
BARTOW-PELL MANSION MUSEUM

FALL 2012 NEWSLETTER

BPMM SHINES AS A PARTNER IN PRESERVATION

We did it! In May, Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum finished 4th out of 40 historic sites in the New York City Partners in Preservation (PiP) online voting competition for \$3 million in grant funds, and received \$155,000 from American Express and the National Trust for Historic Preservation to restore its Delano & Aldrich-designed formal garden, the 18th-century Pell family cemetery, and the horse chestnut allée that leads to it. The competition ranged from very small, all-volunteer operations to large, internationally known institutions with multi-million dollar budgets, such as the Guggenheim Museum and the New York Botanical Garden.

PiP's intent is to raise awareness of historic places and to help them sustain that awareness long term, particularly through social media. Our PiP committee, consisting of board members, staff, and volunteers, executed a plan that included developing a logo, a tag line (*Beauty in the Bronx*), and a special URL for the campaign, along with a full schedule of Facebook posts, Tweets, blogs, and other forms of communication to expand our reach and make our story compelling. We also launched a new website and created a network of connections that we could tap into during the voting period, which ran from April 26 through May 21.

PiP enabled us to increase our exposure along the way. A video was created for YouTube; an original Bartow-Pell ballad was performed at WNYC's Greene Space; a NY Cares volunteer garden clean-up day brought nearly 100 people to work in our gardens; a fashion shoot appeared in *Swagger New York*; an article on us was published in *Untapped Cities*, an online magazine; and an interview with Ellen Bruzelius was aired on WNYC's Brian Lehrer show.

All the sites were required to host an open house the first weekend in May, and BPMM went all out, kicking off on Friday evening with a performance by Irish folk singer Mary Courtney. On Saturday and Sunday, family activities included garden and mansion tours, docents in costume, 19th-century toys and games, Urban Park Ranger hikes, a banjo and washboard duo, birds of prey and other wildlife, plus the Bronx Seaside Trolley—offered in partnership with the City Island Nautical Museum—all free. On Saturday evening, BPMM held its traditional spring fund-raiser celebrating the Kentucky Derby with mint juleps, Southern-style appetizers, a Dixieland band, hat contest, raffle, and, of course, viewing of the race.

During the voting, BPMM sent daily e-mail reminders to more than 4,000 people who had agreed to help our cause. We gradually saw ourselves creep up to fourth place, which we held relatively steadily throughout. Our deepest thanks to all who voted!

Now the real work begins. Working very closely with the Historic House Trust of NYC, Parks Capital Projects, and the New York City Landmarks Commission, we have begun our Requests for Proposals. The work is tentatively scheduled to begin in spring 2013 and must be finished by June 2014, although we hope to be done by the end of 2013 in time to launch our 2014 centennial celebration.

Special thanks to BPMM's hardworking PiP committee, led by Ellen Bruzelius, Laura DeBuys,

Sherry Donovan, and Catherine Scinta, with the invaluable assistance of Cynthia Brown, Lynn Byrne, Nancy Davis, Alice Dean, Mary Beth Fisher, John Felicetti, Cherrie Greenhalgh, Norma Landis, Ellen Lasch, Louise Middleton, Michelle O'Connor, and Bill Rainford. Thanks also to Tom Bricker for his design work.



Photo: Jane Hu



Photo: Richard Warren

Girls in costume at Open House Weekend

A New York City designated landmark listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum is owned by the City of New York Department of Parks & Recreation and operated by the Bartow-Pell Conservancy. The museum is a member of the Historic House Trust of New York City.

The site is home to one of the most beautifully situated historic houses in New York City. The museum welcomes thousands of visitors each year for guided and group tours, education programs, garden strolls, trail hikes, and a variety of special events. The museum is open to the public for guided tours every Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday from 12 to 4 p.m.

