

For Immediate Release

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Press Release for Hamilton Grange

Alexander Hamilton's Home, Relocated and Restored by John G Waite Associates, Architects, Set to Open in Harlem on September 17

Harlem, NY – Hamilton Grange, Alexander Hamilton's country residence, has been relocated and restored, and will officially open to the public on September 17. One of New York City's few free-standing, Federal style houses, its elegant period rooms now replicate those that were the center of Hamilton's family and professional life. Officially called Hamilton Grange National Memorial, the c.1802 house, which is under the care of the National Park Service, will also offer exhibits on the ground floor that summarize his life and achievements. John G. Waite Associates, Architects (JGWA), its restoration architect, performed the detective and design work that brought back the building's structural and historic integrity.

"For a seemingly straightforward house, this was a complex project," says John G. Waite, JGWA's senior principal, "because every aspect of its design, construction and use required our evaluation." The restoration is actually the final phase of a multi-phase project. The first phase saw the moving of the house from a cramped location between a nearby Harlem church and apartment building to St. Nicholas Park, on a portion of Hamilton's original estate. Because its location had been tight, the two-story house had lost many important elements including its foundation and both front and rear porches. The entrance had been moved to one side of the building and interior spaces had been altered.

Now standing in parkland and surrounded by trees, the house itself is just as Hamilton knew it. The front and rear entrance porches as well as side “piazzas”, which can be entered from the parlor and dining rooms, have been reconstructed and balustrades once again grace the roofline. “We were fortunate that the exterior had been illustrated in engravings and also photographed in the mid-nineteenth century on its original site,” says Nancy A. Rankin, JGWA’s project manager for the Grange. “Those documents gave us some evidence of what it previously looked like. The interior provided more of a challenge.”

Inside, the house’s centerpiece is two adjoining octagonal rooms, the parlor and dining room, that were its social center. “While the rooms’ shape and arrangement are unusual,” says Rankin, “they would have worked very well for formal entertaining. In particular, the dining room, which had three mirrored doors, would have had spectacular light and views in Hamilton’s time.” The interior furnishings in these rooms and in Hamilton’s library are a mixture of pieces the family actually owned, reproductions of Hamilton’s furniture that are in public collections, and period pieces similar to what he would have owned.

“Our knowledge of period decorative styles along with field investigations and review of historic documents helped us give the rooms an authentic tone,” says Douglas G. Bucher, a JGWA specialist in building conservation. “We stayed aware of details that would suggest the greater picture.” This meant peeling away paint layers to get the original wall color, knowing what kinds of carpet patterns and materials were designed and fabricated during the period, looking at heavy-timber framing above the plaster ceiling beams to see if they had supported chandeliers, and being attuned to the delicate ornament in the leaded-glass sidelights and transom that frame the front door.

The house now rests on a new ground floor foundation that provides much needed structural support and accommodates an exhibition space and a small theater. “While we don’t know exactly what uses this ground floor had,” says Rankin, “we do know from evidence in the ceiling how the rooms were divided, and it’s likely that informal family

dinners would have been held here, near where the kitchen would have been” Now it will be used to provide an introduction to Hamilton’s life and contributions to the United States.

Alexander Hamilton and the Grange

Alexander Hamilton was a Caribbean immigrant who served as an aide-de-camp to General Washington during the Revolutionary War. As a lawyer, an author of the Federalist Papers, and later as the country’s first Secretary of the Treasury, he became an influential figure in the economic and political development of the United States of America. The Grange, as Hamilton called it, was meant to mark a new chapter in his life as a respected lawyer. He worked closely with the prominent architect John McComb, Jr., the designer of New York’s City Hall, on its creation and construction. Set in 34 wooded acres, at a distance from what was then New York City, the house was Hamilton’s home for just two years when he was killed in a duel with Aaron Burr. His widow lived in the house until 1833 when she moved to Washington, DC.

About John G.Waite Associates, Architects

JGWA is an architectural firm with offices in Albany and New York City, and is widely recognized for its work with the restoration and rehabilitation of historic buildings. The firm has been responsible for the preservation of some of the nation’s most significant landmarks and historic public buildings, utilizing sustainable design solutions and state-of-the-art preservation technology. For more information about JGWA please visit www.jgwaarchitects.com.

Photo credit: Rogol Photography

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HAMILTON GRANGE INFORMATION SHEET

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Project Name Hamilton Grange National Memorial

Client National Park Service

Project Description John G. Waite Associates, Architects recently completed the successful relocation and restoration of Alexander Hamilton's country home, "The Grange" in Harlem, NY. Hamilton, who was a Revolutionary War leader and the first United States Secretary of the Treasury, commissioned architect John McComb Jr. to design a Federal-style home on a sprawling 32 acre estate in upper Manhattan. This house was completed in 1802, just two years before Hamilton's untimely death; the house remained in the family until 1833. Since that time, the Grange has been moved twice: in 1889 to its location at 287 Convent Avenue, and most recently to its new home in nearby St. Nicholas Park, on a portion of Hamilton's original estate. The National Park Service manages the site as a National Memorial.

