

Summer 2020

Lee-Fendall House

MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

A Medical Miracle in a Makeshift Hospital

During the American Civil War thousands of Federal soldiers suffering from wounds, infections, and diseases were brought to Alexandria from southern battlegrounds. The city's pivotal location and accessibility made it one of the first safe locations for Federal soldiers to seek treatment beyond the more primitive field hospitals. Much as we've seen today in the face of a national health crisis, cities were forced to cope with such challenges as best they could. Alexandria established over thirty hospitals to accommodate the high volume of sick and wounded Federal soldiers. Some of the hospitals that treated these soldiers had been converted from private homes, including the Grosvenor Branch Hospital which operated out of what is today the Lee-Fendall House Museum. Prior to the Civil War, this stately home had belonged to Louis Cazenove, one of the city's wealthiest merchants, and his wife Harriot, a member of the prominent Lee family. Louis had died before the war, but when the city fell to Federal forces on May 24, 1861, Harriot chose to pack a few belongings and flee the city with her young son.



Federal soldiers tasked with defending Washington, D.C., during the Civil War. (Detail of a photograph from the Library of Congress)

By 1863, Surgeon Edwin Bentley, who eventually assumed responsibility for all the general hospitals in Alexandria, asked for permission to seize the "rebel house" for use as a hospital. Designated the Grosvenor Branch Hospital, an extension of the Grosvenor Hospital located across the street at 414 N. Washington Street, the medical staff here treated soldiers in need of more advanced and specialized care. At a time when the outcome of treatments was uncertain and access to needed medical supplies was inconsistent, doctors and their staff had to be resourceful and innovative.

In August 1864, the first and only successful blood transfusion of the Civil War occurred at the Grosvenor Branch Hospital. This transfusion was

documented in *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865*, which was published by the U.S. government shortly after the war. The patient was a young man from Massachusetts, Private George Cross, who had been wounded in his right ankle at the Battle of Petersburg. The wound became infected and gangrenous, and he was sent to Alexandria for treatment where he underwent an amputation. Cross suffered serious blood loss, so in order to restore a more healthy level, Surgeon Bentley injected him with a small amount of blood using a hypodermic syringe. This was considered a very experimental procedure, but it was noted that "the patient's pulse immediately became stronger and firmer." Cross recovered and was provided with an artificial limb before returning home.

(article continued on page 2)

Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden

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 Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden

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 Lee-Fendall House Museum

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

(continued from page 1)

Doctors still had much to learn, and the next blood transfusion attempted during the war ended in the patient's death. Few transfusions would prove effective until the discovery of blood types in the twentieth century. However, this transfusion demonstrated the ingenuity and initiative that health workers have exhibited in times of national crisis. These qualities coupled with a determined spirit still resonate within our hospitals today as they did so long ago within the walls of the Lee-Fendall House.

Interested in finding out more about the Civil War in Alexandria? Check out the related videos on our YouTube channel.

A birds eye view of Alexandria in 1863 by Charles Magnus. The Lee-Fendall House is circled in red. (Detail of an image from the Library of Congress)



A Dedicated Docent: Dr. Dianne Murphy



Dianne ready to give a tour in the north parlor of the museum.

Dianne Murphy has been a fixture at the Lee-Fendall House since 2008. An avid history lover, she had been looking for a place in Alexandria to volunteer when she came across one of Lee-Fendall's brochures which indicated that the museum was seeking volunteers. Since then, Dianne has served as a dedicated volunteer, leading countless museum tours, meeting thousands of visitors, and learning the history of the house inside and out.

One of Dianne's great skills as a docent is her ability to listen to visitors and really customize a tour to their interests or background. Being well-versed in history, she can easily delve into and take you on an exploration of any portion of the museum's expansive narrative. The trademarks of her tours include an intriguing discussion of Civil War medicine in relation to the house's service as a Union hospital (enhanced by her own medical background) and a close-up look at the house's beloved window etchings made in 1895.

As one of the most experienced museum docents, Dianne was brought on as a volunteer liaison to the Board of Directors several years ago and soon after asked to serve as an official board member. She is excited by many of the museum's new programs and the increase in community engagement, including Lee-Fendall's ongoing collaboration with the Carlyle House Historic Park, where she also volunteers.

Picnic Perfect!

New, hand-crafted squirrel picnic tables from our museum shop are available at \$35 each. All proceeds support the museum's preservation and education work. Makes a great Father's Day gift!

Email contact@leefendallhouse.org, or call (703) 548-1789 to place your order and arrange for contactless pickup, local delivery (within 1 mile of the museum), or shipping (at cost).

