



Martin O'Malley, Governor

PRESS RELEASE



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MARK THOMPSON APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF JEFFERSON PATTERSON PARK AND MUSEUM

PROVIDES NEW LEADERSHIP FOR THE STATE MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY

CROWNSVILLE (February 1, 2011) – Rodney Little, Director of the Maryland Historical Trust, announced today that Mark Thompson, formerly the Southern Maine Regional Director of the Maine Maritime Museum, assumed the position of Director of Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum (JPPM), the state museum of archaeology, effective January 26, 2011. Michael Smolek, who served as the JPPM Director for over 14 years, retired on June 1, 2010. JPPM is a program of the Maryland Historical Trust, an agency of the Maryland Department of Planning.

Little commented, "I am delighted to welcome Mark Thompson to the Maryland Historical Trust. Mark is a dynamic leader who can build upon our excellent programs and will guide JPPM and its dedicated staff to even greater distinction as a statewide resource."

Pat Furey, President of the Friends of JPPM, said, "It is not easy to replace Mike Smolek, but fortunately in Mark Thompson we have a person of outstanding drive and intellect. The Friends look forward to working with Mark to support the mission and goals of JPPM."

"I'm thrilled to take on this responsibility," commented Thompson. "JPPM is undergoing a tremendous period of growth as a visitor destination right now with the opening of JPPM's War of 1812 exhibit slated for the spring of 2011 and completion of the RITES (Riverside Interpretive Trails and Exhibit Stations) Trail scheduled for 2012. The high quality of JPPM's public programs and the extraordinary work being done by the Maryland Archeological Conservation Lab attracted me to this position. I am excited to begin my work there."

Mark Thompson was born and raised in Pennsylvania. He earned a Bachelor of Arts from Dickinson College and received his Juris Doctor from American University. After a successful legal career in Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Florida, he opted out of the legal profession to pursue his passion for history and the museum field. Mr. Thompson returned to school, graduating from the University of Delaware with a Master's

Degree in History and a certificate in Museum Studies. Mr. Thompson served as the Director of the Portland Harbor Museum for six years prior to its merger with the Maine Maritime Museum in 2010.

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About Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum: As the State Museum of Archaeology, Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum (JPPM) preserves, researches, and interprets the diverse cultures of the Chesapeake Bay region. Located on 560 acres along the Patuxent River shoreline in Calvert County, Maryland, JPPM is home to more than 70 identified archaeological sites dating from the prehistoric period 9,000 years ago through the Colonial period, and including the site of the 1814 Battle of St. Leonard Creek - the largest naval engagement in Maryland's history. The centerpiece of the archaeology program at JPPM is the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory (MAC Lab), a state-of-the-art facility for studying, preserving, and storing the artifacts of Maryland's heritage.

Sign up for the JPPM e-newsletter at jppm@mdp.state.md.us to receive free monthly highlights of events at JPPM via e-mail, or visit our event calendar at <http://www.jefpat.org> for a complete calendar of public programs.

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