



ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

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NEWS RELEASE *for Immediate Release*

No. 2024 – 041

March 4, 2024, 12:30 p.m.

Celebrate Maryland Day at the State's Birthplace
St. Clement's Island Museum Hosting a Full Day of Fun

LEONARDTOWN, MD – On **Monday, March 25, 2024**, “*Maryland Day*” the public is encouraged to celebrate the founding of Maryland at the state’s birthplace, St. Clement’s Island. **St. Clement’s Island Museum will offer a full day of fun from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.**, including free museum admission, kids’ activities, free water taxi rides (10 a.m. – 2 p.m.), lighthouse tours, a food truck, and special exhibits. The event will also include a public ceremony (2 p.m.) held on the mainland and a public Mass on the island (10 a.m.) commemorating the first Mass said in the English-speaking New World.

Maryland Day commemorates the first landing of English colonists on St. Clement’s Island on March 25, 1634 – a significant part of St. Mary’s County’s and the State of Maryland’s story. The St. Clement’s Island Museum, which sits just a half-mile from the island from which it takes its name, is under the care of the St. Mary’s County Museum Division and interprets the fascinating stories of the island and surrounding Colton’s Point from colonial times until the present.

“Maryland Day is the most important event in our program year, since it marks the beginning of both St. Mary’s County and the state of Maryland in 1634,” says Karen Stone, Manager of the St. Mary’s County Museum Division. “On this day, we honor the meeting of two cultures – the newly-arrived English and the native Piscataway – and the friendship and collaboration that ensued. It is also a day on which we celebrate Maryland’s religious history and its place in the development of the statutes of religious freedom that are so pivotal in this country’s history.”

Celebrating Maryland Day at St. Clement’s Island Museum

The day will begin at 10 a.m. with Mass on St. Clement’s Island, featuring students from Father Andrew White, S.J. School in Leonardtown, who will serve as the choir and cantors.

At 2 p.m., the official Maryland Day Ceremony will take place on the mainland at the museum, featuring James Randy Guy, President of the Commissioners of St. Mary’s County; Piscataway Tribal Leader Francis Gray; and other dignitaries. The ceremony will also feature an interpreter portraying Father Andrew White, S.J., who will make the yearly ceremonial presentation of gifts from the English to the Indigenous Peoples. A small public reception will follow the ceremony.

– MORE –

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Back on the mainland, a food truck will be available from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the public. Attendees are encouraged to explore the museum, as admission is waived for the day. There will also be a special display of the original Maryland Charter, as well as a wonderful collection of local art in the changing gallery. As a bonus, the museum will also display the plans for the new St. Clement's Island Museum building facility for the public.

Also, starting on Maryland Day, the museum officially kicks off water taxi operation to St. Clement's Island State Park. Boat rides occur most days through October 31, visit www.stmaryscountymd.gov/watertaxi for more information.

For more information regarding Maryland Day at St. Clement's Island Museum, please call the museum at (301) 769-2222. For hours of operation, programs, admission prices and more, visit Facebook.com/SCIMuseum or museums.stmarysmd.com

About the St. Mary's County Museum Division

The St. Mary's County Museum Division was established by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County to collect, preserve, research, and interpret the historic sites and artifacts which illustrate the natural and cultural histories of St. Mary's County and the Potomac River. These sites include St. Clement's Island Museum, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, the Old Jail Museum, and the Drayden African American Schoolhouse. With this as its charter, the Museum Division serves as a resource, liaison, and community advocate for all St. Mary's County public and private cultural assets. For more information, please visit: museums.stmarysmd.com.

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