

**PRESIDENT AND MRS. CLINTON HONOR THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER
AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY**

JULY 13, 1998

This year, Hillary and I launched the White House Millennium Program to promote America's creativity and innovation, and to preserve our heritage and culture into the 21st century. Our culture lives in every community, and every community has places of historic value that tell our stories as Americans. We should protect them. I am proposing a public-private partnership to advance our arts and humanities, and to celebrate the millennium by saving American's treasures, great and small...Nearly 200 years ago, a tattered flag, its broad stripes and bright stars still gleaming through the smoke of a fierce battle, moved Francis Scott Key to scribble a few words on the back of an envelope -- the words that became our national anthem. Today, that Star-Spangled Banner, along with the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, are on display just a short walk from here. They are America's treasures and we must also save them for the ages.

**President William Jefferson Clinton
1998 State of the Union**

Today, President and Mrs. Clinton recognized gifts for the preservation, conservation, and reinstallation of the Star-Spangled Banner at the National Museum of American History. These gifts were inspired by the President's remarks in his January State of the Union address and the First Lady's Millennium program to Save America's Treasures. The President declared the need for all Americans, including both the private and public sectors, to protect the artifacts and places of historic value to our nation and communities.

The Polo Ralph Lauren Corporation announced a \$10 million contribution designated to the Star-Spangled Banner through the Save America's Treasures fund at the National Trust for Historic Preservation. This contribution constitutes the largest single corporate gift to be received by the Smithsonian Institution. Polo Ralph Lauren also has committed \$3 million for a public awareness campaign to Save America's Treasures.

In the War of 1812, Francis Scott Key witnessed the flag flying over Fort McHenry during the fierce battle the night of September 13-14, 1814. This inspired him to write the poem "Defense of Fort McHenry" which eventually became our national anthem, the "Star-Spangled Banner."

The flag, which was commissioned by the War Department and made by Mrs. Mary Pickersgill of Baltimore in 1813, remained with the Armistead family through the 1800s. The flag came to the Smithsonian Institution in 1907; it now hangs in the National Museum of American History. During 175 years of exposure to light and dirt, the wool and cotton flag has deteriorated and is in urgent need of restoration. Through the financial gifts of a number of private organizations and government sources, the flag will be preserved for generations to come.

"Save America's Treasures" Tour

The visit by President and Mrs. Clinton to the Star-Spangled Banner marks the first stop on the Save America's Treasures tour, sponsored by the White House Millennium Council to Save

America's Treasures. During this tour, the First Lady will visit eleven sites in the mid-Atlantic and Northeastern regions which reflect our nation's heritage; all have artifacts, buildings, and monuments which must be preserved to ensure their survival into the next century. President Clinton requested \$50 million in his FY99 budget for the Millennium Fund to Save America's Treasures to address the nation's most pressing preservation needs. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has created a new national Millennium Committee to Save America's Treasures, on which the First Lady serves as honorary chair.

Star-Spangled Banner Gift Donations

The preservation of the Star-Spangled Banner will be made possible through the generosity of a number of groups. In addition to the contributions made by the Polo Ralph Lauren Corporation, the Pew Charitable Trusts of Philadelphia previously announced a \$5 million pledge. Other gifts include donations from organizations such as the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Ladies Auxillary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Order of Speakers

Spencer R. Crew, Director, National Museum of American History

Secretary I. Michael Heyman, Secretary, Smithsonian Institution

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton

The President

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**"Save America's Treasure" press event
National Museum of American History
Monday, July 13, 1998**

<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Name</u>
NBC	Caroline Mears Terry Shaefer
CNN	Brad Wright
C-Span	Eric Hanson
Bravo	Mimi Tomkins Alex Clive Amanda Elliston
Conus	Jeffrey Ballou Ali Rad
TV Asahi	Takandbuy Ito
USA Today	Maria Puente
The Washington Post	Jackie Trescott
The New York Times	Patty Brown Paul Hosefups
The New York Daily News	Kathy Kiley
Chicago Tribune	Michael Kilian
Associated Press	Lindsay Graves Doug Mills
Women's Wear Daily	Kyle Samperton Jim Ostroff
Chemical & Engineering News	Bill Schultz
Newhouse	Delia Rios
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El Nuevo Dia	Sandy Shaffer Leonore Mulero
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