
RODGERS TAVERN MUSEUM

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

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WHAT A YEAR!

Congratulations to everyone!

THANK YOU!

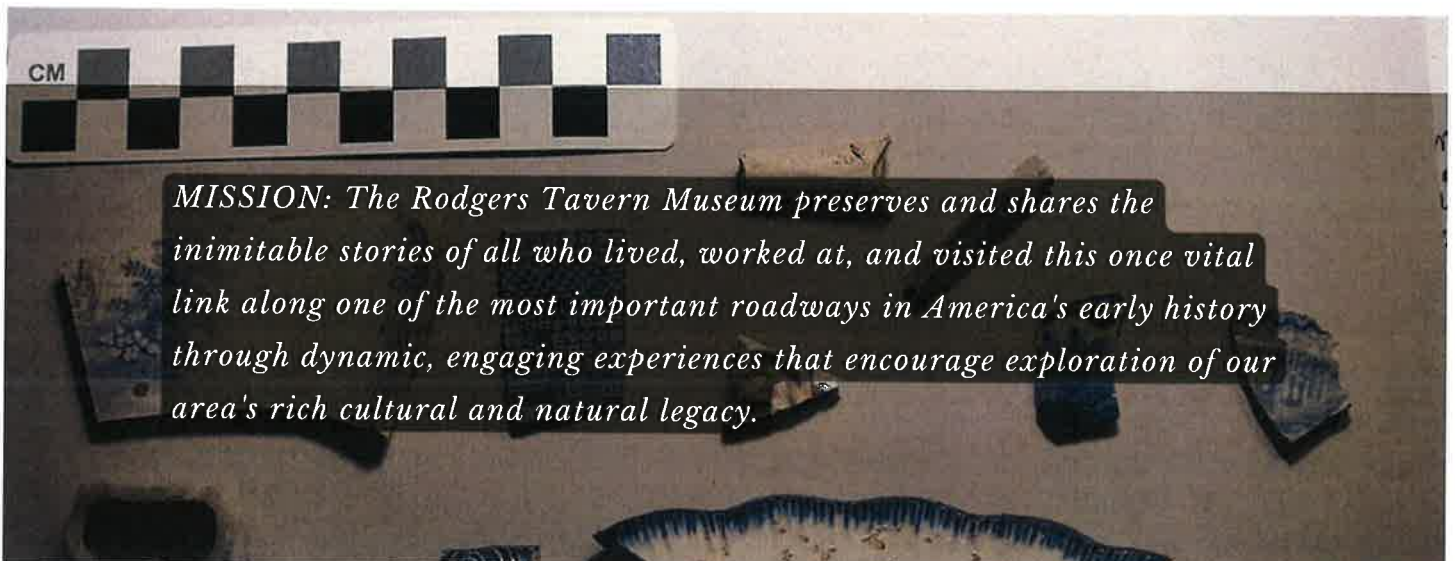
2021 was certainly the museum's busiest. Behind the scenes two grant projects were completed resulting in an improved visitor experience and a better understanding of our archaeological resources. New interpretive signage and reproductions of typical 18th and 19th everyday objects provide visitors a free flowing, self-guided experience. Volunteers and staff are better able to engage in informal conversations guided by visitor interests in the history of Rodgers Tavern.

The Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway funded this project. A non-invasive archaeological survey funded by the Maryland Historical Trust identified tantalizing sites of potential interest related to the the tavern and the Susquehanna Lower Ferry. It also produced a much needed internal planning and resource management document for the Town and Museum.

Tap Into the Tavern, our signature fundraising event held on August 28th was successful despite the wind and chance of rain. The wineries, breweries, and food vendors who attended were kept busy from event start to finish while attendees enjoyed great musical entertainment by Alter Ego. The Perryville Farmers Market, open from the first Saturday in May to the last Saturday in October, moved to the museum grounds. A new, free Museum Mindfulness Program was initiated during October to provide residents with an opportunity to ease stress and reconnect with themselves on the Museum's grounds.

None of this would have happened without the generous support of the Town, their employees, museum volunteers, local businesses, and residents. More is to come in 2022. I invite you to join us as we build on the year that was 2021!

Sincerely,
Jennifer Pitts, Director



MISSION: The Rodgers Tavern Museum preserves and shares the inimitable stories of all who lived, worked at, and visited this once vital link along one of the most important roadways in America's early history through dynamic, engaging experiences that encourage exploration of our area's rich cultural and natural legacy.

Placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, Rodgers Tavern is a circa 1745, two-story stone structure was built primarily to accommodate travelers crossing the Susquehanna River at the Lower Susquehanna Ferry. The tavern was also an important community gathering place.

Rodgers Tavern is of national importance due to the frequent visits of George Washington between the years 1755 and 1798 as well as other persons of national significance during the 18th and 19th centuries. Col. John Rodgers (1728-1794) and his wife Elizabeth, leased the buildings and the Lower Susquehanna Ferry during most of Washington's visits. Five thousand French and American troops crossed at the Susquehanna Lower Ferry during the March to Yorktown in 1781.

Rodgers Tavern is a contributing resource and partner site with the National Park Service's Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail and the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail. Additionally, the museum participates in the Park Service's Passport Program and the Blue Star Museum Initiative presented by the National Endowment for the Humanities/Blue Star Families providing free admission to currently serving U.S. military personnel and their families.

The museum is open every Saturday from 12:00pm to 4:00pm. No admission fee is charged.



