We all breathed a sigh of relief as the scaffolding that had covered the exterior of the mansion for nearly a year came down in January 2016. Finally, after nearly a decade of effort, the Greek-revival house was restored to something approaching its original appearance. But the road to restoration was not an easy one, nor is the restoration complete.

In the fall of 2007, Ursula Huff, president of the board, announced in the newsletter that “preliminary stages of the exterior restoration” had begun. A study of the building’s exterior had noted that there was a serious need for general waterproofing, restoration of the integrated gutters, façade pointing, cornice and trim repair, balcony restoration, and basement window replacement. The Parks Department, through its Capital Projects office, began trying to implement the work in 2009, but bids came in too high, with errors, or not at all. Finally, in the fall of 2013, the Historic House Trust (HHT), part of the Parks Department, took over the bidding process and once additional funding was in place chose Fifty-Three Restorations, which had worked with HHT and BPMM for several years, to do the job.

Before work could start on the exterior, however, it became apparent that the floor joists supporting the first and second floors on the east side of the building had rotted, possibly because of the delays in the exterior renovation. The Parks Department was quick to respond and to remedy the situation by installing temporary screw jacks in the basement. Although funding is in place and a contractor has been chosen, work has yet to begin. Another Parks project still in the works is the repair and painting of the Orangerie’s exterior. In addition to these Parks projects, we are going to restore the front stoop, for which funding has been raised, and complete several interior projects.

Many people deserve our gratitude for their hard work in making progress with the restoration of the mansion, but former executive director Ellen Bruzelius and former board member Bill Rainford, chair of the Buildings Committee, deserve special recognition for their dedication to the projects over the past several years, assisted along the way by board member Kelly Falloon. City Councilmember James Vacca and Bronx Borough Presidents Adolfo Carrión Jr. and Rubén Díaz Jr. played a significant role in making certain that funding was made available for the restoration, and the New York Landmarks Conservancy came through with emergency funds for roof repair after Hurricane Sandy. Although many individuals in the Parks Department have been supportive of BPMM over the years, special thanks should go to Jonathan Mellon of the Historic House Trust and Sybil Young of the Parks Capital Projects office for having coordinated the many complicated aspects of the restoration project.

While the building was undergoing its cosmetic surgery, the garden and grounds were the focus of many small but significant changes. The pool was cleaned and lights were installed; the Lachaise peacocks received permission to stay for another few years; the crabapple garden north of the pebble court was replanted; four iron tuteurs were installed around the pool; and a number of energetic groups of volunteers helped clean up the grounds. Again, special thanks to Ellen Bruzelius for organizing these projects, as well as Alice Dean, chair of the Garden Committee, and her crew, and the Sierra Club, New York Cares, and Con Edison, among others.
Letter from BPC Past President Cherrie Greenhalgh

After a period of transition, we are delighted to publish this latest issue of the Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum newsletter. The Chinese symbol for “change” has elements of both danger and opportunity, and I am happy to report that despite changes in our key personnel this last year, we had significant growth as well. Although we were saddened by the departures of our very capable Education Director/ Curator Margaret Highland and our Executive Director Ellen Bruzelius, after thoughtful and thorough searches, we hired talented new leaders, who have the capacity and energy to seize opportunities for growth and take Bartow-Pell to the next level, in partnership with the new Bartow-Pell Conservancy Board leadership.

I am proud to say that we never missed a beat at Bartow-Pell in spite of these transitions. Our programs have seen a dramatic increase in visitorship, our fundraising events were particularly successful this year, and we are grateful to all of you for your participation. Our holiday attendance was up over the previous year, and the Kentucky Derby Party was our largest and most successful ever.

Letter from BPC President Cynthia Brown

It is with great excitement that I look forward to a new year at Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum. As the new President of the Conservancy, I am thrilled to be working with an extremely talented staff, an accomplished and committed board of directors, and many hard-working individuals who help make our beloved historic house museum and cultural institution the vibrant place that it is.

I have served on the board for six years during which time I had the pleasure of co-chairing our 2014 Centennial Gala, “The Moonlight Ball,” with Ann Auwarter and Lynn Byrne. In 2015 Ellen Bruzelius and I represented BPMM in a program co-sponsored by the Chipstone and 1772 Foundations to explore ways of bringing historic house museums into a more dynamic 21st century. We received a grant that enabled us to produce ACT/REACT: Reimagining the Past, an in-situ theater performance (see page 6).

