



The Post Serial

Volunteer Newsletter of Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens

Volume 23, Issue 1

Winter 2017

BRINGING AN EXHIBITION TO LIFE

Friends and Fashion: An American Diplomat in 1820s Russia

Angie Dodson, Director of Learning and Engagement | Middleton Project Lead

On February 25, 2004 Hillwood's chief curator, Anne Odom, wrote to Barbara Doyle, archivist at Middleton Place, a plantation-turned-museum just outside of Charleston, SC, informing her that Hillwood had acquired the "Middleton album"—a folio containing forty-five miniature portraits assembled by the family of Henry Middleton, the American Envoy to Russia from 1820-30:

Dear Barbara, I wanted to let you know that we have successfully negotiated a price on the album of watercolors, and it is now ours. Before we can exhibit it we will have to conserve it. We hope at some point in time to publish the album with essays about the Middleton family in Russia, the watercolors as works of art, the costume and hairstyles of the period, etc... But that is still a long way off.

"A long way off" indeed! But, this month we opened *Friends and Fashion: An American Diplomat in 1820s Russia*. And, just as Anne envisioned, the exhibition—highlighting the album's intimate portraits, along with objects, images, and publications selected to complement them—provides an opportunity to explore a number of themes, including Henry Middleton's posting in St. Petersburg and the historical events surrounding his time there, the family's social life in Russia, the artistic traditions of the period, and the elaborate fashions and hairstyles of the day.

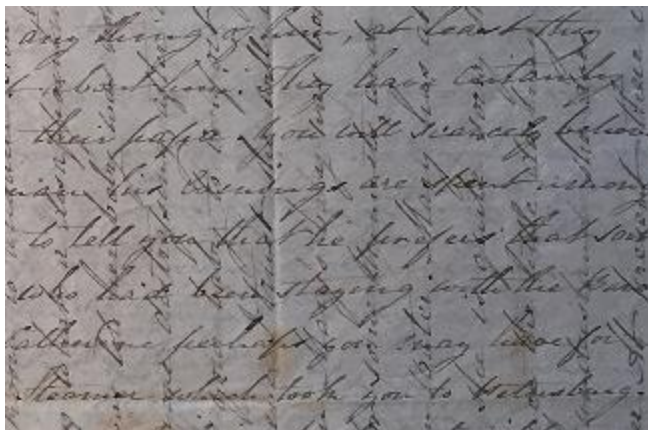
In spring 2016, with the portraits off at the conservator's studio, Hillwood staff began the discovery segment of our exhibition development process, starting with a thorough review of Anne's papers regarding the album. The correspondence between Anne and Barbara Doyle is quite remarkable—time and again, they turned to one another: Barbara to Anne (as far back as the early 1990s) as Middleton looked to tell more of their Russian story; Anne to Barbara (in the 2000s) in preparation for our acquisition of the album. A review of these messages revealed critical content, yes, but also something of the long and lovely relationship between these two colleagues.



(L) Marie Melchior Joseph Théodore de Lagrené, an aide to the French ambassador, 1823-25
(R) Countess Sophia de Laval de la Loubrierie, daughter of St. Petersburg aristocrats

Because of Anne’s untimely death in 2011, the second order of business was to reach out to Barbara to fill in gaps and to re-establish communication with Middleton Place. Unfortunately, Barbara had passed away the previous year. At this point, the purpose of the Middleton album project (as it was then known) became clear—to share the story of the album, of course, but also to honor Anne and Barbara’s passion for Hillwood, Middleton Place, and the album, and to realize their intention of documenting and sharing its important stories with an interested audience.

