

Press Release: for immediate release

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47th Annual Historic Selma Tour of Homes is March 17 & 18, 2023

Selma, Alabama – Selma is moving forward with a Tour of Homes like no other! Despite a devastating tornado Jan. 12, the town is cleaning up with new roofs and debris removal and a lineup of exquisite homes and charming history. It's a challenge like never before, but our large historic district plus venues in nearby Sardis are eager to welcome you!

Come on over Friday evening, March 17, 2023, at 6-9:00 p.m. for a tour, reception, and informative speakers at the **Vaughan-Smitherman Museum**. Live harp music will be provided by Old Town resident Eric Allison. See this WONDERFUL building and all the history it has contributed to our city of Selma since 1847.

Honoring former Mayor Joseph T. Smitherman, who was instrumental in its preservation and restoration, it houses an extensive collection of Civil War memorabilia and exhibits of medical and political artifacts. The museum proudly displays exquisite Victorian antiques, nationally acclaimed art from local artists, antique documents, military memorabilia and uniforms, and medical equipment. Outside the building, the tranquil gardens beckon visitors out for a stroll along brick walks, columns from the beloved Hotel Albert, and flowing fountains.

You'll be entertained and educated by the speakers from **Atlantic Heritage** at 7:00 as they present an enlightening program on the **Architectural Preservation of Selma and Dallas County**. Heavy hors d'oeuvres and beverages will be served.

The next day, Saturday, March 18, will showcase several of Dallas County's historic homes in Selma and Sardis, a museum, a church, a business, and art from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Begin your tour where Selma began at the **Hobbs-Elliott Cottage**, c. 1825. It is delightfully furnished with family items and old memorabilia from Selma's past. Then travel forward 77 years to the elegant **Magnolia Manor**. This house was built in 1902 by the Cosby family and remained in the family until 2006. The current owners, T. Bill Hartzog and John Coto, purchased the house in 2019 and you will appreciate their restoration efforts. They have furnished the home with gathered antiques and collectibles from around the world and continue to update the residence.

The **Kress building**, c. 1931, is a decorative Art Deco style structure that prominently features the Kress name accented by four-color terra cotta tiles. It now serves as the home of **Queen City Market**. Owner Mandy Henry will be welcoming tourists with refreshing drinks on Saturday, from 9-11:00 a.m. Queen City Market will remain open until 4:00 p.m. selling fashionable women's apparel, jewelry, furniture, home accessories, and more in this wonderfully restored historic building.

The **Selma Art Guild Gallery** will showcase the artwork of regional artists from 10-4:00 p.m. on Saturday. A special highlight will be demonstrations by several artists. Works from current artists will be for sale. Also available are prints of historic Dallas County landmarks by founding member Rhea Smith.

Beneath the shelter of ancient oaks and magnolias in Sardis, AL, discover the stately and beautifully restored **Hain-Harrelson House**. One of the state's finest examples of Neo-Classical Revival architecture, you will marvel at the fascinating features including the massive front columns, a leaded glass "Tree of Life" window, and the 12' by 54' center hall. Situated on 13 acres, the home was carefully restored in 1998 by Ken Parker and Cecil Gayle, nephew of Mrs. J. Bruce Hain. You will feel like a visitor to another time period when you tour this magnificent home of Angie and Ray Harrelson. Cross the street to the **Hain-Wilkinson House**, a recently restored Colonial Revival house built in 1935. The house was owned by the Hain family until around 2008 when Stan Wilkinson bought the house. It is beautifully furnished, and the grounds and outbuildings are outstanding. Stan and his wife Shelly have renovated the inside and built a matching detached garage and a pavilion with an outdoor kitchen and fireplace made of antique bricks (some from the Dallas Compress Company, c. 1870).

Our featured church this year is the historic **Shiloh Baptist Church** in Sardis. This lovely structure was put together with pegs and the timbers are hand planed. This church was established in 1818 and moved from Cahawba, Alabama's first permanent capital. Erected in 1842 at its present location, it is a fine example of Greek Revival architecture. Come out to see this treasure!

The day will end as you stroll through the serene and peaceful **Old Live Oak Cemetery**. Dating back to 1833, the cemetery is a MUST for all history lovers. Various "ghosts" will visit from 4:30 until 6:30 p.m. Visitors will be captivated by their stories of humor, perseverance, and tragedy as history comes alive.

The package ticket price of \$50 entitles you to the Friday night reception, presentation, and museum plus Saturday's tour of homes, a church, a museum, the art guild gallery, a business, and the cemetery tour on Saturday evening. Tickets are available at **Eventbrite.com** (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/historic-selma-tour-of-homes-2023-tickets-510927707527>) or during the event at the Vaughan-Smitherman Museum, 109 Union Street, on Friday, March 17, from 6-8 p.m. and on Saturday, March 18, between 8:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. For information you may call 334-412-8550 or check out **Historic Selma Tour of Homes** on *Facebook*, **HistoricSelma_TourofHomes** on *Instagram*, and the website at **HistoricSelmaTourofHomes.com**.

Sponsored by the Selma Dallas County Historic Preservation Society and the City of Selma, Selma's Tour of Homes/Pilgrimage began in 1976 as a celebration of the bicentennial to share the City's exceptional variety of architectural styles and rich history. Selma's historic district features more than 1200 structures. We hope you will come visit to experience hands-on history through guided tours on March 17 & 18, 2023.