

## **MHT Board of Trustees Statement on Racism**

**Adopted unanimously on July 16, 2020**

The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) Board of Trustees expresses its sincerest sympathy for George Floyd's family. His death along with that of countless others demand we commit to being part of the solution to ending racial inequality and work for social and economic justice for all.

There are very few events in our country's history that have moved such a diverse mass of individuals, institutions and organizations across sectors to collectively reconcile our Nation's noble principles of equality and justice for all, with the unfiltered contradictory actions of suppression and racial violence we now witness with our own eyes. The smoldering scourge of racism has existed in our country against African Americans from the first enslaved Africans in 1619 to this very day. The country must face the horrific consequences of systemic racism that plague the very fabric of our Nation. We also recognize that the history and legacy of national, state and local racially divisive policies have permeated the lives of minorities in housing, employment, education and criminal justice in ways that have marginalized vast swathes of our population and their communities.

MHT recognizes that as a historic preservation institution we cannot be neutral in how history is gathered, interpreted, protected and exhibited. We must include a place for all voices in telling the story of our communities and historic sites accurately and broadly. We will be proactive in supporting anti-racist practices and policies that promote inclusion of all residents and break down barriers caused by systemic racism.

MHT is committed to answering the question, "What is this moment asking of us?" Significant and lasting answers will not always be easy to unearth, nor will they always be obvious because of the manner racism permeates our society in ways we take for granted and have not questioned. The commitment is to stay the course and forthrightly challenge our biases and assumptions as individuals and institutions until we are the equal society our country says it values.