

Nearly 400-year-old remains of teen found in Maryland

Archaeology in St. Mary's City, Maryland has discovered human remains thought to be the oldest colonial burial in Maryland.

ST. MARY'S CITY, MARYLAND, UNITED STATES, May 4, 2023 / EINPresswire.com/ -- The Historic St. Mary's City (HSMC) Department of Research and Collections has uncovered the human remains of a young European man, believed to have been buried in the late 1630s. The remains were found approximately 30 feet outside of what once was St. Mary's Fort. This discovery may be one of the oldest colonial burials found in Maryland.

Curator of Biological Anthropology Douglas Owsley and Biological Anthropologist Kari Bruwelheide, both of the Smithsonian Institution, joined HSMC to begin studying the remains to learn more about the young man. It has been estimated that he was 15 – 16 years old at the time of his death.

The individual was directly buried in the ground without a coffin or burial shroud. His lack of formal burial could speak to not having family or people who cared for him in the colony. The life, death, and burial of this person can provide valuable insights into the early settlers of Maryland.

Travis Parno, Acting Executive Director and Director of Research and Collections said, "The remarkable discovery of the remains of one of Maryland's first colonizers is an important



Historic St. Mary's City in St. Mary's City, Maryland has uncovered human remains of a European male teen. The remains are thought to be nearly 400 years old, making it the oldest known colonial burial in Maryland.

opportunity to learn about an individual who probably never appeared in the historical record. Archaeology and forensic anthropology will help us bring life and voice to a young man from the earliest period of the Maryland colony, a time when written records were sparse."

The remains will undergo cleaning and be transported to the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History for further analysis by Owlsley and Bruwelheide.

The palisaded St. Mary's Fort was erected in 1634 by the first wave of European settlers who founded Maryland. The site, which spans an area approximately the size of a football field, is located in Historic St. Mary's City (HSMC) in Southern Maryland

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About Historic St. Mary's City

St. Mary's City was established in 1634 by European colonists led by Maryland's first governor, Leonard Calvert. It is the fourth oldest permanent English colonial settlement in the United States and the site of Maryland's first capital. In 1969, St. Mary's City was designated as a National Historic Landmark in recognition of the uniquely well-preserved archaeological record of more than 10,000 years of human occupation - including archaeological artifacts left by native peoples (Piscataway, Yaocomaco, etc.) and European colonists. Today, the site is home to a living history museum that hosts more than 20,000 school children a year and houses an active archaeological program and the longest running historical archaeological field school in the country. HSMC continues to engage both students and the general public in educational programs in novel and exciting ways, encouraging people of all ages to connect the past with their contemporary lives. Further information can be located at www.HSMCdigsHistory.org.

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