Wickham-Valentine House

Attorney John Wickham (1763-1839) lived at this location beginning in 1790. A prominent lawyer, he helped defend Aaron Burr against treason charges in 1807. Alexander Parris designed this neoclassical house for Wickham that he built here in 1812. Wickham’s family, including second wife Elizabeth and nineteen children, lived here until 1853. More than fifteen enslaved African Americans worked in the house. Entrepreneur Mann S. Valentine II (1824-1892) purchased the property in 1882 and displayed his archaeological and ethnographic collections here. In 1898, the house was opened as the Valentine Museum.
What an amazing year it has been for the Valentine!

Our Top 5 Accomplishments

1. Finalized the major gallery renovation plan
2. Reached an increasing number of students, teachers and parents
3. Curated relevant exhibitions related to the history and culture of Richmond
4. Hosted two record-breaking exhibition openings
5. Garnered significant media attention for our ongoing efforts as a cultural catalyst

Across all of our programs and special initiatives, we see the significant impacts of our strategic plan. From moving forward on the Gallery Phase of our capital campaign to engaging new and more diverse audiences in our programs and tours, from celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Wickham House to creating conversations about the meaning and relevance of our region’s history, we have clearly established the trajectory for the Valentine’s future. Our challenge is to acknowledge the legacies and traditions of our 120 year history (we were chartered in 1892) while creating a sustainable and relevant model for our future. With over 1.6 million objects our collections and a significant block of historic properties strategically located in downtown, we have both unique responsibilities and the resources to respond to a rapidly changing region. The significant community and institutional impact of our plan is clear.

The Recumbent Lee

The 1812 John Wickham House

New State Historical Marker

Our Mission

The mission of the Valentine Richmond History Center is to engage, educate, and challenge a diverse audience by collecting, preserving, and interpreting Richmond’s history.

Our Vision

The vision of the Valentine Richmond History Center is to be recognized as the premier source for experiencing Richmond’s history – using its past to inform the present, and to shape the future.

Most importantly, our family of supporters continues to grow and support our continued work of connecting Richmonders to their past and to their community. The increasing impact of this support can be seen in all of this year’s accomplishments. We are thankful for all of our donors, board, sponsors and friends.

Pamela J. Royal, M.D.  William J. Martin
Chairman  Director

The Recumbent Lee

The 1812 John Wickham House

New State Historical Marker

Wickham-Valentine House

Attorney John Wickham (1763-1839) lived at this location beginning in 1790. A prominent lawyer, he helped defend Aaron Burr against treason charges in 1807. Alexander Parris designed this neoclassical house for Wickham that he built here in 1812. Wickham’s family, including second wife Elizabeth and nineteen children, lived here until 1853. More than fifteen enslaved African Americans worked in the house. Entrepreneur Mary S. Valentine II (1824-1892) purchased the property in 1882 and displayed his archaeological and ethnographic collections here. In 1898, the house was opened as the Valentine Museum.
At a Glance: The Valentine Richmond History Center

Affectionately known by some as “Richmond’s attic,” the Valentine Richmond History Center has been collecting, preserving and interpreting Richmond, Virginia’s 400-year history for more than a century. Located in the heart of historic downtown, the History Center is a place for residents and tourists to discover the diverse stories that tell the history of this important region.

Our Own History

Our own story begins with one man’s love of history and artifacts that grew from a collection to a museum … and evolved into today’s History Center that illuminates the history and interprets the current issues of our city.

Mann S. Valentine II made his fortune in the late 1800s with the creation and production of Valentine’s Meat Juice, a health tonic made from pure beef juice. Rumored to have started with the humble beginnings of a cigar box, Mann eventually amassed a collection of hundreds of artifacts. Mann’s brother, sculptor Edward V. Valentine, shared his love of artifacts and aided his brother in the creation of the Valentine Museum.

The Valentine Museum opened in 1898 as the first private museum in the City of Richmond. Over time, the institution transformed from an art and history museum to one focusing on the life and history of Richmond, Virginia, and its surrounding counties.

Marking Our History

This year, the History Center itself was at the center of a historical moment: the dedication of two state historical markers issued by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources on September 23, 2012. The markers, erected on Clay Street, commemorate the Valentine Museum and the John Wickham House. The dedication ceremony celebrated the 200th anniversary of the Wickham-Valentine House, the neoclassical-style residence built in 1812 for Richmond attorney John Wickham, who had assisted in defending Aaron Burr against charges of treason. In 1882, Mann S. Valentine II purchased the Wickham House to showcase his collection of artifacts.
Making History...
Innovative

Innovation is all about introducing something new, and the Valentine Richmond History Center is — ironically — doing just that by generating new perspectives on “old” history.

