

THE POST SERIAL

The Acquisition of Largillière's *Portrait of Monsieur de Puysegur*

Dr. Wilfried Zeisler, Chief Curator, and Rebecca Tilles, Associate Curator of 18th - Century French and Western Fine and Decorative Arts

At the Eleanor Post Close (1909-2006) sale in December 2017 at Sotheby, Paris, Hillwood bid on lot 609, a three-quarter-length portrait of *Monsieur de Puysegur*, likely *Jacques-François de Chastenet, Marquis de Puysegur* by Nicolas de Largillière, at right. It was a unique opportunity for Hillwood to acquire an excellent example of French portraiture and reacquire a painting that was part of Marjorie Post's collection until 1964.

Born in France, Largillière trained in Peter Lely's atelier in England and became a renowned portraitist. Upon his return to Paris in 1679, Largillière served as First Painter to King Louis XIV and depicted many royals and members of the European and French aristocracy, among them the Marquis de Puysegur. The sitter, framed by a classical column, is depicted wearing abundant drapery of shimmering fabrics while elegantly gesturing to his left, a testament to Largillière's technique and virtuosity.¹



Portrait of Monsieur de Puysegur



Archived photo showing the Largillière painting displayed at Hillwood

First documented in France in 1902, Marjorie Post Hutton acquired the portrait in New York in 1922. In 1937, the portrait was recorded in the draft catalogue of Marjorie's art collection.² It was first displayed in her library in New York, then in the entry hall at Tregaron, and finally in the second floor hall at Hillwood as seen in the photo to the left.

In 1964, Marjorie sent the portrait to her daughter, Eleanor Close Barzin, in Paris in exchange for the return of Jean-Marc Nattier's [*Portrait of the Duchess of Parma and her Daughter Isabelle*](#), which Marjorie gave to Eleanor as a wedding present.³ In June 1984, Hillwood's curator, Katrina

V. H. Taylor, stated that “the return of this painting would add to the interest of the collection at Hillwood”, referring to the portrait.⁴ Thanks to the persistence and generosity of Ellen Charles, Marjorie Post’s granddaughter and president emerita of Hillwood, who personally attended the sale and memorably surpassed Hillwood’s maximum bid, the painting will return to Hillwood for good. “It was no surprise that this important portrait exceeded the estimated auction price,” said Mrs. Charles. “I am thrilled and honored that I could be there in person and contribute to Hillwood’s important acquisition. I just felt that I had to bring it home.”

Highly anticipated, the portrait is expected to arrive this summer and will be displayed in the entry hall, replacing the large [Portrait of a Lady](#), also by Largillière. The latter will move to the opposite wall in lieu of the [Portrait of Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna](#), which will replace the [tapestry portrait of Catherine the Great](#) flanking the front door. The tapestry portrait will move upstairs where it will replace a second [portrait of Catherine the Great](#) and be exposed to less direct light. Stay tuned for more information on this exciting addition. A public lecture, [A Homecoming for Hillwood](#), is scheduled for September 12.

1. “Une Dynastie Américaine en Europe,” Sotheby’s, Paris (December 19-20, 2017), lot 609, p. 190.
2. Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens, Archives.
3. Eleanor Post Close married Belgian-born American conductor, Léon Eugene Barzin (1900-1999), in 1956.
4. Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens, Archives, Curatorial Files.

Hillwood Happenings for Volunteers

All Hillwood volunteers are invited to take advantage of the educational offerings listed below. While advance registration is not necessary for all continuing education events, **please register in advance** when stated, as space is limited for some opportunities. Advanced registration can be completed on the clipboard at the horticulture sign-in station or by contacting Drew Asbury at 202.243.3907 or DAsbury@hillwoodmuseum.org.

The Spring Display and More Tour | Tuesday, April 17—Friday, April 20, 11:30 a.m.

Jessica Bonilla, head gardener, will discuss Hillwood’s spring seasonal displays. Please sign up on the clipboard in the horticulture office. Space is limited to 15 volunteers per tour. Meet in the horticulture break room.

Viburnum and Friends Tour | Tuesday, May 15 and Wednesday, May 16, 10:30 a.m.

Join Marshall Paquin, senior gardener, as he highlights Viburnums and other spring blooming shrubs. Please sign up on the clipboard in the horticulture office. Space is limited to 15 volunteers per tour. Meet in the horticulture break room.

Hanging Basket Workshop | Tuesday, May 15, 11:30 a.m.

Join Drew Asbury, horticulturist, in the greenhouse workroom to create your very own summer-flowering hanging basket with a selection of flowering and trailing plants. A \$25 fee covers the cost of materials. Please sign up on the clipboard in the horticulture office. Space is limited to 12 volunteers. Meet in the greenhouse workroom.

Container Workshop | Wednesday, May 16, 11:30 a.m.