Bartow-Pell
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www.bpmm.org

Letter from the President and the Executive Director

We are all very proud of the Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum's spectacular win as an online popular vote-getter in the 2012 New York City Partners in Preservation (PiP) grant. A heartfelt thank-you to all who voted, posted, tweeted, e-mailed, "liked," and "pinned" us into a winning position. History and modern technology coalesced on our behalf as we embraced 21st-century technology to help us renovate the early 20th-century formal garden gracing our 19th-century mansion situated on land originally purchased from the Siwanoy Indians in the 17th century.

Our success in the PiP social-media campaign is mirrored in a myriad of other achievements this past year. Our fund-raisers all had impressive results. Public visitation to the site hit new highs. The new Scout Day programs, introduced this past winter, were almost immediately sold out and are booked through the fall. Bounty from the new children's garden is being donated to a food pantry. NY Cares Day volunteers helped us with many a garden clean-up task. The gardens continue to improve—with new beds designed by Luis Marmol and tended

by Diana Tavares. Inside the mansion we added to the museum's collection, reclaimed the collapsed cloakroom floor and offered numerous programs for all ages.

All this could not have been accomplished without the support and generosity of Bartow-Pell Conservancy members and many other individuals, foundations, and companies, including our newest funding partners: the Lily Auchincloss Foundation (children's garden); NY Community Trust through the Historic House Trust (children's garden); Elizabeth and Stanley R. Jacobs Foundation (formal garden); and Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation (shutter workshop).

Show *your* support for our Beauty in the Bronx this fall by connecting with us at facebook.com/BartowPell, following us at [@Bartow_Pell](https://twitter.com/Bartow_Pell), discovering us at bpmm.org, and joining us at the museum for our many exciting programs and fun fund-raisers.

Catherine Campbell Scinta, President
Bartow-Pell Conservancy

Ellen Bruzelius, Executive Director
Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum

A SECRET GARDEN IN THE BRONX

Although the mansion at Bartow-Pell dates from the 1840s, its formal garden was conceived and constructed about 1916 by the prominent early 20th-century New York City architectural firm of Delano & Aldrich. Taking advantage of the mansion's slight elevation, the architects terraced the area immediately behind the mansion and enclosed it with beautiful stone walls on three sides, each with its own elegant wrought-iron gate. The effect was a classic geometric design, which contrasted effectively with the surrounding fields and forest and the marshlands of Long Island Sound beyond.

Over the years, the grounds have deviated from the original vision. Many old specimen trees have disappeared, and unplanned trees and shrubs have grown in, obscuring views of the Sound and hiding many features that give the environment its character. Trees and shrubs



1936 aerial view, International News Photo

planted in the formal garden have overgrown their space and are out of scale with the size and style of its design. Symmetry has disappeared with key plants gone.

Today the Bartow-Pell Conservancy has taken up the challenge of restoring the formal

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THE EARLY PELLs: LIFE IN A COLORFUL 17TH-CENTURY WORLD

BY MARK CAMPISANO

We tend to think of our ancestors—if we think of them at all—as living in a world of black-and-white photographs, stiff collars, and wooden expressions, but the truth is much more colorful. Our ancestors lived in a world that pulsed with mortal danger, vivid intrigue, and quickly changing fortunes, a world that can make our own lives seem pretty bland by comparison. The early generations of the Pell family—the founders of Pelham and the Bartow-Pell Mansion—give us many examples of that colorful world.

Ruth and Consequences

Why did the Pells come to America?

In 1635 Thomas Pell was serving as a gentleman of the bedchamber in the royal court of King Charles I of England. A comfortable life in the royal court was his for the asking,

but then Thomas met Ruth, one of the queen's ladies-in-waiting who had recently arrived from France. It turned out that neither Thomas nor Ruth was very good at “waiting,” because Thomas is said to have been caught making love to Ruth, right there in the royal court. Thomas quickly fled to the English colonies in North America.

