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PRESS RELEASE



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Maryland Historical Trust Receives Preserve America Grant

Trust to Improve Public Access to Maryland Historic Property Database

Crownsville (September 22, 2010) – The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) received a \$78,761 grant from the Department of Interior, National Park Service (NPS) through the Preserve America (PA) grant program, for “*Improving Public Access to Maryland’s Inventory of Historic Properties*,” an ambitious project to provide on-line public access to the entire Maryland inventory.

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP) is a broad-based repository of information on districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects of known or potential value to the prehistory, history, archeology, architecture, engineering, or culture of the State of Maryland. The inventory, created shortly after the Trust was founded in 1961, now includes data on more than 12,000 archeological sites and 80,000 historic and architectural resources. Since 1992, MHT has been developing a comprehensive database and geographic information system (GIS) to improve access to this vast store of information.

There is currently limited public access to National Register information through MHT’s website but most of the records are only available internally to staff and on-site library users. Due to high expectations and increasing demand for on-line access, the grant project would provide internet access to the entire, updated library of documentation contained in the Maryland Inventory, including National Register forms, determinations of eligibility, and inventory form text, photos, and maps. Making these records available through the internet will serve to directly educate the public about the historic resources in their own communities. It will also create increased opportunity for Preserve America communities, historic preservation commissions, heritage areas, Main Streets, and others to utilize historic property information to support their resource protection and heritage tourism development goals.

The public is invited to contribute to the development of the web-user interface for the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties by visiting the Trust website at MHT.Maryland.gov. There the Trust will solicit input through an online survey regarding how to provide historic property data in a manner that best suits the public’s needs.

Thirty-one Preserve America grants totaling \$2.9 million were awarded during the first round of the 2010 grant competition. With these funds, communities and agencies support preservation efforts through heritage tourism, education, and historic preservation planning. Through these grant projects our country gains a greater shared knowledge about the Nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets, and support for the economic vitality of our communities.

For more information on this project, please contact Maureen Kavanagh via email at mkavanagh@mdp.state.md.us. For questions regarding the PA grant program, or to comment on this or any other proposed PA project, please contact Hampton Tucker, Chief, Historic Preservation Grants, NPS, at 202-354-2067.

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