

The functions, records, responsibilities, and employees of the Commissioner of the Land Office were transferred to the Hall of Records Commission in 1966 (Chapter 488, Acts of 1966). The State Archivist is designated as the Commissioner of Land Patents and assigned the responsibility of issuing land patents and conducting court hearings (Chapter 355, Acts of 1967). In performing these duties, the State Archivist acts independently of the duties imposed as State Archivist (Code Real Property Article, secs. 13-101 through 13-504).

The land patent process is the mechanism for granting land in Maryland. Land patents were issued by the proprietors during the colonial period, and later by the State. Virtually all land in Maryland has been patented. Through survey errors or due to the inaccessibility of a tract, some land, however, may never have been included in a patent. This land, when it is discovered, can be patented, with title passing to the patentee upon payment of the fair market value of the land to the State.

An applicant for a patent must present evidence based on a title search of the property in question proving that no former patent encompasses any portion of the land. Information concerning the land patent process and an application for a patent can be obtained from the Commissioner of Land Patents.

The State Archives also serves as the official depository for the duplicate copies of subdivision plats formerly sent to the Land Office as insurance against the loss of the originals.

The State Archives produces a variety of finding aids and guides to records, as well as historical monographs, essays, and directories. In addition, the State Archives compiles, edits, publishes, and distributes the *MARYLAND MANUAL*. The Archives also prepares, edits, and publishes future volumes of the *Archives of Maryland* series (Chapter 119, Acts of 1981). A brochure describing publications and providing guidance for research in the public search room, or by mail, is available on request.

COMMISSION ON ARTISTIC PROPERTY

Chairperson: Oden Bowie

Nancy Brennan; William Voss Elder III; Sara Barker Hanan; Dorothy McIlvain Scott.

Ex officio: Winfield M. Kelly, Jr., *Secretary of State*; Pringle Symonds, *President, Historic Annapolis, Inc.*; Dr. Kenneth N. Weaver, *Director, Maryland Geological Survey*

Secretary: Dr. Edward C. Papenfuse, *State Archivist*

Nancy M. Bramucci, *Curator*

State Archives
350 Rowe Boulevard
Annapolis 21401

Telephone: 974-3915

The Commission on Artistic Property was created in 1969 (Chapter 111, Acts of 1969). It was incorporated into the State Archives in 1984 (Chapter 286, Acts of 1984).

The Commission keeps a continuing inventory of valuable paintings and other decorative arts in all State buildings in the Annapolis area. The Commission also provides for the location, proper care, custody, restoration, display, and preservation of these paintings and decorative arts. Every person, agency, or organization desiring to acquire a painting or other decorative art work for the State, for display in a State building or premises in the Annapolis area, must secure from the Commission both prior approval and final acceptance of the painting or decorative art work. In such instances, the Commission considers the competence of the artist or creator, the proposed location, and the quality, historical significance, and appropriateness of the work.

The Commission is empowered, with the approval of the Governor and the State Archivist, to receive and accept gifts and loans of paintings and decorative art works. With the approval of the Governor, the State Archivist may accept gifts of money for the Commission from any source, public or private, and thereafter administer and expend the funds according to the conditions and terms of the gift.

The Commission consists of eight members appointed by the State Archivist, with the approval of the Governor. At least one of the eight members must represent a cultural institution in Maryland. Three members serve *ex officio*. The State Archivist, with the approval of the Governor, designates the chairperson (Code State Government Article, secs. 9-1016 through 9-1023).