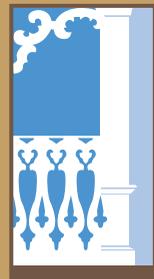




Lee-Fendall House



Fall 2018

VTHP Timeline

MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

The Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation Celebrates 50 Years!

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation by the visionary philanthropist Jay Johns. The Virginia Trust's early mission was to "promote the interest and education of the public in the history of Virginia from Captain John Smith and Pocahontas to the present." Prior to founding the Virginia Trust in 1968, Johns had been involved in saving many historic properties including James Monroe's Highland, Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson's home in Lexington, and the boyhood home of Robert E. Lee in Alexandria.

In the early 1970s, local Alexandria citizens were concerned about the future of the Lee-Fendall House. The home was in a bad state of repair and the property was considered a prime location for developers. Jay Johns agreed to help save the Lee-Fendall House but only if a significant portion of the money could be raised from members of the community. Johns strongly believed that people should help preserve their own heritage.

The Virginia Trust opened the Lee-Fendall House Museum to the public in 1974. It was truly a group effort to restore and furnish the house. Like many local history museums that opened in the mid-1970s, the Lee-Fendall House was riding a wave of interest in history that was sparked by the United States Bicentennial celebrations. Initially, the Lee-Fendall House museum was opened as a memorial to Revolutionary War General Henry "Light-Horse Harry" Lee and other members of the Lee family who lived in the house. Today, the story has expanded to include everyone who lived and worked in the house over its two-hundred-year history. The Lee-Fendall House Museum continues to serve the Alexandria community by preserving and interpreting our shared history through tours, exhibits, and special events.

Check out our timeline featuring highlights of the VTHP's history!

Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden

614 Oronoco St.
Alexandria, VA 22305

703-548-1789
contact@leefendallhouse.org
www.leefendallhouse.org

Museum Hours:

Wed-Sat: 10am - 4pm
Sun: 1 - 4pm

Guided tours offered on the hour.

Self-guided tours also available.

Did you know that you can host special events, parties, and meetings at the Lee-Fendall House?

Visit leefendallhouse.org for rental details!

1968

The Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation (VTHP) is established.

1969

Last resident owner of the house, John L. Lewis, passes away.

Future of house is uncertain.

VTHP purchases the Lee-Fendall House.

Restoration begins soon after.

1972

Director Frances Shively works with the Society of the Lees of Virginia to obtain furniture and objects.

1974

Lee-Fendall House opens as a museum to the public.

Alexandria Council of Garden Clubs begins work on restoring the gardens.

1975

Garden is unanimously chosen as the Alexandria Bicentennial Garden.

1976

First garden excavation uncovers many artifacts at original privy site.

Privy building is reconstructed.

1979

Lee-Fendall House added to the Virginia Landmark Register & the National Register of Historic Places.

1985

200th anniversary of house's construction.

House history, *Visitors from the Past*, is written by T. Michael Miller.

1986

Alexandria Archaeology excavation finds many early 20th century artifacts.

Make Lee-Fendall House Part of Your Legacy

The Lee-Fendall House Museum is a unique and special place, where the stories of Alexandria families from three different centuries are preserved and shared. Collectively, their story reflects not just how the community has grown and changed, but also traces the course of American history, from the earliest days of the new republic right up through the civil rights era.

But maintaining a structure built in 1785 and keeping it open as a community resource is a resource-intensive undertaking. As Alexandria's only independent history museum, we rely on the generosity of friends like you to ensure that we're still helping Alexandrians understand our shared history far into the future.

And today, we're inviting to you to consider making that shared history part of your personal legacy. The Lee-Fendall House is launching a legacy society to recognize those who have made a planned giving commitment. We are able to accept simple bequests, gifts of appreciated stock, IRA charitable rollovers, and many other types of planned gifts, each one providing long-term financial sustainability for the museum and tax planning advantages for you.

To discuss your options and learn how you can leave a legacy at Lee-Fendall House, please contact John Christiansen, Executive Director, at jchristiansen@leefendallhouse.org or 703.548.1789.

Thank you for your support and friendship.

Trivia Nights Receive Top Score



Trivia teams gathered for competition in the garden.

Friday nights were buzzing in the garden this summer! The museum hosted *Trivia Nights at Historic Sites*, a collaboration between the Lee-Fendall House and Carlyle House, where locals could come and socialize, all while testing their knowledge. Trivia categories included topics like classic literature and Virginia history. Each trivia night attracted teams of people eager to show-off their competitive spirit and earn the high score for the night. We want to thank everyone who came out and supported our sites. We look forward to partnering with Carlyle House again for more successful events!

Lee-Fendall House

ANNUAL
FUNDRAISER

**Sips
&
Secrets**

A SPEAKEASY NIGHT

Lee-Fendall House Museum
614 Oronoco Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2018
7:00 - 10:00 PM
VIP RECEPTION AT 6:30 PM

Enjoy drinks, jazz, and flapper-style fun!

VIP Reception includes an exclusive tasting event,
access to a special exhibition and house tour.

