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**EXPERIENCE THE “CHARMS OF FAIRMOUNT PARK” DURING THE HOLIDAYS WITH  
HISTORIC HOUSES OF FAIRMOUNT PARK HOLIDAY TOURS AND OTHER PARK EVENTS**  
*New this year – The return of Strawberry Mansion and Cedar Grove*

**November 11, 2013 – Philadelphia, PA** – Fairmount Park’s historic mansions will, once again, be decked out for the holidays during the annual **Historic Houses of Fairmount Park Holiday Tours, December 5 - 15, 2013**. The tours, a cherished Philadelphia tradition, will feature six of the park’s treasured charms – Cedar Grove, Mount Pleasant, Laurel Hill, Lemon Hill, Strawberry Mansion, and Woodford Mansion – festively decorated to create a stunning holiday experience. *The Charms of Fairmount Park Holiday Tours’ presenting sponsor is the Fairmount Park Conservancy.*



For the first time in five years, Strawberry Mansion and Cedar Grove will be included in the Holiday House Tours. Since 2009, Strawberry Mansion has been closed to the public for renovations. Cedar Grove has been closed to the public since 2012 for repairs to its exterior façade.

“We are thrilled to have Strawberry Mansion and Cedar Grove return to the Fairmount Park Holiday Tours. These homes were designed by their original owners to host and entertain guests, and after a several-year hiatus and extensive restoration process, both homes are ready to welcome and entertain guests again this holiday season,” said **Justina C. Barrett, Site Manager for Historic Houses, Museum Educator for American Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art.**

The houses will host **Holiday Open Houses** Thursday through Sunday, December 5 - 8 and 12 - 15, from 10 am - 4 pm. Visitors may tour as many houses as they wish for \$5 per person per house; children 12 and under are free. Reservations are not necessary, and free parking is available at all houses. Visitors will be greeted by hosts at each house to talk about their unique history, architecture, and holiday decorations. Each house will be decorated in a different theme. In addition to inspirations for their own decorations, visitors to each house will receive a free traditional American Recipe Card (available only during the Holiday House Tours). Each house will offer a different recipe with a picture of that house on the card.

**Guided trolley tours** will depart from the Philadelphia Museum of Art’s West Entrance Thursday - Sunday, December 5 - 8 and 12 - 15. Tours run 10:30 am - 12:30 pm and 1:30 - 3:30 pm. Each guided trolley tour includes a stop in three of the six houses, with each day’s morning and afternoon tours

visiting different sites. The cost is \$38 per person (\$30 for PMA members and Fairmount Park Conservancy Members) and includes admission to each house, transportation, and a Philadelphia Museum of Art trained guide. **Reservations are required and can be made by calling 215-235-SHOW(7469) or visiting [www.philamuseum.org/historichouses](http://www.philamuseum.org/historichouses).**

Groups of 15 or more who would like to provide their own bus transportation to the Fairmount Park Houses should call the Philadelphia Museum of Art Group Sales Department at 215-684-7863.

Museum-trained step-on guides are available. Group tours are offered daily December 4 - 15. Cedar Grove and Woodford are also open to groups through January 1, 2013. Admission for groups is \$8 per person per house, based on availability. Tours of select houses are available year round. Reservations are required. For more information, please visit <http://www.philamuseum.org/groupvisits>.

**The Third Annual Fairmount Park Gingerbread House Display will be on view at The Shops at Liberty Place from November 4 until November 22.** The display features gingerbread houses created by Philadelphia chefs and modeled after Fairmount Park Historic houses and attractions, including Strawberry and Woodford Mansions, Memorial Hall (home of the Please Touch Museum), and Smith Memorial Playground. *The Gingerbread House Display's presenting sponsor is the Fairmount Park Conservancy.*

#### **HISTORIC HOUSES AND THEIR THEMES**

##### **Laurel Hill Mansion – “Angels at Laurel Hill”**

Take in angel decorations from the Community Garden Club at Wayne incorporated into the sights and sounds of your visit. During your visit enjoy music on the historic pianoforte and partake in complimentary tea and purchase gingerbread men, women and angels baked by students from the Culinary Arts Institute of Montgomery Community College.

##### **Strawberry Mansion - “Home for the Holidays”**

For the first time in five years, Strawberry Mansion will be open for the Holiday Tours. Decorations will highlight the beautifully restored rooms, and will welcome friends and guests “home” to Strawberry Mansion. Don’t miss the newly installed mural in the Banquet Room. Purchase fresh greens and gifts at the 6<sup>th</sup> annual Greens Sale on Strawberry Mansion’s grounds throughout the Holiday Tours.

##### **Woodford Mansion – “Wassailing at Woodford”**

Celebrate the holidays from the British perspective with one of Philadelphia’s most prominent Loyalist socialites from the American Revolution! Meet Rebecca Franks, daughter of Woodford’s former owner and a darling of the British occupiers, who will greet visitors and share holiday stories from 11 am to 2 pm, December 6, 7, 13, 14 and 15. Woodford is open Tuesday – Sunday, 10 am – 4 pm, year-round.

**Cedar Grove – “Simple Gifts”** Delight in the naturalistic holiday designs at newly-restored Cedar Grove, an early American home occupied through five generations. They will also have the opportunity to make a vintage ornament to take home. Cedar Grove is open Thursday - Sunday, through December 29 and Monday - Wednesday, December 30 - January 1.

**Lemon Hill – “Holiday Entertaining”** Step into Henry Pratt’s parlor and see how Philadelphians entertained during the holidays. Enjoy a special display featuring rarely seen pieces from Lemon Hill’s

collection and fantastic views of Center City Philadelphia through the Oval Room's floor-to-ceiling windows.

**Mount Pleasant – “Visions of Twelfth Night”** Holiday merry-making in colonial homes often featured a Twelfth Night celebration. Enjoy these visions and craft your own signature holiday card to take home at Mount Pleasant. Mount Pleasant is open to visitors Thursday - Sunday, through December 29 and Monday - Wednesday, December 30 - January 1.

*Each of the houses will collect holiday toys and non-perishable food donations to help support the Strawberry Mansion Neighborhood. All donations will go to the Strawberry Mansion Neighborhood Action Center (SMNAC) to assist local residents during the holiday season.*

### **ABOUT THE HISTORIC HOUSES OF FAIRMOUNT PARK**

The Historic Houses of Fairmount Park are among the most significant collection of 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century domestic architectural examples in the United States. Each house is furnished with period furniture (some original). Proceeds from the events support the ongoing stewardship and maintenance of these treasures. For information and directions call 215-685-0274 or visit [www.parkcharms.com](http://www.parkcharms.com). The Holiday House Tours are on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/parkhouses](https://www.facebook.com/parkhouses).

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**EDITOR'S NOTE: High-resolution photographs are available for media usage in our online press room at [parkcharms.com/press](http://parkcharms.com/press)**