MUSEUM MOMENTS
A Joint Project of
Carlyle House Historic Park &
Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden

Navigating Our New Normal

As both Lee-Fendall and Carlyle Houses throw open their doors, both museums have worked with the City of Alexandria and with professional organizations serving small museums to ensure we can keep visitors, volunteers, and staff healthy and safe.

Both museums will sanitize high-touch surfaces between each group of visitors and maintain social distancing of six feet during tours. Volunteers, staff, and visitors wear masks in accordance with state regulations. Until further notice, each museum will observe the following schedules and procedures for all tours:

Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden
- Tours will be held daily from Wednesday through Saturday at 10am, 11:30am, 1pm, 2:30pm, and 4pm. On Sunday, tours are held from 1pm on.
- Please book tours in advance and pay over the phone or online - $7/adult, $3 ages 5-17, free for children under 5.
- We will limit tour groups to five people per tour, with no mixed-household groups.
- Tours will begin in the garden behind the house - enter through the Washington Street gate.
- Questions and bookings: (703) 548-1789

Carlyle House Historic Park
- Tours will be held daily from Tuesday through Saturday on the hour at: 10am, 11am, 12pm, 1pm, 2pm, 3pm, and 4 pm. Tours on Sunday will begin at 12pm.
- Visitors may book tours over the phone, but due to staff limitations, we are only available for day-of booking.
- We will limit tour groups to five people, unless you are a family unit that has been isolating together, in which case tours are not to exceed 9 people.
- Only one family unit admitted will be admitted at a time into the basement gift shop. Credit card payments are preferred.
- Questions and bookings: (703) 549-2997

We are grateful to each and every person who visits the museums during this unique time, and look forward to inspiring visitors with the courage, creativity, and resilience that Alexandrians have shown throughout our history.

As a thank-you for visiting us during this time, please accept 10% off your purchase in our museum shops, where you'll find books, mementos, and unique gifts. We look forward to welcoming you!
The staff and volunteers at the Lee-Fendall House Museum and Garden are excited to invite you back to tour the house and garden.

The garden has remained open for our neighbors to enjoy the showy spring flowers, and now house tours are starting in the garden. The indoor tour route lets visitors closely examine the historic rooms while maintaining social distancing. We will be maintaining our online presence as well.

Meanwhile, please check out our YouTube channel for video tours. Coming soon is Under the Same Roof, a tour that helps fill out the story of the enslaved and free people of color who lived and worked in the home. We also have an upcoming virtual event in partnership with Carlyle House - our Juneteenth Trivia Night will be held online via Zoom.

As we work to reopen, we are re-dedicated to telling a fuller story. The violent deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and the ensuing protests are reminders of how our nation struggles with racism and injustice born in the past and harbored in the present. We have an obligation not to ignore the racism experienced every day by African Americans and other Americans of color. We must use our knowledge of the past to shed light on these ongoing problems.

The Lee-Fendall House Museum and Garden’s mission in preserving historic resources is to promote community engagement about the relevance of the past to our present. Previously, as with many historic house museums, we have focused primarily on the owners of the building. As we work to broaden this story, we want to become a place where people can engage in historical understanding relevant to current issues.

To that end, we will continue to expand programs and exhibits that examine the lives of enslaved and free African Americans connected to our site, telling a more diverse story from the days of the early Republic through the upheavals of the 1960s.

Hope to see you soon,

Martha
Martha Withers
Executive Director
Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden

Welcome back! On behalf of NOVA Parks and the staff and volunteers at the Carlyle House, we are excited to welcome you back to the museum and grounds.

The gardens have been a source of respite and peace for so many community members over the last few months. I've enjoyed getting to know some of our neighbors (and their dogs!) while out weeding the gardens.

We have re-opened with a modified guided tour. Some rooms remain open for visitors to enter, while others are being interpreted by volunteer docents or staff. More details about tweaks in our tour times are found elsewhere in this newsletter.

As a historic site that was built – literally – with the labor of enslaved individuals and a household that was cared for by enslaved hands, we know we have an important role to play in the process of striving to erase systemic racism and social inequities in this country. As so eloquently stated by historian and Smithsonian Secretary Lonnie G. Bunch, "History is a guide to a better future...

...and demonstrates that we can become a better society—but only if we collectively demand it from each other and from the institutions responsible for administering justice."

Within the next couple of weeks, we will be offering our Tell Me Your Name tour on a regular basis. This tour explores the enslaved story here at Carlyle House and how the enslaved individuals persevered. We hope you will sign up for the chance to learn and be part of positive change to address these deeply rooted problems.

And don’t miss out on Virtual Trivia Night on Juneteenth - Friday, June 19 at 7 pm. Join us to have fun and learn at the same time! I look forward to seeing you soon!

Cheers,

Andrea
Andrea Cochrane Tracey
Historic Site Manager
Carlyle House Historic Park
Be a Part of Our Stories

Protecting and presenting two historical homes - each one approaching 250 years of age - is a challenging and resource-intensive task.

The staff at both Carlyle and Lee-Fendall Houses also pride themselves on bringing the local community a wide variety of programs and exhibits that engage the Alexandria community in dialogue about our past and its relevance to the present.

You can be a part of that story! There are many ways to support both museums:

- **Be a social media ambassador!** Help us reach more people, including your friends and family, by sharing and interacting with our posts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. When you visit, tag us in your photos and videos!
- **Try some hands-on volunteering.** Tours at both museums are led by volunteer docents, for whom we provide regular training, but that's not the only way to get involved! You could also help us maintain the gardens, care for collections pieces, conduct historical research, or be a part of special events like holiday programming or annual fundraisers.
- **Attend events.** We have something for everyone! Summer trivia nights, yoga in the garden, ghost tours, historical holiday celebrations, wine and chocolate tastings, a speakeasy night... There are dozens of opportunities each year to enjoy your local museums.
- **Become a member.** Members of Lee-Fendall and Carlyle House enjoy special programs, discounts, and more, while ensuring that both museums have the resources to continue preserving and sharing our local history long into the future.

Museum From Home

Below, left and right: Lee-Fendall and Carlyle House staff found creative ways to keep sharing our history during closure, with virtual storytimes, special online talks, and more.
Raising the next generation of historians

Above: Kids enjoy 18th-century games at a Carlyle open house event. Each year, families join us for historical amusements like music and dancing, living history reenactments, and a chance to sample the famous Martha Washington’s Great Cake.

Below: Lee-Fendall’s Easter egg hunt is a beloved Alexandria tradition, and we kept it up even in quarantine! This year, the bunny had time during his visit to explore our historic interiors and even check out the women’s history exhibit.

Carlyle House Historic Park

carlyle@NVRPA.org

Have your wedding plans been interrupted?

The historic gardens at Carlyle House Historic Park and the Lee-Fendall House Museum offer beautiful green spaces with plenty of room for small gatherings.

Exclusive use of the gardens at either house for one hour, with our staff on hand to assist, is available for a $250 donation. To inquire or book, contact Carlyle House at (703) 549-2997 or Carlyle@NVRPA.org, or Lee-Fendall House at (703)548-1789 or contact@leefendallhouse.org.