

## **GUILDED AGE TOUR – to Newport, RI**

### ***Fabulous Mansions and Newport's Parade of Carriages!!***

Monday August 13<sup>th</sup> to Friday August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018



Join us August 13<sup>th</sup> as we step back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as we tour the fabulous mansions of Newport and view the Parade of Carriages. A chance to see how the “rich and famous” enjoy their summer holidays at Rhode Island’s famous seashore.



#### **Mansion tours will include:**

- The Elms Mansion;
- The Breakers;
- Blithewood Mansion and Gardens
- George Eastman Estate

Plus, tours of Providence and Newport, RI

#### **Tour Itinerary:**

Day 1 We travel from the GTA – stopping in Rochester, NY to tour the George Eastman Estate. We then arrive in Albany in the later afternoon. Our hotel is ideally situated close to two malls; therefore, a little shopping and eating is on the agenda for the remainder of the day. (B)

Day 2 After breakfast, we arrive in Providence – capital of Rhode Island. Founded by Roger Williams in the 1600s, our city tour will uncover many of the historic locations that make this capital city so vibrant, including the Colonial Preservation of the “Mile of History” décor, scenic Waterplace Park and the Roger Williams Memorial. We also see the First Baptist Church in America, also known as *First Baptist Meeting House* where this still very active congregation was established in 1638! Also, Providence has the most coffee shops per capita of any city in the US!!!! In the late afternoon we will check into our hotel – the Crown Plaza in Warwick, which will be home for three nights. (B)

Day 3 – after breakfast, we begin our discovery of the NEWPORT COACHING WEEKEND

- Parade of Coaches – Step back into the 19<sup>th</sup> century as you view authentic coaches drawn by highly trained horse teams through the elegant streets of Newport past the lavish mansions. Riders are all in period costumes.
- Elms Mansion - Visit this elaborate “Summer Cottage”, fashioned after an 18th century French chateau, featuring uncompromising collections of 18th century French and Venetian paintings, and Oriental jades and surrounded by elaborate Classical Revival gardens featuring marble and bronze sculptures, fountains, a sunken garden and carriage house.
- Breakers Mansion Tour - The Breakers is the grandest of Newport's summer "cottages" and a symbol of the Vanderbilt family's social and financial preeminence in turn of the century America. Enjoy the views from this sumptuous estate, perched high on a bluff, overlooking the Atlantic. Tour through and visit the gift shop.
- Cliff Walk - Enjoy this world famous coastal walkway featuring the natural beauty of Newport’s shore line and the architectural history of the gilded age.

Day 4 After breakfast, we travel to Bristol to tour the beautiful Blithewood Mansion.

- Blithewold Mansion, Gardens and Arboretum- Located on beautiful Narragansett Bay, Blithewold is one of the finest garden estates in New England. Discover a dozen different gardens, specimen trees, and a 45-room English style manor house, all chronicling a rich social history of the lives of one family over a span of more than 100 years.
- Bristol Village - Lunch and shopping on your own in this charming New England, waterfront downtown village.

Day 5 – After enjoying breakfast, we say adieu to Rhode Island and start our journey back to Canada.

#### PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- One Night accommodation – Holiday Inn Express, Albany, NY
- Three Night's accommodation – Crown Plaza Hotel, Warwick, RI
- Four breakfasts
- Admission/tours to the items listed in the Itinerary
- Tours of Providence and Newport, RI
- Services of a HNA Travels Tour Director

**COST: \$ 899.** Per person/double occupancy – Single occupancy \$ 1,269.

**A non-refundable deposit of \$ 250. Is due upon booking – balance due on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**READY TO BOOK?** Simply call us and you are on your way

- ✓ Call us at: Toronto: 416-746-7199;
  - Ottawa: 613-843-9900;
  - TOLL-FREE 1-877-672-3030
- ✓ OR e-mail: [hnatravels@gmail.com](mailto:hnatravels@gmail.com)
- ✓ Pay by Cheque/Visa/Master Card.

