

Hillwood Volunteer Program

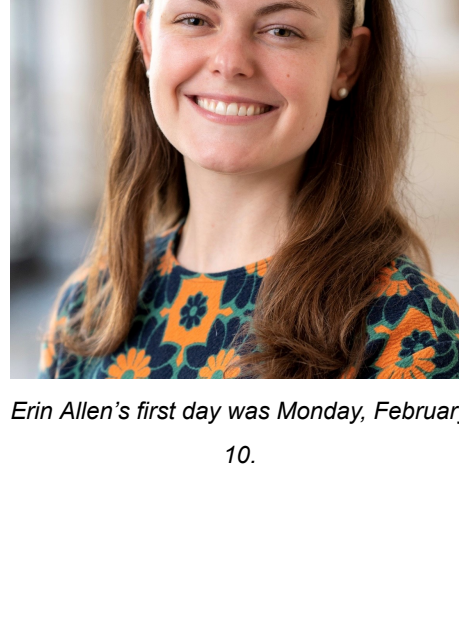
MARCH 2025 SCHEDULE

The March 2025 schedule is now open to all interpretation volunteers in Volgistics, complete with private tours and special events. Please log in to your [Volgistics account](#) to schedule your shifts. If you have any changes or questions regarding the volunteer schedule, please continue to contact volunteers@hillwoodmuseum.org. Thank you.

[Log into Volgistics](#)

WELCOME ERIN ALLEN, NEW VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS COORDINATOR

We are delighted to introduce Erin Allen as Hillwood's new volunteer programs coordinator. Erin officially joined us Monday, February 10, and will oversee monthly and daily volunteer scheduling, support recruitment and training, and provide on-site assistance to docents and visitor services volunteers (VSVs). She will also be on-site during weekends to support volunteers during peak visitation.



Erin Allen's first day was Monday, February 10.

Erin is already a familiar face at Hillwood, having served as a museum teacher since September 2023. She brings extensive experience in museum education, previously working at the Baltimore Museum of Art, where she developed and managed programs for teachers and adults. She also gained experience with docent support and Volgistics while interning at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C. Erin holds a Master of Arts in History of Art from the University of York, UK and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art History from the University of Maryland, College Park.

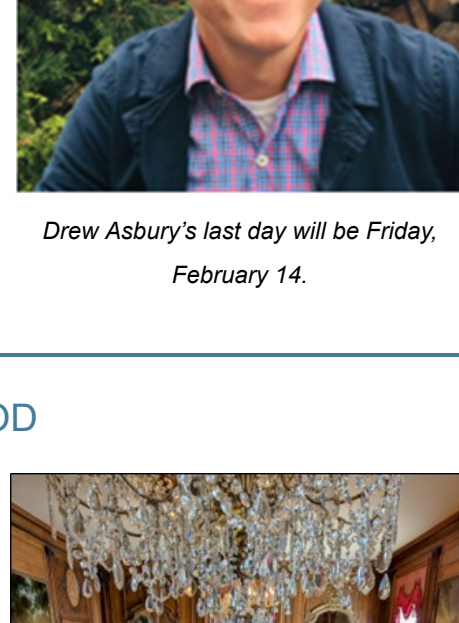
Erin's schedule is Saturday–Wednesday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., and her office is in the Butler's House. We encourage you to say hello and welcome Erin when you see her on-site. Erin will also be making the rounds this week to personally meet the volunteers.

Erin Allen, volunteer programs coordinator, can be reached at (202) 243-3908 or eallen@hillwoodmuseum.org.

A friendly reminder: Interpretation volunteers will continue emailing volunteers@hillwoodmuseum.org for all scheduling questions and requests.

A FOND FAREWELL TO DREW ASBURY

It is bittersweet to announce that Drew Asbury, horticulturist and volunteer manager, has accepted a new opportunity at Brookside Gardens near Wheaton, Maryland and will be leaving Hillwood. During his twelve years at Hillwood, Drew has used his plant expertise, attention to detail, and drive to raise the gardens and greenhouse to new levels. He leaves the horticulture volunteer program running like a well-oiled machine. We will all miss him but wish him the best on his new adventure. His last day will be Friday, February 14.

