



NEW Episode: *The White House 1600 Sessions* Podcast "The Tradition of First Lady Forever Stamps: Barbara Bush"

White House Historical Association President Stewart McLaurin Celebrates First Lady Barbara Bush's Centennial Birthday with Grandson Pierce Bush, Artist Chas Fagan, and Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy President Andrew Roberts

June 10, 2025 (Washington, D.C.)– The White House Historical Association released [a new episode of *The White House 1600 Sessions* podcast](#) today honoring First Lady Barbara Bush to commemorate what would have been her 100th birthday. The United States Postal Service celebrated this occasion by releasing the new Forever Stamp featuring Mrs. Bush's official White House portrait. The design was unveiled during a ceremony in the White House East Room last month, and the stamp goes on sale today. In the episode, Stewart is joined by Pierce Bush, grandson of President George H.W. Bush and Mrs. Bush, Chas Fagan, painter of Mrs. Bush's official White House portrait, and Andrew Roberts, president of the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy, to explore Mrs. Bush's legacy and the significance of the stamp's special tribute.

In these conversations, First Lady Barbara Bush is remembered for her strength, devotion to family, quick wit, and steadfast commitment to literacy.

Thousands of people will have increased their reading skills, maybe even learned to read, as a result of her initiative," said McLaurin. "She continues to be a role model."

Pierce Bush, grandson to President George H.W. Bush and First Lady Barbara Bush, and CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters Lone Star, shares his earliest memories from when visiting his grandparents and uncle meant taking a trip to the White House with his cousins. He fondly remembers his grandmother's attention to their passion for reading, which continues to inspire him in his work.

"She believed that knowledge is the key to advance yourself and make the world a better place," said Pierce Bush. "She practiced what she preached by doing it herself but also making sure that her kids and her grandkids had a love for reading—and thankfully, it has been passed on."

Painter, sculptor, and White House artist Chas Fagan recounts the story of creating this iconic portrait that is set to appear on the new Forever Stamp today. He recalls visiting her in

Kennebunkport, Maine, the location of the family’s Walker Point Estate, instantly finding inspiration for his painting from her hospitality and disarming wit. The portrait, unveiled in 2005, still hangs in the East Wing of the White House today.

“The absolute joy of this particular project was spending time with her,” said Fagan. “That wonderful feeling of warmth and humor was very much part of her. I wanted to make sure that would be reflected.”

The portrait features Mrs. Bush’s classic multi-pearl necklace and cheerful yet driven expression—traits she was always admired for as a strong matriarch and devoted advocate.

McLaurin is joined by Andrew Roberts, president of the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy, a nonprofit she established in 1989. The pair discuss Mrs. Bush’s legacy and passion living on through its mission, changing lives of millions of Americans through philanthropy and community engagement. The foundation has provided over \$130 million of grant funding to support reading and writing skills for all ages.

“We have mentoring programs where we pair high school students with struggling early readers. That's not only helping early readers—that's providing leadership skills to those high school students,” said Roberts. “I think the impact of her work really spans far beyond just numbers you can count.”

The White House 1600 Sessions podcast is available on Apple Podcasts and Spotify in both audio and video formats.

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.

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

The White House Historical Association was founded in 1961 by First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy to support her vision to restore and preserve the Executive Mansion and its legacy for generations to come. Mrs. Kennedy sought to inspire Americans, especially children, to explore and engage with American history and its presidents. Supported entirely by private resources, the Association is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that has contributed more than \$115 million to the White House

in fulfillment of its mission. To learn more about the White House Historical Association, please visit WhiteHouseHistory.org.

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