Staring Down the Dutch By 1654 Thomas Pell was a wealthy resident of colonial Fairfield, in what is now Connecticut, 50 miles from the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam. In a bold move to extend English power in North America, Pell sailed down to where the Bartow-Pell Mansion now stands, just 10

miles from Manhattan, signed a treaty with the Native American tribes living nearby, and set up his own English outpost. He purchased 9,166 acres of land (today's northern Bronx and southern Westchester County), and after the British drove the Dutch out of New York, his ownership of the vast estate was confirmed by a royal decree, and he became known as the “First Lord of the Manor of Pelham.”

Loyalists and Rebels For most of the Revolutionary War, Manhattan was occupied by the British, but they could never extend their control beyond Manhattan. Pelham and the Pell family's manor house stood in “the Neutral Ground,” a 30-mile-wide no-man's-land between colonists loyal to the British and the rebels. Because the Pells were Loyalists, however, they

eventually fled to Manhattan seeking protection with the British and abandoned their manor house, which was then burned to the ground. After the war, they moved to Canada. Not all Pells were Loyalists, however. Philip Pell III, a great-grandson of Thomas Pell, the Third Lord of the Manor, served with distinction in George Washington's Continental Army and rose to the rank of colonel. He enjoyed a distinguished legal and judicial career after the Revolution and died in 1811, several years before the present mansion was built.

Above: The Pell family graveyard, a tiny plot located down a footpath southeast of the mansion, is enclosed by four carved-stone corner posts erected in 1891 by members of the Pell family.



A SECRET GARDEN IN THE BRONX (*continued*)

garden, the perennial border outside the south wall, a horse chestnut tree allée, and the original Pell family cemetery. Irrigation systems will be installed beneath the terraces to provide essential watering, and the terraces will be regraded and reseeded. The soil will be remediated, new beds added, and ornamental

trees and plant beds reintroduced to replicate the original design.

By undertaking a sweeping restoration of the formal garden and adjacent areas, Bartow-Pell can continue to tell the story of the site's remarkable past, one that includes major themes of European and American landscape design.

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Education Director
and Curator

Mary Ellen Williamson
Site Manager

Diana Dalmas
Karen Lambdin
Tour Guides

Diana Tavares
Gardener

Antonio & Janet Cruz
Caretakers

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Doug Hearle

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Diana Lada

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and Book Buyer

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Luis Marmol
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NEWSLETTER

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SHADE AND SHADOW: A SELECTION OF BRITISH AND AMERICAN SILHOUETTES

SEPTEMBER 7–NOVEMBER 18, 2012

On a May day in spring 1836, Mrs. E. F. Wilkes sat for her portrait wearing billowing “imbecile” sleeves and a high knot of hair under her cap. Did she choose delicate watercolors on a fine ivory wafer or rich oil paints on an impressive canvas? The answer is neither. Like many people, she selected the inexpensive silhouette, popular in Britain and America from the 18th century to about 1860.

Before photography became widely available, silhouettes were a quick, easy, and affordable way to obtain “likenesses,” as they were often called. Artists—both professional and amateur—used a variety of techniques to produce profiles (or “shades”) of a wide range of sitters from American slaves and English country vicars to John Quincy Adams and Jane Austen. Augustin Edouart

(1789–1861), a renowned French-born profile cutter, introduced the word “silhouette” to his adopted countries, an eponymous term

deriving from an 18th-century French finance minister. Etienne de Silhouette (1709–1767) was known for his extreme cost-cutting measures; he also cut paper portraits for amusement.

On view at Bartow-Pell this fall is a selection of British and American silhouettes dating from 1788 to 1850, drawn from the museum’s collection and four private collectors. Included in the exhibition are American folk

portraits, elegant ladies, family scenes, charming children, and more. These engaging portraits present a compelling slice of life from the golden age of this art form.

