

A photograph of the Morris-Jumel Mansion, a large white neoclassical building with a portico supported by four columns and a balcony on the second floor.

Monthly Mansion Minute

News from the Morris-Jumel Mansion



What's New at
the Mansion



Restoration
Report



Education
Station



Calendar



Spotlight On
Slavery

Mansion Minute

Letter from the Executive Director

Hello everyone,

The summer season is upon us, which means more programming in Roger Morris Park. Upcoming events include movies in the park: *Rio* will be showing on June 27 at dusk; and we begin yoga sessions in the park on July 9 every Tuesday evening from 6-7pm. So plan on packing a nice picnic and nibbling popcorn while watching *Rio*, then get loose and reduce your stress with a free workout in the park.

We are very busy preparing for the annual George Washington Dinner, which raises vital funds for our work. This year is going to be even better than last. While rain certainly made last year's evening memorable, this year's excitement and fun will come from wonderful food and wine, stimulating conversation, dynamic speakers, and a bit of friendly competition over the silent auction.

We have enjoyed some meaningful media partnerships lately, with film crews working in the Mansion. The Octagon Room served as the perfect backdrop to *CBS Sunday Morning* correspondent John Dickerson's interview with bestselling author A.J. Jacobs about his *Year of Living Constitutionally*, which is now a book of the same name; you can view the segment on our "In The News" website page. Another team creating an *American Masters* series about W.E.B. Dubois for *PBS* was here over two days filming.

All this is to say that it is never a dull moment around the Mansion, and we are thrilled to have its interiors shine in the national spotlight.

Yours,
Catherine Hughes



What's New at the Mansion

Please welcome Will Bompey as our new intern for this summer. Will is a current student at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, in his fourth year studying History with a concentration in pre-World War I American History. His specific interests include the facilitation of educational programs, the archival process, and the work that goes into creating the amazing experience available at the

Morris-Jumel Mansion. Born and raised in Manhattan, Will is incredibly excited to learn more about the history of his hometown, and work with the staff of MJM. Outside of school and work, Will also plays on the Varsity baseball team at McGill and loves running and being outdoors.



Mansion Minute



Click here to watch the December Virtual Parlor Chat about the restoration.



Click here to watch the April Virtual Parlor Chat about the restoration.

The following is an update from Historic House Trust Executive Director Meredith Horsford.

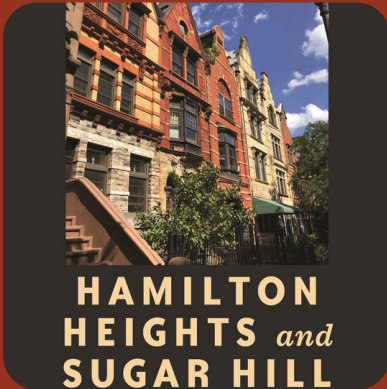
MJM's exterior restoration project is a NYC Park's capital project that is managed by the Historic House Trust of New York (HHT). The design process for the Morris-Jumel Mansion restoration has been completed! HHT is now finalizing a revised bid package to release to interested contractors including those who provided preliminary bids at 80% design, as well as new bidders that have been identified. To allow contractors time to put together comprehensive and accurate bids, HHT is setting the deadline for receipt of bids for late July. Once the contract is awarded, HHT will begin getting all necessary approvals as quickly as possible for work to begin in early 2025. As with many complex projects involving historic buildings, the design process has been slowed at times to allow additional investigations and approvals for sensitive areas. COVID-19 delays, an unexpected column failure, and additional agency approvals are some examples of hurdles that we have overcome throughout this project process.

In order to speed up the most critical components of the project including the roof restoration, HHT will be moving certain scope items including accessibility improvements into phase two which is already funded. HHT has also utilized tools like early incentive clauses and early contractor bidding to make sure that the construction is completed as quickly and efficiently as possible, while still ensuring that the quality of the restoration is maintained.

While we were hopeful that construction could start in 2024, we are now excited to be so far into the project process with just a few more steps to go until construction can begin in 2025. We will continue to keep you updated as the project progresses, especially once the construction contract is awarded.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to reach out to her office at nathalie.diaz@historichoustrust.org.

Calendar



Book Talk and Signing with Davida Siwisa James

Saturday, June 15 1:00-2:00 PM

Author Davida Siwisa James will read from her new book, *Hamilton Heights and Sugar Hill: Alexander Hamilton's Harlem neighborhood through the centuries.*

[Free Registration Here](#)



Virtual Parlor Chat The History of Juneteenth

Wednesday, June 19 7:00-8:00 PM

An interactive and meaningful conversation about the history of Juneteenth with the founder of the annual Juneteenth NY Festival and Summit, Athenia Rodney.

[Free Registration Here](#)



Movie in the Park: *Rio* (2011)

Thursday, June 27th 7:30 PM Start

Bring a blanket and snacks to enjoy a movie screening on our lawn. In partnership with Inwood Art Works. This month's movie is family friendly (Rated G).

[Free Registration Here](#)

Education Station

by Kiowa Pratt-Gordon, School & Community Programs Manager

STUDENT PROGRAM EXHIBITION on JUNE 12th at 3pm - 4:30pm

Over the last several months, the MJM Education Department has been busy preparing for June's upcoming exhibition of student work from two separate programs: CASA after-school program and Cultural Immigrant Initiative, both funded by the office of City Council Member Carmen de la Rosa. The work produced by these 3rd and 8th grade students during their sessions will culminate in a pop-up exhibition on June 12th from 3pm - 4:30pm at MJM. This exhibition is open to the public as well as to the community, schools, and friends/families of the student presenters.

