

Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands opens 60th edition of international flower exhibition Keukenhof in Lisse

LISSE – By baptizing the new Spring Garden tulip Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands officially opened the 60th edition of the international flower exhibition Keukenhof on March 18. In this jubilee year the theme ‘USA, New Amsterdam: New York, 400’ strengthen the bonds of friendship with the numerous American visitors as well as Dutch discoverer Henry Hudson. Approximately 10 percent of passing the Keukenhof box office origin from the United States. And four centuries ago Hudson stepped ashore on what is now Manhattan -- on behalf of the Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie, the Dutch East India Company, who in those times rules the seas -- thus establishing New Amsterdam, later re-named in New York. It made Hudson and the Dutch indirectly responsible for the present city.

In the past six decades Keukenhof has enjoyed a warm interest from the members of the Royal Family. On May 2nd, 1972, then Queen Juliana and the Prince Consort Bernhard celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary and in 2001 Princess Maxima was presented to the Dutch at Keukenhof. Last year Crown Prince Willem-Alexander as a member of the International Olympic Committee opened the exhibition themed ‘China – The 2008 Olympics, Beijing’.

Emphasizing the theme 2009 prof. dr M.J. Cohen, Mayor of Amsterdam, and Congressman Maurice Hinchey, representing the Hudson River Valley addressed the audience. The latter took the place of Mrs Michelle Paige Paterson, Honorary Chairwoman of the New York State Co-ordinating Committee. Hinchey initiated the federal effort to organize this year's celebrations in New York of Hudson's historic voyage.

Mr Walter Jansen, chairman of the Board of Directors of Keukenhof, pictured the history of international flower promotion. During opening period his story will illustrated by a special exhibition in the Willem Alexander Pavilion. Mr Jansen marked 60 years as a milestone. “It is a excellent moment to look back, but to look ahead towards a permanently developing show as well.”

Spring Garden is a Darwin-hybride tulip, breded by Plant Research International Wageningen from a Madame Lefeber and a tetraploide and furthermore upgraded by Fluwel in Burgerbrug. It is a growsome, bright, red tulip with a yellow heart and perfectly fitted for the garden as well as for flower tubs. Natural blooming is around end of April .

America in flowers

The 2009 theme is impressively showed by a portrait of world famous Statue of Liberty in flowers, a scene measuring 26 by 17 yards in which more than 50,000 flower bulbs are processed. Mid October 2008 first plantation was performed by Mr Kenneth Roy, cultural officer for the US in the Netherlands. At the same time another 50,000 tulip bulbs were planted in Central Park, being a donation of the Netherlands American Community Trust, the International Flower Bulbs Centre IBC, and Keukenhof to the city of Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

Keukenhof 2009 has designed an American themed route starting with the Hudson River at the park's entrance. From there a swaying path of blue grape flowers illustrates the two streams of New York, and leads the visitors along recognizable American phenomenons as Brooklyn, Harlem, and Wall Street. A walk of fame pictures a.o. present former First Lady Laura Bush, as well as James Last, Hollywood, Manhattan, Washington and Portland in flowers. The American Dream inspires one of the gardens, in which Uncle William, a returning emigrant, plays the major role.

In the historic park of 32 hectares some seven million tulips, hyacinths, daffodils, and all other spring bulbs exuberantly grow. This year the park will be open from March 19th until May 21st. The displays in the park and the unique flower shows in the various pavilions are a glorious visual feast. And in the midst of this magnificent spectacle of colour there are exquisite works of art. Traditional highly appreciated events like the Easter Hat Parade and the specific the exhibition are maintained in the programme.

Keukenhof is an unforgettable experience for people of all ages. It has developed into one of the most popular destinations in the Netherlands. Many visitors from all continents gain inspiration while relaxing in the magnificent surroundings with no less than 15 kilometres of footpath. Keukenhof is a unique experience and guarantees the most fabulous photos.

For further information and pictures please contact:

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