

Explore **Historic Savannah**, Georgia

Wellesley College BLC
2012 Spring Retreat



Thursday, March 22 to Sunday, March 25, 2012

2012 Spring Retreat

Dear BLC Members:

Spring in Savannah! Azaleas, rhododendrons, tulips, the 77th Annual Tour of Homes and Gardens, a music festival, fabulous restaurants, and an 1888 restored Victorian Georgian mansion, the Mansion on Forsyth Park, as our home for three nights! In planning this Retreat we selected a day and a half of organized tours and left Saturday afternoon free as a time with many options for you to continue to sight-see or relax in conversation with others, go to a spa, or museum, or even take a riverboat tour. Dinners have been selected to delight you with fabulous restaurants in historic homes reflecting the culinary traditions of the South. Savannah is a flat walking city with old brick sidewalks, so bring your most comfortable shoes and plan to experience great historic sightseeing and to eat in the restaurants that served Sherman generals and Johnny Mercer.



Thursday, March 22, 2012

Plan to arrive in time (7-8 p.m.) for meeting with fellow BLC members for a drink in Casimir's Lounge, then an eight o'clock dinner in the Sunroom, a section of the main dining room of our hotel, The Mansion on Forsyth Park. Located on a beautiful square, this Marriott (www.mansiononforythpark.com) and Kessler Collection Hotel offers us a location in the historic district with lavish guestrooms, award-winning cuisine, a fitness center and a full-service spa. We have reserved 20 rooms, which we can hold only until February 22, so please be sure to submit your registration to the BLC office soon. This popular weekend will find hotel rooms in the historic district filling up quickly.

Friday, March 23, 2012

Breakfast is your choice, perhaps by the fountain in front of the hotel in **Forsyth Park**. In addition to the breakfast offerings in the main hotel, there also is a hotel-operated cafe in Forsyth Park with indoor and outdoor seating. Or,

you may want to try coffee and breakfast food at The Sentient Bean, a block from our hotel, which is open every day from 7 a.m. – 10 p.m. and describes itself as "a haven for indie film, live music, and literary readings".

At 9:15 we join up for a private **Savannah Ramble architectural walking tour with Dirk Hardison**. Dirk will introduce us to the unique, beautiful, and historic architecture, giving us a basic understanding of the history of Savannah. This two and a half hour tour, about 1 1/2 miles, will end up at **Vic's on the River** for lunch, where we'll dine together at a room overlooking the Savannah River. This restaurant occupies the top floor of an antebellum cotton warehouse that was used by Sherman's troops during the Yankee occupation of Savannah. Cuisine: Modern Southern.

After lunch we'll walk to the start of the self-directed **Tour of Homes**, which is about 1/2 a mile from Vic's. We have purchased 25 tickets for the 2 to 5 p.m. Home and Garden Walking Tour. The selection of six private homes and gardens involves a stroll back 200 years through Calhoun, Lafayette and Troup Squares to view restored 19th century homes (c.1825).



We'll ramble back to the hotel after 5, then rest and relax until a private dinner at **Noble Fare**. We've arranged for a van to take us to and from the restaurant, so you will have some respite from the walking day! Cuisine: Locally Inspired.

Saturday, March 24, 2012

After breakfast on your own, we'll gather for a business meeting at 8:30 a.m. Then we will take off for a reserved guided tour of the **Owens-Thomas Historic Home and Museum** from 10-11 a.m. This "jewel box" is famed as a place where Marquis de Lafayette, a French aristocrat and military officer who served under Washington, spent the night in 1825. This house evokes the heyday of Savannah's golden age. At 11:15 our ticket also will cover a private tour of the **Telfair Mansion and Art Museum**. Built in 1818, this is the oldest public art museum in the South, housing a collection of both American and European paintings. A young English architect, William Jay, designed both buildings, introducing the Regency style to America.

Lunch will be at the **Cafe Zeum** in the **Jepson Center**, a contemporary art museum which is part of the Telfair Museum. We'll all eat together at this spot. The afternoon will be free time. You can tour the Jepson Center, join our organized private tour to Bonaventure Cemetery, described below, or pursue whatever is of interest to you.

