



Monthly Mansion Minute

News from the Morris-Jumel Mansion
Celebrating 260 years



New member of
Board of
Trustees



Visit by Parks
Department



New
Paranormal
schedule



Calendar



Spotlight on
Black History

Mansion Minute

Letter from the Executive Director

Hello everyone,

Is it only just going into February? What a busy month January has been to start off 2025, which is a very special year for the Morris-Jumel Mansion – our 260th anniversary! We are proud to unveil our new logo to mark this milestone, which is the outcome of a team creative process led by Board Member Susan Arnot Heaney. Watch for this celebratory new logo on the website, materials, and programming throughout the year.

During the coming year we will be commemorating the various eras the house has seen over 260 years, as well as the many tales from and of its occupants. This will be an exciting and fun opportunity to bring out objects from storage, highlight little known anecdotes, and show the layers of history that are represented within the walls of the Mansion and on its grounds. You can look forward to activities and events infused with 260 years of stories.



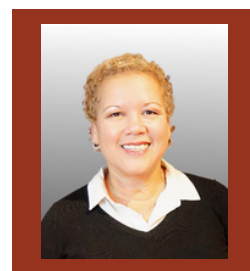
In this issue of the newsletter, you can read about some of the fruits of our busy month. We have a new board member, Ivy Fairchild, who we are excited to welcome back to MJM. It was great to have Commissioner Shimamura visit. And school programs are really having a great effect.

Yours,
Catherine Hughes



What's New at the Mansion

New Member of the Board of Trustees voted in



Ivy Fairchild was voted onto the MJM Board of Trustees at its January meeting and now stands as its newest member. Ivy is a dynamic leader and the driving force behind Landmark Consultants, LLC, an organizational development consulting firm dedicated to empowering nonprofits to achieve their missions and build sustainable futures. With a career rooted in transformational fundraising and operational leadership, Ivy brings a wealth of experience and a passion for strengthening communities through strategic and effective support for nonprofits. Ivy knows both our community and MJM well, having grown up in Washington Heights and previously served on the Board of Trustees in the 1990s.



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



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

NYC Parks Department Leaders Visit MJM



(from l-r) Catherine Hughes, MJM Executive Director, Julietta Fiore, Historic House Trust Interim Director., Tricia Shimamura, Manhattan Borough Commissioner at NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, Benjamin Kramer, Deputy Chief of Operations, Ralph Musolino Chief of Operations for Parks, Wayne Benjamin, VP of the MJM Board , Robert Lugo, MJM Caretaker, Jana La Sorte, Northern Manhattan Parks Administrator, and Glen Campbell, President of the MJM Board

Tricia Shimamura, who last year was named Manhattan Borough Commissioner at NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, visited the Morris-Jumel Mansion on January 24 for a tour of the Mansion and grounds along with MJM staff and Trustees. Accompanying Shimamura were her Manhattan Chief of Operations, Ralph Musolino, Deputy Chief of Operations Benjamin Kramer, and intern Anna Dabrowski, as well as Northern Manhattan Parks Administrator Jana La Sorte. The Commissioner and team used the visit to learn about the operations of the Mansion and Roger Morris Park, and the relationship between the Parks Department and MJM. Also discussed was the effect of the Exterior Restoration Project to begin this year, with HHT Interim Director Julietta Fiore providing information and insights. Shimamura will be a key part of the team helping to usher the elements of the Restoration through the necessary steps in the City's process.

Board Member Wins Accolades

We are proud that Board of Trustees Vice President Wayne Benjamin recently received two honors recognizing his contributions to NYC and the Morris-Jumel Mansion. NYC Council Member Carmen De La Rosa honored Benjamin for his service during a special event on Martin Luther King, Jr Day, and Senator Robert Jackson presented a Community Service Award to Benjamin on January 29 (shown in photo).



Calendar



Family and Community Day

Make Your Own Victorian Valentines

Saturday, February 8th

1:00-3:00PM, FREE (No Registration Needed)



Virtual Parlor Chat

The Life and Legacy of Constance Baker Motley

Wednesday, February 19th

7:00-8:00 PM, [FREE Registration HERE](#)



Paranormal Historical Investigation

Friday, February 7th

Saturday, February 8th

Saturday, February 22nd

Saturday, March 8th (Special Edition! "Women of the House")

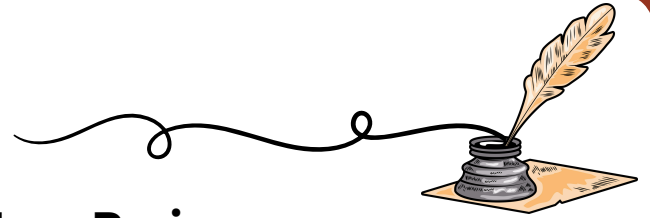
Saturday, March 15th

Wednesday, April 2nd (Special Edition! "Eliza's Birthday Investigation")

Gates open 6:45 PM, Strict 7:00 PM start (no late admission).

