

Classical American Homes Preservation Trust

and The Richard Hampton Jenrette Foundation

SPRING / SUMMER 2017 NEWSLETTER



Tradition of Music Continues at Classical American Homes Preservation Trust



The Red Room at Edgewater with portrait of Susan Donaldson and her harp.

Music has long played a role in the lives of the occupants of Edgewater, Ayr Mount and Millford. This September it will come alive once again in a series of classical concerts entitled, *The Classical Ideal: Music & Architecture in Harmony.*

In the years when Robert and Susan Gaston Donaldson resided at Edgewater, their temple-like villa on the Hudson, it was filled with sounds of the most exquisite music, performed by Susan and their children. Susan Donaldson's musical education began at an early age at the insistence of her father, Judge William Gaston, who believed that attaining skill in this realm would provide her entrée to the best society.

Susan proved to be an excellent student and ultimately an accomplished musician whose abilities were praised by the celebrated Swedish novelist and feminist Fredrika Bremer

on the occasion of her visit to the Donaldson's in the Fall of 1849: "In the evening I enjoyed an unusual pleasure. Mrs. D. played on the harp and piano, and sang remarkably well, with extraordinary power, like a real musician, which I believe is a rare thing in this country." Susan Donaldson's 1832 portrait with her beloved harp by her side, as well as the harp itself, still survive at Edgewater, as does a gilded rosewood canterbury custom-made by Duncan Phyfe about 1828 to hold her sheet music.

[Click to read more and to listen to period harp music.](#)



Susan Donaldson's pedal harp made by Alexander Barry, London, about 1820.
Collection of Richard H. Jenrette.



Canterbury, about 1828, attributed to Duncan Phyfe. Collection of Richard H. Jenrette.



Scaffolding is erected at Millford to prepare for work on the Corinthian capitals.

Conservation of Capitals at Millford

Pinewood, South Carolina

Recent conservation work on the Corinthian capitals of Millford's monumental colonnade has brought to light new discoveries and with it, new excitement. Michael Phelps, an historic restoration specialist, began work on the capitals in early 2017 following his earlier fabrication of replacement shutters for Millford and sensitive stabilization and repair of the original water tower in 2016. Upon surveying the capitals, Michael mused that it appeared that no serious repair or restoration work had been done on these since they were first installed between 1839-1841 -- which is both the good news and not so good news!

the carved capitals (see photo above). The initial work began on the southernmost column, which had maximum exposure to the elements and therefore had suffered the most over the years.

First, scaffolding was erected to give Michael the opportunity to get a bird's eye (or more accurately bat's eye) view of the condition of

[Click to read more and to see images of the conservation of the capitals.](#)



News from Ayr Mount

Hillsborough, NC

In the first half of this year, Ayr Mount has had the pleasure of hosting 103 tours, with a total of 715 visitors thus far - an increase in tours from last year!

In June, as part of the **Society of American Period Furniture Makers** National Conference (SAPFM), Ayr Mount hosted a special tour for its 44 members. Twelve pieces of furniture from Ayr Mount's collection were shown to the group, allowing for close examination of the construction of each piece.

This visit was noted by its organizers as the highest attended regional offering outside of the regular SAPFM National Conference, and by all accounts it was a very enjoyable and memorable tour.

In March, Ayr Mount staff attended the annual **Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail** (FMST) conference. This was an exciting year for FMST as it marked the 40th anniversary of the Trail, which started with a vision by Howard Lee for a footpath in North Carolina linking the mountains to the sea. The Trail now stretches almost 1,200 miles across North Carolina from Clingmans Dome in the Great Smoky Mountains to Jockey's Ridge on the Outer Banks... and of course, through Classical American Homes Preservation Trust's (CAHPT) own Ayr Mount property!

[Click to read more.](#)



Spring Patrons Party

George F. Baker Houses
New York, NY

The annual Spring Patrons Party was a fun gathering again this year, and a way for us to thank our generous donors! On the evening of May 18, we hosted over 150 friends and supporters at the Baker Houses. Guests enjoyed catching up with friends over cocktails on this warm spring evening.

