# Table of Contents

2 Our Mission

4 A History of Family Involvement

6 Preservation
   7 Business of Preservation
   8–9 Preserving a National Treasure
   10–11 Preserving the Historic Landscape

12 Supporting the Environment
   13 Caring for the Land
   14 Protecting Historic Features
   15 Agricultural Best Practices
   16 Alternative Energy
   17 Forestry

18 Economic Impact

20 Community Collaboration
   21 Giving Back
   22 People in Need
   23 Food and Farming
   24–25 Preservation of Cultural and Natural Resources
   26–27 Local and Regional Support
This report shares how our mission of preservation—and the significant investment in Biltmore that results from that mission—has fostered the economic engine that contributes to the growth of Asheville and Western North Carolina.

Striving to fulfill our great-grandparents’ original intentions around giving back and advocating for the welfare of local residents, Biltmore is honored to be part of the fabric of our community.

Biltmore invests in connecting with the community in meaningful ways, partnering with economic, environmental, social, and preservation causes. We consider this a vital part of who we are as a local family business and as an organization.

At the foundation of that business is our 2,600 employees who support the mission of preserving Biltmore, and the thousands of employees over the years who have committed their strengths, talents, character, and commitment to the preservation of the estate.

Thank you to everyone for helping us steward the estate so future generations might enjoy its beauty.
George and Edith Vanderbilt’s legacy consists of much more than Biltmore. In the late 19th century, their socially progressive attitudes around education, agriculture, and the idea of self-sufficiency had a profound impact across Western North Carolina. A major employer since its inception, the estate was also a catalyst for the birth of Asheville’s vibrant hospitality industry, beginning with John and Cornelia Vanderbilt Cecil’s opening of their home to the public in the 1930s.

George Vanderbilt’s grandson, William A.V. Cecil (1928–2017), returned to Asheville in the early 1960s and established an extraordinary vision for the future of Biltmore in which the growth of tourism could fund preservation of his family’s property. He began transforming the estate into the region’s economic engine, contributing to Asheville’s ascendance as a must-see destination.

The legacy continues today under the direction of the next generation of family, led by Bill Cecil, Jr., and his children and Dini Cecil Pickering and her children.
Still privately owned and completely self-sufficient, Biltmore is a unique model of successful entrepreneurship, sustainability, and private enterprise supporting the preservation of this National Historic Landmark.

The far-reaching impact of Biltmore’s investment in preservation touches all aspects of the business. Preservation at Biltmore covers much more than major restoration projects—although those are significant investments of capital and time.

Preservation spans the daily needs of maintaining a 250-room historic building, 8,000 acres of carefully managed gardens, forest, and farmlands, plus other original structures, all of which contribute to Biltmore’s National Historic Landmark designation.

BY THE NUMBERS

$17.9 million in direct spending generated by Biltmore’s preservation efforts
Preserving a National Treasure

Restoring the Historic Roof

In 2015, a long-term leak in the roof of Biltmore House was repaired with the help of a specialty contractor who removed and reproduced more than 900 individual copper pieces of the complex North Tower ridge cap design. The company created casts for stamping, then poured and formed new molds for each piece. After installation, the final result was a perfect match, carrying forward the vision of George Vanderbilt and architect Richard Morris Hunt into another century.

GRIFFIN AWARD FOR RESTORATION

For this project, Biltmore earned the Griffin Award for Restoration, given annually by the Preservation Society of Asheville and Buncombe County for projects that accurately depict the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time.

Protecting Pools

Over time, damage to the masonry created significant water loss for the pools in the Italian Garden. In 2019, all structural material was removed from the third and final pool, taking it down to the brick foundation for a total restoration. This massive preservation project to return all three pools to their original appearance and functionality took 15 years to complete and was directed by a team of Biltmore experts.
Preserving the Historic Landscape

Day-to-day maintenance and replanting in Biltmore’s historic landscape is key to preserving the design intent of Frederick Law Olmsted, George Vanderbilt’s landscape architect. Over the course of 125 years, Olmsted’s original plants have matured, impacting the vegetation, bed lines, and views he carefully considered. Biltmore’s landscaping staff studies original drawings, plans, and letters to understand the architect’s design intent; when time comes to replant, they select the same species or appropriate replacements so future guests can enjoy the same experience as the Vanderbilts’ family and friends.

