



The Post Serial

Volunteer Newsletter of Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens

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Summer 2015

ICON GALA OPENS “INGENUUE TO ICON: 70 YEARS OF FASHION FROM THE COLLECTION OF MARJORIE MERRIWEATHER POST”

Adrienne Starr, Donor Relations & Special Events Manager

On the evening of June 2, Hillwood held its annual gala. Over 350 guests gathered under the new CW Post Courtyard tent for cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, enjoying music from a string quartet. Guests walked the gardens, toured the new exhibition, and delighted in a formal seated dinner on the Lunar Lawn. As they do every year, our volunteers played an integral part of the gala's success. From the prep work leading up to the event to the on-site work that evening, our generous volunteers helped make the gala a special occasion for our guests.



Development Director Judith Paska looks on as Jeri Buchholz, Howard Kurtz, and Jason Gediek put the finishing touches on the floral dress

A unique element of this year's event was a replica of one of Marjorie Merriweather Post's dresses in the exhibition, with a skirt made entirely of flowers, a creation of Jason Gediek, Head of Greenhouse and Design Operations, and exhibition curator Howard Kurtz and assembled with the able assistance of Horticulture volunteer Jeri Buchholz.

A special thank you to all the volunteers involved with this year's gala! Volunteers who assist in Horticulture include: Ann Kelly, Carolyne Starek, Catherine Leape, Jayetta Hecker, Jeri Buchholz, Joan Asboth, Luna Levinson, Nancy Weiman, and Phil Pietras. Volunteers who assisted at the gala include: Kevin Davis, Ferial Fallah, Carolee Heileman, Wilhelmina Irshad, Irene Malbin, Charlotte Peddicord, Chris Ritthaler, Kay Smith, Vee Smith, and Joan Weiss. Your support is greatly appreciated!

HILLWOOD HAPPENINGS

All Hillwood volunteers are invited to take advantage of the educational offerings listed below. 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 unless otherwise noted.

Seasonal Display Garden Tour

August 11-14 (Tuesday-Friday) 12:00 pm

Join Jessica Bonilla, Head Gardener, for an informative walk in the gardens to look at the annual displays at the peak of the summer season. All Hillwood volunteers are welcome to join the tour and share in the fun.

Plant ID Walk

August 20 (Thursday), 9 a.m.

In this session, we will focus on the plants of summer and look at some of the new plants that have been added over the last 2 years. Meet in the Horticulture break room.

Plant ID Walk

September 29 (Tuesday) 9a.m.

We will examine some of the plants in the Japanese-style Garden. Meet Gardener Frances Vandenbroucke in the Horticulture break room.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

There are a number of exciting public programs offered throughout the year at Hillwood. The best way to keep up-to-date on upcoming programs is to visit the [Calendar page](#) on Hillwood's website.

MUSEUM SHOP

Lauren Salazar, Head of Merchandising

I'm thrilled to announce the arrival of the Do Not Disturb sign, a close adaptation of the original

that hangs on Marjorie Post's bedroom door. The pewter signs are hand made exclusively for Hillwood, in Eugene, Oregon.



Do Not Disturb Sign

A new shipment of Danny K handbags is arriving in early September. Known for fine craftsmanship and luscious tapestry fabrics, Danny K bags are handcrafted in America. Three new patterns will be available for the fall.

The Garden Conservancy is celebrating its 25th anniversary with a beautifully illustrated book that documents a selection of the outstanding public and private gardens it has worked with since its founding in 1989: *Outstanding American Gardens, A Celebration, 25 Years of the Garden Conservancy*, by Page Dickey and Marion Brenner.

Another exciting new book to arrive is the CCCP Cook Book, *True Stories of Soviet Cuisine*. From suckling pig to beef stroganoff, each recipe is introduced with an historical story or anecdote from the period, and illustrated using images sourced from original Soviet recipe books collected by the authors, food historians Olga and Pavel Syutkin.

Shop Events:

- **Mix & Match August Accessory Sale**
Buy any 2 red-lined clothing or accessory items in a single transaction and receive 40% off both items. Open to staff, volunteers and visitors. All sales final. No other discounts apply. No returns or exchanges. Some

exclusions apply. This discount is not retroactive.

- **Kennedy Center Museum Store Sidewalk Sale**

The Hillwood Museum Shop will participate with 12 other DC and Baltimore museum stores on Saturday, September 12. Each museum store will sell discounted and sale merchandise.

