



NYC Parks

Historic House Trust of New York City

#2012 Annual Report

Values

#Historic Building Conservation and Property Management
#Organizational Development Support
#Community Engagement
#Education and Public Programs
#Diverse Material Culture



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALICE AUSTEN HOUSE MUSEUM

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Follow Us

Online

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www.facebook.com/hhtnyc

Twitter

@hhtnyc

Mission

The Historic House Trust of New York City (HHT) is a nonprofit organization that operates in tandem with the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation to aid in and insure the preservation of 23 city-owned historic properties located in parks in all five boroughs. We believe historic sites are not static antiquities – they are living institutions uniquely poised to address current issues while retaining their connections to the past. HHT is therefore dedicated to preserving our sites, protecting their collections, engaging diverse audiences, educating visitors and sustaining the nonprofit organizations that operate our houses.



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Historic House Trust
of New York City

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The Arsenal
Room 203
New York, NY 10065
212 360-8282
f 212 360-8201

INVIGORATING OUR WORLD

A MESSAGE FROM JOHN C. GUSTAFSSON, BOARD CHAIR



People think of history-based organizations as things that remain very much the same for long periods of time, much as they think of our stock in trade, the historic house. The more it stays the same, the better it is, yes? Well, no. Not anymore. Fiscal 2011-2012 was a time not merely for HHT to contemplate change but also to redefine our future and re-vision our ability to survive and to remain relevant. Here at HHT, and previously as chair of the Staten Island Historical Society, I have developed a little bit of experience with historic houses and the economic, cultural, educational and social environment in which they operate. Of this I can be sure: the times, they are a changin’. And even though our ilk has been known for staying the course, staying the course has to mean something new today.

Our Executive Director, Franklin Vagnone, has spent this past year creating, developing and refining a new concept in historic house management, preservation and presentation. If you have not had a chance to hear his thoughts, and you have as much of a deep love of our past as we share here, let us know, and we’ll arrange for you to learn more. Frank’s fundamental concept is new for historic house museums -- second guess everything that you think is fundamental to the historic house world. Do not assume that you can’t reach a new audience. Do not assume that you have to keep people “at bay” when they are on your site. Do not assume that the story of your house ended a hundred years ago. Open your mind. Create. Cooperate. Communicate. Frank’s thoughts have made HHT into an emerging leader for new historic house museum management and ideas.

So where have we been during the past year? We have been analyzing the historic house world. But



Urban Gardening (courtesy of Wyckoff Farmhouse Museum)

that’s such the understatement. We have been studying and re-studying the historic house world. When we’re done, we’re going to incorporate our learning into the innovative programming that distinguishes our houses, pushing the boundaries of what is expected and acceptable. We are already starting to get the attention of new audiences around the world, and of new funding sources previously unavailable to us. The core of our work remains the same: we continue to provide conservation, curatorial and financial resources to our individual houses and their staffs and boards of directors. But we’re moving into something completely new. We have begun to provide management resources -- helping the smaller, local boards of directors to develop themselves, to improve themselves and to grow themselves. To follow up on these targeted efforts, we have created our first brand new Board committee in many years, an Oversight and Management Committee, whose mission it is to survey on a global and hands-on level the functioning of our constituent boards, and then to marshal the appropriate human and other resources to help them to help themselves. When our houses have stronger boards, they have a broader reach into their communities; they market better; they fundraise better; and they communicate better with those they are there to serve.

A few months into my tenure, I’m seeing the upcoming years not as a time of belt-tightening (which, of course, it will be!), but as a time for learning how to deploy our human resources and our intellectual resources in new and different ways to improve our houses contact with, and the services they provide to, their local communities and the city-at-large.

If you invigorate it, they will come. We’re counting on it!

