

State House of 1676 Construction at Historic St. Mary's City

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St. Mary's City, MD - September 24, 2019 - The reconstructed State House of 1676 in Historic St. Mary's City (HSMC) has been undergoing renovations and repair to its original roof. Built in 1934 in honor of Maryland's tercentennial, the State House was constructed with a flat tile, which was the best estimate as to the type of roof the original building had. Eighty-five years later, with the approval of neighboring Trinity Church, HSMC archaeologists have monitored grave excavations and done very limited testing over the original 1676 Statehouse foundations in Trinity cemetery. That work recovered numerous fragments of imported Dutch tiles, and no flat or slate tiles. This strong physical evidence led researchers to believe that the original structure was in fact covered with imported curved tiles called pantile.

With the 1934 roof in need of repair, Historic St. Mary's City saw an opportunity to make the reconstruction more accurate. The museum decided in the roof renovation to cover the State House of 1676 with pantiles that match the color and general form of the 1676 specimens, making it more accurate to what the colonists built here. This decision was made in consultation with the Maryland Historical Trust. Historic St. Mary's City is indeed a living history museum, where new discoveries are made that clarify how our present was shaped by the past.

Historic St. Mary's City is a museum of living history and archaeology on the site of Maryland's colonial capital. Costumed interpreters and recreated 17th-century structures bring visitors face to face with the past. For more information about this event or the museum, call 1-800-SMC-1634 or 240-895-4990 or visit our website at www.hsmcdigshistory.org.

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