

The Post Serial

Volunteer Newsletter of Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens

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HILLWOOD'S NEW WEBSITE

Molly Mathews, Digital Communications Associate

Launched in mid-June, Hillwood's new website (www.hillwoodmuseum.org) displays the magic of Hillwood on every page (a sample screen shot is below). Elements such as quotes from staff members, an easy-to-use calendar, and detailed Mansion and Garden pages, provide "guided serendipity" that conveys Hillwood's beauty, generosity, and graciousness.



The Process

Redesigning the website was a comprehensive project touching on many departments and members of the Hillwood community. After much discussion, six objectives emerged:

- Increase Website and on-site visitors

- Reflect Hillwood's brand
- Provide up-to-date and dynamic content
- Integrate with social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Flickr and YouTube
- Highlight past, present, and future exhibitions
- Improve search engine optimization

Five principles were also established to guide the development:

- Reflect the magic of Hillwood
- Convey the emotional experience of Hillwood
- Create a structure for flow and guided serendipity
- Prioritize the Website around the tasks of the user
- Use the voices of Hillwood including staff, volunteers and members to inject personality

We sought a website designer both familiar with museums and technologically cutting-edge. With Cogapp, an English firm based in Brighton, we began designing and populating a new site.

Staff and many volunteers were interviewed about their website needs and wants. Extensive user testing was conducted at every stage. These interviews allowed us to craft a website that is at once beautiful and user-friendly. Countless design specs were emailed across the ocean, with slight tweaks elevating the final product to spectacular!

The Results

Several features directly reflect the stated objectives. Every page contains our hours reflecting the most-often asked user question. The special exhibition page is featured prominently throughout the site. A side navigation bar makes it easier to find information. Images are everywhere, some in carousels (similar to the image below) to keep the pages lively and dynamic.



Staff quotes, complete with pictures personalize the experience (such as the example below). Social media can be accessed on the footer of every page, allowing easy interaction and engagement. The Twitter feed is streaming live on the home page, and Facebook and Twitter followers can be tracked on the header.



Molly Mathews

Digital Communications Associate

“ The Dining Room is my favorite room in the house. The table alone is an incredible display of taste, craftsmanship, and history. ”

The Future

This is just phase one of Hillwood’s website redevelopment. Websites constantly evolve. For example, Cogapp is in the process of adding Pinterest and TripAdvisor to the footer. In the future we hope to gain more interactivity with our audience through a blog and a revamped collections search. Your suggestions, comments, and ideas are very welcome. Please feel free to email me at mmathews@hillwoodmuseum.org. Enjoy! www.hillwoodmuseum.org

HILLWOOD HAPPENINGS

All Hillwood volunteers are invited to take advantage of these tours, workshops and other activities. Please register in advance on the sign-up sheets on the clipboard in the Horticulture Building hallway or contact Bill Johnson at 202.243.3927 or bjohnson@HillwoodMuseum.org. Advance registration is not necessary for continuing education events in the Visitor Center Theater.

How to watch videos online

To view the videos of past lectures, visit <http://volunteer.HillwoodMuseum.org> and click on the Education tab at the top of the website. Select “Lecture Video Archive” followed by the year (for example, “2012 Lectures”) to access a video. An email with instructions and a password will be sent once a new session is available online.

An Afternoon of Horticulture

July 30 (Monday), 12:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Join us in the Visitor Center Theater for a series of presentations by the horticulture staff. The afternoon will start with the Japanese-style Garden that will cover the history of the garden, the renovations in 2001, the plants and maintenance of the garden. The next session will

be about harvesting and conditioning of cut flowers from the garden. Then there will be a short presentation about the coming fall display in the gardens. We will finish with a session on conifer pruning.

Plant ID Walk

August 16 (Thursday), 9 a.m.

On this walk, participants will study the plants with summer interest. Meet in the Horticulture break room.

Field Trip: Dumbarton Oaks

August 22 (Wednesday), 10:00 a.m.