John C. Gustafsson, Board Chair



County fair (courtesy of Historic Richmond Town)

INNOVATION AT OUR HOUSES

A MESSAGE FROM FRANKLIN D. VAGNONE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In this Annual Report, the Historic House Trust is proud to feature innovative programs that the houses in our collection have initiated independently. Located in diverse neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs, these organizations have succeeded in attracting diverse audiences through imaginative programs and educational offerings. From naturalization ceremonies and yoga classes, to contemporary art pursuits and historic preservation workshops, HHT sites are actively responding to community needs and interests through exciting, participatory programs and experiences. Despite difficult realities facing historic house museums -- including a dwindling fundraising base, a perceived lack of relevance and interest from the public, and demographic shifts -- HHT houses are thriving by forging connections with local

communities and expanding their programming. Taking a cue from the work of our member houses, HHT has also been focusing on expanding innovation in historic house museums. As always, we love to hear what our supporters think about our work and what they would like to see and experience. We invite you to join our conversations about the future of historic house museums on Twitter (@hhtnyc) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/hhtnyc). Don’t be shy -- tell us what you really think! Together, we can continue to forge an inclusive, exciting path to engagement for New York City’s storied historic houses.

Franklin D. Vagnone

Franklin D. Vagnone, Executive Director

SPOTLIGHT: INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMING

HHT applauds the success of its member houses in creating adaptive and evolutionary programming that creatively engages the community and inspires discussion and thought. These innovative programs are positioning the houses as centers in their communities and places for exploration, entertainment and performance. A few of the emerging programs are below.



Yoga classes (courtesy of Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum)



Immersive theatre experiences (courtesy of Morris-Jumel Mansion Museum)



Naturalization Ceremony at King Manor Museum (courtesy of Kathy Forrestal)

DIRECTORS’ COUNCIL

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FOLLOW US ONLINE!



Visit our website for a calendar of events and other activities at the houses.

Become a member online!
historichousetrust.org

2012 Founders Award Dinner
Honoree for the use of their
plaster in the "Poe Plaster Party"

THE FUND AT WORK:

Installation of a tarp on the Merchant's House wall and parapet, in order to prevent moisture infiltration from damaging the recently completed plaster work and interior finishes.

Repair of the fiber optic lighting system at the Dyckman Farmhouse Museum in order to allow for the viewing of exhibits on the lower level.



INSIDE STORY

The archaeology work for the upcoming Bowne House restoration project uncovered some notable findings, including the remnants of a cobblestone pathway.

Removing graffiti from the masonry on the east wall and stoop at the Merchant's House Museum prompted the repainting of the ornamental ironwork in a historically appropriate peale green color after it was discovered via paint analysis.

In 2012, the Preservation Crew continued to address needed repair work at the houses in all five boroughs, including the floor at Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum.



PRESERVE

HISTORIC BUILDING CONSERVATION AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

HHT's main effort is ensuring the successful preservation of the irreplaceable historic houses in its care. HHT's Architectural Conservator consults on and manages restoration projects at the sites ranging from small repairs to large-scale capital projects. As of November 2012, there are 19 capital projects, in design or in construction, throughout the five boroughs of New York City. In 2012, there were five "emergency" repairs – projects that supplement HHT's capital work and are funded through private support for HHT. HHT's dedicated Preservation Crew also undertakes small restoration projects at the sites to stave off larger architectural issues.

2012 PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

1 Completed the \$340,000 exterior restoration at Kingsland Homestead which included the restoration of the wood cornices and windows, as well as the replacement of the leaders, gutters and downspouts (with support designated by Queens Borough President Hon. Helen Marshall).

2 Collaborated on the development of the plan for the new \$4,475,000 Education Center at the Wyckoff Farmhouse Museum, which received unanimous approval from the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (with support designated by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz and City Council Member Lewis Fidler).

Proposed Wyckoff Farmhouse Museum Education Center (courtesy of N Architects)



3 Continued the partnership with the World Monuments Fund and the Williamsburg High School for Architecture & Design with a 3-day field school at Lefferts Historic House where students learned about proper care and maintenance of a historic house including the cleaning of the historic shutters.



THE EMERGENCY MAINTENANCE FUND

provides support for immediate structural concerns and repairs that arise at the historic houses in HHT's collection. The Fund is separate from the public dollars that fund our capital projects. Projects covered by the Emergency Maintenance Fund can include small repairs that, if left untreated, may weaken the building's architectural fabric, or larger problems that pose an immediate threat to the structure as a public venue.

