



Staten Island Advance

Staten Islanders get a sneak peek of the new Staten Island Museum



The Staten Island Museum's new home is lite up during the Staten Island Museum's Imagine Gala Preview Celebration Saturday, May 10, 2014 at Snug Harbor Cultural Center and Botanical Garden.(Staten Island Advance/ Bill Lyons)

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STATEN ISLAND, N.Y.-- The beautiful new building sits empty for now, but that didn't stop a decked out crowd from coming out Saturday night to support the Staten Island Museum's "Imagine: A Gala Preview Celebration" to get a peek at the nearly-completed Building A on the grounds of the Snug Harbor Cultural Center and Botanical Garden.

Trustees, art lovers and cultural buffs enjoyed an evening of cocktails and food under the white tents.

"Tonight is about sharing it with people," said Cheryl Adolph, chief operating officer of the Staten Island Museum. "Staten Island is proud of its history. We're really excited to show this great space."

Many got to tour the new building, which was built in 1879, after it got a makeover inside while preserving the historical landmark on the outside.

The three-year, \$27 million project is expected to be completed this fall and will have room for new exhibits, paintings, artifacts and other works of arts. It will also house exhibits on prehistory and natural science, local art and antiquities.

"I think it's really exciting," said William J. Fritz, a trustee of the museum. "It's going to transform the borough. We've had little space to house all the cultural history of Staten Island. And I think it will be on par with museums in other boroughs in New York."

The hefty \$27 million price tag was picked up by the city, but it will be up to the museum to raise funds for the furnishings. It has already raised \$2.7 million of the \$3 million target, and organizers hope the gala and other fundraisers will help secure the remaining funds.

The goal was to raise an additional \$315,000, according to Ms. Adolph.

"I'm confident we can raise the money," she said. "People have really gotten behind this museum. I'm happy we can bring it back to life for everyone to enjoy."