Gail Griffin, director of gardens and grounds for Dumbarton Oaks, will lead us through the elaborate gardens. In 1920, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, seeking a “country house in the city,” purchased Dumbarton Oaks. Today the historic 10-acre garden has a new, temporary installation by Andy Cao and Xavier Perrot of cao | perrot studio. Cloud Terrace at Dumbarton Oaks takes the form of a hand-sculpted wire mesh cloud suspended over the terrace and embellished with 10,000 genuine Swarovski water-drop crystals mirrored in a reflecting pool. All

10,000 have been hand-tied to the wire cloud, where they cast prisms everywhere. On a cloudy day, they glimmer like raindrops. The Arbor Terrace is one of the most modified spaces in the Dumbarton Oaks Gardens. This installation was organized by the Garden and Landscape Studies program at Dumbarton Oaks in cooperation with the Gardens Department, and made with Swarovski Elements. The crystals at Dumbarton Oaks are on loan from the Austrian company.

Street parking is limited. To receive information on car-pooling and travel, please use the sign-up sheet in the Horticulture Building hallway.

An Afternoon of Horticulture

September 10 (Monday), 12:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

Join us in the Visitor Center Theater for a series of presentations by the horticulture staff. Fall is a good time to lift and divide most perennials. It is also a good time to rework garden areas that have become tired. In this session we will discuss which plants can be moved in the fall, soil improvements, design and maintenance. Next we will present ideas on preparing the garden for winter. This session will focus on a checklist of details for winterizing your garden. There will be practical information about digging and storing bulbs, which plants benefit from being cut back, protecting containers that can be damaged by winter freezes and hose and tool care. The last presentation will be on planting bulbs for spring bloom.

Plant ID Walk

September 26 (Wednesday), 9 a.m.

This walk will focus on the plants of interest around the mansion and some of the fall blooming bulbs. Meet in the Horticulture break room.

New Notes on Hillwood:

Recent Scholarship on Hillwood's Collection

October 1 (Monday), 1 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Keep au courant/up to date with news on the collection. Join Liana Paredes, director of collections & chief curator, and Dr. Scott Ruby,

associate curator of Russian & Eastern European art, for a shared presentation of new information and scholarship on selected works in Hillwood's collection. (Visitor Center Theater)

Plant ID Walk

October 17 (Thursday), 9 a.m.

On this walk participants will learn about plants that offer seasonal interest with fragrant flowers, fruits, or berries. Meet in the Horticulture break room.

Field Trip:

Private Garden of Jean & Sidney Silber

October 25 (Thursday), 10:00 a.m.

In Lutherville, Maryland in upper Baltimore County, is a 10-acre estate, considered to be one of the best gardens in the Mid-Atlantic region. Featured in the Smithsonian Archive of American Gardens, this mature property boasts three ponds, a swimming pool, and more than a dozen individual gardens and garden paths designed by Bruce Baetjer, Rose Wolford, Gary Keim, Maripat Neff and the late Wolfgang Oehme. The owners are also avid collectors of sculpture, and pieces by George Rickey, Clement Meadmore and other important twentieth century artists can be found throughout the garden. The garden is best known for the spring display but Sidney Silber loves the garden in autumn. He has planted a large collection of Japanese maples that light up the edge of the woods around the home.

To receive information on car-pooling and travel, please use the sign-up sheet in the Horticulture Building hallway.

Volunteer Trip:

Metropolitan Museum of Art

November 11 (Sunday)

We are currently planning a volunteer trip for this upcoming fall to visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City for a tour of *Extravagant Inventions: The Princely Furniture of the Roentgens*. Hillwood's Roentgen roll top desk, typically in the French Drawing Room, will be on

loan for this exhibition. Stay tuned for more details.

Help Us Spread the Word!

Hillwood is currently recruiting Visitor Services Volunteers for weekend positions. Spread the word to friends and colleagues! Interested candidates should contact Lisa Leyh at 202.243.3938 or LLeyh@HillwoodMuseum.org.

IN REVIEW: VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION RECEPTION

Lisa Leyh, Interpretation Volunteer Manager

It was lovely seeing so many of you at the Volunteer Appreciation Reception on May 7. An evening reception was held on the South Portico to celebrate all your hard work and many contributions to Hillwood. Volunteers and their guests enjoyed delicious food and drinks provided by Ridgewell's Catering. Jason Gedeik, head of greenhouse and design operations, and his team of volunteers created breathtaking floral arrangements using materials all found in Hillwood's gardens such as pink and white roses and peonies. The musical stylizing's of harpist Kathleen Meredith added a special touch to the reception.