At 1:30 those who have signed up for the optional tour of **Bonaventure Cemetery** will be picked up by a van. Our guide will take us to this 100 acre park on the River bluff and speak to us about



the famous gravesites, where we can wander through the beautiful Victorian gardens. If you are a fan of *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, you will remember that Mary Harty calls the ruins the "scene of the Eternal Party. What better place, in Savannah, to rest in peace for all time--where the party goes on and on." The cemetery lies on the grounds of what was once a great oak-shaded plantation built by Col. John Mulryne. It was at the cemetery that John Berendt had martinis in silver goblets with Miss Harty, while they sat on the bench gravestone of poet Conrad Aiken. Songwriter Johnny Mercer and writer Flannery O'Connor are also buried here among the obelisks and columns. The van will return us to the hotel about 3:30.

Other ways to spend your free afternoon might include a visit to the birthplace of **Juliette Gordon Low**, the founder of the Girl Scouts. Her home is the City's first designated National Historic Landmark. Or **shopping for art and antiques**, which are heavily concentrated in City Market and along River Street, or a **riverboat tour** (www.savannahriverboat.com). Or enjoying your spa appointment at the hotel! Make your spa appointment early as it will be a busy time!

We will provide you with a Savannah Visitors' Guide, which offers detailed information on museums, historic sites, galleries, and other places of interest. We'll also provide a map of the historic district and information on the free bus/trolley transportation loop and its stops in these areas.

At 6 o'clock we'll go to **Davenport House** for a tour by costumed guides with a traditional Madeira tasting and a presentation relating to the former Slave culture in Savannah. This house is famous for its exterior, which is said to have "perfect" proportions, and a beautiful interior elliptical staircase. Madeira, historically noted as "potable gold", was an important part of the Savannah culture. Our special tour and Madeira party will involve two Madeira tastings, first in the garden, then in the attic.



Following this taste of Savannah tradition we will take a short walk to **The Olde Pink House** for our last dinner together at 7:45. Built in 1771 and sheathed with pink stucco, this house has functioned as a private home, a bank, a tearoom, and military headquarters during the Civil War. We will have a private room and a van will return us to The Mansion at 9:30. Cuisine: Low Country.

Sunday, March 25, 2012 - Departure

We urge you to sign up early for the Retreat (see registration information and instructions), since the hotel rooms and Tour of Homes tickets are limited. We are planning group meals (3 dinners, 2 lunches) and have reservations at all the restaurants and for the private tours noted above in anticipation of a crowded Savannah on this special weekend. Since we will be doing a lot of walking, we hope that walking and talking will be the "theme" of this Retreat.

Ilene Beal
Nancy Felton Elkins
Retreat Co-Chairs

Suggestions for Late Departure/Early Arrival

On Sunday you might visit one of the beautiful restored churches, such as the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, the oldest Catholic Church in Georgia (www.savannahcathedral.org). Savannah was founded as a Church of England settlement and the center of its religious life was Christ Episcopal Church (www.christchurchsavannah.org). In addition to these two extraordinary structures you could also visit the Lutheran Church of the Ascension, Temple Mickve Israel, Trinity United Methodist Church, Wesley United Methodist Church, and the First African Baptist Church (<http://theoldestblackchurch.org>). In reading about these churches and their history, we decided that a tour of them would be a fascinating addition to our architectural overview of Savannah.

If you are so inclined, check out the **Savannah Music Festival** (www.savannahmusicfestival.org/2012series), which runs parallel to the Tour of Homes in Savannah. We have not scheduled any musical events, but you may want to take advantage of some of the offerings early on Thursday or on Sunday, if you stay on.

Also, if you come early or stay late, check out seminars and tours during the weekend, found at www.savannahtourofhomes.org. These require tickets, which are available now, so review the site early to plan your trip around areas that might especially interest you. Different homes are open each day.



Accommodations



Mansion on Forsyth Park

Located on a beautiful park, this Marriott (www.mansiononforythpark.com) and Kessler Collection Hotel offers us a location in the historic district with lavish guest rooms, award-winning cuisine, a fitness center and a full-service spa. We have reserved 20 rooms, which we can only hold until **February 22**, so please be sure to submit your registration to the BLC office soon. If you want to share a room, please note that there are a limited number of doubles. Please indicate on the registration form which nights you will be staying. This popular weekend will find hotel rooms in the historic district filling up quickly.

