

BERMUDA NATIONAL TRUST PALM SUNDAY WALK 2023

WELCOME! THIS YEAR'S PALM SUNDAY WALK EXPLORES SOUTHAMPTON PARISH. OUR MISSION TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE BERMUDA'S NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IS EMBEDDED IN THE HISTORIC PLACES AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

YOU WILL DISCOVER THROUGHOUT YOUR WALK TODAY.

1 Palm Sunday Walk in Southampton

This year's walk features natural and cultural heritage across much of Southampton Parish. Hike across open spaces and nature reserves with distinct habitats. Encounter the Parish's built heritage, which is detailed in the latest volume in the Trust's Bermuda's Architectural Heritage series. Southampton's rich agricultural heritage spans many centuries, acres and farming families. Our connections to these legacies, including the traumas of enslavement, are embedded within this landscape. We hope your heritage connections come alive as you explore the many facets of Southampton.

2 Seymour's Pond Nature Reserve

Seymour's Pond was Bermuda Audubon Society's (BAS) first nature reserve, purchased in 1963 with funds donated by the community. The remainder of the 2.84 acres site was gifted by the Masters Estate. Much of the pond was filled with garbage and invasive species until restoration work was carried out by BAS. The pond is connected by underground caves to the Little Sound and is brackish. It supports a healthy population of endemic Bermuda Killifish and provides a rich feeding ground for many species, the most common being ducks, herons and egrets. It is open to the public daily, from dawn to dusk.

3 Sea Swept Farm

Private Land

One of many farms in Southampton, Sea Swept Farm has a highly visible banana patch, a typical example of Southampton's longstanding agricultural heritage. Bananas first arrived in Bermuda in 1616, and only 17 years later local bananas would be the first seen in a London market. By the mid- to late-19th century, bananas would become one of Bermuda's primary crops. More than a food source, the leaves were used to stuff mattresses and often used as a remedy for burns and cuts.

4 High Point Nature Reserve

Bermuda National Trust and Bermuda Audubon Society's latest Buy Back Bermuda campaign has saved 10 acres of unspoiled open space from development. Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, Buy Back Bermuda was able to acquire the area's spectacular arable fields, woodland and coastline in 2021, and is working on turning it into a public nature reserve. **THIS AREA IS NOT YET GENERALLY OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**

5 Southwest Breaker

High Point has incredible panoramic views of the South Shore, the Great Sound and North Shore. Looking out to sea, you can see Southwest Breaker, the most westerly of a series of underwater natural formations that break up and stop the ocean swell from hitting Bermuda's shores directly. This is where most 16th and 17th-century shipwrecks have been found off Bermuda, as ships returning from the Americas using the predominant southwest winds would be pushed onto those outward reefs before or after seeing the island.

6 Longtail Nesting Grounds

This section of Southampton cliff has the greatest number of Longtail nests on mainland Bermuda. Longtails are so-called for their distinctive tails formed by two extremely long white feathers. The open ocean species spend most of their lives at sea feeding on fish and squid, only coming into land to breed from February through to the end of August. Females lay single eggs in holes and crevices eroded from the soft limestone of Bermuda's coastal cliffs. Caves along this coastal reserve also provide a critical nesting habitat for Barn Owls.

7 High Point Ruin

This ruin of a two-storey house was built into the hill side, with a refined level above an unfinished cellar cut into the underlying rock below. The room sizes and spacing indicate that the house would have been hip roofed with a chimney. The ruin was recently recorded using 3D scanning, so the invasive plants that overwhelm it can be removed and architectural and archaeological research can take place in future. The ruin is set within mixed woodland that offers habitat for local and migratory birds.



8 Vesey Nature Reserve

This 8-acre nature reserve includes part of Evan's Bay Pond, a saltwater pond with tidal fluctuations. The nature reserve also features two quarries, a natural limestone sink hole and a variety of habitats, ranging from lush woodland to the rocky shoreline. Named for Sharon Vesey who donated the property to Buy Back Bermuda, public donations supported the restoration of the nature reserve and its opening on Earth Day in April 2013.

Hot cross buns will be served at this halfway point for a donation!



9 Railway Trail and Evan's Bay Station

During the Bermuda Railway's island-wide operation between 1931 and 1948, passengers, produce and other freight were transported from, to and through Southampton stations. Here at Evan's Bay station, a passing loop allowed trains to pass each other on the single-track system. Trains took produce grown in Southampton to Hamilton or the naval bases for shipment to the US East Coast or other overseas destinations. Concrete trestles that supported the railway's original bridges can be seen at Frank's Bay.

10 Sally Bassett

Sarah Sally Bassett's life story is highly connected to the parish where we walk today. A mother and grandmother with traditional medicinal knowledge, Sally was enslaved much of her life in Southampton. Before being declared guilty and burned at the stake in 1730 for poisoning three people, Sally was enslaved by a blacksmith and then his children. In 1713 Sally endured being whipped 'every thirty paces' the length of Southampton Parish after being accused of threats, property damage and killing livestock.

11 Buckingham Estate

Private Land

Grade 1 listed Buckingham was built in 1812 and by the 1820s was one of the most prized houses in Southampton with a £700 valuation. Originally 50 acres, the property was divided into smaller lots over time. The estate continues to be rich farmland, with arrowroot still

growing in the nutrient-dense soil. The Bermuda Slave Registers, now online at bnt.bm, tell us that Buckingham was a site of enslavement with five enslaved people registered to be living there in 1821.



12 Buck Island

In 2008 the Dill Family gifted this 4-acre island in the Little Sound opposite Buckingham to the Bermuda National Trust, with the Trust leasing it back to the family for 999 years with protective covenants. The Trust has used long leases as a means of protecting historic properties for many years, but this was the first time one was used to protect open space. The island is covered in low shrubs and surrounded by very shallow waters that shelter and nourish coastal birds and other wildlife. Buckingham's 'well-built fish pond' sits alongside the 'safe snug harbour' between the foreshore and Buck Island.

BERMUDA NATIONAL TRUST IS VERY GRATEFUL TO ALL THE LANDOWNERS, ORGANISATIONS AND RESIDENTS OF THE PROPERTIES THROUGH WHICH WE PASS, AND TO ALL THE VOLUNTEERS WHO HELP THE WALK RUN SMOOTHLY. REFRESHMENTS HAVE BEEN GENEROUSLY DONATED BY JOHN BARRITT AND SON LTD. AND BUTTERFIELD & VALLIS.



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Southampton Parish