Jessica Bonilla, head gardener, will provide inspiration to help you create your very own container of summer-flowering plants. A \$25 fee covers the cost of materials. Please sign up on the clip-

board in the horticulture office. Space is limited to 12 volunteers. Meet in the horticulture break room.

Plant ID Walk – Spring Blooms (Part 2) | Tuesday, May 22—Friday, May 25, 11:30 a.m.

Join Drew Asbury, horticulturist, for a walk in the gardens. We will focus our discussion on plants in bloom. Please sign up on the clipboard in the horticulture office. Space is limited to 15 volunteers. Meet in the horticulture break room.

Rose Garden Tour | Last Week of May/First Week of June (bloom dependent), 11:30 a.m.

Meet Jessica Bonilla, head gardener, in the rose garden for a short tour and lecture. The tour will be offered Tuesday through Friday of the chosen week. An email will be sent closer to the date to let everyone know when the roses will be at peak bloom.

Fabergé Rediscovered Volunteer Education Lecture | Monday, June 11, 10:30 am.

Join Dr. Wilfried Zeisler, exhibition curator, to learn about Hillwood’s exciting, new exhibition. We will begin in the visitor center theater before entering Fabergé’s world in the Adirondack building.

Cutting Garden Tour | Tuesday, June 12—Friday, June 15, 11:30 a.m.

Join Drew Asbury, horticulturist, for a tour and discussion of the cutting garden. Please sign up on the clipboard in the horticulture office. Space is limited to 15 volunteers. Meet in the horticulture break room.

Museum Shop Update

Lauren Salazar, Head of Merchandising

After attending five gifts shows in early 2018, the results are making their debuts in the Museum Shop. We are stocked up with new gifts, apparel, and books with more spring merchandise arriving daily. Some of my favorites include:

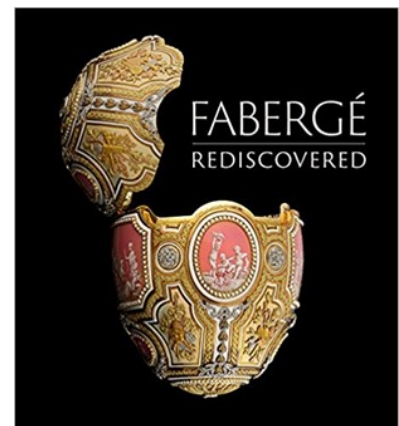
Lovely enamel brooches, see images at right, and silk scarves from Meab (pronounced Maive), an Irish vendor sourced during a recent trip to Showcase Ireland, a Dublin gift show.



Louis Sherry Truffles—
A perfect gift for Mothers’ Day



Looking ahead to June, we anticipate the arrival of the new publication, *Fabergé Rediscovered*. Featuring exquisite photography and recent historical discoveries, the book and the exhibition promise to be hugely popular.



Upcoming Shop Events:

- **Spring Fashion Pop Up Shop**

Friday, April 20—Sunday, April 22, 10 a.m.—5 p.m., Conservatory

Spring is the time to refresh your wardrobe with jackets, accessories and jewelry from a variety of vendors including Winding River, Origin necklaces, and more.

- **Sylvan Spirit Jewelry Pop Up Shop**

Saturday, May 19, 10 a.m.—5 p.m., Conservatory

Living in the Shenandoah Valley, the mother and daughter team behind Sylvan Spirit Jewelry are inspired by the natural beauty of Virginia to create their hand-painted jewelry. Sculpted from precious metal clay and cast in sterling, bronze, and gold, their work incorporates a variety of pearls, Swarovski crystals, and semiprecious stones. An artist signature completes each piece.

Icon Room Changes in Preparation for *Fabergé Rediscovered*

Audra Kelly, Head of Interpretation and Lisa Horvath, Volunteer Services Supervisor

On Monday, April 2, many Fabergé objects, along with a few made by the firm's competitors, were removed from the Icon Room to be prepared for display in [Fabergé Rediscovered](#), the upcoming exhibition in the Adirondack building opening to the public on June 9. Replacement objects were also installed on Monday, April 2 to fill the gaps on the shelves left by the removed Fabergé pieces and will remain on view until the closure of *Fabergé Rediscovered* in January 2019.

Three notable Fabergé objects will remain in the Icon Room until late May or early June before they are moved into *Fabergé Rediscovered*: two imperial Easter eggs in the center case and the large regimental clock in the corner by the window. Additional information about the objects that will be installed in place of these three pieces will be shared at a later date.

