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STORYTELLING AND HISTORY COMBINE TO FASCINATE *From High-Tech to High-Touch, Historic Philadelphia Brings History to Life*

PHILADELPHIA, May 10, 2011 – With something for everyone, Historic Philadelphia, Inc. tells the stories of the nation’s past in modern, fun, and engaging ways, winning awards and mesmerizing guests all summer long and throughout the entire year. The Historic Philadelphia, Inc. (HPI) 2011 season will be highlighted by **Liberty 360’s first full year of operation, Franklin Square’s 5th Birthday Season, History Makers** leading tours and free programs, a **Civil War Summer** featuring a Civil War July 4th Weekend, Flag Fest and new exhibits at the **Betsy Ross House**, and new programs at **Valley Forge National Historical Park**.

HPI is a non-profit organization overseeing four entities under one umbrella. Once Upon A Nation features Adventure Tours (one-of-a-kind immersive experiences), History Makers, Storytelling Benches throughout the Historic District and at Valley Forge, and the Benstute to specially train all staff. Franklin Square is an outdoor amusement oasis with Philadelphia-themed Mini Golf, the Philadelphia Park Liberty Carousel, and SquareBurger, hosting birthday parties and many special events. Liberty 360, a new digital 3-D experience, is open for its first full season as a year-round indoor attraction housed at the remodeled Historic Philadelphia Center as Phase I of the all-new completely re-imagined Lights of Liberty. The Betsy Ross House allows visitors a personal look at the story and home of a famous historical figure, with newly remodeled and reinterpreted rooms and a new Civil War exhibit. **In the 2010 season, HPI’s four attractions saw a total of over 1.2 million visitors.**

“Historic Philadelphia, Inc. hears from visitors around the region and around the globe that our unique programs speak to them in a wide variety of ways,” said **Amy Needle, President and CEO of Historic Philadelphia, Inc.** “At free storytelling benches to behind-the-scenes at night in Independence Hall, from beloved Franklin Square to our newest attraction in 3D, our storytellers, History Makers, and Benstute-trained staff work hard to create memories for everyone who experiences our offerings.”

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21st-Century Technology Lights Up High-Tech History

Now open for its full season, ***Liberty 360*** immerses the viewer in the symbols of freedom in a groundbreaking **360-degree, 3-D show unlike anything that has ever been seen before**, escorted by Benjamin Franklin. The 15-minute, 3-D film surrounds the audience in the new customized state-of-the-art PECO Theater. The theater is housed in the newly renovated **Historic Philadelphia Center**, across the street from Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell. The Historic Philadelphia Center is the headquarters for all of Historic Philadelphia's programs including the box office, providing tickets for Once Upon A Nation tours, *Liberty 360*, as well as the nearby Betsy Ross House and Franklin Square. The Center also serves as the departure point for all Once Upon A Nation Adventure Tours, provides guest services such as restrooms, and offers expanded retail operations. (For more information on *Liberty 360*, see the accompanying *Historic Philadelphia, Inc. 2011 Season Fact Sheet* or visit the press room at <http://tinyurl.com/HPIpress>.)

Franklin Square Celebrates 5th Birthday Season

Franklin Square, now celebrating five seasons of fun, is open 7 days a week for a round of Philly Mini Golf, a spin on the carousel, a quiet respite by the vintage fountain, or a delicious meal with mouth-watering burgers and the best shakes in town. Highlights of the 2011 season include **Third Annual Evening in Franklin Square Fundraiser** on May 19, dozens of free events for families throughout the season, and **The Civil War Road Show** running July 1-4, 2011, commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War. The renowned **SquareBurger**, operated by Starr Restaurants in partnership with Historic Philadelphia, presents a delicious menu featuring burgers, hot dogs, french fries, salad, southern-fried chicken fingers, and delectable frozen treats such as **The Cake Shake** with Tastykake Butterscotch Krimpet©! **New additions in 2011** include a crispy chicken sandwich; Birthday Bonanza Sundae; With Love, XOXO Strawberry Sundae; and the popular Shake-of-the-Month will continue. (Hours for Franklin Square and SquareBurger vary by season and are weather-dependent.)

History Makers Bring History to Life

Some of the most memorable programs produced by Historic Philadelphia, Inc. are the **immersive tours** where visitors are escorted by **costumed interpreters called History Makers** who truly bring the history to life. On the extremely popular **Colonial Kids Quest Tour** (debut May 28, Saturdays through September 3), children help solve the mystery of the missing Declaration of Independence with some delightful two-legged and four-legged Colonial friends. The **Independence After Hours Evening Adventure Tour** (Fridays and Saturdays through October 22 with additional tours Tuesdays – Thursdays, June 14 – August 13) is a walking tour of some of the landmarks of Historic Philadelphia where guests walk through the shadows of Independence Hall (in this unique opportunity to visit inside the Hall at night, with no crowds) and experience what those late nights of the summer of 1776 were like for the Founding Fathers. (Tour includes dinner at historic City Tavern and exclusive tour of Independence Hall with the Founding Fathers.) One of HPI's most popular programs is the **Tippler's Tour** (Thursdays through December 22), a light-hearted tavern tour of Colonial and modern-day watering holes. A

Colonial host shares historical facts about the traditions of drinking and leads guests in Colonial drinking songs and toasts with drinks and snacks at four Old City locations.

