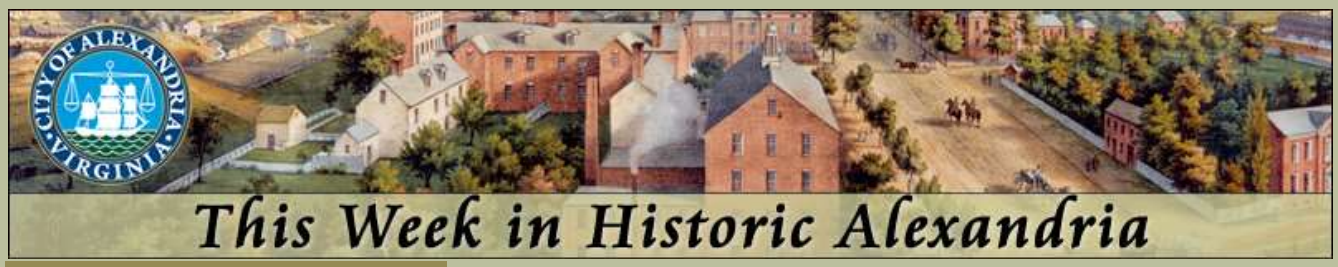

THIS WEEK IN ALEXANDRIA HISTORY

On June 22, 1937, the Alexandria City Council appropriated $2,500 to construct a baseball field at the old Almshouse property at Monroe Street and U.S. Route 1. The 18th century Almshouse, built to house indigent Alexandrians, had been auctioned off by the city several years earlier for a boarding house, but returned to city ownership when the new owner's finances reversed during the Great Depression. Unable to find a use or market for the property, city fathers decided to construct a ball field for recreational use adjacent to the building, which was then used for the storage of baseball equipment. The new ball field proved immensely popular, and today is known as Simpson Field.

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NOTE: This is a special two-week edition of This Week in Historic Alexandria, with events through July 6, 2015

WHAT'S NEW IN HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA

Each summer the City of Alexandria exchanges one student intern with our sister city in Caen, France for the month of July. The student resides with a host family during the period, reports to work daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and attends special events and sightseeing activities with members of the Caen Sister City Committee. This year's intern is a friendly young man (20 years old), named Kenneth, who will be working on a digitization project in the Office of Historic Alexandria. He is an avid soccer enthusiast, speaks and writes English well, and is tech savvy with a computer.

Although July is just around the corner, efforts to secure housing for Ken have not yet been successful, so we are reaching out to the community to determine if there is a family in a position to host him for the month of July. If you have an extra room in your home and would like to host the intern for four weeks, the Alexandria-Caen Sister Cities Committee and Office of Historic Alexandria would be most appreciative. The Caen Committee members will schedule some activities for the intern and are available to help the host family in any way. This could be a fantastic opportunity for a family with children studying French, or those who would like a cultural exchange experience without a long-term commitment of time, or simply a great chance for in-house tech support with a French flair!

If your family (no individuals please) would be interested or are able to help, please email lance.mallamo@alexandrava.gov to discuss consideration of the intern's living arrangements during his visit here. Thank you for your interest in Historic Alexandria and the Caen Sister City program.

On Sale Now

It is the spring of 1815, and the war with England has drawn to a close. Join the presidential salon with the young nation's commander-in-chief, James Madison, on Sunday, July 19, at 3 p.m., as he discusses events as they unfold in his time. This program is part of on-going series of presidential salons which began in 2010 honor of the bicentennial of the War of 1812. Public questions and opinions related to the salon topics are welcome and encouraged. Check-in is at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal Street. Tickets are priced at $15 per person, $10 for high school/college students, and reservations are recommended. Madeira, Port and other libations will be available for purchase at the event.

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EVENTS

From June 20 through September 7 all Alexandria City Public School students, staff, and their families receive FREE Admission to Gadsby's Tavern Museum and the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum. This includes all regular tours and summer family programs except for Harry Potter's Birthday tours.

