

# Bard College The Montgomery Place Campus

January 2016–17 Year-End Report



*Mansion House's southwestern exterior  
Cover: Western view of Catskills from Mansion House*

# **Bard College**

## **The Montgomery Place Campus**

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In January 2016, Bard College purchased Montgomery Place, the historic 380-acre Livingston family estate, from Historic Hudson Valley (HHV). The property is unparalleled in its architecture, landscape, and archives and materials collections. The acquisition was the College's sole remaining opportunity to purchase land adjacent to its current campus. The future management and use of the estate have begun to take concrete form, and this report is a summary of activities that took place during Bard's first year of ownership (January 2016–17). Much has been accomplished. A list follows of work that has been completed or is in progress at the Montgomery Place campus.





*Clockwise from top left:  
Squash Court, Visitors Center,  
Coach House, Gardener's Cottage*

## Operations: Buildings and Grounds, Environmental Services, and Safety and Security

Adding 380 acres and 26 buildings to the Bard College campus has been a great challenge for our operations staff. It is a tribute to the hard work of the Buildings and Grounds, Environmental Services, and Security divisions that they managed to meet the challenge head-on. Security upgrades and maintenance projects have included major capital building improvements and renovations.

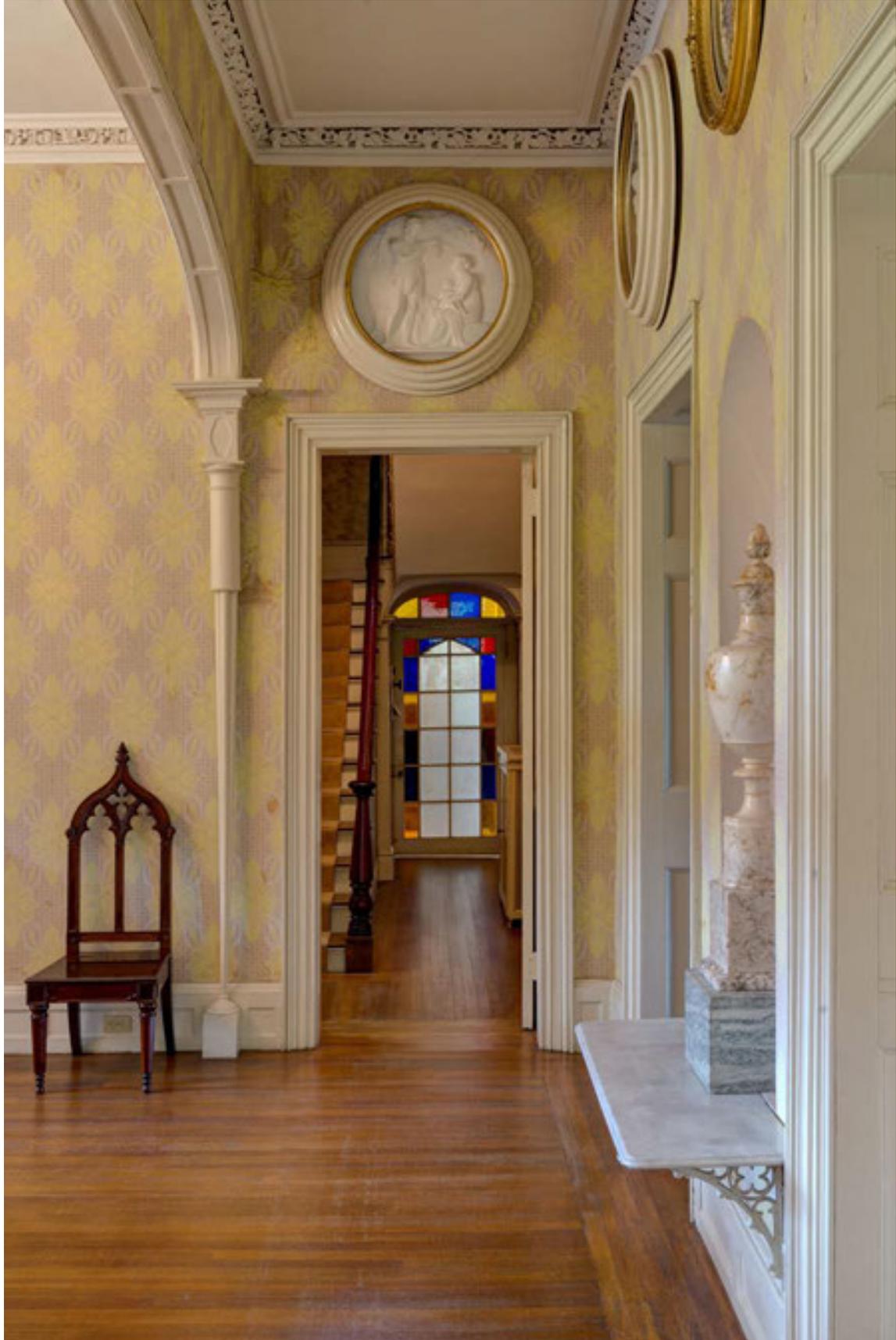
- Squash Court: new home of the Bard Prison Initiative (BPI). Work included gut renovation, new deck, inside/outside LED lighting, new HVAC system, and parking lot upgrades. Three floors of approximately 2,180 square feet were renovated to create six new offices, conference room, open workspace, kitchen, and a large reception area.
- Mansion: 300-plus-page conditions assessment completed in fall 2016 to document the current state of the mansion and its needs, listed by urgency. In addition, crack monitors were installed to track building movement, gutters were replaced, chimney caps were created and installed, and select window shutters were restored in accordance with historic guidelines. Compliance with fire code regulation upgrades is in progress.
- Butler Building South: completed a noninvasive building overhaul to house the archives and selected collection materials in a usable, organized, and secure way. Upgrades included deep cleaning; wall, ceiling, and floor painting; and layout changes that allowed for installation of shelving systems. In addition, the boiler was replaced, new propane tanks installed, and new gutters and a dehumidification unit were added.
- Visitors Center: weatherized to house BPI book stock. Bathrooms were upgraded for year-round use.





