

NEWS RELEASE



Maryland Public Television

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MPT debuts two documentaries celebrating the Maryland State House on October 29

***Back-to-back MPT specials explore the rich history, architecture, and national significance
of America's oldest state capitol in continuous legislative use***

OWINGS MILLS, MD – [Maryland Public Television](http://MarylandPublicTelevision.org) will premiere two original documentaries this month exploring the history and legacy of the Maryland State House. [A Nation Begins: The Maryland State House at 250](#) and [This Old State House](#) will debut back-to-back on MPT and the [MPT livestream](#) on Thursday, October 29, beginning at 8 p.m. Each program will also be available to view on demand using [MPT's online video player](#) and the [free PBS app](#).

Recognized as a National Historic Landmark, the [Maryland State House](#) is the oldest state capitol in continuous legislative use and the only state house ever to have served as the United States' capitol. Through rare archival materials, modern cinematography, and interviews with leading historians and preservationists, MPT's dual premiere event captures both the monumental events that occurred within its walls and the ongoing efforts to preserve its architectural brilliance.

A Nation Begins: The Maryland State House at 250, debuting at 8 p.m., explores the building's pivotal role in the founding of the United States and in its enduring pursuit of a more perfect union. Using present-day footage, *A Nation Begins* traces the Maryland State House's storied past to reveal how revolutionaries, visionaries, and everyday Marylanders shaped our national character.



The one-hour documentary chronicles key events in the Maryland State House's history, from when Annapolis served as the first peacetime capital of the United States through the ongoing challenge of governing a diverse democracy today.

Among the milestones chronicled are George Washington's resignation as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army, which set the precedent for the peaceful transfer of power, and the 1784 ratification of the Treaty of Paris, which officially ended the Revolutionary War. The film features insights and reflections from notable figures including Governor Wes Moore, former Governor Larry Hogan, historian and philanthropist David M. Rubenstein, and journalist Bryan Sears.

Following at 9 p.m., ***This Old State House*** shifts focus to the physical structure itself. A marvel of colonial architecture famous for its iconic wooden dome, the Maryland State House is the largest of its kind constructed without nails. The film takes viewers behind the scenes of the building's continuous 250-year evolution, highlighting the dedicated artisans, architects, and conservationists who work tirelessly to maintain the historic integrity of a building that still houses a bustling, modern legislature today.



The half-hour documentary invites audiences on a walking tour of the Maryland State House building and grounds led by Maryland's State Archivist Elaine Rice Bachmann. An archivist, curator, and art historian who also serves as secretary of the State House Trust, Bachmann provides access to areas beyond public spaces and delivers unique insights into the building's history and décor. Along the way, she connects with experts such as architect Mark Schneidman, historic preservationist Elizabeth Hughes, historian Chris Haley, and curator Robin Gower, who detail aspects of the building's ongoing legacy.

From exploring the building's wooden dome and admiring its rich décor to understanding its importance to key events in our nation's history and examining its role in government today, *A Nation Begins: The Maryland State House at 250* and *This Old State House* celebrate the Maryland State House as not just a state capitol, but as an integral piece of the American story.

A Nation Begins: The Maryland State House at 250 is sponsored by Debbie Driesman and Frank Islam. *This Old State House* was made possible by [Chesapeake Crossroads Heritage Area](#).

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About Maryland Public Television

Maryland Public Television is a statewide, public-supported TV network and Public Broadcasting Service member offering entertaining and educational content delivered by traditional broadcasting and streaming on TVs, computers, and mobile devices via its [online video player](#) and the [free PBS app](#). A state agency operating under the auspices of the Maryland Public Broadcasting Commission, MPT also produces local, regional, and national programming and frequently earns regional Emmy® awards for its work. MPT's commitment to educators, parents, caregivers, and learners of all ages is delivered through its [Maryland Center for Media Literacy & Education](#) and [Thinkport.org](#). MPT's year-round community engagement activities connect viewers with resources covering a wide range of topics. More information is available at [mpt.org](#).