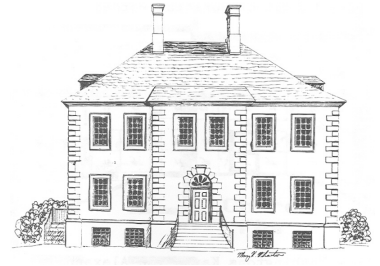


Carlyle

Connection

"It's a fine beginning"



Col. Carlyle's Garden

By Sophia Farulla

What did John Carlyle's garden look like? Due to a lack of archaeological and documentary evidence, it is impossible to precisely replicate the garden. Instead, the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority designed a small park containing plants popular in the eighteenth century. However, by exploring the details of contemporary gardens, we may begin to solve the mystery of Carlyle's own.

In a 1747 letter to his brother, John Carlyle wrote, *"To End my Days in My Native Country is one of My Strongest Wishes."* Carlyle's home strongly resembled a British dwelling and was adorned with prints of his homeland. Since Carlyle was so influenced by his origins in other aspects of his life, it is very likely that his garden was as well.



Detail, "Spring," engraver unknown after a painting by David Teniers, London, 1751. Notice the symmetrically laid out garden paths in the background.

By the eighteenth century, gardens were a central component of a British estate. The maintenance and elaborateness of a noble's grounds demonstrated wealth and ideology. Throughout Europe, the upper classes attempted to mirror the breathtaking symmetrical



gardens of Versailles. While most gardens in England were not as extensive as Louis XIV's of France, the strict symmetry inspired by the French defined royal power. Additionally, due to the reign of Queen Mary of England and her Dutch husband, King William, the Netherlands' topiary gained popularity in Britain as well. British elites took these foreign designs and made them their own. By the late eighteenth century, British gardens were some of the most renowned in the world. Upon visiting England, a Swedish botanist noted that English gardening "doubtless is the best."

Through John Carlyle's probate inventory, we see that he owned "2 Bee hives" on the estate. This essentially guarantees the presence of a garden containing flowers, trees and other plants beyond those found in merely a kitchen garden. Beekeeping and gardening have been linked since the time of Ancient Rome and grew in popularity in Britain during the sixteenth century. The practice was notably widespread in Cumbria, a region in Great Britain located near the border of England and



Scotland-and where John Carlyle spent his childhood.



Reproduction beehive in the Carlyle House Education Collection.

Beekeeping also often affected the architecture of garden features. Based upon the prototype of private gardens in the eighteenth century, we know that garden walls

were common to protect the plants and increase privacy. However, amongst those who kept bees, brick walls could also serve as decorative pieces. It is likely that Carlyle constructed walls containing recesses in which he would have placed his beehives.

While symmetry was the most prominent aspect of eighteenth century gardens, there were a few different Georgian models one could follow. Terraced gardens were quite popular in the eighteenth century, especially amongst those who owned land overlooking a waterway. As Carlyle's land faced the Potomac, is it possible that he had such a garden? While we cannot be certain, it is unlikely that his garden was so elaborate. The land that would have been terraced was probably partially a working area and an inconvenient place for uneven ground.

Typically, merchants and townsmen like John Carlyle had a formal garden, modeled after those in their homeland. In Colonial America, most townsmen designed their gardens with a central walkway, so that either side mirrored one another. Secondary paths stemmed off, ending with features like sundials,



Detail, "Earth," engraver unknown. Published by Joseph Read, Jan. 1, 1799.

gates or summerhouses. Flowerbeds were usually placed between these walkways. If one possessed the means, it was ideal to purchase land on high ground as Carlyle was able to do.

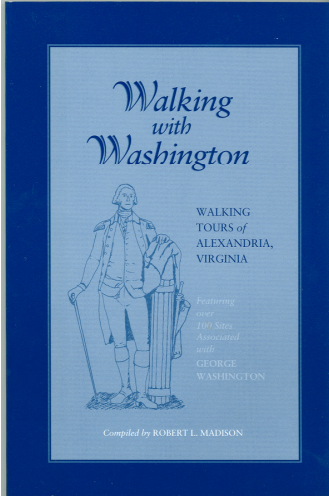


In addition to the outbuildings near the front of the house, there were almost certainly structures in the back. Unfortunately, due to the shortage of archaeological context from the early years of the house -we must imagine what other outbuildings Carlyle may have built on his land. The summerhouse recreated in the Carlyle Gardens, with its octagonal shape and bell roof, was a popular feature in eighteenth century gardens.

While we cannot say for certain what John Carlyle's garden looked like, we can predict that as an Englishman who built a very British estate, he also designed a British garden, complete with Georgian influences and symmetrical pathways. However, gardens sent powerful political messages. After the Revolution, patriots like George Washington uprooted their pristine geometric gardens associated with tyranny, replacing them with free flowing serpentine walks. Now, one can only wonder what John Carlyle's garden would have looked like if he lived to see the end of the Revolution, which he so ardently supported. Like him, could his garden have become American?