A rare look inside the Roentgen roll top desk with Liana Paredes, director of collections & chief curator, in the French Drawing Room

For many the highlight of the evening was the rare look inside the Roentgen roll top desk in the French Drawing Room with Liana Paredes, director of collections and chief curator. Several pictures (about 67 pictures in total) capturing the evening are available on the volunteer website at <http://volunteer.hillwoodmuseum.org> under "Photos".



Executive director Kate Markert giving remarks on the South Portico

Ellen Charles, board president, and Kate Markert, executive director, concluded the reception with remarks infused with voices from Hillwood staff members providing a glimpse at the impressive impact you, our volunteers, have made throughout the campus:

Kristen Regina, head of collections research, & Pat Lynagh, assistant librarian, said: "We LOVE our library volunteers and all the volunteers at Hillwood. They are the lifeline of the library and without (them) our work would not get done as well, as quickly, or at such high standards. All Hillwood volunteers bring fascinating points of view and new perspectives to the table. You all find interesting books to add to the library, articles, and new information we would not come across without your help. THANK YOU for making Hillwood and the library a better place."

Jessica Bonilla, lead gardener, offered: "I have never seen such a dedicated group of individuals in my life. You come, want to do a

good job, and work hard. You decipher our notes without complaint. You help me keep my sanity and I am fortunate to call many of you my friends. Thank you for all that you do.”

Alison Cassels, manager of corporate relations, explained:

“Hillwood events would simply not be possible without the help of volunteers. From the arduous task of tying ribbons on programs or favors, to checking in guests with Hillwood charm, to answering the tough questions in the mansion, they truly are the backbone of our events big and small. We are so fortunate to have such a dedicated, knowledgeable and gracious volunteer corps unlike any other I have seen, and I hope they understand how grateful we are for every moment they give to Hillwood!”

We look forward to planning another magical evening next spring and in the meantime, know that on behalf of Hillwood’s staff and visitors, your passion, time, and skills are deeply appreciated and valued. Thank you for being a part of Hillwood’s family!

PUBLIC PROGRAM UPDATES

Erin Lourie, Adult Audience Manager

September ushers in a busy Fall with the return of our preschool series (three Thursdays per month, September through November), Gay Day (Saturday, September 15), and the second *Nuit de la Mode* (or “Night of Style”) presented with Alliance Française and Art Soiree on Saturday, September 22.

In October we will embark on a new partnership with our neighbors at the Levine School (on Upton Street) to present a Russian concert. On Saturday, October 13, join us for a concert at Hillwood with historical background on *Inside Tchaikovsky’s Seasons*.

As always we invite all Hillwood volunteers to join us at public programs. The best place to stay

informed of our upcoming programs (including a few lectures to be announced later this fall) is at hillwoodmuseum.org.

HORTICULTURE STORM DAMAGE REPORT

Brian Barr, Director of Horticulture

& Jody Fetzer, Garden Supervisor

Friday night, June 29, 2012, a Derecho (massive band of storms) hit the northwest corner of Hillwood slashing south across the property with straight line winds averaging 70 miles per hour. In the wake of these tremendous winds, over 50 mature trees lost major branches, were snapped in two, or were entirely uprooted.



Fallen branches near the Lower Gate

Our clean-up effort began immediately after the storm—trees blocking the service road were cut and pushed aside before the sun rose. The Horticulture team along with other Hillwood staff and volunteers worked in the heat and humidity early morning on Saturday, June 30 to ready the gardens for opening. At least 100 trailer loads of large tree limbs and other debris were removed from the gardens, paths, roads and café area that first weekend. Davey Tree arborists came Monday, July 2 to clear Hillwood’s perimeter roads of large fallen trees, remove hanging limbs from tree tops, and chip the enormous piles of branches. Their invaluable partnership to clean up from this devastating storm will be on-going over the next few months.

Below the Pet Cemetery in a parking area, the Hillwood truck sustained damage from several fallen limbs from the Tulip Poplar tree. The perimeter chain link fence was damaged in several locations by fallen trees and large limbs. The downed fence sections allowed several deer to enter the property. After the fence is repaired by our contractor Long Fence, a concerted effort will be made to remove the deer from Hillwood. The deer have not discriminated with their incessant browsing throughout the gardens.



