

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1968

Office of the Press Secretary
to Mrs. Johnson

THE WHITE HOUSE

MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON'S REMARKS
RESTORATION LUNCHEON
THE WHITE HOUSE
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It is a pleasure to have each and every one of you here!

As I have traveled about the country, I have seen your handiwork from Salado, Texas, to Tarrytown, New York. Many of you I know through visits to your restoration project, and others because all heritage-minded Americans know your deeds. I hoped we could gather this afternoon -- in a house where history is treasured and history is made -- to share a bit of fellowship and compare notes on the pace of preservation.

So much has happened in the last few years. So much has happened because you made it happen. From the Report of the President's Task Force on Natural Beauty in November 1964, to the study of the Special Committee on Historic Preservation in 1966, to the feast of congressional legislation that occurred that winter: the Demonstration Cities Act! the Department of Transportation Act! And the Historic Preservation Act!

These tools are going to keep us busy for many, many years. They give the official framework that preservation has needed and richly deserved in America, they give safeguards from destruction, they give the beginnings of public financial support.

One of my joys in these years has been traveling to scenes of America's past. I have spent many sunny weekends and sparkling autumn days driving through Virginia or exploring around Texas, or seeking landmarks all across this vast land.

There was a marvelous time with Mr. Henry DuPont at Winterthur. There the treasures of this country in furniture, fabric, china and silver, and all the things that go to make a home are gathered together and express how, at the very earliest times, there was craftsmanship and elegance in American living.

There have been fascinating days at sites of special interest to me -- the restored homes of Presidents. I have visited by now more than a dozen of them. One enchanting afternoon I went to Sagamore Hill in Oyster Bay, New York, the home of President Theodore Roosevelt, where Mrs. Alice Longworth and Mrs. Derby took me through on a highly personalized tour, rich in memory and anecdote of their father and their family.

One of my happiest memories is of the homey, humorous warmth of the little museum at Hannibal, Missouri, home of Mark Twain. Becky Thatcher's cottage, the painted fence, all are there -- vignettes of authentic

Americana, a part of everyone's childhood. That inviting little street has visitors from all parts of the world, and I am sure it has provided an economic shot in the arm to the entire town.

Why this increased interest in traveling the path of our past? It is not unique to me. I am but part of a tide. With increased leisure time and affluence more and more Americans will enjoy these places. And, I think there is another ingredient: Could it be that we are, at last, coming of age in assigning value to our heritage. Certainly we of this decade are taking great strides in preserving part of our national memory for the future.

Each of you has been uniquely talented in this work. I have asked three guests to give us a few words today. I am sure they will be entertaining, and from the variety of their experience and viewpoint we can all learn a few more ingredients of the recipe of success.

Introduction of Leopold Adler, II

For all my love of travel, there are thousands of places which I long to know better. One of them is Savannah, Georgia, whose heritage is the sea, and the South, and a town plan laid out in 1733 by Oglethorpe -- called the finest diagram for city organization in existence.

The Historic Savannah Foundation has surveys of over 1100 buildings marked for restoration. We asked Mr. Leopold Adler, president of the Foundation to tell us how a whole town wakes up and tackles a task so important for its future as the preservation of a diverse and handsome past. Mr. Adler --

Introduction of John Ben Shepperd

My own State of Texas is a relative newcomer in the Nation. The drama of its past is as close as a grandfather's fireside tales. Beginning with the state centennial in 1936, and especially in the sixties there has been widespread enthusiasm for preservation. In town after town, like Roundtop and Jefferson, at stops on the stagecoach line like Winedale, landmarks have been identified and brought to life with love and zeal.

One person who has known the magic attraction of an historical marker is John Ben Shepperd, who has just completed a dynamic term of office as president of the Texas State Historical Survey Committee. He will tell us of Restorations and Restorers he has known. John Ben --

Introduction of Carlisle Humelsine

Without a ^{shadow} of doubt, the greatest total restoration in America is Colonial Williamsburg. Everyone goes there to learn the ideal techniques and follows on their own as much as they can.

My husband was particularly delighted to name the President of Colonial Williamsburg, Carlisle Humelsine as Chairman of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission. For he wanted a man who would emphasize continuity as our country looks forward, and who would make the bicentennial year, 1976, a target date for accomplishing many of the civic enterprises on our national, state and local agendas.

Nineteen seventy-six can be a year of great cognizance for America. I am looking forward to Mr. Humelsine's comments on availing ourselves of its noble opportunity: how best to celebrate our 200th Birthday.

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