



# Alexandria Times

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## Out of the Attic

### Celebrating Historic Preservation Month in Alexandria

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Historic Alexandria is pleased to highlight some of its most recent acquisitions this Historic Preservation Month. Early historic preservation in Alexandria is responsible for saving three buildings now operated by Historic Alexandria: Gadsby's Tavern Museum, The Lyceum and the Lloyd House.

This month, we focus on the return of the Prettyman Fire Hose Reel Carriage to the Friendship Firehouse Museum, the ponding of the 18th-century ship timbers in Ben Brenman Lake, the opening of Freedom House museum at 1315 Duke St., the former office of the largest domestic slave trading firm, and the restoration of the Murray-Dick-Fawcett House at 517 Prince St. Readers also have an opportunity to help the Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission increase the number of interior easements in Alexandria.

The return of the 1858 Prettyman Fire Hose Reel is the culmination of years of fundraising to restore the 2019 Top Virginia Museums Endangered Artifact. Thanks to the efforts led by the Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association, this made-in-Alexandria piece of firefighting history returned to Alexandria in its original multi-colored appearance on Saturday. The carriage will be available for residents of Alexandria to view for free on May 14 at the Friendship Fire House Museum at 107. S. Alfred St.

With one restoration project recently completed, another continues at the Murray-Dick-Fawcett House at 517 Prince St. The city purchased the building in 2017 and just finished restoring its roof. The house is currently undergoing a restoration of its siding. This month, visitors will have the opportunity to talk to an expert on the house on Saturdays at 10 a.m.

A central aspect in preserving the Murray-Dick-Fawcett House while it was under private ownership was the maintenance of its architectural elements, both inside and outside of the building, using preservation easements. While many homeowners are intimidated by the idea of an interior easement on their house, they perhaps are unaware that easements can be put on individual elements of an interior, while still allowing for standard renovations of the kitchen, bathrooms and other areas. The Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission is accepting new nominations for easements, especially on interior architectural elements. Readers can nominate an element for an easement by contacting the commission at 703-746-4554.



*The returned Prettyman Fire Hose Reel Carriage. Jeff Hancock Photography*



## Office of Historic Alexandria City of Alexandria, Virginia

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On May 15, Alexandria Archaeology offers a family-friendly public event explaining the process of conserving the ship timbers by submerging them in water. Alexandria Archaeology Museum also gives the public the chance to view three-dimensional models of three of the historic vessels from the Robinson Landing Site in the new SeeWorthy exhibit and find out how archaeologists use digital and physical models to compare ship construction.

Alexandria's intentional effort at historic preservation long predates the formal declaration of National Preservation Month. We hope you take advantage of the opportunities available this month. Whether seeing the restored hose reel carriage, attending a talk at the Murray-Dick-Fawcett House, applying for a preservation easement or learning more about the ship timbers being ponded, you have an opportunity to join Alexandria's decades-long preservation of its history.

*"Out of the Attic" is published each week in the Alexandria Times newspaper. The column began in September 2007 as "Marking Time" and explored Alexandria's history through collection items, historical images and architectural representations. Within the first year, it evolved into "Out of the Attic" and featured historical photographs of Alexandria.*

*These articles appear with the permission of the Alexandria Times and were authored by staff of the Office of Historic Alexandria and invited guests.*