



# **Ushers Office, Office of the Executive Residence: Records, 1981-1989**

## **Finding Aid Type**

White House Staff and Office File Collections

## **Disclaimer**

Folders noted as “Open” may still contain closed material due to Freedom of Information Act restrictions. Most frequent withdrawn material is national security classified material, personal privacy, protection of the President, etc. Folders noted as closed are subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests under the provisions of the Presidential Records Act (PRA).

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## **Record Type**

Textual

## **Biography**

## **Office History and Functions**

During most of the 1800s the informally recognized White House chief servant was often called the steward or stewardess, sometimes the doorkeeper, and beginning with President James Buchanan, the usher. The position of chief usher was not established until 1891, in the administration of President Benjamin Harrison. Thomas E Stone was the first individual to have the official title of chief usher bestowed on him throughout his tenure.

The average length of service for a chief usher is 10 years. The longest serving White House chief usher is Irwin H. "Ike" Hoover, who served as chief usher for 24 of his 42 years in the White House. The second-longest serving chief usher is Gary J. Walters, who spent 21 years in the position.

Administratively, the Office of the Chief Usher resides within an agency known as the Executive Residence, which in turn was made part of the Executive Office of the President (EOP) in 2002. Within the Executive Residence are three offices: The Office of the Chief Usher, the Office of the White House Curator, and the Office of Calligraphy.

For the Reagan Administration, the Office of the Chief Usher was part of the Executive Resident, supporting the President and the first family with operational functions rather than policy support. Physically, the chief usher is located in the Usher's Office on the State Floor of the White House, near the Cross Hall and Entrance Hall and beside the entrance to the North Portico.

The chief usher serves at the pleasure of the president, and has no job tenure or civil service protections. The chief usher has a personal staff of limited size, usually under 10 individuals, But the chief usher oversees a total Executive Residence staff of about 90.

The chief usher is charged with "the effective operation of the White House Complex and Executive Residence,,. [The chief usher] develops and administers the budget for the operation, maintenance, and utilities and supervises the Executive Residence staff." The chief usher is responsible for creating the budget (in the \$16-\$20 million range) for the office of the Executive Residence, overseeing

disbursements from the budget, the purchase of supplies, ensuring the physical safety and integrity of the White House's decorative arts and furnishings collections (including theft prevention), and the generation of hand-written (but not printed) White House items such as menus, placards, or invitations. The chief usher oversees the first family's private as well as public life, meeting the private needs of the family and working to ensure that public and private events do not conflict. Generally, the chief usher hosts a meeting with all White House offices early on every Monday morning to review the week's events and ensure that there are no problems.

Coordination of the locations of the first family and events, both official and personal, are the other large area of responsibilities for the Chief Usher. The Usher must often times coordinate events with the National Park Service and the White House Office of Planning and Scheduling. In addition the Chief Usher works closely with the Department of State on State Dinner events. The Chief User, and particularly the calligraphy unit in the Executive Residence work closely with the Social Secretary to ensure handwritten invitations for White House events are sent out.

The chief usher is an *ex officio* member of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House, which coordinates the decoration, maintenance, refurbishment, and historic preservation of the White House. Once a month, the chief usher hosts a meeting with the National Park Service (which owns the main White House building and its grounds), the General Services Administration (which owns the East Wing, West Wing, and ancillary buildings scattered in the South Lawn: Eisenhower Executive Office Building, The New Executive Office Building, the Blair House and the various other government-owned townhouses and structures on Jackson Place NW, The Secret Service, and the White House Military Office to review maintenance, repair, security, and other needs at the White House and plan for upkeep.

The chief usher also works closely with the White House Historical Association, the government-chartered, private non-profit organization which assists with the furnishing of and the acquisition of art for the White House. As part of their duties, the chief usher also oversees all gifts which become part of the White House collection (e.g., are not personal gifts to the president or first family).

## Scope and Content Note

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The Library received this material as an accession in the early 2000s. It appears to have been a clean-out of the Usher's Office records from the White House and some of these folders contain material from other presidential administrations. The Library has made the decision to retain this material as it was received, maintaining the filing of work product at the White House Usher's Office. An accretion to this collection was sent to the Library by the White House Office of Records Management on July 31, 2012. This material can be found in Boxes 10-11.

