

Winter-Holiday 2006-07 Highlights in the Brandywine Valley

Wilmington, DE (October 8, 2006); For immediate release—The Brandywine Valley, where Pennsylvania and Delaware meet just thirty miles southwest of Philadelphia, is home to world-class gardens, museums, historic sites, and cultural opportunities. Winter is full of decorations, celebrations, and special events.

Here are seasonal highlights. There are many other events scheduled for late November 2006 through February 2007. Detailed information and photos are available through the contacts and websites listed below.

The **Brandywine River Museum** celebrates the season with “A Brandywine Christmas,” November 24 through January 7, featuring a room-size O-gauge model railroad, an elaborate Victorian dollhouse, and thousands of whimsical “critter” ornaments on holiday trees. “The Imaginary Beasts of Royal Lacey Scoville” exhibits 38 whimsical watercolors that form an original narrative written and illustrated by Scoville in 1915.

The annual “Critter Sale” on December 2 and 3 offers unique ornaments handcrafted from natural materials by museum volunteers.

“Winter Weekends for Families,” January 27 through February 25, are filled with fun, learning, and adventure, complete with a free family guide and museum discovery game sheet. Audio tours have been designed for children ages 6 through 12.

Exhibiting American art in a restored 19th-century grist mill, the Brandywine River Museum is internationally known for its unparalleled collection of works by three generations of Wyeths and its fine collection of American illustration, still life, and landscape paintings.

“Building Books: The Art of David Macaulay” continues at the **Delaware Art Museum** through January 7. From November 4 through January 7, “Precious Spaces: The Artist’s Studio in Miniature” displays miniatures that re-create the studios of famous artists. Skilled crafters from the surrounding region have been invited to produce these inspiring environments in detailed, three-dimensional dioramas.

Saturday, December 9, the 22nd annual “Holiday House Tour” mixes historic architecture and contemporary design, sometimes within the same house. Visitors may be inspired to rework their own living spaces.

Cutting-edge art is the subject of “Fever Pitch: New Work from the Center for Emerging Visual Artists” by current or former fellows of the Center for Emerging Visual Artists in Philadelphia. January 27 through March 4. “From Raku to Ray Guns: Ceramics Since 1960” continues through February.

The Museum offers “Art After Hours” Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m., with tours, music, food, and cash bar. Thursdays at noon, “Starving for Art” presents a half-hour tour followed by an informal discussion over lunch. “Glory of Stories” is offered every Friday morning from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. for preschool-age children. Museum admission is free to all visitors on Sundays.

The Delaware Art Museum holds a world-renowned collection of more than 12,000 works focusing on American art and illustration from the 19th to 21st century, as well as the British Pre-Raphaelite movement of the mid-19th century.

The Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts invites you to pull up a

chair—figuratively!—at “The Modern Seat,” through January 7. The exhibit includes 25 chairs from the collection of Wilmington’s Jeanne S. Rymer and Ivar Stakgold, representing well-known designs from the 1930s through the 1990s; many were designed by architects.

New York architects Michael Morris and Yoshiko Sato of the Morris Sato Studio have created “LightShowers,” a multimedia experience in biofeedback. Relax on a rock-shaped seat and meditate upon video projections of flowing water while being bathed in a gentle shower from light-emitting diodes. Through January 7.

“Art Salad,” a free lunchtime program, is held the first and third Wednesdays of the month at noon.

The DCCA presents exhibitions that explore topical issues in contemporary art and society. Housed in a rebuilt railroad car factory, art and community intersect here with passion and energy.

At the **Delaware Museum of Natural History**, “TUSKS! Ice Age Mammoths & Mastodons,” delves deep into the prehistoric world of the Ice Age’s giant beasts. Visitors learn about the carnivores, rodents and reptiles that lived during this period; see how scientists can tell when and how these creatures lived; learn the differences between mammoths and mastodons; and find out what a shoveltusker is. Through January 7.

Celebrate “Dino Days” on December 27 and 28 with live animals, face painting, a fossil dig, crafts, and more amidst Delaware’s only permanent display of dinosaurs.