Above: Mrs. E. F. Wilkes, 1836. Attributed to the Hubbard Gallery (1822–45). Private collection



DIBBLES AND DAISY GRUBBERS: THE ART OF THE GARDEN TOOL

From cucumber straighteners to watering cans, a fascinating array of antique garden tools delighted visitors to *Dibbles and Daisy Grubbers: The Art of the Garden Tool*, which was held at BPMM from April 1 through July 7. Featuring more than 100 objects from the collection of landscape architect Mark Morrison, the display contained tools made in Europe and North America over the last three centuries. Morrison, who has been collecting garden tools for 35 years, says, “I love to tell the story of how the tools evolved. The older tools are much better weighted and much sturdier. They were built to last for centuries, if cared for properly. The antique tools are beautiful—true pieces of art.”

The tools in the exhibit, curated by BPMM board member Barbara Burn Dolensek, were presented in sections according to function:

preparing the soil, planting, cultivating, pruning, controlling pests, harvesting, and watering. Two related lectures were given in the spring: Mark Morrison on the history and evolution of garden tools and Florence Boogaerts,

who teaches at the New York Botanical Garden, on gardens of the world.

The exhibition was featured in *The New York Times* antiques column and earned many compliments from visitors, including Deborah Wye, Chief Curator Emerita of the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books at the Museum

of Modern Art. “I thought it was wonderful—an extraordinary collection beautifully displayed. I especially loved the quotes. My favorite was Emerson’s: ‘All my hurts my garden spade can heal.’ Also, ending with the stunning watering cans was a great touch.”



RECENT ACQUISITIONS: TWO TABLES DONATED BY MR. AND MRS. STUART FELD

Two 19th-century New York tables were recently given to the museum by Mr. and Mrs. Stuart Feld. Mr. Feld, a former curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is the owner of the Hirschl & Adler Galleries, one of the world's premier sources of American decorative and fine arts.

Dating from about 1820 is a splendid mahogany library table (2011.03) attributed to Duncan Phyfe (1770–1854), the influential Scottish-born New York cabinetmaker whose furniture was recently the subject of a major exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum. The table, which is currently located in the downstairs sitting room at Bartow-Pell, has a trestle base, brass string inlay, ormolu caps and bases, and gilt-brass paw caps and castors.

The Felds have also given the museum a mahogany Pembroke table of about 1815 (2011.04), which once belonged to Berry Tracy, another curator from the Met who coincidentally gave a lecture at Bartow-Pell in 1966. Visitors can see the table, set for breakfast, in George Bartow's bedchamber.

We are very grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Feld for their generous gifts and are delighted to add these beautiful objects to our collection.

Above: Library Table. Attributed to Duncan Phyfe (1770–1854), ca. 1820. *Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Stuart P. Feld, 2011.03*; **Below:** Pembroke Table. New York, ca. 1815. *Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Stuart P. Feld, 2011.04*



BPMM SPRING AND SUMMER INTERNS

Brett Bell is our first carriage house docent. A high school junior with an avid interest in history, he shares his knowledge and enthusiasm with weekend visitors during public hours.

Chelsea Blance, a graduate in art history from Sarah Lawrence, wrote a research paper on the nearby Bolton family during her internship and helped prepare catalogue records.

Alexandra (Sasha) Fisher is a museum studies intern and a senior at Fordham University. At BPMM she is developing a new program for Girl Scouts and leading knitting workshops.

J. T. Jamieson, a Sarah Lawrence student of American history and photography, served as an engaging tour guide and added to our collection images data base.

Sarah Pickman, a student at the Bard Graduate Center and full-time employee in the Textile Conservation Department at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, worked with our textile collection and curated a pop-up exhibit.

