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HISTORIC BETHLEHEM MUSEUMS & SITES

Receives Nomination to US Tentative List

along with

Ellis Island, Central Park, Brooklyn Bridge and Early Chicago Skyscrapers

“A Fabulous Christmas Present” for the Christmas City

BETHLEHEM, PA, December 2016 Historic Moravian Bethlehem, a National Historic Landmark District, has been honored with placement on the US Tentative List for eventual nomination to the UNESCO World Heritage List on Friday, December 9, 2016. This happened just two weeks before the 275th anniversary of the naming of Bethlehem on Christmas Eve 1741. Official announcement of the nomination was made through the Federal Register through the Department of the Interior.

According to UNESCO’s World Heritage Center, “Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration What makes the concept of World Heritage exceptional is its universal application. World Heritage sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located.”

With its intact core of original buildings, Historic Moravian Bethlehem preserves some of the most important structures and sites relating to the Moravians in the New World and is significant as an outstanding example of Moravian architecture and town planning. The Moravian settlement of Christiansfeld, Denmark, founded 30 years after Bethlehem, was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2015.

Historic Moravian Bethlehem’s footprint is 14 acres of the original 18th century Moravian settlement which served as the center of Moravian activities in America. The settlement played a key role in both the international and American Moravian communities. Today, visitors can walk the streets and experience some of the finest 18th century colonial Germanic architecture in the nation and explore some of the artifacts that speak to the Moravian community.

The work continues as we strive to work toward the nomination to be placed on the World Heritage List. Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites invites the public to experience a very special Christmas in Bethlehem in honor of the 275th anniversary. Special programs and activities include the Christmas City Stroll, a walk through downtown Bethlehem with certified

guide in period dress where visitors will learn about the story of Bethlehem's unique beginning in 1741, the tales of a candle-in-every-window, and the renowned Bethlehem Star. As part of the the 275th Anniversary Celebration of the 1741 Gemeinhaus, visitors can see *Bethlehem's Christmas, 1741*, an exhibition dedicated to the first Christmas in Bethlehem on display at the Moravian Museum of Bethlehem located in the National Historic Landmark District at 66 West Church Street. They will find out how Bethlehem got its name and learn how the traditions of 1741 are adapted and practiced by Moravians in Bethlehem today.

A day trip to the Christmas City also includes the opportunity to see Trees of Historic Bethlehem. Dispersed across five historic sites, Trees of Historic Bethlehem will transport visitors to a world where Christmas carols come to life. Thanks to the hard work of over 50 volunteers from the Bethlehem Garden Club, each themed tree personifies its contemporary carol or historic hymn. Represented songs include "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "We Three Kings," "Beautiful Star of Bethlehem," "Nutcracker Suite," "What Child Is This," "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," as well as notable favorites like "Jingle Bells," "Let it snow, Let it snow," "Winter Wonderland," "Frosty the Snowman," "Here Comes Santa Claus," and "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas," and more.

In addition to the Historic Trees at the sites, visitors will enjoy the Holiday Putzes. A German term, Putz is a traditional Moravian decoration used around Christmas time that features ornate figurines, animals, and building scenes to tell the Nativity Story.

Evenings light up in the Christmas City with the Bethlehem By Night Bus Tours and Horse Drawn Carriage Rides. Visitors on the bus will see the famous star atop South Mountain, discover early and current local holiday traditions, and learn about historic highlights in North and South Bethlehem. All proceeds from tours, programs, and activities support maintenance of 20 historic structures.

Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites is a not-for-profit institution that brings to life three centuries of American history. Historic Bethlehem tells the story of a small town of great influence, home to some of our nation's earliest settlers, to America's first municipal water pumping system, and to one of the world's greatest industrial companies. Historic Bethlehem is located in eastern Pennsylvania, only a 1.5 hour drive from Philadelphia to the North and 2 hours west of New York City. Historic Bethlehem is an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and a National Historic Landmark District.