



Take a Sneak Preview of Essex Heritage's
premier partnership event . . .
www.trailsandsails.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TRAILS & SAILS 2008: OVER 200 *FREE!* EVENTS ANNOUNCED
A Weekend to GO! Experience Essex Heritage

August 1, 2008 (Salem, MA) . . . The Essex National Heritage Commission (ENHC) presents its seventh annual TRAILS & SAILS: *A Weekend to GO! Experience Essex Heritage*, September 26 - 28, 2008. Designed to showcase the unique array of historic, cultural, and natural resources within the Essex National Heritage Area, the weekend includes more than 200 *FREE!* events spread out over 135 locations throughout Essex County. Involving non-profit and community organizations, as well as recreation-based businesses, the weekend offers guided hikes, walks, sails, paddles, as well as historical tours and special art happenings for all ages, skill levels and interests.

New this year, TRAILS & SAILS will partner with ArtsFest Merrimack Valley, greatly expanding the number of creative events offered. ArtsFest Merrimack Valley is a first annual, valley-wide event designed to celebrate the diversity of art and culture within the creative corridor along the Merrimack River, and will include a range of art happenings taking place from Lowell Open Studios to the Newburyport ArtWalk with a selection of art history talks, open studios and artist demonstrations. With this partnership, Essex Heritage is proudly expanding the creative interpretation of the history of the region.

For the first time, TRAILS & SAILS will kick off with a celebration entitled "*A Taste of TRAILS & SAILS,*" slated for Thursday, September 25 from 5:30 – 8:30pm, at the stately Willowdale Estate in Bradley Palmer State Park, Topsfield. This event will bring together Essex Heritage Area residents,

constituents, supporters and event hosts, to celebrate the “best of” TRAILS & SAILS while raising necessary funds to underwrite the weekend’s free events. With offerings ranging from fresh native produce, local cheeses and spirits from area wine and beer makers to live music and stargazing under a summer night’s sky, “A Taste of TRAILS & SAILS” promises to be an evening that will tickle your taste buds and provide a true sensory experience of all that is essentially Essex. Tickets are \$25 and may be purchased online at: www.trailsandsails.org or by calling 978.740.0444.

On Friday, September 26, TRAILS & SAILS weekend officially launches with garden walks, historic site explorations and a twilight tour of Beauport, Sleeper-McCann House, an early twentieth century fantasy house built on the rocks overlooking the Gloucester Harbor. What follows is a totally unique schedule of themed nature hikes, bicycle outings, vineyard tours, poetry readings and waterfront adventures that continue throughout the weekend. True to the event’s name, activities are organized as “Trails” (guided tours, walks, etc.), “Sails” (river cruises, whale watches, kayaking trips, etc.) plus a host of other cultural activities such as “Talking Walls, the historic murals of Gloucester City Hall” and Haverhill’s Bella Buildings architectural walk. A special presentation on the life of world renowned artist, Johan Selmer Larson whose sculpture appears throughout Essex County’s natural landscapes is planned by the Marblehead Arts Association. From Friday afternoon to “Family Friendly Sunday,” TRAILS & SAILS 2008 will also include a wide range of Go! Healthy activities, designed to raise your heart rate and let you explore all new heart-healthy ways to improve fitness.

Many of this year’s events are focused on one of three different themed “trails” providing participants activities with a unique experience. This year’s special theme trails include:

- **Go! Green** events designed to introduce you to the wealth of ecologically-spirited initiatives here in the Essex National Heritage Area
- **Go! Outdoors** events for the naturalists at heart, which will get you on the trail, out on the beach or in some way off the beaten track.
- **Go! Kids** activities for the young and young-at-heart . . . whether it’s a farm tour, dory-rowing or whale watching, it’s fun, family-friendly and bound to please.

Be sure to take a “Sneak Preview” of all events at: www.trailsandsails.org

TRAILS & SAILS 2008: *A Weekend to GO! Experience Essex Heritage* is an annual celebration of all the historic, cultural and natural treasures in the Essex National Heritage Area. Organized by the Essex National Heritage Commission, this event is an integral part of the Essex Heritage mission, which is to raise regional awareness of the Area’s unique treasures and promote their

preservation. Printed program guides with event descriptions, locations and times will be available via online registration in early August at www.trailsandsails.org. Please register online to receive a copy, or call Essex Heritage at 978-740-0444.

TRAILS & SAILS 2008: A Weekend to GO! Experience Essex Heritage is presented by TD Bank North, Eastern Bank and Beverly Hospital/Addison Gilbert.



About TRAILS & SAILS 2008

TRAILS & SAILS: A Weekend to Go! Experience Essex Heritage is the premier partnership event of the Essex National Heritage Commission celebrating the historic, cultural and natural treasures of the Essex National Heritage Area. Coordinated by Essex Heritage as an integral part of our mission, Trails & Sails raises regional awareness of the Area's unique history and promotes the preservation of its heritage sites. Learn more at: trailsandsails.org



About Essex National Heritage Area and Essex Heritage Commission

The Essex National Heritage Area is comprised of the 34 communities of Essex County and designated by US Congress in recognition of the important role that this region played in American history and the significant heritage sites still extant in the region. Essex Heritage is the non-profit management entity for the Area, working in collaboration with the National Park Service to promote public/private partnerships, and develop programs that enhance, preserve and encourage regional awareness of the Area's unique historic, cultural and natural resources. For more information, experience Essex Heritage at essexheritage.org or call (978) 740-0444.



About ArtsFest Merrimack Valley

ArtsFest Merrimack Valley is organized by the Merrimack Valley Creative Economy Project, a collaborative effort of the Merrimack Valley Economic Development Council, the University of Massachusetts Lowell and the Cultural Organization of Lowell, with support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The goal of ArtsFest is to showcase the magnitude and diversity of art and culture of the Merrimack Valley . . . 24 diverse communities forming a "creative corridor" along the Merrimack River and I 495. For more info: merrimackvalley.info/artsfest.htm

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