For tickets and additional event information visit:
leefendallhouse.eventbrite.com

OBJECT SPOTLIGHT

Say you were living in Alexandria in the second half of the 19th century. The siblings of Mary Fleming, who vacated Lee-Fendall in 1879 but rented the house out to her sisters and brother, invite you to dine with them at their home on the corner of Oronoco and Washington streets.



Saratoga Chip server

One of the savory dishes that draws your attention in the dining room is a pile of thinly sliced, crispy golden potatoes, fried in fat. A servant scoops a few onto your plate using a polished, slotted silver spoon.

This rare circa-1890 Tiffany & Co. Saratoga Chips server, now in the collection at Lee-Fendall, was named for the chips invented in 1853 by George Crum, a cook at a restaurant in Saratoga Springs, New York. The story goes that Crum served his first concoction to a diner who had no choice but to eat the crisp potato slices with his hands, since the food was too difficult to wrangle with a fork.

The Victorians typically considered eating with their hands a faux pas, so it seems likely that the Saratoga Chips server was a compromise, as it saved themselves from getting their hands too greasy. Only once these early potato chips were on a dinner plate did the Victorians consider it acceptable to eat the food with their hands.

Eventually, though, the Saratoga Chips server and other inventive utensils, like sardine spades and asparagus tongs, fell out of favor after Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover limited silver service sets to 55 pieces in 1925.

Virginia Dept. of
Historic Resources
places historical
highway marker
in front
of house.

1988

Historian D. P. Meyers completes an architectural analysis of the house.

1989

Board of
Directors
recognizes the Lee-
Fendall House as the
sole property for
preservation by the
VTHP.

1995

Easement agreement entered in with the state for long-term protection of the property.

1999



the **Real Volunteers**
OF LEE-FENDALL HOUSE

Remembering the Dog Days

When docents give tours to house visitors, they get the opportunity to share stories of the different families who called Lee-Fendall House home. Through these stories we learn that many commonalities exist between the families of the past and those of today – including a love of pets. One pet that always stands out as a house favorite is Hal the dog.

Hal was a companion to Myra Lee Civalier, who lived in the house through the late 1800s. Myra was a niece of Dr. Robert Fleming, who purchased the house in 1870. The family's love for Hal was memorialized in 1895 through a small window etching in the south bedroom where Myra and Hal's names

are carved. Fascinated by the etching and interested in learning about Hal the dog, docent Cheri Sullivan began to see if she could learn more about the much-loved dog.

Cheri started her research by reading through *Visitors from the Past: A Bicentennial Reflection on Life at the Lee-Fendall House, 1785-1985* a reference book by historian M. T. Miller. From there she found a reference to an obituary for Hal published in the *Alexandria Gazette*. She was able to obtain a copy of the obituary from the Special Collections room of the Barrett Branch Library in Alexandria. The obituary read:

"Hal, one of the smartest dogs in this city, and the property of Miss Myra Lee Civalier, was paralyzed yesterday and last night had to be chloroformed to relieve it of its sufferings. The animal was seventeen years old, a remarkable age for a dog."

The obituary conveys the high regard the Civalier family had for Hal. It truly allows us

to feel how important Hal was to his family and also the community. Hal was well known by neighbors of and visitors to the Lee-Fendall House while he was alive. He was sure to be a staple by Myra's side as she gave voice lessons in the parlor. We don't know much else about Hal, but we are grateful to Myra for leaving his memory preserved in the house.



Window etchings in the south bedroom of the house depict Hal's and Myra Lee Civalier's names.

Time to Treat Yourself!

Sign-up to become a **Friend of Lee-Fendall House!**

Check out all the upcoming **FREE** programs for members in the Calendar of Events!

Visit www.leefendallhouse.org to view the full benefits available for each membership level.

It's always a good time to become a Friend of Lee-Fendall House!

All memberships are good for 1 calendar year.

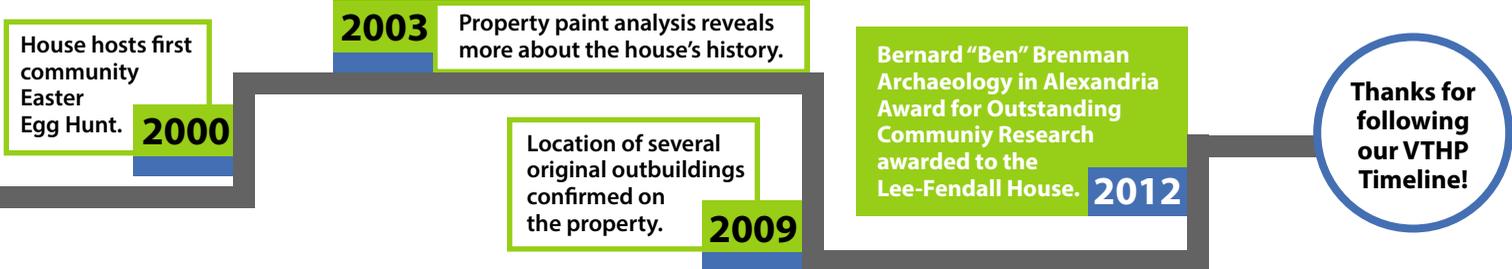
Brand new level!