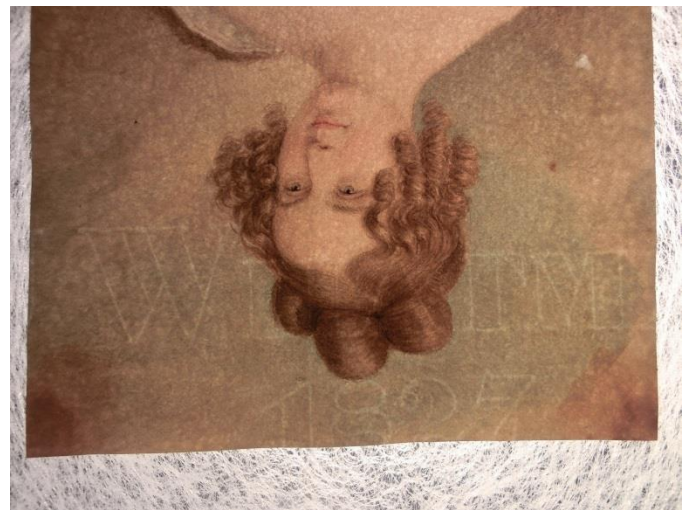
With the foundation of Anne and Barbara’s decade of work to gird us, we set off on two research trips. The first was to Charleston—to see Middleton Place, meet its current staff, and study their collection of objects associated with the Middletons’ Russian years and to scour the Middleton family papers stored in the South Carolina Historical Society’s archives. As we read through the letters—some in English, others in French, and others still written as barely decipherable crossed letters popular in the day (see inset image)—a number of threads began to emerge: colorful descriptions of the family’s social activities while in St. Petersburg; warm letters between family members and some of those pictured in the album; evidence that the Middletons’ eldest daughter, Maria (pronounced Mariah) Henrietta, may well have—as Middleton family lore had long held—painted some of the album’s portraits.



Detail of a Middleton family letter, cross written to save paper and postage

The second research trip took us to Philadelphia and to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the

repository for another large trove of Middleton-related papers (a younger daughter, Eliza, married a well-to-do Philadelphian). There, in addition to additional illustrative correspondence, we read the social diary of the Middletons’ second daughter, Eleanor, and found loads of calling cards and invitations to the most sparkling occasions in 1820s St. Petersburg. And, quite by chance, we noticed that some of Maria Henrietta’s letters included in the bunch had been written on fine drawing paper bearing the same watermarks we’d seen in the conservator’s enlarged details from our portraits, further substantiating the thinking that she might well have had a hand in some of the album’s portraits.



Conservation photography revealed watermarks from J. Whatman, a respected English paper manufacturer

We returned to Washington and focused our attention on “three-dimensionalizing” our story—selecting objects painted or engraved with scenes of St. Petersburg as it was when the Middletons arrived in town; displaying glassware created in celebration of Napoleon’s 1814 defeat in Moscow as fitting backdrop for the changing political and diplomatic nature of Middleton’s mission; and highlighting many of our library holdings as well as porcelain and presentation pieces associated with Nicholas’ coronation to help illustrate that section of the exhibition. After stepping back and checking for gaps in the object checklist, we reached out to lenders—Middleton Place Foundation, Middleton descendants, the Alexandre Vasilliev Foundation,

and other generous Hillwood friends—to help us round-out our story with relevant holdings from their collections.

As this article was being written, the portraits, interpretive panels and graphics were going up on the Dacha's walls; the objects were being mounted in their cases. Loans were being prepared—costumes assembled, mannequins modified, paper wigs crafted. Finishing touches were being put on the iPad-version of the album for visitors' perusal while in the gallery.

For visitors who might "want more": work continues on the supplemental timeline that will enliven the exhibition's page on our website. And, for those who might "know more" about our story, sitters, who painted them, etc.: we are finalizing our first-ever crowdsourcing platform—also for our website—where both actual and virtual visitors can share what they know as we continue to unravel some remaining mysteries about the identities of our sitters, the artists who painted them, other relevant details of the period, etc.

As these activities imply, *Friends and Fashion* is no exception to the rule that it "takes a village" to bring exhibitions to life. I am so grateful for the generosity and creativity that our "villagers"—staff, volunteers, exhibition and program sponsors—have brought and will bring to this project, to all of our projects.

And, most importantly, we are so grateful to the late Anne Odom—and to her late colleague Barbara Doyle—for recognizing the Middleton album and story to be worthy of research and public attention. Our work on this project honors their memories and dedication to the institutions they served so well and for so long.

HILLWOOD HAPPENINGS

All Hillwood volunteers are invited to take advantage of the educational offerings listed below. **Reminder:** Volunteer happenings are also listed via the [calendar page](#) on Hillwood's main website. Events/programs can be searched on the calendar page by either selecting a date on the calendar or "find by type" filter found on the left hand side of the screen.

