

NEWS RELEASE

HISTORIC PERIMETER STONE WALL RESTORATION NOW UNDERWAY AT STAN HYWET Iconic Estate also Kicks Off Season of Celebration for its 100th Anniversary

April 14, 2015 – Akron, Ohio – Just as staff and volunteers were preparing Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens to open for its 100th anniversary season, the first of 2200 linear feet of stone was starting to be dismantled for a complete restoration of the iconic wall surrounding the Estate.

Stan Hywet resident architect Mark Gilles and stonework craftsman Zach Goebelt have been planning this project for more than a year, an effort that was made possible by a significant lead gift to the 2nd Century Campaign for Stan Hywet by the State of Ohio.

Goebelt, owner of COI Stonework in Stow, is well known around the Estate. He has worked on many stone projects including the Corbin Conservatory and other sites around the gardens and grounds. But the Northeast Ohio winters finally got the best of the signature wall structure, when repeated freezing and thawing made it too dangerous for the temporary re-stacking that used to be the norm.

“We’re thrilled to be addressing this important and especially visible aspect of the Estate,” says Sean Joyce, Chief Financial Officer and VP of Operations, whose award-winning Architectural Restoration and Renovation Consultants (ARRC) team is responsible for leading the project. “It’s been a high priority for the last few years, and we are grateful to the State of Ohio which recognized the urgency of our need and have come through for us again.”

ARRC, headed by Gilles, is Stan Hywet’s for-profit entity which not only oversees all restoration efforts at the Estate, but also provides off-site consulting and management to both residential and commercial clients. “Zach has been a true partner as we monitor the impacts of advancing age on all of our stone structures and create our plans to secure them for the future,” says Gilles.

“The dry stone mason must understand the basic principles of dry stone construction and mix these rules with an intuitive sense of shapes in space,” says Goebelt. Each stone is unique but patterns and shapes remain constant. Their shapes suggest their function -- that is, face stones, packing stones, through or tie stones for the middle, capstones and cornerstones. The way they are chiseled and placed to create a perfect fit allows the stones to support one another, eliminating the need for concrete or other fillers.

The story of how Goebelt learned his craft is intriguing in itself. While pursuing his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at Kent State University, he worked on a public art commission titled “Behind the Brain,” which included carving a gigantic sandstone block into a corner of the project. A fan saw his work and he was soon tapped by the Perkins Stone Mansion to help repair that museum’s dry stone wall. He became so fascinated with the process, that in his quest to learn more about the craft, he enrolled at Kentucky’s Dry Stone Conservancy, which he returns to every year to further his skills.

Stan Hywet’s Perimeter Stone Wall is one of three major restoration projects to be addressed by the 2nd Century Campaign, which was publically announced in late January. The work on the wall is being managed in 50-100-foot linear increments, each being rebuilt as the next one is dismantled. The project is expected to take about 18 months.

Restoration of the historic Leaded Glass Windows, Tea Houses and sixteen rooms in the Manor House, as well as a \$2 million Endowment goal are also features of the 2nd Century Campaign.

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