From the DIRECTOR

It is a strange feeling to walk around our building now that it is closed to the public. It is doubly strange for me, since I am into my last months before I retire in June after eighteen years in this extraordinary place, as you will read elsewhere in this issue.

Instead of school groups, individual visitors being guided by docents, or members of the public absorbed in private contemplation of the portraits on our walls, I meet staff from the registrar’s office working hard to move the works of art from our public galleries to workrooms where they will be packed or stored.

While this is going on, the manuscripts for the catalogues that will accompany our traveling exhibitions are being turned into books. Final writing and photography is nearly complete, and the demanding process of editing and design is under way. The paintings that will be in our first two new road shows, “Portraits of the Presidents” and “Notable Americans,” are being examined by the conservation staff and framers to make sure that they will be in the best possible condition to travel. Crates are being built, and shipping arrangements made. Meanwhile, the exhibitions office works with the museums that will host the traveling shows to make sure that everything will proceed smoothly when it is time to send the works out, and that the museums will have everything they need to make the showings of our works as great a success in their own communities as they have been in ours. We even hope to exhibit some selected objects from our collections here in Washington, to remind the public of the Gallery’s richness.

This is both a sad and an exciting time for all of us. We will miss your presence in the Old Patent Office Building during renovation, but we will keep closely in touch with you so you will know about the programs we will be presenting, and about the itinerary of our touring exhibitions so that you can visit our shows as they travel around the country. All of us hope you enjoy this newsletter, and hope you will not be shy in suggesting what else you would like to read in it, besides the kinds of articles you find in this first issue.

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Cover photo: Chris Lands
Renovation of Old Patent Office Building Begins

When the National Portrait Gallery closed its doors to the public for three years on January 9, the $60 million renovation of the landmark Old Patent Office Building, which the museum shares with the National Museum of American Art, had already begun.

- The three stained- and etched-glass windows in the stairwell leading to the third floor and the stained-glass skylight in the center of the Great Hall were meticulously restored and reinstalled. They will be removed again and stored until the building renovation is complete.
- The laylights in the east and west arms of the Great Hall were uncovered and restored. Natural light now floods the space.
- Installation of a new, two-acre copper roof was nearly complete.

Still to come are replacement of all heating, air conditioning, electrical, and plumbing systems, as well as improvements to the telephone and data communication systems. Extensive work on the exterior masonry will take place, and interior walls, floors, and ceilings will be restored or rebuilt. This is the first time in more than thirty years that building systems have been upgraded. The project is designed in concert with Hartman-Cox Architects.

Approximately sixty thousand square feet will become available for new galleries and public areas when the library, and as much of the staff as possible, move permanently to the Victor Building, located one block away at Ninth and H Streets, NW. The relocation of art storage, the conservation laboratory, and workshop areas is also under discussion.

The Portrait Gallery has organized four new shows drawn from the collection that will travel to museums and other institutions in the United States, Europe, and Japan while the museum is closed. Portraits of Presidents from Washington to Clinton, masterworks of painting, photographs of notable women of the twentieth century, and masterpieces from the Gallery’s collection of modern American portrait drawings comprise the exhibitions going on tour. These touring shows and their locations will be featured in the next issue of Profile.

The Gallery is also processing long-term and short-term loans of more than seven hundred pieces from the collection to museums across the country.

Read more about the building on pages 10–11
Director Alan M. Fern to Retire in June

Alan M. Fern, 69, who has been director of the Portrait Gallery since 1982, will retire in June. He plans to pursue writing and research projects at the Smithsonian following his retirement.


During Fern’s tenure, thousands of visitors have attended lectures, symposia, book signings, open houses, and performances, and shared special evenings with such figures as James Earl Jones, Hal Prince, Gwendolyn Brooks, and the descendants of Irving Berlin. In addition, a series of “Living Self-Portraits” engaged Agnes de Mille, Gordon Parks, Clare Boothe Luce, George Abbott, J. William Fulbright, Katharine Graham, and others in candid conversation about their lives, their challenges, and their aspirations.