Margize Howell and Peter Kenny welcomed guests and thanked them for their support. They described several past and present educational and preservation projects that CAHPT is undertaking. Unfortunately, Dick Jenrette was unable to be there this year. A special thank you to everyone who continues to support us in our mission of preservation. We hope to see you all next year!



[Click here for more photos.](#)

Above: Greg Cerio (Editor, The Magazine ANTIQUES), Cynthia Moyer, and Carlie Berlin.



The Magazine ANTIQUES visited Edgewater on their tour of the Hudson Valley. Photo: Sophia Tzelepis.



Drawing of Millford by Hailey Truett, fifth grade student at Laurence Manning Academy.

few.

If you are interested in planning a visit, please come to our [website](#) for information on each of the houses as well as to send us your request.

Friends and Visitors

Since the beginning of Spring, we have welcomed the following groups to our houses:

At the Roper House, **Conlegium Veterum** visited as did **Virtuoso Cruise Lines** (twice). We also hosted participants of **VERANDA Magazine's Innovation in Preservation Forum 2017**.

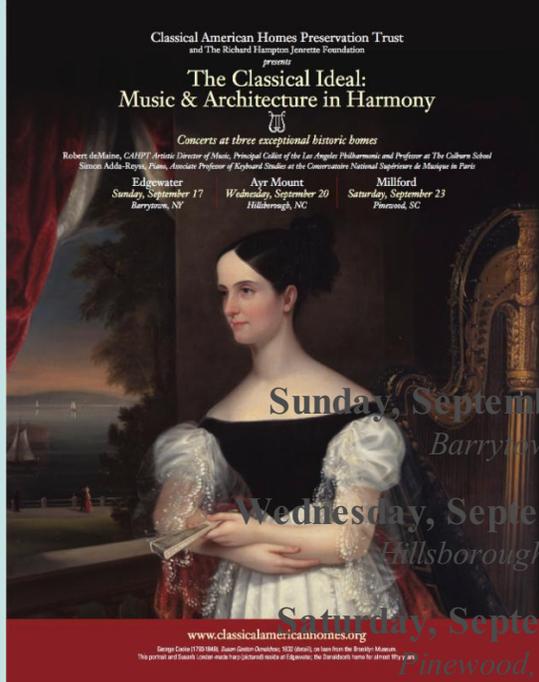
Millford hosted many educational groups this season, such as the fifth grade students from the **Laurence Manning Academy** (their sixth time in eight years; see student artwork at left). In addition, the **Lakewood High School** and the **Thomas Sumter Academy Class of 1977** visited as well as the **Colonial Dames of America**, Columbia, South Carolina Branch.

The trustees and donors of the **Clark Art Institute** visited Edgewater in May. The next month, **The Magazine ANTIQUES** organized a wonderful spring day in the Hudson Valley with one of the stops being a tour of Edgewater.

Ayr Mount had a busy spring with record visitors to both the house and the trails as well as hosting two weddings. Several groups who visited were the **DAR**, **North American Travel Journalists Association** (NATJA), and the **Wake County Historical Society** to highlight a

Save the Date

Join us for this very special series of concerts at three exceptional historic houses. ***The Classical Ideal: Music & Architecture in Harmony*** is inspired by the themes of classicism and romanticism resonant not only in music but also



in the architecture and decorative arts of Edgewater, Ayr Mount, and Millford.

Robert deMaire, Principal Cellist from the Los Angeles Philharmonic, will be performing with **Simon Adda-Reyss**, a young rising-star pianist from the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris.

Sunday, September 17 at Edgewater
Barrytown, New York

Wednesday, September 20 at Ayr Mount
Hillsborough, North Carolina

Saturday, September 23 at Millford
Pinewood, South Carolina

[Click here for details and to reserve tickets.](#)

Let us know your thoughts about historic preservation, comment on your visit to our historic homes, and share with your friends news about our programs and events!