Location: Kennedy Center

GARDEN TOURS

We're eager to welcome back our knowledgeable Garden Docents next month. Garden tours will be offered at 10:30 am and 12:30 pm Tuesday through Sunday from September 1 to November 15. Interested visitors can sign-up for a garden tour on a first-come, first-served basis at the Visitor Center Tour Desk. We'll be in touch with the Garden Docents in August with information to prepare you for the coming fall season.

EXHIBITION FALL/WINTER ROTATION

Lisa Leyh, Interpretation Volunteer Manager

Hillwood's first exhibition to present Marjorie Post's full range of style, *Ingenue to Icon*, will rotate at the end of September. The spring/summer displays currently on view will be replaced with the fall/winter wear on September 27 – 30. Due to the large change out of displays, the Adirondack Building will be closed on September 29 and 30, reopening to the public on October 1.

If you would like a refresher on what the second rotation will entail, view the [exhibition label text](#) and [June 15 video](#) with curator Howard Kurtz on the exhibition available on the volunteer website.

COLLECTIONS UPDATE

MJ Meredith, Registrar

From August through early October, the portrait of Empress Eugénie (51.11) painted by Winterhalter will be temporarily de-installed from the French Drawing Room for conservation with Hillwood's Collections department.



Portrait of Empress Eugénie (51.11)

During that time, the portrait will be replaced with the Tapestry Portrait of Catherine II (41.5) from the Entry Hall. Catherine's portrait space in the Entry Hall will remain empty until the conservation project is completed in October.



Tapestry Portrait of Catherine II (41.5)

ON THE OTHER SIDE “OF THE POND”: A CURATOR’S RECAP FROM THE ATTINGHAM SUMMER SCHOOL

Jessica Bonilla, Head Gardener

Lisa Leyh, Volunteer Manager

In the previous issue of *The Post Serial*, we learned that Estella Chung, Hillwood’s Curator of Material Culture and Historian, was selected to attend the 64th Attingham Summer School in Great Britain – the brain child of the Bliss Family of Dumbarton Oaks so curators and others could go to England to:

EXAMINE the architectural and social history of the historic house in Britain and its gardens and landscape setting.

STUDY the contents of these buildings – their paintings, sculpture, furniture, ceramics, silver, textiles and other applied arts – as well as the planning, decorative treatment and use of the interiors.

STIMULATE debate on problems relating to the conservation and presentation of the country house and its contents.



Hardwick Hall in Derbyshire, England
was one of the sites studied

The 48 students traveled from USA, England, and other countries including Turkey and Indonesia to participate in the Attingham Summer School. The program, spanning 18 days, was robust to say the least. Estella and her classmates visited 27 estates and attended 15 lectures and 6 object handling seminars (as well as drank 72 cups of tea!). Most days began at 7 am and concluded around 9/10 pm.



*Curator Estella Chung was one of 24 Americans
accepted into the study course*

Estella is very excited to have had this opportunity and has begun to look at Hillwood in a new light. She has been digesting all that she’s learned from the program and has already begun to put together her ideas for potential areas of use around the estate for new interpretation, such as in the Visitor Center for telling the Post story through photographs and improvements to the Staff Dining Room in the Mansion.

Other observations of note include the public estates she visited were working hard to add whimsy and refresh their stories to make themselves relevant, such as deploying experiments with new displays and introducing contemporary art installations. Many estates were trying out "eyemats"- a digital reproduction carpet that matches the print of historic rugs and lies over top to protect the antique rug from foot traffic. Certainly much food for thought!

ARCHIVES & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Marge Huang, Archivist/Librarian
Jaime McCurry, Digital Assets Librarian

The Archives & Special Collections Department is pleased to announce that descriptions for collections in the Hillwood Archives can now be accessed at archives.hillwoodmuseum.org. The site is available for use on any computer on Hillwood's campus. The purpose of these descriptions is to provide you with a better idea of the diverse range of material that can be found in the Hillwood Archives.

The scope of the Hillwood Archives is focused on Marjorie Merriweather Post and the museum she bequeathed to the public. In addition to the Marjorie Merriweather Post Collection, the Hillwood Archives holds collections created by her family, staff, and close friends and the institutional records of the Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens. For questions about how to use this site or to make an appointment to conduct research in the Hillwood Archives, please do not hesitate to contact the Archives & Special Collections Department at (202) 243- 3962 and be sure to check the site often for new information!

