
Your Visit with The Brandywiners, Ltd. at Longwood Gardens

How we came to Longwood

Longwood Gardens, on U.S. Route 1 near Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, was the residence of Pierre S. du Pont. This 1,050-acre estate, one of America's horticultural treasures, comprises gardens, woodland, meadows, conservatories, and the renowned Open Air Theatre. Because of his kindness, generosity, and keen interest in theater, Mr. du Pont invited his nephew and our co-founder, W.W. "Chick" Laird, to stage the first performance of The Brandywiners, Ltd. at the Open Air Theatre in 1932. Proceeds from that performance benefitted unemployment relief. Because we are a non-profit organization that donates its proceeds to charity, Longwood Gardens, Inc. allows this tradition to continue.

The Open Air Theatre

Mr. du Pont loved to share Longwood with his friends and his eagerly awaited garden parties were the highlight of the social season. Inspired by the *Villa Gori* near Sienna, Italy, Mr. du Pont personally designed the Open Air Theatre to accommodate the elaborate entertainments he staged during his garden parties.

This 2,000-seat outdoor amphitheater offers three playing levels. In place of a traditional theater curtain, a row of water jets illuminated from behind forms an opaque screen at the front of the stage. Concealed beneath the stage floor and adjacent playing areas are additional illuminated fountains that rise as high as fifty feet into the surrounding trees. These are the original fountains at Longwood Gardens and the ones that you may enjoy at the conclusion of our performance.

The weather affects our productions

To maintain Mr. du Pont's original intent, the theater remains without roof or any other shelter, both for the performers on stage and the audience. Because the theater has no covering, weather can affect our productions. We make every effort to present the performance as scheduled. We can proceed with some shows even during light drizzle, or we may call a delay until a brief shower passes and then resume. However, continuous rain, wind, or lightning may force us to cancel a performance.

Because summertime in the Delaware Valley features highly localized and transient weather events, we rarely decide to delay or cancel a performance before our curtain time of 8:30 p.m. We base our decision on conditions only at Longwood. We understand that our inability to cancel performances earlier and asking you to trek to Longwood under less than ideal conditions inconveniences many of our friends. But time after time over the years our patrons and all-volunteer cast and crew have arrived at Longwood under angry, gray clouds and drizzle only to leave under a moonlit, star-filled sky. We feel the risk is worth it and we ask you to share it with us.

Please come prepared

Summer evenings at Longwood can range from sultry to downright chilly, often ten degrees cooler than nearby urban areas. For your comfort, we suggest that you come prepared with a range of suitable clothing, including adequate footwear. The chairs in the theater sit on grass that may be damp. You may also want to bring cushions.

Questions and Answers on Performance Cancellations and Ticket Refunds

Under what conditions do you cancel a performance?

We cancel performances based only on the weather at Longwood Gardens or safety concerns there. Because the weather is bad where you are or because you have heard an unfavorable forecast, do not assume that a performance has been cancelled!

When do you decide to cancel a performance?

We make every effort to put on the show as scheduled and we rarely cancel performances before our curtain time of 8:30 p.m. If you feel a performance may be cancelled, listen to radio stations WDEL (1150 AM), WILM (1450 AM), WJBR (99.5 FM), WNRK (1260 AM), or WPEN (950 AM), or call our Ticket Office at 302-478-3355. Do not call Longwood Gardens.

What happens if you cancel a performance after the show begins?

If we cancel a performance before intermission, we will reschedule it for the next available rain date. If we cancel a performance during or after intermission, we will consider it a complete performance; we will not reschedule the performance even if rain dates are available and we will not offer refunds.

How do you determine the "next available rain date"?

We reserve as rain dates the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday following the regular performances. If we cancel only one regular performance, its rain date would be Monday; if we cancel another, its rain date would be Tuesday, and so on. For example, if we complete the Thursday performance but cancel the

Friday and Saturday performances, we would reschedule the Friday performance for Monday and the Saturday performance for Tuesday.

What happens if a rain date performance is cancelled?

We would reschedule it for the next available rain date. If, for instance, in the example above we had to cancel the Monday rain date performance, we would reschedule it for Wednesday.

What can I do if I cannot attend a rain date performance?

We will exchange your tickets for another performance on a stand-by basis if seats are available. Call our Ticket Office to verify availability of seats. If you are unable to use or exchange your tickets, you may want to consult with your tax preparer about the possibility of declaring the full ticket price as a charitable deduction; we are recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) corporation.

What happens if a rain date performance is cancelled before intermission and no more rain dates are available?

This is the only condition under which we offer refunds. You must request a refund within 30 days of the cancellation by returning your tickets along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to *The Brandywiners, Ltd., P.O. Box 248, Montchanin, DE 19710.*