In a distinguished forty-seven-year career, Fern served as a member of the humanities faculty of the College of the University of Chicago from 1953 until 1961, when he joined the staff of the Library of Congress. At the Library he held several posts, including Chief of the Prints and Photographs Division and Director for Special Collections.

Lionel Hampton and George Bush Celebrate Portrait Gift

Longtime friends Lionel Hampton and former President George Bush were special guests at a luncheon on March 21 celebrating the museum’s acquisition of Hampton’s portrait by Frederick J. Brown. The luncheon was sponsored by Lucent Technologies, which recently made a contribution to the Gallery’s Performing Arts Fund.
Frederick Voss Senior Historian

Daniel Webster (1782–1852) was one of the most painted and sculpted figures of his time, and it is not hard to see why. A founder of the Whig Party, secretary of state under two Presidents, a perennial White House hopeful, and an influential senator, he was as well a spellbinding public orator and a superb lawyer who had a part in arguing many of the Supreme Court’s early landmark cases. In the wake of these distinctions came legions of admirers, and as those legions swelled, so, too, did demand for his likeness.

But it was not demand alone that accounted for the proliferation of Webster portraits. His appearance also had something to do with it. Invested with an Olympian dignity, Webster looked every inch the great personage that he was, and for artists, portraying his majestic presence promised a professional satisfaction that was not to be missed.

For this writer’s money, the most compelling likeness in the entire Webster iconography is a portrait, recently bequeathed to the National Portrait Gallery, that was painted in the mid-1830s by Francis Alexander. The first thing that attracts me to it is its romantic, almost poetic, flavor that owes so much to the picture’s windswept atmosphere and the magnetic gaze of Webster’s eyes. Adding further to the picture’s appeal is its connection to one of Webster’s greatest moments before the Supreme Court—his successful defense of the charter of his own alma mater in Dartmouth College v. Woodward in 1818. It is said that Webster’s pathos-laden argument on that occasion brought tears to the eyes of his listeners, and seventeen years later, an ever-grateful Dartmouth sought to commemorate the event by commissioning Alexander to paint the original version of this likeness, which resides today at the college.

There is no record of what Dartmouth officialdom thought of its new and decidedly Byronic interpretation of Webster. We do know, however, that Webster was quite taken by it, enough so that he ordered a replica for himself. It is this second version that now belongs to the Gallery.

And now we come to the most interesting issue of all: Is the portrait a faithful likeness? Literally speaking, I have some doubts. Knowing that Webster was in his early fifties when he posed for it and comparing it with other, more mature-looking Webster portraits from roughly the same time, I would judge that Alexander’s romanticizing impulses probably overtook his concern for veracity. Or maybe he was engaging in conjectural time-travel, using Webster’s fifty-three-year-old features as only a guide for reconstructing what his subject must have looked like when he argued the Dartmouth case years earlier.

Nevertheless, in a larger sense Alexander may have hit it right on the mark. For what he created was a portrait that evoked the awe that Webster inspired in so many of his contemporaries. Confronting this Byronic demi-god of a Webster, we thus begin to understand why contemporaries resorted so often to such extraordinary metaphors to describe him; why one admirer, for example, once likened him to “a thunderstorm in July”; why another declared him “a small cathedral in himself”; and why a third said he loomed as a “Parliamentary Hercules” whom one would be inclined to back “against all the extant world.”

Further reading: The most recent and one of the finest biographies of Webster is Robert V. Remini’s Daniel Webster: The Man and His Time (New York, 1997).
Mary Panzer  Curator of Photographs
This photograph combines all the elements I look for when adding new portraits to the collection. It is a beautiful image of an important person, made at a significant time in her life. It is the product of an important historic moment and the story of an encounter that also tells us much about the photographer and her work.

The story of Rosa Parks (born 1913) has become a modern legend. On December 1, 1955, the homeward-bound African American seamstress defied local segregation regulations by refusing to relinquish her seat to a white person on a public bus in Montgomery, Alabama. She was promptly arrested, and she called on the local chapter of the NAACP for legal assistance. Her lawyers recognized that the incident could provide a strong test of existing segregation laws, and Parks agreed to take the case to its conclusion, despite the pressure such a trial would bring.