The roots of a Tulip tree located along the Woodland Trail

Many lessons have been learned from this horrific storm. Mother Nature can pack an extremely strong punch. Our effort with Davey Tree over the years to identify and care for the trees in the garden proper area has paid dividends—these trees had minimal damage. Davey Tree's response to our needs was critical in the recovery effort.



Davey Tree helping cut and remove fallen tree branches

Thanks to the energy and effort of all, Hillwood was able to open to the public both Saturday, June 30 and Sunday, July 1. On-going volunteer efforts to water, prune and weed in the gardens have enabled Hillwood gardeners--teamed with Davey tree arborists--to spend time with what will be a long-term effort to saw, haul and chip fallen trees, branches and debris.

BY APPOINTMENT

Pat Lynagh, Assistant Librarian

“By Appointment Only” can often seem a discouraging sign outside the door. The Hillwood Art Research Library is open “By Appointment Only”, but that does not mean that we do not welcome researchers both from here at Hillwood and outside the campus. We ask that you make an appointment by calling 202.243.3953 in order to be sure that staff is here to help you. We are typically available Monday through Friday from 10:30 am to 5:00 pm.

Did you know that the Library has resources such as biographies on Mrs. Post, C.W. Post, the Romanov dynasty, and many other notables? We are able to provide information on the history, the artist, and the provenance of an object that you might own or that you are interested in acquiring. We collect auction catalogs such as Sotheby's, Christie's, the Hotel Drouot and others that trace sales history back to the 19th century for fine and decorative art. We also can give you access to an online database called “Artifact” that provides prices for art objects that were sold at major auction houses over a period of years.

If you want to see what we have in the Library, you can search our online catalog from home. At the Hillwood website, www.hillwoodmuseum.org, go to “Resources” and click on “Art Research Library.” Here you will find books (both here in the Library and in the Volunteer Library), periodical titles, auction catalog titles, clipping files on artists, and reference material that the Library can make available to you for use on site.

We collect a wide range of periodicals on Russian art, European decorative arts, and the art market around the world. Magazine titles here include “The Art Newspaper”, “Apollo”, “Slavic Review”, “Connaissance des Arts” and many more. There is a photocopier here that you can use to make a copy from most books or from a magazine.

Several important additions to the Art Research Library have come to us from donations. We welcome gifts. They are acknowledged in the online catalog record and with a bookplate in the book. Keep us in mind if you are downsizing at home or have a rare gem of a publication that would be relevant to the Hillwood Library collection. You can always check the online catalog to see whether or not we already own a title.

Come in and get to know the Art Research Library. We are here to help you add to your knowledge about Hillwood, its collections and its history. To make an appointment, please call 202.243.3953.

VISITOR SERVICES NEWS

Annie Hinkley, Head of Visitor Services

First of all, I'd like to say thank you for the incredibly warm welcome given to me from all of you. Having been a “Tuesday” Visitor Services Volunteer and a “Tuesday” Docent, I am thrilled to be meeting all of you who work on other days and in the gardens and continue to be in awe of all you do to graciously welcome folks to Hillwood and to make their visit fabulous. We couldn't do it without you!

As our number of visitors continues to grow, you should know that we have had our best attended spring ever! In April you helped us welcome 9,104 visitors- the highest monthly attendance in our history. As of mid-July, our year to date attendance is 37,263 which is an increase of 15% over the same period in 2011. The growth came

from things like the Fabergé Egg Family Festival which had 2,053 visitors (1,099 families) – our highest attended festival ever – to a 750+ visitor Saturday in April.

Those of you who visited the Café this past spring will know that we offered an 1812 “Companion” menu to *The Style that Ruled the Empires* exhibit that was in the Dacha. This menu featured samplings from either a French (think delicious Napoleons) or a Russian (think Borscht) selection. The current specials to celebrate *Prêt-à-Papier* are Belgian beers and Belgian waffles. During busy times like this, the Café, which has limited seating, feels the challenge. To meet the demand, the Café is again offering its Express Service so folks can purchase pre-packaged sandwiches and drinks. You can help by making advance reservations when you want to go to the Café, and by reinforcing that day-of visitors who wish to have lunch at the café should use the phone on the second floor of the Visitor Center to check on availability and make a booking. It helps us manage visitor expectations.

