

About the Artists

Carter Corbin

Carter Corbin, a member of The Rappahannock Valley Garden Club, created the pen and ink renderings along with her students at Massaponax High School for each of the tour homes and the tour map. She holds a Master of Education from the University of Mary Washington and a Bachelor of Science from James Madison University, where she majored in Cultural Anthropology and minored in Studio Art. As a local artist and art teacher at Massaponax High School, she showcases the beauty of the commonwealth through landscapes, still lifes, and portraiture.

- Mikenna Taylor, Grade 11, Massaponax High School
- Nadia Taylor, Grade 11, Massaponax High School
- Morgan Wolski, Grade 11, Massaponax High School
- Elizabeth Phipps, Grade 11, Massaponax High School



The Rappahannock Valley Garden Club is proud to present today’s tour, which is part of The Garden Club of Virginia’s Historic Garden Week in Virginia, known as “America’s Largest Open House,” and is the oldest and largest event of its kind in the nation.



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Historic Garden Week

April 21, 2026
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Fredericksburg Tour Rising Sun Neighborhood

Hosted by:
The Rappahannock Valley Garden Club

Tour Details

Rising Sun Neighborhood

Visitors will enjoy a walking tour of private homes located in the Upper Caroline Street neighborhood of downtown Fredericksburg. After Fredericksburg's incorporation as a shipping port in 1728, this area became known as the Rising Sun Neighborhood. During the December 1862 Battle of Fredericksburg, the city was damaged by Union guns across the river, and this neighborhood saw fierce street fighting. Today, dwellings from the 18th through the 21st century harmoniously blend together along the Rappahannock River, enhanced by mature vegetation and established gardens. Fredericksburg boasts four Garden Club of Virginia restoration sites, which have benefited from proceeds from Historic Garden Week tours.

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Monday-Saturday 10am-5:30pm

Tour Chairs

Susan Moss, Chair (540) 842-5517
fredericksburg@vagardenweek.org

Karli Murray, Co-Chair (517) 896-1775
fredericksburg@vagardenweek.org

Ticket Information

Online: \$45

<https://gcvirginia.org/historic-garden-week/>

On Tour Day: \$55

Purchase at tour headquarters: 1412 Sophia St.
or online at <https://gcvirginia.org/historic-garden-week/>

Trolley Service

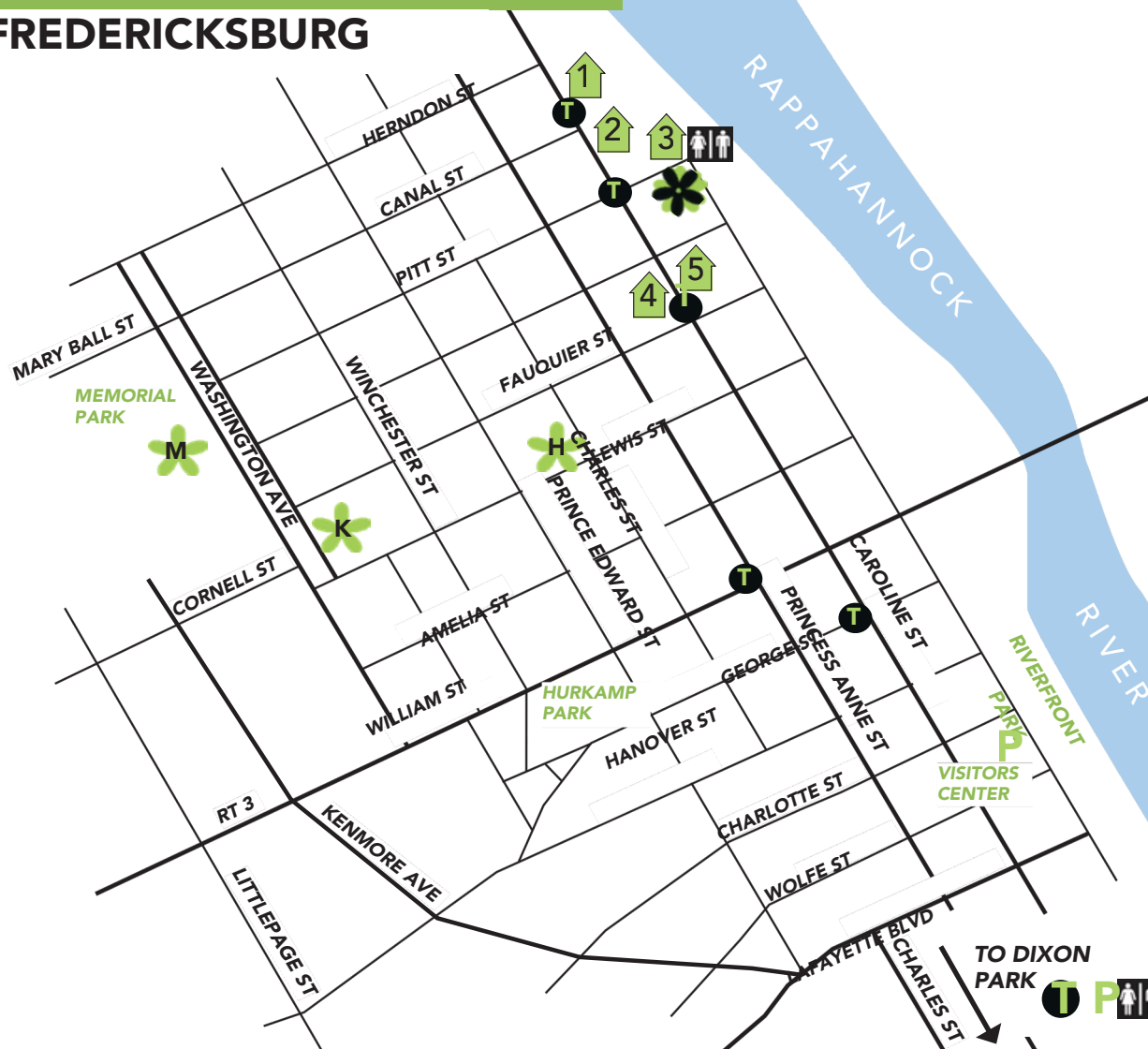
All aboard! A **FREE** trolley shuttle service will be operating throughout the tour area and downtown today, compliments of the City of Fredericksburg.



