Historic Garden Week Returns to Newport News April 22

Newport News, VA, Feb. 1, 2020 – Bring your groups to Newport News to discover Virginia’s flowering heritage during the Garden Club of Virginia’s 87th Historic Garden Week. Selected in past years by the American Bus Association as one of its Top 100 Events, Historic Garden Week is an 8-day statewide event being held April 18-25.

The Newport News tour, hosted by The Huntington Garden Club and The Hampton Roads Garden Club, will be held from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. April 22. This walking and driving tour in Newport News pays homage to the area’s Mennonite community. Four private properties as well as a Gardener’s Workshop Farm are featured.

Two contemporary homes on the banks of the Warwick River sit on part of the original 1,200 acres purchased by Mennonites D.Z. Yoder and I.D. Hertzler in 1897. Two other homes are still owned by Mennonite families. The Yoder family homestead, where ducks, geese and swans swim in the family pond, is adjacent to the tour headquarters at Providence Mennonite Church, established in 1900.

The Marketplace, featuring a variety of vendors from across the country, will be held from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. under the big tent behind tour headquarters. Food trucks will also be at the site, from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Additionally, an optional “Flowers After Hours” wine-and-cheese reception will be held as part of the tour, from 5 to 7 p.m., in the pavilion at tour headquarters.

Guided garden tours will be held at the Ackerman residence and at the Gardener’s Workshop Farm, home to a private urban flower farm that is situated on three acres that were part of the original Mennonite tract. Since 1998, the owner has provided thousands of flowers each week from May to October to local florists and customer “shareholders” who purchase a part of the crop. Visitors can join a guided walking tour of the farm and view a 1947 scale model of the original Warwick River Mennonite Colony.

Funds from Historic Garden Week tours benefit the restoration of important public historic gardens and grounds throughout the state, such as the Governor’s Mansion, as well as a research fellowship program for graduate students in landscape architecture.

To plan a group tour to Newport News during Historic Garden Week, contact Barb Kleiss, Group Marketing Manager, at 757-926-1442, toll-free at 888-493-7386, or by email at bkleiss@nnva.gov.

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