New in 2011, History Makers will have expanded free daily programs to meet and greet visitors, regale them with tales from their times, and perform regular dramatic readings throughout the day, all summer long. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, meet recognizable faces like Betsy Ross and Benjamin Franklin, or be introduced to some lesser-known headliners from days gone by such as Oney Judge, Octavius Catto, or Major Samuel Nicholas. Begin the day with the Flag Raising at the Betsy Ross House at 10 am, hear a dramatic reading from the U.S. Constitution at We The People at 12 noon on Independence Mall, have kids join the Continental Army at 2 or 3 pm in the Military Muster, or greet all the History Makers behind Independence Hall at the Declaration Reading each day at 3:45 pm. Visitors of all ages will be entranced by actors who portray HPI History Makers after weeks of rehearsals and intense study, at the award-winning Benstitute. Meet them, take photos with them, and the memories will linger forever. Pick up a copy of the *Historic Philadelphia Gazette* for complete daily schedule. (For hours, days, and pricing for all attractions, see *Historic Philadelphia, Inc. 2011 Season Fact Sheet* or visit the press room at <http://tinyurl.com/HPIpress>.)

Civil War Summer

While many people associate Historic Philadelphia with the Revolutionary War and Colonial times, Philadelphia played an important role in the Civil War and Underground Railroad as well. In 2011, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War, HPI will have a **Civil War Summer**. Visitors from Memorial Day through Labor Day will have the chance to meet Civil War History Makers, hear stories, see *Liberty 360*, and enjoy *Rally Round the Flag*, a temporary exhibit at the Betsy Ross House. The Civil War experience will be featured at the award-winning Once Upon A Nation Storytelling Benches, scattered in 13 locations throughout the Historic District. Modern-dressed storytellers, in addition to their wide array of tales from varying time periods in Philadelphia's history, will also share Underground Railroad and Civil War-era stories with subjects as varied as Octavius Catto to Harriet Tubman to two Philadelphia Civil War generals who fought on opposite sides: George Gordon Meade and John C. Pemberton. If the kids have filled their Once Upon A Nation storytelling flags, redeem them in Franklin Square for a free ride on the *Philadelphia Park* Liberty Carousel and free ice cream.

As part of the summer-long commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War, Historic Philadelphia, Inc. is planning a **Civil War Weekend** July 1-4, 2011, featuring a variety of in-depth, interactive, and family-friendly experiences to delight and engage everyone from the serious Civil War buff to the youngest visitor. The highlight of the weekend will be a four-day stop at Franklin Square by the state's travelling Civil War Road Show, in the only opportunity to see the Road Show in Philadelphia. (For more on HPI's Civil War Summer and Civil War Weekend, see the accompanying *Civil War Weekend Press Release* or visit the press room at <http://tinyurl.com/HPIpress>.)

Meet Betsy and See New Exhibits at the Betsy Ross House

Beginning Memorial Day Weekend, at one of Philadelphia's most popular historic attractions, **the Betsy Ross House**, join Betsy herself and some History Maker friends raising the flag at 10 am to signal the start of the day. Afterwards, tour the restored house, where Betsy Ross, as the story tells it, created the first American flag. Visit with her as she works covering chairs, making window coverings and more in the country's only 18th century upholstery shop. Ask her how she came to make our country's first flag and learn the secret snip behind the five-pointed star. A fully-restored flag made by Betsy Ross' daughter, Clarissa Claypoole Wilson, will be displayed at the Betsy Ross House for the first time ever as part of a new exhibit opening in the gallery this spring. The Civil War era 34-star silk flag is one of the highlights of *Rally 'Round the Flag: Civil War Color Bearers and the Flags They Carried*, which opened April 12 in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War. The Betsy Ross House hosts Flag Festival 2011: A Turn of the Century Celebration on June 11, 2011. The fourth annual event will pay tribute to our Stars & Stripes and continue the tradition of Flag Day celebrations that began here more than 100 years ago, and resumed with the first modern Flag Festival in 2008. (For hours, days, and pricing for all attractions, see *Historic Philadelphia, Inc. 2011 Season Fact Sheet* or visit the press room at <http://tinyurl.com/HPIpress>.)

