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Mount Vernon Place Conservancy

Mount Vernon Place Conservancy Hosts Viewing of Washington Monument's Historic Cornerstone
Monument's 200-year-old cornerstone will be displayed along with new items that will be placed inside the stone, including a 3-D printed likeness of George Washington.

BALTIMORE, MD—Mount Vernon Place Conservancy officials today unveiled publicly the Washington Monument's 200-year-old cornerstone.

The cornerstone, its lid and the new contents that will be placed inside the well of the stone were displayed at the north side of the construction fence at the foot of the Monument.

Discovered during excavation outside the Monument's northeast corner, the cornerstone was temporarily removed, brought to the surface and opened February 18, 2015.

Since then, the cornerstone's original contents have been carefully removed and assessed by conservators from The Walters Art Museum and Maryland State Archives. To ensure preservation, items from the cornerstone will be kept in archival storage and not returned to the stone. New items that will be placed inside the cornerstone include a likeness of George Washington created using the latest in 3-D technology.

The cornerstone will be returned to its original position during the week of April 13 so restoration work can continue. In late May, contents of the 1815 cornerstone will be revealed along with the 1915 Centennial Time Capsule, which was also found inside the Monument.

"As the symbolic starting point of the construction of the Monument, the cornerstone is best preserved in its original location," said Lance Humphries, Chair of the Conservancy's restoration committee. "It fortifies the Monument, which is a national treasure that should be enjoyed by everyone who comes to visit Baltimore for years to come."

During the restoration of the Monument, Owings Mills-based Direct Dimensions Inc., a national leader in 3-D scanning technology, scanned Enrico Causici's statue of George Washington, which stands atop the Monument. Washington is depicted resigning his commission as Commander in Chief of the Continental Army at the close of the Revolutionary War, an act that took place at the Maryland State House in 1783. The scan is being used in creating a record of the condition of the statue as it was in 2015.

"We were able to very quickly produce what may be the first of its kind – a set of miniature replicas of an historical monument enshrined back into the cornerstone for future generations to see," said Michael Raphael, Direct Dimension's founder and chief executive officer. "We strongly believe that cultural artifacts, especially those exposed to the elements, such as the George Washington Monument in Mount Vernon Place, are among the most important treasures requiring 3-D digital documentation. Three-dimensional scanning provides a fast accurate means for permanent documentation and future restoration of cultural artifacts under constant risk of destruction by weather, pollution, or other disasters."

The 3-D models were printed in nylon by NextLine Manufacturing Inc. of Gaithersburg and electroplated for durability in copper and nickel by Halethorpe-based RePliForm Inc.

"Although we have used the most advanced technology and tools available to us to document the current condition of the statue, we wanted to make sure that people in the future would not need any special tool to understand these objects," Humphries said. "These 3-D images will show the future the condition of the statue in 2015. We don't know when they will be found, but when they are they will help future generations understand how the statue appeared during the Monument's bicentennial year."

About the Monumental Bicentennial Celebration

On July 4, 2015, the bicentennial of the laying of its cornerstone, the Washington Monument will be re-dedicated and re-opened to the public during the Monumental Bicentennial Celebration. The celebration, presented by Bank of America and the Mount Vernon Place Conservancy, will take place from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm at Mt. Vernon Place. There will be day-long festivities including a Naturalization Ceremony, a formal ribbon cutting, and an old-fashioned family-friendly county fair. Admission is free. For more information, visit <http://mvpconservancy.org/>. Visit our Facebook page [Facebook.com/mountvernonplace](https://www.facebook.com/mountvernonplace).

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