



PRESS RELEASE
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For immediate release

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**WHITE HOUSE EXHIBIT
OPENS AT THE VISITOR CENTER**

**MR. TRUMAN'S RENOVATION
The White House Photographs of Abbie Rowe: 1948-1952**

The White House Historical Association announces the opening on March 20 of a new exhibit, *Mr. Truman's Renovation: The White House Photographs of Abbie Rowe, 1948-1952* at the White House Visitor Center, 1450 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Fifty years ago the White House underwent a dramatic and extensive reconstruction. The interior structure was entirely removed, leaving only the exterior walls standing. The mansion was then rebuilt on a skeleton of steel structural beams and a new concrete foundation. President Truman's renovation was the most radical in the history of the White House. His goal was to rebuild the house for all time. It remains today, redecorated, but essentially as he left it.

The 8-panel exhibit of 42 images features a unique collection of photographs taken by National Park Service photographer Abbie Rowe during the renovation. Panels include "The White House Is Falling Down," "Demolition," "The Workers," "A Modern House for the President," and "Return of the Chief."

"Abbie Rowe's photographs of the renovation are a remarkable chronicle of the history and architectural heritage of the White House. We are proud to be able to bring them to the public's attention," said Neil W. Horstman, president of the White House Historical Association.

The exhibition also includes a video program featuring the first televised tour of the White House by President Truman and a display of souvenir artifacts created from materials removed from the White House during the Truman renovation.

The opening reception (by invitation) on March 20 will feature a conversation with two former Truman aides, George Elsey and Rex Scouten. Elsey served as military aide and Scouten as the secret service agent. Clay Bauske, curator of the Harry S. Truman Library and guest curator of the exhibit, will host.

Mr. Truman's Renovation, which will be on exhibit until September 4, 2002, was organized by the White House Historical Association, The Harry S. Truman Library, and the White House Curator's Office, in cooperation with the National Park Service.

The White House Historical Association, established in 1961, is a non-profit organization whose goal is to enhance public understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the Executive Mansion. Proceeds from the association's publications and other items are used to fund acquisitions of historic furnishings and artwork for the permanent White House collection, assist in the preservation of the public rooms, and further its educational mission.

The White House Visitor Center located at 1450 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C., is open daily from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For information please call 202.208.1631.

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