

50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
HENRY MORRISON  
FLAGLER MUSEUM  
— PALM BEACH, FLORIDA —

10/13/09

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**For Immediate Release**

**Celebrate the Holiday Season at Whitehall**

Palm Beach, FL - Beginning December 1<sup>st</sup> Whitehall's first floor is decorated in traditional Gilded Age magnificence. The Flagler Museum invites visitors to escape the holiday fervor and discover the splendor of the season at Henry Flagler's Gilded Age mansion.

**Special Holiday Lecture: *An American Christmas: An Illustrated Lecture by Philip B. Kunhardt III***

December 6, 2009

2:00 p.m.

\$25 includes Tree Lighting and Museum admission

\$5 for Individual, Family and Life Members

Free for Members at the Sustaining level and above

Best-selling author, American historian, and film producer Philip Kunhardt will present a richly illustrated lecture on the evolution of Christmas in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century American culture. Focusing on such fascinating and influential figures as Washington Irving, Clement Clarke Moore, Thomas Nast, Phillips Brooks, Louisa May Alcott, and L. Frank Baum, as well as on American presidents and Christmases in the White House, Kunhardt will shed light on the changing face Christmas. The presentation will be illustrated with images from the of Meserve-Kunhardt Collection, and will include surprising and moving stories that will help put the audience in the Christmas spirit.

**Christmas Tree Lighting**

December 6, 2009

3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

10 minute organ and Drawing Room Piano performances begin at: 3:30 p.m., 3:50 p.m., and 4:10 p.m.

20 minute choral performance in the Courtyard begins at 4:30 p.m.

Free with Museum Admission

The 16-foot tall Grand Hall Christmas Tree, with its historically accurate trimmings, is the center of Whitehall's holiday celebrations. The Tree Lighting festivities include holiday music played on Whitehall's original 1,249 pipe J.H. & C.S. Odell & Co. organ, and the 1902 Steinway art-case grand piano. This is the only opportunity visitors have to hear Whitehall's majestic instruments. Visitors are sure to enjoy a special choir performance, refreshments, and a visit from Santa Claus. The event culminates at 4:45 p.m. with Henry Flagler's youngest descendants lighting the Grand Hall Christmas Tree. This family tradition is an enjoyable way to tour one of America's National Historic Landmarks, while celebrating the holiday season.

### **Holiday Evening Tours**

December 19 - 23, 2009

Tours begin at 7:05 p.m., 7:15 p.m., and 7:25 p.m.

\$25 for adults

\$15 for children ages 6-18

Children under six are free

Advance purchase is required

During this beloved family event, visitors tour Whitehall after hours and discover the origins of American Christmas traditions, like Santa Claus and decorated trees. Guests will have the rare opportunity to see Whitehall by the glow of the original 1902 light fixtures. Every visitor will receive a traditional Christmas cracker following the tour. A choral group will sing carols while holiday refreshments are served. The Museum Store will remain open for holiday shopping.

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When it was completed in 1902, Whitehall, Henry Flagler's Gilded Age estate in Palm Beach, was hailed by the *New York Herald* as "more wonderful than any palace in Europe, grander and more magnificent than any other private dwelling in the world." Today, Whitehall is a National Historic Landmark and is open to the public as the Flagler Museum, featuring guided tours, changing exhibits, and special programs. The Museum is located at Coconut Row and Whitehall Way, Palm Beach. The Museum is open from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and noon until 5:00 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$18 for adults, \$10 for youth ages 13-18, \$3 for children ages 6-12, and children under six are free.

For more information, please call the Flagler Museum at (561) 655-2833 or visit [www.flaglermuseum.us](http://www.flaglermuseum.us).

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