*We will gladly take all your personal information; fully explain the details of the excursion and go over the pick-up points and travel requirements. A current Canadian Passport is required.*

**PICK-UP INFORMATION:** Departure locations will be determined at time of booking.

**Travelling more than 80 km** from a scheduled pick-up? We will share the cost of your hotel night prior to departure – yes, we will arrange your accommodation at a departure location and pay 50% of your hotel night, prior to departure (max. allowance is \$ 50 per room). Please contact the office for more information.

*Please continue scrolling down for complete details of the Highlights*

## **TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:**

**THE ELMS:** The Elms was the summer residence of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Julius Berwind of Philadelphia and New York. Mr. Berwind made his fortune in the coal industry. In 1898, the Berwinds engaged Philadelphia architect Horace Trumbauer to design a house modeled after the mid-18th century French chateau d'Asnieres (c.1750) outside Paris.

Construction of The Elms was completed in 1901 at a cost reported at approximately \$1.4 million. The interiors and furnishings were designed by Allard and Sons of Paris and were the setting for the Berwinds' collection of Renaissance ceramics, 18th century French and Venetian paintings, and Oriental jades.

The elaborate Classical Revival gardens on the grounds were developed between 1907 and 1914. They include terraces displaying marble and bronze sculpture, a park of fine specimen trees and a lavish lower garden featuring marble pavilions, fountains, a sunken garden and carriage house and garage. These gardens were recently restored.

Mrs. Berwind died in 1922, and Mr. Berwind invited his sister, Julia, to become his hostess at his New York and Newport houses. Edward Berwind died in 1936 and Miss Julia continued to summer at The Elms until her death in 1961, at which time the house and most of its contents were sold at public auction. The Preservation Society of Newport County purchased The Elms in 1962 and opened the house to the public. In 1996, The Elms was designated a National Historic Landmark



## **THE BREAKERS:**

The Breakers is the grandest of Newport's summer "cottages" and a symbol of the Vanderbilt family's social and financial pre-eminence in turn of the century America.

Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt (1794-1877) established the family fortune in steamships and later in the New York Central Railroad, which was a pivotal development in the industrial growth of the nation during the late 19th century.

The Commodore's grandson, Cornelius Vanderbilt II, became Chairman and President of the New York Central Railroad system in 1885, and purchased a wooden house called The Breakers in Newport during that same year. In 1893, he commissioned architect Richard Morris Hunt to design a villa to replace the earlier wood-framed house which was destroyed by fire the previous year. Hunt directed an international team of craftsmen and artisans to create a 70 room Italian Renaissance- style palazzo inspired by the 16th century palaces of Genoa and Turin. Allard and Sons of Paris assisted Hunt with furnishings and fixtures, Austro-American sculptor Karl Bitter designed relief sculpture, and Boston architect Ogden Codman decorated the family quarters. The Vanderbilts had seven children. Their youngest daughter, Gladys, who married Count Laszlo Szechenyi of Hungary, inherited the house on her mother's death in 1934. An ardent supporter of The Preservation Society of Newport County, she opened The Breakers in 1948 to raise funds for the Society. In 1972, the Preservation Society purchased the house from her heirs. Today, the house is designated a National Historic Landmark.



### **The Breakers Stable & Carriage House**

The Breakers Stable & Carriage House is located approximately a half-mile west of the house, on Coggeshall Avenue. Completed in 1895, it is 100 feet deep and 150 feet wide, U-shaped with a carriage house in the center.

The stable functioned as follows. There were two ways carriages were requested: Mrs. Vanderbilt sent a day-book down every morning at 8 a.m. with a list of the carriages that would be used that day, and people in the house could call down their requests on the telephone. When a carriage was requested, the horses were brought out, hitched, and left the building from the north door. All of the returning

carriages entered through the south door. The carriages were unhitched, washed off, and wheeled into the carriage house. The horses were taken to the back, un-harnessed and washed down in two rooms with cement floors. The harness was cleaned and placed in the tack room. The horses went to the stable, which consists of 26 tie stalls and 2 box stalls.

