Staunton

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2020, 10 A.M. TO 5 P.M.

Staunton is one of Virginia’s premier historic preservation and beautification success stories, and a highly acclaimed tourist destination. To celebrate the Garden Club of Virginia’s Centennial, the Augusta Garden Club, one of its founding clubs, is hosting a tour that features turn-of-the-20th-century urban homes, many with beautiful gardens, as well as recently renovated verdant urban spaces. Of special note are newly refurbished structures and signage in Gypsy Hill Park, located in the heart of Staunton. During the morning hours of the tour plein air artists from Beverley Street Studio School can be observed painting in the gardens. Visitors will enjoy browsing scenic parks, historic buildings, galleries, and gardens designed by renowned landscape architect Charles Gillette on this walking tour showcasing the downtown area.

TIKTETS

Discount Advance Tickets: $25 pp

- Online: vagardenweek.org
- By mail before April 3: Check payable to The Augusta Garden Club, c/o Kathy Garrison, Treasurer, 503 Mountain View Dr., Staunton, VA 24401.

Additional parking at 205 and 125 N. New Street at 239 N. Central Ave., Parking and shuttle to Mary Baldwin and New Street at 239 N. Central Ave., Additional parking at 205 and 125 N. Central Ave.

BOXED LUNCHES

- Enjoy lunch at the Gypsy Hill Garden Center 600 Churchville Ave. before touring the park
- $15 each; pre-order by April 3
- Specify chicken salad, egg salad, or ham wrap
- Mail check made out to Frederick Street Café at 11 E. Frederick St., Staunton, VA 24401. (540) 886-3060
- Pick up at the Garden Center

FACILITIES

- Howard Johnson Express Inn, 268 N. Central Ave.
- University Café in Pannell Student Center, Mary Baldwin University

SHUTTLE AND PARKING

- Parking and shuttle to Mary Baldwin and New Street at 239 N. Central Ave., Additional parking at 205 and 125 N. Central Ave.
- Parking lot for houses on Lewis Street at Howard Johnson’s Express Inn, 268 N. Central Ave.

REFRESHMENTS

- Complimentary Water
- First Citizens Bank, 239 N. Central Ave.
- Maps at vagardenweek.org, the Staunton page, or augustagardenclub.org

LUNCHES

- Pick up at the Garden Center
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SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

- Artists: Standing with the morning light, professional painters from Beverley Street Studio School (BSSS) and the biennial Queen City Plein Air Festival will paint in tour gardens. Works from BSSS artists will be on display and for sale at a pop-up show at the 239 N. Central Ave. parking and shuttle area starting at 1 p.m. The remaining works will be on display at the Fresh Paint Sale and reception at the BSSS gallery, located at 22 E. Beverley St. Patrons of Historic Garden Week gain complimentary early access at 5 p.m. by showing their tickets at the door.

Heifetz performances: The President’s House, Mary Baldwin University, 240 Kable St. at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Performances of favorites for piano, violin and cello feature musicians that take place every summer at Heifetz International Music Institute, the world-renowned training ground for young musicians that takes place every summer at Mary Baldwin University.

Gypsy Hill Presentations:

- Parking lot for Gypsy Hill Park, Garden Center and Pumphouse at Gypsy Hill Place, 600 Churchville Ave.
- For Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library and Museum (WWPL), enter private WWPL lot from Frederick St.; for public lot enter from Market St.

President’s House at Mary Baldwin University, 210 North New Street

The three-bay, châteauesque cream-colored edifice, with four decorated chimneys, rounded dormers, peaks, and tall corner turret, is sited at the top of the New Street Hill. Designed in 1898 by local architect T.J. Collins for the Miller family, this elaborate brick structure is an exuberant expression of the Romanesque revival style. It features a heavy, rustic-cut limestone foundation and Ionic columns that support the roof of the wraparound porch. Despite its varied uses, little has changed since its construction. The antique cast iron fence encloses the small urban garden, planted with low evergreens and perennials. The original interior features an entrance foyer that opens to a large reception hall with a grand staircase. The living room, dining room, parlor, and porches flank the hall. While updated for modern living, its distinctive details, such as the golden oak woodwork, spindled arches, spiral-turned balusters, multi-paneled wainscoting and doors, deep moldings, and ornate mantelpieces, have all been preserved. The house is listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places, is designated a Virginia Historic Landmark and received the Historic Staunton Foundation’s coveted Preservation Award in 1996.

