

De Boerenwoning

January 2005

The Farmhouse

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Lott House Exterior Restoration Slated for Next Spring

After enduring many long winters the Lott House restoration is finally slated to begin. Many within the neighborhood and beyond have watched the deterioration of the House and worked or hoped that it would soon be restored. That time has come.

In accordance with New York City policies, the exterior restoration contract for the Lott House has been bided and work is expected to start next spring (2005). Up until now, the Hendrick I. Lott House Preservation Association has made a wide range of stabilization repairs, and connected the house to public sewers for the first time. These steps have maintained the structural integrity of the house while funding and resources were secured to undertake and formal restoration.

The over \$1.2 million project will restore the exterior envelope and upgrade the mechanical and electrical systems of the House. Professional services are being provided by Koutsomitis Architects, a firm that has completed other historic restoration assignments for the Parks Department including projects in Central Park and restoration of the Washington Square Arch.

The Lott House has an extraordinary degree of historical and architectural integrity, so every effort will be made to preserve original materials and match the historic methods of construction. This will both maintain and enhance the integrity of the house. Years of research and the Historic Structures Report will guide the restoration process.

The old asphalt roof will be removed and new cedar shingles will be installed replicating the original roof of the house. The three brick chimneys will be restored. Lott House has four fireplaces, two of which once shared a single chimney. The vertical shingled walls will be restored. Many of the 200 year old original handmade wood shingles still remain on the house. Every care will be taken to retain them along with the hand forged nails that secure them. The historic window sash, doors and shutters will be restored and the porches rebuilt. As one of the last steps in this restoration, the house will be painted in its historic colors, as established by laboratory analysis.

New basic electrical, mechanical and plumbing services will be installed. These upgrades will make the building safe for limited public access and allow some

programming to begin. Construction funds will come from New York City capital projects through the City Council, and the New York State Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act. (See the article on p. 4 for more about the funding the project has received.)

Thank you to our many supporters, including Councilman Lewis Fidler, Assemblyman Frank Seddio, Governor George Pataki, and the MPCA.

Charles H. Henkels, AIA, President



Landscape Planning to Begin

The Lott House site is now officially a New York City park. The $\frac{3}{4}$ acres is a portion of the former 200 acres that the Lotts farmed up until 1925. With mature trees, it is just big enough to convey a feeling of the original setting. Next spring the Parks Department's staff landscape architects and planners will begin designs for the permanent improvements necessary to open the site to the public. HILHPA is working closely with them to restore its historic appearance. It is particularly challenging to develop a way of showing visitors the results of the extensive archaeological resources. One of these is the former stone kitchen building that archaeologists excavated in 1998 and backfilled with sand in preparation for a future display. Other work will regrade and restore the lawns, historic landscaping, a display garden, irrigation, utilities, fencing, new pathways, or perhaps some restored brick pathways, driveway and accessible ramp. This \$600,000 project is made possible thanks to the support of Councilman Louis Fidler.

Historic House Trust and HILHPA: Partners in Restoration

Since 1998, the Historic House Trust of New York City has been an eager partner with the Hendrick I. Lott House Preservation Association in the restoration of the Hendrick I. Lott House. Building on HILHPA's successful fundraising efforts, we secured a grant of \$500,000 from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation in 2002 for the house's exterior restoration. With assistance from HILHPA, our on-staff architectural conservator Christine Djuric and the Capital Division of the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation have spent more than two years developing the design for the restoration, and we look forward to beginning construction in 2005. The project will include the complete restoration of the exterior, including all porches, doors, windows and shingle siding, the installation of a hand split cedar shingle roof, electrical and plumbing upgrades, and repairs to the foundation and the site. This work will help enhance protection of historic fabric and secure the overall integrity of the historic structure.

The Trust is also excited to begin consideration of the interpretation of the Lott House as a historic house museum. Funding we secured from the National Endowment for the Humanities in 2001 allowed HILHPA and the Trust to convene a panel of experts to draw up a "vision plan" for the museum in 2002. Our curator, Sandra Huber, and several HILHPA board members are now working on the first steps to implement that plan. They will begin by reviewing the vision plan and crafting a formal interpretive plan that will place the Lott House in the larger picture of Brooklyn history. This important work will also inform the design of the upcoming landscape project.