Thanks to former intern Sophia for her excellent article.

Friend of Carlyle House Bob Madison Recipient of 2012 Special Awards from Alexandria Historical Society



In April, The Alexandria Historical Society selected local historian Robert L. Madison and journalist Michael Lee Pope as winners of Special Alexandria History Awards for 2012. This award is given to a person or persons who have made notable contributions to the Society and to Alexandria history. State Senator Patricia S. “Patsy” Ticer presented the award. The honorees for the

2012 special awards are authors of works researching intriguing local aspects of Alexandria history.

Bob Madison is the author of *Walking with Washington: Walking Tours of Alexandria, Virginia, Featuring over 100 Sites Associated with George Washington*. This popular guide highlights over 140 Alexandria sites related to George Washington. As a result of its publication, Madison was Alexandria Archaeology’s 1998 Volunteer of the Year. *Walking with Washington* continues to be used by tourists, residents, historians and curators. All proceeds from the sale of the book go to Carlyle House Historic Park. Mr. Madison has been a docent with the Carlyle House for over 12 years. For seven years, he was a board member of the AHS and held positions of Vice President and Program Chair. During his tenure with the AHS, he managed the website, edited the newsletter, handled publicity and scheduled a stellar roster of speakers for the society. *Excerpted from the Alexandria Gazette.*

Bob and his wife, Joanne, have been fantastic supporters of the Friends of Carlyle House for many years. Our congratulations go to him on this well deserved award.

From the Educator

I am pleased to announce that the Carlyle House has a new school program! On Wednesday, the 25th of April, we launched our program for a group of 6th graders for a local school. The program, *Nurses, Spies and Soldiers*, focuses on the Civil War history of the museum. Students begin the program before they ever step into the museum with activities in the classroom. We encourage them to look at the logistics of the city of Alexandria as an occupied town during the war, and begin to ask why that was.

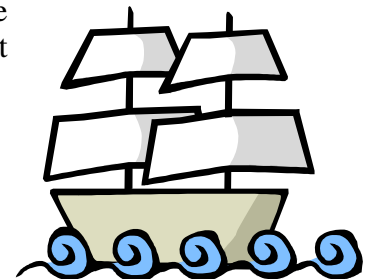
Once the students arrive at the museum, we guide them through the museum and ask them questions that get them thinking about the changes in the geography of the property and the city. We discuss how technology affected the Civil War, the city of Alexandria and the hospital here at Carlyle House. While the house has a limited amount of construction from the Civil War, we have the students look at it and discuss how the changes affected the city and the house.

I have been designing and developing this program since last fall when the teacher requested it. I would not, however, have been able to pull it off without the outstanding assistance I received from Jenny Stout, a colleague and weekend staff member here at Carlyle House. She volunteered her time to help research, write and teach the program. Many thanks for her invaluable support with this project.

Now that we are nearing the end of the school year, I am working on our annual Hands on History Tent. The event will take place on Tuesday, June 26th from 10-1, with a wonderful maritime theme: *All Hands on Deck!* We will engage young visitors with hands-on activities, from a model boat regatta to making flags, and packing an 18th century portmanteau, or suitcase, for seaboard travel. If you would like to volunteer that day, let me know!

Best!

Lacey



From the Curator's Desk

New to the Collection



New to the collection is a circa 1770 hourglass, acquired from Mark and Marjorie Allen Antiques at Antiques in Alexandria this past March. John Carlyle's 1780 inventory lists "2 time Glasses" valued at 4 shillings.

The purchase of this unique piece was made possible by the generosity of Joan and Jim Merow.

The museum's new time glass can be seen on the desk and bookcase in

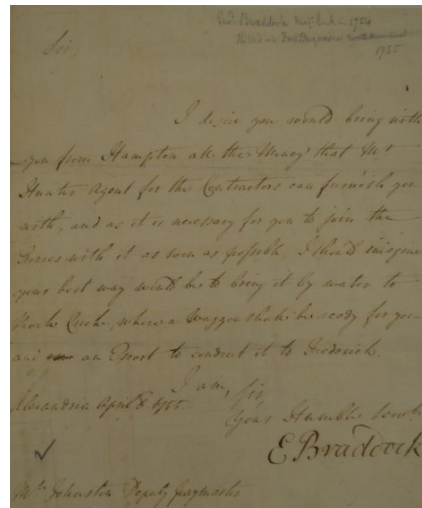
Carlyle's study.

