

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 9 1979
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

off U.S. 9

CITY, TOWN

Hyde Park

STATE

New York

— VICINITY OF
CODE

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

COUNTY CODE
Dutchess

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*

National Park Service, North Atlantic Region

STREET & NUMBER

15 State Street

CITY, TOWN

Boston

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Massachusetts

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Dutchess County Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

22 Market Street

CITY, TOWN

Poughkeepsie

STATE

New York

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic American Building Survey: Drawings of Boathouse and Coachhouse

DATE

1940's

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site is located in Hyde Park, Dutchess County, New York, approximately 80 miles north of New York City. The 212-acre estate is bounded on the east by the Albany Post Road (U.S. Route 9) and on the west by the Hudson River. The focus of the estate is the 1896-99 Mansion built by the prominent architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White. The original estate was purchased by Frederick W. Vanderbilt in 1895 from Walter Langdon, Jr., who had acquired the property through his grandfather, John Jacob Astor.

During the Vanderbilt tenure, there were about 676 acres of land including the Howard Mansion, a farm, and the Wales Residence which are no longer part of the property. Vanderbilt undertook a major redevelopment of the property. Only two buildings remain, the Tool House and the Gardener's Cottage, from the years before the Vanderbilt tenure.

The eastern part of the estate was made into a carriage drive through the forest, and a pond was enlarged to form a miniature lake. A large standpipe, 10,000 feet of water pipe, and a large dam and reservoir were installed to form a water system. A powerhouse was built that generated the electricity and pumped the water needed by the estate buildings. Vanderbilt organized extensive forestry operations and had two palm houses built. An old frame bridge spanning Crum Elbow Creek was replaced by the White Bridge, a modern concrete and steel structure, noteworthy in its time for its engineering.

The grounds were extensively landscaped with formal Italian gardens, five greenhouses, hundred of specimen shrubs and trees, a pool garden and a rose garden which were graced by pergolas, loggias, arbors, garden houses, walls and hedges. A creek was transformed with dams, sculptured pools and handsome bridges.

The Sexton estate was acquired in 1906 and all buildings except for a boathouse were demolished and the land adapted to the Vanderbilt "park plan."

Of the presently existing buildings, the Mansion is most nearly the same as when the Vanderbilts lived there. The exterior of the other buildings with the exception of the Pavilion and gatehouses have not been altered. All roads and trails are historic and retain their original alignments and, generally, their original width. The estate was enclosed by stone walls and fences which, for the most part, retain their original appearance.

The following historic buildings and structures remain on the grounds:

1. Vanderbilt Mansion (No. HS1)

Vanderbilt Mansion was designed by Charles Follen McKim, of the architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White, in the then fashionable Beaux-Arts style. The Indiana limestone Mansion was built by the construction firm of (James A. and Oscar W.) Norcross Brothers of Worcester, Massachusetts and New York City. The construction of the Mansion began in October, 1896 and was completed in March, 1899. Rooms in the Mansion were decorated

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Vanderbilt Mansion" Master Plan (National Park Service, 1971)
 Snell, Charles. "Vanderbilt Mansion NHS" (NPS) 1960; "Early History of "Hyde Park" Estate. 1705-1894 (NPS, 1955). "Preliminary Report on Frederick W. Vanderbilt." (NPS, 1954).
 Weatherwax, Mary B. "Documentary Report on the Vanderbilt Pavillion" (NPS, 1958)
 Various historic structure reports from park files in regional office.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 213

UTM REFERENCES

18 587 520 46 28 480
 A | 1.8 | 5 8.7 | 5.6.0 | 4.6 2.8 4.8.0 |
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 C | 1.8 | 5 8.8 | 0.0.0 | 4.6 2.6 6.0.0 |

200 440
 B | 1.8 | 5 8.8 | 4.4.0 | 4.6 2.8 5.0.0 |
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 D | 1.8 | 5 8.7 | 2.4.0 | 4.6 2.6 5.0.0 |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION 27 160

E: 18 587 520 46 26 620
 E

See enclosed Historical Base Map.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Bronwyn Krog, Preservation Historian

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service, North Atlantic Region

DATE

12/18/78

STREET & NUMBER

15 State Street

TELEPHONE

223-3778

CITY OR TOWN

Boston

STATE

Massachusetts

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ___ NO ___ NONE ___

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

F. R. Halland

TITLE

Asst. Dir., Cultural Resources

DATE

6/29/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Kevin A. Keebe

DATE

Oct 6, 1980

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: *Kevin A. Keebe*

DATE

Oct. 6, 1980

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUL 9 1979
DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE two

by Georges A. Glaenzer and Ogden Codman as well as by McKim, Mead and White. The cost of the Mansion, unfurnished and without fixtures, was \$660,000.

