



Original Star-Spangled Banner Manuscript Traveling to State House

BALTIMORE, MD (February 25, 2020) – On March 3, the Maryland Historical Society’s* original “Star-Spangled Banner” manuscript will take to the road, and head to the State House in Annapolis, where it will be displayed alongside the State House’s 1783 George Washington Resignation Speech for the first time. For one day, visitors to the State House will have the opportunity to see the special union of two of Maryland’s most important manuscripts.

The 1814 manuscript handwritten by Francis Scott Key rarely leaves the premises of the Maryland Historical Society due to its fragility. In the summer of 2014, it joined the original 1814 flag at the Smithsonian as part of the 200th anniversary of the anthem’s writing. This time, the manuscript’s trip will mark its 89th anniversary as our national anthem, which became official via executive order on March 3, 1931 by President Herbert Hoover.

“We are thrilled to be both the keepers, and in this instance, the makers, of history,” said Mark Letzer, president and CEO, Maryland Historical Society. “Our chief responsibility is to preserve the manuscript, and as such, we cannot have it exposed to the elements for long periods and are limited in the appearances we can arrange. This anniversary, and this union, felt like a once in a lifetime opportunity that we are excited to be able to make a reality.”

The rest of the year, the “Star-Spangled Banner” manuscript is stored in the Maryland Historical Society’s library, but a replica is on display in the War of 1812 exhibition. The Maryland Historical Society is located at 201 West Monument Street in Baltimore, Maryland. The museum’s operating hours are 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday, and 12 – 5 p.m. Sunday.

* Now the Maryland Center for History and Culture.

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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, MCHC offers a museum, library, and education programs to inspire critical thinking, creativity, and community. Learn more at mdhistory.org.

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