MISSION

The Historical Society of Washington D.C. is a community-supported educational and research organization that collects, interprets, and shares the history of our nation’s capital. Founded in 1894, it serves a diverse audience through its collections, public programs, exhibitions, and publications.

VISION

Washington is known throughout the world as a monumental federal city. Less well-known are the stories of Washington’s many diverse and vibrant communities. The Historical Society makes this local history accessible to the public to promote a sense of identity, place, and pride in Washington and to preserve our heritage for future generations.
Education is the core of our mission. We teach students from local elementary, middle and high schools, colleges, and teachers from public, private, and charter schools.

**Major gifts supported educational initiatives**
The Bloedorn Foundation generously supported FY16 educational school visits. The Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of D.C. celebrated its 150th anniversary with a $25,000 gift to the Historical Society for developing 3rd and 12th grade initiatives, including portable “history cart” prototypes.

**Internships**
Nine graduate-level interns from American University and The George Washington University received training through hands-on experience in collections management, reference services, and educational programming.

**Student Research**
Student groups explored history, culture, politics, and the visual landscape of the city at the Kiplinger Research Library. Participating schools and programs include: American University, Bridge DC, Boston University, Capitol Hill Montessori at Logan, Cornerstone Schools, The George Washington University, Investigating Where We Live, SEED Public Charter School, THATSummer, Two Rivers Public Charter School
The Historical Society dramatically expanded programs and outreach in FY16, creating dynamic programs and enhancing existing activities.

Conferences, Dialogues & Lectures

Curt C. and Else Silberman Foundation Lecture
at the National Archives with scholar Eric Foner

Annual Conference on D.C. History
at the National Archives and the Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

James M. Goode book talk
Capital Houses

DISTRICT: Chris Earnshaw art talk
with Dan Zak of the Washington Post and artists Earnshaw and Joseph Mills

Social and Political Changes in ’60s and ’70s Washington
with the Anacostia Community Museum

The Lavender Scare
a Conversation with David Johnson and Josh Howard at the Newseum

Patsy Fletcher book talk
Historically African American Leisure Destinations Around Washington, D.C.

Events

Washington History author receptions
Making D.C. History Awards and Bootlegger’s Ball
Spandorf Exhibit Curator Tea and Tour
Exhibition Openings: November 21, 2015; January 6, 2016; March 10, 2016; April 24, 2016

Tours

Historic Seneca and Montevideo members-only tour
Union Station walking tour
Southwest Waterfront walking tour
Window to Washington exhibit tours
Nationals Park behind-the-scenes tour
Street Photography Series neighborhood photo walks: Kenilworth and Buzzard Point
Historic Carnegie Library tours

Workshops

Street Photography Series: Insights into Architectural Photography and Hands-on Street Photography

Collections Workshops: Third Street Tunnel, Navy Yard, Southwest Waterfront, McMillan Sand Filtration Site, McMillan Plan, Archiving Digital Photography, D.C. in the ’60s and ’70s, Lily Spandorf, Slavery and Citizenship, House History Workshops

Community Partnerships

Institutions across the city’s cultural spectrum broaden engagement and reach diverse audiences.
This year the following partners participated with us: The George Washington University Museum | The Textile Museum; National Archives; DC Public Library; D.C. Fire and EMS Museum; Anacostia Community Museum; National Building Museum; HumanitiesDC; Smithsonian Associates; Capital Pride Alliance; Newseum; Nellie’s Sports Bar; Rainbow History Project; Nationals Park/Washington Nationals.
LIBRARY & COLLECTIONS

Our collections document more than 200 years of city history and drive our exhibitions, programs, and publications.

Kiplinger Research Library Highlights
Historical Society librarians and collections specialists served more than 300 new library patrons and guided more than 500 returning researchers; filled 300+ scan-on-demand requests; responded to more than 2,000 reference queries; pulled more than 4,800 collection items requested by researchers; and hosted orientations for community groups.

