

# THE POST SERIAL

## ***A Very Merriweather Christmas***

Ami Wilber, Floral and Event Décor Designer

Hot cocoa and knitted scarves are just around the corner. As we say *au revoir* to summer, the horticulture volunteers and staff are busy preparing for the holidays. This year, we are all hands on deck as volunteers and staff members team up to knit a tree skirt and socks for the dining room tree and craft frames for Post family pictures for the French drawing room tree. As in past years, the tree decorating teams consist of horticulture staff and volunteers. A deepfelt thank you goes out to all the horticulture volunteers and staff for all they do to create the magical merriment of the holidays.

*A Very Merriweather Christmas* takes inspiration from director of collections, Estella Chung's newly released book *Marjorie Merriweather Post: The Life Behind the Luxury* and the exhibition *Mid-Century Master: The Photography of Alfred Eisenstaedt*. Here is a sneak peak of the Christmas trees that will be on view beginning November 19.

### **Visitor Center**

A dramatic tree in shades of black, white, and red takes decorative cues from the *LIFE* magazine covers in *Mid-Century Master: The Photography of Alfred Eisenstaedt*, the exhibition on view in the Adirondack building.



*The French parterre in snow.  
Photograph by Erik Kvalsvik.  
Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens.*

### **Entry Hall**

Adorned with live flowers, this tree evokes the beauty of Hillwood's landscaped gardens. Over decades of collecting, Marjorie Post amassed holdings of remarkable beauty, superior craftsmanship, and with historical associations. Her joy in the splendor of art and gorgeous grounds coupled with her desire to share them with others make Hillwood Marjorie's most enduring and fitting legacy.

### **French Drawing Room**

This opulent tree is decked with Post family photographs. Marjorie enjoyed surrounding herself with framed pictures of those dearest to her, including her daughters, Adelaide, Eleanor, and Dina.



*Marjorie Post and daughters unveiling C.W. Post's portrait at the Long Island University campus dedicated in his name, 1954. Post Family Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.*

## Pavilion

Marjorie Post's philanthropic support of the arts and education inspired this tree's ornaments. She lent her business acumen and substantial financial support to a variety of cultural, artistic, and educational institutions, especially programs for young people. Marjorie gave generously in time and money to the Boy Scouts of America, Mount Vernon Seminary and Junior College, C.W. Post College—Long Island University, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. She also was a key patron of the Washington School of Ballet and the National Symphony Orchestra, which is whimsically referenced in the tulle tree skirt and ornaments of musical instruments. It was her pleasure to give.



*Marjorie Post engaged in activities on behalf of scouting all the way from Texas to Washington, DC, and New York. Photograph by George Kalec, 1960. Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens Archives.*



*Marjorie Post hosting wounded Vietnam War veterans at Hillwood, 1967. Photograph by Charles Del Vecchio. Post Family Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.*

## Dining Room

This tree is inspired by the numerous examples of Marjorie Post's service to others. Throughout her life, when it came to times of war, large-scale hunger, and opportunities to be an engaged citizen, she chose to be involved, sharing her time, money, and thoughtfulness. During World War I, Marjorie financed one of the largest hospitals in France, and during the Great Depression, she funded a canteen to provide regular meals and sleeping accommodations for women and children. In recognition of her having knitted socks for soldiers, Hillwood volunteers and staff made the knitted decorations for this tree. The ribbon ornaments harken to the awards Post received from world governments acknowledging her "great selflessness."

## Hillwood Happenings for Volunteers

All Hillwood volunteers are invited to take advantage of the educational offerings listed below. While advanced 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 computer across from Drew Asbury's office or by contacting Drew Asbury at 202.243.3907 or [DAsbury@HillwoodMuseum.org](mailto:DAsbury@HillwoodMuseum.org). The horticulture break room is located on the lower level of the greenhouses.

### **Worm Composting Bin Workshop | Saturday, November 16, 11:30 a.m.**

Hillwood gardeners have composted over 350 pounds of kitchen scraps and paper over the last two years using a simple worm composting system and want to share their expertise with you. Join Matt Boyle, gardener, in a demonstration of how to create a worm composting system of your own. You

will learn all aspects of worm care, vermicompost harvest, and use. Matt will build a small system with the class, tour Hillwood's worm habitat, and demonstrate feeding Hillwood's worms. This is a great class for anyone looking to take the first steps in worm composting or just learn more about a trending way for urbanites and suburbanites to divert landfill-bound waste while creating a powerful soil amendment!

**Holiday Wreath Workshop | Wednesday, December 4-Saturday, December 7, 10:30 a.m.**

Be inspired and create your own unique holiday wreath of wintry greens under the guidance of gardener Matt Boyle. *Space is limited to ten volunteers per workshop.* Cost for workshop materials is \$35.