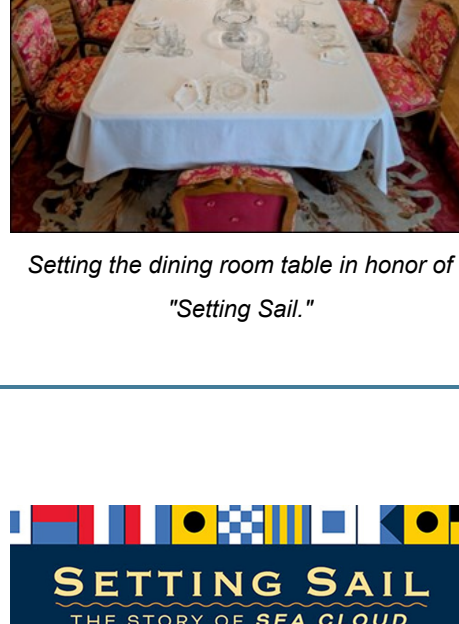


Drew Asbury's last day will be Friday, February 14.

As we make this transition, Jessica Bonilla, director of horticulture, will be the main contact for all horticulture volunteers at jbonilla@hillwoodmuseum.org.

NOTES ON A PRODUCTIVE JANUARY AT HILLWOOD

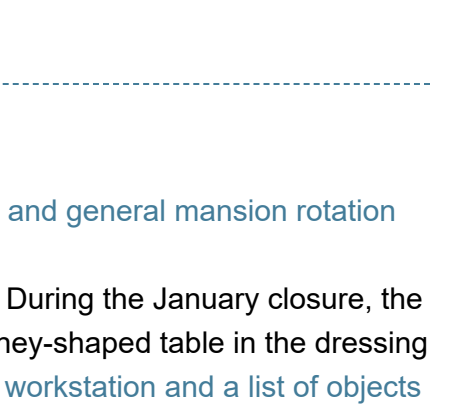
Some consider the holidays their "busy season." For Hillwood's collections team, the weeks of January are hyperpaced with tasks when the museum is closed to the public, and 2025 was no exception. From navigating contractors to exhibition installs and deinstalls, [read on to learn what the team was up to this January](#), written by Diana Brazil, collections and curatorial coordinator, and Megan Martinelli, curator of apparel, textiles, jewelry, and accessories.



Setting the dining room table in honor of "Setting Sail."

MANSION AND EXHIBITION UPDATES

Hillwood's special exhibition, *Setting Sail: The Story of the Sea Cloud*, will be on view in the dacha from February 15-June 15. *Sea Cloud*, the windjammer that was once the world's largest sailing yacht that has lived many lives since its creation. Built by Marjorie Merriweather Post and her husband, E.F. Hutton, in the early twentieth century, the vessel went on to serve as a weather ship for the U.S. Coast Guard, and today survives as a luxury cruise liner. Explore the magnificent story of this seafarer from the 1930s to today through documents, photographs, models, decorative arts, paintings, and more.



Hillwood's new exhibition, "Setting Sail: The Story of the Sea Cloud," opens to the public on February 15.

Volunteer Education

- **Exhibition Label Text** | Enjoy reading the exhibition label text and general mansion rotation information.
- **Display Change: Kidney-Shaped Table in Dressing Room** | During the January closure, the Collections and Curatorial team updated the display on the kidney-shaped table in the dressing room. Please refer to this document for a photograph of Post's workstation and a list of objects that were installed and removed.
- **Virtual Volunteer Lecture** | Join Thomas Wu, assistant curator of European decorative arts, for a virtual volunteer lecture on Tuesday, February 18 at 6 p.m. The virtual lecture will provide an overview of the new exhibition *Setting Sail*. A Zoom link will be emailed closer to the program date.

