

Winter 2018

Lee-Fendall House

MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

New Mission, New Momentum

The Lee-Fendall House Museum is beginning the winter season with a brand-new mission statement! Over the last few months the museum's Board of Directors has been diligently working to update the previous mission statement, which had guided the museum for the past twenty years. We are pleased to announce that this November the board voted on and approved the new mission statement:

The Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden interprets American history through the experiences of those who lived and worked on the property from 1785 to 1969. As an educational resource, the museum preserves its historic fabric to promote community engagement about the relevance of the past to our present.

Our new mission statement maintains the museum's core functions, but now better reflects the exciting time of ongoing growth and change at Lee-Fendall. During times when the public's understanding of the value of American history and its instruction wanes, it's essential that museums reassess how they can contribute to and further engage with their communities. The staff of Lee-Fendall have done just that.

Through the introduction of a variety of new educational programs, the museum is working hard to tell the stories of the many individuals who lived and worked at the Lee-Fendall House. These programs allow visitors of all ages to immerse themselves in history and experience the relevance our past holds for today. We are excited by this change and are incredibly enthused by the positive response this expanded interpretation of the house has garnered within our community. We thank everyone who has supported the museum during this transition, and we look forward to continuing this momentum into 2019!

Discover our shared history today!



**Alexandria developed.
Our nation grew.
Lives were shaped.
History was made.**

Experience the change.

Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden

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Alexandria, VA 22305

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Follow us on:

 Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden

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 @leefendallhousemuseum

Museum Hours:

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

Guided tours offered on the hour.

Self-guided tours also available.

Rentals:

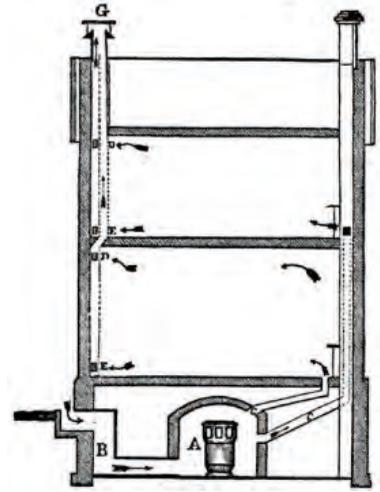
Host your special events, parties, and meetings at the Lee-Fendall House!

Check out rental details at www.leefendallhouse.org

Keeping Warm in the 1850s

It was the winter of 1851-1852 and residents of Alexandria were coping with a winter for the record books. In early October "The Severe Winter" began to set in around town. The air was bitterly brisk, the streets were layered in snow and ice, and the Potomac River running alongside the city was frozen solid. That particular winter had, in fact, proven a tough one for much of the eastern United States, with temperatures falling far below average and snow cover lasting well into April for many areas.

The Cazenove family, who had purchased the Lee-Fendall House in 1850, were one of the many families bracing against that winter's cold. Upon purchasing the home, the family made many significant improvements to the house, including upgrading the home's heating system. Advancements in home heating enabled the Casenoves to make the home substantially more comfortable than in years past. They installed a coal furnace, probably very similar to the well-known Chilson's furnace. These award-winning furnaces became popular staples in homes across the country and were lauded for their efficiency. Lit coals inside a Chilson's furnace warmed air in the basement, which then rose through ducts in the floors to heat the rooms overhead. Once installed, the furnaces allowed families like the Casenoves to enjoy a wonderfully warm home



The Chilson's furnace provided families a safe and efficient way to heat their homes. Situated in the basement, the furnace moved warmed air through the house via ducts within the floors.



Harriot Casenove lived in the Lee-Fendall House during "The Severe Winter" of 1851-1852.



One of the quilted winter bonnets from Lee-Fendall's collection.

At times when daily life forced the Casenoves to go outside and brave the elements, they would bundle as best they could to ready themselves for drafty rides in their carriages. Women like Harriot Casenove, the matriarch of the family, would often wear muffs and winter bonnets to help keep out the cold. The Lee-Fendall collection has several winter bonnets that date to the mid-19th century and are likely similar to those worn by Harriot. The bonnets are quilted and padded to allow for maximum warmth. Many of the bonnets were designed to be overly large so as to accommodate and protect the intricately curled hairstyles of the time period. Just like today, no one was a fan of getting hat head from their winter gear! Many trends come and go as the years pass, but keeping warm in the winter is as important now as it was back in the 1850s.



Trim the Tree with Lee-Fendall!

The Lee-Fendall House is proud to be featured as this year's Historic Alexandria Commemorative Ornament!

Available for sale at the museum's gift shop, the holiday ornament depicts the front of the house as seen from Oronoco Street. This beautiful brass ornament showcases the house's unique, telescopic style with festive garlands and wreaths adorning the front porch.

Whether you're seeking a new ornament to add to your decor or are looking for the perfect gift for someone on your list, the Lee-Fendall House ornament is just what you need. Stop by the Lee-Fendall House and pick yours up today!



Give the Gift of History

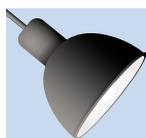
Lee-Fendall House has an expansive story to tell – one that reflects a wide swath of American history. Few historic houses have the distinction of serving as a family home for over 150 years. The house has stood through significant American milestones such as the signing of the U.S. Constitution and the launch of the first astronaut into space.