Please register in advance: on the sign-up sheets on the clipboard in the Horticulture building hallway or contact Drew Asbury at 202.243.3907 or dasbury@HillwoodMuseum.org. Advance registration is not necessary for continuing education events in the visitor center theater unless otherwise noted.

Mansion Docent Training Curator Lectures

As you are aware, Hillwood is embarking on a new Mansion Docent Training Program now through April 2017. Hillwood's curators lead sessions about their areas of expertise. This is a wonderful opportunity for volunteers, as well as staff members, to take advantage of this training as continuing education and enrichment. The remaining lectures in the training program are listed below.

The lectures will take place in the visitor center theater and will also be digitally recorded and made available on Hillwood's volunteer website (<http://volunteer.hillwoodmuseum.org>). To access a video, click on "Lecture Videos." Lectures are organized by year.

- **Russian Porcelain and Glass
February 27 (Monday), 6 p.m.**
Presented by Dr. Wilfried Zeisler, Curator of Russian and 19th-century Art
- **French Porcelain and Objets de Vertu
March 27 (Monday), 6 p.m.**
Presented by Liana Paredes, Chief Curator/Co-Chair of Exhibitions & Director of Collections
- **Jewelry and Costume Collections
April 3 (Monday), 6 p.m.**
Presented by Liana Paredes, Chief Curator/Co-Chair of Exhibitions & Director of Collections, and Howard Kurtz, Associate Curator of Costume and Textiles
- **Paintings and Portraiture
April 24 (Monday), 6 p.m.**
Presented by Dr. Wilfried Zeisler, Curator of Russian and 19th-century Art

Friends and Fashion

February 27 (Monday), 10 a.m. & 1 p.m.

Volunteers are invited to join exhibition curators Angie Dodson and Dr. Wilfried Zeisler for a guided tour of Hillwood's new exhibition *Friends and Fashion: An American Diplomat in 1820s Russia*. Volunteers will check in at the visitor center then meet in the dacha for the tour.

Orchid Month - Greenhouse Tour

February 28, March 1, March 2, March 3, Noon

All volunteers are invited to attend a twenty minute tour of the orchid greenhouses to help kick off orchid month. Space is limited to 12 volunteers per tour. Tour meets in the entrance of the orchid greenhouses and is led by Drew Asbury.

A Day of Horticulture

March 13 (Monday), 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Join your fellow volunteers in the visitor center theater from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. for garden-related presentations. Come early and socialize as light refreshments and coffee will be ready by 9:30 a.m. The topics include:

- **All About Bonsai - Stories, Inspiration, and Art presented by Stephen Voss, Sandra Moore, and garden docent Ann McClellan**

Each author will discuss their individual perspective on the national collection of living works of art that inspired their respective books. These range from the elegant and insightful photography in Stephen Voss's *In Training* to Sandra Moore's charming children's story of the Yamaki Pine, a bonsai in training since 1625, in *The Peace Tree from Hiroshima*, to Ann McClellan's comprehensive overview in *Bonsai and Penjing, Ambassadors of Peace & Beauty*.

- **Water and Stone presented by Frances Vandembroucke, gardener II**
A detailed look at the essence of Hillwood's Japanese-style garden.
- **Color Theory and Composition in Floral Design presented by Ami Wilber, floral and event décor designer**
Floral creations are like three dimensional paintings that incorporate the theories of

color and design. In this presentation I will explore the science behind color theory and the artful approach to composition and how it relates to floral design.

- **Thirty Years of Memories presented by Bill Johnson, former horticulturist and volunteer manager**

Join Bill for as he looks back on his 33 years of working in Hillwood's gardens.

Plant ID Walk – Conifers

March 21 (Tuesday), 11:30 a.m.

Join Frances Vandembroucke, gardener II, for a walk in the gardens with a focus on conifers. Space is limited to 15 volunteers. Meet in the horticulture break room.

Plant ID Walk – Spring Blooms (Part 1)

April 5 (Wednesday), 11:30 a.m.

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

Woodland Path Garden Tour

April 11 (Tuesday) and April 12 (Wednesday), 11:30 a.m.

Join Senior Gardener Marshall Paquin as he leads a tour of the newly created woodland path. Space is limited to 15 volunteers per tour. Meet in the horticulture break room.