Hotel Amenities

- Poseidon Spa
- 700 Kitchen Cooking School
- Grand Bohemian Gallery with 400 rare works of art
- Concierge service
- 24-hour fitness center
- 24-hour business center
- Lounge with live entertainment
- Outdoor relaxation pool with chaise lounges and water wall

Guest Room Features and Amenities

- Eclectic, luxurious design scheme
- Pillow top beds w/ white on white linens
- Wired/Wireless Internet
- Bose entertainment systems w/ Kessler CD
- Marble Writing Desks
- Pewter Candelabras
- Italian marble baths w/ large soaking tubs
- Kessler Robes
- One cup coffee makers featuring Starbucks
- Mini Bar
- Hairdryer
- In room safe
- Iron/Ironing board



Schedule at a Glance

Thursday, March 22nd

- 4:00 pm Check-in
- 7:00 pm Cocktails in Casimir's Lounge, Mansion on Forsyth Park
- 8:00 pm Dinner in the Sunroom, Mansion on Forsyth Park

Friday, March 23rd

- Breakfast on your own
- 9:15 am Architectural Walking tour with Dirk Hardison
- 12:00 pm Lunch at Vic's on the River
- 2:00 pm Tour of Homes (self guided)
- 5:00 pm Free Time
- 7:00 pm Dinner at Noble Fare



Saturday, March 24th

- Breakfast on your own
- 8:30 am BLC Business Meeting
- 10:00 am Owen-Thomas Historic Home - guided tour
- 11:15 am Telfair Mansion and Art Museum - guided tour
- 12:15 pm Lunch at Café Zeum in Jepson Center
- 1:30 pm Bonaventure Cemetery Tour (optional)
- OR Free Time - Explore Savannah or have a spa treatment
- 6:00 pm Davenport House tour with traditional Madeira tasting
- 7:45 pm Dinner at The Olde Pink House

Sunday, March 25th

- Breakfast on your own
- 11:00 am Checkout
- Leave for the airport (transportation on your own)



Registration

To register, you may either fill out the attached form or register online at www.wellesleyblc.org. If you have questions, please feel free to contact Linda Guild at 781.397.8870, blc@guildassoc.com. Please register no later than February 22nd to help us plan. Please remember that hotel reservations must be made no later than **February 22nd**. If you would like to bring your significant other, please include that information on the form.

Costs

The cost for the hotel is \$239/night + tax = \$272/night single or double occupancy. We request that you prepay the hotel and the Tour of Homes (\$45) at the time of registration. At the end of February we will send out an invoice for the rest of the retreat costs. We expect that meals and tours will cost approximately \$425/per person. The optional Bonaventure Cemetery Tour is \$26/per person.

Cancellation Policy

All cancellations must be made no later than **February 22nd** to receive a full refund. Any registration canceled after this date may not receive a refund depending on charges incurred by the BLC on behalf of the member. All refunds will be processed after the completion of the retreat.

Transportation to and from the Airport

For those who wish to rent a car, most regular car rental services are available at the airport
If you are interested in sharing a ride, please indicate this when you register. A taxi from the airport is approximately \$35.00. A car is not needed during the retreat.

BLC Spring Retreat Registration

March 22 - 25, 2012

Name: _____

Guest: _____

Arrival Date/Time _____ Departure Date/Time _____

Please return with payment ASAP. You may also register online at www.wellesleyblc.org.

Hotel Accommodations:

- Thursday, March 22 @ \$272 (includes taxes)
- Friday, March 23 @ \$272 (includes taxes)
- Saturday, March 24 @ \$272 (includes taxes)
- I will be sharing a room with _____
- I do not need a hotel room

Total for Hotel _____ + Tour of Homes (\$45/pp) = _____

Please sign up here for the optional Bonaventure Cemetery Tour (we need to plan for transportation, which is already included in the tour cost)

- Bonaventure Cemetery
- Bonaventure Cemetery - guest

I would like vegetarian meals

I have dietary restrictions: _____

My check for \$_____ is enclosed. Please make check payable to Business Leadership Council.

Please charge my credit card:

American Express Visa Master Card

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

*Please note that all cancellations must be submitted in writing either via email, fax or mail before **February 22nd**. There will be no refunds after this date.

Please fill out and return this form via fax 781.397.8887 or mail to BLC Leadership Council,
389 Main Street, Suite 202 / Malden, MA 02148 / 781.397.8870
or register online at www.wellesleyblc.org.