Invitation-only grand opening set today

Houmas House in Burnside will reopen to public

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Houmas House, the 19th-century antebellum plantation home on River Road at Burnside, reopens to the public Monday. Cost will be $20 per person.

Workers give Houmas House, the antebellum plantation home on River Road at Burnside, a new coat of paint in July. After months of restoration and renovation, the house and grounds reopen to the public on Monday.

In the past five months, Kelly has restored the home and gardens to the early 1800s, a golden era for wealthy Southern planters.

“I am excited to re-open the property to Louisianians and travelers who come from all over the world to explore plantation life,” Kelly said. “Houmas House has been revamped to showcase the best parts of its history and our tour guides are ready to tell the exciting stories of the past.”

Kelly will host an invitation-only grand opening at 2 p.m. today featuring a day-long series of activities, including high tea in the courtyard with a string quartet, croquet on the lawn, antebellum ballroom dancing and a cochon du lait.

As a novelty, a mock wedding of Kelly's Dutch Labrador retrievers will take place on the grounds, and dogs from neighboring plantation homes have been invited to participate, Kelly said.

Visitors to the property will find the gardens restored and enhanced with lagoons, fountains and massive plantings of camellias, azaleas, irises, water lilies, antique roses, cypress and oak trees.

The house itself no longer resembles the stark-white plantation house of the past 60 years. Its soft, gold/cream exterior and antique furnishings reflect styles popular in the 1820s and 1840s. A number of rare Louisiana pieces are on display in the house.

Tours will begin Monday. Cost will be $20 per person.

The plantation home is handicap accessible and visitors are welcomed to linger as long as they wish in the gardens. The property does not have a bed-and-breakfast operation.

The home and gardens are available for special events including weddings, corporate outings, dinner parties and holiday celebrations.