This year we welcome six new directors to our board, and one of our first efforts will be to complete a three-year Strategic Plan for future projects and programming. Our Curatorial Committee will continue its work on the collection and realizing a new floor cloth for the front hall; the Buildings and Grounds Committee will carry on its vital restoration work; our Business Development Committee will focus on ways to promote earned income, and our Fundraising Committee will continue to create our annual money-raising fetes. All of these efforts are vital to the health of Bartow-Pell. It is an honor to work with our highly committed board, and I thank them, as well as all our staff and volunteers, for their service this year.
When Ellen Bruzelius announced in March 2016 that she would be leaving in June, the news hit the Conservancy board hard, because during her seven years as Executive Director, Ellen proved to be creative, charming, diplomatic, determined, energetic, and expert at forming new partnerships for Bartow-Pell. The advance notice enabled the board to plan a farewell gathering on June 9 and to launch a professional search for a new Executive Director. After screening more than sixty resumes, a team of five, including past, present, and future board presidents, interviewed ten candidates and were delighted to find Alison McKay, whose experience working for a New York City cultural organization affiliated with the Parks Department and strengths in strategic leadership, innovative programming, development, community outreach and advocacy, and staff and vendor management made her an outstanding fit for Bartow-Pell. She joined BPMM on June 14 and immediately rolled up her sleeves by diving into events and hosting a visit from our Congressman Joe Crowley.

Alison comes from the Bayside Historical Society in Bayside, Queens, where she had worked since 2005, first as archivist, then curator, then executive director. She received her B.A. in art history from Manhattanville College, an M.A. in art history from Hunter College, and a master of library science from Queens College. At the Bayside Historical Society, she oversaw the daily operations of the organization and building, developed the annual budget, spearheaded fundraising events, cultivated new members, and created and implemented public and education programs, including events, workshops, art classes, and exhibitions. She is the author of two books, The Castle at Fort Totten (Bayside Historical Society, NY. 2014) and Bayside in the Images of America Series (Arcadia Publications. 2008).

In November, Margaret Highland moved to Texas as a result of her husband’s employment relocation. She served on the BPC board from 2005 to 2011, during which time she co-chaired the curatorial and education committee with Mary Huber. Subsequently, Margaret joined the staff as Education Director and Curator from 2011 to 2015, using her exceptional skills in history, the decorative arts, research, and arts administration. On November 8, the Conservancy hosted a send-off for her, but happily she continues to contribute to Bartow-Pell in her roles as historian and blogger.

The search for a new Curator and Education Director resulted in the selection of Alyssa Fridgen, an excellent candidate with the skills, experience, and energy to match the considerable needs of the museum. Alyssa spent time with Margaret in December and participated in the holiday weekend before joining BPMM full time in January. Alyssa has already made an impact with the development of a new themed tour highlighting 19th-century women leaders and bringing in many new visitors on Smithsonian Museum Day in March during Women’s History Month. She also coordinated the Easter Egg Hunt, which attracted nearly 900 visitors and 53 volunteers, and she brought in several artists to paint the gardens en plein air during our June luncheon.

Alyssa Fridgen has had more than nine years of experience curating exhibitions and developing programs for galleries, museums, and nonprofit organizations, primarily in New York City. She studied art history in Columbia University’s graduate program, received her Certificate in Fine Art Appraisal Studies from New York University, and has a B.S. in Marketing and International Business from Arizona State University. Before coming to BPMM, Alyssa managed the construction and exhibit design for a new gallery in the Visitor Services Center of the Brooklyn Navy Yard to showcase the art and industrial design work of the Yard tenants. Before that, she was chief curator and registrar of the Alexandria Museum of Art in central Louisiana, where she won a national exhibition award selected by the Curatorial Committee of the American Alliance of Museums.
RAISING THE BAR
ACQUISITIONS AND RESTORATIONS ENHANCE THE COLLECTION

In 2014 and 2015, Bartow-Pell was once again the grateful and delighted recipient of objects donated by Stuart and Sue Feld, owners of the Hirschl & Adler Galleries and honorary chairs of our 2014 Centennial celebration’s Moonlight Ball. These exquisite pieces refine and upgrade our collection of decorative arts—in particular lighting and ceramics—and reflect the classical style in vogue when the mansion was built. The gifts date mostly from the 1820s and ‘30s and include an American maple crib, a pair of French sinumbra lamps in the post-Napoleonic Restoration style, a French student lamp, and several “Old Paris” vases. In addition, BPMM purchased an early 19th-century serpentine-front, inlaid shaving stand from a local antiques shop for George Bartow’s bedchamber. These handsome new acquisitions are on view in the period rooms.

The Curatorial Committee, headed by Nora Mazur and Carswell Berlin, has made great strides in evaluating the collection, organizing restoration projects, and preparing for future installations, such as replacing the floor cloth in the front hall. Although Margaret Highland left us last fall, she continues to make a valuable contribution with her blog focusing on BPMM history and the collection, which can be accessed at https://mansionmusings.wordpress.com/.