*Clockwise from top left:  
 Spur Cottage, Swiss Cottage,  
 North Cottage, Thompson House*

- Coach House: installed phone control center in basement and made upgrades to the electric and power systems for the building and others nearby. A generator was also installed.
- Gardener’s Cottage: installed new septic and leach field, repaired and replaced bluestone walkway, painted and refinished floors.
- Annandale Road Cottages (North, Spur, Swiss): installed lighting and signage for first responders.
- Modular House: installed new boiler and well pump and resurfaced gravel driveway.
- Thompson House: repaired roof, porch, and gutters; insulated basement and attic; and upgraded appliances.
- Installed new or improved existing Internet service to Coach House, Greenhouse, Squash Court, Thompson House, and Butler South Building.
- Installed new alarms and locks throughout the property to be compatible with Bard systems.
- Property-wide improvements made to all roads, including managing storm water and repaving asphalt curtain at front gate.
- New signage installed throughout the property including front gate, Visitors Center, and farm stand.
- Commitment received from Dutchess County Department of Public Works to build a multipurpose pathway on eastern side of CR 103 (Annandale Road) from Publications Office to Montgomery Place front gate, to be completed in summer of 2017.
- Comprehensive environmental services and security schedules implemented to maintain and protect the property.





*Clockwise from top left:  
Entrance to Formal Garden, Greenhouse,  
Interior of the Greenhouse, Ellipse Pool*

## Horticulture, Arboretum, and Trails

Bard's horticulture and grounds crew, part of the Landscape and Arboretum Program, has taken on the task of maintaining the property to the same high standards as the main Bard campus. It is a tribute to the hard work, dedication, and loyalty of the staff that they have been able to do so. Highlights included:

- Removed dead and dying trees and invasive plants from the grounds, farm stand, and Visitors Center parking lot; cleared the grounds around the main gate; and began replanting the historic rose garden.
- Completed Existing Conditions Report on the Greenhouse.
- Received a \$100,000 grant for restoration of the Greenhouse, which is currently underway, with a completion date of June 2017.
- Measured and verified with Department of Environmental Conservation five trees designated as New York State Champion Trees.
- Oversaw 12 garden volunteers, two Abilities First students, and 24 new work-study students to assist on grounds and garden upkeep.
- Researched Montgomery Place archives for horticulture-related information, digitized several maps, and interviewed two former Montgomery Place gardeners.
- Led monthly and special event garden and arboretum tours for both Bard and local community members.
- Trail maintenance and tree measuring on South Woods Trail completed by students during Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Engagement.
- New horticulture guide in progress includes both main campus and Montgomery Place campus.





*Clockwise from top left:  
farm house, farm complex,  
farm stand, orchards*

## Montgomery Place Orchards and Farm Stand

Under previous ownership, Montgomery Place Orchards functioned as a stand-alone operation. With Bard's purchase of the property, the orchards' farmers and Bard administration have made great strides in working together as partners to secure the long-term success of both the orchards and farm stand.

- For the first time in 20 years, the farmers secured a five-year lease (previous leases were only one year in length, which constituted a challenge for farmers trying to plan for the future).
- New signage was designed and built for the farm stand.
- The modular house located behind the farm stand was leased to farmers for migrant worker housing (\$1 lease).
- Montgomery Place Orchards' lease was reviewed and control of various spaces in the farm complex was reassigned or clarified.
- All farm buildings were installed with fire alarms and extinguishers.
- All farm roads have been repaired and resurfaced.
- The commercial kitchen was updated to include a commercial exhaust hood and fire-safe, approved electrical equipment.
- The farmers partnered with Chartwells and Bard's food initiative program to hold food production classes.





*Clockwise from top left:  
General Montgomery's pocket  
watch, c.18th century; portrait of  
Lewis Livingston, c.1800, by  
Louis-Léopold Boilly; dueling  
pistols, c.18th century*

## Archives and Collections

The first year was spent gathering information on the collections and archives, and developing policies, procedures, and strategies on how they might be utilized by the College and outside groups. Work to date has focused on compiling an inventory, finding storage solutions, identifying records, reviewing insurance coverage, and acquiring a working database.

- Initiated a manual inventory project of the 8,000-plus accessioned and unaccessioned collection items that are stored inside the Mansion House. To date, the first floor (four main rooms) and majority of second-floor collections have been completed. Third-floor inventory and objects stored in other buildings are to be completed this year.
- Photography with descriptions of all objects is in progress.
- Completed renovating the carpenter shop into a secure space to house all paper archives and select collection items. Work included installing shelving units and creating an identification system where archival and selected collections materials are housed.
- Drafted mission statement and policies regarding collections management, outgoing loans, research and reproduction requests, special events, professional photography, and filming requests. Policies are pending final management approval.
- Completed appraisals of silver and jewelry collections.
- Scheduled conservation assessment of the painting collections.
- Revised insurance coverage for all Montgomery Place archive and collection materials.
- Extracted the Montgomery Place database from HHV's master list and trained key personnel on usage.
- Trained seven student workers, two staff members, and four volunteers to assist in: compiling an inventory of the collections, storage management, photography, and drafting policies and procedures manual.





*Horticulture supervisor leads a tour of the grounds during Family Weekend*

## Tours and Special Events

Bard faculty, staff, and students used the property for several purposes over the year, including academic study, community outreach, and special events. In addition, by actively engaging with the local community and cohosting events that benefited both the community and Bard, the College helped make the property as accessible as possible.