Loan from the Lee-Fendall House Showcases Rarely Seen Letter Braddock wrote from the Carlyle House

For our annual "Grandest Congress" commemoration, Carlyle House is thrilled to display two extraordinary 1755 letters graciously loaned to us by the Lee-Fendall House and Gardens. The first letter was written by Virginia's Lieutenant Governor, Robert Dinwiddie. Although its intended recipient is unknown, it is a letter of introduction for Braddock, who had recently arrived in Williamsburg. Gov. Dinwiddie writes to the recipient, "I supposed you willingly would wait on him as soon as possible."

The second letter was penned by Braddock himself, most likely at the Carlyle House, and is a request to his deputy paymaster, Mr. Johnston, for funds to be dispatched from Hampton, Virginia, to Frederick, Maryland.

"Sir, / I desire you would bring with you from Hampton all the money that the [illeg] agent for the contractors can furnish you with, and as it is necessary for you to join the forces with it as soon as possible. I should imagine your best way would be to bring it by water to Forks (?) Creek where a wagon shall be ready for you and an escort to conduct it to Frederick. Alexandria April 8, 1755 / I am, sir, your humble servant, E Braddock



We are incredibly thankful to the Lee-Fendall House Director Erin Adams and the board of the Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation for their loan of the letters and especially for giving us the chance to bring Braddock's letter

back to the place he wrote it. The letters will be on display until June.

Donation of Reproduction Dresses in Memory of Amanda Washburn

A donation of two lovely period reproduction dresses was made by Deana Washburn LoConte in memory of her mother, Amanda Washburn, a former Docent and Friend of Carlyle House. The dresses were hand-sewn and worn during the Promenade Days, for those of you who remember that festive event! We look forward to using the dresses to help with our interpretation of women's lives in the 18th century.

Many thanks to Deana and our best wishes to her family! Also, thank you to Emmy Stuart for assisting Carlyle House in obtaining this donation.

Bylaw Change

In March, the Friends Board voted to change the title and description of the Corresponding Secretary and to change the wording in the Bylaws to reflect this amendment.

Rationale—In the age of e-mail, the position of Corresponding Secretary is not crucial to the operations of the Friends of Carlyle House. A need, however, exists for an officer of the Board to advise the group on effective fundraising and membership relation strategies.

From Bylaws

ARTICLE III , Section 4 DUTIES OF OFFICERS

“Section 4 The corresponding secretary shall issue notices of meetings and shall conduct the correspondence of the Friends.”

In June, at the Annual Meeting, the membership will vote to change Article III, Section 4 to read as stated below:

Article III DUTIES OF OFFICERS

“Section 4 The Membership Secretary shall, in consultation with the president, site administrator and other staff, be responsible for overseeing correspondence with the membership pertaining to dues and fundraising.”



Annual Meeting of the Friends Of Carlyle House: Friday, June 8, 6 pm

Please join us for our Annual Business Meeting and Member Reception on the Carlyle House Magnolia Terrace. Refreshments and light hors d'oeuvres will be served by Great Blue Heron Catering. The meeting will also be a chance to celebrate the years of dedicated service given by outgoing Board President, Rosalind Bovey. *Invitations to follow, RSVP acceptances only to carlyle@nvrpa.org.*

The Little Theatre of Alexandria

ALL THE KING'S WOMEN

written by Luigi Jannuzzi
produced by Robert Krause & Alan Wray
directed by Ellen Dempsey

The King is alive and well in Alexandria! The story of Elvis Presley told through the eyes of 17 enthralled, appalled, and obsessed women. Luigi Jannuzzi's award-winning comedy takes us from Tupelo, Mississippi where a 12-year-old Elvis wanted a BB gun instead of a guitar; to President Richard Nixon's office and Andy Warhol's studio; from Cadillac salesmen to Graceland guards. This touching, comedy for every generation captures the effects that fame, generosity and just being a nice guy can bring to others.

JUNE 19, 2012

The Friends of Carlyle House

Remembering the way we were and how far we have come: A Letter from Outgoing Board President Rosalind Bovey



For me, stages of life that are happy, busy and productive pass by so quickly that I lose track of the dates that initiated those activities. I have been on the Friends' Board since at least the early 1990s and President for the last eight years. For me it has been a wonderful learning experience and an opportunity to meet and make friends with some very interesting, talented and wonderful people of both the staff and volunteer category.

When I joined the Friends, the museum was much more sparsely furnished than it is today. Among the pieces I remember then were those same green chairs in the hall and the green bed now in the daughters' room. The paint was mostly turquoise blue and white. The floors were mostly bare. Over these last 20 years the museum has, with the help of the Friends and a knowledgeable staff, made tremendous progress toward completely furnishing the house with antiques listed on John Carlyle's inventory. We have had paint analyses done and repainted rooms to better match the

18th Century colors. We have installed wallpaper, floorcloths and NVRPA has helped underwrite period carpeting.