Collections and Exhibitions

From a 19th century photograph showing Richmond’s early skyline to a digital image of body art on a current Richmond resident, the History Center’s collections are vast. It’s these objects that can start someone’s mind to turn … and to ask questions… and to wonder. And that is our mission.

History, Ink: The Tattoo Archive Project
In 2010, Richmond was noted as one of the most tattooed cities in the United States, and so the History Center ventured into an unexpected kind of historical archiving. As a popular subculture and art form, tattoos are part of Richmond’s unique history, and “History, Ink: The Tattoo Archive Project” captured nearly 1,800 images of tattoos and the stories behind them.

RVA50: A History of Richmond in 50 Objects
If exhibitions had no space restrictions, there could be countless objects … but RVA50 faced the opposite: how do you define a city’s history in just 50 objects? The History Center debated, compared, eliminated and evaluated hundreds of objects in the quest to present a balanced exhibition. And the final twist? Spot #51 was left open to public suggestion …

Wickham House 200: Inspiring New Art Two Centuries Later
What more innovative way to celebrate the bicentennial of construction of the 1812 John Wickham House than by installing new artwork? Inspired by the history of the house, students from Virginia Commonwealth University’s School of the Arts submitted proposals that illustrated their contemporary responses to the house. Installed in the Wickham House itself, these works of art served as the perfect backdrop for a series of events and public programs that commemorated the 200th birthday of the home.

Holt Tobacco Collection
Richmond’s history is steeped in tobacco, so much so that early tobacco companies even advertised their products as containing only Richmond or Virginia-style tobacco. The Holt Tobacco Collection captures this history through Bernard Stuart “Skip” Holt’s (1932 - 2011) recently donated collection of tobacciana.

Virginia First Ladies Portraits
First Lady Maureen McDonnell unveiled portraits of all ten living Virginia First Ladies in October 2011. Of the ten, four were displayed at the Valentine Richmond History Center. They were exhibited to honor of the contributions each of these women has made to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Framing Richmond: Recent Photography Acquisitions
From formal studio portraits to candid snapshots, photographs capture details about who we are, where we are and what’s happening around us. The History Center has preserved more than one million Richmond-related images from early daguerreotypes to today’s digital images. “Framing Richmond: Recent Photography Acquisitions” showcased some of the images added to the History Center’s collection in the past five years.
Let’s Talk: Community Conversations

In the spring of 2012, the Valentine Richmond History Center partnered with the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (VCIC), TMI Consulting and the Future of Richmond’s Past to host a series of public meetings. This city-wide effort engaged audiences in a dialogue about our shared past and how we can positively shape the future.

Now in its third year, “Community Conversations” transitioned from topical discussions to a series of sessions focused on a specific decade. Starting with the 1960s and ending with the 2000s, nearly 400 people in total gathered together to talk, learn and develop new ideas.

What Did We Talk About?

1960s (January 2013)
We examined and made recommendations for Richmond’s Slave Trail and the proposed Richmond Liberty Trail route, which guide long-time residents and visitors alike as they explore city sites.

1970s (February 2013)
We continued the January discussion of the trail routes, plus had a discussion about implementing racial integration in Richmond forty years ago.

1980s (March 2013)
In addition to exploring the city’s subcultures through the 1980s, we explored the current tattoo subculture and sketched tattoos for the City of Richmond and tattoos capturing a personal history.

1990s (April 2013)
If we had room for just one piece in the exhibition, “A History of Richmond in 50 Objects,” what should it be? After exploring RVA50, we discussed the arts, culture, and political landscape of the 1990s in Richmond.

2000s (May 2013)
For the 2000s, participants contributed to a timeline of significant events for the first decade of the 21st century.
Making History...
Shape the Future

The Valentine Richmond History Center is not only proud of its engaging exhibitions, but our fascinating storytelling is truly impactful because it has the power to affect the future. And shaping the future – for the better – is one of our highest accomplishments.

History Center @ TEDxRVA = Inspiration

In March 2013, History Center Director Bill Martin joined other impressive Richmonders to share thoughts and tell stories at TEDxRVA 2013, an independently organized TED event. Key to Bill’s talk was the notion that you can’t believe you were told everything (about your own past and our shared history).