Hop on and off the trolley at the marked trolley stops within the tour area and key points downtown. It's an easy way to enjoy the tour as well as downtown dining and shopping!

Historic Garden Week 2026

FREDERICKSBURG



PRIVATE HOMES

- 1 Dahnk and Glover Residence
1601 Caroline St.
- 2 St. Ours Residence
1515 Caroline St.
- 3 Sears and Wack Residence
101 Pitt St.
- 4 Bradford Residence
1310 Caroline St.
- 5 Graham Residence
1309 Caroline St.



PUBLIC GARDENS: GCV RESTORATION PROJECTS

- K** Kenmore
1201 Washington Ave.
- M** Mary Washington Monument
1500 Washington Ave.
- H** Mary Washington House
1200 Charles St.



TOUR HEADQUARTERS

1412 Sophia St.



TROLLEY STOPS

- Falmouth Ferry Stop (near 1601 Caroline St.)
- Corner of Pitt St. and Caroline St.
- 1309 Caroline St.
- Corner of William St. and Princess Anne St.
- Corner of Caroline St. and George St.
- Dixon Park Parking Lot

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- Dixon Park • 600 Sophia St.
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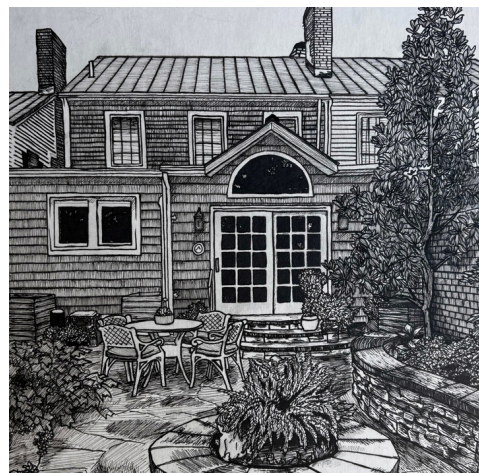
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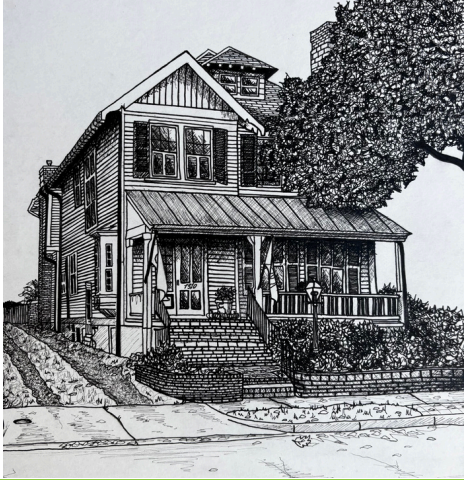
GARDEN CLUB
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1309 Caroline St.