Several support materials are available to help volunteers communicate with visitors about the new Icon Room displays during the run of *Fabergé Rediscovered*. These materials have been uploaded to the volunteer website and include:

- [List of objects removed from the Icon Room](#) for future display in *Fabergé Rediscovered*
- [List of objects replacing objects removed](#) for future display in *Fabergé Rediscovered*
- [Images showing Icon Room changes](#)
- [List of Highlighted Objects](#): objects with interesting stories that can be highlighted with visitors in lieu of any objects no longer on display during the run of *Fabergé Rediscovered*

The [object database](#) on Hillwood's website and *A Taste for Splendor* are excellent resources to "go deeper" into specific objects. Anticipation is great for *Fabergé Rediscovered*, and this is an exciting opportunity to share with visitors about Hillwood's collection.

Objects Off-View in the Mansion and Audio Tour Stops

Audra Kelly, Head of Interpretation

An object profiled in an audio tour stop, on both the audio guides and the app, is currently off-view. The Benjamin Franklin Cup and Saucer, stop 422 usually on display in the French porcelain room, is currently on loan to The Metropolitan Museum of Art for display in [Visitors to Versailles 1682-1789](#). It will return to Hillwood in late summer after the exhibition closes in July.



The Benjamin Franklin Cup and Saucer

Several objects are being prepared for display in *Fabergé Rediscovered* and will return to the Icon Room after the exhibition closes in January 2019:

- Stop 361, Two Imperial Easter Eggs by Fabergé (off-view beginning in late May or early June)
- Stop 362, Yusupov Music Box by Fabergé (off-view beginning April 3)
- Stop 363, Empress Alexandra's Notebook by Fabergé (off-view beginning April 3)

We thank volunteers for helping visitors understand that while they may still listen to the tour stops, either on the audio guides available in the visitor center or via the app on their personal smart device and enjoy learning about the objects, the objects will be off-view in the mansion until they return at later dates.

Save the Date: June Fabergé Gala

Allison Kingery, Special Events Manager

Hillwood's [annual gala](#) will be held the evening of Tuesday, June 5. This year's gala celebrates the opening of our much anticipated new exhibition, *Fabergé Rediscovered*. The Fabergé Gala starts at 6:30 p.m. with cocktails and passed hors d'oeuvres in the courtyard and a first preview of the exhibition in the Adirondack building. Guests will then proceed to a seated three-course dinner on the Lunar Lawn. Co-Chairs Sophie Hawkins, Mark Lowham, and Marilyn Wald anticipate it will be one of our most popular galas to date with more than 400 guests.

Individual tickets for the evening are \$500, and sponsorships begin at \$1,000 for our Individual Benefactors. Tables of ten are available for \$15,000 Empress sponsors. Please contact Allison Kingery, special events manager, at 202.243.3974 or akingery@hillwoodmuseum.org for more information.



Updates from Membership

Lizzie Axelson, Membership Operations and Marketing Manager

Some of you may know me from the front desk, but for those I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting, my name is Lizzie Axelson and I am the membership operations and marketing manager. I have greatly enjoyed getting to know so many of you during my more than two years in visitor services, and I am extremely excited to have taken on membership a few months ago and to work with some of you in a different capacity.

There is a lovely spring ahead at Hillwood, as always. Mark your calendars for the member preview days for *Fabergé Rediscovered* on June 6, 7, and 8 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Members have the exclusive opportunity to see the exhibition before it opens to the public and hear directly from the curator, Dr. Wilfried Zeisler, during behind-the-scenes presentations.

Members are encouraged to upgrade to the contributor level (\$150) or above to attend the Curator's Reception on Thursday, June 7 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Enjoy libations and hors d'oeuvres while meeting members of the exhibition team. Executive Director Kate Markert and Chief Curator Dr. Wilfried Zeisler will be on hand to chat and answer any questions you may have about *Fabergé Rediscovered*.

We cannot wait to launch this dazzling exhibition in fabulous style. I hope that each of you will take advantage of Hillwood's wonderful membership benefits to enhance this special opening week.

Hillwood Welcomes New Dining Partner

Angie Dodson, Director of Learning and Engagement

Just after Thanksgiving, Hillwood welcomed Starr Catering Group as its new dining partner. From November through March, Starr served a seasonal menu of fresh soups, salads, and sandwiches in a casual, self-service setting. As of March 20, we returned to full table service but continue to offer an express menu for those who prefer a more casual offering. The new menu and service align nicely with the overall visitor experience.

The café and C.W. Post will undergo a facelift in preparation for a grand opening with Starr later this year. While no one looks forward to managing a renovation while also delivering on the promise of a seamless and fabulous visitor experience, we've done it before and will do it once more. We look forward to introducing you to the café's new look and menu in the months to come.

Some of you may know Starr from some of their other venues. A year or so ago, Starr assumed responsibility for the National Gallery of Art's dining program. They are also the food service provider for the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Barnes Foundation, and the New York Botanical Garden. Starr is an offshoot of Starr Restaurant group, which operates many well-regarded restaurants in the Philadelphia-NJ-NY region—including Buddakan, Morimoto, and Talula's Garden—as well as Le Diplomate here in Washington. Starr's local catering partner is also Design Cuisine, one of the DC area's longstanding caterers of record. There is a lot to look forward to with these folks, who seem to have unbridled energy to put towards their next great thing!