Unless you know more – unless you push to find out more – you’re going to miss the opportunity to transform your future. The untold story begins to change everything. And that’s where the Valentine Richmond History Center strives to be every day: discovering the past, engaging everyone in interpreting it, and using that powerful knowledge to shape a better future.

What was being Tweeted after Bill Martin’s talk:

• Just teared up at #TEDxRVA: “There is one thing about your past that you don’t know that is going to change your life forever.”

• Made me fall in love with #rva all over again: Bill Martin from the Valentine.

• Bill Martin just crushed #tedxrva: “creativity comes from the tension between what you know and what you think you know.”

• Bill Martin @valentinerhc reminding me why I love history. You can hear a pin drop in here right now. #tedxrva
**Construction Zone**

Imagine a space in Richmond that serves as a forum for community ideas and discussions, the seat of the city’s history, and an engine that helps to drive Richmond’s future and its growth. Board members, staff and others know that the Valentine Richmond History Center already fulfills those roles in various ways, but the upcoming capital renovations will allow the campus to fully support the vision.

By transforming the History Center’s Clay Street campus into an inviting, visitor-friendly space for exhibitions, education programs, and community events, we are physically becoming the space for:

- telling our stories and our histories
- researching and building our communities
- identifying and framing the major issues that will impact Richmond’s future
- sharing ideas about contemporary community subjects and
- offering authentic experiences based on a rich collection of historical objects and documents

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**Historical Improvements**

As the History Center prepares to modernize and renovate its Clay Street campus, we also made significant historical enhancements to the period interpretations of the 1812 John Wickham House. As the original location for the Valentine Museum (and now proudly bearing a state historic marker), the Wickham House allows guests to explore aspects of life in the early 19th century. Historical improvements to the house include mirror and fireplace additions, sisal carpeting installation (to emulate 19th century grass matting), and a 19th century mahogany writing table (likely made in Richmond).

In addition, based on inventories from John Wickham, several pieces have been added to the Wickham Master Bedchamber and Dr. McClurg’s Bedchamber to fully represent the house as it would have been in the early 19th century.
Making History...
Come to Life

As a history center, we don’t just want to archive historical documents and objects and store them in a dark basement. It’s just the opposite: we’re committed to engaging and educating people in our region’s history. And in doing so, we make history come to life, every day.

Richmond History Tours

What better way to learn about the history of our city than to walk it in your own shoes? Or to stand in the holiday lights as you learn the history of monument Avenue residences? Or to walk old neighborhood streets with your dog while you learn about how our city was built?

For 12 years, the Valentine Richmond History Center has offered Richmond History Tours, which are various guided walking, bus, group, school tours that explore the history of our city. Think it’s all the same tour, same route, same information? Think again!

“There was NOTHING the guide didn’t know!”

2012 - 2013 Highlights

- New tours added: Byrd Park and the Carillon Neighborhood walking tours; Monument Avenue and Bellevue History Hounds tours
- Director’s Tours featured Highland Park and Barton Heights neighborhoods
- Increases in group and reunion tours, particularly for customized city tours for businesses, government, regional and national conferences, civic groups, and colleges and universities
- Redeeming a voucher? Join the crowd: more than 500 people participated in tours through our promotions with LivingSocial and Groupon

Richmond History Tours are always changing and introducing new ways to make the history of our city come to life. More than 9,000 people (plus hundreds of dogs on the History Hounds tour!) participated this year in Richmond History Tours with topics ranging from women leaders to 18th and 19th century cemeteries. There are Director’s Tours, which explore Director Bill Martin’s choice of neighborhood and topic, and tours that focus on timely topics, such as the Civil War Sampler tour.

“Lots of fun! Unexpectedly being invited into two homes made it special. [We heard an] out-of-towner say, “I heard that Richmond is friendly, but I can’t believe this!”
Education and Public Programs

Nothing makes history come to life for students more than an engaging educational program. Hearing stories, examining artifacts and walking in the steps of historical figures will beat a textbook any day!

More than 17,000 students, teachers and parents participated in education programs and tours this year at the Valentine Richmond History Center. Our school programs support the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Standards of Learning (SOLs) for History and Social Science, English, and Visual Arts. We offered eleven school programs and a post-program gallery tour – either as in-house programs or outreach opportunities: A Colonial Community, African Americans in Antebellum Richmond, Children in the House: Growing Up in the 1800s, Civil War Spies, Era Explorations, Fall Line City History, Greek by Design, Hands on Richmond History, Powhatan Indians, Waterways and Whose Hat is That?