Welcome Spring Floral Workshop

April 14 (Friday), 10:30 a.m.

Join Ami Wilber, floral and event décor designer, and create a floral arrangement to welcome spring into your home. We will use 5-inch ceramic containers and flowers that reflect the new season. A \$30 fee covers the cost of materials. Group size is limited to 12 volunteers. The workshop will meet in the horticulture break room. Please sign up on the clipboard in the horticulture office area or email Ami Wilber at awilber@hillwoodmuseum.org to have your name added to the list.

Seasonal Planting Tour

April 18- 21, 11:30 a.m.

Head Gardener Jessica Bonilla will tour and discuss Hillwood's spring seasonal displays.

Please sign up on the clipboard in the horticulture office area as space is limited to 15 volunteers per tour. Meet in the horticulture break room.

**Hanging Basket Workshop
May 16 (Tuesday), 10:30 a.m.**

Join Drew Asbury, horticulturist, in the greenhouse workroom to create your very own summer-flowering hanging basket. There will be a selection of flowering and trailing plants. A \$20 fee covers the cost of materials. Please sign up on the clipboard in the horticulture office area as space is limited to 10 volunteers. Meet in the greenhouse workroom.

**Container Workshop
May 17 (Wednesday), 10:30 a.m.**

Head Gardener Jessica Bonilla will provide inspiration to help you create your very own container of summer-flowering plants. A \$20 fee covers the cost of materials. Please sign up on the clipboard in the horticulture office area as space is limited to 12 volunteers. Meet in the horticulture break room.

**Plant ID Walk – Spring Blooms (Part 2)
May 19 (Friday), 11:30 a.m.**

Join Frances Vandenbrouke, gardener II, 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 area as space is limited to 15 volunteers. Meet in the horticulture break room.

**Volunteer Appreciation Reception
May 22 (Monday), 5-7 p.m.**

Save the date! Join your fellow volunteers and Hillwood staff for the annual spring reception in your honor on Monday, May 22. An online invitation via Paperless Post will be emailed in April. More details to come this spring.

**Rose Garden Tour
Depending upon bloom – last week of May
or first week of June, 11:30 a.m.**

Meet Jessica Bonilla, head gardener, in the rose garden for a short tour and lecture. The tour will take place on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. We will send an email closer to the date to let everyone know when the roses will be at peak bloom.

**Volunteer Education: Spectacular!
June 12 (Monday), 10 a.m. & 1 p.m.**

Volunteers are invited to join exhibition curator Liana Paredes for a presentation on Hillwood's new exhibition *Spectacular! Gems and Jewelry from the Merriweather Post Collection*. Following the lecture, Liana will be available on-station in the Adirondack building to answer questions. (Visitor Center Theater)

**HILLWOOD LIBRARY & ARCHIVES
TO SCAN THE MARJORIE
MERRIWEATHER POST PAPERS OF
THE POST FAMILY COLLECTION**

Abby Stambach, Archivist / Librarian

The Hillwood Library & Archives is excited to announce a new digitization project in collaboration with the Bentley Historical Library located in Ann Arbor, Michigan. In the late 1970s, about half of Marjorie Merriweather Post's papers were donated to the Bentley along with her father's papers. This collection is now known as the Post Family Collection. The remaining Marjorie papers were retained at Hillwood and served as the foundation of Hillwood's archival collections. This division of records requires Hillwood staff to travel to Michigan in order to conduct research or rely on the Bentley staff to send copies. Once digitization is completed, Marjorie's papers will be reunited and research will be significantly easier.

The first three boxes from the Bentley arrived this past July for the pilot phase. Staff members from the Library and I.T. departments have been testing software and equipment as well as creating workflows and procedures. Digitizing archival documents is quite time consuming so the project is expected to take 2+ years to complete. Documents must be individually scanned and described with keywords and other information so they are findable in Piction, Hillwood's digital assets management system. Currently, volunteers are being trained to assist in the project with the goal that the pilot phase will be completed in the next few months.

Stay tuned for future updates and glimpses into what the documents uncover as work progresses.

