New citizens take the Oath of Allegiance at a naturalization ceremony in front of the Museum’s Star-Spangled Banner gallery, featuring a keynote address and donation of objects by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

When you return home tonight, do what I did, and put your citizenship document in the safest and most secure place you can find. It is the most important piece of paper you will ever get because it represents not just a change in legal status, but a license to a dream.

—Madeleine Albright, May 24, 2012
We all can remember our own “museum firsts.” Some particular object made us gasp with wonder—or see the world in a brand new way. We all know that museums can change lives.

Unfortunately, American history—history in general—is no longer studied as a core knowledge requirement in America. Great history museums have become an elusive ideal, and the meaning of our daily lives is not weighed in the full light of historic understanding. There remains a great need to have a place to gain an understanding of our American republic and a full appreciation of where we came from.

So how do we do it in today’s museum?

First, we create and support intellectual life through history experts whose work can be directly delivered to the American public. We believe that if we express the one story of America—inclusive, dynamic, complicated—the public will be more engaged in our nation.

Secondly, we will focus on collections. America has a wonderfully complicated history, based on a grand experiment that is still playing out in our lives today. We are committed to building the breadth of our collection, for it is through these objects that we express ideas and connections that stimulate the public. It is the mix of collections coupled with the presentation and interpretation that gives a history museum authenticity.

We are today through exhibitions, programs and publications. But this cannot be done as humdrum lessons in history. We have to embrace the opportunity to present the ideas of the past and to show how we got where we are today through exhibitions, programs and public programs in the Museum’s 120,000-square-foot West Wing.

We want them to be organized around the large ideas that make America... America. It is not going to be encyclopedic, rather thematic and stimulating. Our plan is highly aspirational—instructively and economically.

People come to our Capital and to our Museum to remember and to understand America. They come in times of celebration and in times of national tragedy. It is our responsibility to take this seriously and respond.

By promoting the profound beliefs of America and by safeguarding the precious objects that we steward for all Americans, we can present our history as substantial and challenging, inviting and accessible, inspiring and wonderfully human.

“George Washington spoke these words during the very first State of the Union address on January 8, 1790. Our first president understood that an informed citizenry lay at the heart of a free society. He warned that the preservation of the newly formed Constitution required the people to know and understand their rights as citizens. Furthermore, he encouraged support of public education because he believed it would lead to the ‘introduction of new and useful inventions’ that would benefit the economy and lift the prospects of this young nation. It’s not surprising that these sentiments still ring true today.

The National Museum of American History plays a crucial role in educating and engaging an informed citizenry and inspiring the next generation of inventors, innovators and entrepreneurs. Through its research, exhibitions and educational programs, this dynamic Museum introduces its youngest visitors to the spirit of ingenuity that is tantamount to America.

At a time when the emphasis on teaching history is waning, the Museum is implementing ambitious plans to expand its reach, enrich its visitors’ experiences and transform its monumental building on the National Mall. Work is underway to double the amount of space dedicated to exhibitions and public programs in the Museum’s 120,000-square-foot West Wing. Starting in 2015, the wing will be unveiled to the public in stages, starting with new exhibitions exploring Innovation, Creativity and Enterprise; Democracy and the Peopling of America; and American Culture.

New venues for programming—including an education center and musical performance hall—will enable the Museum to bring history to life and rekindle visitors to the spirit of ingenuity that is tantamount to America.

I am honored to serve as chairman of the Museum’s board, and like Washington, I believe that knowledge is the key to our nation’s future. Inspiring a greater understanding of the American experience and our indomitable spirit brings with it limitless potential for progress.

To echo Washington’s sentiment: this wonderful Museum, which ensures our future by connecting us to our past, is more than deserving of our patronage.
SINCE THE REPEAL OF PROHIBITION IN 1933, THE WINE INDUSTRY HAS GROWN AND EXPANDED. BY THE YEAR 2000, WINE WAS PRODUCED IN ALL FIFTY STATES.

Like Julia Child—who had a table right in the center—we have a communal table in the middle of the exhibition, where the public can engage in conversation about food.

— Paula Johnson, Curator

The first roster of free public film festivals showcased

- The Films of Humphrey Bogart
- Clint Eastwood’s Westerns
- The Advent of Sound
- The Civil War on Film

The Museum regularly hosts classic film festivals and special screenings throughout the year. In 2012, film festivals featured special guests including scholars, historians, actors and directors who discussed the background and historic significance of films, including actor Rita Moreno and Stephen Bogart, son of Humphrey Bogart.

