



2011 Annual Report

Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden

VIRGINIA TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

614 Oronoco Street

Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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I. Executive Summary

The Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden is a historic home and garden in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia. Built in 1785 by Phillip R. Fendall of Maryland on land purchased from his cousin, General Henry “Lighthorse Harry” Lee, the House was home to 37 members of the Lee family until 1903. The Downham family purchased the house in 1903, living in it until 1931. Labor activist John L. Lewis purchased the house in 1937, living here till his death in 1969. In 1972, the Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation acquired the house and established it as the Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden. In 2011 the Trust continues to oversee its operations.

The following report is a review and description of the Museum’s activities and operations conducted in fulfillment of its mission during 2011. It is the first Annual Report published by the Trust/Museum and is available in hard copy and electronically on the Museum website, www.leefendallhouse.org. The report concludes with an assessment of 2012, and plans for the Museum during the next year. The Museum continues to enjoy the goodwill of its neighbors, the respect of the professional community, and the guidance of a professional staff and talented Board of Directors. Its challenges continue to be met with strategic planning and collaborative teamwork.

II. Mission

The mission of the Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation is to promote historic preservation and education by preserving, rehabilitating, maintaining, and interpreting the Lee-Fendall House Museum, gardens, and collection, thus serving as a community resource for the city of Alexandria.

To these ends the Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation:

- Maintains the Lee-Fendall House according to the best preservation standards to assure its enjoyment for future generations
- Develops, conserves, maintains and uses a collection of tangible objects
- Interprets to a wide public, through exhibits and educational programs, the role of the inhabitants of the Lee-Fendall House from 1785 to 1965 in the development of the City of Alexandria, the region, and the nation.

III. 2011 Events

A. Public

▪ House Tours

The Museum continued to offer its standard 45-minute tours of the House and Garden regularly between March and December. In addition to public tours, the Museum also conducted tours for local K12 school groups. Total visitorship figures come in close to 5000 people.

▪ Easter Egg Hunt

The 2011 Easter Egg Hunt proved to be a larger, more popular event than ever. This year it was decided to institute a reservation/timed-entry system to ensure the pleasure of every visitor. Charges for children were raised, and charges for adults

were added. The event was so successful, that the decision was made to hold the event over two days in 2012.

- **Wine Reception**

The Museum held several wine receptions during 2011. Although attendance fluctuated wildly between events, the receptions were popular, reaching several new audiences previously underdeveloped at the Museum, such as local singles groups.

- **Spring Garden Party**

A Spring Garden Party was held in June as a membership drive and fundraiser.

- **Fall Brunch**

A Fall Brunch was held as a membership drive and fundraiser in October. A reenactor from Colonial Williamsburg, portraying Richard Henry Lee, entertained the guests and provided a historic framework for this social event. In addition to the reenactor, guests enjoyed a light brunch, open bar, and a raffle. The new Executive Director was introduced at the event.



*Photos, courtesy of
Erica Prakop*



- **Garden Opening**

Though not a money-making venture, the Executive Director elected to keep the Garden open and available to the public during the Museum's regular operating hours. Previously, the Garden was only accessible to Museum visitors. The large Garden provides a quiet, green space in a very busy section of Old Town.

Neighboring businesses and residents were personally invited to use the Garden as they liked. The opening has been positively received by the community.

- **Victorian Teas and Etiquette Programs**

The Museum hosted several Girl Scout groups for a program called "Tea and Etiquette." The program is designed to meet badge requirements for social behaviors. The event is also offered to the general public on a reservation basis. One group reserved the event in December, to great success. Several areas for improvement and expansion were identified and will be implemented in 2012.

B. Private Events

- Wedding rentals continued to represent a strong stream of income for the Museum in 2011. There were five weddings and four other private events.

- The Staff identified several areas that needed to be edited or updated in the rental contract that governs private use of the Museum. All rental documents were amended accordingly with Board approval. These changes bring the Museum in line with industry standards and offer additional elements to renters that have previously been restricted. All changes have been positively received by potential renters.
- A new blog, “LeeFendall Events” was begun in 2011. It operates independently of the Museum website and features photographs of Museum events, in addition to news and tips for using the site to its full advantage during a private rental.