**Marjorie Merriweather Post: The Life Behind the Luxury Volunteer Education Session | Monday, December 9, 10:30 a.m., 2 p.m., and 6:30 p.m.**

Join us for a discussion of the new biography of Hillwood's founder, *Marjorie Merriweather Post: The Life Behind the Luxury*, with Estella Chung, author and director of collections. The book is now available for purchase in the museum shop. Volunteers planning to attend are encouraged to read the book prior to the training and submit questions via this [Survey Monkey survey](#) for Estella to answer during the discussion. Questions are to be submitted by Friday, November 29. Volunteers can choose any session to attend, and one will be recorded and shared on the volunteer website. No RSVP is required. All sessions will take place in the visitor center theater.

**Hillwood Holiday Décor Tour | Tuesday, December 10-Friday, December 13, 10:30 a.m.**

Get an intimate look at Hillwood's holiday décor and a tour of the holiday displays with Ami Wilber, floral and event décor designer, and Jessica Bonilla, head gardener.

**Holiday Floral Workshop | Friday, December 13, 10:30 a.m.**

The floral workshop will focus on crafting a loose and whimsical holiday arrangement using wintry greens, beautiful flowers, and natural elements to create some yuletide cheer. *Space is limited to twelve.* Cost for workshop materials is \$35.

## 2020 Annual Volunteer Business Meeting



Mark your calendars! The 2020 annual volunteer business meeting will take place on Wednesday, January 29, 2020 in the visitor center theater at 10 a.m., 1 p.m., and 6 p.m. Volunteers are strongly encouraged to attend one of the sessions. For those unable to attend in person, one of the meetings will be recorded and posted to the volunteer website. Advanced registration is not required, and light refreshments will be provided. This is a great chance to learn about upcoming Hillwood happenings as we prepare for 2020 and beyond.

## Museum Shop Updates

Lauren Salazar, Head of Merchandising

The museum shop has been preparing for the holiday season. We are stocked with exciting new items for you to keep or to give.

At the top of our list is the new biography *Marjorie Merriweather Post: The Life Behind the Luxury*. This fascinating read is illustrated with a wealth of historical photographs, archival documents, exquisite works of art, and other souvenirs of an extraordinary life.



Other great finds include:

- *Put a Ring On It Gem* mugs. Enjoy your coffee with a little bling.
- Ultrasuede jackets in autumnal colors. Dress them up or down.



*Put a Ring On It Gem* mugs

### Upcoming Events

- **Museum Store Sunday**

**December 1, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. | Hillwood Museum Shop**

The Hillwood museum shop is participating in Museum Store Sunday, along with more than 700 other museum stores, representing all fifty states, ten countries, and three continents. Visit the Hillwood museum shop on Sunday, December 1 and receive a 25% discount on all merchandise (cannot be combined with other discounts). Shop knowing you are supporting the mission and programs here at Hillwood.

- **Holiday Discount**

**December 2-31, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. | Hillwood Museum Shop**

Our annual holiday discount is open to staff and volunteers during regular business hours for the month of December. Shop and receive an additional 10% off regularly priced items. Come early and shop often for the best selection.

## **New Biography *Marjorie Merriweather Post: The Life Behind the Luxury* Now Available**

Lynn Rossotti, Head of Marketing and Visitor Experience

As we celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of the nineteenth amendment and the right to vote for American women, Hillwood honors one of the most interesting and influential women of the twentieth century with the first illustrated biography of its founder, *Marjorie Merriweather Post: The Life Behind the Luxury*. Written by director of collections, Estella M. Chung, and published in partnership with D Giles, Ltd., *The Life Behind the Luxury* offers a fresh and focused look at Post, going beyond the opulence to explore more deeply how her background and upbringing informed a life of generosity and service to others.

To write *The Life Behind the Luxury*, Chung mined Hillwood's archives and those at the University of Michigan's Bentley Historical Library, where Post's papers are kept, to reveal her as an

astute businessperson, lifelong philanthropist, and deeply caring humanitarian. As Kate Markert, executive director, said in her foreword to the publication: "Post was modest regarding her many good deeds, so such instances were ripe for further research....Chung discovered Post's deep well of remarkable humanitarianism in times of need and war, and an exceptional generosity throughout her long life."

While Post's social and personal life was well documented at the time, through society press coverage and in major outlets such as *Vogue* and *LIFE* magazine, *The Life Behind the Luxury* examines specific areas that reveal what made Post one of the most influential women of the twentieth century. Post is well known as heir to her father's Postum cereal fortune, renowned host, art collector, and connoisseur, but this new publication, rather than describe a chronological overview of her life, offers a thematic examination into the facets of her life that were her passions and to which she made significant contributions. "I was drawn to Hillwood over a decade ago by the opportunity to explore the life of a woman museum founder and cultural philanthropist," Chung explained. "And while surrounded by the impeccable art collection, pristine mansion, and beautiful gardens that are her legacy here, I came to realize that Post is so much more than the exquisite lifestyle she came to be known for."



The newest biography of Hillwood founder, Marjorie Merriweather Post: *The Life Behind the Luxury* is now available in Hillwood's museum shop.