As a reminder, Hillwood’s volunteers enjoy a 20% discount in the café, so please take time to try it out. Be sure to show your ID for the discount.

While there, you’ll see that many of your favorite servers remain on site and that they have been joined by some great new colleagues working in both the front and back of house. As is the case with any transition, there will be great, new things and things to work on so please let us hear any comments or suggestions as we move along with this exciting new venture.

New Mobile App of Hillwood’s Audio Tours

Audra Kelly, Head of Interpretation

Since December 15, 2017, visitors have been able to download Hillwood’s audio tours onto their handheld iOS or Android devices. The app is one more way for visitors to access content about the mansion and gardens. Visitors may download the app to serve as their mobile audio guide during their visit or to enjoy the richness of Hillwood anytime, anywhere. The free app is available in the App Store or Google Play store. The [mobile tour page](#) on Hillwood’s website makes downloading simple.

We recommend that visitors download the app in the visitor center before touring the estate. . Headphones or earbuds are required when listening; free earbuds are available for visitors in the visitor center or mansion coat room.

The app has many helpful and illuminating features, which include the following:

- all audio tour content is available—from mansion, garden, and family tours
- detailed, zoomable maps for easy navigation of estate and mansion
- a “Favorites” option, which allows the saving of favorite objects
- sharing via social media (Facebook, Twitter) or email
- an easy-to-explore menu featuring visit planning details (with links to tickets and more)
- text size available in small, medium, and large

Volunteers are encouraged to download the app on their own device and explore its many features. Enjoy engaging visitors with this new mobile tool.



Three tours—the garden, mansion, and family—are offered on the new app.

Welcome: Two New Curators Join Hillwood

Hillwood is pleased to welcome Rebecca Tilles and Megan Martinelli Campbell to the collections division.



Rebecca Tilles joined Hillwood as associate curator of 18th-century French and Western European fine and decorative arts in January 2018. Rebecca is also a PhD candidate in Art History at the University of Sussex, UK where she has been working on the Gilded Age collection of George and Florence Blumenthal. Prior to beginning her doctorate, Rebecca worked as a curatorial research fellow in decorative arts and sculpture in the Art of Europe Department at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston for eight years where she assisted with the exhibitions: *Symbols of Power: Napoleon and the Art of the Empire Style, 1800-1815* (2007) and *Splendor and Elegance: European Decorative Arts and Drawings from the Horace Wood*

Brock Collection (2009). She holds a Bachelors of Arts degree in French and French Cultural Studies from Wellesley College (2003) and an Masters of Arts degree in European Decorative Arts from The Bard Graduate Center in New York (2007).

Megan Martinelli Campbell began at Hillwood as assistant curator of apparel, jewelry, and accessories on January 16, 2018. Previously, Megan was a Research Assistant at The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute for three years. At the Costume Institute, Megan contributed to internal object assessment research and assisted with exhibitions including *China: Through the Looking Glass* (2015) and *Manus x Machina: Fashion in an Age of Technology* (2016). Before joining the Met, Megan curated an exhibition titled *The Other White Dress: Non-Wedding Dresses of the Twentieth Century* (2014) at the University of Rhode Island's Historic Textile Gallery and contributed to *Artist, Rebel, Dandy: Men of Fashion* (2013) at The RISD Museum of Art. Megan holds a Masters of Science degree in Historic Textiles and Costumes from the University of Rhode Island and a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature from Providence College.



Please join us in welcoming Megan and Rebecca to Hillwood!

The Fashionable Life of Dina Merrill (1923–2017)

Megan Martinelli Campbell, Assistant Curator of Apparel, Jewelry, and Accessories

This spring's installation in the Marjorie Merriweather Post bedroom suite, running May 8, 2018 through January 2019, will honor Marjorie's youngest daughter, Dina Merrill, who died last May. Born Nedina Marjorie Hutton in 1923, Dina was the daughter of E.F. Hutton, Marjorie's second husband. During her teens, Dina supported her fledgling acting career by appearing in *Vogue* and other fashion publications before landing her first role on Broadway at age twenty-two in *The Mermaids Singing*. She later appeared in numerous films and television programs, including *Desk Set* (1957) and *Butterfield 8* (1960).



The bridesmaid dress Dina wore for her mother's wedding

The jewelry case will connect Dina Merrill to the forthcoming special exhibition *Fabergé Rediscovered*, as it displays the miniature portraits Marjorie commissioned of her daughter in Fabergé or Fabergé-contemporary frames. It will also include the egg pendant jewelry that Dina donated in 1978. The accessory case will feature a selection of handbags, representing both mother and daughter's superb taste, and will contain a pearl-beaded Cartier bag that Dina's father gave her on her wedding day.