It has been a pleasure to work with HILHPA to preserve the Lott House, and with these exciting projects coming up, the future looks bright. We are looking forward to continuing to work together to open this important piece

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of New York City's history to the public.

A Letter from the Chairman of the Board

Can you believe it? The day is near when, as we dreamed, The Lott House will become a vibrant part of our community. It has been a long time since, along with concerned neighbors, community members, city officials, and Lott family members we created the Hendrick I. Lott House Preservation Association. Community support has been our greatest asset, and we at the Hendrick I. Lott House Preservation Association sincerely thank you for your help.

With the funding restored (thanks to all those who initially got us the funding and then to those who got it back)(ed. see included article on the funding history of the project) we have been working with the Historic House Trust, and the Parks Department to create the plans for the restoration of the exterior of the house. When the construction fence and protective coverings are installed, the house will begin its transformation from a neglected structure back to the splendor we all know is hidden beneath. Thankfully, we will be seeing the beginning of this work early in 2005.

As a long time resident of Marine Park, I have sympathized with my neighbors who wished to see the work progress sooner. However we must understand, in working with "the City" we have no choice but to be patient. Our wait appears to have been well worth it as the planned restoration will be magnificent.

When the construction fence and protective coverings are installed, the house will begin its transformation from a neglected structure back to the splendor we all know is hidden beneath.

Thank you all for your continued patience and words of understanding. As the head of Hendrick I. Lott House Preservation Association I have shared in your frustration. However by this time next year we expect the first phase of the work will be complete and the fruits of everyone's labor will be evident. I, like all of you, cannot wait for that day. It will take several more years before the entire restoration process is complete and the house becomes the educational facility we all envision.

I thank you, in advance for your continued support, patience, and understanding.

If you have any questions about the process please feel free to contact me.

Funding the Lott House Project

As many of you know the Lott House was successfully acquired by the City in July 2001. Since 1998 when the project to save the Lott House began moving forward, the project has been lucky to receive funding from many of our elected officials. The following is a brief summary of local, City and State support. We would like to thank all those who have contributed or acquired funds to help save the Lott House.

June to August 1998:

Scott Heyl, then Executive Director of the Historic House Trust (HHT), secured \$600,000 for the purchase of the Lott House. The Office of the Mayor, Honorable Rudolph Guliani contributed \$200,000, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation's (Commissioner Henry Stern) contributed \$200,000 from its Annual Budget (funding for the Parks Department's Annual Budget was approved by the New York City Council) and \$200,000 came from the Brooklyn Borough President's Office (then Honorable Howard Golden).

Summer 1998:

The HHT and the Hendrick I. Lott House Preservation Association (HILHPA) were awarded a \$35,000 Matching Grant from the New York Landmarks Conservancy. A local family, the Ricciardi's, contributed half the funds (\$17,500) for the match.

Summer 2000:

New York City Councilman Herbert Berman, after several meetings with Scott Heyl and others, announced that the City Council appropriated \$850,000 towards restoration of the Lott House.

Fall 2000:

Assemblyman Frank Seddio awarded HILHPA a \$10,000 grant (funded through the New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation) to continue community outreach and continue work on the Historic Structures Report (HSR).

Winter 2000:

The Preservation League of New York State awarded HILHPA an \$8,500 grant to continue work on the HSR.

July 2001:

Amy Freitag, then Executive Director of HHT, announced that the purchase price of the house had been raised from \$600,000 to \$750,000. The extra \$150,000 was taken from the \$850,000 sponsored by Councilman Berman. The Lott House was officially sold to the City of New York.

November 2001:

HHT was awarded a \$9,800 grant to sponsor a Lott House Interpretive Program Study from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

May 2002:

HHT was awarded a \$500,000 matching grant from the New York State Clean Air/Clean Water Bond Act. This discretionary grant, from the Governor's Office, administered through the New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, was matched by the money awarded by the New York City Council funds originally sponsored by Councilman Berman, in the Summer of 2000.