As most of you are aware, we are really making an effort to capture as many new visitor emails as we can – it helps us communicate quickly and cost-effectively with our visitors to tell them what programs and events are coming up that would be of interest to them. So please continue to encourage them to sign up at the computer we have set up near the entranceway. By giving us their email, they will receive a “2 for 1” bonus – two Hillwood visits for the price of one, to be redeemed between July 1 and October 1, 2012. We appreciate your support as you help us build our future.

MUSEUM SHOP NEWS

Lauren Salazar, Head of Merchandising

Prêt-à-Papier has arrived in the Museum Shop! The full range of licensed Isabelle de Borchgrave jewelry is available in the shop. Made in India of recycled paper with hand-applied gilt, necklaces

and earrings are offered in variety of styles. Isabelle scarves are also on hand, crafted in India of paper, and hand block-printed.



Ikat, Suzani and Kantha scarves and gifts inspired by the Isabelle de Borchgrave kaftans

In addition to paper items, *Prêt-à-Papier* has given me the opportunity to source and offer merchandise related to the gorgeous kaftans hanging in the Visitor Center. The Museum Shop is stocked up with one-of-a-kind kaftans, scarves, jewelry and gifts in Suzani and Kantha fabrics. Available only for the duration of the exhibit, you won't want to miss these lovely and unusual pieces.



Gifts and accessories of traditional Basque textiles from France

A new range of merchandise has arrived from France and was debuted for the French Festival. Espadrilles, tablecloths, runners, totes, coin purses, key chains and more, are all produced in Provence of traditional fabrics. In stripes and bold hues, these items are perfect for a summer lifestyle.

I'd like to welcome Angie Dimson, our newest sales associate, and Brittany Spencer-King, our returning seasonal sales associate. Please stop by the Shop and introduce yourselves.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Rachael Horsman, Membership Manager

Just like many of you at Hillwood, Membership has had a very busy (and rewarding) spring. Recently, the Friends of Hillwood topped 1,700 members, the highest in the history of the Membership program. Of course, the mild weather this spring and the beautiful gardens helped, but much of the success is due to volunteers who welcome visitors and show them how much there is to love here at Hillwood. Visitors want to come back again and again – and Membership allows them to do that. So thank you for spreading the good word and making Hillwood a destination for many in the Washington area.

Members most recently enjoyed a preview of *Prêt-à-Papier: The Exquisite Art of Isabelle de Borchgrave* on June 15. The evening featured a reception and remarks by Liana Paredes, director of collections and curator of the exhibition, as well as a chance to see the exhibit before it opened to the public on June 16.

In late May, Members took a trip to Baltimore County for the Annual Spring Garden Tour. Despite the rainy weather, Members had a wonderful time exploring the gardens of the Silber's and Hamilton's who opened up their homes and private gardens. Volunteers will be able to visit the Silber's on October 25.



Private Garden of the Silber's

Membership continues to offer programs and events and is looking forward to a trip this fall. We would love to have you as a member! If you are interested in learning more about member trips and programs, please contact Rachael Horsman, Membership Manager, at 202.243.3939, or rhorsman@hillwoodmuseum.org.

THE MAGIC OF THE DISPLAY: DESIGNING THE *PRÊT-À-PAPIER* EXHIBITION

Betty Cochran, Newsletter Volunteer

For the first time, Hillwood is presenting an exhibition designed by an in-house staff member instead of an outside consultant. The magic of what Lawrence (Ren) Waung can do is on view in *Prêt-à-Papier: The Exquisite Art of Isabelle de Borchgrave*, which opened June 16 in the Adirondack Building. The exhibition, which also extends to the Mansion and the Visitor Center, showcases the elaborate period dresses made entirely of crumpled, pleated, and painted paper by the Belgian artist Isabelle de Borchgrave.

Ren is Hillwood's first head of exhibitions and collections management, which means that he is responsible for the care and safety and display of Hillwood's collections. Working with him within the Collections Division are registrar M. J. Meredith and conservation technicians Manuel Diaz and Manuel Rouco.