After years of studying Post's letters and notes to staff in Hillwood's archives, listening to and recording dozens of interviews with people who knew her, and researching her archives at the Bentley Historical Library, Chung evaluated distinct themes that characterize Post's passion for service, philanthropy, business, and adventure. As a result, *The Life Behind the Luxury* explores these themes through five chapters: Business, Service, Travel Luxe, Giving, and Legacy. Illustrated with a wealth of historical photos, archival images, and souvenirs of Post's extraordinary life, *Marjorie Merriweather Post: The Life Behind the Luxury* highlights Post's good works during times of war and economic crisis, her efforts on behalf of women's rights, and her acumen for business, all while living an impeccable life that would serve as a model and inspiration for generations to come.

Volunteers are invited to attend an education session on the new biography, which will be held Monday, December 9 at 10:30 a.m., 2 p.m., and 6:30 p.m. in the visitor center theater. Volunteers can attend any session with no RSVP required. For those unable to attend, a session will be recorded and posted to the volunteer website. Volunteers planning to attend are encouraged to read the book in advance and submit their questions for Estella Chung to discuss. Questions must be submitted via this [Survey Monkey survey](#) no later than November 29.

## Circles Event Recap:

### A Glimpse into Marjorie Post's Personal Archives

Jan Jensen, Head of Development, and Martha Ball, Development Assistant

[Circles members](#) enjoyed exclusive access to Marjorie Post's photographs, letters, and scrapbooks on Wednesday, September 25. Following a reception in the visitor center, Circles members were introduced to the archives at Hillwood by Estella Chung, director of collections, Jason Speck, head of special collections and archives, and Kayla Baker, digital initiatives librarian. Members had the opportunity to individually explore materials, which included photos and correspondence from May 1963, when Marjorie brought students from Battle Creek, Michigan to tour Hillwood, and a scrapbook documenting a voyage on the *Sea Cloud* with the Duke and Duchess of Windsor in 1948. Seeing Marjorie Post through her writing and the photographs she kept connected Circles members directly with the stories that are further detailed in the new biography *Marjorie Merriweather Post: The Life Behind the Luxury* by Estella Chung, now available in the museum shop.



*Attendees view some of Marjorie Post's personal archives.*

## Membership Department Updates

Lizzie Axelson, Marketing, Communications, and Membership Manager

To celebrate the holiday season, enjoy 25% off our regular membership prices throughout the month of December. This exclusive discount is being offered to volunteers for the first time. Support Hillwood and become a member, upgrade, or give one as a gift—Hillwood membership makes the perfect present. Keep an eye out on December 1 as we send out the special membership form. Questions? Contact Lizzie Axelson, marketing, communications, and membership manager, at [EAxelson@HillwoodMuseum.org](mailto:EAxelson@HillwoodMuseum.org) or Catherine Vassaux, membership coordinator, at [CVassaux@HillwoodMuseum.org](mailto:CVassaux@HillwoodMuseum.org).

### Celebrate the Holidays

Hillwood members are cordially invited to celebrate *A Very Merriweather Christmas!* Kick off the holiday season at the annual Members Holiday Open House on Tuesday, December 3, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Spend the day partaking in delicious treats while mingling with fellow members, attending specialty tours, and enjoying additional discounts in the museum shop. New this year, Merriweather Café will be open for a festive dinner, just for members. Advanced reservations are required. Not a member? [Join today!](#) We hope to see you there, full of merry and cheer.

### Give the Gift of Membership

What do you get for the person who has everything? A Hillwood membership, of course! Perfect for the holidays, a birthday, a thank you or hostess gift, and more, gift memberships can be given at any level of membership, from individual to President's Circle.

## Updated Orientation Film to Premiere Soon

Lynn Rossotti, Director of Marketing and Visitor Experience

Accompanying the release of the new biography *Marjorie Merriweather Post: The Life Behind the Luxury*, an updated orientation film introduces Hillwood visitors to its founder with a more complete story than ever before. Produced originally in 2000, when Hillwood re-opened to visitors after a three-year renovation, the orientation film provides background about Post's intriguing life and the legacy she left for future generations at Hillwood. At the heart of the 2000 film are the collecting story—how Post's passion for collecting exquisite objects and surrounding herself with beauty is manifested at Hillwood today—and the interviews with daughter Dina Merrill and granddaughter and president emerita Ellen Charles, which provide strong personal links to Post.

While the updated film retains these most engaging pieces, with the release of the new biography, we felt it was important to extend the story beyond Post's collecting to her role as a philanthropist, businessperson, and cultural leader. The update also provides the opportunity to highlight parts of the Hillwood experience that were underrepresented in the 2000 film. For instance, Post applied her connoisseurship not just to the decorative arts, but also to the jewelry and apparel she collected, which were important components of her self-presentation. The orientation film now beautifully features more of these aspects of the collection. The updated film also provides a greater sense that Hillwood is a distinctive oasis and immersive experience, offering lush and colorful views of the gardens in different seasons.

Finally, though not originally a goal of the update, the new film is under eleven minutes, which means we can show it every quarter hour, allowing guests to integrate the film more seamlessly into their Hillwood visit. We will start showing the updated film before the end of the year.