PLANT PROFILE ALOCASIAS & COLOCASIAS: NO SHRINKING VIOLETS

Betty Cochran, Newsletter Volunteer

Tropical plants have been adding touches of the exotic to Hillwood's gardens for several summers—you'll see them on the Lunar Lawn, along the wall across from the Greenhouse, and of course in containers. Stars among the tropicals here come from two genera, *Alocasia* and *Colocasia*.



Colocasia 'White Lava'

These two genera are closely related, and often confused, and in fact some consider *Alocasia* a variant of *Colocasia*. All are grown for their large, dramatic leaves, generally arrowhead-shaped or heart-shaped. The leaves rise directly from the ground on sturdy stems, which mean they often move gracefully in a breeze.

Elephant ear is the name widely used for *Alocasia*, *Colocasia*, and related tropicals. *Colocasia* is also known as taro, which is a common food plant in equatorial regions.



Colocasia 'Violet Stem'

Elephant ears range in size from dwarfs, less than two feet tall, to eight or ten feet tall. Many are striking shades of green, some with dramatic white veining, but elephant ears come in a range of colors, from copper, ivory, and chartreuse to charcoal or dusky purple. Some leaves are mottled or edged with a contrasting color. Some have a

matte finish, and others are shiny. Most elephant-ear leaves are peltate, with the stem attached inside the leaf margin rather than at the base of the leaf.



Colocasia esculenta 'Maui Gold'

The photos show a selection of Hillwood's elephant ears, which are now putting on a grand display.

CALLS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Lisa Leyh, Interpretation Volunteer Manager

Hillwood is recruiting for two volunteer roles: Visitor Services Volunteers and Family Art Volunteers, a new volunteer position at Hillwood (see below for more details). You can help by spreading the word to friends, family members or clubs and organizations you're affiliated with. Please direct any inquires or possible applicants to Lisa Leyh at (202) 243-3938 or LLeyh@HillwoodMuseum.org.

- **Visitor Services Volunteers (VSVs)**
VSVs offer a gracious welcome and interpretive assistance to visitors in the Visitor Center and Mansion. Help is needed for the morning (9:30 am – 1:30 pm) and afternoon (1 – 5 pm) shifts on Saturdays and Sundays.
- **Family Art Volunteers**
Family Art Volunteers assist in facilitating art-making activities with caregivers and children

at family-friendly public programs, such as Fabergé Egg Family Festival and Girl Scout Day. The volunteer duties include preparing materials and art-making locations, including set-up and clean-up, assisting visitors in making connections between the art activity and Hillwood's collection, and assuring a positive, enjoyable visitor experience. The volunteer shift is at least four scheduled four-hour shifts at festivals and other family-friendly public programs per year, with about 10 days per year available, primarily on Fridays, Saturdays or Sundays.

NEW STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

We are delighted to welcome 7 new volunteers and 2 new staff members! Please join us in welcoming our newest members to Hillwood:

Joining the Hillwood staff:

- Lucy Harvey - Visitor Services Associate
- Eileen Tomczuk - Grants Manager

Joining the Administrative volunteer corps:

- Abby Follmer

Joining the Interpretation volunteer corps:

- Allison Axtell
- Lorraine Brown
- Pat Tamaccio

Joining the Horticulture volunteer corps:

- Sybil Goldman
- Vicki Onderdonk
- Steve McWhite

VISITOR SERVICES UPDATE

Katy Albertson, Head of Visitor Services

Visitor Services is delighted to announce the promotion of Lisa Wheeler to full time as a Visitor Services Coordinator. She started at Hillwood last fall on a part time basis, covering Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays. In her new

role, Lisa will be at Hillwood Sunday-Thursday. Please join us in congratulating Lisa on her promotion.

IN MEMORIAM: GINETTE VILLARET PATCH

It is with great sadness we share with you the passing of Visitor Services Volunteer Ginette Patch. A long-time resident of Washington DC, Ginette passed away on June 25, 2015, due to failing health after a serious injury. She volunteered as one of First Lady Laura Bush's correspondence team members and was a member of and volunteer for Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens.



From 2006 to 2013, Ginette brought her gracious spirit and professionalism to Tuesday afternoons at Hillwood. Among her many skills she shared with the museum, her proficiency in French was an added benefit to many of our visitors. To view the obituary in *The Washington Post*, [click here](#).

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