SUSTAIN

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

Once the buildings are stabilized, HHT provides resources to the leadership at the houses to help them operate efficiently. Community-based nonprofit organizations, with budgets ranging from \$42,000 to \$2.9 million annually, operate the historic houses as museums. HHT works to strengthen these organizations through annual financial support and capacity building opportunities including Board Governance workshops, quarterly roundtable meetings with House Directors, and oversight on strategic planning and fiscal management. There are over 600 volunteer Board members involved in the stewardship of HHT and its member houses.

2012 PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

1 Partnered with the Arts & Business Council of New York and the Financial Women's Association to host a Board recruitment event to pair the nonprofit organizations that operate the houses with potential new Board members.

2 Worked with the Conference House Association in Staten Island to review Board roles and responsibilities, best practices for nonprofit organizations and mission statements.

3 Distributed general operating support funds to the houses, as well as a stipend for the Historic House Festival. General operating support is fundamental to the operation of the house museums. These funds supported Old Stone House as it underwent rebranding with design services provided pro-bono by Beardwood & Co.



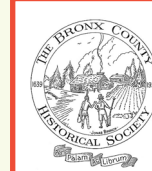
1776 Peace Conference event
(photo courtesy of Conference House)



**OLD
STONE
HOUSE**
& WASHINGTON PARK

THE ESSENTIAL MANAGEMENT SUPPORT FUND

provides unrestricted support to the nonprofit organizations that operate the historic houses in HHT's collection. The Fund also assists with professional development and capacity building initiatives for the houses.



2012 Founders Award Dinner
Honoree for the Bronx Latino
History Project

THE FUND AT WORK:

Offering capacity building opportunities for the House Directors

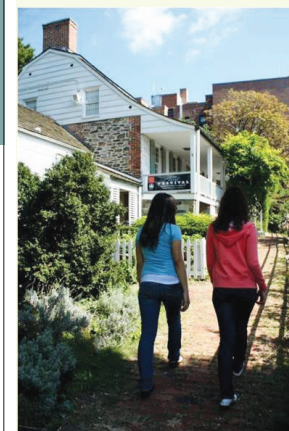


Provided general operating support funds to the houses

INSIDE STORY

11 staff members and 15 Board members from 14 houses attended the HHT Board Recruitment event to network with professionals in the fields of nonprofit organizations, historic preservation, education and museums.

After the success of the 2011 Strategic Planning Workshop led by HHT Board Vice Chair Franny Eberhart and the hard work of the Dyckman Farmhouse Museum Alliance and staff, the Dyckman Farmhouse has recently received 501c(3) status from the Internal Revenue Service.





THE FUND AT WORK:

In partnership with Benjamin Moore, provided sponsorship for the Little Red Lighthouse Festival and commissioned signage in Spanish.



Participated in Respect For All Week. For this initiative, HHT created and posted a special online lesson plan for educators. The plan included an interactive activity teaching themes of Respect for All through the lens of New York City History.



INSIDE STORY

HHT connections could be found throughout the performing arts in NYC this year – performances of Poe's poetry set to salsa music, an Alice Austen Off-Broadway musical, and a children's musical about the Little Red Lighthouse (commissioned by HHT).

At HHT's food-themed fall festival, the Cool Haus truck, pictured below, was on hand with a Little Red Lighthouse inspired ice-cream sandwich of red velvet cookies and Tahitian vanilla bean ice cream. YUM!



ENGAGE

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

With the buildings secure, HHT works to increase the relevance and visibility of the individual sites and to promote visitation to the collection as a whole. Through city-wide events and programs, HHT oversees activities that encourage public engagement in local communities and invite visitors to explore the City's history. HHT actively updates its lively Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages and has expanded its community engagement through multilingual publications and audio tours. Through its Roof Raisers Brigade and Edward I. Koch Intern and Fellow program, community members can volunteer their time and talents with HHT and its houses. Currently, there are over one thousand volunteers involved with the 23 member sites.

2012 PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

1 Welcomed more than 800,000 visitors to the historic houses for tours, school programs, and family activities. 2012 also marked the 20th anniversary of the Little Red Lighthouse Festival, drawing hundreds to the beloved landmark.



2 Prioritized community engagement during Hurricane Sandy response. HHT used Twitter to actively communicate with its houses, receive information from community members, and reach out to other cultural institutions. HHT Tweeted this picture, taken by Lewis H. Latimer House caretaker Joel Holub, and many other photos to keep constituents apprised of conditions at the houses.