Discover DC History
The Historical Society launched a new digital platform, Discover DC History (accessible via www.DCHistory.org), an online resource highlighting more than 900 items from collections digitized in FY16. Support for the underlying digitization was provided by a grant from the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region in FY15. This new platform complements the more than 110,000 records already available for researchers from our online research catalog.
**Public Access**
Access to collections was enhanced in collaboration with The George Washington University, DC Public Library, DC Archives, Howard University, and the Smithsonian Archives Center on the D.C. Africana Archives Project (DCAAP), and with the DC Public Library through a Library of Congress-funded National Digital Stewardship Resident (NDSR) fellowship.

**New Collections**
The Kiplinger Research Library accessioned more than 40 collections and donations, including manuscripts, maps, business records, and photographs from individuals as well as organizations including the Washington Home & Community Hospices and The Washington Post.

**Enhancing Research**
Staff and volunteers created or updated catalog records for more than 15,000 items and finding aids for more than fifty manuscript collections.

Photos by Anne McDonough
We continue to curate exhibitions that focus on new ways to explore D.C. history. This year D.C. artists and photographers, both bygone and contemporary, interpreted our city through art.

**EAST GALLERY**

**ReVision: Thinking Big**
September - December 2015

**DISTRICT: Chris Earnshaw**
January - February 2016

**ExposedDC 10th Anniversary**
Photography Show
*Independent exhibition*
March 2016

**For the Record: Changing DC**
April - July 2016

**SMALL-ALPER FAMILY GALLERY**

**Window to Washington: The Kiplinger Collection**
November 2012 - Present

**THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY MUSEUM | THE TEXTILE MUSEUM**

**For the Record: The Art of Lily Spandorf**
*Co-curated*
November 2015 - July 2016
PUBLICATIONS & OUTREACH

Online resources and social media exponentially expanded educational opportunities.

Washington History
Two issues of our award-winning journal were published and shipped to members and subscribers, continuing our tradition of producing the only journal dedicated to new research on local D.C. history. Washington History is available online, through the digital repository JSTOR and Amazon.com, as well as through local retailers.

History Headlines
The monthly electronic newsletter delivers updates on recent activities and news. Readership has grown from 9,825 on October 1, 2015, to more than 12,700 subscribers by September 30, 2016.

DCHistory.org
This fiscal year, our blog-based website reached an all-time peak of 16,289 visitors with between 350-525 visits per day.

Social Media @dchistory
Facebook: “Likes” increased by 77%
Twitter: approx. 5,200 followers

Instagram: (started account in October 2015) approx. 600 followers

Youtube: new videos of FY16 programs

Media Coverage
The Washington Post highlighted the Historical Society in numerous columns and articles, including Dan Zak’s four-page feature on a local photographer and his solo photography debut, DISTRICT: Chris Earnshaw (“The Polaroids of the Cowboy Poet,” January 2016). Additional media coverage of the Historical Society’s library services, programs, exhibits, and events included outlets such as Vanity Fair, Washingtonian Magazine, The Intowner, WAMU 88.5, DCist.com, and Greater Greater Washington.

Membership
FY16 saw a 15% increase in members. Digital and social media channels have increased visibility among younger audiences, with the 25-45 year old age group most responsive to our presence on Facebook and Twitter.

The North American Reciprocal Membership benefit offers free admission to more than 800 cultural repositories around the continent, an increasingly popular incentive for members at the “Membership Plus” level of $100.

Funding from the Graham Fund supported the purchase of 15 new computers and software, as well as an upgrade to Neon CRM, the membership and donor database software that provides a more robust interface with our members through a cloud-based system.
FY16 DONORS & SUPPORTERS

Donors at all levels are essential to the continuation of our mission. We give particular thanks to donors who gave $2,500 and above during FY16, including:

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DC Preservation League
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Downtown DC BID
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Izetta Autumn Mobley, Public Programs and Outreach
Karen Harris, Events and Publications
Laura Barry, Social Media Coordinator
Chris Myers Asch, Editor, Washington History
Jane Freundel Levey, Managing Editor, Washington History

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