## Hillwood's Events and Programs Page

Be sure to visit Hillwood's [Events and Programs](#) page to see the exciting lineup of festivals, programs, and lectures occurring at Hillwood in the coming months. Events for 2020 are now online.

## Fall Garden Tour Season Ended November 10

The fall garden tour season concludes on Sunday, November 10. A heartfelt thank you to our garden docents, both veteran and new, for their support this year as they led over 5,570 visitors on 580 tours. Thank you for another fabulous season!

## Save the Date: *Romancing the Stone* on February 13, 2020

Allison Kingery, Special Events Manager

Mark your calendars now for Hillwood's 2020 Valentine's celebration, [Romancing the Stone](#), on Thursday, February 13, 2020. Typically a sold-out affair, Hillwood's Valentine's Day benefit is an unforgettable evening with cocktails, *hors d'oeuvres*, art, and a silent auction. The 2020 event will celebrate the opening of the special exhibition [Natural Beauties: Exquisite Works of Minerals and Gems](#), with an exclusive preview before it opens to the public.

The event committee led by co-chairs Tony Cammarota, Michele Hartlove, and Kate Evans Lluberes is hard at work planning a fabulous celebration. We have already secured many one-of-a-kind auction items, including a stay at designer Timothy Corrigan's apartment in Paris, dinner with Hutton Wilkinson at Tony Duquette's legendary Dawnridge Estate in Beverly Hills, and a cruise for two on the *Sea Cloud*.

Beyond being a fantastic party and festive celebration, *Romancing the Stone* is vital in supporting Hillwood's distinctive programming and special projects. Proceeds from the event will support Hillwood's work to engage and educate visitors through the beauty and history of Marjorie Merriweather Post's collections, gardens, and estate.

We hope to see many of you at *Romancing the Stone* as sponsors, guests, and volunteers. Please consider supporting this special evening. Individual tickets are \$125 for Hillwood members and \$150 for the public, with sponsorships available from Agate (\$250) to Jade (\$5,000).

You can make your commitment [online](#) or by phone at 202.243.3974. Please feel free to contact Allison Kingery, special events manager, at [AKingery@HillwoodMuseum.org](mailto:AKingery@HillwoodMuseum.org) for more information or with any questions.



### Volunteer Website Resources

Be sure to visit the [volunteer website](#) to see the multitude of resources available for Hillwood volunteers. From docent training materials and new volunteer onboarding documents to video recordings of recent volunteer education lectures and public programs and *Post Serial* archives, the volunteer website provides a wealth of Hillwood information.



## New Provenance Discovery of Eighteenth-Century French Portraiture

Rebecca Tilles, Associate Curator of Eighteenth Century French and Western European  
Fine and Decorative Arts



Fig. 1: Dubois, Portrait of Henriette, Duchess of Orléans, as Hebe, 1790, oil on canvas. Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973 (51.5).

The oval portrait of [Louise Henriette de Bourbon-Conti, Duchess of Orléans](#) (51.5), currently hanging in the Adam bedroom at Hillwood, has been somewhat of a mystery (Fig. 1). While it is not currently known from whom Marjorie Post acquired the painting, photographic documentation of the American Embassy in Brussels indicates that she likely purchased it while living in the Soviet Union between 1937 and 1938, before arriving in Belgium (Fig. 2).

Louise Henriette de Bourbon-Conti (1726-59), Duchess of Orléans, married Louis Philippe, Duc de Chartres, in 1743. The Duchess was a French princess and great-granddaughter of Louis XIV and Madame de Montespan. Her husband later became the Duke of Orléans, the First Prince of the Blood, and the most important personage after the French royal family. In this portrait, the Duchess is portrayed as

Hebe, goddess of youth and the daughter of Zeus and Hera according to Greek mythology. Hebe was a remarkably popular subject in art between 1750 and 1880. Hillwood's portrait has always accurately been believed to be a copy of the original version painted by Jean-Marc Nattier in 1745, today conserved in the collection of the National Museum in Stockholm (Fig. 3).



Fig. 2: Royal bedroom illustrating the Dubois portrait above the bed, American Embassy, Brussels, c. 1938-39. Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens Archives.



Fig. 3: Jean-Marc Nattier, The Duchesse de Chartres as Hebe, 1744, oil on canvas, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm (inv. no. NM 1186).

However, unlike the original, Hillwood's portrait bears unusual red and white numbering on the front, including the inscription "2173" in red on the upper left-hand corner, the inscription "54" in large white letters on the upper right side, and the inscription "603" in very small white letters on the lower right (Fig. 4a-c). On the reverse, the painting is inscribed "Duchesse d'Orleans, mother of the current Duke, by Dubois, a student of David, 1790" (Fig. 5). Until recently, the meaning of these curious numbers and for whom this portrait was commissioned remained unknown.



Fig. 4a-c: Details of the red and white inventory marks on the front of Hillwood's portrait. Listed in the catalogue of the King's collection as 2173 (8) and and bears the little white number on the front "603."



