

## History of The Order

The Order of the First Families of Maryland existed for many years as an unincorporated association. The late Eldon Lee White and his daughter, Elizabeth Windsor-White Hay, led and guided The Order during the earliest period with the assistance of Karen R. Crowley and others. Due to the growing interest in The Order and the ultimate need to "formalize" it into a recognized non-profit public-benefit corporation so that it could more easily pursue and accomplish its stated goals, members and friends of The Order gathered on April 17, 1999, for an informal first organizational meeting as a non-profit public-benefit association. This was followed a few months later with incorporating under the laws of the State of California. The Order is a federally recognized tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code with an effective date of May 31, 2000, the date of incorporation. All contributions are deductible to the fullest extent allowed under tax law.

By consensus of those present, Merrick Browne was chosen to be the first Governor of The Order of the First Families of Maryland under its new association structure. Also by consensus of those present, Elizabeth Hay was recognized for her role in keeping interest alive in The Order of the First Families of Maryland and holding it together during its existence as an unorganized association. For her unwavering service, she was accorded the special and unique title of "Founder Emerita" of The Order of the First Families of Maryland. In addition to her interest in The Order, Elizabeth Hay has served for two years as the California Chairman for the National Debutante Cotillion & Thanksgiving Ball of Washington, DC.

## Membership Queries

Queries are welcome and may be directed to:

**Registrar General Dr. Stephen Pearce**  
106 Sunnyfield Drive  
Madison, AL 35758-6816  
spearc@knology.net

## Purpose of The Order

- ◇ To perpetuate the memory and commemorate the deeds of those who founded and settled Maryland during its colonial period and to promote friendship amongst their descendants.
- ◇ To foster an interest in historical colonial research and aid in the preservation of the records and relevant historical sites in Maryland.
- ◇ To inculcate and foster love of America and its institutions by all its residents.
- ◇ To aid in the education of the youth of our country.



# The Order of the First Families of Maryland

Membership Brochure

[www.firstfamiliesofmaryland.com](http://www.firstfamiliesofmaryland.com)

## Membership

An invitation to membership in The Order of the First Families of Maryland is extended by the Governing Council to individuals, eighteen years of age or older, of good moral character and respectable standing in society, who are acceptable to The Order, and who have a verifiable, lineal descent from either:

- (1) Sir George Calvert, The 1st Lord Baltimore, who was granted the Palatinate of Maryland by King Charles I of England, or
- (2) an ancestor who aided in the establishment of the Palatinate of Maryland or who was an office holder, real property owner or resident in Maryland prior to December 31st, 1734.

## Leadership & Gatherings

The Order of the First Families of Maryland is organized as a national lineage society. The national board of directors is called the Governing Council, consisting of the Governor General, Lt. Governor General, Deputy Governor General, Secretary General, Treasurer General, Attorney General, Registrar General & Genealogist, Chaplain General, and others.

## Charitable Projects

The order is committed to charitable projects including: (1) the establishment of a permanent scholarship fund for substantial college level scholarships to needy students annually, and (2) the donation of Maryland genealogical and historical books to varying libraries to promote a stronger awareness of those who founded and settled Maryland during its colonial period.



## The Lord Baltimore

Sir George Calvert, The 1st Lord Baltimore, held a strong interest in American colonization. Born circa 1580, he obtained a bachelor's degree from Trinity College, Oxford University, in 1597. By 1609, he was sitting in the British Parliament. He was knighted in 1617 and in 1619, the King appointed him the principal Secretary of State and member of the Privy Council. In 1625, he was raised to the peerage as Baron Baltimore of Baltimore. In February of 1632, King Charles I of England granted the Palatinate of Maryland to Sir George Calvert. Lord Baltimore died on April 15, 1632, before the charter of Maryland had passed the great seal. It was issued to his eldest son, Cecilius Calvert, The 2nd Lord Baltimore, who commissioned his younger brother, Leonard Calvert, as first Governor of Maryland. Leonard Calvert and about 300 colonists, arriving in two ships, took possession of Maryland on March 25, 1634.

## Membership Insignia

The membership insignia (worn on the left breast) is referred to as the "Order of the First Families of Maryland." For gentlemen, the insignia consists of the badge suspended from a black ribbon edged in gold (each gold edge measures a quarter width of the ribbon). The design of the badge consists of a white enameled Maltese cross edged in gold upon which is centered a circular medallion which depicts the coat of arms of Maryland encircled by the inscription "The Order of the First Families of Maryland." For ladies, the insignia consists of the badge suspended from a bow (in the European fashion) of the same colors. Officers, Councilors, and former Officers and Councilors, are authorized wear of the badge suspended from a neck ribbon when appropriate. Miniature insignia for more formal occasions, special insignia for the Governor and former Governors, lapel pins and rosettes, ties and blazer patches are also authorized.

## The Order's Flag

The official flag of The Order is of standard rectangular size. The field is vertically divided into three sections, the two outer are gold, and the center section is black upon which is depicted the badge of The Order. Each gold section measures one quarter width of the entire field. The center black section measures two quarters of one of half of the width of the entire field.

## Publication

The Order publishes an annual newsletter called *The Chesapeake News Courier*.