This home (1881-1882) and 1311 Caroline Street (1855-1856), both antebellum homes, were converted into a “double house” with a shared wall and chimney flues. Both homes, vernacular side-passage townhouses with Federal influences, were built by James Tongue, a native of England and trained builder and architect who emigrated to Fredericksburg in 1848. Tongue’s wife, Mary, died in November 1859, and after her death, he lived with additional extended family from England: his sister and her husband, their son, and granddaughter, all under the 1311 roof. It appears that he built 1309 several years later to “spread out” his family. Tongue died in 1885, leaving his property to his grandniece. The 1891 Sanborn Insurance Map documents the extension of the south side of 1309 by four feet, as well as a rear porch addition to both 1309 and 1311 Caroline Street, subsequently enclosed by 1912 to accommodate the kitchen (formerly in the basement). A later addition in 2014-2015 added a back sitting room and terrace, carefully preserving the fenestration at the back of the original house. The rear yard, shielded from the noise of Caroline Street, is a peaceful oasis in downtown Fredericksburg.

Ms. Susan Graham, owner



1310 Caroline St.

In 1910, Commonwealth's Attorney Gustavus Brown Wallace, known as "G.B.," commissioned local architect Philip Stern to design and build 1310 Caroline Street on land once owned by Charles Washington, George Washington's youngest brother. Around 1760, Charles Washington built his home near the corner of Caroline and Fauquier Streets, where he sometimes entertained his brother George. By 1792, Colonel Gustavus Brown Wallace, who served in the Continental Army, bought Charles Washington's former home and turned it into the Golden Eagle Tavern, now called the Rising Sun Tavern. G.B. Wallace, the builder of this house, was the great-great-grandnephew of Colonel Gustavus Brown Wallace. The house features late Victorian style with Queen Anne exterior elements, such as a steeply pitched roof, an asymmetrical façade, and a full-width porch with hints of Craftsman style in the porch posts and railings. In 1920, Wallace sold it to W. Mayo Smith, a vice president at Farmers & Merchants Bank. Smith and his family kept the house until 1969. The property changed owners several times until it was bought in 2006 by the current owners, who, in 2010, remodeled the kitchen, added a two-story rear extension, and redesigned the outdoor areas.

Erin and Christopher Bradford, owners



1515 Caroline Street

Built in 1921, this frame Foursquare house—with Craftsman elements—is the third improvement on this lot. In 1819, owner Henry Fitzhugh leased the land to John Lewis, a free African American, who operated a cooper's shop (barrel-making) here until it closed in 1841, and the building was removed. Sisters and dressmakers Elvira and Emily Samuel built a new home on the parcel in 1850; it remained in the family until 1892. When Ernest Ryerson, a local grocer with a store on Caroline Street, purchased the house in 1921, it was in disrepair. He razed the existing structure and built the current home. Ryerson expanded the lot in 1929, acquiring an additional 12 feet of frontage on Caroline Street from a neighbor. He also bought the parcel behind the original property, extending it to the Rappahannock River and providing 66 feet of waterfront access. Later owners added a kitchen and breakfast area in 1987 and a family room with a walk-out recreation room below in 2003. Elegant tiered gardens were created in 1986, with elaborate stonework added in 2008. Today, the home offers 3,700 sq ft of historic charm combined with spacious modern waterfront living.

Ms. Denise St. Ours, owner

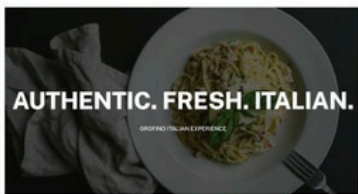
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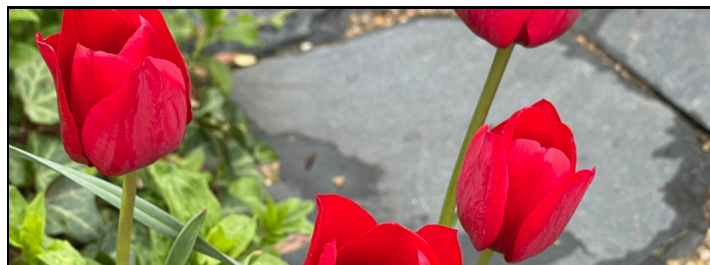


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1601 Caroline Street

In 1889, Joseph W. Colbert, a prominent grocery store owner, built the central part of this residence: four rooms upstairs and four downstairs, connected by a central hallway. When Bettie Colbert, his wife, defaulted on a loan in 1895 from the Merchants and Mechanics Perpetual Building and Loan Association, the association acquired the house as a rental property. Around 1900, the association added an extensive rear wing on the north side of the house, and then sold it in 1906 to The Assembly's Home and School of the Presbyterian Church, which used it as a dormitory for ten years. In 1916, William Mullen, who operated a stone works near the Mill Race Canal, purchased the house. Mullen made major changes to the front of the house in 1920, adding a neoclassical porch with a two-story pediment, a one-story full-width porch, and an elliptical fanlight with sidelights at the front door. After Mullen's death in 1930, his widow Carrie rented out rooms as a "tourist" home. In 1948, Herman Stuart Groves and his wife Lucy bought the property, and it remained a boarding house for over fifty years until 2012, when the current owners bought it and began extensive renovations.