3 Forged a new partnership with Art Beyond Sight to create audio descriptions of the houses, helping to further engage visitors with visual impairments. Pictured is David Mandel, HHT's Director of Interpretation & Education, recording an audio description of Conference House.



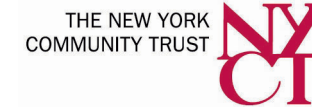
THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FUND

promotes visitation to the collection as a whole and supports public engagement initiatives at HHT houses. The Fund aids HHT's Edward I. Koch Intern and Fellow program, sponsors citywide events and underwrites communication strategies.

EDUCATE

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS

In December 2010, The New York Community Trust generously awarded a grant of \$100,000 to the Historic House Trust to fund the development of a series of signature education programs at its historic houses. In 2012, HHT worked with the substantial majority of its sites to develop these programs and successfully launched eight of them. Thanks to the support of The New York Community Trust, to date over 25,000 people in all five boroughs have had the chance to experience New York City and its history in exciting ways—whether through the lens of a pinhole camera, with a bilingual audioguide, by planting and cultivating vegetables, in an online Revolutionary War game, and through other interactive educational initiatives.



NEW YORK COMMUNITY TRUST'S SIGNATURE EDUCATION PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

1 **Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum—Native American Garden Project.** This project expanded their most popular education program and enhanced it with a nutrition-based curriculum.



Courtesy of Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum

2 **Alice Austen House Museum—Pinhole Camera Program.** By creating an enhanced pinhole camera program, the Alice Austen House Museum tied their site to a national event—Worldwide Pinhole Photography Day.



Courtesy of Paul Moakley

3 **Lefferts Historic House—Interactive Kitchen Exhibit.** The interactive kitchen exhibit corrected the historical inaccuracies of the previous kitchen and granted visitors the freedom to handle historic reproductions of kitchen items.



Courtesy of Lefferts Historic House Museum



MORE FROM THE SIGNATURE EDUCATION PROGRAM:

Edgar Allan Poe Cottage—The Bronx Latino History Project: English/Spanish Audio Interpretation and the Bronx Latino History Project Historic Houses of the Bronx Map Brochure.

Gracie Mansion—"A Student Guide to the People's House" Brochure.



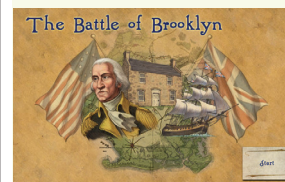
COURTESY OF THE GRACIE MANSION CONSERVANCY

King Manor Museum—King Library Interpretation/Commonplace Book Activities.



Morris-Jumel Mansion Museum—The Mansion and the Revolutionary War E-Field Trip.

Old Stone House—Battle of Brooklyn: Online Activity.



COURTESY OF OLD STONE HOUSE

THE EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS FUND

provides support to the sites in HHT's collection to help develop and strengthen their public and educational programs. It offers assistance with identifying needs and enables the implementation of programs that increase capacity and engage new audiences.

Gaylord
Your Trusted Source

2012 Founders Award Dinner
Honoree for assistance in Poe
Mirror conservation.

THE FUND AT WORK:

Sponsored house curators to attend a disaster management seminar at Lower East Side Tenement Museum

Supplied funds for Poe Mirror conservation

INSIDE STORY

HHT Curator attended the AAM Annual Meeting and Expo in Minneapolis, returning with information and experiences to share with HHT site curators and volunteers, like this Poe Cottage volunteer.



HHT Curator talked with New York University (NYU) public history class to discuss administrative challenges in our program areas.

An Archival Intern from NYU completed a project at the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre archiving nearly 50 years of documents related to the theatre's marionette shows.



HHT Curator and the Contemporary Art Partnerships Committee enjoyed a trip to the Brooklyn Museum to view the "Playing House" contemporary art activations in the museum's period rooms.

PROTECT

DIVERSE MATERIAL CULTURE

To help protect and conserve the collections of the houses for the enjoyment of future audiences, HHT provides curatorial assistance to the sites in its collection. Many HHT member sites lack the resources to employ a curator; the HHT Curator fills this void by providing curatorial expertise and resources to staff and volunteers at the houses. Currently, HHT assists in the preservation and interpretation of over 90,000 house collections and artifacts. From a fragment of General Lafayette's sash at Kingsland Homestead to a piano music book used by the Tredwell sisters at the Merchant's House Museum to a collar worn by Rufus King's dog, HHT provides support for these collections and enables the houses to introduce their visitors to the stories told by these diverse objects.

