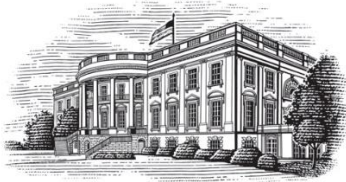


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THE WHITE HOUSE  
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

## NEW Episode: *The White House 1600 Sessions* Podcast “Driving ‘The Beast’ and the History of Presidential Vehicles”

*White House Historical Association President Stewart McLaurin Discusses Iconic  
Presidential Vehicles with Retired U.S. Secret Service Agent John Bush*

February 27, 2026 (Washington, D.C.) – The White House Historical Association today released a [new episode of \*The White House 1600 Sessions\*](#) podcast exploring “The Beast,” the affectionate nickname given by the press when the first generation of General Motors’ custom-built Cadillac presidential limousines debuted in 2001. Stewart McLaurin, president of the Association, is joined by John Bush, former Special Agent in Charge of the Presidential Protective Division, for an in-depth discussion and tour of historic presidential vehicles at the United States Secret Service James J. Rowley Training Center in Laurel, Maryland.

“There is a very exclusive club of people who have been President of the United States,” said McLaurin. “Likewise, there’s a small group who have actually driven these presidents.”

Bush, who served for 24 years before retiring in December 2025, was one of the agents who drove the limo for President Barack Obama, and in his last year of service oversaw President Donald Trump’s protective detail. Bush emphasized that protecting the president is a complex team effort founded on nonpartisanship. To ensure seamless transportation and protection of the protectee, the Secret Service advance teams evaluate routes, coordinate safe houses, collaborate with local police, and arrange medical support, among other detailed preparations. Leading and training these teams brings considerable pressure and requires unwavering commitment.

“When you’re driving, you don’t think about it being the President of the United States,” said Bush. “You have a job to do, so you’re going to do the job. But when you can finish the run and you see what you’ve done—and what the team has done—it sure does mean a lot.”

McLaurin and Bush were joined by retired Special Services Division Agent Robert Diehl for a tour of various historic presidential vehicles in the Diehl Garage, named in honor of the man who dedicated more than 50 years to the Secret Service and is admirably referred to by his colleagues as a “legend.” They take a closer look at a 1993 Cadillac from the Clinton presidency, as well as a 1987 model equipped with grab bars, armored transparencies, and a powerful 454 cubic inch Chevrolet Mach Five truck engine that was in service during the Reagan presidency.

The tour culminated with an intimate look inside the imposing presidential limousines themselves. McLaurin and Bush sat in Gen 1, the vehicle that transported both President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama, and viewed Gen 2, which debuted at President Obama's 2009 Inauguration. For McLaurin, sitting in the exact seats occupied by these former presidents was a powerful reminder of the historic moments that have unfolded within these vehicles.

“This peek behind the curtain at this facility, the multiple generations of vehicles, the technology, and the evolution of this important part of protecting and transporting our president was an incredible privilege,” said McLaurin.

*The White House 1600 Sessions* podcast is available on Apple Podcasts and Spotify.

The full video of this podcast episode is also available on the White House Historical Association's YouTube channel [here](#).

For more information, please contact [press@whha.org](mailto:press@whha.org).

### **The White House 1600 Sessions**

The White House Historical Association's President Stewart McLaurin is the host of *The White House 1600 Sessions*, the Association's official audio and video podcast devoted to exploring the history, cultural impact, untold stories, and personal accounts of America's most iconic residence and highest office.

### **About the White House Historical Association**

Founded in 1961 by First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, the White House Historical Association is the nonprofit, nonpartisan organization entrusted with preserving and sharing the history of the White House. Supported entirely by private philanthropy and the sale of educational books and products, the Association reaches millions of students, teachers, and lifelong learners through research and scholarship initiatives, public programming, and the authoritative titles published by its independent press. Throughout each presidency, the Association works with the Offices of the First Lady and the White House Curator to acquire and preserve historic objects for the White House Fine and Decorative Arts Collection. The Association also operates The People's House: A White House Experience, a free, immersive, educational museum in Washington, D.C., which welcomes hundreds of thousands of visitors annually. To learn more about the White House Historical Association, please visit [WhiteHouseHistory.org](http://WhiteHouseHistory.org).

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