Since Ren joined Hillwood's staff in December, his activities have ranged from setting up the rotations of objects chosen by the curators for the Dining Room and elsewhere to overseeing the transport of objects loaned between Hillwood and other museums to upgrading the silver storage area. However, much of his attention has focused on the design and installation of *Prêt-à-Papier*.

Designing an exhibition

But how does Ren work out the design, the backgrounds, and the accoutrements for an exhibition? His background in art comes into play, as does his extensive experience, most recently as director of exhibition operations at the Savannah (Georgia) College of Art and Design. He has held management positions at galleries in New York City, at Rutgers University, and at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, as well as at other museums, and also maintained an active arts consulting practice in exhibition design and project management.

In designing an exhibition, Ren talks to the curators who are responsible for it—in this case, primarily Liana Paredes, director of collections and chief curator—to find out what their objective is, what message they want the objects they've chosen to convey. If a living artist is involved, he visits the artist, as he did Isabelle de Borchgrave in Brussels. He considers the physical characteristics of the exhibition space, the lighting, the access and traffic patterns, and how the viewer will perceive things. All parts of an exhibition must look intentional, he says, not as if some things were left to chance.

Ren has experience working with exhibitions of various sizes, from a few hundred to more than 30,000 square feet, but finds smaller spaces, as at Hillwood, more demanding. There may be less time to prepare them, he says, and more attention must be paid to detail. At Hillwood he works eventually with almost all other departments, such as Interpretation, Marketing and Communication, Horticulture, Visitor Services, and Facilities.

The look of *Prêt-à-Papier*

So what does the visitor to *Prêt-à-Papier* experience? Entering the exhibition gives the feeling of coming into a completely different, and gorgeous, world. Fresh flowers, with their aromas, are in the small entryway—Ren used floral forms throughout the exhibition, as they are an integral part of de Borchgrave's work. A large, curved title wall set back from the doorway gives a different structure and direction to the space. Ren has treated the elaborate gowns somewhat like sculpture, lighting them partly from below, to convey a sense of buoyancy and airiness. The background panels of large charcoal drawings showing ferns and flowers come from de Borchgrave's own hand; she has used them routinely as backdrops in photographing her work.

Some 18th-century French decorative arts pieces from Hillwood's collection, such as a writing table and candelabra, are displayed. A major consideration was how much of the tree trunks that are a prominent feature of the Adirondack Building's interior should be visible; Ren incorporated part of them into the design, and also included the fireplace area, which increases the exhibition space. Near the fireplace is a display case in which shoes, small bags, and other elegant paper accessories by the artist are presented against a background of blue sky filled with white clouds, which Ren took from a painting by Rene Magritte. It is a sly nod—like Isabelle de Borchgrave, Magritte was a Belgian.

Several dresses are displayed on the first and second floors of the Mansion; in front of each is a large basket of flowers, which signals the display and continues the floral motif. In the Visitor Center, kaftans by the artist are hung from the ceiling, easily viewed especially from the second floor. An exhibit Ren constructed on the second floor of the Visitor Center lets visitors indulge their wish to touch the various kinds of paper "fabrics," as they spill out of a large basket. This display also includes tools that Isabelle de

Borchgrave uses in her work both on a long table and in greatly enlarged versions on the adjoining walls.

Hillwood will continue to mount two exhibitions a year, one with a more scholarly bent and the other designed to attract a broad audience. Ren is already working with Kristen Regina, head of research collections and archivist, on *Pageant of the Tsars: The Romanov Coronation Albums*, to open early in 2013 in the Dacha. He is also working with curator Estella Chung on *Living Artfully*, a mid-2013 exhibition on Marjorie Merriweather Post.

For more information about the Prêt-à-Papier dresses, how Isabelle de Borchgrave constructs them, and the periods they represent, see the spring issue of the Post Serial, available at <http://volunteer.hillwoodmuseum.org>.

