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Manitoga/Russel Wright Center Receives Federal Grant

Congresswoman Kelly helps obtain assistance through "Save America's Treasures" initiative

U.S. Congresswoman Sue Kelly has helped secure a \$250,000 federal grant through the Save America's Treasures initiative to benefit preservation efforts at Manitoga/The Russel Wright Design Center in Garrison.

Manitoga, a national landmark that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, preserves the legacy of Russel Wright, a nationally renowned designer in the mid20th Century who lived and based his operations at the Garrison site for more than three decades. Manitoga preserves Wright's home and studio (known as Dragon Rock) as well as the site's unique landscape, possessions, and archives.

Kelly worked with the National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and Putnam County Legislator Vinny Tamagna to secure the funding for Manitoga. The National Park Service and National Trust for Historic Preservation each confirmed with Kelly this week that Manitoga will be awarded the grant

"Manitoga is not only a Hudson Valley historical treasure, but also an integral part of the Putnam County community.

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This return of federal money to our area is a valuable boost for our local tourism and cultural efforts,” Kelly said.

“These funds will help preserve the Manitoga history, architecture, and landscape that are enjoyed by local residents and visitors alike,” Kelly added. “This is well-deserved federal assistance for all of the people behind Manitoga who do such a great job hosting site tours, community activities, and a Summer Nature and Design Camp for children during the summer months.”

Save America’s Treasures is a public-private partnership founded in 1998 to protect national cultural treasures including historic sites, collections, and other materials that document the history of the United States. The national effort is led by the National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and current Save America’s Treasures co-chair First Lady Laura Bush. The initiative is supported by individuals from business, academia and philanthropy, along with experts in architecture, art, science, and conservation.

Manitoga’s Executive Director Anita Pidala said, “We are honored to be awarded a Save America’s Treasures grant which will enable us to begin restoring Dragon Rock, an irreplaceable national treasure associated with the life and work of Russel Wright, a midcentury cultural icon and pivotal 20th Century American designer. Future generations will now have the chance to fully experience Wright’s dramatic modern home and his masterfully intertwined natural and man-made world.”

Manitoga, one of only a few 20th century modern home sites in New York that is open to the public, was

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recently designated as an official site of the First Lady's Preserve America initiative. Manitoga also is one of only 28 National Trust for Historic Preservation's Artists' Homes and Studios sites around the country. It also is recognized as a Heritage Site of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, and is part of the Hudson River Greenway Trail System.