The small closet will showcase two special occasion dresses worn by Dina Merrill as a girl, including the bridesmaid dress she wore for her mother's wedding to Joseph E. Davis in 1935, as seen in the photo to the left. Her own wedding gown and veil worn in 1946 will be the large closet. The lace case will house the pink and brown hat Marjorie wore to Dina's wedding, and a fancy rhinestone blouse that Dina inherited from her mother. Another drawer will showcase the art of

needlepoint, admired by both women. Dina appeared in a 1978 *McCall's Needlework and Crafts* article where she is quoted, "My mother taught me to needle-point while traveling." The last drawer will contain several of Dina's baby bonnets and a scrapbook page of her childhood hair clippings. Finally, Dina's career as actress and model will be illustrated on the dressing room table, where one of her *Vogue* covers and a special *LIFE* magazine fashion shoot will be featured.

Though a reluctant "fashion icon", who once revealed her preference for easy, comfortable clothing in a 1972 editorial, Dina Merrill's special occasion wardrobe will reveal her taste for refined glamour, most certainly



Dina posing in front of her mother's portrait

most certainly influenced by her mother.

A public lecture program highlighting *The Fashionable Life of Dina Merrill, 1923-2017* will take place on May 22. More information and tickets are available on the [Events & Program page](#) on Hillwood's website.

Updates from Marketing

Lynn Rossotti, Director of Marketing, Communications, and Visitor Services

As you know, though there's something new in every season at Hillwood, spring holds a special allure. At this time of year, we make sure we're taking full advantage of all that Hillwood has to offer by building awareness through our brand campaign. Here's a summary of where you can expect to see Hillwood advertising this spring.

The paid media campaign begins this month with a focus on seasonal branding with a "Spring is Fabulous" message. Most of the ads you see and hear will also incorporate mentions of the special exhibition *The Artistic Table* to repeat the message that there's always something new to see. We continue to invest in the traditional media outlets that research suggests our audience best responds to including: monthly ads in the *Weekend* section of *The Washington Post*, spots on WAMU-FM and WTOP-FM, and ads in local print media, like the *Current Newspapers*, *Washingtonian*, *Metro Weekly*, and *Washington Blade*. The brand campaign will extend into early summer and be complemented by a paid campaign promoting *Fabergé Rediscovered* beginning around the exhibition opening. Ads for *Fabergé Rediscovered* will run in: the June issue of *Washingtonian*, the June 3 Summer Arts Preview in *The Washington Post*, and *The Washington Post Magazine* on June 24; and on bus sides in DC and close-in Bethesda from early June to early July. Though we focus on traditional outlets, we will also be promoting *Fabergé Rediscovered* online on washingtonpost.com and through paid promotions on Facebook and Instagram. We hope that by building awareness of all Hillwood has to offer, we can attract new guests who become as enthusiastic about Hillwood as you are!

Bentley Digitization Project: Why the Bentley?

Abby Stambach, Archivist/Librarian

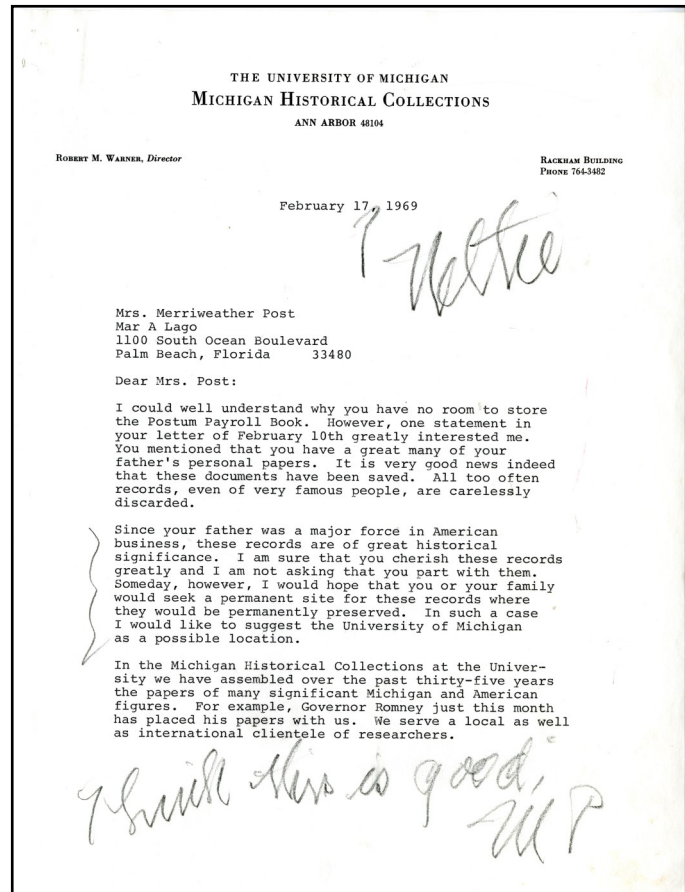
One of the most common questions I have received since the beginning of the Bentley digitization project is about how the Marjorie Merriweather Post papers ended up in Michigan. This answer is complicated, and the transfer of her papers was not done until six years after Marjorie's death. Interestingly, project staff discovered that Marjorie seriously considered donating the Post Family papers to the Bentley Historical Library in 1969.