Fig. 5: Inscription on the reverse of the painting "Duchesse d'Orléans, mère du Duc actuel par Dubois élève de David 1790."

Thanks to the recent scholarship conducted by Dorota Juszcak, curator of paintings at the Royal Lazienki Museum in Warsaw, we now know that between 1789 and 1791, King Stanislaw August Poniatowski of Poland ordered a series of French personalities from the studio of the French neoclassical painter Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825) (Fig. 6). According to Juszcak, fifty-eight portraits of French subjects were made by David's best pupils. Eleven paintings of women were oval in shape, while the paintings of men were rectangular in format.

By September 1790, six paintings had been rejected by David, including a portrait of the Duchess of Orléans. As a result, a second version of the same subject was completed that same year by David's student, Dubois, and likely retouched by David. Two portraits of the Duchess of Orléans are mentioned in the first batch of paintings sent from Paris to Warsaw in 1791 and both versions are listed in the catalogue of the King's collection.<sup>1</sup> The earlier, rejected version is now in the Royal Castle in Warsaw, Poland (Fig. 7) and the second "accepted" copy belongs to Hillwood.



Left: Fig. 6: Marcello Bacciarelli (1731-1818), Portrait of Stanislaw August Poniatowski in Coronation Robes, 1764, oil on canvas. Royal Castle, Warsaw, Poland (inv. No ZKW/2729).



Right: Fig. 7: Portrait of Louise Henriette, Duchess of Orléans, painted by the Studio of Jacques-Louis David, after Nattier, Royal Castle, Warsaw, Poland (inv. no. ZKW/3442), phot. Andrzej Ring, Lech Sandzewicz. The portrait is listed in the catalogue of the King's collection as 2173 (7) and bears the small white number on the front "520."

After the King's death in 1798, the collection was inherited by his nephew Prince Józef Poniatowski (1763-1813). The majority of the collection, including the portraits from the French series, was subsequently sold in 1821 by the King's niece, Countess Maria Teresa Tyszkiewicz, to the art-dealer Antoni Fusi and taken to Russia. As a result, the red inventory mark "2173" has now been identified as the collection inventory mark of King Stanislaw August Poniatowski and the white number "603" represents the 1809 inventory mark from the depot of the Royal Library gathered by the King's nephew prior to being sold. Though the exact meaning of the inscription "54" remains unclear, it is not present on the Warsaw portrait, so it likely relates to a nineteenth-century Russian collection.

It is evident from correspondence between Marjorie Post and curator Marvin Ross in 1966 that Post was always intrigued by the portrait of the *Duchess of Orléans* and hoped to someday uncover additional information about its history.<sup>2</sup> While it seems probable that Marjorie acquired a royal commissioned portrait without knowing, she was a passionate collector of French eighteenth-century paintings and owned the Nattier portrait of the [Duchess of Parma](#) (51.4) and was likely aware of the original Nattier painting in Stockholm. Not only is it extremely gratifying to uncover additional provenance among objects in Hillwood's collection, but this new provenance discovery further exemplifies Post's interest in royal courts outside of France and Russia.

1. See D. Juszcak, H. Małachowicz, *The Royal Castle in Warsaw: a Complete Catalogue of Paintings c. 1520-c. 1900* (Warsaw: The Royal Castle in Warsaw, 2013), pp. 186-188.

2. Object file for 51.5, Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens. Correspondence between Marvin Ross and Marjorie Post indicates that the portrait was in Post's New York apartment at the Sheraton East in 1960 and may not have arrived at Hillwood until the late 1960s.

## Facilities Drives Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship

Brian Greenfield, Head of Maintenance and Facilities

The facilities team at Hillwood has been putting a lot of effort into saving energy. Since December 2017, we have cycled out more than 450 incandescent and sodium-halide light bulbs in favor of the more energy efficient Light Emitting Diode (LED) type. The change to this long life and energy conscious alternative not only saves a great deal on Hillwood's electrical bill but also reduces carbon emissions and the labor hours needed to replace them. A typical hardware store light bulb will last approximately twelve months and uses over \$30 in electricity. A comparable LED lightbulb will last five years or longer and uses only \$3 a year in electricity. That is a ninety percent energy reduction! By compounding our savings and using LED bulbs that generate very little heat, cooling costs have been significantly reduced as well.



Hillwood's facilities department receives the first sustainability project award from DCSEU

The facilities team has also been busy working on improving the HVAC programming and operation for several buildings on campus. We have been optimizing setbacks where an HVAC system will cycle off at night, over a weekend, and holidays when the museum is closed. The recent testing and analysis has shown major savings with this initiative. In October 2018, we installed several updated heating and cooling control valves for the HVAC system in the mansion. The results were immediate and substantial. In fact, shortly after the initial project, we installed an additional twelve valves in the mansion and two in the visitor center.