Honoring Olmsted’s Original Designs

At times, large scale efforts are required to maintain Olmsted’s designs. In the Azalea Garden, a century of heavy rainfall resulted in significant stream erosion. Olmsted created this stream to carry water draining from the front of Biltmore House & Gardens down to the Bass Pond, adding to the natural appearance of this garden. Biltmore is working with an engineering firm to design stream stabilization methods, including placing appropriate rock structures to slow the water and reinforce the banks in an aesthetic manner befitting its historic surroundings.

Restoring the Azalea Garden Stream
When George Vanderbilt began planning his grand estate in Asheville, North Carolina, his vision was twofold. First, he wanted to create a place where he could relax and entertain friends and family. Just as important, however, was his desire to preserve the surrounding beauty. He envisioned a self-sustaining estate that would nurture the land and its resources for years to come. From this vision came the nation’s first planned forestry program and the beginning of a family focus on the environment.

Supporting the Environment

To help preserve one of its most valuable resources—the land—Biltmore seeks to continue the tradition of resource stewardship with the following best agricultural practices:

- No tilling of pasture land and rotational grazing of livestock helps break parasite cycles, increases soil health, and provides higher quality forage for animals.
- Crop rotation on a four-year cycle helps reduce soil erosion and increases soil fertility and crop yield.
- Using goats to control invasive plant species in areas of steep terrain allows maintenance crews to take on other projects while reducing some diesel fuel usage in equipment.

By cultivating pollinator-friendly areas of wildflowers and other attractive plantings, Biltmore is playing a part in preventing the worldwide demise of bees, hummingbirds, moths, and more. The estate has earned certification as a monarch waystation for this threatened species of butterflies that migrates through Western North Carolina.

Promoting Pollinators
Protecting Historic Features

When Biltmore’s National Historic Landmark designation was granted, it recognized more than 150 contributing structures as well as significant elements of Olmsted’s landscape design. Each year, Biltmore carefully documents and monitors existing conditions, identifies immediate needs for stabilization, and looks for advantageous ways to fully restore or adapt original structures for current uses. One example is the Jones Farm, built around 1910 on the West Range of the estate. It sat empty for several decades until it was restored and adapted for use as the Biltmore Sporting Clays Clubhouse.

In addition, we constantly monitor, restore, and enhance stream beds, bank erosion, vegetation, and wildlife habitat along streams on the West Range—particularly those negatively affected by a recent road-widening project that created additional and concentrated water flows off the expanded pavement into adjacent forested areas.

Agricultural Best Practices

Our Field to Table program focuses on growing—and sourcing—the best local and regional foods for the estate’s restaurants. Hormone-free beef, lamb, pork, and eggs from free-range hens are supplied by the estate’s agricultural services, and the culinary teams incorporate this self-sustaining bounty into restaurant menus.

Hydroponics

Biltmore has been a working farm since 1895, with an outstanding reputation for quality. To honor that legacy of excellence while still meeting the demands of the estate’s full-service restaurants, the benefits of hydroponics are undeniable. In addition to higher and more consistent yields, the system is more efficient in protecting plants such as leafy greens and herbs from pests and uses less water than standard field irrigation.
Alternative Energy

Our solar panel installation offsets a percentage of the estate’s energy needs. The 9-acre, 1.7-megawatt system features 7,000 solar panels and uses advanced technology to perform even on cloudy days.

Biofuel

Waste fryer oil from estate restaurants is collected and recycled locally into biodiesel fuel that is used in estate farming/horticulture operations.

Solar Array

Managed Forestry

Modern Managed Forestry

Under the direction of landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted and the implementation of his long-term plan for sustainability, Biltmore became the birthplace of scientific forestry in America.

Today, more than 4,000 acres of the estate are managed under a plan written by a certified consulting forester. We utilize selection harvest in 15-year rotations, allowing a chance for different species to grow and mature.

Instead of focusing on just a profitable bottom line, Biltmore strives to create a true multi-use sustainable forest: one that provides healthy wildlife habitats, beautiful aesthetics, recreation opportunities, and the ability to persist for generations to come.

A PHILOSOPHY OF FORESTRY

“Mr. Vanderbilt was the first of the large forest owners in America to adopt the practice of forestry. He has conserved Pisgah Forest from the time he bought it up to his death, a period of nearly twenty five years, under the firm conviction that every forest owner owes it to those who follow him, to hand down his forest property to them unimpaired by wasteful use.”