In 1906 the Mansion underwent its final alteration when prominent architect Whitney Warren was called in to make changes in the living room, main hall and second story hall including the removal from the living room ceiling of a mural by H. Siddons Mowbray which the Vanderbilts disliked.

The three-story Mansion has 54 rooms on four levels, including servants' quarters and utility rooms like the kitchen and laundry. The entire construction of brick, concrete and steel is faced with Indiana limestone and has a sheet copper roof.

The Vanderbilt Mansion is a restrained residential interpretation of a style that leaned towards the monumental in scale. The four fluted Corinthian columns support an elaborately carved portico entablature and introduce a doorway surmounted by a single large-scaled round arch window at the second story.

The Mansion's interiors are lavishly decorated in the Beaux-Arts manner. The surfaces are embellished with architectural detail, gorgeous tapestry, priceless rug, exquisite vases, objects d'art and other finely crafted furnishing. The room motifs are predominantly French and Italian.

2. The Pavilion (No. HS2)

The Pavilion, designed by McKim, Mead and White, was erected by Norcross Brothers in 1895 in 66 working days, September 8 to November 24, 1895, on the site of the old Langdon carriage house. The Pavilion was used by the Vanderbilts as a residence during the construction and furnishing of the Mansion.

The Pavilion is basically a classical structure in style. It has a porticoed doorway centered on the east facade with four fluted Greek Doric columns supporting a pediment which has a patterned colonial fanlight. The exterior also features shuttered 6-over-6 double-hung sash windows, pilasters, and a third story balustrade, the "Captain's Walk" which resembles a yacht deck.

The two-story structure has a complete basement, a storage room over the second floor and a canvas-covered deck. The roof, once covered with wooden shakes, is now shingled. The exterior walls of the building are "pebble-dashed" (mortar with sea gravel spattered over it) and are painted a creamy yellow. The Pavilion contained approximately 16 rooms.

After Mrs. Vanderbilt's death in 1926, the Pavilion was closed up. In 1940 the Pavilion was reopened as a restaurant and inn. The basement was rearranged and

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 9 1979
DATE ENTERED	

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE three

features in first and second story rooms were repaired and repainted. From 1954-77 the visitor center and the park office were located in this building, and changes made in the interior, while necessary, were kept to a minimum.

3. Gardener's Cottage (No. HS3)

The Gardener's Cottage is a slate-roofed, two-story brick and frame structure. The residence was designed by John H. Sturgis and Charles Brigham, Architects, of Boston in 1874 and was constructed in 1875 by Walter Langdon who then owned the estate. It has five rooms, one bath and a full basement with a concrete floor poured in 1940. It is now used as an employee residence.

The asymmetrically massed house is Italianate in style with some round-headed windows, bracketing, deeply recessed and ornamented eaves, and decorative windows. This style is in keeping with the picturesque qualities Langdon established with his park-like grounds.

4. Tool House (No. HS4)

The Tool House is a two-story brick building with a slate roof. On the first floor it contained a tool room used for the storage of mowers, grass cutters and miscellaneous equipment used by the gardeners, a bathroom and a potting room. The second floor held an office, which was used in connection with the operation of the flower gardens, greenhouses, and for maintenance of the grounds. The high-ceilinged basement under the Tool House held two coal-burning boilers and coalbins which supplied heat for the Tool House, the Carnation House and the two Palm Houses.

The Tool House, also built by Walter Langdon in 1875, was designed by John H. Sturgis and Charles Brigham, Architects, of Boston. It is Italianate in style, with deeply recessed and ornamented eaves, a round-headed doorway set in a second story porch with a decorative sawn wood railing, bracketing and a board-and-batten clad upper story. Until 1954 it was connected to the Gardener's Cottage by the Carnation Greenhouse. It is currently used as an employee's residence.

5. Coach House (No. HS5)

The Coach House was designed by architect Robert Henderson Robertson of New York City and was built by Norcross Brothers in 1897. Further alterations were made to the building by the architect in 1910 so that it could also be used as a garage.

The Coach House is a two-story brick Queen Anne structure with a red tile shingled gable roof. It has bracketing, tall pinnacles, a large cupola and massive chimneys.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 9 1979
DATE ENTERED	

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE four

In 1940 the first floor contained a garage, a fully-equipped machine shop, a coach room with parquet floor, a washroom, a harness room, a saddle room, a feed room, seven double stalls and an office. There was a hanging loft located over the stall room, garage and machine shop. The remainder of the second floor contained a living room, seven bedrooms for Coach House employees, and two baths.