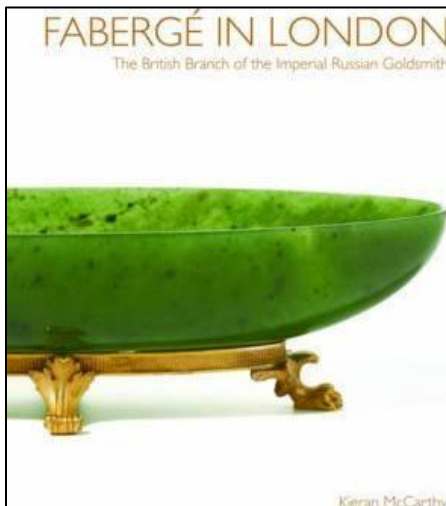
MUSEUM SHOP

Lauren Salazar, Head of Merchandising

January was a busy and exciting month as three major projects happened in the museum shop. As soon as the museum closed for the season, we jumped into physical inventory. The process of counting and reconciling the counts of thousands of items can take over a week to complete. Immediately after inventory, Nichelle Lacey led the museum shop team in creating fresh new displays featuring merchandise tied to events and the new exhibit *Friends and Fashion*.

January is also the time we travel to several gift and trade shows. Nichelle and I went to New York City to select jackets and wearables for spring. I flew to Atlanta's AmericasMart to source new gifts and Christmas merchandise. This year, for the first time, I was invited to attend the Las Vegas Market where I discovered several new vendors. In early February I went to NY Now to find gifts, jewelry, books and toys for spring, summer and beyond.

Attending the gift shows has led to the discovery of several new lines for spring. A few of the new items that I'm most excited about include:



A stunning new title: Fabergé in London by Kieran McCarthy



Extasia Cameo & Intaglio Jewelry



Victoria & Albert Museum Garden trowels

Look for these and many other new items to arrive in the Shop in February and through the next several months.

Attingham Trust Summer School

David Maxfield, Garden Support Volunteer

Like his curatorial colleagues Liana Paredes and Estella Chung before him, Dr. Wilfried Zeisler had a must see list while visiting dozens of the "treasure houses" of Britain during the recent 65th Annual Attingham Trust Summer School.

The purpose of the prestigious program is to "examine the architectural and social history" of Britain's historic houses and "its gardens and landscape settings" along with "the contents of these buildings." Dr. Zeisler was one of 48 selected scholars, primarily from the United States and Europe, whose careers focus on art history, the decorative arts, conservation, architecture and education, who attended the program.

The curator of Russian and 19th-century art at Hillwood, Dr. Zeisler recently reported: "Many works at Hillwood are directly connected to European history...[that] led me to consider Hillwood in the broader context of country houses in England and Europe. It is very interesting to note how similar they are."

Asked by this horticulture volunteer to consider the similarities between Hillwood's gardens and those he visited, Dr. Zeisler spoke candidly: "There is so much interest in gardens now, less so in interiors. Gardens always change, which interests the public." He also connects the contemporary, outdoor art exhibitions at England's Chatsworth estate with the landmark Philip Haas *Four Seasons* outdoor sculpture group now on view at Hillwood.

Dr. Zeisler, however, is quick to note differences: In England, he said, "there are lots of visits to kitchen gardens" which stock the on-site cafés and offer produce to visitors, but not at Hillwood.



Arundel Castle

And lately, several prominent English gardens have been gilded (literally) by the creativity of the landscape firm, I&J Bannerman. Classical garden follies, once exclusively created in stone, have been re-imagined in wood and fiber, then selectively gilded in what can only be viewed as wry English humor.

(Editor's Note: to view these follies: Google Arundel Castle and Wolbeding or I&J Bannerman. Other treasure houses such as the

forementioned Chatsworth and those following, also have websites.)

Archives and Library

In a report about this Attingham experience, Dr. Zeisler noted that "difficulties in documenting house histories and collections" is common on both sides of the pond. In England, many historic mansions and castles have lost their archives, or they are located in different places. "Despite their 'youth,' Hillwood and other US houses," he said, "share these same issues with family and historic archives owned by different institutions and universities."

Artworks Here & There

Most of Hillwood's British art is displayed in the mansion's first floor library, which was created in the English style. Dr. Zeisler mentioned works here by George Romney and Thomas Lawrence, for example, that can be found in the collections he viewed at Aspley House and Arundel Castle -- (Lawrence) and Burton Constable Hall (Romney).