IV. Personnel

A. Executive Director

- In August, Tracy Sullivan resigned her position as Executive Director to take advantage of other opportunities. She voluntarily remained active in the search for a replacement.
- The President of the Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation formed a search committee and placed a position description and request for applicants in industry media. The Search Committee received over forty applications from all over the country and conducted numerous interviews both in person and telephonically. The Search Committee recommended Ms. Erin Adams as the new Executive Director. She had an opportunity to meet with the Board of Directors, staff and volunteers. Subsequently the Board voted to offer Ms. Adams the position as the Lee-Fendall House Garden and Museum Executive Director.
- Ms. Adams accepted the offer and assumed her duties on October 16, 2011.



The ED is introduced at the Fall Membership Brunch.

B. Manager of Special Events

Emily D. Rusch completed her first full year as the Manager of Special Events. She offered additional services to the Museum in 2011, to ease the transition between Executive Directors. She authors the blog, “Lee Fendall Events,” located at www.leefendallevents.com, featuring news and tips about using the Museum to its fullest potential for a rental.

C. Institutional Memberships

The Museum reinstated or renewed several of its institutional memberships, which are crucial to keeping the Museum connected to its professional relationships. As of

the end of 2011, Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden is a member of the Alexandria Association, the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, the Alexandria Convention & Visitors' Association, the American Association for State & Local History, the Historic House Museum Consortium of DC, and the Virginia Association of Museums. Several of these memberships were renewed through the generosity of a Board member.

V. Interns and Volunteers

A. Interns

1. Five interns served the Lee-Fendall House Museum during 2011. Together, their work represents approximately 1200 hours of volunteer service to the Museum.
 - Erica Prakop—George Washington University; Social media, event marketing and execution, website management and content development, and newsletter-style communications
 - Lydia Blackmore—Assisted with Antiques in Alexandria;
 - Julie Rotramel—Assisted with collections management tasks including collections organization and inventory.
 - Ashley Peterson Davis—Assisted with family and educational programming, including the Girl Scout programs, the Teddy Bear Parade, and other such events
 - Kyra Swanson—University of Mary Washington; Assisted with clearing up long-term loans from the Society of the Lees of Virginia to determine their value to the Museum.
2. George Washington University, long a main source for interns, decided to cease the practice of awarding a financial honorarium to host sites. During 2011, the Museum did not realize the same income from the program that it had in previous years.

B. Docents

1. The Museum owes a debt of gratitude to its docents for stepping in to keep the Museum running during the transition between Executive Directors.
2. During 2011, the Museum saw a loss of volunteers due to several factors, primarily the absence of an Executive Director. By December, the final docent count stands at 6 people. A challenge was issued to the docents to bring in at least one additional volunteer per person. Now that the Executive Director is in place and established, this challenge was met with enthusiasm by the docents.

C. Special Volunteers

1. The Junior League of Washington provided some volunteers for the year's special events. The annual agreement between JLW and the Museum, which usually provides us with many more volunteers, was not renewed due to the absence of an Executive Director. The agreement was renewed for 2012 in December 2011.
2. The Museum ended the year with five local women interested in forming a group of volunteers that focus solely on the Garden and its needs. This group will be activated in 2012.

*Junior League of
Washington
volunteer Martha
Gittings at the Fall
Membership
Brunch.*



3. The Museum dedicated a room on the main floor to serve as the Museum Shop. A volunteer manager was coordinated, and expected to be operating by 2012.

D. Volunteer Representative to the Board

Dr. Dianne Murphy agreed to serve as Volunteer Representative to the Board of Directors, replacing Allison Morrill, who resigned the position to have a baby. Dr. Murphy has served in this capacity with wisdom and enthusiasm. She has even taken on the additional role of unofficial volunteer coordinator, keeping contact information up-to-date, and maintaining the volunteer schedule.