The carriage house and stable were run by the head coachman. There were 12 grooms and stable boys working under his supervision, and they lived directly overhead on the north side. There was a large hayloft and grain room over the stable itself and the head coachman had a five-room apartment. To the rear, on the south side, there was a large kitchen, dining room and living room for the grooms and stable boys. Unfortunately, the second floor was destroyed by fire in 1970.

Alfred Gwynne Vanderbilt, who was a leader in the sport of coaching, had Brewster Company of New York, the finest of the coach companies, build him the *Venture*. He took the *Venture*, his coachman, grooms, and stable boys along with twelve teams to England each year, where he had a stage coach line that ran from Brighton to London. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday they came up to London from Brighton; every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday they went back down to Brighton. The run was about 50 miles and they stopped every 10 miles to change teams. They also stopped for lunch and for tea. The entire run took from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. to complete. The *Venture* is among the coaches now on display in the carriage room.

In 1915, Alfred Gwynne Vanderbilt was on the steamship *Lusitania* when it was sunk off the coast of Ireland at the start of World War I. As the ship went down, he gave his life jacket to a woman who could not swim, and as a result, he lost his life.

### **THE BLITHWOLD MANSION:**

The original Blithewold was a large, shingled, Queen Anne style mansion. The 45-room mansion was furnished with beautiful antiques and fine reproduction furniture. The photograph shown at the left was taken in 1901 five years before the mansion was destroyed by fire.



The second Blithewold was much grander, designed by the Boston architectural firm of Kilham and Hopkins in the English Country Manor style. Walter Kilham was a close friend of the McKees, and his partner, James Hopkins, spent part of each year in England where he witnessed the English Arts and Crafts Movement first hand. This style was revitalized as part of the Movement, and Hopkins embraced the design as desirable for the wealthy classes of America. These houses, typically, were built of rough stone, with steep pitched roofs and medieval ornamentation. The loggia of Blithewold, which faces Narragansett Bay, has carved crests and gargoyles, and is a copy of the (13th) century loggia at Cranborne Manor in Dorset, England.

The family loved outdoor pursuits, and the very architecture of the mansion ensures that its occupants are constantly aware of their magnificent surroundings. The house is long and narrow, built on a north-south axis, so that all the main rooms face west to the water. There appears to have been a deliberate attempt to 'bring the outdoors in', with French doors leading out to terraces, porches, loggias and sleeping-porches, and large windows which frame the glorious sunsets at Blithewold.

The center hall and staircase of the house are designed in the Colonial Revival style. This design was based on the Georgian style, popular in the English colonies of America in the mid-18th century. Typical are the elaborate ceilings in all the main rooms of the ground floor. Also characteristic of the Colonial



Revival style are the fluted columns, dentil moldings, and volutes in the Entrance Hall, and the three different patterns of balusters on the stairways. The new Blithewold had electricity and coal-fired central heating, taking advantage of modern technology.

We know from photographs that the furniture in each room remains as Bessie McKee arranged it before 1910. She mixed decorative styles freely, emphasizing elegance, comfort, and informality. The Breton Bed Box in the Entrance Hall is a fine (18th) century antique, and the carved oak table in the center of the hall is a reproduction in the Renaissance style, dating from the late 1800s. The oldest pieces in the house are the Italian oak and leather armchairs in the Billiard Room, which were made in the early 1600s. Some of the furniture was made especially for the family. The Dining Room furniture, for example, is of oak, made for the Van Wickles in the 1890s, in a Baroque style. Several of the chairs were made of oak cut from the Blythewood gardens, and were marked with a Blithewold crest. The wedding chest in Marjorie's bedroom was also made from Blithewold oak. The Master Bedroom furniture is (19th) century Dutch and Italian marquetry.