JGWA supervised building probes, provided options for moving the house, and updated the historic structure report prior to starting design work in order to ensure the successful preservation, relocation, and restoration of this significant historic building. JGWA prepared a comprehensive set of phased construction documents to guide the relocation and restoration of the house, including detailed documentation for repairs to the building's original materials and finishes as well as the reconstructed exterior porches and the interior staircase. New building systems were planned and installed for the entire house, and ground floor exhibits and period furnishings in the historic first floor rooms of The Grange have been designed to allow a full interpretation of Hamilton's family life and significant legal and political accomplishments.

Project Design Team

John G. Waite, Associates, Architects
Mactec
Plus Group
Robert Silman Associates
Skidmore Owings & Merrill LLP
EDAW
Available Light
Gallagher & Associates
Origin Studios
Rome Antics Productions

Project Architect
Civil Engineer
MEP Consultant
Structural Engineer
Executive Project Architect Phase I
Landscape Architects Phase I
Lighting Consultant Phase II
Exhibit Designer Phase II
Exhibit Consultant Phase II
Audio Visual Consultant Phase II

Specialty Fabricators

Cohoes Design Glass Associates

Excalibur Bronze
Ball & Ball Antique Hardware Reproductions
Hammersmith Studios

J.R. Burrows & Company
Family Heirloom Weavers
Gracewood Design

Restoration and Reproduction of Leaded Glass Consultant
Historic Lighting Fabricator
Reproduction Door Fabricator
Reproduction Shutter Hardware Fabricator
Reproduction Carpet Consultant
Reproduction Carpet Consultant
Floorcloth Fabricator

FIRM FACT SHEET

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Firm John G. Waite Associates, Architects, PLLC

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Website www.jgwaarchitects.com

Profile A leading architectural firm in the field of historic preservation, John G. Waite Associates, Architects directs restoration, adaptive use and new design for historic properties across the United States. The firm's meticulous and research-based approach is driven by a knowledge of historic buildings and a commitment to their preservation and long-term stewardship.

JGWA's team of architects, historic interiors specialists and building materials conservators have extensive experience applying sustainable design solutions and state-of-the-art preservation technology to culturally significant buildings and environments.

Services Historic Preservation, Restoration, and Adaptive Use

Key Staff	John G. Waite, FAIA	Sr. Principal (Sr. Principal for Hamilton Grange)
	Clay S. Palazzo, AIA, LEED AP	Principal (Project Manager for Phase I of Hamilton Grange)
	Nancy A. Rankin, AIA, LEED AP	Principal (Project Manager for Phase II of Hamilton Grange)
	Douglas G. Bucher	Principal (Senior Restoration Specialist and Building Conservation for Hamilton Grange)
	Chelle Jenkins	Associate
	Matthew K. Scheidt, AIA, LEED AP	Associate
	William Brandow	Associate

Notable Projects Baltimore Cathedral, Baltimore, MD
Hancock Shaker Village, Pittsfield, MA
Mount Vernon (home of George Washington), Mount Vernon, VA
Sagamore Hill (home of Theodore Roosevelt), Oyster Bay, NY
Springwood (home of Franklin Delano Roosevelt), Hyde Park, NY
The Statue of Liberty, New York, NY
Tweed Courthouse, New York, NY
University of Virginia (Thomas Jefferson's Academical Village), Charlottesville, VA
Vanderbilt Pavilion, Hyde Park, NY
Yin Yu Tang at the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA

Recent Recognition

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Awards

National Honor Award
American Institute of Architects - 2009
Basilica of the Assumption, Baltimore, MD

Palladio Award - Citation for Design
Traditional Building Magazine/Period Homes - 2010
Basilica of the Assumption, Baltimore, MD

American Institute of Architects New York State, Inc. Design Awards - 2010
West Hall on the campus of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Excellence in Preservation Award
Preservation League of New York State - 2010
West Hall on the campus of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Historic Preservation Award
Massachusetts Historical Commission - 2010
Kinnell-Kresge Building/Beacon Cinema, Pittsfield, MA

Recent Press

Writer: Gordon Bock
“Preservation Perfectionists”
Traditional Building Magazine
June 2011

Writer: Alan G. Brake
“Jefferson in the Round”
The Architects Newspaper
May 20, 2009

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John G. Waite, FAIA, Senior Principal on the Hamilton Grange project

John G. Waite Associates, Architects PLLC

In his forty-year career, Jack Waite's practice has been responsible for the restoration of many of America's most significant buildings. Jack has experience in planning for and overseeing the restoration of adaptive use of historic buildings, as well as the design of new structures within historic contexts. He is a fellow of the American Institute of Architects and the Association for Preservation Technology International and received APT's Harley J. McKee Award for outstanding contributions in the field of preservation technology.

His work is based on the concept that all preservation work must be founded on a thorough investigation analysis of physical and archival evidence. Jack Waite was instrumental in developing and refining the concept of the Historic Structure Report, which has become the recognized tool for gathering essential information for planning a preservation project.