VI. Restoration

A. Garden

Lee-Fendall House's Garden continued as the focus of restoration activities, upon the conclusion of the archaeological excavation conducted in 2010. During 2011, the final report on the excavation was completed by The Louis Berger Group, and all artifacts were cleaned, curated, and returned to the Museum. Along with a Civil War-era outbuilding that served as a morgue, the archaeologists were able to confirm the presence of an 1850s greenhouse and get a comprehensive view of the 19th century landscape architecture. According to the project manager, the Garden was the "most intact 19th century small-space garden" he had yet seen in his career. Concept sketches for the Garden's restoration were completed by Bruno Carvalho of Carvalho & Good Landscape Architects, Washington, DC. During 2012, Carvalho & Good are expected to finalize the design and deliver the final design along with construction document to the Museum. Funding for this project came from the National Park Service's Save America's Treasures grant.

B. First Floor Plaster

Andrew Wallace of Old Town Paint & Plaster was contracted to restore or repair the plaster in the Formal Parlor, the Family Parlor, the Dining Room, and Passage. The plaster in these rooms had been compromised over time due to age, water leakage, and structural shifting. Pieces of the original plaster were retained by the Museum to serve interpretive functions, and are used frequently in house tours and educational programs. The project was partially funded by a grant from the Alexandria Association.

C. Dining Room Doors

When the Cazenoves selected a room in Section B of the house to serve as their Dining Room in 1850, they formalized its appearance by hanging crown molding, using finer plasters, adding baseboards and trim, and by giving the doors a faux-grain paint treatment. Artist Patrick Kerwin created new faux grain for these doors, using graining techniques of the 19th century. The project was funded through a grant from the Alexandria Association.



D. Roof Repair

In October, a known roof leak threatened to nullify all the plaster repairs along the north elevation. Pond Roofing of Fairfax was contracted to repair the roof, laying new plywood, fascia boards, weatherboard, and shingles. The project was partially funded by a generous donation from a volunteer.

E. Privy

In December, a group of local Boy Scouts was led by Board member Ed Horn in a project to clean out, assess the condition of, and make basic repairs to the c. 1785 Privy. The project was in fulfillment of Boy Scout John Siegmund's application to attain Eagle Scout rank. Nearly one hundred bags of debris and overgrowth were hauled away, old supplies and other junk were cleaned out of the privy, and a new temporary roof of plywood and weatherboard was applied until the project can be completed. Carlyle House Historic Park, a neighboring museum, assisted in the project by providing ladders and some additional equipment. The project was partially funded by a generous donation from a Board member.





VII. Financial Report

- A. The fiscal year for the Lee Fendall House Museum and Garden coincides with the calendar year. 2011 was a good year, ending with a balanced budget for the first time in several years. Generous donations from private individuals and a \$10,000 grant from the Society of The Lees of Virginia helped secure success. The total in unrestricted grants received during 2011 was: \$38,500, which was about one third of our total income for the year. Unrestricted grants are critical to the operation of the Lee-Fendall House Museum and Garden
- B. There were two principal fundraising events, which were not as successful as anticipated. Other events, including the wine receptions, were sporadically successful. All events generated some positive outcomes, through they were not financially beneficial. The Board and Staff are reexamining all events for 2012 to identify their potential for success or failure.
- C. Thanks to the efforts of Emily Rusch, the number of weddings and other private rentals is increasing. There were five events in the fall, which helped us break even for those months. We have changed accountants to work out tax returns which will result in savings of about a thousand dollars per year. In the bookkeeping area, we are starting to use online banking more aggressively. This will save us the cost of checks as well as postage.

VIII. Fund Raising

A. Individual Donors

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Abell	Mr. & Mrs. James D. Heinzen	Mr. & Mrs. Gant Redmon
Ms. Lois Ancona	Ms. Betty Corzon Hill	Capt. & Mrs. Carter Refo
Mr. & Mrs. John H. Ariail	Mr. & Mrs. Ed Horn	Ms. Patricia L. Refo
Mr. & Mrs. William Bassett	Ms. Jean S. Hurley	Anne Fortney & Richard Riddell
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Bovey	Mr. & Mrs. John Hyland	Mr. & Mrs. Robert W. Robinson
Ms. Joyce Caldwell	Mr. & Mrs. Robert M. Jenkins	Mrs. Emily D. Rusch
Hon. & Mrs. Robert Calhoun	Mr. & Mrs. Joe Johnson	Dr. Patricia Sanders
Hon. & Mrs. William F. Clinger	Mr. & Mrs. Joseph F. Johnston, Jr.	Mr. & Mrs. Gerhardt H. Schrage
Capt. John S. Craighill	Mr. & Mrs. James A. Kennedy	Mr. & Mrs. John Siegmund
Dr. & Mrs. H. Talmage Day	Mr. Christopher G. Lee	Mr. & Mrs. William F. Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Robert H. Dugger	Mr. & Mrs. Peter Mattheis	Dr. & Mrs. Daniel Smith