The Museum satisfies cravings for food history with a new 3,800-square-foot exhibition exploring major changes of food, wine and eating in postwar America.

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Are you going to pull those pistols or whistle "Dixie"?
— Clint Eastwood as Josey Wales in The Outlaw Josey Wales (1976)

Warren Winiarski, lead donor to FOOD: Transforming the American Table, 1950-2000, addresses guests at the opening of the exhibition.

The Museum satisfies cravings for food history with a new 3,800-square-foot exhibition exploring major changes of food, wine and eating in postwar America.

Julia Child’s kitchen—along with its hundreds of tools, appliances and furnishings—serves as the opening story, demonstrating her influence on the culinary field and food television. On the exhibition’s menu are 275 objects to explore food production and processing, who cooks and why, where and when meals are consumed, and what people know (or think they know) about what is good for them.

The Smithsonian’s first major exhibition on food history was made possible through support from Warren and Barbara Winiarski (Winiarski Family Foundation), the Land O’Lakes Foundation, the Julia Child Foundation for Gastronomy and the Culinary Arts, the History Channel, Miljenko “Mike” Grgich and the Nutrients for Life Foundation.

The exhibition is open-ended and serves as the foundation for a major initiative to create a vigorous program through collecting efforts and a series of intellectual exchanges, online offerings and dynamic public programs. Following renovations of the West Wing, the first floor will house a state-of-the-art demonstration kitchen.
Children explore the interactive timeline in American Stories.

Clotilde Arias, a Peruvian immigrant, translated the national anthem into the official Spanish version at the request of the U.S. government.

Until the 1850s, Conestoga wagons hauled supplies and finished goods over the Allegheny Mountains to the Western frontier.

Roberto Clemente’s baseball uniform was featured in American Stories.
Events and Programs

**February**
- Classic Film Festival: The Films of Humphrey Bogart
- Film Screening: Clinton, an American Experience Film
- For Country: Japanese American Soldiers 70th Anniversary of Executive Order 9066, Panel Discussion and Film Screening
- Bach’s St. Matthew Passion, a seminar led by Kenneth Slowik
- Greensboro Sit-in Electronic Fieldtrip
- Thomas Jefferson webinar
- Premiere of Jefferson’s Secret Bible by Smithsonian Channel

**March**
- Sworn To the Drum: A Tribute to Francisca Aguabella
- Protecting Wild Lands: 20th Anniversary Environmental Film Festival Retrospective

**April**
- **Jazz Appreciation Month** performances, displays, talks and more
  - JAM Tap Fest with DC Tap
  - Master Class Workshop with Claudia Acuña
  - Kite JAM: Workshop and ballet
  - Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra: The Incredible Jazz Guitar of Wes Montgomery
  - International Jazz Day

**May**
- Naturalization Ceremony and Madeleine Albright donation

**June**
- Girl Scouts Rock the Mad
- Classic Film Festival: Clint Eastwood’s Westerns
- Music from the Hearts of America performances
- National History Day

**July**
- Classic Film Festival: The Advent of Sound

**August**
- Happy 100th, Julia Child!

**September**
- The Star-Spangled Banner en español with Coral Cantigas

**October**
- Classic Film Festival: The Civil War on Film
- National Youth Summit: Dust Bowl, featuring Ken Burns America’s Test Kitchen public program

**December**
- Music from the Hearts of America performances
- SJMO concert; artistic director David Baker named Maestro Emeritus
- During the Year, the New Warner Bros. Theater Screened 25 Films.
COLLECTIONS & ACQUISITIONS

THE MUSEUM ACQUIRED MORE THAN 2,000 NEW OBJECTS AND 300 CUBIC FEET OF ARCHIVAL MATERIAL IN 2012.

Selected Events

JANUARY
Heritage Auction Galleries hosts a benefit auction to create an endowment in support of the National Numismatic Collection.

MARCH
1933 Double Eagle goes on a seven-city tour of Europe.

JUNE
Museum collects BMI Archives Confederate Music Collection.

AUGUST

OCTOBER
Dorothy’s ruby slippers depart for London’s Victoria and Albert Museum for the Hollywood Costume exhibition. Robot car “Stanley” moves to the National Air and Space Museum to be part of the co-curated exhibition Time & Navigation.

DECEMBER
Museum receives Elphaba costume and broom from the musical WICKED.

