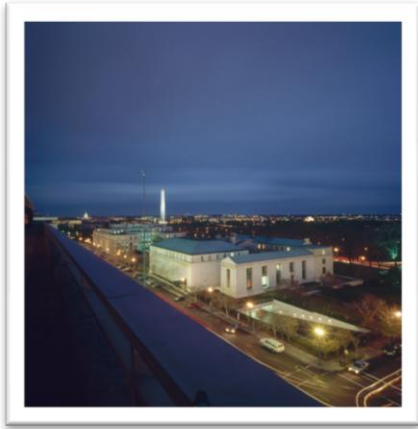


The Diplomatic Reception Rooms

U.S. Department of State



On the seventh and eighth floors of the U.S. Department of State are America's best kept secret – the Diplomatic Reception Rooms. These 42 magnificent rooms are used each day by the President, Vice President, and Secretary of State to conduct American diplomacy at the highest levels and are often the site for important Presidential speeches such as President Obama's landmark speech on the Arab and Mideast Peace Process. While a portion of the Rooms are made available to the public through daily tours, these Rooms are primarily used for important meetings

with world leaders – to conduct peace negotiations; hold official state dinners, lunches and events; sign international treaties; and conduct diplomacy at the highest levels.

Spanning more than 28,000 square feet, the Diplomatic Reception Rooms are home to a historic collection of more than 5,000 decorative and fine arts objects – valued at more than \$100 million. These masterpieces reflect the pride, craftsmanship and spirit of 18th century America. It is an unrivaled collection that tells the story of America's birth and its early days as a nation.

Each day, the Diplomatic Reception Rooms and their collections serve as silent ambassadors – sharing America's history, heritage, and achievements with the world – and serving as a centerpiece for our country's diplomatic work. The Rooms also play an important educational role, as they literally tell the story of our nation's history to the more than 90,000 visitors who tour the Rooms each year.

There is no other place in the world like the Diplomatic Rooms, and no other collection that shares the American story and celebrates American craftsmanship in such a unique way. Each object in the collection tells two stories: the story of the remarkable craftsman who created each piece, and the story of the patriot who owned each piece. These are stories of heroism and perseverance – of the American Dream and the American Spirit. And each day, these stories are shared with the world through these priceless objects.

The same is true of the Rooms themselves. Each architectural detail in the Diplomatic Rooms is historically significant, and was painstakingly crafted by master artisans, laboring for thousands of hours to recreate the rooms in the manner reflecting the period of our nation's founding. With inspirations from great American homes including Monticello and

Cliveden, and with objects belonging to George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Francis Scott Key, Paul Revere and other national leaders and patriots, these rooms and their collections form a vital link between our proud past and the efforts of leaders today to represent the best of America through diplomacy.

Fifty years ago, in October 1961, the Rooms' former curator, Clement Conger, began the remarkable collection of decorative and fine arts that today make their home in the Diplomatic Rooms. In 1982, the Rooms themselves were transformed into the beautiful masterpieces they are today.

By law, no government or taxpayer funds can be used to care for or preserve these national treasures. Thus, the Diplomatic Reception Rooms and their \$100 million collection depend entirely upon private donations. Because a base of adequate funding did not exist, each year, the Curator of the Rooms was forced to make difficult decisions about which national treasures would be conserved and which could not.

To address this issue, the State Department launched a historic campaign in 2010, the *Patrons of Diplomacy*. The goal: to create a \$20 million permanent endowment to preserve, protect and care for the Diplomatic Rooms and their historic collection in perpetuity. In October 2012, the campaign was successfully completed, with \$20 million raised, thereby ensuring that the Diplomatic Rooms and their Collection will continue to provide an extraordinary venue for American diplomacy for generations to come.