Her case led African American citizens of Montgomery to boycott the bus system for more than a year, and inspired a decade of newly energized civil rights agitation that would end much of this country’s legalized racial discrimination. As one friend later put it, when Parks “sat down, our people stood up.”

Ida Berman made this photograph of Parks in the summer of 1955, at the Highlander Folk School, a training ground for labor organizers and community activists. Parks and her husband were already leaders in the Montgomery branch of the NAACP when friends offered her a scholarship to Highlander. Berman, a professional photographer who worked for the furrier’s union in New York, also came to Highlander that summer.

According to Berman, “Rosa Parks . . . wasn’t well known then, the [Montgomery Bus] boycott hadn’t happened. She came [to Highlander] because it was a place that instructed people in community action and I think she learned a lot.” When Highlander’s director saw that Berman had a camera, she asked her to make photographs for the school, and she chose subjects at random, looking for faces that interested her. Later she recalled, “I was just lucky that one of them was Rosa Parks . . . We were talking and I liked her. Not because she was anybody. I’m sorry I didn’t go the next year because Martin Luther King was there!”

Berman studied at the Photo League in New York City, where from the late 1930s through the early 1950s photographers of all levels found classes and exhibitions. The teachers emphasized the use of photography as a documentary medium, and many students went on to careers in journalism. Because classes and exhibitions of photography were relatively rare, the Photo League attracted some of the most important photographers of the era, including Paul Strand, Aaron Siskind, Berenice Abbott, and Ansel Adams.

Like all good portraits, this photograph came from a rich encounter between a subject and an artist. Ida Berman and Rosa Parks met at the Highlander School because of their shared commitment to social change. Berman’s portrait also shows us a soon-to-be national heroine as she appeared to her friends and family. Such intimate views are unusual, but when they exist, they often take the form of a photograph, made by perceptive (and lucky) men and women, often without a thought to the generations that will later treasure their pictures as a rare and valuable record.

Major Portraits of Jefferson and Kennedy Added to Collection

The Portrait Gallery acquires dozens of portraits every year—paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings, and photographs of men and women who have a place in the nation’s history. In 1999 two particularly significant portraits of Presidents were added to the collection: Mather Brown’s 1786 portrait of Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826)—a gift to the museum—and Elaine de Kooning’s portrait of John F. Kennedy (1917–1963), made in 1963 from life drawings.

Thomas Jefferson by Mather Brown
Oil on canvas, 1786; bequest of Charles Francis Adams

This painting of Jefferson was bequeathed to the Portrait Gallery by Charles Francis Adams, a descendant of its original owner, John Adams, second President of the United States. Until it was given to the Portrait Gallery, the portrait had been in the possession of the Adams family. It was stolen in 1994 while copies were being made by a photography workshop in Boston. The portrait was recovered in 1996 in perfect condition and returned to its owner.

The earliest known portrait of Jefferson, the painting was commissioned by John Adams when both men were in Europe, Jefferson as minister to France and Adams as minister to Great Britain. Mather Brown painted the portrait in the spring of 1786, when Jefferson was in London. Jefferson is shown in formal diplomatic dress and a powdered wig, quite different from the much simpler appearance he later adopted.

In October of 1786, Jefferson commissioned the artist to make a copy of the portrait and also asked Brown to paint a portrait of Adams. Both portraits were to be shipped to Jefferson in France. The portrait of Jefferson that was sent to him—whether the original or the replica—is now lost.
John F. Kennedy by Elaine de Kooning
Oil on canvas, 1963

This portrait of John F. Kennedy by Abstract Expressionist Elaine de Kooning—a Gallery purchase—is one of two known full-length portraits that resulted from sittings with the President in Palm Beach, Florida, in December 1962 and January 1963. De Kooning had been commissioned to depict the President for the Truman Library in Independence, Missouri.