They inhabit all of the world’s oceans, battle with sperm whales, and can be longer than a school bus. “In Search of Giant Squid,” from January 20 through April 29, introduces the fascinating world of the giant squid, and invites visitors to join in the quest to observe this legend that has only been seen once in the wild. Special opening day events.

A visit to the Delaware Museum of Natural History is a family-friendly voyage of discovery.

Hagley Museum and Library celebrates “Christmas at Hagley” from November 24 through January 1 (closed December 25). The 1803 Georgian-style estate E. I. du Pont built for his family is trimmed for the holidays in a combination of styles from the 19th and 20th centuries. Decorations include a special Twelfth Night dessert service in the dining room.

Start a new tradition with the “Sunday Brunch Holiday Tour,” Sundays from November 26 through December 17. Dine on omelets, pastries, French toast, and other goodies in a historic setting, followed by a tour of the du Pont family home.

Saturday, January 13 through Monday, January 15, the “Invention Convention” is filled with fun, family-oriented, hands-on activities relating to inventing, engineering, and science. Take apart appliances to see what makes them work; obtain a pretend Hagley patent on a new creation; watch amazing and entertaining science shows.

Sunday afternoon, February 11, “Victorine's Valentine Day” takes place on Workers' Hill. The focus is on the social and family history of the people who once operated the powder mills. Visitors bake gingerbread, make a Victorian Valentine, and hear stories from yesteryear.

Hagley’s park-like museum on 235 acres along the Brandywine depicts home and work in a nineteenth-century milling community amid ruins and restorations. Functioning machinery, a restored house and garden, and changing exhibits bring history to life.

“Complex Relations: Delaware at the Time of First Contact” at the Delaware History

Museum of the **Historical Society of Delaware** through January 6 explores the culture of the native peoples who were living in what is now Delaware, and their interaction with European settlers. Examples of the flora, fauna, and geography/environment in which these people lived will be on display. The exhibit is in conjunction with the 375th anniversary of Lewes, DE.

“The Dansey Flag” features the only known Delaware regimental flag from the Revolutionary War. The flag is named after the British captain who captured it. The exhibit tells multiple stories centered on this icon, including its history, its acquisition by the Historical Society of Delaware, and its conservation and preservation.

Costumed guides lead “Read House and Garden Tours” through a 22-room mansion in New Castle. See how two of the families that lived here celebrated the holidays, from the understated Read family in the early 1800s to the Lairds’ lavish dinners and parties in the 1920s. December 26-31.

The Delaware History Museum in Wilmington and the Read House in historic New Castle bring the First State’s history to life. Regular lectures are offered at both locations.

“Christmas Blooms” at **Longwood Gardens** from November 23 through January 7. Thousands of poinsettias accented with amaryllis, narcissus, begonias, cyclamen, tulips, and other flowers grace the 4.5-acre heated Conservatory. A 20-foot Christmas tree in the Music Room features elegant red and ivory ornaments and shimmering white lights; a towering 25-foot tree in the East Conservatory dazzles with an array of white and silver plants and ornaments. Swags, living wreaths, and decorated trees are displayed throughout the Conservatory. Concerts, performances, and sing-alongs are scheduled daily.

New this year is the addition of an intimate ice skating rink nestled outdoors around the Chimes Tower. Evenings November 25 to January 1, amateur and professional skaters perform. Winter visitors will also discover fountains dancing to holiday music in the Open Air Theatre. A 62-bell carillon plays holiday music every half hour. After dark, more than 420,000 colorful lights glow in the trees; anemones, daffodils, lilacs, roses, and witch hazels fashioned from lights bloom in the flowerbeds.

New Year’s Eve, Longwood remains open until 10 p.m. Strolling carolers, a barbershop quartet, face painting, a balloon artist, craft station and a special New Year’s in Old Vienna Waltz performance by a guest organist are topped by a 5-minute fireworks display at 9 p.m.

