New Issue of *White House History Quarterly*  
“Furnishing the White House: The Decorative Arts Collection”

**February 12, 2020** (Washington, D.C.) – The White House Historical Association has just released a new edition of its *White House History Quarterly: “Furnishing the White House: The Decorative Arts Collection.”* This issue provides a first look at newly restored pieces of the circa 1818 Bellangé suite; explores a treasure trove of never before published drawings from the Theodore Roosevelt administration; tells the story of how one 20th century quilt offers the only existing clues about upholstery used in the Victorian era White House; details the role of the White House Curator; and more.

More about articles in this issue:

- Melissa Naulin, Assistant White House Curator, presents the newly restored Bellangé suite, ordered for the “Oval Room” by President James Monroe in 1818 and now re-gilded and reupholstered to its original splendor. The Bellangé firescreen, re-acquired for the White House collection in 2012, is seen fully restored for the first time in this issue. The White House Historical Association funded the recent restoration.

- Using computer technology, designer David Ramsey has created a set of images showing the Bellangé suite in "summer dress" carefully protected from potential damaging effects of sun, dirt and insects, as it would have been in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries between social seasons when the White House was not in use for entertaining.

- Author Kristen Hunter tells the story of a unique early twentieth-century quilt and its maker, Alice P. Kennedy, a woman who served as a White House upholsterer at a time when upholstery was considered a man's job. Kennedy's artistic use of
nineteenth-century fabric scraps is today the only existing document of upholstery materials and colors used in the late nineteenth-century State Rooms.

- **Author Lauren McGwin** presents the story of an “archival treasure trove”—the never before published White House collection of drawings made by A. H. Davenport and Company for furnishing the rooms renovated during Theodore Roosevelt’s administration.

- **Robert Kelly** traces the journey and history of the elegant antique French scenic wallpapers hung in the Diplomatic Reception Room and Private Dining Room during the Kennedy administration.

- **Stewart Stevens** shares the story of his unusual career cleaning the large glass chandeliers and windows of the White House for seven presidents.

- **Former White House Curator Betty Monkman** shares the stories of those who have held the title of White House Curator, a small group of only eight people over the course of nearly 60 years.

- **For the Quarterly’s** presidential site feature, author Lauren McGwin finds a connection between the White House decorative arts collection and The Hermitage, Andrew Jackson’s home, as she tells the story of a special collection of porcelain and silver that traveled from Decatur House to the White House and then to The Hermitage.

To request an advance copy of *White House History Quarterly* #56, or to interview the authors, please contact press@whha.org.

**About White House History Quarterly**
Published four times each year by the White House Historical Association, this publication features articles on White House history, architecture, fine and decorative arts, and gardens, as well as the life stories of White House occupants and their experiences living in the Executive Mansion. Now in its 23rd year of regular publication, the Quarterly has won national and regional awards for content and design and has attracted a loyal readership of both scholars and laymen in the U.S. and abroad. More than 200 scholars, witnesses to White House history have written for the award-winning Quarterly. Historian William Seale was the founding editor.

Issues of *White House History Quarterly* retail for $9.95. To subscribe or purchase a single issue, visit shop.whitehousehistory.org.

**About The White House Historical Association**
First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy envisioned a restored White House that conveyed a sense of history through its decorative and fine arts. In 1961, the White House Historical Association
was established to support her vision to preserve and share the Executive Mansion’s legacy for generations to come. Supported entirely by private resources, the Association’s mission is to assist in the preservation of the state and public rooms, fund acquisitions for the White House permanent collection, and educate the public on the history of the White House. Since its founding, the White House Historical Association has contributed more than $50 million in fulfillment of its mission. To learn more about the White House Historical Association, please visit www.whitehousehistory.org.

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