Almost all the rooms are decorated with the original wallpaper, the only exceptions being two bedrooms, which have been re-papered with fine quality reproductions of the originals. The walls in the Master Bedroom show a Dutch village scene, hand-painted on canvas-backed wallpaper. The Dining Room Collection includes Baccarat crystal, Gorham silver and more than 30 sets of fine china which are displayed in the Butler's Pantry. There are several Tiffany lamps, an extensive doll collection, and original hand-embroidered linens, as well as souvenirs from the family's world travels.

The archival collections are stored on the third floor of the Mansion (originally guest quarters). They represent many aspects of the lives of Blithewold family members over a span of 150 years, including their domestic lives, education, travels, recreation, gardens, and pets. The guest books are full of drawings, amusing stories, paintings, and praise for Bessie and Marjorie's renowned hospitality. Thousands of letters to and from the family tell of their dreams and aspirations. There are letters documenting historic events, like the opening of the Van Wickle Gates at Brown University in 1901, and the Fitz-Randolph Van Wickle Gates at Princeton University in 1905, both presented and dedicated by Bessie and Marjorie. Diaries in the archives document events of the day, social and historical occasions, progress in the gardens, and relationships within the extended family.

## **GEORGE EASTMAN MANSION**



Entrepreneur George Eastman (1854–1932), the pioneer of popular photography, completed his Colonial Revival mansion on East Avenue in Rochester in 1905 and resided there until his death. He bequeathed most of his assets to the University of Rochester, expressing a desire that his mansion serve as the residence for the university president. The large house, measuring 35,000 square feet,

proved far too large for this purpose, especially without a large service staff.

In 1947, the Board of Regents of the State of New York chartered George Eastman House Inc. as an independent nonprofit educational institution—specifically, a museum of photography and allied pursuits created as a memorial to George Eastman. The next year, the University of Rochester donated Eastman's mansion and surrounding property to the museum. The institution altered its name several times over the ensuing decades, but its mission has remained steadfast: to collect, preserve, study, and exhibit photographic and cinematic objects and related technology from the inception of each medium to the present.

At the museum's opening in 1949, it was one of only two American museums with a photography department and one of only two American museums with a film department (the Museum of Modern Art also had both). In 1951, the museum opened the beautiful Dryden Theatre, with seating for more than five hundred people, to exhibit films.

The George Eastman Museum's position as a leader in its fields is founded on the curatorial visions of Beaumont Newhall, James Card, Rudolf Kingslake, George C. Pratt, Nathan Lyons, Philip Conday, and the gifted leaders and curators who followed them. For the first couple decades of the museum's history, its curators, faced with relatively limited competition from other collecting institutions, were able to develop world-class collections of great breadth, depth, and quality—mostly through generous gifts from photographers, filmmakers, collectors, and corporate donors.

For almost forty years, the museum displayed objects from its collections in the rooms of George Eastman's mansion. As its collections expanded and experts became more knowledgeable about the nature and importance of appropriate conditions for the storage of photographs and film, a new museum facility became essential. In 1989, the museum completed construction of a 73,000-square-foot building (more than 70 percent of which is below ground level) that included climate-controlled collection vaults, exhibition galleries, libraries, offices, and photographic conservation and film preservation labs.

Given that George Eastman's mansion was no longer to be occupied by the exhibition and storage of the photography and cinema collections, a determined group (almost entirely of women), led by Georgia Potter Gosnell and Nancy Turner, undertook the heroic effort of an exacting restoration of the historic mansion and grounds. Based on vintage photographs and other historical evidence, virtually all of the complex decorative interiors of the first floor of the mansion were restored and more than 85 percent of its original furnishings were returned during the two-year process.

Today, visitors to the George Eastman Museum can view at least three temporary exhibitions on photography and cinema in our galleries, tour George Eastman's mansion and gardens (a National Historic Landmark), and see daily films at the Dryden Theatre.

## **HNA TRAVELS** *Heatherington & Associates*

**TOUR AND EVENT PLANNERS**

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