Wednesday, June 24 – Sarah's Stories
Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 North Fairfax Street
Carlyle House Historic Park invites you to "Sarah's Stories" a monthly program featuring educator-led readings of 18th century history-themed books for children and their guardians. Guardians are expected to stay throughout the duration of the program. This program is geared towards children ages 3-6 but all are welcome. Reservations are recommended as space is limited. $3 per child, free to Friends of Carlyle House members. 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. For more information about this event please call 703-549-2997 or email vherndon@nvrpa.org.

Saturday, June 27 – Civil War Kids Drill Day
Fort Ward Museum, 4301 West Braddock Road
Kids aged 9 to 12 will learn from a reenactor how soldiers drilled during the Civil War, and make a canteen in a fun hands-on craft activity. Fee includes a Civil War kepi and snack. Program is weather dependent. $25 fee per child. Registration required; space limited to 25 participants. Contact the Museum to reserve a space. 9 a.m. to 12 noon. For further information, please call 703-746-4848.

Saturday, June 27 – Special Family Tours of Gadsby's Tavern Museum
Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal Street
This flexible tour format will allow families to start a tour as soon as they arrive and move through the museum at their own pace.

Epilogue

Last Wednesday's presentation of Look What a Wonder radio show at the Alexandria Black History Museum ended on a tragic note. The show was based on the founding of South Carolina's Mother Emmanuel AME Church and was received by an engaged audience in our city. But just as the program ended in Alexandria, the tragic violence began at the historic church in Charleston. Museum Director Audrey Davis heard from the composer of Look What a Wonder last Friday morning. The radio play has now gone viral, and more of the history of Demark Vesey is being told, a profoundly sad way for the story to be discovered by a wider audience. The Office of Historic Alexandria and the Alexandria Black History Museum wish to express their condolences to the congregation and to the African American community of South Carolina for their unbearable loss.

Young guests will be able to connect with the museum through their peer tour guides, plus have fun with hands-on activities at the end of the tour. In late June and July, activities in the ballroom explore the science behind the historic ice well as part of National Ice Cream Month. Activities include making (and tasting) ice cream! August features activities about 18th century travel, highlighting a letter written by Thomas Jefferson outlining his route from DC to Monticello as well as art projects revolving around the theme.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Gadsby's Tavern was the center of social and political life in Alexandria and the new Federal City of Washington. The tavern served as the premier gathering place for residents – including George Washington – and visitors to eat, drink, learn, and influence history. $5 adults ($4 with AAA), $3 children ages 5 to 12, and 4 and under are free. Alexandria City Public School families and Blue Star Families are free and coupons, including the Key to the City, accepted. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, please visit www.gadsbystavern.org or call 703.746.4242.

Saturday, June 27 – Family Dig Days
101 Callahan Drive, on the Grounds of the George Washington *National Masonic Memorial*
The event is presented in three parts, beginning with an introduction to the history and archaeology of the Shuter's Hill Site, followed by a site tour, and finally gathering around the screens to sift through excavated soil collecting artifacts. The bags of artifacts will be sent to the laboratory in the Museum for processing. All the necessary equipment will be furnished, but please wear comfortable clothes, boots or sturdy shoes (no sandals), and bring a water bottle. Individuals and families are welcome. Children under sixteen years of age must be accompanied by a participating adult. $5 fee per person is non-refundable, space is limited and reservations are required. 1:30 to 3 p.m. For more information, please call 703.746.4399.

Saturday, June 27 – Lee Fendall House to Close at 2 p.m. Today
Lee-Fendall House and Gardens, 614 Oronoco Street
Due to a private afternoon event, the historic house museum will close early today. Please call 703-548.1789 for tour times earlier in the day.

Sunday, June 28 – Civil War Sunday
Alexandria Archaeology Museum, 105 North Union Street, #327
Explore the Civil War in Alexandria with Civil War Sundays. See an original May 26, 1861, edition of *The New-York Tribune* detailing Colonel Elmer Ellsworth's death in Alexandria, a Peeps diorama illustrating Ellsworth's death, a TimeTravelers Passport exhibit featuring the Civil War drummer boy, a diorama of a heating system constructed in Alexandria to warm Civil War hospital tents during the winter of 1861, a cocked and loaded Wickham musket discarded in a privy during the 1860s, and an exhibit on a Lee Street archaeological site during the Civil War. Free! 1 to 5 p.m. For more information, please visit www.alexandriaarchaeology.org or call 703.746.4399.