RUSSIAN LITURGICAL GALLERY: LITURGICAL CHALICES & ICONS

*Dr. Scott Ruby,
Associate Curator of Russian & Eastern European Art*

The newly mounted Russian Liturgical Gallery rotation features a display of liturgical chalices and icons acquired by Marjorie Merriweather Post and her husband, Joseph Davies during their ambassadorial appointment to the Soviet Union in 1937-1938. Objects such as these were available because the Soviet regime had the goal of stamping out all religion in the country. Although Marjorie favored Russian Orthodox icons and liturgical vessels, it is important to remember that the Soviet Government targeted all religions for elimination (including Orthodox Christians, Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, etc.). To achieve this end, the communists confiscated religious property, ridiculed religion, harassed believers, and propagated atheism in schools. As the Soviet Union's leader Vladimir Lenin put it:

"Religion is the opium of the people: this saying of Karl Marx is the cornerstone of the entire ideology of Marxism about religion. All modern religions and churches, all and

every kind of religious organizations are considered by Marxism... [as intended] for the exploitation and the stupefaction of the working class."

Within a year of the Russian revolution, the state expropriated all church property, and saw to the murder or imprisonment of countless religious leaders and believers.

The Russian chalices and icons on display in the Russian Liturgical Gallery date from the 1700s and 1800s. These objects are examples of what the Soviets offered for sale to Westerners in state-run commission shops for hard currency.

Following their appointment to the Soviet Union, Marjorie and Joseph received a subsequent ambassadorial posting to Belgium in 1938-39 where they put their newly acquired collection on view. As you can see from the period photograph taken in their Brussels residence, the chalices were exhibited in a massive cabinet, while many of the icons hung on the wall above them. Marjorie noted in a scrapbook that nine of the chalices she collected in Moscow were slated to be melted down had she not purchased them.



*Photograph from Mrs. Post's Brussels Residence
from 1938-39*

Further background about some of these objects includes words about the exceptionally tall chalice (acc. no. 12.93) by Ivan Zaitsez, which was made in Moscow in 1810. Based on its unusually large size, it was clearly intended as an important vessel for a large cathedral or monastery. Encircling the cup are four large enameled medallions, each with a border of table-cut brilliants. The medallions represent: 1. Christ as 'Ruler of All' blessing with an upraised hand, 2. St. John the Baptist, 3. The Mother of God, 4. Christ carrying the cross. The knob is very low and cube-shaped with enameled rectangular medallions surrounded by brilliants. These represent: 1. The Last Supper, 2. The mocking of Christ, 3. The Holy Face of Christ, 4. The Entombment. On the rim of the cup is the following inscription in Church Slavonic: "Receive ye Body of Christ, taste ye of the Fountain of Immortality. Eat My Flesh, I am in It, drink My Blood; Thou shalt remain in Me."

The eighteenth-century icon of The Three-Handed Mother of God (acc. no. 54.16) derives from the life of the 8th century saint, John of Damascus, whose hand was cut off by order of the Caliph of Damascus for allegedly writing traitorous letters against the Greek emperor, Leo. St. John prayed for the restoration of his severed hand and upon awakening, he found that his hand was miraculously reattached to his arm, with only a fine red scar to show where the wound had occurred. In gratitude St. John crafted a silver hand and attached it to the icon of the Mother of God: hence its title "The Three Handed One" (Troeruchitsa). The fame of the icon spread to the Serbian Chilandari Monastery on Mount Athos, where they created a replica in the 15th century. Patriarch Nikon of Moscow ordered a further version in 1663 and sent it to a monastery near Moscow where it had a great following among the faithful and became a much-beloved image in Russia. The icon displayed in the Liturgical Gallery was created in 1743, while its silver gilt and enamel cover (oklad) was created in 1790. However, this icon, created in the era of Empress Elizabeth I (reigned 1741-1761), belies some changes to the iconographic tradition. Notably,

the painter rendered the images of the Mother of God and Christ Child with tear ducts, eyelashes, and fluttering draperies to create a more life-like appearance. The presence of a signature and date on the lower border of the icon panel reflects a new interest in the icon painters' individuality. Iconographers were required by imperial decree, enacted in 1710, to sign and date their paintings, thus ending centuries of pious anonymity.

From more information on the June – November Mansion rotations, please visit the volunteer website (<http://volunteer.hillwoodmuseum.org>) and click on "Mansion Rotation & Exhibition Information" under "Education".