Exhibition Opening Celebration and Member Program

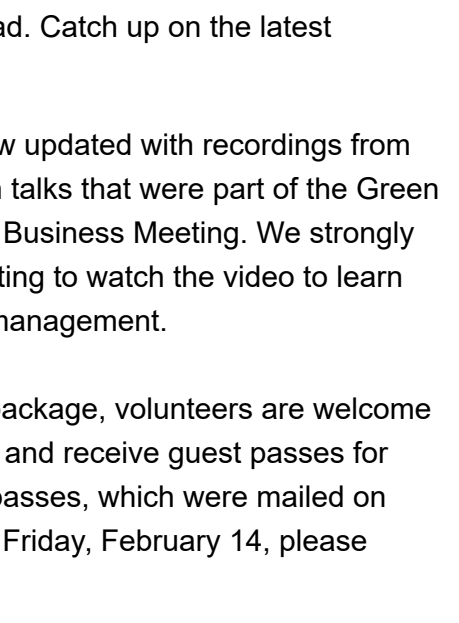
- **Come Sail Away | 2025 Valentine's Day Celebration** (sold out), Thursday, February 13 (7-10 p.m.)
- **Member Preview Day | Setting Sail: The Story of the Sea Cloud**, Friday, February 14 (10 a.m.-5 p.m.)

WHO MAKES A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR HILLWOOD'S ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM?

Volunteers' stellar visitor engagement has enabled Hillwood's archives and special collections team to meet and interview individuals who have had first-hand experiences with Marjorie Merriweather Post or key members of her Hillwood staff. Many volunteers who meet visitors with connections to Post or Hillwood wonder if they qualify as participants for Hillwood's oral history program. [Click here for more information from Jason Speck, head of archives and special collections, such as the type of individuals of interest for the oral history program and steps to take to connect him with qualified individuals.](#)

EVERGREENS IN THE GARDEN

Evergreen plants, those that hold their leaves through the winter, are a vital and interesting addition to any landscape. At Hillwood, they play an important part in the designs of all the garden spaces and there are some particularly nice plants and combinations to check out now. [Click here to find out where those locations are and learn more about our garden plants in this article by Jessica Bonilla, director of horticulture.](#)



Evergreens in the garden.

INTRODUCING BABY COLIN!

Megan Martinelli, curator of textiles, apparel, jewelry and accessories, shares her newest arrival, the birth of her son, with the Hillwood community. [Click here for adorable pictures of baby Colin and cheerful notes from Megan about his growth and development since his birth in August 2024.](#)

VOLUNTEER NEWS & REMINDERS

We have had an exciting start to the new year, with continuing education programs and growth in Hillwood's volunteer management team. We hope you feel our appreciation for your valuable contributions and join us in excitedly looking forward to the year ahead. Catch up on the latest happenings for Hillwood volunteers:

- **2025 Lecture Videos** | The "2025 Lecture Videos" page is now updated with recordings from recent volunteer education programs. Visit to watch the garden talks that were part of the Green Day of Horticulture program and to watch the Virtual Volunteer Business Meeting. We strongly encourage those who were unable to attend the business meeting to watch the video to learn about Hillwood's 2025 goals and projects directly from senior management.

- **2025 Guest Passes** | As part of Hillwood's volunteer benefit package, volunteers are welcome to visit the estate free of charge during normal operating hours and receive guest passes for family and friends. Be on the lookout for your volunteer guest passes, which were mailed on Friday, January 31. If you do not receive your guest passes by Friday, February 14, please reach out to us at volunteers@hillwoodmuseum.org.

- **Butler's House Office Construction: Completed** | We are thrilled to announce that construction for the new office on the staff side of the Butler's House is complete. This additional space will accommodate the new volunteer programs coordinator. We appreciate your understanding and patience during the renovation. We also want to express a special thank you to Hillwood's facilities team for their work on this space and other enhancements in the Butler's House.

