

Guidebook: Great Houses

MID HUDSON

Clermont

<http://www.friendsofclermont.org/>

1 Clermont Ave
Germantown, NY 12526

Hours: Mansion and Visitor Center Open Mid-April through Labor Day: Wednesday-Saturday 10:00-5:00 & Sundays 12:00-5:00; Labor Day through October: Wednesday-Sunday 12:00-5:00. Garden Tours given Mid-April through September, Monday-Friday. Admission is \$5.00 for adults, \$4.00 for seniors and students, \$1 for children 5-12, and children under 5 are free.

Notes: Group tours for 12 or more people are available by reservation only.

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Historical Description:

Clermont was the Hudson River seat of the politically and socially prominent Livingston family of New York for more than 230 years. The most notable resident of Clermont was Judge Robert Livingston's eldest son, Robert R. Livingston, Jr. (1746-1813) who was one of the five men responsible for drafting the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Robert also earned the title of "the Chancellor," when he became Chancellor of New York State. British Major General John Vaughan would burn Clermont and the Chancellor's own Belvedere during his ill-fated advance up the Hudson in October 1777 to take the pressure off of the doomed Lieutenant General John Burgoyne and his army at Saratoga. Livingston's mother, Margaret Beekman Livingston, would rebuild Clermont between 1779 and 1782. Seven generations left their mark through the architecture, furnishings, and landscape.

The Site:

Today the 485-acre historic site appears much as it did in the early twentieth-century, when the estate was the home of the last two Livingston generations to occupy the property: Mr. and Mrs. John Henry Livingston and their daughters, Honoria and Janet. Clermont is fully handicap accessible. New York State Access Passes are accepted. Most visitors take an hour and a half to tour the Gardens and the House. The House tours are guided and run every half-hour, while guided tours of the Garden are only on Sundays.

Directions:

From the New York State Thruway take Exit 19 (Kingston). Cross the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge to the east side of the Hudson River. At the second traffic light turn left (north) onto Route 9G. Proceed north ten miles to Clermont's entrance sign. From the north take Exit 21 (Catskill). Cross the Hudson River on the Rip Van Winkle Bridge, then bear right (south) onto Route 9G. Take 9G south for ten miles to the entrance sign for Clermont.