2012 PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

1 Secured funds from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund to establish HHT's Roof Raisers Curatorial Brigade, a training program that will prepare volunteers to perform curatorial duties at HHT houses.



2 Provided consultation and guidance to Morris-Jumel Mansion Museum for their contemporary art installations.



3 Provided funds and oversight of conservation for Edgar Allan Poe's gilt framed 19th century mirror.



THE COLLECTIONS FUND

provides basic but essential collections care to the houses in HHT's collection. The Collections Fund offers assistance with collections management and curatorial needs.



Executive Director Franklin Vagnone and Deputy Director Meredith Horsford teach a professional seminar at the Cooperstown Graduate Program.

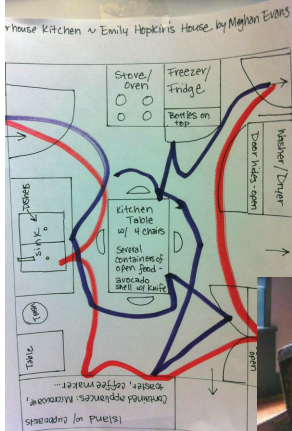
SPOTLIGHT: ADVOCACY

The Historic House Trust strongly believes in action! Through its efforts overseeing a diverse network of historic house museums, HHT has developed innovative strategies for museum management and nonprofit administration. Throughout the year, HHT devotes time to not only implementing these successful strategies but teaching them to others. Over the past few years, HHT staff members have spoken at a variety of venues including:

- Brooklyn College
- Columbia University
- Cooperstown Graduate Program
- Cosmopolitan Club of New York City
- Fashion Institute of Technology
- Great Camp Sagamore
- Greater Hudson Heritage Network
- Parsons The New School for Design
- Metropolitan Museum of Art
- Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums (2012 Annual Museum Conference)
- Museum Association of New York
- Museum of the City of New York
- Museumwise
- New York City Department of Parks & Recreation
- New York School of Interior Design
- New York University
- University of North Carolina at Charlotte
- Williamsburg High School for Architecture & Design

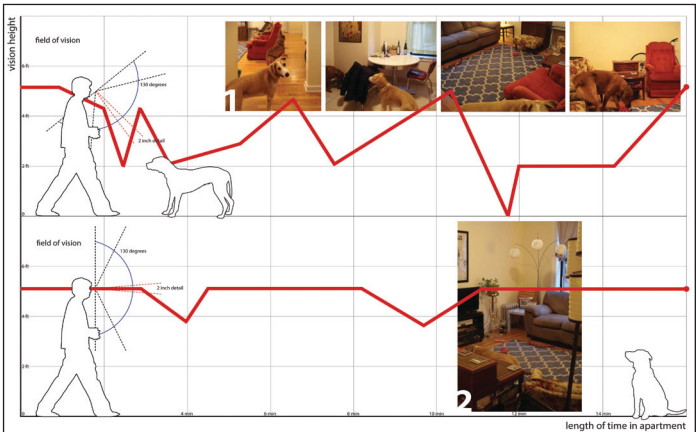
TOPICS HAVE INCLUDED:

- *Interactive Design for Museums*
- *Old House, New Art: Revitalizing the Historic House Museum with Site-specific Art*
- *Thoughts on Houses: The Anarchist Guide to Historic House Museums*
- *Quantitative Analysis for Nonprofits*
- *Successful Sustainability for Museums Housed in Historic Structures*



UNCC Student project for Van Cortlandt House Museum

Student project from HHT professional seminar at Cooperstown Graduate Program



Student project from Columbia University graduate course "The Future of House Museums: Real Problems, Real Solutions"

HHT STAFF

Rebecca Brainard
Preservation Crew Member

Olivia Cothren
Development Associate

Caroline Drabik
Curator

Sheri Durkee
Development Director

Meredith Horsford
Deputy Director

David Mandel
Director of Interpretation & Education

Jonathan Mellon
Senior Architectural Conservator

Sara Meyer
Development Assistant

Matthew Rizzo
Edward I. Koch Fellow

Franklin Vagnone
Executive Director

SPECIAL THANKS TO



NYC Parks

City of New York
Parks & Recreation
Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Veronica M. White, Commissioner