– Edith Vanderbilt; letter from May 1914
Previous research by Oxford Economics indicates the tourism industry generated a total economic impact of nearly $3.3 billion in Buncombe County in 2019. Based on Biltmore’s estimated economic impact of $620 million in FY2019, Biltmore comprised 20% of the tourism industry’s economic impact in Buncombe County.

The Biltmore Company oversees the operations of Biltmore House & Gardens, Antler Hill Village & Winery, restaurants, shops, equestrian and hiking trails, and historic barns, farms, and fields. Additional businesses that are part of The Biltmore Company include:

- Biltmore Estate® Wine Company—producer and marketer of wines
- Two hotel properties
  - The Inn on Biltmore Estate®, a four-star, 210-room hotel offering world-class service
  - Village Hotel on Biltmore Estate®, featuring Biltmore’s celebrated hospitality in surroundings inspired by the estate’s farm houses
- The Biltmore Building—management company for commercial office space in downtown Asheville
- Biltmore Estate Reproductions, Inc.—a licensing company working for Biltmore-branded products

Measuring Economic Impact
Economic data cited in this report comes from The Economic and Fiscal Impacts of The Biltmore Companies, a study produced in 2020 by Oxford Economics for Biltmore to measure the economic impact of its businesses. The study collected and analyzed data focusing on:

- Impact of Biltmore operations
- Impact of off-property spending by Biltmore guests motivated to visit the region
- Impact of preservation-specific spending
Biltmore focuses philanthropic efforts on social, economic, and environmental goals of the overall company, as well as partnerships within the counties of Western North Carolina to support people in need, food and farming, and the preservation of natural and cultural resources.

Specifically, we support those organizations that assist people in our community with housing, education, and workforce development. In keeping with our agricultural heritage, we support local organizations that promote food access and sustainability, nutrition education, and food safety. We also support local organizations that educate and preserve our natural resources (water, wildlife, forestry) and those organizations that preserve significant historical sites.

**Philanthropy Guidelines**

Biltmore is committed to giving back in significant ways to our community in appreciation of the support our company receives. In keeping with our corporate vision, we proactively invest in local organizations that align with our mission and focused areas of giving. We do not accept unsolicited donation requests for financial or in-kind gifts.

**Biltmore’s Relationship with CFWNC**

We are proud to partner in many ways with The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina (CFWNC). Managing our charitable giving through CFWNC gives us access to the guidance of professionals for both grant-making and gift-planning, and allows more of our charitable resources to be directed into the community. We are grateful for this collaborative partnership and the expertise of the foundation’s staff.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

In addition to monetary support, Biltmore supports local organizations with which it has a strong and lasting relationship through in-kind gifts of wine, auction items, and gift baskets; complimentary estate tickets; guided tours; corporate sponsorships; on-property events; and volunteer hours.

- 247.5 volunteer hours
- 631 organizations supported

**Giving Back**
Biltmore is contributing to building affordable homes and apartments for working families in the area by supporting organizations like Mountain Housing Opportunities (MHO). “Biltmore has been a critical business donor in MHO’s 30-year history,” said Scott Dedman, MHO President and Executive Director. “The company’s support continues a long-standing commitment to address housing affordability, which encompasses workforce programs specifically for Biltmore employees and has now expanded to any employees working in the greater Asheville/Buncombe County area.”

Mountain Housing Opportunities

BY THE NUMBERS

7,400+ renter households and 5,200+ homeowner households pay more than half their income for housing costs in the Asheville/Buncombe area—including many working families

Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP)

Biltmore chefs prepared dishes like local apple and butternut squash soup for Asheville elementary students to taste as part of the Growing Minds Farm to School program developed by Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project, which provides students with opportunities to learn about local foods. For several years, Biltmore chefs have prepared tastings and provided recipe cards to encourage children to eat healthy foods at an early age. Popular with the chefs and students alike, the tastings elicit responses including “That soup was superb! It’s the best soup I’ve had in my life, really!”