But just because school is out doesn’t mean the learning stops! The History Center taught more than 1,500 students through nine summer offerings: Flying the Flag, History Mystery, Hoops and Hopscotch, Party in the House, Recycled Sculpture, The Shape of our House, Three Sisters, Whatchamacallits & Thingamajigs, and Who’s Hat is That?

An important part of making history come to life is to teach others how to do it themselves! In other words, we work hard to provide the tools to teachers so that they can, in turn, make history come to life in their classrooms.

This past year, the History Center made presentations in the spring and fall semesters to prospective teachers to assist them in developing, planning and executing (exciting!) field trip possibilities.

Our Students Came From:

- 18 public schools in the City of Richmond
- 24 public schools in Chesterfield County
- 7 public schools in Henrico County
- 4 public schools in Hanover County
- 21 private schools
- 33 day care/pre-school facilities
- 9 schools from localities outside the Richmond Metro area: New Kent, Dinwiddie, King George, Hopewell, Powhatan, and Prince Edward counties.
- Boy Scouts, Tuckahoe YMCA Indian Guides and Prince Edward 4-H groups

Of course, learning isn’t just for youth students! Our adult programs – interactive history lectures, curator lecture programs, and Wickham House special tours – were conducted for nearly 6,000 people.

We also couldn’t do what we do without the help of interns and volunteers! This year:

- 15 interns served 1,900 hours
- 48 volunteers provided 3,986 hours of service
Special Events

The Valentine Richmond History Center realizes that our special events are certainly entertaining gatherings, but they’re more than that. Our special events are key ways that we make history come to life: by celebrating the ways of the past, integrating ourselves into present-day historical events, or commemorating the achievements of people making history.

Richmond History Makers

Each year the Valentine Richmond History Center honors citizens and organizations for making extraordinary (and sometimes unrecognized) contributions to the greater Richmond region. This year the Richmond History Makers program honored four individuals and one organization for their work in making history.

The 2012 Richmond History Makers program would not be possible without the support of our sponsors, including presenting sponsor Dominion and collaborating partner Leadership Metro Richmond.

A full list of sponsors appears in the Honor Roll of Donors.

First Friday Art Walk

On November 2, 2012, this First Friday Art Walk made history at the Valentine as one of the largest and most diverse exhibit openings in over 100 years. “History, Ink: The Tattoo Archive Project” and “Wickham House 200: Inspiring New Art Two Centuries Later” were greeted by hundreds of guests. Guests enjoyed local food, drinks and a guest DJ entertained everyone with some happening jams.

26th Annual Court End Christmas

For more than a quarter of a century, various historic downtown sites have joined with the History Center every December to host a holiday open house complete with guided tours, living history and reenactments, children’s activities, carriage rides and music. This year, sites included the Virginia State Capitol, the John Marshall House, and St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, to name a few.

4th Annual Secret Garden Party

As spring unfolded, the History Center celebrated the urban garden with an annual progressive party in Richmond’s Court End neighborhood. Each of five historic homes/museums and gardens featured a different beverage and entertainment.

Valentine Costume Gala

On May 4th, 2013, friends and supporters of the History Center gathered to celebrate the renowned Costume and Textile Collection and to recognize a few people who have helped make the museum what it is today. The Honorary Chairs for the event were as follows: Mr. and Mrs. E. Massie Valentine, Sr., Mr. and Mrs. Henry L. Valentine II, Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Wright, Jr. and Mrs. Granville G. Valentine, Jr.
Financial & Development Notes

The History Center is well on its way in the Gallery Campaign to fund the $8.6 million renovation of the galleries, education center, lobby and other areas. The confusing maze of walls will come down and doors, windows and spaces will be opened. Included in the renovation campaign is a $4.5 million addition to our endowment to ensure a reliable financial foundation for the museum.

$4,035,326

• New comprehensive exhibition on the history of Richmond
• New changing exhibition space to explore community issues
• Dedicated galleries for the Costume and Textile Collection
• Renovated restrooms
• Updated special event space
• New gift shop and lobby area
• Updated education center

$4,500,000 Endowment and Operating Funds

• Fully fund the Nathalie L. Klaus Costume and Textile Curator, a position that will oversee the use of over 40,000 textile items at the History Center, the largest textile collection in the Southern United States. (Completed in February 2013)
• $1,000,000 for new programs and exhibitions within the rotating galleries. (Completed in April 2013)
• $500,000 for operations
• Fully endow a new position to curate the rotating community galleries
• Additional general endowment