C.W. Miller House 210 North New Street

The cream and white Colonial Revival President’s House at Mary Baldwin University, which crowns Cannon Hill, blends with the Neoclassical architecture of this historic campus. The Staunton architectural firm of T.J. Collins & Son designed the house in 1916 to serve as the home for superintendent of the Staunton Military Academy. In 1976, when it closed, the college acquired the property. The five-bay, shuttered house was on display and for sale at a pop-up show at the 239 N. Central Ave. parking and shuttle area starting at 1 p.m. The building’s vinyl siding has been removed to reveal the original red brick. This grand hall, flanked by the living room and dining room, all with exquisite crown molding, woodwork, and decorated with art from the university’s collection. Set back on either side are a shaded open porch with French doors that lead into the dining room and a sun-set-facing sunporch. Across the back of the house, there is an intimate den, a large kitchen, and a porch. The house underwent a major renovation in 2002-03. This update provided both comfortable living and a gracious setting for official functions.

Dr. Pamoda Fice and Mr. Daniel Layman, residents

319 North New Street

Built in 1895, this brick Victorian house features bay windows on two floors, a mix of gable and hip roofs and a front porch with bracketed posts. A retaining wall of rustic-cut stone flakes the curved stair, which leads from the sidewalk, through the front garden, to the front porch stair. Remodeled in 1946 into four apartments, the house was

TOUR CHAIRS

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Directions

- Parking and shuttle to Mary Baldwin and New Street at 239 N. Central Ave.
- Additional parking at 205 and 125 N. Central Ave.
- Parking lot for houses on Lewis Street at Howard Johnson’s Express Inn, 268 N. Central Ave.
returned to single family use in 2005. The owners collaborated on the design and construction of the renovation. Eclectic furnishings and period light fixtures, blended with contemporary art and whimsical collections, characterize the interiors. Integrated into the house redesign are several ways to experience the gardens. Four entrances from porches and adjoining rooms connect inside to outside, while views into the gardens are featured from both the first and second stories. A garden shed with a pyramidal roof, designed and built as part of the latest renovation, is showcased through a half glass dining room door. A blooming apple tree and a family rose are visible through kitchen windows. Additional features include a garden enclosed with a tall hornbeam hedge, an extensive native plant collection, heritage apple trees and a rose hedge.

**Stratton House**

271 North Lewis Street

As with many Victorian houses, this home, built in 1894, blends two styles. The two-story hip-roofed, brick Queen Anne house, with a peaked bay-window tower, has a Colonial Revival wraparound porch with Doric columns and a central pediment, designed c.1904 by architect T.J. Collins. The front doorway, which features natural wood French doors and sidelights with beveled glass, opens into a spacious front hall flanked by parlors and a dining room. The interior showcases its Victorian past, with carved natural woodwork, oak mantels, transom lights, marble fireplaces, period light fixtures, and crystal chandeliers. Across the back, the owners added a kitchen, bar, breakfast area, sunroom, and circular staircase in a four-story tower that complements the architecture of the house. For privacy and to create an urban garden, the owners reclaimed adjacent commercial property and bordered it with lush screens of arborvitaes. The garden behind the house and garage includes shade trees, a patio, and pool. At the foot of the side lot and extending to the corner are an orchard, a greenhouse, a shaded gazebo, and perennial beds. At the lower boundary lies the Peyton Branch of Lewis Creek, which until recently was encased in underground culverts, but now gurgles in sunlight alongside a border of rhododendrons.