Mr. & Mrs. H. Stewart Dunn, Jr.	Amy & Jeff Millican	Mr. Phillip W. Slattery
Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Ellsworth	Mr. & Mrs. Kim Morehouse	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Stalder
Hon. Frank Fannon	Mrs. Stephanie Morris	Ellen & Donald Stanton
Mrs. M. Susan Farr	Mr. & Mrs. Mark Mueller	Ms. Britt-Marie Stejskal
Ms. Betty Farrell	Mr. & Mrs. Richard Muller	Mr. & Mrs. Douglas P. Stuart
Mrs. Martha S. Feldkamp	Dr. Dianne Murphy	Ms. Michelle Triantos
Mr. Bill Fendall	Ms. Caroline H. Norman	Mr. & Mrs. Ramon vonDrehle
Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Graham	Mrs. Faye M. Padgett	Ms. Leslie J. Wilder
Mr. David Halle, Jr.	Judge & Mrs. Michael T. Paul	Mr. & Mrs. Richard Wilder
Ms. Nancy Hamilton	Ms. Jean Ponton	Mr. & Mrs. Thomas A. Wolf
Mr. & Mrs. David Heiden		Dr. & Mrs. Robert Zapalac

B. Business Donors

Old Town Paint & Plaster
Rent-All
SPARTA, Inc.
Zimmerman Electric

C. Grants

Microsoft
The Alexandria Association
The Camp-Younts Foundation
The Historic Alexandria Foundation
The International Design & Furnishings Association
The Marilyn S. Moll Trust
The Society of the Lees of Virginia

IX. Board Membership

A. At the January 2011 meeting of the Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation Board of Directors, the following officers were elected:

President:	Dr. Patricia Sanders
Vice President:	Ed Horn
Treasurer:	Carter Refo
Corporate Secretary:	Carter Refo
Volunteer Representative:	Allison Morrill

Other Board members who served were Stephanie Morris, David Heiden, Timothy Graham, and Amy Milligan.

B. During the year H. Talmage Day, Robert Stalder and Ellen Stanton joined the Board, and Dianne Murphy replaced Allison Morrill as the Volunteer Representative. Thomas Wolf joined the Board as the ex-officio representative from the Society of the Lees of Virginia. We are still far short of the fifteen members authorized in the By-Laws and are actively seeking new Board candidates.

X. Outlook for 2012

- A. The outlook for 2012 is good. The Executive Director is actively scheduling events and programs. She has instituted a tracking system that should help us identify which events are money makers and which are not. Other aspects of operations are being streamlined that will generate reliable, consistent data in all areas of museum operations.
- B. The staff has issued a challenge to the volunteers to recruit new corps members. Five new garden volunteers have stepped forward, and two docents are already in training. For the museum to fulfill its publicly advertised schedule, it must offer 108 tours per month. The need for additional volunteers cannot be understated.
- C. Although the Museum has offered a selection of Museum Shop merchandise for sale from time to time, it has never been a focused part of our revenue stream. For 2012, a permanent space is going to be set aside for the Shop, and it will be outfitted and staffed as such. The center of operations in the Museum is going to be shifted to this space.
- D. Renovation projects for 2012 include replacement of broken windows, additional plaster repairs, and painting the exterior of the house to remain in compliance with City codes. Assessment of the east chimney will take place, and plans will be made for its renovations as well.
- E. Private Rentals are already showing a strong return for 2012, with seven events on the calendar before the end of December 2012. Adjustments made to the rental contracts and rate schedule are expected to drive additional business for 2012. The Board of Directs is courting a donation from the Alexandria City Council and if we keep up our income from grants and donations Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden looks forward to a great year.

Photo, Courtesy of SweetTea Photography

