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World's Largest Gumby comes to the Virginia Historical Society to mark the extension of the *Toys of the '50s, '60s and '70s* exhibition through December 31, 2017.

Richmond, VA — There is more fun to be had at the Virginia Historical Society (VHS). As a result of the overwhelmingly positive public response to *Toys of the '50s, '60s and '70s*, the history museum has announced it will extend its stay. The special exhibition that opened in February will now remain open until December 31, 2017, to meet public demand. To mark the occasion, the VHS commissioned Richmond native, sculptor and founder of MCS Design and Production Inc., Allen Jessee to produce an enormous, one-of-a-kind Gumby. Installation on the front steps of the museum will take place Monday, May 15. Gumby is 18 feet tall and weighs approximately 300 pounds.

“I have really enjoyed bringing this giant character to life,” said Mr. Jessee. “With the way he looks like he’s waving at passersby on the Boulevard, he is sure to make the VHS look like a most inviting place to visit.”

Toys has been tremendously well received by thousands of people since it opened. Along with seeing iconic toys like Mr. Potato Head, Gumby, Barbie, and Slinky, guests will find rich veins of nostalgia and history. These toys—and the stories of the kids (today’s Boomers), parents, child-rearing experts, inventors, manufacturers and advertisers they affected—reflect the dynamism of American life. Featured in this exhibition are hundreds of America’s most beloved toys popular in three decades that changed America in lasting ways.

“*Toys* has multi-generational appeal,” said VHS president and CEO Jamie O. Bosket. “Whether you visit to learn the story of the iconic toys you remember from childhood, or you visit to share your own story and memories with others, I encourage you to come. This exhibit is great fun and offers something for everyone. We are so pleased to be able to respond to public demand and keep *Toys* available through the end of the year.”

As one of the largest special exhibitions brought to the VHS, with 445 pieces and parts (and some assembly required), *Toys* displays all of the childhood favorites in reconstructed period rooms. For example, the 1950s living room with the times’ popular western theme illustrates the transition from wooden to plastic toys, including the first African American doll, Sara Lee, and the first toy advertised on television, Mr. Potato Head.

VHS members receive complimentary admission to all special exhibitions. Admission is free for children 18 and under, and \$10 for non-members. The exhibition is organized by the Minnesota Historical Society.

The Virginia Historical Society (VHS)—a privately funded nonprofit organization—collects, preserves, and interprets the Commonwealth’s history, linking past with present to inspire future generations. The VHS is located at 428 North Boulevard in Richmond’s Museum District. Hours are Monday – Sunday 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. for the galleries and museum shop, Monday – Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. for the library. For more information about the VHS call (804) 358-4901, visit vahistorical.org, or connect with the VHS on Facebook and Twitter. Allen Jessee’s other work can be viewed at www.lookatmcs.com.

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