Of course, Hillwood is known for its collection of 18th-century art. "The seminar at Harewood on porcelain was a unique opportunity to have close access to a Sèvres vase of 1757, which is nearly identical to one in Hillwood's collection," Dr. Zeisler observed.



Dr. Zeisler examined a similar vase to Hillwood's own [Vase \(Cuvette "Mahon"\)](#) (24.91) made by Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory

"One of the great privileges of this trip," he said, "was the chance to view two beautiful portraits by Franz Xavier Winterhalter" at Harewood and Birdsall. A portrait by that artist of the French Empress Eugénie "is one of Hillwood's masterpieces."



[Portrait of Empress Eugénie \(51.11\)](#) by Franz Xavier Winterhalter on view in the French drawing room

The art scholar said he “was very surprised to find a large number of Russian works in different country houses. These discoveries expanded my knowledge of the collections of Russian art outside of Russia.” Malachite objects, for example, developed during the Reign of Nicholas I are on view at Aspley House, Chatsworth and Castle Howard, relating to objects in that medium at Hillwood.

(Dr. Zeisler’s studies were supported by Hillwood and by the American Friends of Attingham from funding by a Hillwood horticulture volunteer.)

LECTURE VIDEO ARCHIVE NEWS

Erin Lourie, Adult Audiences Manager

A video archive of many of Hillwood’s 2017 lectures will be shared publicly on YouTube beginning in March!

For more than five years, our volunteers have taken advantage of our lecture video archive, hosted through Vimeo. Hillwood has worked to improve the video quality, and I am excited to share our dynamic programs and fascinating speakers with virtual visitors across the globe!

Details will be shared through our monthly e-blast. As always, recordings are available contingent on the permission of each speaker. Some programs may not be available, and others may be available exclusively for volunteers as part of your continuing education. You can continue to access videos through the [volunteer website](#), by visiting the “Lecture Archive” tab and selecting the year. Visitors can view our latest offerings by visiting www.YouTube.com/HillwoodMuseum.

WHAT’S COMING UP IN THE GARDENS

Jessica Bonilla, Head Gardener

As a gardener, I am often asked about what I do during the winter. Truth be told, in DC, we are still outside most of the time whether it be with snow removal or garden upkeep. This year, January and February have been quite mild and we have been continuing with leaf clean-up, dormant pruning, and mulching. When it is too cold or there is snow on the ground, focus shifts to preparations for the next gardening season. This means maintenance on the equipment, planning meetings and general organizing to be as prepared as possible. Once spring arrives, the whole department has to be ready to move.

In March, weather permitting; we will be welcoming back all of our outdoor garden volunteers. Please keep an eye out for an e-mail update from our staff near the end of February. The return of this dedicated team will allow for one last push of garden clean-up before moving into the installation of our spring display. We will be planting over 4,000 pansies and cool season plants starting March 27. Our goal is to have the gardens singing for the start of the docent-led tours on April 1 and the Fabergé Egg Family Festival on April 8 and 9.

April also brings our Four Seasons exhibit to a close. Its removal will provide an opportunity to upgrade both the lawn and the plantings in this area.

Other garden projects include the addition of a new garden between the visitor center and the

greenhouse and smaller pockets of plantings directed by Hillwood's gardeners. The firm of Robinson Anderson Summers, Inc., who has worked with us on our five year garden restoration plan, will be providing the design for the new garden which will create a beautiful setting for our new terrace conservatory.

Looking further into the year, May will usher in the summer seasonal display and June will see the start of the restoration of the flagstone walkway on the south side of the mansion. Tune in to the next issue for all the exciting details on these two great projects. Keep growing!!

GROUPS UPDATE

Meredith DeSantis, Group Sales, Special Events & Tourism Manager

We had a great year with 428 groups visiting us in 2016, an increase from 395 groups in 2015. We offered dozens of custom tours and served as the venue for several evening events.

Celebrations such as George Washington University's donor appreciation event in April, the American Alliance of Museum's Leadership dinner in May, and the Colonial Dames of America annual soiree in September helped expose hundreds of new people to Hillwood, while tours gave lasting memories to thousands of visitors. Glowing reviews from group leaders with phrases like "extraordinary docent" and "amazing experience" continue to arrive in my inbox with great frequency. Your passion is contagious and inspires all of our visitors to fall in love with Hillwood.