De Kooning was known for her ability to work quickly, but she said she had great difficulty in locating Kennedy’s “essential gesture.” She wrote about “his extreme restlessness: he read papers, talked on the phone, jotted down notes, crossed and uncrossed his legs, shifted from one arm of the chair to the other, always in action at rest... I had to find a new approach.”

The artist made dozens of life drawings and oil sketches at the sittings in Palm Beach. She ultimately decided that one portrait was not enough to do Kennedy justice. Over the next year she produced more than twenty-three widely varying likenesses, many of which were exhibited across the United States after Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963.

The Portrait Gallery’s de Kooning is typical of the artist’s images of Kennedy in its lush coloring, gestural brushwork, and slightly awkward pose, as if the President were in motion.

See these portraits in the traveling exhibition
Portraits of the Presidents from the National Portrait Gallery
First stop: George Bush Presidential Library, College Station, Texas
October 6, 2000–January 15, 2001
Praised by Walt Whitman as “the noblest of Washington buildings,” this National Historic Landmark was begun in 1836 and completed in 1867. It was the fourth major federal building constructed in Washington. The Patent Office was saved from the wrecking ball in 1958, and Congress gave it to the Smithsonian in 1962. After extensive interior renovation, the National Portrait Gallery and the National Museum of American Art opened to the public in 1968.

The neoclassical-style Patent Office Building, erected on a site designated by Pierre Charles L’Enfant for a non-denominational church to honor the nation’s heroes, is arguably the finest expression of the Greek Revival style that swept America between the 1820s and 1840s. President Andrew Jackson laid the cornerstone in 1836. The quadrangular edifice, built around a central courtyard, was intended to be erected wing by wing, in keeping with the young nation’s growing needs and resources.

The Patent Office was intended as “a temple to the industrial arts,” reflecting the new nation’s desire for advancement. It was designed to display the models that inventors submitted with their patent applications and also provided space for exhibits of public interest beyond patent models.

Artifacts such as the Declaration of Independence, the tent George Washington used in the Revolutionary War, and specimens from explorer Charles Wilkes’s expeditions between 1838 and 1842 were displayed here, as were the holdings of the National Institute—a forerunner of the Smithsonian Institution—which included artworks that formed the foundations of the collections of the National Portrait Gallery and the American Art Museum. During the Civil War, the building served as a hospital for wounded Union soldiers, a temporary barracks, and a morgue. In March 1865, it was the site of Abraham Lincoln’s second inaugural ball.

Interest in historic preservation after World War II was ultimately responsible for preserving this national architectural treasure. In 1953, legislation supported by the General Services Administration argued for the building’s removal to make way for a parking garage. The effort to save the building was led by David E. Finley (chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts and later a founding member of the Portrait Gallery Commission), the American Institute of Architects, and preservationists.

Legislation in 1958 transferred the Patent Office Building to the Smithsonian Institution “to house certain art collections of the Smithsonian,” and in 1962 President John F. Kennedy signed a bill establishing the National Portrait Gallery. Major interior renovation followed, and in 1968 the Gallery opened to the public. The following year the surrounding neighborhood was devastated in the wake of Martin Luther King Jr.’s assassination.

The December 1997 opening of the MCI Center, immediately to the east of the museums, and the opening of F Street—preceded by years of redevelopment carried out by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation—have spurred growth in the area so that the renovated Old Patent Office Building will serve as the centerpiece of a new downtown Washington.
Kristin Gray, Hartman-Cox Architects

On January 20, 1998, construction crews at the Old Patent Office Building began the first stages of a multi-phased millennium renovation. This first phase of work entails construction of two acres of new copper roof and restoration of the building’s four porticos and the historic skylights. Visitors returning to the building when it reopens in 2003 will enjoy, among myriad other improvements, the glorious Great Hall and the former Library, flooded with natural light from the restored skylights above.

