

Boscobel Offering Open House Tours this Season

Celebrating its fifth decade as a historic house museum, Boscobel House and Gardens continues to evolve. An 1824 inventory of the house, discovered in 1989, combined with more recent scholarly research projects, continues to inform the interpretation of Boscobel as it updates and improves the mansion's furnishings and surrounding property.

In addition to mansion tours given six days a week by its acclaimed staff of docents, Boscobel offers a variety of public events and programs April through December that support its mission to provide visitors with experiences rich in the history, culture and environment of the Hudson Valley.

New for 2017 will be behind-the-scenes open house, tours of the mansion, offered only in April. In addition to the elegant Federal-era interiors for which Boscobel is so beloved, open house tours will offer access to rarely-seen areas. In the company of expert guides, visitors will peek into private spaces, from

ingeniously-designed compartments in fine furniture to passage-ways most often used by servants.

"Boscobel was built much like a stage set for its original owners," explained Executive Director Steven Miller. "Our new open house tours are designed to give visitors a behind-the-scenes look at the museum and at history."

Open house tours are offered through April 30, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (closed Tuesdays). Each guided tour is approximately one hour in length. Reservations are not necessary, and tickets can be purchased in person or online at Boscobel.org. Friends of Boscobel members and children 5 and younger are admitted free.

Also this season, many signature programs will return to Boscobel, such as design lectures, the Turtle Walk, yoga with a view, the big band concert, a sunset picnic and family bonfire night. "Sparkle" will also shine again in December, offering the community an elegant and entertaining family event at the

holidays.

Boscobel's education programs presented in numerous area schools last year continue to receive enthusiastic accolades. Museum Educator Lisa DiMarzo will continue with those programs, as well as on-site activities such as playgroups, field trips, Starlab and more.

A special opportunity to celebrate Earth Day will take place with a trail clean-up scheduled April 22, and a living history military re-enactment event will return in August.

Opening in the exhibition gallery June 3 will be "Make-Dos: Curiously Repaired Antiques," the first major exhibition focused on historic attempts to reduce, reuse and recycle. "Make-dos" include everyday household remnants, such as porcelain teapots with silver replacement spouts and/or tin handles. They also include treasured relics, such as a decanter riddled with staples that was once owned by Washington Irving.

For outdoor enjoyment at Boscobel, guests may stroll the gardens, listen to an audio tour of local historic stories, visit the sculpture garden, hike the Woodland Trail of Discovery and, of course, take in the spectacular view from the main lawn overlooking the Hudson River.

Starting in May, guests can visit the Cold Spring Farmers' Market on Saturdays in the lower parking lot, and beginning in early June, enjoy performances by the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival.

Friends of Boscobel members receive free access to the house and grounds, as well as discounts on many event tickets and in the gift shop. Memberships start at \$40 and



Executive Director Steven Miller welcomes visitors to enjoy a new season of events, programs and tours at Boscobel House and Gardens, whose doors officially opened April 1.

can be purchased at Boscobel.org.

"We look forward to an active and fun season at Boscobel as we welcome visitors from around the corner and around the globe," said Miller. "Our enhanced and expanded family-friendly programs often sell out quickly, so we encourage advance ticket purchases at our website."

Boscobel is located on Route 9D in Garrison, 1 mile south of Cold Spring and directly across the river from West Point. From April through October, hours are 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Boscobel is open every day except Tuesdays, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

For more information, visit Boscobel.org or call 845-265-3638.

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Putnam Among Top 5 Healthiest Counties

The seventh annual County Health Rankings have been released by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, and for the seventh consecutive year, Putnam ranks among the top five counties in New York State.

Putnam is fifth in health outcomes, based on length and quality of life, and second in health factors, which are the influencers of health. Last year Putnam was also second in health factors, and fourth in health outcomes, from among the 62 counties in the state.

"Residents in Putnam County are very fortunate; we have a consistent pattern of good health, based on these rankings," said County Executive MaryEllen Odell. "Putnam is a great place to live, work and prosper, while enjoying a healthy lifestyle. Our health department is nationally accredited and works tirelessly, along with other county agencies and dozens of other community organizations, to protect and promote residents' health."

"These rankings provide a snapshot of our county's health," added Dr. Michael Nesheiwat, interim commissioner of health. "They form a starting point for discussing ways to improve health and we do this through collaboration with partners, educating the public, and enforcing public health law."

The county's move from fourth to fifth place in health outcomes may be due to two health challenges the county is currently facing.

The first concerns the rate

of excessive alcohol use in Putnam, which continues to remain higher than in the rest of the state. The health department is working closely with the Putnam chapter of the National Council on Alcoholism and other Drug Dependencies and the Communities That Care coalition on this pressing issue.

The second health problem relates to the dramatic rise of sexually transmitted diseases. This problem is not limited to Putnam, or even NYS – it is a nationwide trend that has all health officials concerned, particularly with the rise in syphilis, which is experiencing a resurgence.

Individuals may be infected with syphilis without symptoms for years, leading to tragic results, and the health department has been reaching out to physicians to encourage more routine testing for all STDs including syphilis.

For more information on the 2017 County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, visit www.county-healthrankings.org.

The health department's mission is to improve and protect the health of the community, composed of nearly 100,000 residents. Core services include community health assessment, disease surveillance and control, emergency preparedness, environmental health protection, family health promotion and health education.

For more information, visit www.putnamcountyny.com/health, or www.facebook.com/putnamhealth and Twitter @PutnamHealth-NY.