Jeannie Dahnk and William Glover, owners



101 Pitt Steet

Built on an acre of land overlooking the Rappahannock River, this Federal Style Farmhouse was constructed in 1939 for Woodson Boyle, a retired DuPont executive. Noted garden designer Charles Gillette created the landscape plan for the original gardens. A framed itemized Final Payment Request from the contractor, dated September 1940, documents construction costs. The current owners purchased “River Terrace” in 2002 and spent two years completing a major renovation and addition. Walnut floors and carved moldings, original to the living room and library, remain unchanged. In the addition, a new state-of-the-art kitchen opens into a great room where extensive windows offer views of the river, as does the lower-level family room. The home is decorated with family heirlooms, a vast collection of antique maps, and paintings by several Virginia artists. In 2024, the owners updated the dining room, adding wainscoting and installing Zuber’s scenic wallpaper, “The War of American Independence,” to honor George Washington, whose boyhood home is across the river. The owners designed the rear terraced garden rooms to complement the addition as outdoor entertaining spaces. During construction, a 12-pound cannonball and a Colonial-era brass button commemorating George Washington’s inauguration were discovered in the garden.

Ms. Ann Sears and Mr. Thomas J. Wack, owners

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Places of Interest

Rising Sun Tavern 1304 Caroline St.

Built by George Washington's youngest brother, Charles, around 1760 as his home, this frame building became a tavern in 1792 when the Wallace family purchased it. It operated for 35 years as a stopover for travelers in the bustling port town of Fredericksburg.

Michigan Alley Behind Graham Home, 1309 Caroline St.

Michigan Alley in Fredericksburg, VA, is historically significant for its role in the December 1862 Battle of Fredericksburg, serving as shelter for the 7th Michigan Volunteer Infantry. During intense urban combat, this alley and the surrounding areas were used by Union troops to advance on Confederate positions along Caroline Street.

French John's Wharf 1600 Caroline St.

In 1787, a free black man named John DeBaptiste rented a portion of this property from Henry Fitzhugh. DeBaptiste established a shipping wharf at the foot of this lane and eventually purchased the land in 1796. In 1792, at a time when no bridges crossed the Rappahannock, DeBaptiste also secured the rights from the local government to operate the Falmouth Ferry.

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Restoration Gardens

Mary Washington Monument **1500 Washington Avenue**

Mary Washington was buried here in 1789. In the early 19th century, the Gordon family, who gave Kenmore its name, established their family burial ground here as well. The Garden Club of Virginia first planted the grounds in 1938 and recently renovated both the monument and the grounds. Appropriate plantings were installed along the brick walk to the monument.

Mary Washington House **1200 Charles Street**

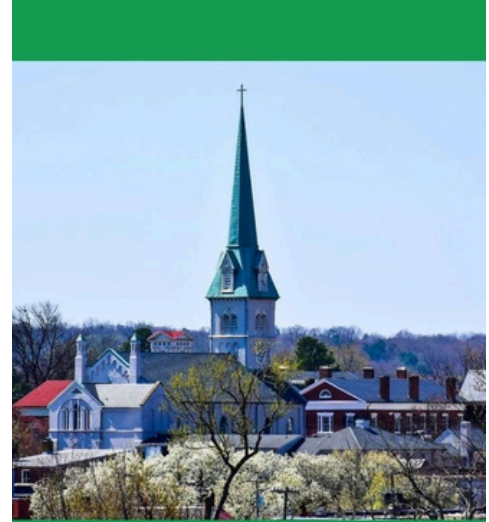
Originally purchased in 1772 by George Washington for his mother, Mary Ball Washington, who resided there until she died in 1789. The garden, designed by the Garden Club of Virginia in 1968-69, is a simple Colonial Revival filled with vegetables and flowers, and features the pedestal that once held her sundial.
WashingtonHeritageMuseums.org

Belmont, Gari Melchers Home and Studio **224 Washington Street, Falmouth**

A National Historic Landmark, Belmont crowns a hill overlooking the falls of the Rappahannock River. The white frame house was the home of the renowned American artist Gari Melchers and his wife Corinne. In 1993, the Garden Club of Virginia restored the garden with proceeds from Historic Garden Week. Admission fee.
(540) 654-1015 garimelchers.umw.edu

Historic Kenmore & Gardens **1201 Washington Ave.**

One of Virginia's finest 18th century houses, Kenmore was built by patriot Fielding Lewis and his wife, Betty, the sister of George Washington.



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The James Monroe Museum
umw.edu/arts/museums/

George Washington's Boyhood
Home at Ferry Farm
Historic Kenmore
Kenmore.org

Hugh Mercer Apothecary Shop
Mary Washington House
Mary Washington Monument
Rising Sun Tavern
WashingtonHeritageMuseums.org

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