We had a lovely winter season with visits from groups focused on holiday enjoyment and are now excited for another busy spring. Independent groups such as garden clubs, social groups, senior centers, and church groups continue to be our bread and butter, but we are looking to expand our tour operator business over the next couple of years. I attended the American Bus Association conference in January in Cleveland and had the opportunity to talk to several tour operators about including a visit to our beautiful estate in their future trips to DC. We remain a great destination for groups that are

looking for a unique experience. We know that word of mouth is how most of our visitors find their way to Hillwood, and you are such phenomenal ambassadors for us. I would love to work with you to arrange group visits for your friends or family in 2017.

I am looking forward to a great year as we continue to delight our groups with everything Hillwood has to offer. Your flexibility and graciousness contribute to the amazing visitor experience we are so proud to provide our guests.

PLANT PROFILE: PAPERBUSH (*EDGEWORTHIA* *CHRYSANTHA*)

Jane Berger, Newsletter Volunteer

If you're looking for an unusual harbinger of spring, this is the plant for you. Bare branches give way to densely nodding flower heads of pale to deep yellow or reddish orange. The blooms are very fragrant and open in succession for six to eight weeks in late winter or very early spring, when most plants in the rest of the garden are still in a deep winter sleep.

After the flower fades, the foliage emerges. Beautiful bluish-green oblong leaves with spotted stems are so flexible they can be tied in a knot without any noticeable damage.

Edgeworthia is a suckering shrub that spreads slowly by rhizomes, in general attaining a height and width of four to seven feet. It prefers moist, well-drained soil in light to moderate shade and is hardy in USDA zones 7 to 9.

Native to China and Japan, paperbush is a member of the daphne family and is prized for its cinnamon-colored stems which are used to make high-quality paper and even Japanese banknotes. Because of this, it's sometimes known as *Edgeworthia papyrifera*.



Paperbush on the west side of the lunar lawn beds

The shrub is named after Michael Pakenham Edgeworth (1812-1881), an amateur plant collector who brought it back from the Himalayas in the 1840s when he worked for the East India Company. Edgeworth was born in Ireland and educated by his half-sister Maria Edgeworth, known for her novel *Castle Rackrent* published in 1800. She also wrote *Dialogues on Botany for the Use of Young Persons*, published in 1819. Michael Edgeworth also collected plants in Yemen, India and Sri Lanka, and contributed to Joseph Hooker's book, *Flora of British India*.

Cultivars include 'Grandiflora' with large flowers and leaves; 'Gold Rush', also with large flowers; 'Jitsu Red', 'Red Dragon', and 'Rubra', all with reddish flowers; and 'Snow Cream', a vigorous plant with large flowers that was introduced by Tony Avent of Plant Delights Nursery. 'Winter Gold' is said to be an easy to grow selection introduced by Ted Stephens of North Augusta, South Carolina. The plant is fairly new to the US nursery trade, so you may have to look around for it.

At Hillwood, paperbush can be found on the west side of the lunar lawn beds. One is tucked up under a large Magnolia, the other is floating in the middle of the bed. Make sure to walk by and enjoy its scent while the flowers are out.

A FAREWELL TO BILL JOHNSON

*Drew Asbury,
Horticulturist and Volunteer Manager*

Nearly one hundred and fifty volunteers and staff gathered on February 6, 2017 to bid a fond farewell to horticulturist and volunteer manager Bill Johnson. The attendance reflected Bill's 33 years of dedication to Hillwood. The day was filled with many hugs and laughter along with a few surprises for Bill.

Volunteer contributions nearing \$4,000 were used to purchase numerous gift cards. Emma Refuerzo presented Bill with a memory book filled with memories and stories contributed by fellow volunteers and staff.



Brian Barr and Ellen Charles presenting Bill with a bronze plaque to be installed along the woodland path



Starting on the left: Kate Markert, Bill Johnson, Ellen Charles, and Brian Barr

Bill was presented with a bronze plaque inscribed 'This section of the woodland trail is dedicated to our colleague Bill Johnson on the occasion of his retirement, in recognition of his many contributions to Hillwood and the community of horticulture volunteers across the region.' The plaque will be displayed along the woodland trail just below the putting green.