The building has been modified slightly for use as park maintenance area. Conversion of the quarters for footmen, chauffeurs, etc. on the upper level into two apartments by the National Park Service resulted in minor alterations.

6. Main Gate House (No. HS6)

The Main Gate House was designed by McKim, Mead and White and was built by Norcross Brothers in 1898. It was part of the Vanderbilt's estate redevelopment and echoes the classical Beaux-Arts styling of the Mansion.

The building is a two-story house, constructed of Indiana smooth-cut limestone and has a copper roof. There are five rooms and one bath, and it is currently an employee's residence. There are large wrought iron entrance gates nearby. A frame section has been added by the National Park Service for enlargement of staff living quarters.

7. Lower Gate House (No. HS7)

The Lower Gate House was designed by McKim, Mead and White and was built by Norcross Brothers in 1898. It echoes the classical Beaux-Arts styling of the Mansion.

The two-story structure is faced in smooth-cut Indiana limestone and has a copper roof. A frame addition on the rear was put there ca. 1901. The basement is situated only under the stone portion of the house. There are six rooms and one bath. Currently the building is used as an employee residence.

8. Power House (No. HS8)

The Power House is a romantic fieldstone building with a slate roof and swept dormers and nestles in the woods beside Crum Elbow Creek. A porch with crudely fashioned arches opens to the deep umbrage and entryway. Double-arched leaded glass windows are separated by heavy fieldstone mullions. Both the porch and main block have bellcast hipped roofs and deeply overhanging eaves.

The building contained a shop, battery room and pump room. The structure was designed and built by the engineering firm of W. T. Hiscox and Company of New York City in 1897. The building was heated by a stove. All electricity for the estate, from 1897 until sometime in the 1930's, was generated from this building. After 1940 electric power

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 9 1979
DATE ENTERED	

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE five

was obtained from the Central Hudson Gas & Electric Company. The motors for the Power House, Mansion, Pavilion, Greenhouses and Coach House were all located in the Power House.

In 1940 the water pump, a Gould Triplex pump dating from 1899, was still operating in the Power House. It was powered by a 11" water wheel operating on a 25" head. The water to operate this pump was obtained from Sherwood Pond and was piped to the Power House through a 30" penstock. In addition to the water power, there was also a 7 1/2 h.p. General Electric motor that was used to operate the pump during dry seasons when there was not sufficient water in Crum Elbow Creek for the operation of the water wheel. The roof and porch of this building were restored in 1973. The equipment is still present in the power house.

9. Pool House (No. HS16)

The Pool House was built in 1903 as a part of the Italian Gardens development devised by landscape architect James L. Greenleaf. The Pool House is a small, open-air, arcaded structure with Tuscan columns framing a stylized statue of a young woman. Inside is a stone banquette from which the gardens and the circular pool may be contemplated out of the direct sunlight. The Pool House has a tiled, hipped roof with a deep overhang.

10. Loggia (Garden House) (No. HS17)

The Loggia was erected in 1910 by the landscape architects Thomas Meehan & Sons. It is a brick structure with pink stucco outer covering and tiled gabled roof. The open-air entrance has three rounded arches supported by four Tuscan columns.

11. Pergola (No. HS18)

The Pergola, located near the Gardener's Cottage, was planned and built by landscape architect James L. Greenleaf in 1903 and remodeled by Robert B. Cridland, landscape architect, in 1922. Most of the superstructure, including wooden arbor and semi-circular terra-cotta bench, was removed by the National Park Service in 1951. A series of squared brick columns and badly deteriorated tile floor are all that remain on site. However, a portion of the terra-cotta bench and the Tuscan columns are in storage for future restoration of the Pergola. When restored, the wooden arbor top which supported vines and other plants will be added.

12. White Bridge (No. HS21)

The White Bridge was designed and erected in 1897 by the New York City engineering firm of W. T. Hiscox and Company. A melan single-arch span, it is reputed to be one of the first steel-reinforced concrete bridges to have been built in the United States.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 9 1979

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE six

The roadway over the bridge is flanked by a decorative balustrade on either side with acanthus leaf ornamented urns placed on pedestals at intervals and planted with various flowers and vines.

13. Rustic Bridge (No. HS22)

The Rustic Bridge, designed by the Norcross Brothers, erected in 1897, is a two-arch reinforced concrete bridge that has been rusticated with a fieldstone cladding. The voussoirs are of quarry-faced granite, as are the copings and endposts flanking the roadway.

14. Lower Dam (No. HS23)

As part of the estate's water power generating system, the Lower Dam was built in 1898. The Dam is faced with rubble in concrete and has reinforced concrete retaining walls.