An arrangement has not been completed on this material.

### Last Modified Date

2025-01-03

### Box 1

Status	Title
CLOSED	3.5" Diskette - Miscellaneous Folders From Past Presidents and Gary Walters, Head Usher, 03/23/2009
CLOSED	Access Control System 1988
CLOSED	Accident Reports
CLOSED	Account Statement - White House Historical Association (WHHA) Special Project
CLOSED	Administration 1987
CLOSED	Administration Matter
CLOSED	American Association of Nurserymen
OPEN	Application: Usher (1)-(3)
CLOSED	Application Administrative/Managerial
CLOSED	Application Carpenter/Electricians/Maintenance
CLOSED	Application Flower Shop
CLOSED	Application Food Services

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
CLOSED	Application General Miscellaneous
OPEN	Application Housekeeper (1)-(3)
CLOSED	Appropriations Historical Information
CLOSED	Asbestos
OPEN	Beauty Salon [1979-1981]
CLOSED	Biltmore Estates
CLOSED	Birds
OPEN	Boehm
CLOSED	Budget 1987
CLOSED	Cabinet Room
CLOSED	Candles
CLOSED	Carpeting
CLOSED	Chair
CLOSED	Chef Search 1987
CLOSED	Classified Documents
CLOSED	Congressional Barbecue
CLOSED	Congressional Barbecue 1985
CLOSED	Construction
CLOSED	Cybis

## **Box 2**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
CLOSED	Dining Room
CLOSED	Dinners (Official)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<a href="#">Dining Room (Second Floor)</a>
CLOSED	Document Classification
CLOSED	Drug Testing Program 1988
CLOSED	East Wing
CLOSED	East Wing Detection System
CLOSED	East Wing Electrical Vault
CLOSED	Easter 1988
CLOSED	Easter Egg Roll 1985

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
CLOSED	Electrical-Renovation System
CLOSED	Elevator
CLOSED	Emergency Power SystemEnergy Conservation (General)
CLOSED	Fire Inspections
OPEN	Gary Walters
CLOSED	Ground Floor Restrooms
CLOSED	Kitchen
OPEN	Kitchen (Second Floor) [1973-1987]
CLOSED	Law and Regulations
OPEN	Linen [1970-1987] (1)(2)
CLOSED	Loans (Objects)
CLOSED	Long Range Planning
CLOSED	Marble
CLOSED	Miscellaneous
CLOSED	National Park Services
CLOSED	North Fountain
CLOSED	North Roadway Restoration
CLOSED	Official Residences Council
CLOSED	Oval Office
CLOSED	Oval Office Floor I
CLOSED	Oval Office Floor II

### **Box 3**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
CLOSED	Paint (Exterior) Residence 1972
CLOSED	Paint (Interior) State/Ground Floors
CLOSED	Paint-Exterior Restoration Project
CLOSED	Paint- Restoration (Exterior) 1984
CLOSED	Paint Shop
CLOSED	Passes- Issuance of General
CLOSED	Pay System
CLOSED	Pennsylvania Avenue Barriers

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<a href="#">Personnel (Residence) - [General, 1972-1987] (1)</a>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<a href="#">Personnel (Residence) - [General, 1972-1987] (2)</a>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<a href="#">Personnel (Residence) - [Position Descriptions]</a>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<a href="#">Personnel (Residence) - [Staffing Reports] (1)</a>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<a href="#">Personnel (Residence) - [Staffing Reports] (2)</a>
CLOSED	Pest Control
CLOSED	Portraits/Paintings
CLOSED	President's Office 1989
CLOSED	Press and Press Facilities
CLOSED	Press Inquiries (Energy)
CLOSED	Reagan China
CLOSED	Recipes
CLOSED	Red Room
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<a href="#">Redecoration [1978-1981]</a>
CLOSED	Reimbursement White House Historical Association (WHHA)
CLOSED	Remote Delivery Site
CLOSED	Retirements
OPEN	Rex 1986 [Dog]
OPEN	Rex Stouten [1980-1984] (1)-(4)
CLOSED	Roof