**269 North Lewis Street**

The owners acquired this 1922 Arts and Crafts style house next door to #271 for his mother. The wide porch leads into a hall with natural woodwork and a half-turn staircase. The adjoining living room and dining room, which feature natural oak woodwork, showcase furniture, paintings, sculptures, and other treasures from Kenya, where the owner once lived. The dining room, with twin corner cabinets, opens into a spacious modern kitchen with tiled walls, compact bar, breakfast nook, natural oak cabinets, and Arts and Crafts-style hardware. A large porch stretches across the back of the house. Behind the porch is a new L-shaped Victorian-style five-car garage, built of old brick. A staircase from the porch leads into a shared driveway, which opens into a patio, all overlaid with eco-friendly pavers. The adjoining garden and patio can be accessed from the porch and driveway.

**Pumphouse and Garden Center at Gypsy Hill Park, 600 Churchville Avenue**

This expansive 214-acre multi-use park was founded in 1889. With babbling creeks, winding paths, and a variety of old-growth trees, the public space is one of the beneficiarys of Augusta Garden Club’s award-winning Project Dogwood. This year, the Gypsy Hill Park Gateway Restoration Committee has raised funds, including a gift of $35,000 from the Augusta Garden Club, to improve the park entry. Projects include the restoration of three peak-roofed spring boxes, historic light fixtures, existing gates and brick piers with historic light fixtures designed by local architect T.J. Collins in 1890, and the addition of a decorative iron period-style sign marking the entrance. The park began as the site of Staunton’s water supply. Water from several springs was pumped to Reservoir Hill and dispensed to the city. Just outside the park gate, the red brick 1880s Pumphouse, open for touring, now houses the Stonewall Brigade Band, which has been in continuous operation since 1855. Adjacent to the gates, the hip-roofed, stick-style Garden Center with a wide wrap-around porch, built in the 1890s on the foundations of a 1770s Hessian-built stone house to serve as a community pavilion, is also open.

**Woodrow Wilson Birthplace, Museum & Presidential Library 20 North Coale Street, (Garden only)**

Built in 1847 as the manse of First Presbyterian Church, this two-story Greek Revival mansion once marked the eastern edge of Staunton. Its sitting on a hill facilitates a ground-floor service level, a street-level entrance, and a commanding view of downtown Staunton from the upper level porches. Thomas Woodrow Wilson, 28th President of the United States, was born here on December 28, 1856. Although he moved away as a child, he always referred to Staunton as home. The Woodrow Wilson Birthplace Foundation purchased the property in 1938. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt opened it to the public in 1941. Emily Smith, a former Garden Club of Virginia president, served on the founding board and was a driving force behind the restoration of the house and gardens. In 1933, in an early restoration project, the Garden Club of Virginia engaged landscape architect Charles Gillette to design the terraced gardens. The Foundation and GOV have partnered several times since, including the 1967 brick terrace by Ralph Griswold dedicated to Mrs. Smith. Recently, the Foundation launched an archaeological assessment in the garden, which further the understanding of this previously undocumented area. Access to the house and museum require a separate ticket, which can be purchased at the museum.

**Places of Interest**

**Project Dogwood at Gypsy Hill Park**

600 Churchville Ave., and Montgomery Hall Park, 1110 Montgomery Ave

In keeping with this year’s Historic Garden Week theme of the dogwood flower, the Augusta Garden Club features its ongoing Project Dogwood and two spacious city parks, which are among its chief beneficiarys. In 1928, the club planted 228 dogwoods at the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace and surrounding area. In 1933, Staunton’s city manager, aspiring to make Staunton the dogwood capital of Virginia, added more. Today, many of the original trees have vanished due to disease and other causes. In 2013, the club partnered with the city to revive this vision by planting hearty native dogwoods in the city’s parks and other municipal locations. The project received the Garden Club of Virginia’s Commonwealth Award, the Garden Club of America’s Founders Fund Award, as well as grants from the Staunton Rotary Club and the Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge. augustagardenclub.org/projects/project-dogwood/

**Mevluda Tahirovic Memorial Garden at the R.R. Smith Center 22 S. New St.**

The restored 1894 Ekleton Hotel building, designed by T.J. Collins, is among Staunton’s many preservation successes. The garden has transformed a once-derelict alley into an urban oasis of trees, seasonal flowering plants, and whimsical sculpture. rsmitcenter.org.