Tours and Free Programs at Valley Forge

After visitors have explored the offerings in Historic Philadelphia, there's more to see in beautiful Valley Forge National Historical Park. The free Once Upon A Nation Storytelling Benches at Valley Forge continue in three prominent locations throughout the Park, beginning May 28 and lasting, unlike the Benches in Historic Philadelphia, through October 23, engaging residents and visitors in the treasures of history that took place in the venerable hills of Valley Forge. The popular Valley Forge After Hours Tour travels back in time to June 1778, where visitors spend an exciting evening at the famous encampment and see what nights were like for the Continental Army under the leadership of General George Washington. Enjoy a traditional Colonial dinner with Martha Washington before checking in at the General's Headquarters and then relax around the group campfire and listen to the soldiers' tales. Inspired by the popular Independence After Hours Tour, this tour has a unique twist at Valley Forge. Guests interact with General Washington and our first First Lady, Martha Washington, the Marquis de Lafayette, a Continental soldier, and other prominent visitors to the encampment in the era of June 1778, just before the army moves out of Valley Forge and retakes the City of Philadelphia (May 28 – October 22, Saturdays). Younger visitors will love the Valley Forge Secrets & Spies Tour. George Washington needs help: there's rumor of a plot to have him kidnapped at Valley Forge. Meet the General as he enlists children and adults to join his American spy network to uncover the traitors involved. Learn 18th-century spy techniques from Washington's most-trusted guards including invisible ink, counter-espionage, and looking for secret messages as young guests work with operatives to foil the plot (June 11 – September 3, Saturdays). New for 2011: the free program *Call to Arms: 1778!* will recruit young people into the Continental Army in a fun and spirited Military Muster at Varnum's Quarters twice a day on Saturdays and Sundays. (For hours, days, and pricing for all

attractions, see *Historic Philadelphia, Inc. 2011 Season Fact Sheet* or visit the press room at <http://tinyurl.com/HPIpress>.)

“Most visitors know Philadelphia was the birthplace of America in 1776, but don’t realize the important role the city played in the Civil War and the ‘new birth of freedom’ nearly a century later. HPI’s Civil War Summer is a great opportunity to expand visitors’ understanding of Philadelphia’s past,” said **Historic Philadelphia, Inc. Board Chairman Wayne S. Spilove**. “We are proud to tell this story.”

Historic Philadelphia, Inc. is led by President and CEO Amy Needle and Board Chair Wayne Spilove, in partnership with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, City of Philadelphia, Independence National Historical Park, Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation, Fairmount Park Commission, and Valley Forge National Historical Park. Historic Philadelphia, Inc.’s funders are The Lenfest Foundation and H.F. Lenfest, PECO, Delaware River Port Authority, PARX Casino, William Penn Foundation, The Pew Charitable Trusts, ACE Charitable Foundation, Lincoln Financial Group Foundation, Philadelphia Eagles Go Green, Avery Foundation, Brett’s Pony, Cash Is King Racing Stable, Team Smarty and the Chapman Family, ARAMARK, Connelly Foundation, Lewis Katz, Esq., Wayne S. Spilove, The McLean Contributionship, Samuel S. Fels Fund, Thomas Skelton Harrison Foundation, Parx Casino, Google, Valley Forge Convention & Visitors Bureau, 1956 Otto Haas Charitable Trust, American Express, PNC Foundation, Wachovia Wells Fargo Foundation, Blank Rome LLP, Starr Restaurants, The Home Depot, Religious Society of Free Quakers, Hotel Monaco Philadelphia, National Constitution Center, Robert Ambrosi / ARC Properties, Inc., James & Nadine Biles, Bittenbender Construction, LP, Chapman Auto Group, Cozen O’Connor, Giordano & Associates CPAs, P.C. / Streamline Payroll, LLC, Hill International, Inc., Independence Business Alliance, Independence Visitor Center Corporation, Lumbermens Merchandising Corporation, Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau, The Phillies, Stonehenge Advisors Inc., Valley Forge Hotel Management Company, S.R. Wojdak & Associates, Amtrak, Omni Hotel at Independence Mall, and media partners WHERE Magazine, KYW Newsradio, and WXPN’s Kids Corner.

Historic Philadelphia, Inc. enhances the visitor experience and helps strengthen Philadelphia’s tourism industry through interpretation and interaction, making our nation’s history relevant and real. Historic Philadelphia, Inc.’s programs include the Betsy Ross House, Once Upon A Nation storytelling and Adventure Tours, Franklin Square, and Lights of Liberty. For all Historic Philadelphia, Inc. event information, call 215-629-4026, 877-462-1776, or visit www.historicphiladelphia.org to buy tickets online. Tickets available in person at the Historic Philadelphia Center, Betsy Ross House, Franklin Square, or the Independence Visitor Center. Follow HPI at twitter.com/HistoricPhilly and twitter.com/FranklinSq or on Facebook at <http://tinyurl.com/facebkHPI> or <http://tinyurl.com/facebkFnkSq>.

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(To view or download the entire Historic Philadelphia, Inc. electronic press kit, go to <http://tinyurl.com/HPIpress>)