



Historical Society
of Pennsylvania

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release
Contact: Lauri Cielo
215-732-6200 ext. 233
lcielo@hsp.org

Founder's Award Event Set for April 30 at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania

**Honorees include John C. and Chara C. Haas,
Joseph M. Torsella, and Barbara L. Greenfield**

Philadelphia, PA (March 6, 2009) — The Historical Society of Pennsylvania will honor four of Philadelphia's extraordinary individuals at its prestigious Founder's Award gala on **Thursday, April 30, 2009**. Called "A Star-Spangled Evening," the dinner and celebration will be held at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania at 1300 Locust Street in Philadelphia. The cocktail reception starts at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 8 p.m.

The event will honor **John C. and Chara C. Haas** and the couple's lifelong commitment to philanthropy. John C. Haas, former executive vice president and chairman of the board at Rohm and Haas, has devoted his life to charitable causes. He is active nationally with United Way of America and is a former director of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Philadelphia and the Chemical Heritage Foundation. In 2006, the couple founded the Stoneleigh Center to help improve the well-being of children and youth. Passionate about history and heritage, Mr. Haas became a trustee of the Balch Institute of Ethnic Studies in 1973, serving as board chairman from 1984 to 1995. He has remained active with the National Advisory Council of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania following its merger with the Balch in 2002.

Other honorees include **Joseph M. Torsella**, former president and CEO of the National Constitution Center—the world's first museum and education center dedicated to the U.S. Constitution; and **Barbara L. Greenfield**, a longtime supporter of the Philadelphia cultural community who has held numerous positions on professional, civic, and charitable boards across the city.

Hundreds of guests are expected to attend the "Star-Spangled Evening." The event will begin with a cocktail reception at 6 p.m. in the society's beautiful reference room and library. Guests can peruse some of the Historical Society's greatest treasures—including

— more —

an original handwritten copy of “The Star-Spangled Banner” by Francis Scott Key. Also on display will be the flag that hung behind George Washington on his first inauguration on April 30, 1789, from the collection of Thomas S. Connelly. Musical entertainment will be provided by the VFMAC Regimental Choir, the Quaker City String Band, and harpist Alison Simpson.

Deborah Dilworth Bishop and Alice Lea Tasman serve as event chairs, and Mary D. Kurtz and Mary MacGregor Mather will be honorary committee chairs. Bruce K. Fenton, Esq. and Leonard L. Combs are corporate chairs, and Nathan K. Raab and Karen Pearlman Raab, Esq. will be young friends chairs.

The Founder’s Award was established in 2000 as part of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania’s 175th anniversary celebration to applaud individuals and organizations that champion history’s uses and enhance its value to the public. Past recipients include Ken Burns, Andrea Mitchell, Vartan Gregorian, Ed Bradley, Al Hunt, Bette Bao Lord, Anne d’Harnoncourt, Jim Lehrer, James Billington, Robert W. Bogle, and William T. Coleman Jr. Last year the Founder’s Award was presented to four local newspapers—Al Día, The Jewish Exponent, The Philadelphia Inquirer, and The Philadelphia Tribune.

This event is the Historical Society’s main fundraiser of the year. Funds raised will help HSP continue to preserve and catalogue its 21 million documents and share our nation’s stories with researchers, educators, and the wider community.

Media is invited to attend the event. Please contact the society’s coordinator of communications, Lauri Cielo, at 215-732-6200 ext. 233 or lcielo@hsp.org.

EVENT DETAILS:

- Date: Thursday, April 30, 2009
- Time: 6 p.m. reception followed by 8 p.m. dinner
- Location: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania
1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA

About the Historical Society of Pennsylvania

Founded in 1824 in Philadelphia, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (www.hsp.org) collects and shares the stories of Pennsylvania. It is home to some 600,000 printed items and more than 21 million manuscript and graphic items. Its unparalleled collections encompass more than 300 years of America’s history—from its 17th-century origins to the contributions of its most recent immigrants. The society’s remarkable holdings together with its educational programming make it one of the nation’s most important special collections libraries: a center of historical documentation and study, education, and engagement.

###