Bob Schieffer and Honky Tonk Confidential perform songs from the Museum’s collection of Civil War sheet music to celebrate the acquisition of the BMI Archives Confederate Music Collection.

Senior Costume Conservator Sunae Park Evans examines Benjamin Franklin’s suit.

Elphaba costume from the musical WICKED

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Elphaba costume from the musical WICKED
The Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation’s 2012 activities engaged the public with invention and innovation through significant scholarly work manifested in books, articles and presentations; inspired young people and adults with stimulating programs; and, in taking much of our content online, reached audiences far beyond the Smithsonian.

With the Center’s public spaces temporarily closed to prepare for the renovation of the Museum’s West Wing, much of the past year was spent developing our new exhibition, Places of Invention, and a revamped Spark!Lab, both of which will open in 2015.

**Highlights:**

- Mrs. Dorothy Lemelson joined Smithsonian staff in dedicating the Lemelson Center’s new, permanent office space in the Museum’s new South Wing.
- A temporary, month-long Spark!Lab installation at Art Arsenal, a contemporary art museum in Kyiv, Ukraine, served 32,141 visitors, three times what was expected.
- The latest book in the Lemelson Center Studies in Invention and Innovation series with MIT Press, The Color of Invention: The Color of Innovation, was published in September and went into a second printing by the end of the year.
- The preliminary concept design phase of the Places of invention exhibition project known as the 10% design phase, conducted with design firm Roto, concluded at the end of September.

**Programs:**

- Spark!Lab Cart Program
- Kite JAM
- Spark!Lab at the Cambridge Science Festival
- Lemelson Center Fellowship Program and Travel to Collections Awards
- Nanotechnology activities at the USA Science & Engineering Festival
- IW Mini-Urban Challenge
- Places of invention Affiliates Pilot Project
- Bright Ideas blog and Inventive Voices podcast series
- Portrait of Invention: Author Regina Lee Blaszczyk and Fashion Designers Jeffrey Costello and Robert Tagliapietra
- Political Machines: Innovations in Campaigns and Elections, 2012 New Perspectives on Invention and Innovation symposium

We gratefully acknowledge members of the Smithsonian Council for American History for their enthusiastic commitment throughout the year. The Council is a membership group for individuals who make unrestricted contributions of $1,000 or more to support a variety of the Museum’s critical needs, from the preservation of national treasures to the presentation of world-class exhibitions and educational programs. Council members receive an array of exclusive opportunities in appreciation of their generosity.

We are also pleased to announce the launch of the National Committee, a leadership advisory board for the Council.

**Members as of May 2013**

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Mars, Incorporated
A $5 million gift from Mars, Incorporated is helping create American Enterprise, an exhibition that will engage visitors in learning how this nation

has become one of the world’s largest and most influential economies. The exhibition will open in 2015 in the Mars Hall of American Business.

Benjamin Franklin’s Suit
The simple silk suit, originally a plum color that age has faded to brown, still speaks clearly of its owner, patriot and diplomat Benjamin Franklin. Worn during his 1778 trip to France, Franklin knew the garment’s understated elegance would stand out in the opulent French court, symbolizing the character of a new nation.

Douglas N. Morton and his wife, Marilyn L. Brown, helped the National Museum of American History add the coat, waistcoat and breeches to its collection. For Morton, a descendant of Betsy Ross and lifelong student of American history, sharing it is the whole point.

"Seeing Franklin’s suit on display is like having a Founding Father in front of you. Visitors come to the Smithsonian to see the objects that tell the story of the United States—starting with the Star-Spangled Banner—and they don’t forget them. I hope these treasures inspire people to learn more about our nation’s heritage.”
Transforming the Museum’s West Wing

What makes America… America?

Beginning in 2015, the West Wing of the Museum will feature new exhibitions, program spaces and performance venues to help us tell an inclusive American story.

Democracy and the Peopling of America

Interactive exhibitions and programs on the second floor will explore the history of the American people, from our political struggles and ideals to the origins of our diverse and ever-evolving population.

American Culture

Music, sports, theater, film and more will be showcased on the third floor in dynamic exhibitions on culture, along with a spectacular Hall of Music designed for performances and displays of the Museum’s extraordinary instrument collections.

Innovation, Creativity, and Enterprise

New exhibitions and a multi-faceted education center on the first floor will introduce our visitors to the spirit of ingenuity that is synonymous with America.