We have also been focusing on our natural gas use. Facilities recently replaced a twenty-two-year-old water heating system used for the greenhouse with a cutting edge instantaneous water heater. The new system uses just a fraction of the energy and takes up less than twenty-five percent of the space. The office areas of the greenhouse received an upgrade as well. We replaced thirteen sets of single pane windows with double pane Energy Star certified units.

The facilities special services team has been busy protecting the environment as well. We have been collecting batteries for our recycling program for nearly a year, and the results are fantastic. To date, 112 pounds of batteries have been sent out for recycling instead of being discarded into local landfills, a commendable accomplishment.

Incorporating the initiatives noted in this article and many other individual projects, District of Columbia Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU) calculated that annually 400,000 pounds of carbon emissions will be avoided, and our expected natural gas and electrical savings will be over \$32,000 per year. Hillwood and the facilities team were recently recognized for this achievement with the first sustainability project award through DCSEU's new, innovative Pay for Performance (P4P) program. On September 10, DCSEU awarded Hillwood \$30,000 for our sustainability efforts.

Congratulations to our wonderful facilities team on a job well done!

## **What's Coming Up in the Gardens**

Jessica Bonilla, Head Gardener

Early fall was a trying time for the plants in terms of the weather. The "flash" drought showed us that irrigation only does part of the job and a little help from Mother Nature is vital. The whole year of up and down weather also exasperated health problems of our two sentinel blue spruce trees at the entrance to the motor court. Spruces throughout the region are suffering from spruce needle cast often attributed to *Rhizosphaera* fungi. Root issues and disease led to our pair being removed in October.



*The lost blue spruce at the entrance to the motor court.*

The horticulture division began a relationship with soil consultants from F2 Environmental Design. Eric T. Fleisher and Andrea Filippone will be giving advice on the rose garden beds and our compost and compost tea programs. Eric and Andrea have a long resume of helping prestigious institutions and individuals. Locally, they have been working with Dumbarton Oaks on their hornbeam ellipse planting.



*Fall seasonal display at the putting green.*

Mum was certainly the word at the end of September. Volunteers and staff planted nearly 2,300 mums across campus. More than 5,000 other cool season plants rounded out the display. Summer weather would not let go, and much of the planting took place with temperatures at 90 degrees or above. Forget the pumpkin spice lattes. We were all looking for cold water! Thanks to all the volunteers who came out to help.

The mums are always just a brief moment of beauty. Gone in a flash, we are starting to think spring with the installation of the bulbs. We have roughly 26,000 tulip, daffodil, hyacinth, and other miscellaneous bulbs to plant throughout the grounds. The conservatory up to the café will be bright yellows and oranges while the Lunar Lawn beds will be soft pinks and purples edged in blue.

After the bulbs, there's still quite a lot to do before the end of the year. Our team will be in the holiday spirit, making swags and wreaths and decorating the grounds. We will continue with garden clean up and readying the beds for winter. We have the last week of outdoor garden volunteering wrapping up on Saturday, December 14, always a bittersweet note to end on.

Thank you for your support of the gardens and keep growing!

## **Garden Docent Fall Gathering Recap**

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

On October 7, twenty-one garden docents attended a fall gathering hosted by Hillwood staff. This event served as an opportunity for garden docents to visit the garden rooms with horticulture staff to ask questions of the experts and learn what is happening in the gardens. It was also a chance for the garden docent cohort to get together following their summer break from tours.

The docents visited the rose garden where Jessica Bonilla, head gardener, updated them about the changes occurring there. The group learned that, as Hillwood is dedicated to environmentally responsible gardening practices, the roses are currently not being treated with insecticides or fungicides. Jessica shared some of the ongoing efforts to counter plant stresses, including soil analysis and underplanting with perennials in the rose beds. At the conclusion of the rose garden updates, docents then explored more rooms featured on the garden tours.

The afternoon of learning concluded with all assembling under the tent. Kate Markert, executive director, remarked how excited Hillwood is to welcome sixteen new garden docents into the folds of the volunteer program (they graduated in June), and how the combination of their energy with the veteran docents' experience makes for a fabulous visitor experience. The afternoon was a wonderful way to kick off the start of fall. Thanks to our garden docents for sharing Hillwood's outdoor splendor with visitors.



*Garden docents hear about updates in the rose garden from Jessica Bonilla.*

## **Plant Profile: Winter's Broadleaf Evergreens**

Jane Berger, Newsletter Volunteer

When all the blooms and autumn's colorful leaves have faded, we look to our needled and broadleaf evergreens. These types of evergreens give us a great variety of beautiful leaves and sometimes even fruits and faded blooms. Among those are some of our prized evergreen viburnums.

### **Burkwood Viburnum (*Viburnum x burkwoodii*)**

This classic old viburnum has been around for a long time. It never seems to go out of fashion, which is likely why we have quite a few of them here at Hillwood. The shiny, dark green leaves hang on late into the fall, and the foliage may turn red or burgundy. Red berries, which turn to black, are sparsely produced, and you may not even notice them. But in early spring, you will definitely notice the pink, heavily scented, globe-shaped flower clusters. They only last for about ten days, so make sure you get out to catch the fragrance. It grows eight to ten feet high, with a slightly narrower spread. They grow best in United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) zones 4 to 8. You will find them along the path from the motor court to the rose garden, and there is one at the south patio of the putting green.