A superb French chariot clock made in 1825 and donated to the Bartow-Pell collection in the 1940s was recently restored by antiquarian horologist John Metcalfe and is now back in place on the marble mantel in the south parlor. French clocks like this one were desirable decorative accessories in stylish, wealthy American houses during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, when neoclassicism was at its peak. Now is the perfect opportunity to see—and hear—our clock, after its recent restoration, as it once again chimes and tells us the hour.

Chariot Clock, French, 1825. Gilt bronze with impressed initials “L G.” Dated 1825 on the spring. Gift of Mrs. Elliot Tuckerman

John Metcalfe restored our chariot clock. He is a horologist, a master of antique clock restoration, and owner of Antiquarian Horologist in lower Manhattan.
EXHIBITIONS AT A GLANCE

Bartow-Pell’s spring 2015 exhibition featured early 19th-century American schoolgirl embroideries and watercolors from the collection of William and Sally Gemmill. This show was a special opportunity for the public to see beautiful and rare works from a major private collection of fine pictorial silk embroideries and watercolors made by well-to-do young ladies in exclusive schools known as “female academies.” Although a variety of subjects were taught, these schools are best remembered for the needlework and watercolor creations of their students. A finished needlework piece would be hung prominently in the home to demonstrate the daughter’s accomplishments.

The Gilded Age in America (ca. 1870–1900) was associated with opulence and luxury, especially in clothing styles. Highlights from these decades, drawn from the museum’s fashion collection, included women’s, men’s, and children’s garments, as well as period fashion illustrations. The fashions on display throughout the mansion were more than just glamorous; however; they revealed the larger ideas about family life and private and public spaces that shaped the United States at this time. On view from mid-February through April 2016, “Gilded Age Glamour,” curated by Claire McRee and Sarah Pickman, also explored connections between the collection and the history of the mansion, linking BPMM’s beginnings as a grand country home in the mid-19th century with its development as a museum in the 20th century. The summer of 2016 offered two fine exhibitions, one focused on the past and the other on the present. From June to mid-August, “Wish You Were Here!” displayed vintage postcards dating to the turn of the 19th century that offered views of historic inns, beaches, street scenes, military camps, sports, and Prohibition-era speakeasies in the area of Pelham Bay Park and City Island. Borrowed from the collection of local historian and BPC board member Thomas X. Casey, these delightful cards offer insight into changes in landscapes and lifestyles over the past century.

To celebrate the centennial of the formal garden, artists were invited to paint the gardens en plein air on June 9, in conjunction with the annual summer luncheon on the theme of French classical gardens. The paintings, on view in the Orangerie from July through September 23, capture the changing light and atmospheric mood of the hidden treasures of the Bartow-Pell gardens and grounds. Featured artists include Michele Basora, Mary Colby, Sofya Dudnik, Elise Fechtmann, C’naan Hamburger, Thomas Legaspi, Sarah Olson, Julie Ortiz, Kim Power, Linda Sacewicz, Greg Thielker, Melanie Vote, and Alice Elisabeth Waite.

Top: Cotton day dress, ca. 1895, Gift of Mrs. Alexander Rogers, 1974–75, and blue-striped silk dress with velvet trim and paste stones, ca. 1895, donor unknown.

Bottom: Artists painting the Bartow-Pell gardens on June 9, 2016.
The past year has been an exciting one for Bartow-Pell, with annual programs increasing their audiences and innovative programs attracting new ones. From our popular First Fridays and yoga classes to lectures, poetry readings, and chamber music concerts, the Mansion has something for everyone. Discover Bartow-Pell Day was introduced in 2014 as a feature of the citywide Open House New York Weekend, which offers visitors each fall an opportunity to experience the city’s rich architectural heritage in all five boroughs. Saturday events at BPMM include mansion and carriage house tours by costumed docents, garden walks, wigwam explorations, trail hikes, and children’s crafts. BPMM Adventures, a week-long camp program organized by our children’s garden manager, Lauren Gill, is another program that has become increasingly popular and now extends over three weeks in the summer. Below are some of the highlights of several unique recent events at the Mansion.

