

BIO and FACT SHEET – John L. Seidel

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Dr. John L. Seidel

Executive Director & CEO
Historic St. Mary's City Commission

Biographical Sketch



Dr. Seidel is the CEO of the Historic St. Mary's City, in St. Mary's City, Maryland. He received his MAs and a PhD from the University of Pennsylvania, after completing his undergraduate studies at Drew University. Dr. Seidel grew up in the Middle East and has lived or worked in nine countries. His academic research includes work in the Near East, investigations of the ancient and modern Maya (Guatemala and Belize), marine research conducted for the U.S. National Park Service, and terrestrial and marine archaeology throughout the Eastern U.S. He has taught at Rutgers University, the University of Maryland College Park, Washington College, and St. Mary's College of Maryland. In the private sector, he has conducted marine investigations from New England to the Gulf of Mexico. He has published more than 80 articles, book chapters, and research

monographs, and he actively lectures to public and professional groups.

Despite Dr. Seidel's wide-ranging geographic experience, his real passion is the Chesapeake region during the 17th and 18th. His current position allows him to explore that interest at one of the country's premier historic 17th C. sites. The Historic St. Mary's City Commission is an independent state agency, an 835-acre living history and archaeology museum at the site of Maryland's first capital (1634-1695). Building on decades of cutting-edge research, the site includes recreated structures in the historic town center, a Woodland Indian hamlet, a tall ship, and a tobacco plantation, all staffed by costumed or uniformed interpreters who help visitors understand the stories of Maryland's history. Ongoing archaeological excavations continue to reveal new information about life in the past, and a new visitors center, the Maryland Heritage Interpretive Center, will come online in 2025. Since its inception, the agency has identified more than 300 archaeological sites within the St. Mary's City National Historic Landmark (NHL) and curates more than 6.5 million artifacts representing millennia of human history.