



## Maryland Center for History and Culture Launching Project to Conserve and Rehouse its Flag Collection

**BALTIMORE, Md. (March 9, 2021)** – This month the Maryland Center for History and Culture (MCHC) is launching a project to conserve 100 rare and fragile flags in its collection, with a goal to raise \$30,000 toward the effort. Over the next year, the flags—dating from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century—will be cleaned, stabilized, digitized, and rehoused for future generations to enjoy.

On March 25—in celebration of Maryland Day, the state’s history holiday—MCHC will focus on raising \$30,000 to support the flag conservation project during its third annual Maryland Day of Giving, but donations can be made anytime at: [mdhistory.org/donate/md-day-2021/](https://mdhistory.org/donate/md-day-2021/)

“We are very excited to celebrate Maryland Day by announcing this initiative to conserve our extraordinary flag collection—one of the gems of the museum's holdings,” said Mark Letzer, President & CEO of the Maryland Center for History and Culture. “Every dollar raised will ensure the collection lives on to be studied and appreciated, long into the future.”

The flags in MCHC’s collection include American flags with varying numbers of stars; flags carried in battle, including the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, and both World Wars; commemorative flags; and flags representing local militias from towns across Maryland.

“They are one-of-a-kind objects that possess a lot of stories,” said Harrison Van Waes, MCHC Associate Registrar. “Some of these flags were handmade by the women of the soldiers who went off to fight and were hand-painted in some cases. They survived battle and weather of all kinds. Some men lost their lives carrying these flags.”

MCHC received most of its donated flags over a period of about 100 years—from the time MCHC was founded in 1844, through WWII. The flags have been stored in the historic Enoch Pratt House on MCHC’s campus in Baltimore’s Mount Vernon neighborhood. The flag conservation project will ensure they are properly rehoused in MCHC’s temperature-controlled textile storage. But first, the flags will travel to the Fashion Archives and Museum of Shippensburg University, where textile conservation experts will carefully clean, stabilize, and create archival housing for the flags before they are safely returned to Baltimore.

Highlights of some of the flags slated for conservation—[pictured here](#)—include:

- A silk flag of the 10th Cavalry, District of Maryland, "Caroline Squad" from the War of 1812. The unit was active from 1812-1814. (militia)
- A silk, paint, and fringe flag of "The Juvenile Corps" of Easton, Maryland, dating to 1814.
- A silk and paint Mexican-American War flag "Presented by the Ladies to the Union Riflemen, September 12th, 1846" of Reisterstown, Maryland.
- A Civil War flag picked up at the Battle of Vicksburg in July 1863 by the Rev. Joseph Fowler Jennison.

- A red guidon or flag of the Maryland National Guard, Battery F, 110 Field Artillery Regiment, ca. 1917, which fought in France during WWI in 1918.

The Maryland Center for History and Culture's museum is open with limited hours and capacity due to COVID-19 — Wed.-Sat. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The library is currently closed for in-person research appointments, but the library staff is accessible by email at [specialcollections@mdhistory.org](mailto:specialcollections@mdhistory.org), or by phone at 410-685-3750, ext. 359, Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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**The Maryland Center for History and Culture (MCHC)** collects, preserves, and interprets the history, art, and culture of Maryland. Originally founded as the Maryland Historical Society in 1844, the MCHC inspires critical thinking, creativity, and community by exploring multiple perspectives and sharing national stories through the lens of Maryland. Your history lives [here](#).

**Media Contact:**

Jennifer Michael, Communications & Marketing Director

[jmichael@mdhistory.org](mailto:jmichael@mdhistory.org)

443-851-0568