*The bloom of a Burkwood Viburnum at Hillwood in the spring.*

Cultivars include 'Conoy,' which is densely branched, with small, dark green glossy leaves that take on a maroon hue in winter. Bright red, clustered fruits are abundant and persist into fall. In spring, pink flower buds open creamy white, but they have no scent. Five feet high and seven feet wide, they do their best growing in USDA zones 6 to 8. Look for one at the left front corner of the dacha. There are several more in the "new" planting that runs on the slope between the visitor center conservatory and the greenhouses.

### ***Viburnum awabuki***

You cannot miss this almost tree-like viburnum, with a pyramidal shape ten to twenty feet high and thick, shiny, dark green leaves, bottom to top, that hold their color throughout the seasons. White, globe-shaped flowers appear in spring, producing red berries in fall that eventually turn to black. It tolerates sun, shade, and all types of soil except those that are very wet. 'Chindo' is the cultivar here at Hillwood, and there are three large ones between the upper gate and the steward's house. It is one of our most beautiful broadleaf plants, so make sure you stroll by to see them. They thrive in USDA zones 7 to 9.

### ***Viburnum davidii***

The David viburnum is one of the most handsome evergreen viburnums, with distinctive glossy, dark green leaves that are two to six inches long. It has a mounded, dense habit, white flower cymes in spring that appear above the leaves, and metallic blue fruits in winter. It grows three to five feet high and wide, making it a perfect specimen for massing in a border. It does well in USDA zones 7 to 9. While not in Hillwood's gardens, David viburnums are readily available at local garden centers and fit well in smaller gardens.

### **Leatherleaf Viburnums**

It is almost impossible to tell leatherleaf viburnums apart from each other, and we have them in a multitude of locations across campus in the parking lot island where the access road splits to go to employee parking or to the visitor's parking lot and several more are near the administration building and the ellipse.

### ***Viburnum rhytidophyllum***

This classic leatherleaf viburnum can be a massive shrub, at ten to fifteen feet high and wide, with a globe-like habit that makes it perfect for screening or as a large background shrub year-round. It has dark green, leathery leaves, three to seven inches long and one to two and a half inches wide. It has cream-colored, slightly fragrant flower clusters in spring, and red and black oval berries favored by birds in autumn. It is perfect for a large garden with heavy shade and well drained soil and does best in USDA zones 6 to 8.

### ***Viburnum x rhytidophylloides***

The lantanaphyllum viburnum is a cross between *V. rhytidophyllum* and *V. lantana*. The cultivar you will most often find in nurseries and landscapes is 'Allegheny'. It is a rather loose, globe-shaped shrub with abundant white flower clusters in spring and red and black berry clusters in fall. It is used most often massed in shrub borders. They grow to be ten to fifteen feet high and wide and thrives in USDA zones 4 to 8.

## Hillwood Hosts Capital Region Connect and National Docent Symposium

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

On October 7, Hillwood hosted the second annual Capital Region Connect meeting. This is a networking event for professionals in the horticulture industry. The diverse gathering of nearly seventy people included public garden professionals, private estate gardeners, landscape designers, nursery owners, and local extension agents. Guests mingled in the courtyard enjoying light refreshments while Jessica Bonilla, head gardener, provided guided garden tours throughout the evening.

Twenty-seven visitors with the National Docent Symposium visited Hillwood on October 24 for a day filled with touring and networking before going to Tudor Place for tours of the house and grounds. The National Docent Symposium is held bi-annually by the National Docent Council and gathers attendees from museums and organizations across the country to discuss and learn about docenting strategies, techniques, and more.

At Hillwood, trip participants were treated to private garden and mansion tours before dining at the café and enjoying some free time to explore the estate.

A special thank you to Wilhelmina Irshad, who co-led the group's visit and shared information about Hillwood and Tudor Place's docent programs. Additional thank yous go to garden docents Lynn Feinberg and Janice McHenry and mansion docents Lara Dajani, Nina Gradia, and Margaret Vassilikos. Thank you for helping us share our wonderful docent programs with our visitors from across the country!



*Hillwood mansion docent Nina Gradia discusses War and Pieces with visitors from NDS.*

## In Memoriam

We are saddened to inform you that we have lost a former Hillwood volunteer in recent months.



### **Alan Friedman**

Alan Friedman passed away at home on September 19. Alan loved to give to others and to the community, and he did so at Hillwood as a visitor services volunteer for nine years. In addition to volunteering at Hillwood, Alan was active in theaters throughout the D.C. area, his synagogue, the National Building Museum, and the National Gallery of Art. Alan is survived by his partner, Lou.



## Volunteer Spotlight

Lisa Horvath, Volunteer Services Supervisor

Hillwood's volunteer corps continues to grow with more than 380 active volunteers, making it the largest in the history of the institution. The volunteer spotlight is an opportunity to get to know some of your fellow volunteers a little better.