HISTORIC FLOOR COVERINGS SOS

BY NORA MAZUR, BPC CHAIR, CURATORIAL COMMITTEE

Over the next year or two, BPMM will replace several of the existing floor coverings in the mansion, the first of which will be the straw matting upstairs in George's and Clarina's bedrooms. Straw matting was often used in 19th-century bedchambers to minimize drafts and dampness. This relatively inexpensive floor covering was originally imported from China in strips and sewn together. The straw matting that will replace the worn matting now in George's room and cover the softwood floor in Clarina's room is a beautiful geometric design that was chosen for its neutral straw color.

With our centennial approaching, BPMM is embarking on an exciting campaign to raise funds to replace the worn floor covering in the

entrance hall. We know from historical sources that the original floorcloth (or "oilcloth") in the hall was painted. Painted floorcloths were originally made of heavy canvas that was often decorated to simulate marble floor patterns. Our current floorcloth is a beige-and-white checkerboard pattern within a decorative border. It was painted in 1982 by Robert Jackson, who had also painted the floor cloth in the American Wing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the replacement will be of a similar design. We have been coordinating with one of the senior designers in Robert Jackson's company to make sure that the design will be in keeping with the Greek Revival style of the mansion.

NEW FACES AT THE MUSEUM

Diana Dalmas Tour Guide

A Fairfield University graduate, Diana has just begun working for her master's degree in fashion and textiles at the Fashion Institute of Technology. She has interned at Bartow-Pell and the Morris-Jumel Mansion and has a particular interest in Victorian costume. She hopes one day to become a curator.

Karen Lambdin Tour Guide

Karen has worked as a volunteer for several organizations over the years, including BPMM, the Pelham Art Center, and the Pelham Hockey Association. She also works part-time at Accents on Antiques in Pelham and continues to volunteer for BPMM in the education programs.

Diana Tavares Gardener

Diana has been a professional horticulturalist for the past three years. Before that she worked for ten years at gardens and environmental organizations in New York City, including Wave Hill, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and Hudson River Park Trust. She plans to pursue her master's degree in natural resources and environmental management.

THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN AT BPMM

When Lauren Gill was asked last winter if she would be interested in helping to develop a children's garden at BPMM, she jumped at the chance to grow vegetables in full sun, a rare opportunity for a Manhattan gardener. Consultant Debra Epstein had come up with an initial garden plan and guided the layout of the site into sections that would include a Native American garden, communal gardens, and individual plots that would ultimately serve three audiences: school groups, scouts, and individual children. The garden is located near the carriage house, where there is a source of water and a space that can be used as a rainy-day classroom. By mid-March, Lauren was ordering heirloom plants from GrowNYC and soliciting a seed donation from Seed Savers Exchange.

Before even one seed was planted, the Green Team from the Horticultural Society of New York and other volunteers helped construct a tall fence with materials provided by the Parks Department. The area was tilled by Larchmont Nursery, which generously donated their time and equipment, as well as plants for the garden. During two volunteer days in the early spring, woodchip-mulched paths were established and gates were built.

Beginning in late April, 265 students and their teachers attended children's garden programs led by Lauren, with help from volunteers. Children enjoyed working in the garden planting seeds with bright and cheery

gardening gloves and watering them with colorful watering cans.

During the rest of the spring and summer, maintenance work was done by Lauren working with volunteers, using as many on-site materials as possible: wood chips from the Parks Department, grass clippings from lawn mowing, and trellises made of pruned branches. In June and August, BPMM Adventures participants spent many happy hours working and learning in the garden, discovering living soil and pollinators, planting, watering, and even harvesting.

In early August, raised beds were constructed with the help of a teen group from the NY Horticultural Society just in time to plant a late summer crop. The beds were made of recycled scaffolding boards donated by Build it Green NYC, a non-profit organization that provides recycled supplies to community gardens.

The bounteous harvest is being donated to WHEDco (Women's Housing and Economic Development) in the south Bronx, which runs a food pantry along with its many other programs.

In addition to the invaluable work of Lauren and the other volunteers, BPMM is very grateful to the funders who have made this project a great success: The Lily Auchincloss Foundation, New York Community Trust through the Historic House Trust of New York City, and the Junior League of Pelham.

