

# OPENING WINDOWS TO WILDERSTEIN'S FUTURE

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## The Exterior Restoration of the Carriage House

### ABOUT WILDERSTEIN

Perched high above the Hudson River in Rhinebeck, Wilderstein stands as one of the most significant and intact examples of Victorian architecture in the Hudson Valley. A striking example of Queen Anne design, the mansion constructed in 1852 and the Carriage House completed in 1888 together with the landscape designed by Calvert Vaux form an extraordinary historic estate.

Wilderstein was the lifelong home of Margaret "Daisy" Suckley, confidante and cousin of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Through Daisy's life and legacy, the history of Wilderstein offers a unique insight into the private world of one of America's most consequential presidents, while also illuminating the broader story of the early settling families, workers, and community members who shaped the Hudson Valley for more than a century.

Regarded widely as the crown jewel of the Hudson River National Historic District, Wilderstein is preserved as not only a remarkable country estate, but also the intertwined cultural, political, and social histories of New York State and the nation.

Today, Wilderstein is far more than a historic house museum. It is a vibrant cultural resource welcoming thousands of visitors each year for tours, educational programs, lectures, exhibitions, performances, and community events. It serves as a living classroom for students of architecture,



*The Wilderstein Carriage House Today.*

landscape design, American history, and environmental stewardship. Its woodland trails and river views provide the public with access to extraordinary natural beauty and open space for peaceful contemplation.

### RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

Since opening to the public as a nonprofit historic site, Wilderstein's board, staff, and dedicated volunteers have undertaken an ambitious and sustained preservation effort. Over the past two decades, more than \$6 million has been raised and invested to stabilize and revitalize the estate.

Major achievements include:

- Complete restoration of the mansion exterior.
- Conservation of historic mansion interiors, furnishings, and decorative arts, including the recently opened second floor.
- Improvements to climate control and collections storage in the mansion.
- Ongoing restoration of the Calvert Vaux landscape.
- Rehabilitation of key estate outbuildings including the gate lodge, potting house, ice house, gazebos, bicycle shed, and dog houses.
- Comprehensive structural stabilization of the Carriage House and replacement of the roof.



*Wilderstein Mansion.*



**WILDERSTEIN CARRIAGE HOUSE  
FRONT ELEVATION  
RESTORATION RENDERING**



*Stabalization of Carriage House Interior.*

Through thoughtful stewardship, Wilderstein has preserved the authenticity and architectural integrity of the site while responsibly adapting it for contemporary public use. These achievements reflect strong leadership, committed volunteers, generous donors, and enduring community support.

The one essential structure still requiring significant and highly visible restoration is the Carriage House.

## REIMAGINING THE CARRIAGE HOUSE

The Carriage House is a defining feature of the Wilderstein estate. Historically used for horses, carriages, and estate operations, it represents the working heart of the property illustrating how large Hudson River estates functioned in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Architecturally significant in its own right, the Carriage House complements the grandeur of the main residence and completes the historic narrative of the estate. Its preservation is critical not only to the site's history but also to Wilderstein's long-term sustainability.



*Carriage House Foundation Work.*

A phased restoration and adaptive reuse plan has been underway in recent years. These efforts stabilized the foundation and exterior envelope and replaced the roof, including straightening the building's distinctive turret. Final exterior restoration work on the Carriage House will now focus on repairing and replacing deteriorated siding and trim, completing masonry repointing, and restoring long-boarded windows that have been closed for years due to severe deterioration.

This is the last major exterior project at Wilderstein necessary to secure the estate's historic core. Fully restoring the Carriage House exterior with its 33 windows will quite literally be "opening windows" to Wilderstein's future, bringing the building's original architecture back to life. This work will prepare the 10,000 square-foot interior for adaptive reuse as a visitor and education center for exhibitions and programs, a community gathering venue for events, and a state-of-the-art collections storage facility.



*Carriage House Chimney Detail (Initials of Robert B. Suckley).*

## NEXT STEP

Wilderstein is launching a capital campaign to raise \$1 million to complete the exterior restoration of the Carriage House.

Campaign funds will support:

- Restoration of historic windows and doors.
- Replacement of deteriorated siding and trim.
- Masonry repairs and repointing.
- Historically appropriate painting and finishing.
- Preparation of the building envelope for future interior adaptive reuse.

Wilderstein has demonstrated its ability to execute complex preservation projects with excellence and fiscal responsibility. Goals for prior Carriage House campaigns were met, and the overall condition of the property to-

day reflects Wilderstein's record and capacity. Oversight by long-time management and a dedicated board of directors will ensure that every dollar raised for this current effort is used effectively to preserve and enhance Wilderstein.

## INVITATION TO HELP

We invite you to join us in opening windows to Wilderstein's future. The Wilderstein Carriage House restoration represents more than a construction project. It is a visible and lasting commitment to history, community, and legacy.

A gift to our "Opening Windows" campaign:

- Preserves a nationally significant historic landmark.
- Honors the legacy of the Wilderstein estate.
- Protects a treasured Hudson Valley cultural resource for future generations.
- Prepares the structure for interior adaptive reuse to expand programming and engagement activities.

All contributions to this campaign are welcome and celebrated. Donations at \$5,000 and above will be recognized publicly on a special campaign plaque. Donations of \$20,000+ will be attributed to specific windows.

For more info, please contact the Wilderstein Office.



Daisy Suckley at Carriage House, Circa 1985.



Carriage House Carved Horse Head Gable Detail.

## OPENING WINDOWS LEVELS OF GIVING

### The Sill Squad – "Where Support Begins"

Gifts up to \$4,999

The sill is the quiet, strong base of every window. These donors will provide grounding support to reach the fundraising goal for the Carriage House.

### The Frame Guild – "Strengthening the Structure"

Gifts of \$5,000 to \$9,999

The frame gives shape and stability. These donors will provide the essential structure for this campaign for the Carriage House to be successful.

### The Sash Posse – "Accelerating Momentum"

Gifts of \$10,000 to \$19,999

The sash is the moving part of the window that allows it to open. These donors will lift, propel, and create the momentum to make the vision for the Carriage House a reality.

### The Glass Society – "Illuminating the Vision"

Gifts of \$20,000+

Glass lets in the light with brilliance and clarity. These donors will illuminate the future of the Carriage House with transformative generosity.