LOWER SUSQUEHANNA HERITAGE GREENWAY

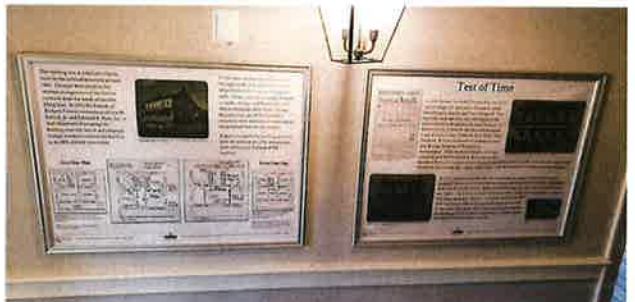
A FY2020 mini-grant from the LSHG enabled the museum to take our first steps to improve the visitor experience through seven (7) new exhibit panels about the history and importance of the Rodgers Tavern and related Susquehanna Lower Ferry within a regional and national context.

- "A Vital Link" provides a general introduction to the museum
- "the Inconvenience for want of ferries..." a panel about the Lower Susquehanna Ferry
- "for the Ease and Conveniency of the Inhabitants, Travellers, and Strangers..." a panel about taverns in general
- "to keep Tavern at Susquehanna Lower Ferry..." a panel about tavern naming traditions and information about the Rodgers Family
- "the most Convenient high waies and paths..." a panel about modes of travel and road conditions
- "The Test of Time" two panels about the building's ownership during the 19th century and renovations in the 20th century.

In addition to the exhibit panels, reproductions of material culture from the 18th and early 19th century were purchased with the purpose of giving visitors an opportunity to learn more about typical activities tavern patrons would have engaged in during this time period. Interactive exhibit components provide visitors with another way to make connections with history and with each other in addition to or as an alternative to reading exhibit panels.

Installation of the exhibit panels and reproductions was completed in January 2021.

LOWER SUSQUEHANNA HERITAGE GREENWAY



MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

This FY20 Non-Capital Grant from the Maryland Historical Trust allowed the Town to create a set of tools to help identify potential archaeological deposits over-layers with historic maps and the location of previous archaeological efforts and modern utilities related to the operation of the Lower Susquehanna Ferry and Rodgers Tavern. The project puts the Town in a proactive position for protecting its history found in the archaeological record while planning for future educational opportunities.

The non-invasive survey and GIS project for Rodgers Tavern and Lower Ferry Park was carried out by Washington College's Center for Environmental & Society (CES). The project's objectives were two-fold. The first goal was to design and conduct a non-invasive study of three areas, using remote sensing technologies: the grounds around the historic Rodgers Tavern, built around 1740; a larger area to the east, comprising Lower Ferry Park; and a smaller area to the south of the current railroad line across the Susquehanna River, from Avenue A (the southern extension of Broad Street) to the shoreline. The second objective was to build a comprehensive Geographic Information System (GIS) containing historical data, previous archaeological site plans, and data on modern infrastructure.

The work resulted in the first extensive synthesis of previous historical research and prior archaeological investigations, to which were added a collection of historic and modern maps, a comprehensive map analysis, and an assessment of utilities across the property. The investigation confirms the promise of all three portions of the project area as having both historical and archaeological significance. Eleven targets of potential archaeological interest were identified:

- on the Rodgers Tavern Museum grounds: 4 possible structures.
- in Lower Ferry Park: 2 possible structures, 2 unknown
- in the area south of the current rail alignment: 2 possible structures, 1 unknown

The above archaeological features were added to the Maryland Historical Trust site form for Rodgers Tavern (18CE15) and the two new sites were identified and recorded with the Maryland Historical Trust:

- 18CE410, the W. Cole Store and Residence on Broad St. in Lower Ferry Park; and
- 18CE414, Lower Ferry Landing (18th century ferry landing site, located south of the railroad alignment crossing the project area.

This project was completed in 2021.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST



TAP INTO THE TAVERN

Tap Into the Tavern is the museum's signature fundraising event. We were excited to be able to hold this much anticipated community event in 2021 after the COVID-19 pandemic forced its cancellation in 2020. Attendees were well supplied by the seven wineries, breweries, and food vendors while the band Alter Ego kept everyone entertained with music and good natured banter.



REVENUE VS. EXPENSES



\$5,500.00 SPONSORSHIPS

A formal sponsorship program was developed for Tap with Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze levels offering a variety of benefits. The following Perryville businesses provided an amazing \$5,500.00 in sponsorships.

Thank you again to:

Platinum Sponsors:

- Hollywood Casino
- Susky Brewing Company
- Jumbo Jimmy's

Gold Sponsors:

- McGuirk Construction Company
- Great Wolf Lodge
- Johnny's Sushi House

Silver Sponsors:

- 5th Company Brewing
- Healthies of Perryville
- Perryville Liquors
- Todd's Enterprises LLC

TAP INTO THE TAVERN



PERRYVILLE FARMERS MARKET

In 2021 the Perryville Farmers Market moved to the museum grounds. Since 2013 the Market's goal is to bring fresh, local homegrown produce and homemade goods to the Town's residents and visitors. The Market is open every Saturday, 8:30am-12:00pm, from the first Saturday in May to the last Saturday in October.

The purpose of the Market is to provide a direct consumer outlet for many locally grown agricultural products, including non-produce items such as arts, crafts, baked goods and hand-made goods. The Perryville Farmers Market is a "producer only market" meaning products sold at the market but be grown, produced, or made locally.



MUSEUM MINDFULNESS PROGRAM

The pandemic was (and continues to be) a source of stress and anxiety for many people. In response, the Museum offered a new mindfulness program on Saturdays, 7:30am to 8:30am, from September 25th to October 30th. The outdoor program was free to the public and taught by local resident and museum volunteer.



We look forward to continuing both the Market and the Mindfulness Program in 2022.