If you are interested in volunteering in the garden, please e-mail [info @bpmm.org](mailto:info@bpmm.org).



Lauren Gill is a graphic designer, website developer, mother, and lifelong gardener who is currently pursuing a horticulture certificate at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. She lives in Manhattan, where she has been a community gardener for 15 years, started a children's gardening program at her son's school, and enjoys solving garden problems in an urban setting.



BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

Contributions to Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum support the care and growth of the museum collection, development and implementation of public and school programs, and general operating support. There are many ways to help. For further information or to become a member, please call 718.885.1461.

MAKE A PLANNED GIFT

BPMM's Legacy Can Be Your Legacy

Support the preservation of the history, buildings, collection, and grounds of BPMM by entering into a planned giving program. This can be accomplished by including BPMM in your will. By doing this you can help to ensure that future generations experience the museum's rich collection and offerings.

ESTABLISH A NAMED ENDOWMENT

Help Secure the Future of BPMM

Named endowment funds are a meaningful way to honor a loved one, celebrate a family's commitment to history, or recognize the contribution of a foundation or corporation. These provide crucial financial support, in perpetuity, for BPMM's important work. Income generated by named endowments may be applied to general operations or a specific use such as school programs, care of gardens, or acquisitions.

MATCHING GIFTS

Companies often will match employee contributions to cultural organizations. If you are eligible to have your gift to BPMM matched by your company, please complete the matching gift form (provided by your employer) and send this paperwork with your donation.

VOLUNTEER AT BPMM

A wide range of volunteer opportunities is available for anyone interested in donating their time and energy to help keep the mansion and property accessible to the public. Volunteer opportunities include, but are not limited to, leading education programs, supporting public programs and special events, providing administrative assistance, and garden help (seasonal). Benefits include training and advance notice of lectures and concerts.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

Become a member today and join an ever-widening circle of friends who are helping to keep this historic site vibrant for generations to come. Your membership helps support Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum's ongoing operations and programs. Members at all levels enjoy free museum admission as well as member discounts on programs.

FRIEND \$40

Fully tax-deductible

- * Free individual admission
- * Advance program notice
- * Discounts on programs and shop purchases

FRIEND FAMILY \$100

Fully tax-deductible

- * Same as Friend level plus
- * Admission free for a family of two adults and two children up to age 21

HERITAGE \$180

Fully tax-deductible

- * Same as Friend level plus
- * Two free admission passes
- * Invitations to members only events and trips
- * Free copy and listing in annual yearbook
- * Participation in annual meeting and luncheon
- * Voting rights at annual meeting

HERITAGE FAMILY \$300

Fully tax-deductible

- * Same as Heritage level except
- * Admission free for a family of two adults and two children up to age 21
- * Four free guest passes

BARTOW-PELL SOCIETY \$500

\$464 tax-deductible

- * Same as Heritage Family level plus
- * Invitation to donors' reception and recognition in selected print materials

CONSERVATION CIRCLE \$1,000

\$900 tax-deductible

- * Same as Bartow-Pell Society level
- * Use of Orangerie (certain restrictions apply)

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE \$3,500

\$3,150 tax-deductible

- * Same as Bartow-Pell Society level
- * Use of site (certain restrictions apply)

A yearlong membership to Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum makes a great gift for any occasion.

I would LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER OF BARTOW-PELL MANSION MUSEUM:

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Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ made payable to Bartow-Pell Landmark Fund or

Please bill my MasterCard Visa Card Number _____

Name as it appears on credit card _____ Exp. date _____

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE: BPMM'S SUCCESSFUL PIP CAMPAIGN; THE EARLY PELL'S; THE NEW SILHOUETTE EXHIBITION; THE FELD GIFT, THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN

PLEASE VISIT WWW.BPMM.ORG OR CALL 718.885.1461 FOR MORE INFORMATION

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