Summer 2002:

The remaining \$700,000 from the 2000 NYC City Council funding was "pulled back" due to budget cuts.

Fall 2003:

Councilman Louis Fidler spearheaded the campaign to restore the \$700,000 in funding that was originally secured by Councilman Berman and awarded by the City Council to the Project in 2000. The funding was restored and "added" to the \$500,000 matching grant awarded by the NYS Bond Act, allowing the initial exterior restoration project to commence.

Spring 2004:

Councilman Louis Fidler secured an additional \$600,000 in funding from the City Council for exterior landscape restoration of the Lott House property.

We would also like to acknowledge the private individuals who have donated over \$150,000 since 1998.

Thank you all for your continued local efforts to support the Lott House acquisition and restoration. The financial and political support has been immeasurable and marks a major step toward fully restoring the Lott House. Without this continued support of the Lott House certainly would not be on its way to exterior restoration.

Our funding goal over the next 5 years is to raise \$5,000,000. This amount will enable us to complete exterior restoration, landscaping, begin the interior restoration and develop programming that will allow all New Yorkers to experience and participate in the Lott House.

*A Sincere Thank You to
GHS Architects
for funding the publication
of this newsletter.*

The Lott House Kids

During the period of time when Professor Arthur (Bankoff, ed.), Alyssa (Loorya, ed.) and Chris (Ricciardi, ed.) from the Brooklyn College Archaeological Department were giving talks to children at the Lott House, local schools and libraries, I had the pleasure of attending some of these talks. It was with much awe and amusement I listened to the children's questions and their answers to the questions they were asked. I should have been better prepared. My own experience with my four year old son, who is now 47 years old, when I took him to the Brooklyn Museum to see the newly installed Egyptian display. I asked "well Mike, what do you think"? He looked up at me without batting an eye and said "this stuff is no good, it's all cracked".

When the children were asked "who was the President of the United States when the Lott House was built, they would think for a moment and realize there was no President. When asked "why", they would laugh and reply "because there was no "United States". The Lott family moved to America in 1652 and the "United States" was not created until July 4th 1776 when the Lott House was over 50 years old. When the children learned about the "Old Stone Kitchen" and its location, one child wanted to know why they built it so close to East 36th Street. The children present almost rose up as a group and said "why?" Because East 36th Street did not exist when the house was built.

The Hendrick I. Lott House which sits on its original location on $\frac{3}{4}$ acre of land and has a southern exposure that once faced the water is all that remains of the Lott family farm which at one time covered extensive property in Flatlands. There are 18 rooms in the house and Lott family members lived in the house from 1720 to 1989. The main part of the house was built in 1800 with the 1720 portion added to it. The family history extends over 260 years. The key words "original location" count heavily when claiming the Lott House to be one of the oldest Dutch farmhouses in the city.

Another question asked was about the children who lived on the farm. Artifacts found tell us they played with simple toys – no video games, no GameBoys. As the children grew up, they married and left the farm and started their own families. The evidence of their presence exists in the local street names – Hendrickson, Ryder and Kimball.

In June 2001 when the house was already 280 years old it was purchased by the NYC Parks Department. The Historic House Trust, a division of the NYC Parks Department is responsible for planning the restoration of the house with input from the Hendrick I. Lott House Preservation Association. The house will become a

museum for children of all ages and once again the halls will echo with the sounds of children's laughter and a never-ending flood of questions.

The work is just beginning and volunteers are needed to assist with cataloguing the artifacts, researching the genealogy of the family, reviewing architectural plans, landscaping ideas, formulating educational programs and fundraising. Perhaps you are a long-time resident of Marine Park and have pictures or old newspapers which might contain information or articles about the family or life in Marine Park, Flatlands. All of these can help the project and we welcome your help and input.

For more information, you can contact the Hendrick I. Lott House Preservation Association:

Phone: 718-375-2681

Website: <http://lotthouse.org>

Email: hillhpa@lotthouse.org

Thank you for your interest and support.