Bill's smile and enthusiasm for gardening will surely be missed by all. Bill and his wife Vikki will relocate to Berea, Kentucky to start a new adventure.

A THANK YOU TO VOLUNTEERS

Drew Asbury, Horticulturist & Volunteer Manager

Decorating for the holidays is a Hillwood tradition. We would like to officially thank the many volunteers who assisted with decorating this past season. From prepping ornaments, to stringing lights, to decorating the trees, to tear down, it takes a small army to get the holiday display looking fabulous.

Thank you Carolyne Starek, Emma Refuerzo, Kaki Power, Luna Levison, Phil Pietras, Jeri Buchholz, Dana Boyd, Joan Asboth, Anne Kelly, Buzz Seltzer (and wife Diane), BL Johnston, Sherell Goggin, Betsy Holleman, John Fegan, Josie Rattien, Paula McMartin, and Susan Ruth.



(L) Volunteers installing the holiday display in the visitor center

(R) Adding the finishing touches in the dining room

HILLWOOD CELEBRATES FRIENDS AND FASHION

*Adrienne Starr,
Donor Relations & Special Events Manager*

Hillwood celebrated the opening of *Friends and Fashion: An American Diplomat in 1820's Russia*, on the evening of February 14. A record 350 guests attended the event, which featured the opening of our newly completed visitor center conservatory. Visitors enjoyed food from Russia, France, and the Low Country, and a St. Petersburg inspired ice sculpture with French and Russian Vodka tastings. Caricature artists were on hand to create special keepsakes in the vein of *Friends and Fashion*. The silent auction featured nearly 40 items, with fabulous art, jewelry, and unique experiences for bidding.

The evening was the most successful February event to date, raising more than \$70,000 for Hillwood. Many thanks to our fabulous volunteers who helped make the evening a wonderful experience for our guests.

See below for a selection of images from the evening:



Kate Markert with guests



Rod Uveges, Susan Bollendorf, Marilyn Uveges, Robert Brokesmit

NEW STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

We are delighted to welcome 10 new volunteers and five new staff member! Please join us in welcoming our newest members to Hillwood:

Joining the Hillwood staff:

- Kendall Smith, General Maintenance Engineer
- Michael Redd, Event Technician/Custodian
- Catherine Vassaux, Full-time Visitor Services Associate
- Marianna Wald, Part-time Visitor Services Associate
- Jerelle Jenkins, Part-time Visitor Services Associate

Joining the Interpretation volunteer corps:

- Jane Boynton
- Jane DeCell
- Cynthia "Cindy" Elsea
- Benson Goldstein
- Marcia Lawrence
- Christine Martin
- Julie Raffensperger
- Morella Sucre

Joining the Horticulture volunteer corps:

- John Silvia
- Allison Schmale



Guests enjoy caricatures



Friends and Fashion Curator Angie Dodson

IN MEMORIAM: JANE McGAVISK

Lisa Leyh, Head of Volunteer Management

It is with a heavy heart that I write to inform you of Jane McGavisk's passing on January 18. Jane graciously served Hillwood for 10 years from January 2003-December 2013. As a Wednesday Visitor Services Volunteer, Jane eagerly helped visitors by providing orientations, answering questions, and creating a welcoming atmosphere wherever she went on campus. Jane will be greatly missed by all who had to good fortune to know her.



Jane McGavisk

Below you'll find the obituary that will run in *The Washington Post* this Sunday, February 26:

JANE McGAVISK (8/1/33 - 1/18/17)

Teacher, Traveler & Tour Guide

In 1972 Jane moved to Washington, DC and taught 6th grade; first at Bannockburn and later at Potomac Elementary, both Montgomery County public schools, until she retired in 1990. Next Jane became a travel agent, a tour guide at the Library of Congress, and a volunteer at Hillwood.

In 2013, at the age of 80, she moved to East Aurora, NY, where she was a tour guide at the Roycroft Inn, and the Millard Fillmore House. Jane was a volunteer with Meals on Wheels and a member of the women's club.

Throughout her life she traveled the world, often alone and also with friends; her last trip was to Japan in 2015.

A memorial Mass of Christian Burial was held in East Aurora, NY, in January.

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