



## History NEVER Pauses

**Everything Old is New Again. . .** In September 1858, a mob stormed “the Quarantine”—a.k.a the New York Marine Hospital in Staten Island—when opposition to this massive facility that isolated highly infectious patients reached a boiling point. Armed with matches and bundles of straw, local residents set the compound ablaze, completely destroying it. At trial, the leaders of the attack successfully argued that their actions were warranted to protect the health of the community. Today’s historians still use the “Quarantine War,” as the attack came to be known, as a case study on the implications of quarantines.

The last 160 years have taught us a few things. For one, New Yorkers now erupt in daily applause for our medical workers and the hospitals that are keeping us safe. History also demonstrates that while this current moment seems interminable, it will end. Just like the “Quarantine War,” one day, hopefully very soon, COVID-19 will become a part of our collective past, a shared experience that didn’t divide us, but united us and made us stronger.

**What if NYC’s Historic Houses Didn’t Exist?** The Historic House Trust (HHT) preserves, promotes, and provides expertise to 23 historic house museums so that they can create authentic experiences that give history resonance. These cultural centers provide an essential window into the lives of all New Yorkers, past and present, and are living examples of New York City’s spirit and tenacity.

Before COVID-19 hit, these sites thrived, attracting more than 860,000 visitors annually, nearly a third of whom are local schoolchildren. But now, each one has shut their doors and canceled all public programs, school field trips, and other forms of revenue generation. City budget cuts will make this situation even more grave, with houses facing losses of up to 54% of their annual revenue and cuts of up to 90% of their staff. **Many may be forced to close their doors forever.** With your financial support, HHT will be able to help these cultural assets prevail and reopen to serve their diverse communities once again.

**Where to Now?** In another 160 years, HHT’s house museums will be interpreting the historical narrative of this moment. But to ensure that HHT and its 23 sites survive to tell *any* stories, we need your help to do something historic.

For the past 19 years, HHT has held its annual Founders Award Dinner every June to bring our community together in raising 60% of our annual operating budget. But this year, sadly, there will be no need to dress in your best or to make that salon appointment: the 2020 gala simply cannot take place.

**How You Can Help.** Our celebration can wait, but HHT cannot press pause on our need for your generosity. Will you step up and support HHT’s “un-gala”? To capture the Founders Award Dinner’s lost revenue, HHT is asking you to join us in raising \$350,000. Without your assistance the organization will not be able to survive intact.

While an “un-gala” has no passionate advocates of history gathering to toast those who make our City a better place, no laughter, no witty conversation, no clinking glasses, and absolutely NO kissing on cheeks, the wonderful thing about an “un-gala” is that it has absolutely NO expenses. So, **100% of your contribution is tax-deductible and every dollar will go directly to two primary concerns:**

- Retaining HHT’s staff and their associated programs
- Providing emergency relief to our historic house museums

**Re-imagining Our Work.** HHT is working intensely to provide additional assistance to our house museums in a time of great need. While we navigate this crisis, HHT is:

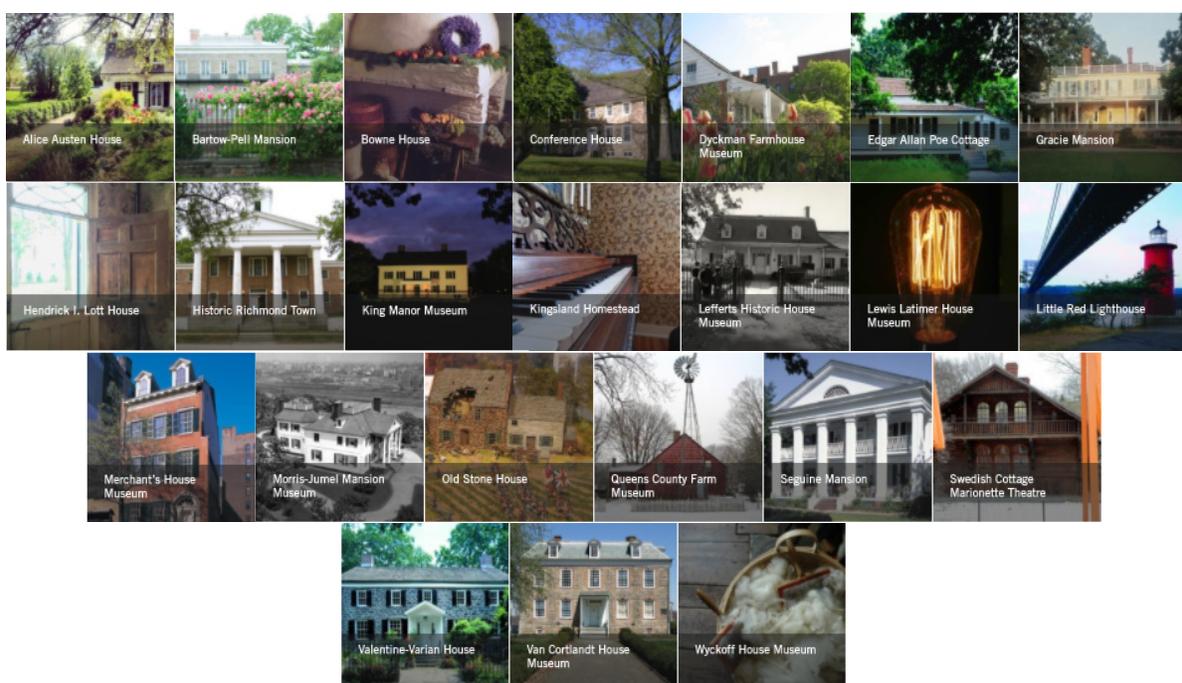
- **Providing Emergency Relief:**
  - Ensuring that our centuries-old sites and their historically significant furniture, artwork, and artifacts are secure during the City's closure
  - Advocating for relief and recovery funding
  - Activating emergency preparedness plans
  - Preparing for the monumental task of reopening
- **Fortifying HHT's Core Work:**
  - Protecting the jobs and well-being of our staff
  - Sustaining critical services to our historic houses, including essential maintenance and restoration projects
  - Re-imagining how public programs and volunteer opportunities can be transitioned to virtual offerings

**HHT Needs You to Thrive.** HHT has been busier than ever. But without our usual gala revenue, we need your support to give HHT the strength to face the challenges ahead. You have generously supported HHT for years, and **donating at this critical time in history will protect your investment in our mission.**

**Thank You.** You know as well as we do that without these distinctive places, the New York City we return to will be unrecognizable. But history shows that HHT's houses are no stranger to adversity. Just as they have survived to tell their stories of revolution and of peace, of slavery and suffrage, of 9/11 and superstorms, our houses will persevere. Even when so much in our lives has been put on pause, with your help we will find a way to press play again.

**See You Soon.** Our 2020 Founders Award Dinner may be canceled, but HHT cannot let a year go by without seeing you! When New York City is un-paused, we will gather all of our supporters and partners for that laughter, that witty conversation, those clinking glasses, and, yes, maybe even those kisses. You cannot imagine how sincere we are when we say, "We truly cannot wait!" Until then, please take care of yourself and stay in touch. You know where to find us.

**History NEVER pauses. Together, we can prove it.**



**Background photographs depict train operators and traffic officers during the 1918 Spanish flu epidemic in New York City, and are courtesy of the National Archives. HHT is indebted to the dedicated city workers, including those at NYC Parks, who are keeping New York City running during this unprecedented time.**