

## Presidential libraries

总统图书馆

Style and guile

风格与骗局

The search for a home for Mr Obama's library and museum has begun

为奥巴马图书馆和博物馆找家的工作已经展开

"AT THEIR best, they are lively classrooms of democracy," says Richard Norton Smith, a historian who specialises in presidential libraries. They are also something of a misnomer. People who wander in expecting to borrow "The Cat in the Hat" tend to find instead a museum, a replica of the Oval Office and many floors of documents.

"在它们的历史最好时期，是民主制度的活教室，"Richard Norton Smith 说，他是专门研究总统图书馆的历史学家。这些"图书馆"也是用词不当的产物。那些漫步而进想借本《帽子里的猫》的人们会发现这其实是家博物馆，仿造了总统办公室，有很多文件。

Last week the Barack Obama Foundation invited applications from institutions interested in giving room to the 14th presidential library. Marty Nesbitt, a member of the foundation board and a friend of the Obamas, says a shortlist of sites will be presented to Mr and Mrs Obama early next year. The foundation wants to create an institution that reflects the commander-in-chief's values and priorities, as well as serving as a "force for good in the surrounding community".

上周，奥巴马基金会邀请一些机构，这些机构对为 14 届总统图书馆腾出空间很感兴趣。作为基金会董事会的一员同时也是奥巴马家族朋友的 Marty Nesbitt 说，这些网站的最终候选名单将会在明年上半年呈给奥巴马夫妇。基金会想要衍生一个选项能映射出三军统帅的价值和地位，同时也能起到一个"在周边国家中带好头的力量"。

ColumbiaUniversityinNew York, the president's alma mater, is preparing a bid. So too is his birth state ofHawaii. ButChicago, with its strong Obama ties, is assumed to be the front-runner. Mr Obama worked as a community organiser in the South Side, represented the area as a state senator, and was on the faculty of the University of Chicago for 12 years. A number of institutions are vying to make a bid inChicago, well aware that presidential libraries can spur the local economy. Susan Sher, a former chief of staff to Michelle Obama who is co-ordinating theUniversityofChicago's bid, says a number of sites in the South Side, including Bronzeville, are being considered.

纽约的哥伦比亚大学是总统的母校，他们也在做这方面竞标努力。他的出生地夏威夷州也同样在努力。但是芝加哥，奥巴马的铁杆基地，被认可为领跑者。奥巴马还在 South Side 区时的工作时团体组织者，是这一地区的州议员，并且曾在芝加哥大学当了 12 年的职员。

The money needed to build the library—possibly about \$500m—will be raised by the foundation. This will include an endowment to cover some of the maintenance costs. The rest will come from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) which is charged with running all the presidential libraries at an annual cost of \$70m.

这个图书馆的建立可能需要 5 亿美金，将由基金会募集。这里面也包含有覆盖维护费用的捐款。剩余的将会由国家档案记录管理委员会（NARA）提供，这个组织负责运营所有总统图书馆，每年花销 7000 万美元。

Last year a mere 10,600 scholars used the libraries. By contrast 730,000 people attended public and educational programmes there, and 2.4m people visited the associated museums. Ronald Reagan's library in Simi, Californiawas the most visited in 2013, with

some 425,000 trooping in to see, among other things, his Air Force One. Online visits are more numerous and growing rapidly. Every library seems to be bigger than the last, but then records and artefacts are accumulating at an ever-faster clip. Herbert Hoover's library stores 500 gifts; Dwight Eisenhower's, 25,000; that of Bill Clinton (a man of appetites), more than 150,000.

去年，将近 10,600 位学者使用过图书馆。与之对比，有 730,000 人参加了那里的公共与教育活动项目，有 240 万人参观了相关图书馆。位于加州西米市的罗纳德·里根图书馆在 2013 年大热，相比于其他物品，他的空军一号最热，有 425,000 人去参观。

Since presidents usually live for decades after they leave office, the library becomes a tool for defining—cynics would say, polishing—their legacy. But they also try to continue the work of a president. The Obama Foundation hopes his library will be “the most connected, interactive presidential library in history”. Until the next even-more-wired president, that is. 因为总统们通常在退休后还会生活数十年，图书馆就成了定义的工具——这也就是评论家口中常说的，让他们的遗产发光发亮。但是基金会也尝试让图书馆还继续履行总统职责。奥巴马基金会希望他的图书馆成为“历史上最具活力，最有亲和力的总统图书馆”。即使到了下一位更令人振奋的总统上任，它依旧不变。

In the long term, the libraries are most useful for the access they offer to presidential documents, which tell the true story of the man and his times. But it seems that attention to the flashier, exhibition side of things is detracting from NARA's real work: making documents available for public release. Fully 40% of NARA's text holdings have not been processed. And they have plenty to reveal. Eisenhower, for example—says Mr Smith—was widely known in his time as a “genial duffer”. When the papers in his library were examined he was seen as far more sophisticated, even ruthless: “Behind the smile was guile.”

从长远来看，这些图书馆最有用的地方在于它们许可参观总统文件，这写文件阐述了总统和他的时代最真实的故事。但是似乎看起来这些高涨的公众热情会被 NARA 的实际展出的物品所降低：可供公众阅读文件的程度。NARA 40% 的储存文本从未被展出。并且它们中有很多爆点。Smith 说，例如，艾森豪威尔，在那个时代是个广为人知的“亲和的小二货”。当时从他图书馆里查阅的文件看来，他其实比看起来城府深得多，甚至是残忍：“笑里藏刀。”