The Bentley Historical Library is part of the University of Michigan's libraries systems. It collects materials documenting the history of the university and the history of the state of Michigan. Sometime in 1968, Marjorie donated the first payroll book of the Postum Cereal Company to the Bentley. The exact details behind this donation are unknown, but it makes sense that the payroll book was donated to the Bentley because C.W. Post founded the Postum Cereal Company in Battle Creek, Michigan. When Robert M. Warner, director of the Bentley, thanked Marjorie for her

donation, he suggested that she consider donating her father's personal papers because C.W. "was a major force in American Business" as you can see in the letter to the right. Marjorie wrote on the bottom of this letter "I think this is good." This prompted her to consult with Nettie Leitch Major about the appropriate course of action to preserve her father's papers.

Major served as Marjorie's genealogist and wrote the 1963 biography, *C.W. Post: The Hour and the Man*, developing a deep understanding of the contents of C.W. papers. During the course of the discussion, the preservation of Marjorie's papers came up. This discussion coincided with finalizing the details of bequeathing Hillwood to the Smithsonian. Marjorie said that there was not a definite understanding with the Smithsonian over the care of the documents then the Bentley Historical Library was a suitable option. After careful consideration, Marjorie decided it was best to keep the papers at Hillwood.

While this set of correspondence does not fully answer why the Post Family papers ended up in Michigan, it does give some understanding. It also shows that Marjorie was keenly interested in making her papers accessible, which is one of the reasons behind the current Bentley digitizing project.



Marjorie Post gives the approval for donating her father's personal papers to the Bentley.

DAMs at Hillwood

Elizabeth Blackwood, Digital Assets Librarian

Webster's defines a dam as a "barrier constructed to hold back water and raise its level," but staff members use Hillwood's DAM for seeing through barriers.

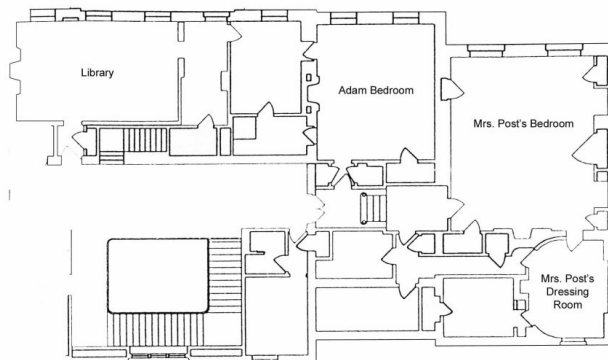
DAM, the abbreviation for Digital Asset Management, is nestled within its own department between Information Technology and the Library/Archives. Our DAM is a database that helps staff members access the nearly 90,000 digital assets that Hillwood owns. It is the digital warehouse of images, sounds, videos, and other types of media. These could be images of the gardens or objects in the collection, home movies of Marjorie Post and her



Hillwood's DAM provides information on everything, from table forks...

family, or architectural drawings of the campus, just to name a few examples.

A DAM is important to the normal function of Hillwood. It helps the curators look at objects in the collection. It helps the marketing department communicate to our audiences. It helps the gift shop develop product prototypes. Even the facilities and horticulture departments use DAM to document changes on campus. The database allows staff members to search across all of Hillwood's assets to find what they need, much like a library catalog or a shopping



To architectural designs...



And Horticulture changes!

website, like Amazon. This helps staff members at Hillwood stay organized and find what they are looking for. Rather than serving as a barrier like a physical dam, our digital DAM acts as a window to view all of the digital assets that make work happen at Hillwood.

What's Coming Up in the Gardens

Jessica Bonilla, Head Gardener

Spring is here, but March certainly brought us interesting weather. It came in like a lion with the big wind storm on March 2. The estate had six mature trees come down just barely missing a dog statue in the pet cemetery and the gates at Friendship Walk. The beloved Oriental spruce in the eastern Lunar Lawn bed was also an unfortunate casualty.

A fallen tree during the March 2 wind storm narrowly missed the gates along the Friendship Walk



Then the cold and wind just seemed to continue making us nervous about putting out the spring annuals in time for the Fabergé Egg Festival. Surely good weather is just around the corner, and we have some intriguing projects on the horizon.

