



ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

Jenna Guzman, Communications Director

SMCG TV 95 Station Manager

Media Inquiries: 301-475-4200, ext. 1342, or PIO@stmaryscountymd.gov

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NEWS RELEASE *for Immediate Release*

No. 2025 – 024

January 27, 2025, 9:45 a.m.

Explore Stories of Local African Americans this Black History Month at the U.S. Colored Troops Interpretive Center & Drayden African American Schoolhouse

LEONARDTOWN, MD – The public is encouraged to head to the U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) Interpretive Center in Lexington Park and the Drayden African American Schoolhouse to explore the profound and significant contributions of African Americans in St. Mary's County this February, in honor of Black History Month.

USCT Interpretive Center exhibits will be open and free to the public, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. every Wednesday and Saturday in February: February 1, 5, 8, 12, 15, 19, 22, and 26. The Drayden African American Schoolhouse will be open for free tours to the public from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. every Saturday in February: February 1, 8, 15 and 22.

Inside the USCT Interpretive Center, visitors can learn about two St. Mary's County Congressional Medal of Honor recipients who served in the 38th Infantry Regiment of the U.S. Colored Troops and fought for the Union during the Civil War. These two men received the Medal of Honor for their valor and bravery at the Battle of New Market Heights, Virginia, in 1864. On the trail between the Interpretive Center in Lexington Manor Passive Park and John G. Lancaster Park, you can learn about the Civil War era in St. Mary's County and the African American troops on interpretive panels that lead to the statue of the soldier.

At Drayden, visitors can discover one of the nation's best-preserved one-room African American schoolhouses, whose story represents a significant part of St. Mary's County's African American history. Visitors are invited to learn more about the restored schoolhouse, its rich history and importance to education in St. Mary's County. Hear the real stories about how African American students learned in this school up until the mid-20th century.

Staff will be available at both locations to answer questions and provide information on these amazing stories.

The U.S. Colored Troops Interpretive Center is located in Lexington Manor Passive Park at 21675 S. Coral Drive in Lexington Park, Maryland. For more information, call (301) 769-2222 or visit [Facebook.com/USCTCenter](https://www.facebook.com/USCTCenter) and click on "events".

– **MORE** –

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The Drayden African American Schoolhouse is located at 18287 Cherryfield Road in Drayden, Maryland. For more information, call (301) 994-1471 or visit [Facebook.com/DraydenSchool](https://www.facebook.com/DraydenSchool) and click on “events”.

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: www.stmaryscountymd.gov/Museums.

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