- Extended property hours from sunrise to sunset, 365 days a year (previous hours were 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.).
- Completed first summer season of public tours scheduled on Saturdays, four times daily, from Memorial Day through Labor Day. The 2017 tour season has been extended through October 2017.
- Honored HHV commitments to host two private weddings in the summer of 2016. (Note: The current private special event policy is under review.)
- Trained several Bard students as tour guides.
- Hosted Fisher Center’s SummerScape Gala, a faculty gathering of “Big Ideas” on curriculum changes, and a daylong outdoor history program, “Celebrating the Saw Kill.”
- Arranged a private tour for patrons of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, hosted daylong tours in conjunction with Hudson River Heritage Country Seats, and led guided tours for several VIPs.
- Scheduled open house tours during Opening Day, Commencement, Family Weekend, Discovery Day, and Accepted Students Day.
- Organized volunteer fall field trip and winter appreciation luncheon for garden and house volunteers.
- Supervised three photo shoots.
- Participated in Montgomery Place Orchards’ annual apple pie contest.





*Trio of Bard Conservatory students performs on the portico*

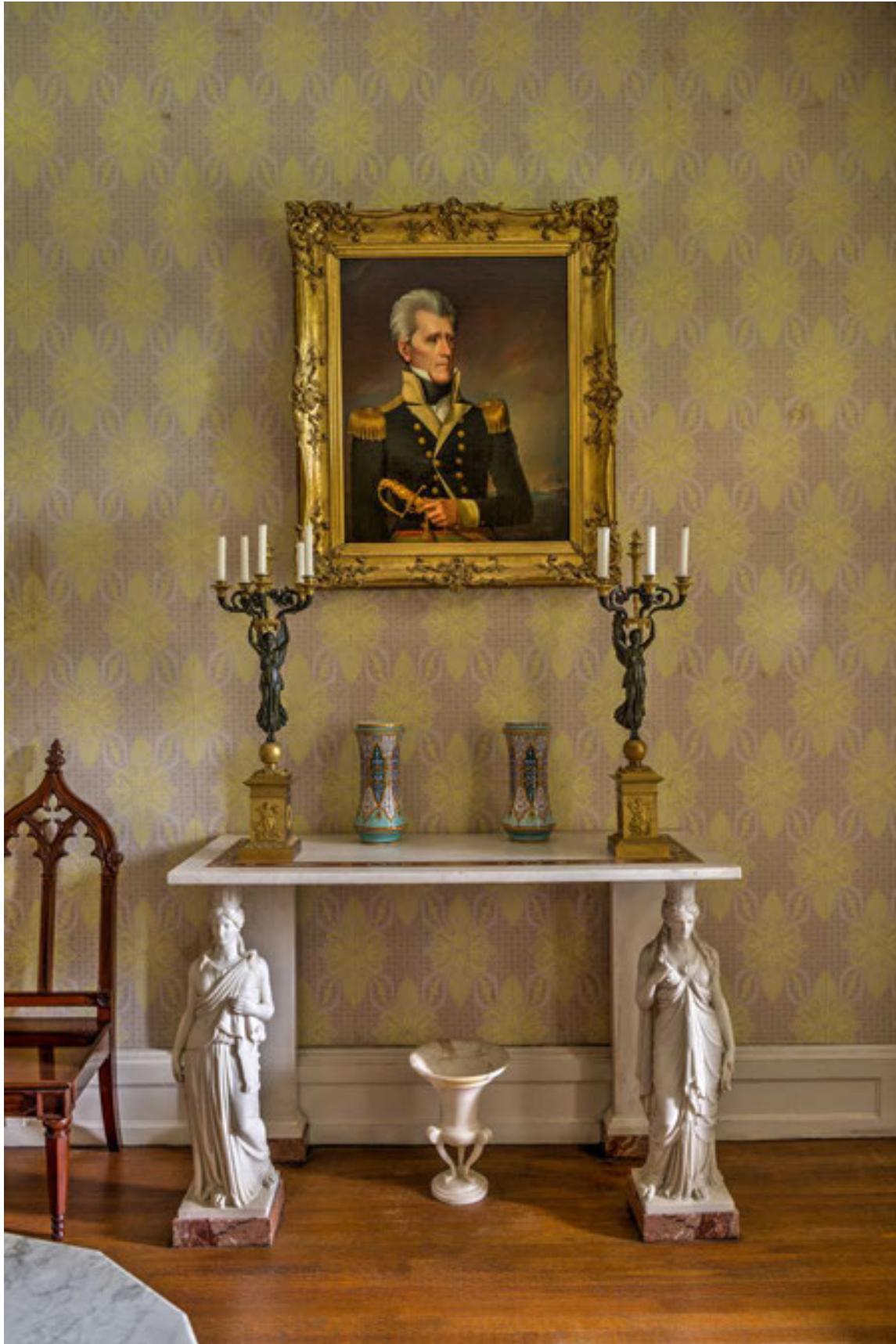
## Administration

Various necessary projects were completed in order to move Montgomery Place from a tourist destination to an integrated and integral part of the larger Bard College campus.

- Estate named as Bard College: The Montgomery Place Campus.
- Created two committees: Collections and Archives, and Academic and Cocurricular Activities:
- Collections and Archives Committee convened several times to work on a draft policies and procedures manual, prioritize grant proposals, strategize on how to extract database information from HHV, and choose a software package.
- Held two open campus meetings at which 70 faculty and staff brainstormed the potential uses of the Montgomery Place campus. Ideas included internships, practicum, residencies, labs, and events for a variety of courses/cocurricular activities that focused on landscape design, history of horticulture, slavery in the North, astronomy, botany, studio arts, historic preservation, mapping, and geology, among other topics.