Young Professional (under 30) - \$35
Individual \$50
Family \$75
Contributor \$150
Supporter \$225
Patron \$500

Support the museum while saving money on all your favorite museum programs.

All members receive:

- ★ Free museum and garden admission
- ★ 10% off at the gift shop
- ★ Quarterly newsletter subscription
- ★ Free or reduced pricing to special programs, tours, and events



A Storybook Summer

This summer the Lee-Fendall House was busy bringing history alive for the children of Alexandria. Each Thursday morning the museum hosted *Summer Stories*, a series of educational, story-based programs, aimed for children ages 3-5. Our young visitors enjoyed listening to a story and completing a fun, simple craft and activities which were based around a central historical theme that varied week to week. Among the most popular sessions were *Happy Birthday, Alexandria!*, *Clothing of the Past*, and *Carriages to Cars*. At the end of each program, children were led on a house tour, giving them the opportunity to ask questions and experience the house for themselves. For many of the children, it was their first time touring a historic house. Educational programs for young children are important to nurture an early appreciation for history. The museum was happy to see so many families come out to discover their local history!



Intern, Esther Bouquet, reading a summer story to young children.

Mark Your Calendars!

Saturday, September 8 & October 20, 10:00 AM

Beyond the Battlefield – A Civil War Walking Tour ★

A guided walking tour of Civil War sites in Historic Old Town focusing on locations and stories associated with soldiers, citizens, and the enslaved, including the occupation of Alexandria and emancipation.

Saturdays: September 15 & October 13, 10:00 AM

Prohibition in Alexandria: A Walking Tour ★

Discover the forgotten stories of teetotalers and bootleggers on this walking tour of Prohibition-era Alexandria. Learn about the dramatic campaign to ban alcohol in Virginia and its threat to the production and sale of alcohol in Alexandria.

Saturday, September 22 & November 10, 10:00 AM

The General's Tour – Robert E. Lee in Alexandria ★

This guided walking tour of Robert E. Lee sites in Alexandria's Historic Old Town will address the complicated legacy of the general's life in Alexandria, his hometown from the age of five.

Saturday, September 22, 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Sips & Secrets: A Speakeasy Night

Step back in time to Prohibition-era Alexandria at our annual fundraiser and help us to raise money for critical repairs to the house's historic foundation. Enjoy drinks, jazz, and flapper-style fun!

Saturday, October 22

Smithsonian Museum Day

Stop by the Lee-Fendall House for a free house tour as we participate in Smithsonian magazine's annual museum day celebration of culture and curiosity.

Friday, September 28, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Homeschool Day

Homeschoolers and their families are welcome to come and participate in interactive activities and learning opportunities throughout the museum and discover how home life in America has changed over the past 200 years!

Saturday, November 24, 2:00 PM

Under the Same Roof: Enslaved and Free Servants at the Lee-Fendall House ★

Explore the Lee-Fendall House from the perspectives of the enslaved and free African Americans who lived and worked in the home as domestic servants, both before and after the Civil War.

Visit www.leefendallhouse.org:

- View the most up-to-date list of upcoming programs
- Get full event details and ticket information
- Purchase tickets for your favorite events

Seasonal Favorites!

OCTOBER

Saturday, October 27, 10:30 AM, 12:30 PM, & 2:30 PM

Halloween Pumpkin Hunt

Alexandria's ghosts and goblins fill our garden with hundreds of colorful toy-filled pumpkins for children to discover! Other activities include crafts, spooky stories, and a costume parade.

Friday-Sunday, October 26-28, 7:30, 8:30, & 9:30 PM

Grief & Ghosts Tours

Celebrate Halloween with a look at Victorian mourning traditions coupled with stories of tragic deaths and mysterious occurrences at the Lee-Fendall House. Explore mourning clothes, funeral practices, and séances by candlelight at night in the house.

See a ★?

These programs are free for Lee-Fendall House Members!



NOVEMBER

Saturday, November 10, 2:00 PM

Thanksgiving Lecture: From 1621 to Present ★

Acclaimed food historian, Joyce White, explores the political, social, economic, and cultural traditions that have made Thanksgiving the truly American holiday that it is. Learn how the holiday and the food have changed over time!

DECEMBER

Saturday, December 8, 4:00 – 9:00 PM

Historic Alexandria Candlelight Tours

Take a break from the fast pace of the season and enjoy the unique charm and history of Old Town at Alexandria's most popular holiday event. Enjoy seasonal decorations and light refreshments while touring the city's favorite historic sites!

Saturday, December 15, 11:00 AM, 12:30 PM, & 2:00 PM

A Victorian Christmas

Experience the wonder of the season by joining us for a Victorian Christmas at the Lee-Fendall House! Enjoy the traditional décor, holiday crafts, sweet treats, seasonal story time, photos with Santa, and more!