Fall Garden Tours

The fall garden touring season begins after Labor Day on Tuesday, September 4 with garden tours offered Tuesday through Saturday at 10:30 am and 12:30 pm and at 2:30 pm on Sunday, September 16, October 7 and 21, and November 4. Interested visitors can sign-up for a garden tour on a first-come, first-served basis at the Visitor Center Tour Desk. Saturday, November 10 marks the end of the fall garden touring season.

DIPLOMATIC GARDENS BOOK

Bill Johnson, Horticulturist/Volunteer Coordinator

Photographer Ann Stevens, a Hillwood volunteer, co-authored a new book "Diplomatic Gardens of Washington" with her husband Giles Kelly, a retired diplomat. This photography book with text features the private gardens of 12 ambassadorial residences, including the grandeur of the British garden, the oriental style of the Korean garden, and the charming yet modest Danish garden, along with the history of each of the residences. The book includes a Foreword by Holly Shimizu, executive director of the United States Botanic Garden. It will be available for purchase in the Museum Shop.

Ann has photographed numerous private gardens and estates in Washington, including all of the gardens here at Hillwood. Her work has been featured in the book "Sequoia President Yacht" and in a one woman exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution.

KUDOS AND CALLS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Lisa Leyb, Interpretation Volunteer Manager

Seersucker Social

A heartfelt thank you to all who helped with this year's Seersucker Social on Saturday, June 9. With your assistance, we welcomed over 1,000 visitors to the event! In addition to the amazing support from you, our volunteers (listed on page 14), Hillwood also welcomed 47 "day-of" volunteers for the afternoon to assist with various duties such as check-in and bike parking. It was a team effort by all and your assistance and gracious welcome to both the "day-of" volunteers and visitors made the event a huge success!

Reshma Ballie-McGowan	Angela Meyer
Jean Baum	Helene Meyers
Janice Brambilla	Natasha Morse
Rosemary Coskey	Chris Ritthaler
Cynthia Darling	Carol Roberts
Gale Dugan	Harold Schafke
Cheryl Fields	Marilyn Shapiro
Irene Gersh	Erica Stern
Kissa Guilsher	Lois Stratton
Carolee Heileman	Kevin Tomaine
Essie Horton	Lois Topping
Wilhelmina Irshad	Kathy Tutem
Jo Anne Jelling	

French Festival

Hillwood welcomed over 1,250 visitors on Saturday, July 14 for French Festival. Guests enjoyed activities ranging from music and dance performances to a hands-on art project making paper shoes inspired by *Prêt-à-Papier: The Exquisite Art of Isabelle de Borchgrave*. The support from our

volunteers is one of the key components for a successful program. Thank you for making another memorable experience for our visitors!

Reshma Ballie-McGowan	Minna Kahn
Janice Brambilla	Oksana Klebs
Rosemary Coskey	Carol McCoy
Gale Dugan	Helene Meyers
Pat Evans	Natasha Morse
Cheryl Fields	Delia Riso
Nina Gradia	Ann Scott
Kissa Guilsher	Rachael Sifuentes
Carolee Heileman	Kay Smith
Essie Horton	Bill Steffeck
Wilhelmina Irshad	Kevin Tomaine
Jo Anne Jelling	Sabine Tourreilles
	Maggi Walker

Calls for Volunteers

The summer fun continues with **Gay Day** on **Saturday, September 15** and **Nuit de la Mode** on **Saturday, September 22**. Assistance is needed in the Visitor Center, Mansion, and with the special programming and activities. If you are available, please contact Lisa Leyh at 202.243.3938 or LLeyh@HillwoodMuseum.org.

NEW VOLUNTEERS

We are delighted to welcome nine new volunteers to Hillwood. Joining Visitor Services are Christine Cheevers, Phyllis Gerstell, Susan Lund, and Yani Partowardojo. Joining Horticulture are Luna Levinson, Scott Miller, Katherine Schinasi, Nancy Weiman, and Danielle Williams.

HILLWOOD REMEMBERS HOWARD ESKILDSON

Jody Fetzer, Garden Supervisor



A gentle smile, man of few words with warm eyes and helping hands; Howard's quiet presence and skill with orchids will be missed by the horticulture staff. Howard volunteered in Hillwood's greenhouses for the past two years. Howard passed away peacefully on June 6, 2012 after a long battle with cancer.

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