- Academic and Cocurricular Committee called for proposals for academic and cocurricular activities, which the dean of the College and others are currently reviewing.

### Press and Public Relations

- New website designed and incorporated into bard.edu ([bard.edu/montgomeryplace](http://bard.edu/montgomeryplace)).
- New brochure designed, printed, and distributed throughout the campus (see enclosed).
- New map of Bard campus created to include Montgomery Place.
- New campus-wide Walking Tour Guide created (see enclosed).
- Ongoing meetings with local historians and preservation groups to build community relations regarding programming, accessibility, and preservation goals.
- Discussions underway with Red Hook Central School District and Bard Office of Athletics and Recreation on the possibility of creating a cross-country course for team practices and meets.





*Mansion House's north portico,  
western view*

## Fund-Raising

In the first year of operations, \$267,750 was raised from individual donors and private foundations. Several other grants are still pending. Research and outreach on funding opportunities continue.

### **Institutional Grants Received**

- Burpee Foundation—\$100,000
- Gerry Charitable Trust—\$31,750 to be matched 1:1
- Open Space Institute—Barnabas McHenry Hudson River Valley Award—\$6,000 for student research project on genealogy

### **Institutional Grants Pending**

- National Archives—\$63,000 for sharing archival information with worldwide databases
- National Endowment for the Humanities—\$50,000 for research on renovation of existing structures to be used for storage facilities
- Stockman Family Foundation Trust

### **Grants to Be Submitted**

- Frelinghuysen Foundation—amount TBD
- Benjamin Moore Foundation—inquiry made
- The Plymouth Hill Foundation—letter of inquiry to be submitted

### **Grants to Be Resubmitted**

- Market NY grant program—\$200,000 funding for signing and outdoor exhibit
- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation—\$500,000 for exterior renovation of Mansion House and farm house
- New World Foundation—\$75,000 to complete restoration of the Greenhouse

### **Individual Donations Received**

- \$100,000 (general support)
- \$25,000 (fund-raising support)
- \$5,000 (renovation of the Greenhouse)
- David Bull and Teresa Longyear, parents of David Bull Jr. '16—donated two days of conservator services