Last year, you may remember, we began working with John Pond, a contractor, to repair the promenade in front of the mansion at the Lunar Lawn. This year, hardscape improvements will continue, with a focus on the cutting garden wall. Time and the elements have taken their toll, creating loose stones and crumbling mortar. We will keep you informed as to when repairs will commence and how they will affect the campus.

We will also be upgrading our irrigation system, installing a control network that takes advantage of the latest technology and is capable of running the sprinkler heads by cell phone or laptop. The cutting garden will also see an entire redesign of its irrigation system that will provide more flexibility in targeting what sections to water and improve overall coverage.

Lastly, we have planned some fun planting projects. The concept for the front of the Adirondack building has always been to have a native garden. Over the years, it has declined a bit, but we are determined to make it everything that our esteemed Bill Johnson, newly retired Hillwood horticulturist, ever wanted and more. Staff and volunteers will be adding lots of U.S. native perennials and a shrub or two to the garden. Another project will focus on putting some of our outlying areas to better use. Ami Wilber, floral and event décor designer, loves to use plant material from the property in her arrangements. To give her more to manipulate, we will be adding plants for cutting around the entrance to the horticulture offices, by the steward's house, and along the northern access road. Other planting plans include more perennials at the dacha to repair damage from a water main break and along the woodland path to increase numbers and coverage. It's a busy time of year, and we're so happy to have you with us. Keep growing!

Recruitment Begins in June for Next Year's Garden Docent Training

Audra Kelly, Head of Interpretation

This summer Hillwood will recruit applicants for garden docent training. The online application will be available on Hillwood's website in early June in the Jobs and Volunteering section. Recruitment will end on September 7.

Garden docents lead one-hour seasonal tours of Hillwood's thirteen acres of formal gardens. Docents tour April to June and September to mid-November.

The training teaches how to engage visitors about Hillwood's gardens, landscape design, and Marjorie Merriweather Post. The training, January through May 2019, consists of weekly evening classes, readings, and projects. The last garden docent training was four years ago in 2015.

Please help spread the word about this opportunity to your friends and colleagues. Hillwood volunteers are an important way for Hillwood to recruit excellent docents.

Plant Profile: Sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboretum*)

Jane Berger, Newsletter Volunteer

Take a stroll by the updated garden bed on the Lunar Lawn (left side as you're facing away from the mansion). Just to the left of the golden Hinoki Cypress, you'll notice a new tree with glossy, dark green leaves and, in early summer, lovely clusters of flowers that look something like Lily-of-the-Valley.



The new sourwood's location on the Lunar Lawn

It's our new sourwood, a native American tree found in woodlands, ravines, and on bluffs and hills from south New Jersey to Florida and northeast Louisiana and west through Ohio, Indiana, and over to southeast Illinois.

The white flowers appear on long, slender, drooping panicles. In fall, the tree changes with brilliant, deep red leaves and dry, five-part, silvery-gray panicles that contrast with the hue of the autumn foliage.

The tree's common name derives from the sour taste of the leaves, and the genus name comes from the Greek words *oxy*, meaning acid, and *dendron*, meaning tree.



Blooms we can expect to see on Hillwood's sourwood

Oxydendrum is also valued as a patio tree, since it generally attains a height of only thirty feet high and a spread of twenty feet, although it can get much taller in the wild. It prefers full sun to part shade and acidic, well-drained soil. The flowers are attractive to bees, and sourwood honey is prized if you can find it.

Sourwood is difficult to produce in nursery conditions, and it can be difficult as well in the home garden. Two cultivars are in the trade. 'Chaemeleon' is a selection from the Polly Hill Arboretum on Martha's Vineyard, and in fall, the leaves turn shades of red, purple, and yellow.

It's also a little more upright than the native tree. 'Mt.

Charm', developed in West Virginia, has a symmetrical rather than a pyramidal habit and its leaves turn red earlier than the straight species.

Welcome: Two New Visitor Services Associates

Lisa Leyh, Head of Visitor Services and Volunteer Management

We are delighted to announce that two new associates have joined the visitor services department: Georgia Lucas and Claire Fuller.



Georgia Lucas brings four years of experience working with visitors, most recently from the National Park Service Visitor Center at the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historic Park in Maryland where she continued to develop her customer service skills at the front desk, assisting the gift shop operations, taking tour reservations, and providing visitor orientations. Georgia is also a licensed DC tour guide, so you may have seen her around the city! Georgia holds a Bachelor's of Arts degree from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Claire Fuller brings two years of museum and non-profit experience to Hillwood. She has interned and volunteered at a number of museums, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC, and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia. Claire's experience in studio art, education, and administration provides an interesting background as she begins her career in visitor services. Claire holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond.



As visitor services associates, Georgia and Claire will support all facets of the visitor services operations throughout campus, delivering a gracious welcome and enriching experience for all visitors. Georgia's schedule is Tuesday-Saturday and Claire's schedule is Wednesday-Sunday.

