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## **Smithsonian and White House Historical Association Team Up to Create Two New Traveling Exhibitions**

Few residences inspire as much wonder and awe as the President's House at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. The very sight of the White House, symbolic of all that this nation stands for, evokes pride in America's past and optimistic hope for her future. For more than two centuries, since John and Abigail Adams first moved in, the house has been a uniquely private and public place— at once a home, a seat of the government, a ceremonial center, and an historic building and museum.

The Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) and the White House Historical Association (WHHA) have announced plans to collaborate on two upcoming exhibitions that explore the history and culture of the president's residence. These exhibitions, "The Working White House: Two Centuries of Traditions and Memories" and "The White House Garden," will begin multiyear national tours in 2008.

"This partnership provides an opportunity to share the story of the White House from coast to coast," said Neil W. Horstman, president of WHHA. "The White House is at the service of presidents and their families but at the same time transcends any particular administration."

"The Working White House" will focus on the men and women who have worked behind the scenes to make the house function and whose public service has at times spanned multiple administrations. While the president and his family are temporary residents of the White House, hoping to renew their four-year lease at election time, a dedicated workforce of butlers, maids, engineers, housemen, chefs, electricians, florists, ushers, doormen, carpenters and plumbers operate, maintain and help preserve the 132-room executive mansion.

The exhibition will include such objects as building tools, housekeeping implements, reproduction period clothing, workers mementos and souvenirs. Most significantly, new interviews conducted by Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage and WHHA staffers with past workers, will provide eyewitness accounts of White House work culture and will be included in an audio tour and exhibition video. "The Working at the White House" will begin its national tour in September 2008 and will continue through 2012.

From Easter egg rolls and honorary ceremonies, to treaty signings and receptions for heads of state, the gardens and grounds surrounding the White House bear the mark of history. “The White House Garden,” the second SITES/WHHA collaboration, will trace the development of the 18-acre ensemble of formal gardens, secluded natural retreats and expansive parklands and how they have evolved since Pierre Charles L’Enfant’s original vision. This exhibition will begin its four-year national tour in summer 2008.

“Though the White House is arguably the most photographed and filmed building in the United States, few people really know much about its inner-workings,” said SITES Director Anna Cohn. “We are excited to work with the White House Historical Association to bring these compelling stories to light.”

More information on both projects may be obtained from [www.whitehousehistory.org](http://www.whitehousehistory.org) and [www.sites.si.edu](http://www.sites.si.edu).

The White House Historical Association is a nonprofit institution dedicated to enhancing the understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the White House. The association produces educational literature and films; develops and sponsors special programs, including lectures, exhibits and other outreach activities; and maintains a Web site that interprets the White House and its history and the persons and events associated with it. The association supports the acquisition of artwork and objects for the White House collection and contributes to the conservation of the public rooms.

SITES has been sharing the wealth of Smithsonian collections and research programs with millions of people outside Washington, D.C., for more than 50 years. SITES connects Americans to their shared cultural heritage through a wide range of exhibitions about art, science and history, which are shown wherever people live, work and play. Exhibition descriptions and tour schedules are available at [www.sites.si.edu](http://www.sites.si.edu).

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