



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Contact:

Paula Hankins
615-889-2941 x223
phankins@thehermitage.com

Pam King
615-889-2941 x200
pking@thehermitage.com

Howard J. Kittell
615-889-2941 x206
hkittell@thehermitage.com

Picture Perfect Garden Party at The Hermitage

Mayor Karl Dean Speaks on Tourism and Flood

NASHVILLE, TN (May 20, 2010) - Southern grace and charm adorned a picture perfect **Spring Outing, the annual meeting of the Ladies' Hermitage Association (LHA), on Wednesday, May 19th with Mayor Karl Dean as the keynote speaker.** Since 1889, the LHA has managed and operated The Hermitage, Home of President Andrew Jackson, lovingly and expertly caring for the entire 1,120 protected acres, including the world-renowned Hermitage mansion, a splendid example of Greek Revival architecture built by our 7th U.S. President, Andrew Jackson.

No one knows exactly when the Ladies' Hermitage Association began holding Spring Outing, but it's known to be a very long-standing tradition. Spring Outing became famous as a picnic-type outdoor event where ladies paraded big, colorful hats and fashionable clothing – and much of that tradition was still in evidence among Wednesday's attendees. For the first time, this year's event was held under an open tent in the one-acre formal

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historic gardens of The Hermitage. Amidst glorious blooms and well-manicured lawns, under sunny skies, temperature of 72 degrees and a mild breeze, Spring Outing attendees dined on tasty box lunches while being delighted by the spirited musical entertainment of the Nashville Old Time String Band Association.

As the meeting got underway, LHA Regent, Sarah Knestrick welcomed the group and provided historical perspective on all that has been achieved since the Ladies' Hermitage Association was founded in 1889. Howard Kittell, President & CEO of The Hermitage, presented The Year in Review, highlighting major accomplishments, VIP visitors, grants, and restoration projects over the past year. **The Honorable Karl Dean, Mayor of Nashville, served as keynote speaker for the event, concluding that following the city's recent devastating storms, his best word for describing Nashville would still be "optimistic", "but now I would underscore that word four or five times!"**

Special awards and honors presented at Spring Outing included: a wreath of flowers in memory of LHA members, board members, and regents who have passed; a gift in celebration of employee Faye Kay's 30 years of inspirational service to The Hermitage as an historical interpreter at the mansion; and the first presentation of the newly instituted Regent's Award to Mary Wade. Mary served as Regent from 1997 – 1998, presiding over the completion of a 10-year interior restoration returning the mansion to the way it looked upon Andrew Jackson's return from Washington in 1837, and also leading the LHA at the time of the destructive tornado that struck on April 16, 1998. Though The Hermitage did not suffer a great deal of structural damage from that tornado, 80% of the trees on the property over 30' tall were uprooted or sheared off, including three trees that dated from the 1700's and many believed to have been planted by Andrew Jackson, himself. Mary recalled her first impression "on entering The Hermitage property today was to notice how much shade was being provided by all the trees. They've grown back!"

Indeed, under the constant dedicated care of the Ladies' Hermitage Association, the trees at The Hermitage have flourished, just like the gardens, the mansion and other buildings, the museum collection, the education programs, and the flow of visitors from around the world. Wednesday's picture perfect garden party was a well-deserved celebration of all the LHA has achieved on behalf of this national treasure over the past 121 years. The Hermitage is a bright part of Mayor Karl Dean's apt description of Nashville's future as "optimistic".

ABOUT THE HERMITAGE:

The Hermitage, Home of President Andrew Jackson, is one of the largest and most visited presidential homes in the United States. In 1856, the State of Tennessee purchased the property from the Jackson family, entrusting it to the Ladies' Hermitage Association in 1889 to operate as one of America's first historic site museums. Today, The Hermitage is a 1,120-acre National Historic Landmark with over 30 historic buildings, including restored slave cabins. Thanks to efforts of this nonprofit organization, the mansion is the most accurately preserved early presidential home in the country.

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The Hermitage is a national model for authenticity, conservation, and historic preservation. In recent years, new interpretive initiatives and educational programs such as archaeology and the history of slavery have enhanced the experience of some 180,000 annual visitors, including 30,000 schoolchildren, from all 50 states and many foreign countries; in fact, we interpret the Hermitage mansion in five foreign languages. The property also receives 30,000 annual visits from the local community, including over 1,000 children who play Little League baseball at The Hermitage's Rotary Park. The Hermitage is Nashville's first Smithsonian Institution Affiliate Museum; a "Partner Place" with the National Trust for Historic Preservation; and a site along the National Park Service's Trail of Tears National Historic Trail.

TICKET INFORMATION:

For more information, please call 615.889.2941. The Hermitage is open daily from 8:30am-5:00pm and located just 15 minutes from downtown Nashville, I-40 to exit 221 or I-65 to exit 92; take Old Hickory Boulevard from either exit.

www.thehermitage.com

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