



Carlyle House

Docent Dispatch



February 2005

Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority

Carlyle House Honored By American Association of Museum

The Carlyle House has again been awarded the highest honor a museum can receive—accreditation by the American Association of Museums. Accreditation provides museums with national recognition and certifies that the institution is operating on all levels according to the highest and most current professional standards and practices. The designation gives assurance that the museum fulfills its obligations to the public as set forth in its mission. Carlyle House was first accredited in 1994. The museum must undergo a subsequent review every ten years to maintain accredited status.

Of the nearly 16,000 museums in existence nationwide, only 750 or about 5% are accredited. As you can see by this small percentage, accreditation is a rigorous process that few museums are prepared to undertake. The American Association of Museums Accreditation Visiting Committee conducted its on-site review of Carlyle House August 26-28, 2004. Over the course of two days, the committee investigated all aspects of the museum's operations and reviewed overall museum matters - finance and administration, the collections, exhibits and education programs, as well as the Carlyle House's role within the context of the community and the Park Authority. They conducted interviews with staff, volunteers, Friends Board members and Park Authority staff.

The on-site review culminated with a 15-page report acknowledging Carlyle House as "a museum that

is both loved and venerated for its past illustrious history while it is also valued for its positive role in Alexandria today." The staff was complimented for its dedication and professionalism. The committee noted with pleasure that "without exception, from the Park Authority's representatives to the volunteers, there was

a pervasive atmosphere of enthusiasm and pride, and everyone understood and cherished the site's accredited status." All in all, the committee described their stay as "a model site visit."

We trust all members of the Friends group and the people of Alexandria share our pride in having earned this prestigious honor. The process was rigorous and demanding, as we examined virtually every aspect of the museum's operation: a year of self-study, preparation of documents and an on-site visit by a team of experienced museum professionals. I hope

everyone in the community will help us celebrate this award by visiting Carlyle House often and exploring our fine programs, tours and exhibits.

Mary Ruth Coleman



<p>CARLYLE HOUSE</p> <p>Mary Ruth Coleman, Director Jim Bartlinski, Curator Cindy Major, Curator of Education</p>
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Lecture

“The Watershed War: Why the Seven Years War Lasted for More Than a Decade.”

March 23 ♦ 7:30 pm ♦ Lyceum ♦ Free ♦ No Reservations
By Dr. Warren Hofstra, Professor of History, Shenandoah University. Sponsored by the Alexandria Historical Society and Carlyle House.

Professor Warren Hofstra of Shenandoah University will kick off Alexandria's commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the Seven Years War (often called the French and Indian War) with a talk on that subject. The Seven Years War began with a North American struggle over the watershed of the upper Ohio Valley and spread thereafter across the continent and throughout the world. The war, however, also represented a watershed in early American history. Crossing it not only created the first British empire but also led to its destruction. The crossing destroyed the colonies of New France but strengthened the French empire. It moved the British colonies of North America closer to revolution and independence. And it moved the Native American peoples of the Ohio Valley closer to their removal from eastern North America and from American life. Dr. Hofstra's presentation will explore why all these crossings were important in a watershed war that lasted for more than a decade and forever changed the course of American and world history.

Dr. Hofstra is the Stewart Bell Professor of American History at Shenandoah University, where he has taught for 28 years. He holds a bachelor's degree from Washington University, a master's degree from Boston University, and a doctorate in American social history from the University of Virginia. In addition to teaching in the fields of American social and cultural history, he directs the Community History Project of Shenandoah University.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 6

Movie Premier and Fundraiser
Film by Robert Cole

Paper and Stone:

*The Hidden History of
John Carlyle*

4 p.m. to 6 p.m., Casual attire
\$10, includes popcorn and fountain drink
\$5 for students and teachers with ID.
Old Town Theater, 815 ½ King Street

March 22—April 17

Washington Remembers Exhibit
Carlyle House

March 23 Lecture

by Dr. Warren Hofstra
*The Watershed War: Why the
Seven Years War Lasted for More
Than a Decade*
7:30 p.m. at the Lyceum, Free

April 9

Reenactment of the
Grandest Congress
Carlyle House
Noon to 5 p.m.

April 16

Garden Day and Herb Sale
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

April 19

Lecture by Dr. Peter Henriques,
*His First Training Ground: George
Washington and the French and
Indian War*
7:30 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Museum
\$10 Docents

April 27

History Awards Banquet
Alexandria Historical Society
6:30 p.m. Gadsby's Tavern Museum



***George Washington Remembers:
Reflections on the French & Indian War***
An Exhibition concerning the “Remarks” by an
American Hero at Carlyle House
March 22– April 17

As part of our commemoration of the 250th Anniversary of the French and Indian War, Carlyle House will host a very special exhibit on loan from French and Indian War 250, Inc. based in Pittsburgh. The highlight of the exhibit is a document the public was never meant to see which reveals the personal thoughts of America’s first President. The exhibit *George Washington Remembers* provides a rare opportunity to see firsthand the only surviving document in which Virginia’s favorite son set down his thoughts “just as they occurred to my memory” as he put it himself in the “Remarks.”

In 1787, at Mount Vernon, George Washington penned eleven pages of personal reminiscences about the early years of his career, including a vivid account of his service as a young officer during the French and Indian War when he had four harrowing brushes with death. He called the document simply, “Remarks.” The understated title of the manuscript stands in stark contrast to its astonishing historical value. While Adams, Jefferson and Franklin told their stories in extensive and candid autobiographies, Washington left future Americans with virtually no insight into his own thoughts and emotions. Of the millions of words Washington set down on paper during his life, only the “Remarks” were given over to private reflection. And,

according to George Washington’s own instructions, those words were never supposed to survive him. But survive they did.

The exhibit, *George Washington Remembers* puts the “Remarks” in their proper historical context. The exhibit illuminates the intellectual trends on the Continent at the time when Voltaire was all the rage and the British Museum was just opening its doors, and juxtaposes this with the dynamics of the Ohio Country of the 1750’s, where British, French and Indian forces all competed for control and territory. It follows 21-year-old Colonel Washington on his trek to deliver a letter demanding French withdrawal from western Pennsylvania and the terrifying Battle of Fort Necessity in July 1754, which led to the start of the French and Indian War. The exhibition continues with the defeat of General Edward Braddock in the 1755 “March to Disaster,” and one of the most harrowing moments in Washington’s life, when the colonel found himself “between two fires” as his own men mistakenly fired at each other. As it leads into the manuscript display case, the exhibit provides context on George Washington’s “retirement” at Mount Vernon, between the Revolution and his inauguration in 1789 as the first president of the United States. It was during this period that he wrote the “Remarks,” and in this final installation, visitors learn about the circumstances under which Washington wrote the document and its particular historical significance.

Also on view will be Braddock’s sword on loan from Mount Vernon and Carlyle’s 1755 letter to his brother on loan from the Virginia Historical Society describing General Braddock’s month long stay at his home. Special training tours of the exhibit will be given for Docents. Spring will be a very exciting time at the museum for all of us. We all have much to learn and to share with the public.

Walking With Washington Tours

Written and given by Bob Madison

Dates: Sundays February 6, 13, 20, 27

Time: 1:30 p.m. to 3:30

Location: Fountain at Market Square

Tickets: Free

Walk the streets of Alexandria with our own Bob Madison and learn about the sites associated with George Washington.