**ACT/REACT: Re-Imagining the Past** was a delightful immersive theater experience held in the mansion on April 7 and 8, 2016. The program was part of ShatterCABINET, an initiative of the Historic House Trust of New York City, in partnership with the Chipstone Foundation, whose purpose is to help historic house museums engage new audiences and make more expressive use of their collections. Playwrights from the group Supporting Characters provided six charming one-act plays based on an historic document, a letter written in 1838 by the Bartow family tutor. The City Island Theater Group brought the plays to life in different rooms of the mansion by providing actors, directors, and costumes. Seated (left to right): Carol Dooner, Graeme Buehrer, Sebastian Fisher, Britney Jensen; standing: Ed Friedman, Edgar Emanuel Cabrera, Rich Feldman, Matiana Bogiatzis, Amanda Livington Martin, Bob Mulroy, Shari Winard, Jay Langkamp, Sarah Harrold, Karen Andronico, and Linda Blackstock.

Over 50 years ago, the International Garden Club, now the Bartow-Pell Conservancy, established an annual fundraiser to benefit the museum’s landmark fund by honoring the daughters and granddaughters of board members at a “Presentation Reception.” The idea of welcoming young women into adult society is not new: court presentations took place in mid-19th-century England where young daughters were introduced to society as “debutantes” eligible for marriage. The tradition quickly caught on in the United States, and at Bartow-Pell, daughters and granddaughters of members are invited each year to participate in a reception at the mansion over the Thanksgiving weekend, continuing this charming tradition. In 2015 Bartow-Pell hosted its 50th presentation, in which seven young ladies were honored: (left to right): Brigid Fallon, Emily Eicher, and Kathryn Doyle being congratulated by Conservancy members Alice Dean and Mary Gallagher and Conservancy president Cherrie Greenhalgh.

In addition to the traditional lecture series, which have in the past focused on local history, current exhibitions, and gardens, BPMM teamed up with Four Way Books in the winter of 2016 to present three Sunday afternoon poetry readings in the double parlors. Two poets read at each event, with a brief musical interlude in between and a reception with a book signing afterwards. Pictured here is Gregory Pardlo, winner of the 2015 Pulitzer Prize in poetry, who read from Digest, his latest book, followed by the award-winning Reginald Dwayne Betts and music by guitarist Dustin Carlson.

Another popular annual event is Kentucky Derby Day, held this year on May 5. Here board member Jill Pytosh, who organized the wonderful party, shows off her award-winning hat to a group of enthusiastic gentlemen guests! Thanks to Jill’s organizational skills and her energetic committee members, Kentucky Day 2016 was the best attended in BPMM’s history.
Fall is upon us, and the excitement is palpable! Our staff has many programs planned, and we encourage members and not-yet-members to come take advantage of the offerings.

Be sure not to miss our groundbreaking Garden Centennial Exhibition (September 2–November 2), which celebrates the centennial of our formal garden designed in 1916 by Delano and Aldrich. The dynamic exhibit of outdoor sculpture will include large-scale objects of steel, wood, fiberglass, ceramic, recycled plastic, and various media. Come see how a classical garden can be a thought-provoking canvas for contemporary artists, connecting the past with the future and inspiring us all.

Throughout the year, attend fascinating lectures and concerts, many of them free for members. Join us on September 29 for a Local Author Spotlight, as Richard Zachs discusses his new book *Chasing the Last Laugh: Mark Twain’s Raunchy and Redemptive Round-the-World Comedy Tour* (Doubleday, 2016; $29.95). By popular demand, First Friday on October 7 will again feature the talented jazz vocalist Queen Esther with the Jeremy Bacon Jazz trio. First Fridays (April through December) are becoming a local favorite. Where else can you hear such a wide range of professional musicians in such a beautiful and relaxed setting?

October weekends will be filled with fun for families and children of all ages, including our new Fall into Fall Harvest Festival scheduled for Saturday, October 8 (noon to 4 p.m.; rain date Sunday, October 9). There will be music, crafts, games, horse-drawn wagon rides, and seasonal treats from area farmers’ markets, fresh cider from our outdoor press—something for everyone! Discover Bartow-Pell Day and Open House New York will follow on October 15. And lastly, if you love all things hallowed and horrible, don’t miss *Gravestone and Goth* on Saturday, October 29: 6 p.m. Cemetery Walk and Parlor Presentations of Horror Literature Readings by the City Island Theater Group.

**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 $50**

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

**HERITAGE FAMILY $300**

Fully tax-deductible  
* Same as Heritage level plus  
* Admission free for a family of two adults and two children up to age 18  
* Four free guest passes

**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 18

**BARTOW-PELL SOCIETY $500**

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

**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

**CONSERVATION SOCIETY $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)

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

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Will your company match your gift? If so, please enclose a matching gift form.
Photos (left to right): A tour of the Pell cemetery was a highlight of Discover Bartow-Pell Day; the Lachaise peacocks residing in the garden; volunteers from Harvesters for Change from the Equality Charter School in the Bronx help clean up our grounds.