At the completion of the first phase in late spring, work will continue with scaffolding erected around the building for window restoration and exterior stone cleaning and repair. Concurrently, work will begin inside the building, including restoration of all historic finishes and thorough modernization of mechanical, electrical, plumbing, security, safety, accessibility, and communications systems.

The Use of Copper

Historically, the roof of the building was standing-seam copper over wood sheathing on either wood or metal trusses. The roofs of the south and east wings were described in 1877 as “sheet copper laid on one inch of pine sheathing boards which were supported by pine joists.” The purlins, trusses, sheathing, and ceilings were constructed of pine; sheet copper covered the pine sheathing of the roof. A pine grating was placed over the gutters to keep them from becoming clogged with snow and ice.

In 1877 a fire severely damaged the west and north wings of the building; a report at the time concluded that “sparks from a chimney ignited this grating and caused the fire.” As a result, the roof construction was changed to a grout layer over “fireproof” concrete planks over metal beams. In 1883, the roof framing over the south wing was also changed to a grout layer over clay tile on metal beams with linear ridge skylights. In 1964, the east-wing roof was entirely rebuilt with nailable precast concrete plank over steel beams.

The new roof is made up of standing-seam copper with flat-seam copper at low slope areas and gutters. The copper is applied over a fiberglass slipsheet over roofing felt on a plywood substrate, which is secured to stainless steel “Z” purlins with in-fill insulation. This entire system is underlaid by a self-sealing sheet membrane, which provides a vapor barrier and secondary moisture containment.

As early as 1819, copper was used on the roof of the United States Capitol, which was being rebuilt following the fire set by the British in 1814. Flat-seam copper was thought to have been used throughout the building; it was not until the Civil War era that forming machines were invented that facilitated the extensive use of standing-seam roofing.

Copper is historically appropriate for this building. Standing-seam roofing of both tin and copper would have been popular at the time of the west and north wing reconstruction, but copper, not tin, would have been the choice for a monumental government building such as the Patent Office.

Copper is durable: the life expectancy for a copper roof is approximately one hundred years with appropriate maintenance, and examples of copper roofs lasting two centuries are not uncommon. Also, copper is light and easily formed, and it can be folded and soldered to form waterproof seams in configurations that fit almost every roof shape. Copper is expensive, but the long-term cost is competitive, given its life span. Because the runoff from copper would stain the stone below, lead-coated copper will be used at the parapets, where the roof is in contact with the stone.

Though perhaps not historically appropriate—since it was not introduced until the 1930s by Revere Copper and Brass Company—lead-coated copper is dipped twice, so that the base copper is prevented from corroding. Lead-coated copper combines the malleability of copper with the durability and appearance of lead. It is easily formed and soldering is actually easier, since the copper is already coated with the lead needed for soldering.

A copper roof is a fitting choice for a building of monumentality and prominence. As a valuable piece of the urban fabric of Washington, D.C., the newly renovated Old Patent Office Building will enliven and enhance the neighborhood around it for years to come.
An interview with Beverly Cox, curator of exhibitions, conducted by Brandon Fortune, associate curator of painting and sculpture

Brandon Fortune: I understand that nearly one thousand portraits from the collection are going to be loaned to museums and other institutions while the museum undergoes renovation over the next three years.

Beverly Cox: Yes, in addition to several exhibitions that opened here in 1998 and 1999 and are already traveling, we are putting together four special exhibitions drawn from our collections which will tour in this country and abroad. The titles of these shows are “Portraits of the Presidents,” “Notable Americans,” “Women of Our Time,” and “Modern American Portrait Drawings.”

We’ve also had a great deal of interest from institutions all over the country who’ve heard that we’re closing and have asked for loans of specific subjects or types of portraits.

Fortune: Could you tell us about these institutions and their requests?