[Purchase Tickets HERE](#)

Education Station



New School Program Elements Earn Praise

With a constant eye to making programs more relevant and accessible, School Programs has been fine tuning elements, and enhancing student engagement through hands-on, inquiry-based activities targeted to each age group. In the "What Was Life Like in the Past?" program, K-3 students now participate in a second-floor scavenger hunt, exploring bedrooms and Washington's War Room to locate key artifacts. These artifacts serve as discussion points for comparing past and present, such as a globe leading to conversations about historical versus digital navigation.

For grades 4-12, "Fighting for Freedom: The Mansion During the American Revolution" now features a Soldiers and Spies Cipher activity. Students uncover clues throughout the Mansion and use a cipher to decode an authentic spy message Washington received just before the Battle of Harlem Heights—an intelligence report that helped him avoid defeat.

Older middle and high school students in "What Does It Mean to be an American?" now participate in a Town Hall Role Play, embodying different social classes of the late 1700s to debate voting rights and citizenship in the new nation.

These additions have been met with overwhelming enthusiasm from teachers, with some booking additional programs mid-visit due to the excitement and engagement they inspire. One favorite moment was seeing a student return to the Mansion the week after her class visit to participate in Family Day and excitedly give her mom a personalized tour. She told her mom all about cooking over a fire in the past, how she got to feel the difference in the fabrics used for working class vs wealthy clothing, and people playing instruments and games because there was no TV in the 1700s. She even purposely wore a striped dress to match the chair in the Burr Bedroom, a detail that left us all smiling! Another young student summed it up perfectly by calling their trip to the Mansion the "cool best time." Moments like these remind us of the impact our programs have and inspire us as we share the magic of Morris-Jumel history with our community.

Watch for School offerings & Family and Community Days in our website calendar.

Celebrating Black History and Heritage this Month



Morris-Jumel Mansion is celebrating Black History Month with two programs that connect to the heritage of the Mansion and our community: a Virtual Parlor Chat on February 19th from 7:00-8:00pm on The Life and Legacy of Constance Baker Motley and an audio experience on the life of Anne Northup.

First, the spotlight is on a trailblazer with an incredible legacy: Judge Constance Baker Motley. Her life was filled with triumphs and trials as she rose to be one of the most prominent figures in the American Judicial System. During the Virtual Parlor Chat, attendees will hear her story from Constance Royster, Esq., Judge Motley's niece, and learn why the likes of former Vice President Kamala Harris, Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, and co-founder of the World Institute on Disability Judith Heumann have all credited Motley as an inspiration and contributor to their success. Judge Motley's New York City home was a short distance from the Morris-Jumel Mansion and she is a proud part of the Black history of the local community.

Constance Baker Motley was born in Connecticut in 1921. She received her undergraduate education at New York University (class of 1943) and her law degree from Columbia Law School (class of 1946). Her career began as a Civil Rights Attorney for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, where she represented Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the Freedom Riders, and other significant early Civil Rights activists in court. She also wrote the original complaint in the case of "Brown v. Board of Education" and was the first African-American woman to argue in front of the Supreme Court. Motley was also the first African-American woman to serve in the New York State Senate, the first woman to serve as Manhattan Borough President, and the first African-American woman to serve as a federal judge, presiding over many landmark cases during her tenure. You can register for the VPC by going to: <https://morrisjumel.org/events/virtual-parlor-chat-the-life-and-legacy-of-constance-baker-motley/>

Secondly, we are spotlighting the unique audio experience that explores the interior life of Anne Northup, a noted cook, and wife of Solomon Northup (the author of *12 Years A Slave*), whose life journey brought her and her three children to the Mansion. Produced by Black Gotham and commissioned by the Morris-Jumel Mansion, this approximately 60-75 minute audio experience can be included as part of a regular tour of the Mansion, and be enjoyed remotely from anywhere. It is available to download at: <https://morrisjumel.org/walkingtours/northup/>



Part-Time
**WE'RE
HIRING**



MUSEUM EDUCATOR

The Morris-Jumel Mansion, Manhattan's oldest residence, is seeking a dynamic and creative Cultural After School Adventures (CASA) Program leader to run engaging after-school programs for students.

Responsibilities

- Lead engaging workshops, projects and field trips tailored for middle school students from end of April to mid June
- Foster creativity and curiosity
- Help students plan and construct a final exhibit of their projects

Requirements

- Experience in teaching or leading educational programs for children.
- Background in history, arts, education, or related fields.
- Passion for engaging students with cultural and historical content in innovative ways.
- Fluent Spanish speaker

Send your resume and a brief cover letter explaining why you're the perfect fit for this role to

education@morrisjumel.org

Mansion Minute

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special thanks to new supporters**

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