Carmine Carro,
President,
Marine Park Civic Association



So Long Wendy

In the Spring of 2004 our long-time caretaker, Wendy Carroll, left the Lott House.

Wendy moved upstate New York to establish her own landscaping business and continue renovating the old house that she bought.

HILHPA would like to thank Wendy for all her time and effort over the years. She's left us with some fond memories and a beautiful garden. Wendy will always be part of Lott House as she provided us with some important ideas for the future landscape of the property.

HILHPA: A Brief Introduction to the Board

Gary H. Silver, AIA - Chairman of the Board

Mr. Silver is a Marine Park resident and architect involved in new building design. He started HILHPA 10 years ago.

Gary@ghsarchitects.com or 212.966.0094

Charles H. Henkels, AIA- President

Mr. Henkels is an architect active with historic preservation projects and new buildings. Henkels.Arch@verizon.net or 212.255.3352

Bernard Cohen - Treasurer

Mr. Cohen is a Marine Park resident active in community affairs. hilhpa@lotthouse.org

Peggy Ann Accardo - Secretary

Mrs. Accardo and her family have lived across the street from the Lott House for 32 years. She has been instrumental in organizing community support.

hilhpa@lotthouse.org or 718.375.2681.

Gregory Borruso

Mr. Borruso is a Marine Park resident and local small business owner.

hdweking@aol.com

Vito Delre'

Mr. Delre' is a Marine Park resident active in community affairs.

hilhpa@lotthouse.org

Alyssa Loorya, MA, RPA

Ms. Loorya is an historical archaeologist active in local historic preservation. She develops educational content for New York City schools and local historic properties and is the Archaeology Laboratory Director at Brooklyn College.

bcarc@brooklyn.cuny.edu or 718.951.4714

Stuart Mont

Mr. Mont has been active in local community and historic preservation for over 20 years. He is the owner of a Nationally landmarked house and property located in Brooklyn.

stumont@optonline.net

Christopher Ricciardi, PhD, RPA

Dr. Ricciardi has his Ph.D. in Historical Archaeology from Syracuse University. He is active in local historic preservation and archaeology and currently works for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a project archaeologist. ricciardi@att.net or 212.264.0204

Lee Rosenzweig

Mr. Rosenzweig is a Brooklyn historian and archivist. The co-author of 6 books on Brooklyn's history he has an extensive collection of historical photographs and memorabilia, which can be seen on the recent PBS presentation "A Walk Around Brooklyn".

hilhpa@lotthouse.org or 516.292.8677

Ron Schweiger

Mr. Schweiger is the Brooklyn Borough Historian. He is active in local history and has presented several lectures on old Brooklyn and conducted historic walking tours.

Bklynremembered@aol.com

Welcome to the Neighborhood

This spring the Lott House became home to new residents. After 4 years Wendy Carroll, our caretaker, moved on. Soon after Kristy and Alec moved in.

Kristy De Cario and her husband Alec Greer moved to Brooklyn about 5 years ago and had been living in Marine Park for a while when they heard that the Lott House was looking for a new caretaker. Familiar with the house they applied for the position. After meeting with members of HILHPA and Historic House Trust the decision was unanimous.

Kristy is familiar with Parks and the neighborhood since she works for the Parks Department at the Salt Marsh Nature Center at Marine Park. Alec is a professor of Chemistry at Brooklyn College and the CUNY Graduate Center. Joining Kristy and Alec in the house is 10 ½ year old Fred, their gray tabby (tiger) cat who keeps the mice and squirrels away. He loves the yard and on a nice day you might see Fred walking through the yard or find him under the garden plants near the gate. Or he'll be engaging in his favorite past time of napping. Fred is a real professional at sleeping.

Since moving in Kristy and Alec have done an excellent job of keeping up with the garden and look forward to the holidays as they continue to get to know their new neighbors.



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The Hendrick I. Lott House Preservation Association (HILHPA) is a 501(c)(3), not-for-profit, educational organization. If you would like to make a tax deductible contribution to the Restoration Project please use the form below:

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