#### **Box 4**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
CLOSED	Safety Committee
CLOSED	Sanitation Inspections
CLOSED	Secret Service Issue 1987
CLOSED	Secret- Residence and Grounds
CLOSED	Sewer Line Project
CLOSED	Silver
CLOSED	South Grounds Roadway
CLOSED	South Grounds Subsurface Geotech Report

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	State Dining Room
CLOSED	State Floor Mahogany Doors
CLOSED	State Visits
CLOSED	Storeroom 1987
CLOSED	Structural Inspection of White House
CLOSED	Structural Team
CLOSED	Supply Requisitions
CLOSED	Table Clothes
CLOSED	Tennis Court
CLOSED	Tennis Tournament 1987
CLOSED	Theater
CLOSED	Tours (1988)
CLOSED	Tours/Visitation
CLOSED	Travel Forms 1983
CLOSED	Trees (Christmas)
CLOSED	Truman Balcony

#### **Box 5**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	Visit of General Secretary Gorbachev of Russia
CLOSED	Visitors Facility
CLOSED	Weekly Report of Activities National Park Services (NPS)
OPEN	West Garden Room
CLOSED	West Wing Waterproofing Project
OPEN	White House Baths 1988
CLOSED	White House Historical Association By-Law and Certificate of Incorporation
CLOSED	White House Replica

#### **Box 6**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
CLOSED	Special Project Account Book
CLOSED	Petty Cash Control Sheets (Blank Forms)



<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
CLOSED	Blue/ Consumption Forms (Blank Forms)
CLOSED	White/ Consumption Forms (Blank Forms)

#### **Box 7**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
CLOSED	1984 Budget Book
CLOSED	Yellow Executive Residence Food, Beverage and Supplies Consumption Form
CLOSED	Blue Executive Residence Food, Beverage, and Supplies consumption Form
CLOSED	White Executive Residence Food, Beverage and Supplies Consumption Form
CLOSED	Petty Cash Control Sheet

#### **Box 8**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
CLOSED	Executive Residence Food, Beverage and Supplies Consumption Forms October 1987-January 1989

#### **Box 9**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
CLOSED	Christmas 1983
CLOSED	Christmas 1984
CLOSED	Christmas 1985
CLOSED	Christmas 1986
CLOSED	Christmas 1987
CLOSED	Christmas 1988

#### **Box 10**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
CLOSED	Economic Summit Williamsburg
CLOSED	Administrative Matters (1)-(4)
CLOSED	Air Conditioning/Heating
CLOSED	Alcoholic Beverages
CLOSED	Apprenticeship Program

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
CLOSED	Budget (1)-(3)
CLOSED	Computer Information
CLOSED	Electrical (1)(2)
CLOSED	Exterior Restorations RAMCO
CLOSED	Exterior Restoration Documentation
CLOSED	Food and Beverage (1)-(5)
OPEN	Gifts (Presidential)
CLOSED	HVAC Activity Reports
CLOSED	HVAC Project
CLOSED	Lucky
OPEN	Maintenance [1981-1982]
CLOSED	Matches
CLOSED	Movies 1986 (1-2)
CLOSED	News Clippings
CLOSED	News Releases
CLOSED	Part-Time Employees
CLOSED	Payroll
OPEN	Reagan Admin
CLOSED	Reagan Move Items
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<a href="#">Reagan Personal Effects (1)</a>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<a href="#">Reagan Personal Effects (2)</a>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<a href="#">Reagan Personal Effects (3)</a>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<a href="#">Reagan Personal Effects (4)</a>
OPEN	Reagan, Nancy (Mrs.) (1)(2)
CLOSED	Reagan, Ronald (President)
CLOSED	Solicitation Offer and Award (1)(2)
CLOSED	Special Events/Entertainment
CLOSED	U Misc

## **Box 11**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	Warehouse

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	Warehouse (Springfield)
CLOSED	Water (1-4)
CLOSED	Weekly Progress Reports
CLOSED	White House 200th Symposium: Caring for the White House Today
CLOSED	White House Fellows 1988
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<a href="#">White House Preservation Fund</a>
CLOSED	Williamsburg Summits 1983