



PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate release

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WHITE HOUSE HISTORY FEATURES PRESIDENTIAL PORTRAITS

The oldest and most famous work found in the White House is the presidential portrait of George Washington by Gilbert Stuart purchased by the U.S. government for \$800 on July 5, 1800. The full length portrait of General Washington set the policy for gathering works of art that serve primarily as historical documents. The new edition of *White House History* (Number 16) addresses early portraiture beginning with George Washington and also that of our own time including the new portraits of President and Senator Clinton.

In his opening article, *Portraits Made at the White House*, editor William Seale writes, “It is a custom reminding one that in addition to being home and office, the White House is also, somewhat like a courthouse or state capitol, a public building where historical inhabitants who make or made it tick are of interest. Portraits of them seem to belong there, making windows into the long history.”

Face the Lens, Mr. President, an article by historian Clifford Krainik, describes the ability of photography to “instantly convey not only detailed information but evoke emotions common to all humankind, a universal language.” Art historian William Kloss provides a history to the portrait of George Washington as the “oldest hung portrait in the White House” in *The Greatest Man Living*.

The techniques used to adapt to the schedule of presidents are highlighted by Lydia Barker Tederick in *Artist Life Studies for White House Portraits*. She writes that quickly drawn sketches used for developing a composition are sometimes “more revealing than the finished product.” In *Drawing Presidents, An Artists Reflections on Catching a Lively Likeness*, author-artist John Hutton talks about the difficulties artist may face when adding “visual and intellectual life” to their portraits, and to round out the issue artist Simmie Knox shares his experiences when creating President Clinton’s portrait with former White House curator Betty C. Monkman in *Conversation with a Presidential Portraitist*.

White House History is published twice yearly by the White House Historical Association and features articles on White House history, architecture, fine and decorative arts, and gardens, as well as stories about the occupants of the White House and their experiences while living there.

White House History is available for \$6.95 per copy (plus packing and delivery). To order please call toll free 1-800-555-2451 or visit our web site www.whitehousehistory.org

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

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