



**Calvert County Heritage Committee
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM**

TO: Board of County Commissioners
VIA: Mark Willis, County Administrator
FROM: Harry E. Wedewer, Chairperson, Calvert County Heritage Committee
DATE: October 30, 2023
SUBJECT: Annual Report for the Calvert County Heritage Committee

Background:

The Calvert County Heritage Committee was created by Calvert County Board of County Commissioners' (BOCC) Resolution 15-98.

Annual Report Fiscal Year (or FY) 2024

Budget: \$2,820

Actual: \$2,820

Purpose: Pursuant to BOCC resolution 15-98 the committee's purpose is to "promote programs and activities concerning the historical and cultural heritage of Calvert County to the extent that funds are provided to the Calvert County Heritage Committee." Further, as part of the same resolution, the committee was directed by the BOCC to particularly focus its attention on supporting programs to educate students in the county's history.

Past Accomplishments

- Historic Old Wallville School. In partnership with the Friends of the Old Wallville School, the committee was instrumental in assisting in the reconstruction of the historic Old Wallville School on Calvert County Public Schools (or CCPS) property adjacent to Calvert Elementary School where it serves as a learning laboratory for CCPS students. The committee was equally instrumental in assisting in the development of a half-day long interpretive program for these students titled "Strive Not To Equal But To Excel." Since 2012, the committee has supported this effort in joint partnership with the Friends of the Old Wallville School, CCPS, Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum, the Maryland Humanities Council, and with the support of private donors in what has been a highly successful public and private venture.

Through "Strive Not To Equal, But To Excel," thousands of CCPS students have benefitted from this program. This effort will continue to develop the historic record of the school and African American education in Calvert County while increasing student awareness of these topics. In this regard, the interpretive program brings forward the stories of the accomplishments of Southern Maryland's African American communities and schools during the era of one-room schools in Calvert County. As noted below, the committee will continue to support "Strive Not To Equal, But To Excel" during Fiscal Year 2024. Aside from the educational benefits noted above, the school has been of significant interest to tourists visiting the county and was featured in the 2015 Maryland Home and Garden tour. In partnership with the Friends of the Old Wallville School, the committee has assisted in the repair and upkeep of the school, including the upcoming repairs to the structure, which will ensure that this historic gem will continue to benefit Calvert County citizens for years to come.

- Calvert County Public Schools History Day. The committee has been a vital supporter and promoter of CCPS History Day and the development of this program into one of the leading such events in Maryland. Since its inception in 1990 with approximately 200 students, CCPS History Day has grown to approximately 3,500 participating students annually and has provided these students with an important educational experience that enhances their critical thinking, and research and writing skills among others. Several CCPS students have been recognized at the state and national level for their History Day projects. In FY 24, the committee anticipates again supporting History Day.
- Calvert County Heritage Photography Contest. For the last 14 years, the committee has sponsored this contest in which more than 1,000 CCPS student have participated. In addition to providing a photo of a subject of historic significance, CCPS entrants are required to submit a written description describing the historical significance of the photo. The committee looks forward to sponsoring the photo contest in FY 24 and looks forward to incentivizing students to explore the history around them through this event.

Current Projects

Pursuant to the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan, “Calvert 2040,” adopted in August 2019, the Heritage Committee is identified as a stakeholder in “Support[ing] efforts to interpret and celebrate local heritage sites, in the public schools, and at special events in the community and make information available to assist in those endeavors.”¹ Consistent with this role, in Fiscal Year 2024, the committee will focus on the below projects.

- Support of Calvert County Public Schools History Day. The committee is continuing its vital support of CCPS History Day in Fiscal Year 2024 through three lines of effort: (1) commitment of a portion of the committee’s budget; (2) endorsement of CCPS grant efforts in support of the event; and (3) volunteer and judging support at the CCPS National History Day event in March 2024.
- Support of the historic Old Wallville School and its interpretation. In Fiscal Year 2024, the committee is continuing its important support of the historic Old Wallville School through three lines of effort: (1) commitment of a portion of the committee’s budget to support the “Strive Not To Equal But To Excel” interpretive effort; (2) volunteer support of interpretive and maintenance efforts at the school; and; (3) support of grant efforts by the Friends of the Old Wallville School.
- Sponsorship of the Calvert County Heritage Photography Contest. The committee is continuing its sponsorship of this contest in Fiscal Year 2024.
- Support of the Normandy American Cemetery Interpretive Project. In collaboration with Calvert County Public Schools, the committee developed the idea for a live interpretive project that would bring a virtual tour of the D-day landing site to CCPS high school students. This project was piloted on a highly successful basis in May 2021 and has subsequently continue to grow with considerable success.
- Support the implementation of the objectives in the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan with respect to historic preservation including involvement in the development and implementation of the Prince Frederick and Dunkirk Master Plans, respectively. In this regard, the committee provided input for the Prince Frederick draft master plan and anticipates doing so for the Dunkirk draft master plan while continuing to participate in dialogue with Planning and Zoning Staff.

Long-Term Goals

- Continue support of the CCPS History Day.
- Continue sponsorship of the Calvert County Heritage Photo Contest.
- Continue support of the Old Wallville School.
- Continue to support implementation of the county’s comprehensive plan and development of the Prince Frederick Master Plan and Zoning Update, and Dunkirk Master Plan and Zoning Updates, respectively.
- Support the Normandy American Cemetery interpretive project.
- Support grant applications that are supportive of preserving Calvert County’s history.

¹ Calvert County Comprehensive Plan , “Calvert 20240” (adopted August 2019), sub-objective 5.3.1.2, p. 5-5.