Food and Farming

Mountain Housing Opportunities provides affordable housing options for working families

Estate Executive Chef Mark DeMarco (left) and his culinary team work with students
Biltmore Community Benefit Partners

Diamond Sponsors ($15,000+)
- The Biltmore Company™
- Barkley’s Mill on Southern Cross Farm
- Classic Event Rental
- Wells Fargo

Platinum Sponsors ($10,000)
- Bank of America/Merrill Lynch
- Chamberlain Hollicka Attorney at Law
- Dixon Hughes Goodman LLP
- Ken Wilson Ford
- Roberts & Stevens
- SunTrust

Gold Sponsors ($5,000)
- Advanced Business Equipment
- Biltmore Estate Wine Company*
- Biltmore Floral*
- Colton Groome & Company
- Hershey Creamery Company
- Insurance Service of Asheville
- PGAV Destinations
- Royal Cup Coffee & Tea
- Wicked Weed Brewing
- Worley, Woodbery, & Associates, P.A.

Silver Sponsors ($3,500)
- Biltmore Iron & Metal Company
- Brown Crosby
- Ecolab
- Grove Stone & Sand Company/Hexdrick Industries
- Mountain Housing Opportunities
- Silver-Line Plastics
- Sysco*
- US Foods

Bronze Sponsors ($1,500)
- Aon
- Asheville Hotel Group
- Dorfman Pacific
- Eugene M. Carr, Jr.
- Fresh Point Charlotte*
- Grove Funeral Home
- Highland Brewing Company
- Hour Glass Cleaners
- Joseph K. Oppermann—Architect, P.A.
- MB Haynes Corporation
- PSAV*
- The Richards Group
- UNC Asheville

Special Thanks: Clark Communications; The Community Foundation of WNC

*In-Kind Sponsor
**Represents a combination of cash and in-kind services

BY THE NUMBERS
$177,430 Contributed to Asheville Art Museum Arts Education Programming and Outreach from 2018 Biltmore Community Benefit
36,442 Children served during the first half of 2018–2019 by Literacy Through Art programs in Asheville City Schools

Pictured on facing page: (L-R) Chuck Pickering, Dini Cecil Pickering, Bill Cecil III, Ginger Cecil, Bill Cecil Jr., Bench Patrick, AAM Chair of the Board of Trustees, Don Myers, AAM Executive Director, Bruce Good, Ryan Good, Kyle Baliles, Aubrey Good Baliles, Alison Norris, Carly Pickering, and Chuck Pickering

Biltmore Community Benefit

The Biltmore Community Benefit is a collaborative effort with our valued business partners and a key centerpiece of our corporate philanthropy. This invitation-only process selects an area nonprofit organization that aligns with one of our three main areas of focus, has a specific program/project need, and meets additional criteria determined by the selection committee to receive the proceeds from the community-wide fundraising event. Since 2000, Biltmore vendors, corporate partners, and private donors have raised more than $2.1 million for beneficiaries.

In 2018, the Biltmore Community Benefit supported the Asheville Art Museum Arts Education Programming and Outreach. The Asheville Art Museum (AAM) is the only nationally accredited art museum serving 24 Western North Carolina counties with vital and otherwise unavailable visual arts programs to adults and children.
Local and Regional Support

- All Tech Foundation
- AdventHealth Hendersonville Foundation
- Asheville Area Habitat for Humanity
- Asheville Greenworks
- Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation
- Community Foundation of WNC
  - Supported purchase of new box truck for YMCA Mobile Market program
  - Supported MountainWise Double Up Food Bucks program
  - Sponsored annual “Power of the purse” luncheon
- Eblen Charities
- Eliada Home
- Friends of the Smokies
- Friends of the WNC Nature Center
- Homeward Bound of WNC
- MANNA FoodBank
- Meals on Wheels
- Muddy Sneakers
- OnTrack Financial Education & Counseling
- Organic Growers School
- Pisgah Legal Services
- Preservation North Carolina
- Preservation Society of Asheville and Buncombe County
- Riverlink
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Pisgah Conservancy
- TRACTOR Food and Farms
- Warren Wilson College
- Working Wheels

In addition to preserving the estate’s 8,000 acres and providing support for organizations in the local community, Biltmore supports regional efforts to protect air quality, clean water, scenic views, national and state parks, and wildlife and plant habitats.

In 2018, with support from Biltmore and other donors, Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy purchased 234 acres in the Highlands of Roan to protect rare plant and animal habitat, wildlife corridors, scenic views, and sources of clean water along an important high elevation ridgeline.