History of Fraunces Tavern

Fraunces Tavern was built in 1719 as an elegant residence for merchant Stephan Delancey. In 1762 tavern-keeper, Samuel Fraunces, bought the building and transformed it into one of the most popular meeting places of the day. Named the Queen’s Head Tavern, after England’s Queen Charlotte, it eventually came to be known as Fraunces Tavern as Fraunces’ reputation as a great cook spread around the city.

Before the American War for Independence, New York City was a political hotbed of thought & action. Once war began & the Continental Army lost possession of the city, Loyalists forces occupied the area until peace was declared in 1783. During the British occupation the Tavern was run by Sam’s Loyalist son-in-law, Charles Campbell, irregularly providing food, drink & community throughout the War.

By 1783, the Tavern resumed normal operations and the American Commissioners setup headquarters at the Tavern while negotiations with the British concerning their evacuation from the City were underway. The Americans also hosted a dinner for their British counterparts at the Tavern. George Washington gave his emotional farewell to his officers in the Long Room on the 2nd floor, nine days after the British evacuated the City on the December 4th, 1783.

From 1785 to 1788 the Tavern held the first offices for the Departments of Foreign Affairs, War, and Treasury.

In the mid-1800s there was a high demand for housing & the Tavern operated as a boarding house & bar. During this time the building underwent many structural changes, including repairs from fires & two additional stories with a flat roof were added. In the 1890s the 1st floor was dropped to street level & a modern façade of glass and cast iron was added.

The Tavern was threatened with demolition in 1900. By 1904 the Sons of the Revolution in the State of New York took ownership and completed a conjectural restoration to open Fraunces Tavern Museum & Restaurant by 1907. The block was designated in 1977 as a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places. In 1981, the 2nd floor Long Room was opened as an interpretation of a Colonial urban tavern public room.

About The Museum

The museum complex includes four 19th century buildings in addition to Fraunces Tavern. Visiting the Museum today, you can stand in the room where General George Washington said farewell to his officers and explore seven additional galleries that focus on America’s War for Independence and the preservation of early American history.

Public Hours of Operation

Monday through Sunday
12:00PM—5:00PM

Closed New Year’s Day, MLK Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day

Admission Pricing

Adult (18+)

$7.00

Senior (65+)

$4.00

Student (w/ proof of ID)

$4.00

Children (6-8)

$4.00

Children (under 5)

FREE

Active Military (w/proof of ID)

FREE

Group Tickets

Family Group (1 adult w/ 1+ children)

$20.00

General Group Rate (14+ adults)

$5.00

Museum Events

All Lectures Begin At 6:30pm*

Cost: $10/ free for FTM members
Includes: Museum admission & light refreshments

Before the Revolution

America’s Ancient Pasts

Presented by Dan Richter †

Thursday, January 30th

America began, we are often told, with the Founding Fathers, the men who waged a revolution and created a unique place called the United States. We may acknowledge the early Jamestown and Puritan colonists and mourn the dispossession of Native Americans, but we rarely grapple with the complexity of the nation’s pre-revolutionary past. In this path-breaking revision, Richter shows that the United States has a much deeper history than is apparent. Far from beginning with a clean slate, it is a nation with multiple pasts that stretch back as far as the Middle Ages, pasts whose legacies continue to shape the present and further reveal the deepest origins of American history.

Museum Events Continued on Back

Fraunces Tavern® is located at 54 Pearl St, at the corner of Broad St, in Lower Manhattan. Subway: R to Whitehall St, 4/5 to Bowling Green, 2/3 to Wall St, 1 to South Ferry, J/Z to Broad St. Buses: M1, M6, M15
Enjoy benefits such as free Museum & lecture admission, discounts on books, walking tours, restaurant patronage, & special events, plus invitations to exhibit openings and exclusive events. Full benefit & membership details are available on our website: www.FrauncesTavernMuseum.org

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Pinpointing Parker’s Print Shop
Where New York’s Premier Printer Worked & Why It Matters
Presented by Gordon Bond†
Thursday, February 20th

In February of 1742, a 28-year-old printer named James Parker arrived in Manhattan to open his first printing shop. He had the backing of Benjamin Franklin and spent the next thirty years as one of colonial New York’s premier printers. His clients included some of the most prominent men and he found himself at the center of freedom of the press battles. With such a remarkable career, why is there no monument or commemorative plaque remembering Parker’s shop today? In part, this is due to the fact that the its actual location is a bit of a mystery. Join historian Gordon Bond as he unravels clues to determine where Parker’s shop once stood and find out why the actual printing press of Parker’s played a key role in establishing the freedom of the press.

†Books will be available for purchase - discounts apply for Museum members

These programs are supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

Kips Bay & Harlem Heights
The War for Independence on Manhattan, 1776
Presented by Philip Briggs
Thursday, March 20th

Following its narrow escape across the East River from Brooklyn in the fall of 1776, America’s fledgling armed forces hoped to maintain its position on Manhattan. However, it soon met the enemy in two new engagements as the War for Independence continued. This lecture, presented by Dr. Briggs, explores those events and their results on the continuing struggle.

Revolutionary Medicine
The Founding Fathers & Mothers in Sickness and Health
Presented by Jeanne Abrams†
Thursday, April 17th

Before the advent of modern antibiotics, one’s life could be abruptly shattered by contagion and death. Debility from infectious diseases & epidemics was commonplace for early Americans, regardless of social status. As both victims of illness & national leaders, the Founders occupied a unique position regarding the development of public health in America; republican ideals fostered a reciprocal connection between individual health and the “health” of the nation. Focusing on founders such as the Washingtons, the Adamses, Franklin, & Jefferson not only provides us with a richer and more nuanced insight into their lives, but also opens a window into the practice of medicine in the 18th century.

Special Event Hosted By Salon/Sanctuary Concerts
Exodus
Dreams of the Promised Land in Antebellum America
Saturday, April 5th
3pm & 7pm

The enduring power of liberation imagery in the early American consciousness comes to life through works by William Billings (1746 - 1800), Stephen Jenks (1772 - 1856), early spirituals and Shaker hymns performed with historical texts selected from abolitionist writings and slave narratives. Fraunces Tavern, one of the first sites of the American government, sets the stage for starkly beautiful American repertoire. Developed last season to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, Exodus returns this year for two performances with The Western Wind Vocal Ensemble & Guest Actors. Tickets available through www.SalonSanctuary.com

137th Annual George Washington Birthday Ball
Wednesday, February 19th at the Yale Club