Mr. Waite has written more than fifty books and articles which have been published by the U.S. Government Printing Office, National Park Service, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Smithsonian Institution, State of New York, University of Virginia, and North Atlantic Treaty Organization. His book, Metals in America's Historic Buildings: Uses and Preservation Treatments, and technical leaflet, Preservation Brief 27: The Maintenance and Repair of Architectural Cast Iron, are standards for the field. Tweed Courthouse: A Model Restoration was published in 2006.

Mr. Waite is a graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Columbia University.



Clay S. Palazzo, AIA, LEED AP, Principal and Project Manager for Phase I of the Hamilton Grange project

John G. Waite Associates, Architects PLLC

A principal at JGWA, Clay Palazzo has been integral to some of the firm's most prestigious preservation and restoration projects, including Yin Yu Tang for the Peabody Essex Museum; multiple projects for the University of Virginia; and historic structure reports for Mount Vernon; the Museum of African American History in Boston; Hancock Shaker Village; and Top Cottage; and the FDR Presidential Library in Hyde Park, New York. He also directed the Greenwood Plantation and Greentree projects, including the preparation of maser plans and historic structure reports, and the restoration of the buildings.

Mr. Palazzo's responsibilities have ranged from the preparation of feasibility studies, historic structure reports, and conservation studies to the design and construction administration of restoration and adaptive use projects. All of these projects have been characterized by innovative, state-of-the-art solutions to restoration problems, and a consistent commitment to thoroughness, design excellence, and client satisfaction.

He has acted as project manager for the National Park Service projects undertaken by JGWA, including Vanderbilt Mansion, Saratoga Monument, the ceiling analysis of the Lincoln Memorial; historic structure reports for Fort Wood, Arts of War and Peace, and the DC War Memorial; and Phase I of the restoration and relocation of Hamilton Grange.

Mr. Palazzo earned degrees in economics and architecture from the University of Virginia, and a Masters in Historic Preservation from Columbia University.

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Nancy A. Rankin, AIA, LEED AP, Principal and Project Manager for Phase II of the Hamilton Grange project

John G. Waite Associates, Architects PLLC

Nancy A. Rankin, AIA, is a principal with John G. Waite Associates, Architects and has been an integral part of the firm since 1999. She currently oversees the firm's New York City office, which is located in downtown Manhattan. Her commitment to incorporating new uses, modern building technology, and sustainable design practices in a way that respects the historic fabric of an existing building exemplifies an important value of John G. Waite Associates, Architects.

In her years of experience with John G. Waite Associates, Ms. Rankin has served as Project Architect on several prominent historic preservation and adaptive use projects, including New York City's historic Tweed Courthouse; the Statue of Liberty National Monument; the Nassau County Government Operations Center, Mineola, NY; the Nassau County Museum of Art, Roslyn Harbor, NY; Hamilton Grange, the home of Alexander Hamilton in Harlem, NY; the Roslyn Grist Mill, Roslyn, NY; Rockaway Courthouse, Queens, NY; and the Greentree Estate in Manhasset, NY. She has contributed to many other projects of national significance with the firm, such as the University of Wisconsin Armory and Gymnasium, Madison, WI; the Octagon, Washington, DC; the Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO; and Franklin D. Roosevelt's Top Cottage, Hyde Park, NY.

Ms. Rankin is a graduate of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with degrees in both Architecture and Building Science. She is a registered architect in New York State and is a LEED Accredited Professional. Ms. Rankin has contributed to the fields of architecture and historic preservation through lectures and publications, such as "Tweed Courthouse Restoration: A New Approach to Life-Safety Management in a Landmark Public Building," an article she co-authored for the Association for Preservation Technology International Bulletin. She is also the co-author of Tweed Courthouse: A Model Restoration. Ms. Rankin is an active member of the APTI Technical Committee on Sustainable Preservation, and has given several local presentations entitled "Historic Preservation is Sustainable Design".



Douglas G. Bucher, Principal and Senior Restoration Specialist and Building Conservator on the Hamilton Grange Project

John G. Waite Associates, Architects PLLC

Douglas Bucher is a restoration specialist and building conservator with over thirty years of experience in scientific analysis of historic paint colors and finishes, and the restoration and recreation of historic decorative schemes. He directed the restoration of interiors as diverse as Tweed Courthouse in New York City and the recreated Oval Office at the Truman Library.

Mr. Bucher has worked on virtually every historic structure report produced by JGWA, and contributed his expertise in the publication of several books, including The Marble House in Second Street published by the Rensselaer County Historical Society, The Mount, Home of Edith Wharton by Edith Wharton Restoration, and A Neat Plain Modern Style: Philip Hooker and His Contemporaries, 1796-1836 by Hamilton College.

He has lectured widely on historic interiors, presenting at Preservation League of New York State conferences and the Annual Conference of the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID). In 1992, he was a guest lecturer at the Baltimore Antiques Show, where he presented a lecture entitled "Floor Coverings in America in the 18th and 19th Centuries." He has also been the Guest Curator for two exhibits, one on the architecture of Philip Hooker and the other on the Church of the Holy Cross/ Mary Warren Free Institute.

A graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Mr. Bucher currently serves on the boards of the Mary Warren Free Institute and the Rensselaer County Historical Society.