### **Rick Ferenci**

Rick Ferenci joined Hillwood after graduating from the 2019 garden docent training program. An avid gardener at his home, his experiences with enthusiastic volunteers at other museums was one of the reasons he applied to Hillwood's garden docent program. Additionally, Rick enjoys weaving the beauty of the gardens with stories from Marjorie Post's life. Rick continues to enjoy learning more about Marjorie, and in fact, if Rick could ask her any question, he would love to know what she believed was her greatest accomplishment.



Since becoming a garden docent, Rick has had many favorite memories, including guiding Marjorie's great-great granddaughter on a tour. Interacting with visitors is Rick's favorite benefit of being a Hillwood volunteer, noting that "visitors to Hillwood are immensely kind, engaging, and gracious." He sees Hillwood and its visitors as representatives of hospitality and thoughtfulness, which he strives to achieve in his life.

### **Claudia "Dia" Sherman**



Claudia "Dia" Sherman joined Hillwood's horticulture volunteer program in the spring of 2018 after moving into an apartment in the city. Looking to fill the void of no longer having a garden, Dia volunteers Friday mornings with Jessica Bonilla. Her responsibilities include "whatever the gardens require," including watering, weeding, deadheading, planting, pruning, and more. She, like so many volunteers, assists with the seasonal plantings, an all hands on deck activity. Dia's contributions help Hillwood maintain its exuberant gardens, which is one of her favorite characteristics of Hillwood.

For Dia, there is not just one personal benefit she gets from her time spent at Hillwood. The staff is "exceptionally kind, generous, and talented," and she enjoys the horticulture walks and talks staff arrange, which deepen her knowledge of and perspective on the gardens. She appreciates the time spent with her fellow volunteers, who have become friends. Dia also loves seeing the progression of the gardens from week to week, knowing that they are always changing. Hillwood provides not only the gardening outlet Dia was searching for but also an engaging and friendly community in which to learn more about gardening.

Hillwood is thrilled to have Rick and Dia as members of our dynamic volunteer corps, and we look forward to highlighting volunteers in future editions of *The Post Serial*.

## Recap of Recent Horticulture Volunteer Trips

Drew Asbury, Horticulturist and Volunteer Manager

A group of horticulture volunteers and garden docents attended the annual volunteer appreciation event at Mount Vernon on September 18. The event is hosted by the Horticultural Consortium of the Greater Washington Area and celebrates the many contributions of local garden volunteers. The day included tours of the garden, a lecture presented by Mount Vernon's director of horticulture Dean Norton, and a casual lunch.

On September 20, thirty Hillwood horticulture volunteers had a fun and informative day touring the gardens of Glenstone in Potomac, Maryland. A highlight of the visit was Jeff Koons' thirty-nine foot tall sculpture *Split-Rocker*, which is planted each spring with thousands of annuals.



*Hillwood volunteers on a tour of Mount Vernon's gardens.*



*Hillwood volunteers in front of Split-Rocker at Glenstone.*

## Welcome Hillwood's Newest Staff Members

Hillwood is pleased to welcome the following new staff members.



### **Robby Adams**

Robby Adams recently joined Hillwood as the greenhouse grower, assisting with Hillwood's plant production and maintenance of the space. In his youth, Robby worked on a dairy farm before he began working with landscaping crews and plant nurseries across the country. His experience in greenhouse management includes a 2,600-square-foot food and herb production greenhouse in Orchard Mesa, Colorado, and his personal backyard gardens.

### **Rachel Bournique**

Rachel Bournique joined Hillwood as the exhibitions and collections administrator. Previously, Rachel spent two years as the association administrator at the Museum Association of New York (MANY). Before working with MANY, she spent two years at the Hilton Albany in Albany, New York in the sale and event services department. Rachel received her bachelor's degree in American studies from Siena College and is finishing her master's degree in public administration from the University at Albany, SUNY.



### **Maria Chernousov**

Maria Chernousov is a new museum shop associate. She has worked in customer-focused organizations and retail, including Barnes & Noble. Maria graduated with an art history degree and is excited to bring her art knowledge, fluency in Russian, and her desire to work with the public to Hillwood.

### **Claire Griffin**

Claire Griffin recently graduated from The George Washington University with a master's degree in museum education. She joined Hillwood on September 18 as a full-time visitor services associate. Claire will be at Hillwood Wednesday through Sunday, and is excited to be a part of the team.



### **Jason Speck**

Jason Speck joined Hillwood on September 9 as the new head of archives and special collections. Previously, Jason worked at the University of Maryland, College Park, as head of collection management for special collections and archives. He earned his Master's degree in library science at the University of Maryland and has a bachelor's of art in literature from American University in Washington, D.C.

### **Daisy Waters**

Daisy Waters brings her solid retail experience to Hillwood as a museum shop associate. She is an art student and is excited to combine her love of art and retail knowledge at Hillwood.



Please join us in welcoming our newest staff to Hillwood!



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