Sunday, June 28 – New Family Art Lab at the Apothecary Museum
Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum, 105-107 South Fairfax Street
New this summer, guests can explore the Family Art Lab Sundays from 2-4pm June 28 through Labor Day weekend at the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum, located at 105-107 S. Fairfax Street. The Lab features a new activity every week that brings together history, science, and art in a way all ages will enjoy. Families can come back throughout the summer and experience something new every time. No tour necessary to create in the Lab!

The Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum in Old Town Alexandria is noted for its outstanding collection of medicinal herbs, shop furnishings, apothecary bottles and equipment, many still in their original location. It also has a spectacular collection of archival materials, including journals, letters and diaries, prescription and formula books, ledgers, orders and invoices. The names of famous customers appear in the documents, including Martha Washington, Nelly Custis, and Robert E. Lee. Lab only admission is $5 per family. If taking a tour, cost is included in regular admission. Alexandria City Public School families and Blue Star Families are free and coupons, including the Key to the City, are accepted. 2 to 4 p.m. For more information, please visit www.apothecarymuseum.org or call 703.767-3852.

Monday, June 29 – Pubic Records Advisory Commission
City Hall, Sister Cities Room 1102, 301 King Street.
Regular monthly meeting. Free! 7:30 p.m. For further information, please call 703-746-4753.

Saturday, July 4 – Special Family Tours of Gadsby's Tavern Museum

Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal Street
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Sunday, July 5 – Civil War Sunday
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Now on Exhibit through July 19 – *Saturate / Stephen Estrada,* *Naomi Janchs, Abby Kasonik, Hannele Lahti, Eve Stockton, Thomas Teasley*
The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street
Using paint, photography, printmaking, glass and sound/video, six very different artists convey a sense of watery wetness in *Saturate*. Each artist not only manages to portray a sense of liquidness — whether realistically or abstractly — but in combination their works bathe viewers in the sensation. Free! Open Thursday through Sunday, 12 Noon to 4 p.m. For more information, please visit www.nvfaa or call 703.548.0035.

Now on Exhibit – *Journey to Be Free: Alexandria Freedmen's Cemetery*
Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe Street
A new exhibit tracing the 150-year history of the long-forgotten Freedmen's Cemetery, its rediscovery and how the new Contrabands and Freedmen's Cemetery Memorial was created at the site. Free, but donations are appreciated. Tuesday to Saturday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday and Monday: Closed. For more information, please call 703.746.4356.

Now on Exhibit – *Their Fates Intertwined: The Lees of Alexandria in the War of 1812*
Lee-Fendall House and Gardens, 614 Oronoco Street
A new exhibit on the experiences of the Lee family in Alexandria during the War of 1812 examines the contributions of

Alexandria's citizens during the conflict that led to the writing of our national anthem through the lives of this iconic Virginia family. For further information, please visit www.leefendallhouse.org or call 703.548.1789.

Now on Exhibit – *Fifty Years of Collecting: An Anniversary Exhibit of Objects from the Fort Ward Collection*
Fort Ward Museum, 4301 West Braddock Road
In recognition of the 50th anniversary of the opening of Fort Ward Museum & Historic Park, this new exhibition offers a glimpse into the growth and holdings of the Museum's fine Civil War collection. The exhibit features some rare items related to the Defenses of Washington, such as an 1862 panoramic drawing of Fort Albany by the soldier-artist William Lydston, a folding camp chair that belonged to an officer in the 1st Connecticut Heavy Artillery, and a Lambley's portable copying machine used by an officer from the 57th Massachusetts Infantry. Objects that interpret the Union occupation of Alexandria, such as a proclamation declaring martial law in the city, are also featured. Examples of newly acquired objects are a field desk with personal belongings owned by a captain in the 107th New York Infantry, and a John Rogers statuary group, "Uncle Ned's School," which aimed to portray the efforts of newly freed African Americans to better their lives through education in the postwar years.

Fort Ward is the best preserved of the extensive network of Union forts and batteries known as the Civil War Defenses of Washington. Free! Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sundays from noon to 5 p.m. For more information, please call 703.746.4848, or visit www.fortward.org.