*Sergei Polunin performs at the  
2016 SummerScape Gala*

## Moving Forward

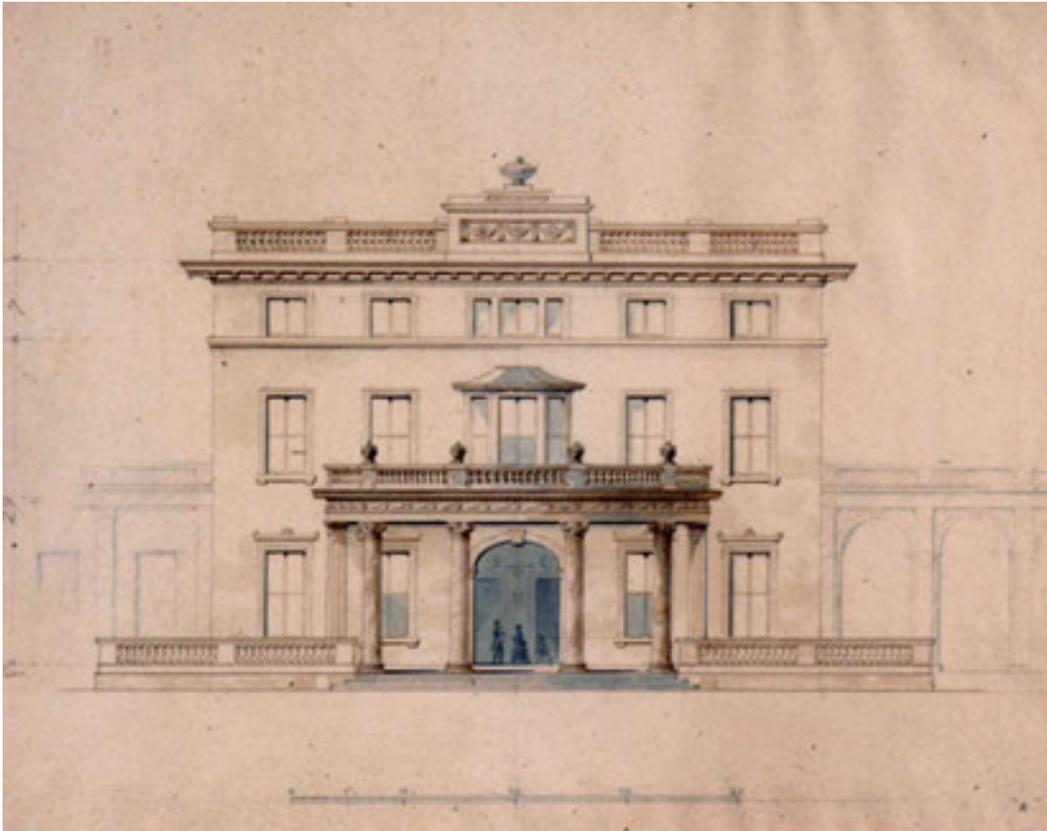
In the coming year, we will continue making improvements to the property and buildings, with a focus on finding support to renovate the mansion building. Until funding is secured for a full renovation, ongoing maintenance will continue. Maintenance projects to be completed in spring/summer 2017 include repairing the mansion's exterior porch and columns, installing containment systems for the oil tanks, installing back-up generators for the house and Squash Court, cleaning out the Thompson barn and second floor of the Coach House, installing an HVAC system in the Butler Building, and adding new lighting at the Visitors Center.

The recent Gerry Family Foundation grant will be used to draw up blueprints for an adaptive reuse of the mansion, keeping in mind that per the deed of purchase, the four main rooms of the house will remain open to the public. Funding opportunities to renovate the three cottages on Annandale Road and restore the rough garden and stonework (installed by Violetta White Delafield in the 1920s) continue to be priorities.

In 2017, we aim to complete the inventory for both accessioned and unaccessioned items and find alternative safe and secure storage locations for the permanent collections. Unaccessioned items will be relocated as needed. Butler Building South, the location of the paper archives and select collection items, will be systematically catalogued and made accessible to the public.

Efforts will continue to bring classes, internships, events, and special programs to the Montgomery Place campus.





*Mansion house's front elevation, by architect A. J. Davis, c.1860*

# Bard

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