



NEWS RELEASE

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ORANGE COUNTY RECOGNIZES WALKING TOUR OF HISTORIC GORDONSVILLE

HISTORIC GARDEN WEEK IN ORANGE, VIRGINIA

Orange County, VA – Celebrate Historic Garden Week with a special walking tour of Gordonsville on **Saturday, April 26, 2014 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** sponsored by the Dolley Madison Garden Club. Gordonsville, a charming southern town of quaint shops and galleries, features a noted Civil War museum and critically acclaimed restaurants in the heart of historic central Virginia. The Historic Garden Week walking tour will include three private homes and gardens as well as special events and very special cuisine.

Gordonsville has a unique place in the history of America, nestled between the birthplace of the Declaration of Independence (*Thomas Jefferson's Monticello*) and the Constitution (*James Madison's Montpelier*). A place of presidents and generals, Gordonsville was an important crossroad during the Civil War as both a receiving hospital for 70,000 wounded soldiers and as a rail hub for transporting food, supplies, and soldiers. Gordonsville emerged from the Civil War, reconstruction, a devastating downtown fire, and the Great Depression to celebrate its bicentennial with the present day renaissance of its downtown district.

The 1860 Exchange Hotel has completed extensive renovations and its exceptional Civil War museum will be open for the walking tour. At one time a tavern, a private home, a civil war hospital, a quarantine facility, the first Freedman's bureau, a railroad hotel, and a boarding house, this excellent example of local vernacular non-Jeffersonian architecture has been named by the Discovery Channel as one of the 15 most haunted places in America.

Once known as the "Chicken Leg Center of the Universe," Gordonsville became famous during the Civil War era for the fried chicken served to the railroad passengers passing thru this important railroad hub. The original recipe has been handed down in local families and is usually available only during Gordonsville's Fried Chicken Festival and now, especially for the Historic Garden Week walking tour! Gordonsville Fried Chicken box lunches are available for advanced purchase and pick up at the Exchange Hotel on the day of the tour. There are picnic tables and benches on the grounds available for picnicking. **All lunches must be pre-ordered** and paid for at the time the order is placed. The cost of the lunch is \$12.00 including tax. Order your box lunch by calling the Exchange Hotel at (540) 832-2944. The last day to place an order will be **April 11, 2014**. There are two lunch choices: the award winning "Famous Gordonsville Fried Chicken" or Chicken Salad Sandwich.

Advance tickets are \$25 and may be purchased online at www.vagardenweek.org, or in person at the following locations until 12:00 noon on Friday, April 25, 2014:

Elmwood at Sparks, 124 West Main Street, Orange - (540) 672-0060

The Arts Center of Orange, 129 East Main Street, Orange - (540) 672-7311

The Laurie Holladay Shop, 123 South Main Street, Gordonsville - (540) 832-0552

Colonial Florist, 100 North Main Street, Gordonsville, (540) 832-3611

Advance tickets may also be purchased by mail through April 14, 2014 by sending a check payable to DMGC with a stamped, self-addressed legal sized envelope to: Mary Beth Wells, P.O. Box 1017; Orange, VA 22960. Tickets are available at each location on the tour for \$30. No single site admissions. Children 6-12 half price; children 5 and under free of charge.

Visit www.vagardenweek.org for more information. Photos available for selection at: <http://dmgc.christchurchgordonsville.org/HGW14pk/>

Orange County is located 72 miles from the State capital, Richmond; 75 miles from Northern Virginia; 87 miles from the Nation's capital, Washington, D.C.; and only 25 miles from Charlottesville. For more information, please visit www.visitorangevirginia.com.

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