Hammond Castle Museum Presents Holiday Programming for All Ages

Deck The Halls Holiday Celebration, Santa Returns to the Castle, and New Year's Eve Party Top the Historic Museum's Offerings

Gloucester, MA — November 19, 2024 — Hammond Castle Museum is delighted to present its sixth annual Deck The Halls celebration, a seasonal tradition that transforms the historic Museum into a holiday experience unlike anything on Boston's North Shore. Running now through December 29th, this temporary exhibit encompasses the entire Museum and features White Birch and Christmas trees, lush garlands, festive wreaths, and the glow of candlelight to immerse visitors in the magic of the holidays. Tours of the Museum are available daily from 10 am – 4 pm, with the last entrance at 3:15 pm. The Museum will close early on December 14, 15, 21st, and 22nd to accommodate set up for special events.

Visitors exploring **Deck The Halls** during daytime tours will discover beautifully decorated, holiday-themed rooms, including:

- **Reception Room and Entry Hallways:** Angelic decor radiates peace and joy.
- **The Great Hall:** A grand winter woodland scene adorned with poinsettias.
- **The Dining Room:** Silver and gold elements inspired by nature create a festive holiday setting.
- **The Library:** A Victorian family room filled with Santas, snowmen, teddy bears, and a Christmas tree.
- **The Den:** A cozy retreat with a serene blue and silver palette guarded by nutcrackers.
- **The Gothic Guest Room:** Rich maroon and gold decor exuding Victorian Christmas grandeur.
- **The American Guest Room:** Rustic Scandinavian woods-inspired decor with whimsical gnomes and elves.

Visitors will still enjoy full access to the Museum's two current STEAM-based temporary exhibits: *"Natalie Hays Hammond: A Portrait of an Inventor's Inventive Sister"* and *"Hammond, Hedy & Turing: The History and Technology of Encryption and Decryption"* which remain on display through the holiday season. These exhibits exemplify the Museum's dedication to STEAM education and connect visitors with the innovative legacy of its founder, John Hays Hammond, Jr. his family, and some of his contemporaries at the time. Both exhibits complement the seasonal offerings, providing visitors with a

deeper understanding of the historical relevance of the Museum in relation to many groundbreaking scientific advancements.

This year's programming also includes:

- **Deck The Halls by Candlelight**: Offered every Thursday night in December, this enchanting evening experience begins with holiday illuminations lighting the Castle and its iconic arches. Inside, the halls glow with candlelight, enhancing the meticulously arranged decor and creating a tranquil, magical ambiance. Tours at 6, 7, & 8 pm. Reservations encouraged.
- **Sketch the Halls During Deck The Halls**: A unique opportunity for artists led by Sue Wheeler of Arts Abound in Magnolia. These classes, open to all skill levels, will take place on November 21st, December 12th, and December 19th, from 10:15 am to 12:15 pm.
- **Santa Returns to the Castle**: Now in its sixth year, Santa, played by actor **John Cena, Sr.**, will meet children in a magical setting on December 14th and 15th, where they can share wishes and receive a wrapped present, a letter from the North Pole, and milk and cookies. Mrs. Claus and Santa's helpers will join in the festive fun. Timed admission: 4 pm – 6:30 pm. Reservations are strongly encouraged. Walk-in pricing applies.
- **Firebird Pops Orchestra**: Back for its fourth season, the **Firebird Pops Orchestra**, accompanied by the North Shore-based choral ensemble **Lyricora**, will perform their annual "Christmas at the Castle" concert. With four nearly sold-out performances, this program features a mix of orchestral and choral music celebrating the holiday spirit. A very small number of tickets remain for the Saturday, December 21st 8 pm show. Sold-out performances are: Friday, December 20th at 5 pm, Saturday, December 21st at 5 pm, and Sunday, December 20th at 5 pm.
- **New Year's Eve Celebration**: The holiday season concludes with the Museum's biggest event of the year. Host **Bruce Jaques** will return for an exclusive celebration in the Great Hall, featuring music, dancing, heavy hors d'oeuvres, a cash bar, and a midnight champagne toast. Guests aged 21 and over can ring in 2025 in style at this unique and elegant event. Doors open at 9 pm, party goes until 1 am. Reservations required.

Hammond Castle Museum's Deck The Halls celebration, Sketch the Halls classes, Firebird Pops Orchestra performances, Deck The Halls by Candlelight tours, Santa Returns to the Castle, and New Year's Eve Celebration all reflect the Museum's dedication to creating immersive and culturally enriching experiences. Executive Director Linda Harvey remarked,

“We joyfully transform the Museum into a festive holiday experience, similar to what we believe our founder, John Hays Hammond might have done. The holidays represent a time to come together with loved ones and community, and these historic halls have welcomed generations and it is our goal to continue that tradition for generations to come.”

Visitors wishing to learn more about any of the Museum’s offerings or to schedule a visit are encouraged to visit the website at hammondcastle.org.

Hammond Castle Museum is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Built from 1926 through 1929 and incorporated as a museum in 1930, the castle was the home and laboratory of John Hays Hammond Jr. Known as “The Father of Radio Control,” he is one of the nation’s most prolific inventors of the 20th century. Hammond’s extensive list of patents, his work with radio control, and his work on guided torpedoes for the military are on display. Also on permanent display is the only surviving mural by American Artist and Illustrator, Eric Pape. The Museum offers tours and numerous educational and cultural events throughout the year. It is also available for private event rentals. For more information, please contact Hammond Castle Museum at info@hammondcastle.org or visit hammondcastle.org.

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