I am delighted by the recent efforts to make the house look like it is really lived in such as the dining room table set for an elegant dinner – food and all, the spinet with music ready to play, dirty socks in George Williams room and dresses and undergarments strewn on the daughters' bed. At the same time the maps, surveying equipment, documents, money, traveling trunks, hour glass and horse pictures help tell the story of Carlyle's business interests and hobbies.

Our Docent cadre is amazing both in numbers and length of service. Their camaraderie and dedication to research and accuracy in portraying the house to the public are exemplary. Whenever I go with them on a school or regular tour, I am so impressed with their knowledge and skill at interacting with the children and adults. They are really the heart and soul of the house.

We are blessed to have the best museum staff in town. They are smart, knowledgeable, creative and extremely hard working. I hope in the future that we will find ways to help make their jobs easier. In particular there is still a need for more docents especially on the weekends. I appreciate all that they do to make being a volunteer fun - such as the always fascinating, Docent Dispatch, the wonderful field trips, the movie nights and the book club.

One of the aspects of the museum that is closest to my heart is our beautiful garden. Garden Volunteers have been tending the garden and having some sort of plant sale for many years. I am told they used to dig up their own plants to sell. The Friends started the Garden Party in the 1990s. It included vendors, plants and Virginia ham biscuits. What a job all that soaking of the ham was!! This morphed into the yearly Herb Sale which brings hundreds of visitors into our house and garden. They go away with an increased knowledge about gardening. Wonderful friendships have been formed working on this annual event.

In closing, this had been a real labor of love for me. In June we will have election at the Annual Meeting. I will remain on the Friends' Board, but step back to "Past President". Please see the proposed slate of officers. All of these current board members have shown their commitment by their past volunteer activities with the Friends. I know that you will give your strong support to them in continuing to support and interpret this fabulous Alexandria treasure to the public.

Peace, Love, Joy, Rosalind Bovey

Friends Board

Officers

Rosalind Bovey
President

Deborah Rudolph
Vice-President

Shelly Miller
Recording Secretary

E. Hunt Burke
Treasurer

Debby Christie
Corresponding Secretary

Directors

Jason Ankele
Teddy Clayton
Mary Ruth Coleman
Henry Desmarais
Bonnie Fairbank
Michael Hobbs
Chantal Jennings
John Komoroske
Tom Leoni
Gregory May
Joan Merow
Sue McIver
J. Dean Norton
Scott Price
Susan Richmond
Steve Ridenhour
Suellen Savukas
Peter Smeallie
Carole Smith

Emeritus:

Oscar P. Fitzgerald
J. Wm. Middendorf

Museum Staff

Sarah Coster
Historic Site Administrator
Helen Wirka
Historic Site Specialist
Lacey Villiva
Education and Outreach Assistant

Phone: 703-549-2997

www.nvrpa.org

Carlyle House Historic Park is accredited by
the American Association of Museums



Upcoming Events Carlyle House

Friday, June 8: 6 - 7:30 pm

Friends of Carlyle House Annual Meeting and Reception

Join us on the Magnolia Terrace for our Annual Meeting. The business portion of the evening will be followed by light refreshments served by Great Blue Heron Catering. Business dress. Please RSVP, acceptances only, to carlyle@nvrpa.org or 703-549-2997.

Tuesday, June 19: 7 pm

All the King's Women: A Night at the Little Theatre of Alexandria benefiting the Friends of Carlyle House

Support Carlyle House and enjoy a night out at the theatre for this special benefit performance, part of the Little Theatre's *Partners in Art* program. The evening will begin at 7 pm with a wine and cheese reception featuring a silent auction. Bid on items ranging from gift certificates to local restaurants to a weekend in Cape Cod. The performance will begin at 8 pm. Tickets are \$30 and can be purchased by calling 703-549-2997. All proceeds benefit the Friends of Carlyle House. **Help us sell the place out. Buy tickets in bulk and sell them or give them to your friends and neighbors!**

Tuesday, June 26: 10 am to 1 pm

Hands-on-History Tent: All Hands on Deck!

Explore life on the high seas during Carlyle House's Hands-on-History Tent: All Hands on Deck! Children and their families are invited to explore Alexandria's maritime history through crafts and hands-on activities. For a small fee, participants can build their own model sailboat and race it against others! Other activities include making a compass, designing a flag, writing with a quill pen and trying on colonial clothes. The event is designed for children ages 3-12.

FREE!

Sunday, July 1: 1 pm

American Doll Tea at the Carlyle House

Girls are invited to bring their favorite doll and enjoy tea on the Carlyle House terrace. Learn about the past and celebrate America during this patriotic themed event. *More details coming soon! Sign up at www.carlylehouse.org to receive e-mail updates.*



Carlyle House Historic Park

A property of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority

121 North Fairfax Street ~ Alexandria, Virginia 22314

www.nvrpa.org



Northern Virginia
Regional Park Authority