Cox: Most of the requests have come from institutions on the East Coast. One of the largest requests came from the Virginia Historical Society in Richmond, which has asked for approximately forty portraits from our collection. They were naturally interested in Virginians from the collection, and the list of possibilities was quite long. We’ve also made a list of Pennsylvanians for a regional museum near Pittsburgh. Basically, the requests are from smaller museums, which see an opportunity to supplement their collections with these loans. The Virginia Historical Society is making a very big statement with our portraits and is preparing a special exhibition space in the front of its museum to accommodate them. They are also taking our “Portraits of the Presidents” exhibition, and a local newspaper has done a front-page article about that show coming to Richmond—three years from now! So Richmond is really excited about the possibilities these portraits will bring to them.

Other loans are being made as a result of the Smithsonian’s Affiliates program, which basically sets up agreements with regional museums to exhibit original material from the Smithsonian collection. One of the most exciting of these is with a new museum opening in Dallas, Texas, this September—The Women’s Museum: An Institute for the Future. This museum will primarily be an audiovisual, highly technological museum, with little or no collection of its own. They have a large temporary exhibition space, and so have asked to borrow as many of our women’s portraits as we can lend, which will be about fifty altogether. They will exhibit these works under the title “Notable Women from the National Portrait Gallery Collection” for the entire three years we are closed.

Another such loan is to Origins of the Southwest, a museum that is not yet open but has worked out an agreement with the Legends of the Game Museum in the Texas Rangers’ stadium in Arlington, Texas, to exhibit our works on its behalf. We have loaned ten portraits of major baseball players such as Mickey Mantle and Nolan Ryan to that display, which opened in March.

Beverly Cox has worked at the National Portrait Gallery since it opened to the public in 1968. As curator of exhibitions, she is responsible for implementing the Gallery’s exhibition program. She is now focusing her attention on the National Portrait Gallery’s traveling exhibitions and outgoing loans.
Interview: What kinds of portraits can be loaned? I understand that, unlike other institutions, we are placing very few restrictions on loans that can be made during our renovations.

Cox: Most museums that undergo renovation send out notices that they will not make loans during that time. However, we agreed that, to the extent possible, we would continue to accommodate all loan requests during our closedown.

Our primary goal in making all of these loans is to have as many pictures as possible from the collection on view somewhere—rather than being put in storage here in Washington for three years. Of course, coming at a time when we are having to move the entire collection out of this building, this is not an easy thing to undertake. Everyone involved in the loan process here, particularly my staff and that of the registrar, is going to be hard-pressed to keep up with the work this requires, but it is too important not to give it our best shot.

It’s as though we’re not closing after all. I’m really excited by the loans that are going to smaller institutions, even more excited than about the major traveling exhibitions themselves. Our two largest exhibitions are going to seven cities each and will be seen by many thousands of people, which is terrific, but these loans to the smaller institutions, which might not ordinarily have access to the national collections, are really wonderful. For instance, we are working with Wilton, a small plantation museum near Richmond, to place several portraits. We are happy to help that kind of small facility, which may only have 5,000 to 10,000 visitors a year. If we can help increase their attendance just a little bit, that’s great.

Fortune: It sounds like a win-win situation to me. We would not be able to consider a request of that nature for things that would normally be on view.

Cox: Exactly. The things that museums want most are the portraits that are normally on view, and we obviously couldn’t lend them when we were open to the public. But I think that as long as we are closing down, there should be nothing, other than security and environmental restrictions, to keep us from lending these objects. We’re even sending our wall labels with the loans, with full biographical information, so that there is an even greater extension of the National Portrait Gallery through our words.

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National Portrait Gallery Exhibitions on Tour
Where to find us now

A Durable Memento: Portraits by Augustus Washington, African American Daguerreotypist
Through May 2 Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford
June 24–Sept. 24 International Center of Photography, Uptown Gallery, New York City

Theodore Roosevelt: Icon of the American Century
April 28–July 9 New York State Museum, Albany
As this issue of Profile goes to press, the nation is at the end of its presidential primaries. As happened in this year’s New Hampshire contest, the conventional wisdom—and the polls—were often wrong. There also were two striking upsets in the New Hampshire primaries of the 1960s.