Please join us in welcoming our two newest team members to Hillwood!

New Volunteers

We are delighted to add five new volunteers to the Horticulture volunteer corps. Please join us in welcoming:

- Andy Davis
- Sharon Gee
- Joe Bell
- Dia Sherman
- Caity Valley

Volunteer Spotlight

Lisa Horvath, Volunteer Services Supervisor

Hillwood's volunteer corps is the largest it has ever been at over 300 volunteers, and it continues to grow! While some volunteers see each other on a regular basis, the Volunteer Spotlight is an opportunity to get to know a couple of volunteers a little better.

Frances Moghaddam, Interpretation



As a graduate of the 2017 mansion docent training class, Frances Moghaddam shares her passion for art, history, and jewelry with Hillwood visitors on her guided mansion tours. Frances's interest in volunteering at Hillwood stemmed not only from her love of learning but also from the exciting challenge the mansion docent class posed. It was something outside her comfort zone, and it has been a rewarding experience as she has met "new, friendly, and like-minded people with a passion for learning."

Frances brings unique skills and knowledge to Hillwood through her professional life. Frances is a Graduate Gemologist and works for Tiffany & Co. where she has looked at gems and jewelry every day. Her love of gorgeous gems carries into her tours where she highlights Marjorie Post's collection of hardstones and jewelry and the objects made from beautiful stones and gems. In fact, if she could ask Marjorie any question, Frances would love to know what her favorite piece of jewelry is, or how she came to acquire some of her pieces, especially the Burmese sapphire in Marjorie's Cartier necklace!

Candy Kessel, Horticulture

Candy Kessel joined Hillwood's horticulture volunteer corps in 2000 after attending a lecture given by former Hillwood horticulturist, Bill Johnson, while completing her master gardener course through the University of D.C. After that lecture, she visited Hillwood to attend another of Bill's lectures, and she has been a part of the Hillwood community since, helping maintain Hillwood's beautiful gardens and grounds. Throughout her years as a volunteer, Candi has had various gardening assignments, including the rose garden and French parterre, the outer edges, and she currently works in the cutting garden. Her regular duties include maintaining and beautifying the cutting garden and planting the seasonal plants.



Candy's favorite aspects of volunteering at Hillwood are "learning more about plants and horticulture, seeing how plants grow and behave, and being able to ask the wonderful, knowledgeable, and always-helpful staff". She also enjoys the annual volunteer reception and imagines herself as a guest of Marjorie Post's as she enjoys the evening. When not at Hillwood, Candy can often be found in her own garden, enjoying its personal benefits.

Hillwood is thrilled to have Frances and Candy as members of our wonderful volunteer corps, and we look forward to continuing to highlight our volunteers in future editions of the *Post Serial*.

Volunteer Recruitment Continues

Hillwood is continuing to recruit for visitor services volunteers, outdoor horticulture volunteers, and family arts volunteers. If you or anyone you know is interested in volunteering "Where Fabulous Lives," please visit Hillwood's [Jobs and Volunteering](#) page on the website to apply and to learn more about each of these volunteer roles.

Save the Date!

Mark your calendars for Hillwood's annual volunteer appreciation reception! This year's festivities will be Monday, May 21 from 5 to 7 p.m. and will include a cocktail reception and informative programming opportunities just for our volunteers and their guests. An invitation will be sent via e-mail in the coming weeks. Please join us as we thank you for your time, dedication, and so much more that you give to Hillwood!

In Memoriam: Nancy Ferris and Sybil Goldman

Lisa Horvath, Volunteer Services Supervisor, and Drew Asbury, Horticulturist and Volunteer Manager

It is with heavy hearts that we write to inform you that we have lost beloved Hillwood volunteers in recent months.



Nancy Ferris passed away peacefully on January 22, 2018. Nancy was an avid philanthropist and patron of the arts, and her love of Hillwood was evident in the time she dedicated to it. She served as a docent throughout the 1980s and 1990s and created memories at the 1983 docent trip to the Soviet Union led by former Hillwood curator, Anne Odom. Always friendly and helpful, Nancy is survived by two daughters, a daughter-in-law, two stepsons, and nine grandchildren.

On Tuesday, December 26, 2017, Sybil K. Goldman passed away. She began her volunteer service at Hillwood in July 2016 and shared her talents with the floral department. Her smile and enthusiasm for flower arranging will be greatly missed. She is survived by her two sons, a daughter-in-law, and a grandson.



HILLWOOD
ESTATE, MUSEUM & GARDENS

The *Post Serial* is published quarterly for Hillwood volunteers by Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens, 4155 Linnean Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008. It is edited under the direction of the volunteer management team of Lisa Horvath, Drew Asbury, and other Hillwood staff members. Copyright 2018 by Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens.