

'Tis the Season...and Historic Batsto Village Cancels Again!

Historic Batsto Village, Hammonton, NJ – Sunday, December 4, 2011 - The holidays are almost here! Family and friends are shopping for special gifts and decorating their homes with care. Batsto Citizens Committee, Inc. (BCCI) is also preparing for this joyous season by hosting “*A Victorian Christmas to Remember*” at Historic Batsto Village on Sunday, December 4th from 12 Noon until 4:00 PM.

In the Visitor Center from noon until 1:00 PM you can enjoy the beautiful sounds of a hammered dulcimer played by Rich Carty, “The Dulcimer Guy.” Rich, a talented musician and instructor along with his wife, Mary own the Pinelands Folk Music and Basketry Center in Mount Holly.

At 1:00 PM sharp, in the Batsto Visitor Center Auditorium, the Pinelands Regional Thespian Society will proudly present three short vignettes from Charles Dickens’ world famous work “*A Christmas Carol*” a timeless story of redemption and renewal. The Pinelands students, dressed in period costume, will make the pages of Dickens’ classic story come to life on stage as they give the audience a glimpse of their overall performance that will be held in its entirety at Pinelands Regional High School later in the week.

There will also be performances by Preston Forchion and Doug Laubert, members of the Stockton Oratorio Society. Mr. Forchion has sung many styles of music but specializes in gospel and historic pieces. Preston’s rich bass has been heard singing the national anthem for the Camden River Sharks and the Atlantic City Surf. Doug has been on stage with Rosemary Clooney, Andy Williams, Pavarotti and local choirs. Mr. Laubert is the current caretaker of the historic playhouse in Pleasant Mills. Together, they will sing traditional Victorian Carols, perform a reading of “*A Visit from Saint Nicholas*” and present some newer holiday favorites for children of all ages.

The Batsto Mansion will be adorned in the Victorian style with a modern flare, while still maintaining its bountiful beauty and history! The first 100 people paying for the holiday presentation, “*A Victorian Christmas to Remember*” will receive a complimentary tour of the Mansion during scheduled tours being offered that afternoon.

“Cancel, is that what you say?” Visitors to Batsto on Sunday, December 4th can bring their holiday cards, already stamped and addressed, to have them hand cancelled by John Morsa from Somers Mansion serving as postmaster. Due to the age and historical significance of the Batsto Post Office (1852), a zip code is not required to be part of the hand postmark cancellation. Batsto is one of only four post offices in the United States with this exemption. The other three are Williamsburg, Virginia; The Ben Franklin Post Office in Philadelphia, and Hodgenville, Kentucky (located near the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln).

You can also see several exhibits and sample tasty refreshments in the adjoining Post Office Exhibit Room. Young children will be encouraged to add a paper card to the traditional tree and have their photo taken with Santa Dear. Be sure to bring your camera!

Toby Kroll, owner of Three Cedars Forge Blacksmithing, in Alloway will demonstrate techniques and tools used by blacksmiths in the Batsto Blacksmith Shop. The Krolls’ products include a variety of their iron and steel creations, including napkin holders, wall ornaments, horseshoes and sundials. A Blacksmith Shop was a necessity in an industrial village such as Batsto. Blacksmithing is the trade of working iron into useful goods.

Cost is \$10 per person, regardless of age, for the 1½ auditorium presentation starting promptly at 1:00 PM. The event is suitable for the entire family. The first 100 people to pay for the presentation will get a complimentary tour of the Mansion during one of the scheduled tours that afternoon. Mansion tours will be conducted on a first come first served basis. No reservations accepted. Anyone interested in touring the Mansion at a later date, may do so on any Saturday in December. For more information on tours call Batsto Village at 609-561-0024.

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CALENDAR ITEM:

Historic Batsto Village, Hammonton, NJ - "A Victorian Christmas to Remember" Sunday, December 4th, from Noon until 4:00 PM, hosted by Batsto Citizen's Committee, Inc. Cost is \$10 per person regardless of age. This daylong celebration is filled with many historic and wonderful Victorian traditions. In the Visitor Center, the beautiful sounds of "The Dulcimer Guy" Rich Carty can be enjoyed from Noon until 1PM. At 1:00 PM sharp, in the Batsto Visitor Center Auditorium, the Pinelands Regional Thespian Society will proudly present three short vignettes from Charles Dickens' world famous work "*A Christmas Carol*." There will also be performances by Preston Forchion and Doug Laubert, both members of the Stockton Oratorio Society. Together they will sing traditional Victorian Carols, perform a reading of "*A Visit from Saint Nicholas*" and include holiday favorites for children of all ages. The Mansion will be adorned in the Victorian style, but with a modern flare while still maintaining its bountiful beauty and history! The first 100 people paying for the presentation will get a complimentary tour of the Mansion during one of the scheduled tours offered that afternoon. Visit the Blacksmith Shop where you will find Toby Kroll who will demonstrate techniques and tools used by blacksmiths. Next, head off to Post Office, where you can bring your holiday cards, already with a stamp and addressed, and have them hand cancelled. Due to the age and historical significance of the Batsto Post Office (1852), a zip code is not required to be part of the hand postmark cancellation. In the adjoining Exhibit Room, you can see some exhibits and sample tasty refreshments. Young children will be encouraged to add a paper card to the traditional tree and have their photo taken with Santa Dear. Be sure to bring your camera! Anyone interested in touring the Mansion at a later date, may do so on any Saturday in December. For more information on tours call Batsto Village at 609-561-0024.