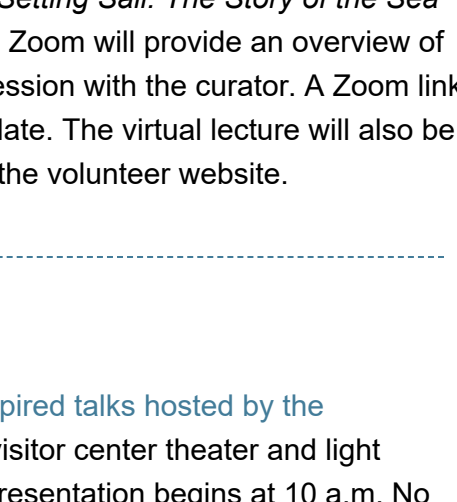
- **2025 Spring Garden Tours** | We look forward to the return of our garden docents in April 2025. The 2025 Spring Garden Touring season will begin on Tuesday, April 1 and end on Sunday, June 29. Garden tours will be offered at 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. Hillwood will continue to offer a third garden tour on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays in 2025: at 2:30 p.m. in April, and 1:30 p.m. in May and June, adjusted earlier to avoid the high temperatures that peak in the late afternoon during those months.

VISITOR SERVICES TEAM UPDATES

Please join us in recognizing the great work of our Visitor Services team, and catching up with the latest staffing changes:

Will Dawson

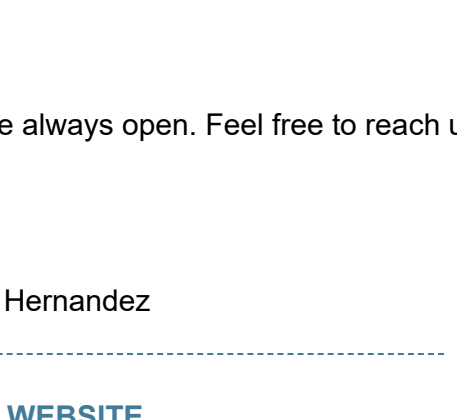
We are thrilled to announce that Will Dawson is transitioning from a part-time role to a full-time associate position on our visitor services team! Will has been a dedicated team member since 2021, and we look forward to seeing him bring his excellent customer service and organizational skills to this expanded role.



Will Dawson

Alexa Patsey

At the same time, we bid a fond farewell to Alexa Patsey, visitor services associate, who has started a new journey with The Frick Pittsburgh Museum & Gardens. Since joining Hillwood in February 2023, Alexa has been an important member of both our visitor services and security teams, making invaluable contributions to our operations. Alexa's last day was Sunday, February 9.



Alexa Patsey

UPCOMING VOLUNTEER EDUCATION

Mark your calendars for these upcoming volunteer educational sessions:

Virtual Volunteer Lecture: *Setting Sail: The Story of the Sea Cloud* February 18 (Tuesday), 6 p.m.

Join us for the upcoming virtual volunteer lecture presented by Thomas Wu, assistant curator of European decorative arts, highlighting Hillwood's special exhibition *Setting Sail: The Story of the Sea Cloud*, opening in the dacha on February 15. The lecture hosted via Zoom will provide an overview of the exhibition design and objects featured followed by a live Q&A session with the curator. A Zoom link with the meeting instructions will be emailed closer to the program date. The virtual lecture will also be recorded, and the video link will be shared via email and posted on the volunteer website.

Day of Horticulture

March 3 (Monday), 10 a.m.- 1 p.m.

All volunteers are cordially invited to attend a morning of garden-inspired talks hosted by the horticulture department. This program will be held in-person at the visitor center theater and light refreshments will be served. Doors open at 9:30 a.m. and the first presentation begins at 10 a.m. No RSVP is required. Presentations will be recorded and posted on the volunteer website for those who are unable to attend. Please [click here to learn more about the Day of Horticulture in March.](#)

STAFF HELP & RESOURCES

Thank you for being a part of the Hillwood community! Our doors are always open. Feel free to reach us at volunteers@hillwoodmuseum.org.

-The Volunteer Support Team

Erin Allen, Jordan Hansen, Lisa Leyh, Drew Asbury, and Samantha Hernandez

HILLWOOD'S WEBSITE

Stay engaged with all things Hillwood at our website by exploring the collection database, finding out what's in bloom, and registering for programs. Learn more about current visitor offerings and booking your next visit on our [Plan Your Visit](#) page.

[Explore >](#)

VOLUNTEER WEBSITE

Catch up on past volunteer communications, newsletters, recorded volunteer programs, and updated guidelines by consulting the volunteer website. Continue your Hillwood learning journey by exploring the robust collection of educational resources available to all volunteers.

[Learn >](#)

HILLWOOD

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