Henry Cabot Lodge, the surprise write-in
One of these upsets occurred in the Republican primary of 1964, in which Barry Goldwater was favored over Nelson Rockefeller. Two months before the primary, a small group of political amateurs from Boston launched a write-in campaign for the former Massachusetts senator and then-ambassador to South Vietnam, Henry Cabot Lodge. Lodge was a favorite among Republican moderates. He had served as ambassador to the United Nations under President Eisenhower and in 1960 was Richard Nixon’s vice-presidential running mate. Lodge, however, had assured Rockefeller of his support and his intent to remain at his post in Vietnam rather than go home to campaign.

On primary day, New Hampshire was blanketed with a fourteen-inch snowfall, but the blizzard failed to discourage the hardy voters of the Granite State. In an amazing upset, 33,000 of them wrote in Lodge’s name (Goldwater received 20,700 votes, Rockefeller, 19,500, and Nixon, also a write-in, 15,600). Lodge, as he had promised, refused to become a candidate and remained in Vietnam. Ironi-

Gallup polls in January had predicted that McCarthy would get 12 percent of the vote in the primary, but final returns gave Johnson 49.5 percent and McCarthy 42.5 percent. Only hours after the results were known, Robert Kennedy indicated that he was “reassessing” his position for making a run for the party’s nomination, and in a little more than two weeks, Johnson withdrew from the presidential race, saying in a televised speech to the nation: “I shall not seek and I will not accept the nomination of my party for another term as your President.”

Visit highlights of our collection, ranging from the Hall of Presidents to David Geary’s photographs of Marilyn Monroe. Click on Collections.

Search the Catalog of American Portraits’ database of nearly 70,000 portrait records in the Collections Search area. Click on Search and follow directions for submitting your inquiry.

Coming Soon
• A virtual tour of the Hall of Presidents
• Information on traveling exhibitions
• Periodic updates of the ongoing construction during renovation of the building
• Expanded programming for teachers developed by the Gallery’s Office of Education

Please click on Exhibitions to sign our Guestbook!

Useful Contacts

General Number
(202) 357-2700

Office of Development
Regarding contributions to the Gallery, membership, underwriting of programs, sponsorship of exhibitions, and general support of Gallery activities:

Phone: (202) 633-9004
Fax: (202) 633-9188
E-mail: maddenp@npg.si.edu

Office of Education
To keep abreast of upcoming public programs click on Calendar. For information about teaching resources and education programs:

Phone: (202) 357-2920
Fax: (202) 357-1830
Web: www.npg.si.edu/inf/edu/index.htm
E-mail: Scheduler@npg.si.edu

Library
For answers to questions about American portraits, art, and biography:

Phone: (202) 357-1886
Fax: (202) 786-2583
Web: www.siris.si.edu (for the library’s catalog)
E-mail: plynagh@nmaa.si.edu

Office of Rights and Reproductions
For high-quality photographs of works in the Gallery’s collections:

Phone: (202) 357-2791
Fax: (202) 357-2790
Web: www.npg.si.edu/inf/r&c/index-intro.htm
E-mail: NPGRightsOffice@npg.si.edu

Office of Publications
To order Portrait Gallery publications, contact the National Museum of American History’s shop:

Phone: (202) 357-1527
Portrait Puzzlers

Most of us have been able to conjure up mental images of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln practically since we were toddlers. Using these clues, can you connect names to these faces? Answers below.

1. She was a minister's wife, charged with looking after their large family. Still, she found time to write a novel on a timely subject. She worried that no one would want to read it, but it became an instantaneous best-seller. Abraham Lincoln would later suggest that her book, in fact, sparked the Civil War.

2. Many American scientists dismissed his experiments in rocketry as the tinkerings of a crackpot. German scientists, however, knew that he was on to something and used his research to develop one of the most lethal weapons of World War II. He is widely acknowledged today as the father of space exploration.

3. He was “the schoolmaster” of early America, who taught the country how to spell. He could be dubbed the defining personality of his age.

4. Until she was nearly fifty, she traveled in elite society and led a pampered life of leisure. Then she turned her energies to founding an organization that would eventually sponsor America’s annual springtime cookie binge.


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