birthday). As a regular attendee of their twice per year virtual convenings of stakeholders, I am always impressed with the information, connections, and resources. Personally, I am grateful to the HCWHA team for being great thought partners for me, and for sharing some excellent ideas which we are in the process of implementing statewide. The team’s enthusiasm for the 250th is contagious.”

MICHELE W. JOHNSON

Director, Maryland Two Fifty Commission

“We have left Paris and are now in Normandy. Today we visited the D-Day beaches and the American Cemetery. We stood proudly while the flag was lowered and Taps was played. I was reminded that these places like Omaha, Utah, the Alamo, Fredericksburg and Antietam are sacred places. The young people who fought and died on these fields and beaches sacrificed so we can continue to enjoy freedom. We help visitors understand the place and the stories. I feel blessed to be able to share Antietam and the Newcomer House with visitors.”

GREG SLICK

Newcomer House Volunteer

“The City of Westminster appreciates and commends the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area staff for their unwavering support, thorough reviews, and recommendations on complex historical renovation projects. Their guidance and technical assistance in preparing grant applications and resources for additional funding are unmatched. We are incredibly grateful to HCWHA for their knowledge, experience, and dedication to preserving local landmarks and cultural heritage.”

ABBY GRUBER

Director, Westminster City Recreation Department



This publication has been financed in part with State funds from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority but does not necessarily reflect its views or policies. The Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area is a 501 (c) 3 charitable organization. Gifts are tax-deductible in accordance with applicable law. A copy of the current financial statement is available on request. Documents and information under the Maryland Charitable Solicitations Act are available for the cost of postage and copies from the Maryland Secretary of State, State House, Annapolis, MD 21401 (240) 974-5534.

COVER ILLUSTRATION:
Antietam National Battlefield Visitor Center Rededication, September 8, 2023;
Courtesy of the National Park Service.

GET TO KNOW THE HEART OF THE CIVIL WAR HERITAGE AREA!

The Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, Inc. (HCWHA), is an independent non-profit organization, certified by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA). As such, HCWHA’s services include eligibility to compete for MHAA project grants extended to nonprofits and government agencies within our Carroll, Frederick, and Washington county boundaries.

MISSION – the heritage area’s reason for existing.

The Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area – with its partners – preserves and promotes the historic sites, towns, cultural landscapes, and diverse stories in Carroll, Frederick, and Washington County, Maryland.

VISION – a future in which the Mission has been accomplished.

A vast and diverse audience engages meaningfully with the past and present in the HCWHA, carrying their experiences here into the future.

VALUES – standards we will not compromise in pursuing our Mission.

- **INTEGRITY:** of ourselves, of our organization, and of the resources.
- **WELCOMING:** of visitors, of residents, of diversity, and of varied viewpoints.
- **COMMITTED:** to responsive public service, to making a lasting difference, to the value and relevance of Civil War history.
- **INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE:** in all aspects from our governance to our staffing, from programming to partnerships.
- **CONNECTING:** partners, resources, information, assistance, visitors, residents, stories, experiences, and ideas.