Images of the squirrel picnic tables in the Lee-Fendall House garden.



Calendar Notice

For the latest on the museum's operating status, virtual experiences, and upcoming events, follow us on social media or check our website at www.leefendallhouse.org.

We will begin hosting our popular summer trivia nights in partnership with the Carlyle House Historic Park virtually on Friday, June 5th at 7:00 pm.

This night's theme is LGBTQ Pride. Prizes for this week have been donated by Old Town Dolci Gelati. Online registration is required by June 4.





OBJECT SPOTLIGHT

The invention of the safety bicycle, a bicycle whereby riders could easily reach the ground with their feet (similar to most modern bicycles), kicked off a nationwide “bicycle craze” in the 1890s. Clever entrepreneurs began marketing cycling accessories including items like this collapsible metal drinking cup from Lee-Fendall’s collection. Easy to stow away during cycling excursions, it allowed for quick refreshment at a public fountain or stream.

Hydration Innovation

For many women, the bicycle provided an affordable and independent means of transportation. They could cycle to work, school, gatherings, or simply for recreation. Susan B. Anthony famously said in 1896 that bicycling “has done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world. It gives women a feeling of freedom and self-reliance. I stand and rejoice every time I see a woman ride by on a wheel.”



A collapsible metal Cyclist’s Cup patented in 1897 on display in the museum’s “The New Woman” exhibit.

Stay tuned to our social media channels for our upcoming virtual, behind-the-scenes tour of our exhibit, *The New Woman: Life in Progressive Era Alexandria, 1890-1920*. This exhibit explores some of the social and political changes women experienced in the era leading up to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.

Sizzle with Our Summer Special on Museum Membership!

Member Perks

Free Admission



Free & Discounted Programs



10% Discount in Gift Shop



Access to Members-Only Events



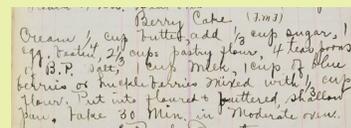
Our team here at the Lee-Fendall House have enjoyed engaging with you all on social media and during our virtual events, and we’re excited to continue to develop ways for you to interact with and experience the museum while it’s closed to the public. As a sign of our appreciation, the Lee-Fendall House will be offering a special on museum memberships. Starting June 1, anyone who signs up for a membership (at any level!) will have their membership extended through the end of 2021. We realize it’s been challenging for us to provide the same variety of member experiences during our closure as we typically do, and that even upon opening, our programs and events may be limited for some time. We don’t want these temporary setbacks to keep you from taking advantage of all the benefits museum membership offers. Already a member? This offer applies to you too! Membership renewals and level upgrades are included in this special.

In addition to this offer, we’ve enhanced our membership page on our website to make it simpler to figure out what level of membership is best for you. We’ve also taken this time to make some adjustments to the structure of our membership levels. We now have discounted individual memberships (only \$35!) available for students and seniors. It’s important for us that, regardless of your level of support, you feel value in your membership. Not only do memberships support the ongoing preservation of the Lee-Fendall House, they bring together members of our community who are committed to the mission of the museum. Continued support and feedback from our members allow the museum to expand our offerings, further explore our history, and increase our impact as an educational resource within Alexandria.

This special will run through August 31, 2020. Visit www.leefendallhouse.org to access a full breakdown of our membership program, including our benefits table. Joining is easy and can be done directly through our website or by completing and mailing in a membership form available for download on the membership page of our website. If you have any questions about museum membership email contact@leefendallhouse.org.

Ready, Set, BAKE!

Whip up a summer treat with this recipe pulled from the cookbook of Myrta Lewis, wife of Lee-Fendall’s last owner, John L. Lewis.



Berry Cake



Ingredients:

