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# Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission



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## MEDIA ADVISORY

### Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission to Hold Public Hearing on Racial Terror Lynchings in St. Mary's County on November 16, 2024

For Immediate Release

LEONARDTOWN, Md.— The [Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) (MLTRC) will hold a public hearing in Leonardtown on November 16, 2024, as part of its ongoing effort to bring awareness to Maryland's history of racial violence and to foster reconciliation in the present. Research reveals that two Black men were lynched in Southern Maryland and 38 were lynched across Maryland.

The November hearing will focus on the history of lynching in Southern Maryland, including the killing of Benjamin Hance in St. Mary's County in 1876 and of Charles Whitley in Calvert County in 1886 (there were no recorded lynchings in Charles County). Descendants of the victims and aggressors, expert witnesses, community members, scholars, and archivists will have the opportunity to provide testimony and make recommendations for achieving racial healing. Community members are encouraged to submit their testimony to [mltrc@maryland.gov](mailto:mltrc@maryland.gov) or bring their written testimony to be collected at the public hearing.

This event is part of the St. Mary's County Museum Division's bi-annual *Social Justice & Equity*, Equity programming, in commemoration of the November 1, 1864 ratification of the new Maryland Constitution which ended slavery in the state. Past events have included the soil collection and marker placement for lynching victim Benjamin Hance, and the placement of five Stopping Stone in honor of five Freedom Seekers held in prison at the Old Jail in Leonardtown.

Established in 2019 through [House Bill 307](#), the MLTRC is the first statewide commission of its kind in the nation. The commission works with local historians in researching cases of lynching throughout the state and holds these public hearings in communities where lynchings took place to shine a light on the dark legacy of lynching in Maryland and its enduring impacts on the Black community and communities of color. At the heart of the MLTRC mission is the pursuit of justice and healing for the victims of lynching and their descendants.

For more information on the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission, visit <https://msa.maryland.gov/lynching-truth-reconciliation/>

## HEARING DETAILS

When: Saturday, November 16, 3024

Time (in person and streaming): 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

Where: St. Mary's County Public Library, Leonardtown Branch, 23630 Hayden Farm Lane, Leonardtown, MD

### How to Attend:

- *In-person:* [Preregistration](#) is required to help manage attendance.
- *Livestream:* A link to stream the hearing will be posted on MLTRC's [website](#) one day before the hearing.

## SUBMIT TESTIMONY

Members of the public are encouraged to submit written testimony about how the lynching of the victims has impacted their lives and their communities or make recommendations to address the legacy of lynching in Maryland and promote racial healing. Written testimony can be submitted to [mltrc@maryland.gov](mailto:mltrc@maryland.gov) or collected at the public hearing.

Contact Trish Floyd, MLTRC, [tboyle@oag.state.md.us](mailto:tboyle@oag.state.md.us), 314-437-1362

For more information on the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission, visit  
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