15. Power House Dam (No. HS24)

The Power House Dam was built in 1897 by the engineering firm of W. T. Hiscox and Company as part of the overall scheme to generate water power for the estate. It is constructed of stone and mortar and extends 46 feet in length.

16. White Bridge Dam (No. HS27)

The White Bridge Dam, constructed of fieldstone and mortar, was built in 1897 and supplemented the water power generating system of the estate. The dam was repaired in 1972.

17. Railroad Bridge (No. HS25)

This metal, overhead bridge, connecting the Bard Rock section of the estate with the park portion, was erected by the New York Central Railroad in 1912.

18. West Half of Albany Post Road Bridge (No. HS26)

This fieldstone and concrete bridge was erected in 1898 from \$19,000 donated to the Town of Hyde Park by Mr. Vanderbilt for this purpose. The bridge was designed by Owen Morris, Civil Engineer of Hyde Park and Poughkeepsie. In 1922 the southern approaches to the bridge were widened to 32 feet. In 1928 a concrete arch was added to form a third lane. The present center and west lanes are the original portion of the bridge.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 9 1979

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE seven

19. The Italian Gardens (No. HS 36)

Considerable remnants of the extensive Italian formal gardens are visible today. The Vanderbilt gardens are on the site of the gardens developed by Dr. David Hosack who lived on this estate in 1830. Walter Langdon, who succeeded Hosack, maintained similar gardens in the same vicinity. The only change Vanderbilt made to the Langdon gardens during the period 1895 to 1897 was the addition of four greenhouses. Extensive changes were made to the gardens during the period of 1903 to 1934.

The gardens were compartmented into three main units when Vanderbilt Mansion was established in 1940:

- a. The Greenhouse Gardens - This section was divided into three separate parterre gardens of varying levels and was set within a rectangle, framed on the west side by the Rose Houses and Palm Houses, and on the north side by the Carnation House, the Gardener's Cottage and Tool House. This portion of the garden contained geometric garden beds that had evolved from the 1897 garden. A potting shed still remains.
- b. The Cherry Walk circa 1934 and Pool Gardens - This section, which evolved from the 1897 garden, was located at a lower level immediately east of the greenhouse gardens and progressed from the pergola to the pool house. The term "Cherry Walk" dates from circa 1934.
- c. The Rose Garden - This section was located at a low grade immediately east of the cherry walk and pool gardens, and extended eastward to the Loggia. The rose garden was divided into two levels, each containing panel beds. The rose garden was added to the other two garden sections in 1910.

20. Stone Walls and Gates

The fieldstone walls and gates of the original estate were completed in 1898. The longest portion ran along the east boundary at the west side of Albany Post Road and extended 180 feet south of the present park boundary. Another section followed the south boundary along the north sides of West Market Street and Dock Street. This section extended about 700 feet east of the present park boundary to Doty Avenue leading to Stoutenburgh Cemetery. A small portion extended about 125 feet north from Dock Street along the New York Central right-of-way near the river.

The total length of boundary wall built in 1898 and within the present National Park Service boundary is approximately 4500 feet. This does not include the elaborate limestone and wrought iron entrance gate, the main gate at U.S. 9 or the Dock Street

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 9 1979
DATE ENTERED	

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE eight

gate. The east wall is dressed stone, from three feet to five-and-one-half feet high and two feet thick. The part adjacent to the main gate was originally surmounted by wrought iron spikes which were removed and used for scrap metal during World War II. There was apparently no wall at the north end of the property, merely a post-and-rail fence until 1905 when Vanderbilt acquired the 64-acre Sexton property to the north. The stone boundary wall was extended about 1450 feet and included a new north gate.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 9 1979
DATE ENTERED	

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE two

Frederick W. Vanderbilt. A number of specimen trees, many from Europe and Asia, some in place for almost two hundred years, are planted throughout the grounds.

The White Bridge built in 1897 was one of the first steel and concrete bridges in the United States.

The furnishings of the Mansion reflect turn-of-the-century interior decorator's room designs in which furnishings were generally treated as an integral part of the interior architecture. The furniture consists largely of a mix of pre-nineteenth century antiques and high quality reproductions of earlier period pieces. Most of the paintings are of the salon type, popular with most wealthy Americans of that era. The Mansion houses a particularly fine collection of Flemish and French tapestries as well as French and oriental rugs.

Interpretively, the site is not restricted to the Frederick W. Vanderbilts. It is expressive of the lifestyle of Americans of their class during the first two decades of the Twentieth Century. A large collection of fine quality, late nineteenth-century horse-drawn carriages and coaches (only four of which have F. W. Vanderbilt provenance) and three F. W. Vanderbilt automobiles are exhibited in the north wing of the Vanderbilt Coachhouse.