



OFFICIAL
PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Shallop Launch Set for November 4

Chestertown, Maryland: Maryland Governor Robert Ehrlich and a fleet of visiting "Tall Ships" will be in Chestertown Maryland on November 4th to help launch a replica of the 30-foot boat or "shallop" used by Captain John Smith to make his groundbreaking exploration of the Chesapeake Bay in 1608. The replica shallop is being built as part of the Captain John Smith Four Hundred Project, a multi-year educational effort to commemorate the four hundredth anniversary of Smith's incredible 1,500-mile Chesapeake voyage.

The Captain John Smith Four-Hundred Project is an undertaking of Sultana Projects, Inc., a non-profit educational organization based in Chestertown, Maryland, best known for providing educational programs on board its reproduction of the 1768 schooner Sultana. The Captain John Smith Four Hundred Project is being developed as a signature product for the Friends of the Chesapeake National Water Trail, a group whose founders include Gilbert Grosvenor, Chairman of the National Geographic Society, William Baker, President of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and Patrick Noonan, Chairman Emeritus of The Conservation Fund. The mission of the Friends of the Chesapeake National Water Trail is to celebrate the unique history and environment of the Chesapeake Bay by creating a lasting legacy for future generations through the establishment of America's first National Water Trail. Legislation authorizing a feasibility study of the proposed trail by the National Park Service was approved by Congress on July 26 and signed by President Bush on August 2.

The launch of the replica shallop will take place at 1:00pm at the foot of High Street in Chestertown. A fleet of historic sailing vessels, including Delaware's official "tall ship" Kalmar Nyckel, the newly launched schooner Virginia, the Living Classrooms Foundation schooner Lady Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation skipjack Stanley Norman will be on hand for the festivities. The ceremonies will include remarks by Governor Ehrlich and other visiting dignitaries and will culminate with the Governor sawing the shallop in half and launching it into the waters of the Chester River. This unusual aspect of the launch ceremony echoes the unique design of Smith's original 1608 vessel, which was built in England and then broken down into two pieces so that it could be transported to the New World.

The launch of the shallop will mark the start of an amazing two year odyssey for this little vessel. In 2006 the shallop will travel as part of an educational exhibit to museums around the Chesapeake Region, including the Maryland Science Center, The Science Museum of Virginia, the National Maritime Center at NAUTICUS, the National Geographic Museum at Explorers Hall, the Mariners' Museum, the Calvert Marine Museum and the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum.

In 2007 the shallop and a crew of 14 modern-day explorers will embark on a 127-day, 1,500-mile reenactment of Smith's original expedition. Propelled by oar and sail alone, the shallop and her crew will visit communities around the Chesapeake while their progress is followed by students throughout the region through an innovative website and planned video documentary.

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