Longwood Gardens is the world’s premier horticultural display garden, offering 1,050 acres of gardens, woodlands, and meadows; 20 outdoor gardens; 20 indoor gardens under glass; spectacular fountains; and more than 800 annual events.

Rockwood Park invites visitors to its free “Holiday Open House,” December 8 and 9 from 5-8 p.m., and December 10 from 1-4 p.m. See Rockwood Mansion at its holiday best. Take photos with Santa Claus; enjoy special appearances by Frosty the Snowman and Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer in an atmosphere of live music, refreshments, and fun.

Through December 31, the Brinhurst Gallery exhibits “Objects of Beauty: Vessels from the Rockwood Collection.” Explore the eclectic taste of the Brinhurst family in their selection of decorative arts, with objects ranging from vases to hair receivers.

Rockwood Park is owned and operated by New Castle County. Chris Coons, County Executive. Rockwood Park welcomes visitors to the mansion, gardens, conference center and 72 acres of woods and meadows.

At **Winterthur Museum & Country Estate**, “Wrapped in Holiday Style” is the theme for Yuletide at Winterthur, November 18 through January 7. Elegant decorations re-create 20th-century du Pont family celebrations, and four historic interiors are decorated for 21st century celebrations by New York designer Thomas Jayne. Tour highlights include a visual history of decorated Christmas trees, a 10-foot tree decorated with hundreds of dried blossoms, and a painting by James Wyeth never before on public view. Several rooms feature mannequins dressed in fashionable clothing from the 1940s, as well as contemporary couture.

“Fashion in Film” exhibits period costumes created for film adaptations of classic novels—elegantly worn by Elizabeth Taylor, Nicole Kidman, Meryl Streep, Alan Rickman, Ralph Fiennes, and others. The 36 costumes are on display through January 7.

Winterthur Museum & Country Estate is internationally famous for its interiors and landscape. Indoors, the 175-room mansion is a world-renowned center for American decorative arts. Gallery space presents permanent and changing exhibits; various tours of the house, galleries, and gardens are offered.

Discover Brandywine Valley Public Relations Association members
(www.brandywinetreasures.org):

Brandywine River Museum U.S. Route 1, Chadds Ford, PA 19317;
www.brandywinemuseum.org. Lora Englehart, 610-388-8337, lenglehart@brandywine.org.

Delaware Art Museum 2301 Kentmere Parkway, Wilmington, DE 19806; www.delart.org.
Dennis Lawson, 302-571-9590, x. 515; dlawson@delart.org.

Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts, 200 S. Madison St., Wilmington, DE 19801;
www.thedcca.org. Larry Nagengast, 302-656-6466, lmnagengast@thedcca.org.

Delaware Museum of Natural History, 4840 Kennett Pike, Delaware Route 52, Wilmington, DE 19807; www.delmnh.org. Joey Outten, 302-658-9111; joutten@delmnh.org.

Hagley Museum and Library, DE Route 141, Wilmington, DE 19807; www.hagley.org. Suzy Rogers, 302-658-2400m ext. 238; srogers@hagley.org.

Historical Society of Delaware (includes the Delaware History Museum in Wilmington and the George Read II House and Gardens in New Castle), 504 Market St., Wilmington, DE 19801;
www.hsd.org. Megen Morris, 302-295-2390, publicrelations@hsd.org.

Nemours Mansion and Gardens, 1600 Rockland Rd., Wilmington, DE 19803;
www.nemoursmansion.org. Susan M. Maynard, 302-651-6912; smaynard@nemours.org.

Longwood Gardens, U.S. Route 1 at PA Route 52, Kennett Square, PA 19348;
www.longwoodgardens.org. Patricia Evans, 610-388-1000, ext. 442;
pevans@longwoodgardens.org.

Rockwood Park and Mansion, 610 Shipley Rd., Wilmington, DE 19805; www.rockwood.org.

Carol K. Dougherty, 302-761-4340, CKDougherty@nccde.org.

Winterthur Museum & Country Estate, DE Route 52, Winterthur, DE 19735;
www.winterthur.org. Contact Hillary Holland, 302-888-4734; hholland@winterthur.org.

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