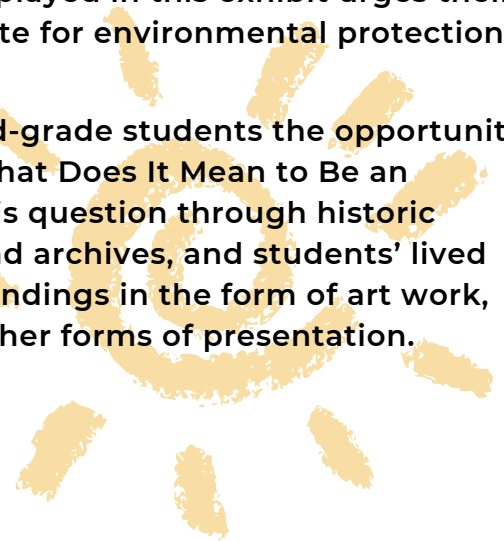
MJM has partnered with The Community Health Academy of the Heights (C.H.A.H.) and PS 4 The Duke Ellington School as part of our grant funded programs Cultural After-School Adventures (C.A.S.A.) and the Cultural Immigrant Initiative (C.I.I.), respectively. This program is one of many initiatives focused on engaging with the diverse community and using the unique MJM site for educational purposes.

What have the C.A.S.A. students been doing?

The Cultural After-School Adventures program is S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) based and has allowed our students to explore the evolving built and natural landscape of Washington Heights and the impacts of climate change. Over the course of this program, students have employed their critical-thinking skills and investigated changes in the built and natural environment using the 259-year old historic house and surrounding Roger Morris Park as a resource to explore sources historic maps, archaeological finds from the park, our living heritage rose collection, local Audubon Mural Project artworks, and to reflect upon the impact of climate change. Their work displayed in this exhibit urges their audience of local officials and the public to advocate for environmental protections.

What have the C.I.I. students been doing?

The Cultural Immigrant Initiative allows these third-grade students the opportunity for an extended project based on the question, "What Does It Mean to Be an American?" This spring, students have explored this question through historic biographies, the Morris-Jumel Mansion's history and archives, and students' lived experiences. Students will present their research findings in the form of art work, text panels, images, poetry or spoken word, and other forms of presentation.



Mansion Minute

Spotlight On Slavery

The Dutch Role in New Netherland's Slave Trade

By Catherine Hughes, Executive Director

At a recent conference, Slavery in New Netherland and the Dutch Atlantic World, hosted by the Schomburg Center for Research into Black Culture, and the New York Historical Society, I was excited to hear any information that could be used in Morris-Jumel Mansion's interpretation. And indeed, in the very first panel, Dr. Dennis Maika from The New Netherland Institute, shared his research: "Assessing the Impact of Private Entrepreneurs on New York's 17th Century Slave Trade" and my ears pricked up at the mention of Frederick Philipse, great-grandfather to Mary Philipse Morris, whose money built MJM. Dr. Maika shared that Frederick and his wife Margaret Hardenbroeck, a Dutch trading couple building a vast business in the new world in the 1600s, eventually began to trade in people.

I was first introduced to Margaret Hardenbroeck through the book, *The Women of the House* by Jean Zimmerman. This rigorously researched historical fiction shows how Margaret came to New Netherland as a young "She-Merchant" from Amsterdam, sailing on her own in 1659. Margaret's story of establishing herself, marrying, and building an empire is fascinating. Unfortunately, Margaret and her husband eventually began to trade in human beings. In 1684, her flute-ship the Charles went to Angola where it picked up 146 prisoners bound for sale in Barbados, where Margaret met the vessel. 105 surviving captives were sold, and nine remaining captives went on to become the first enslaved people on Philipse-owned land in Westchester.

Dr. Maika's talk included references to these nine captives' journey, which is a well-documented tale. Margaret and Frederick had the ship bring them to Rye on Long Island Sound instead of the New Amsterdam's port to escape paying taxes on their human cargo. These people were then forced to walk to the Philipse estate in what is now Yonkers, many apparently still in shackles.

The Dutch part in building the Trans-Atlantic slave trade was the subject of two days of conference panels and discussions. In pursuit of profits, the Dutch of New Netherland began this human traffic in 1626. They brought enslaved Africans to New Amsterdam in such numbers that eventually New York rivaled Charleston, SC and had the second highest proportion of enslaved population in the colonies.

The Morris-Jumel Mansion is a member of the Northern Slavery Collective, a group of museums and historic sites that have joined forces to collaborate on how to interpret the history of enslavement at their sites. To many of our visitors, it is perhaps just the existence of slavery in the Northern United States that elicits the most surprise. Morris-Jumel Mansion strives to develop its understanding of how the history of the site was entangled with the history of slavery, which continually expands our interpretation and the story we share.



Mansion Minute



JOIN US FOR THE 2024 MORRIS-JUMEL MANSION GEORGE WASHINGTON DINNER

SUNDAY, JULY 14, 2024

6:00 - 9:00 PM



Liberty · Equality · Brotherhood

Liberté · Égalité · Fraternité

The George Washington Dinner is an elegant and fun evening commemorating a dinner hosted by President Washington in July 1790 for his Cabinet. This year it takes place on Bastille Day, the French National Day, and we celebrate the principles of liberty, equality, and brotherhood. Individual tickets and tables of 10 are available. Learn more about this unique event that takes place in the historic Mansion and on the beautiful grounds.

Visit the [Dinner web page](#) to learn about the Honorary Chairs and Program and to purchase tickets.

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TICKETS

Contact Catherine Hughes chughes@morrisjumel.org for information on sponsorships ranging from \$750 to \$20,000.

Mansion Minute

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