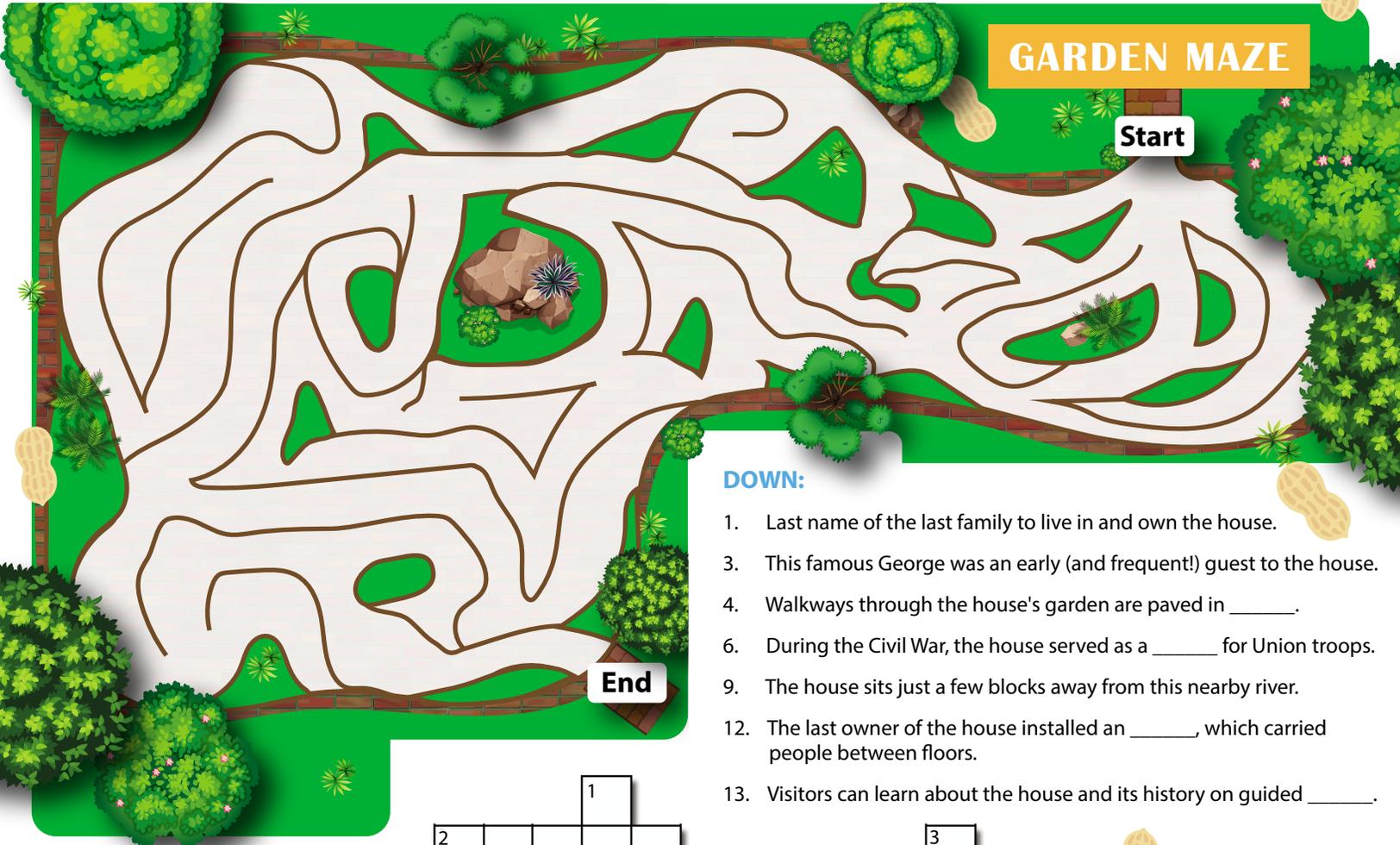
- 1/4 cup butter, softened
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/3 cup flour
- 2 1/3 cup pastry flour
- 4 tsps. baking powder
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- Pinch of salt

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, combine the butter, sugar, egg, pastry flour, baking powder, milk and salt to make the cake batter.
2. Toss berries in flour then fold them into the batter.
3. Pour batter into a shallow pan and bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees.

Share your Berry Cake photos with us on our social media!

Summer Activity Page!



GARDEN MAZE

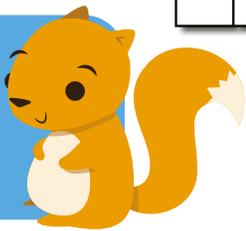
Start

End

DOWN:

1. Last name of the last family to live in and own the house.
3. This famous George was an early (and frequent!) guest to the house.
4. Walkways through the house's garden are paved in _____.
6. During the Civil War, the house served as a _____ for Union troops.
9. The house sits just a few blocks away from this nearby river.
12. The last owner of the house installed an _____, which carried people between floors.
13. Visitors can learn about the house and its history on guided _____.

How many peanuts can you find for the squirrel on this page?



CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS:

2. The fence surrounding the house's garden is this color.
5. A large brick fireplace can be found in this room where most of the food preparation and cooking occurred.
7. This local and commonly found animal is featured in the Lee family crest.
8. This freestanding brick structure served as a bathroom for the house until the early 1900s.
10. The house is classified as a _____ home due to its multiple sections of descending size.
11. Name of the city where the house is located.
14. This sunny room was added during a renovation of the house in 1850.
15. Last name of the first family to live in the house.
16. The front of the house faces _____ Street.