Interest in the house's rich history has been invigorated by new educational and community programs introduced over the past year. We've seen noted increases in visitor attendance and high demand for program tickets. We've also been recognized by public history professionals at acclaimed non-profits and universities for our more inclusive interpretation of the house's history.

There is so much we are proud of in 2018. We have had an amazing year with a wide assortment of both specialty house tours and walking tours on topics ranging from the War of 1812 to Victorian home renovations to Prohibition in Alexandria. We've interwoven the culinary arts with history in seasonal tasting lectures. We brought families together for garden fun during our annual **Easter Egg Hunt** and **Pumpkin Hunt**. Over the summer, we introduced **Trivia Nights at Historic Sites** and the children's reading program, **Summer Stories**. We hosted an outstanding **Sips & Secrets** annual fundraiser in September raising over \$10,000 for foundation repairs that are now in progress. And, we will end the year with a bang with the always popular candlelight tours and **A Victorian Christmas**. But we can't do this alone! We rely on the support of all our members, friends, and community partners.

During this holiday season and new year, we ask you to consider giving the gift of history – to yourself, your family, and your community. We invite you to become a Friend of Lee-Fendall House, to renew or upgrade your membership, or to make a special gift to support a project or program at the museum that's important to you. Lee-Fendall House is a non-profit and receives no public funding, so gifts to sustain our operations are always needed. We also welcome corporate memberships, planned gifts, and gifts in-kind of materials or professional expertise. All donations to Lee-Fendall House are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

To learn more about giving the gift of history, please visit our website at www.leefendallhouse.org; email contact@leefendallhouse.org; or call the museum at 703-548-1789. Thank you for your vital support of Lee-Fendall House!



OBJECT SPOTLIGHT

If you were a child living in the 1930s, you'd probably add the Fire Fly® sled to the top of your Christmas list. While its metal sliders and simple wooden slat seat might not pass muster for a modern-day safety test, these little sledding toys used to be some of the most popular sleds for dashing through the snow.

Its earliest predecessor, the Flexible Flyer Sled®, was patented back in the late 19th century by Samuel Leeds Allen in New Jersey. (Allen's children reportedly tested each of his sled designs.) Allen's Flexible Flyers®, and later models like the Fire Fly®, were the first steerable sled, allowing drivers to veer away from obstacles. Riders could sit up or lie down on their stomachs, turning the wooden cross-piece with the attached rope using either their hands or feet.

Initially sledding was a practical means of transportation in areas that experienced heavy snowfall. But the sledding we recognize today took off as a pastime in the 1800s in places like Russia, when men and women would don their best attire before hurtling downhill.

Allen had trouble selling his new sled invention until he marketed them as toys, and by 1915, sleds were selling about 120,000 per year at toy stores across the country. In 1928, six flyers even went on an expedition to the South Pole.

Visit Lee-Fendall House this holiday season to see this unique find in person.



Fire Fly® Sled, c.1930s

New Holiday Exhibit!

The Golden Age of Toys 1870-1920



Visit our special holiday exhibit showcasing toys and games from the late 19th and early 20th centuries! Featuring objects from the museum's collection, learn how toys and gift-giving changed the Christmas holiday during this era. Highlights include a large 1890 dollhouse, a Kestner doll, and a Flexible Flyer® sled. *Open December 1 - January 6.*

Handmade Boxwood Kissing Balls

Available starting
December 8th



Thank you to everyone who came and supported us during our annual Sips & Secrets Fundraiser!



Expanding Hands-on Education

The past few months have brought some exciting developments to the Lee-Fendall House's educational programs. On September 28, the museum hosted a Homeschool Day in partnership with the Home Educators Association of Virginia. Volunteers guided participants through the home on a modified tour that included hands-on stations to bring the house's history to life. Students enjoyed playing with historic toys, practicing their hat and glove etiquette, and seeing how dining has changed over time. Around thirty students attended with their parents to experience this interactive day at the house.

Adding further to the museum's offerings, Lee-Fendall's fall intern, Mackenzie Breeland, is helping staff develop a field trip for local 4th-6th grade students studying Virginia's history in school. By developing this field trip program, the museum hopes to fill a niche in the educational community by providing a space where students can learn about Virginia during the Civil War and Reconstruction eras outside of the traditional classroom. Field trips will utilize the house's collection of primary sources and allow students to experience these eras through the lens of the home's residents. The museum hopes to offer more hands-on history programs moving forward in order to continue connecting children with history.

Look out for more information on these programs at www.leefendallhouse.org.



Interactive station from Homeschool Day for teaching students about historic hat and glove etiquette.

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!

Saturdays: January 12 & February 9, 2:00 PM
Stories in the Architecture ★

Go behind the scenes and explore the stories in the architecture of the Lee-Fendall House. Discover how the home has changed throughout its long history. The tour includes access to parts of the house that are not normally open to the public.

Saturdays: January 26 & February 23, 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.

Space on tours is limited so advanced tickets are recommended.

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



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

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!

★ = free event for Friends of Lee-Fendall House! Learn more about membership at www.leefendallhouse.org.