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BRONX

Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum
(718) 885-1461
www.bpmm.org

Edgar Allan Poe Cottage
(718) 881-8900
www.bronxhistoricalsociety.org

**Valentine-Varian House
Museum of Bronx History**
(718) 881-8900
www.bronxhistoricalsociety.org

Van Cortlandt House Museum
(718) 543-3344
www.vancortlandthouse.org

BROOKLYN

Lefferts Historic House Museum
(718) 789-2822
www.prospectpark.org

Hendrick I. Lott House
(718) 375-2681
www.lotthouse.org

Old Stone House
(718) 768-3195
www.theoldstonehouse.org

Wyckoff Farmhouse Museum
(718) 629-5400
www.wyckoffassociation.org

MANHATTAN

Dyckman Farmhouse Museum
(212) 304-9422
www.dyckmanfarmhouse.org

Gracie Mansion
(212) 570-4751
www.nyc.gov/gracie

Little Red Lighthouse
(212) 304-2365

Merchant's House Museum
(212) 777-1089
www.merchantshouse.org

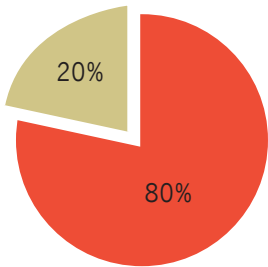
Morris-Jumel Mansion Museum
(212) 923-8008
www.morrisjumel.org

Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre
(212) 988-9093
www.cityparksfoundation.org

STATEMENT OF
ACTIVITIES
FISCAL YEAR 2012
(JULY 1, 2011 TO JUNE 30, 2012)

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
Public support and revenue:				
Contributions:				
Foundations	\$ 124,275	\$ 85,025	\$ 20,000	\$ 229,300
Government grants	16,000	292,981		308,981
Corporations	19,850			19,850
Individuals	50,543			50,543
Donated services, materials and facilities	442,304			442,304
Special events (net of expenses of \$115,139)	238,410			238,410
Memberships	15,865			15,865
Investment income	(29,848)	(18,472)		(48,320)
Miscellaneous income	559			559
Net assets released from restrictions	497,048	(497,048)		
Total public support and revenue	1,375,006	(137,514)	20,000	1,257,492
EXPENSES:				
Program services	1,156,578			1,156,578
Management and general	117,243			117,243
Fundraising	92,462			92,462
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,366,283			1,366,283
Change in Net Assets	8,723	(137,514)	20,000	(108,791)
Net assets, beginning of year	582,795	481,689	371,000	1,435,484
Net assets, end of year	\$ 591,518	\$ 344,175	\$ 391,000	\$ 1,326,693

80%
OF EVERY DOLLAR
CONTRIBUTED GOES
TO MISSION-RELATED
PROGRAMS



A model of Poe Cottage at HHT's Annual Founders Award Dinner (courtesy of Daniel Avila)

OUR FY12 SUPPORTERS

THE HISTORIC HOUSE TRUST GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES OUR 2012 SUPPORTERS

\$50,000 plus

Benjamin Moore
Bloomberg Philanthropies
The Charina Endowment Fund
New York City Department of Parks
& Recreation
The New York Community Trust
Robert W. Wilson Charitable Trust

\$25,000 - \$49,999

Bloomberg
Franny & David Eberhart
History Channel

\$15,000 - \$24,999
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Cynthia C. Wainwright & Stephen Berger
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Con Edison
The Estee Lauder Companies Inc.
The Leonard and Evelyn Lauder
Foundation
MetLife Foundation
The New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission
May & Samuel Rudin Family
Foundation, Inc.

\$10,000 - \$14,999

American Express
Joan Krupskas & Ted Barbour
New York State Council on the Arts
The Sidney J. Weinberg, Jr. Foundation

\$5,000 - \$9,999

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TD Bank
The Order of Colonial Lords of Manors
in America

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Courtesy of Queens County Farm Museum



A 1950s Christmas at Merchant's House Museum



"Jazz At the Mansion" at Morris-Jumel Mansion Museum