

Saxe Gotha Dispatch

Christmas Open House a Great Success

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The museum's annual Christmas Open House was a great success.

More than 400 visitors came out despite windy weather to learn more about the history of Lexington and about how Christmas was celebrated in Lexington County in the 19th century. Visitors enjoyed light refreshments that would have been eaten by Lexington residents in the 19th century, including hot apple cider and gingerbread and were able to listen to Friends of the Museum member Constance Caractor Flemming singing and playing live music in the Fox House

We once again were fortunate to have the



Slave Dwelling Project out to help teach visitors about what the lives of the enslaved were like before emancipation. They also led a cooking demonstration in our 19th century Ridgell kitchen.

The museum offers events throughout the year so follow us on Facebook and Instagram and visit our webpage at lexingtoncountymuseum.org

to keep informed of all that goes on here at the museum.

Museum Past and Upcoming Outreach Efforts

Museum staff members stayed busy throughout the fall speaking to community groups about the museum and county history. Over the past few months, museum employees have spoken to the Lexington Main Library, Generations of Chapin, the Gilbert-Summit Library, the

Cayce-West Cola Library, and the Lexington SCV.

In the future, museum staff will speak to the Lexington County Main Library, South Lake Village, Leadership Lexington, and the St. Andrews Optimist Club.

If you'd like to have a museum staff member speak to your

group either virtually or in-person, don't hesitate to give us a call. We can speak on a variety of topics related to the museum, the county, and its history. Some of the most popular topics include the quilts and other artifacts from the Dutch Fork, Lexington County-made rifles, and the history of alcohol in Lexington County.

Museum Staff Changes

The Lexington County Museum has recently had some changes in its staffing. At the end of 2025, long-time part-time historical interpreter Lisa Mallory retired. Mallory had served as a historical interpreter since 1998 and volunteered with the museum before that. We are sad to see Lisa go and appreciate her hard work and dedication over the years. Since being hired, Mallory has given countless tours to tourists from all over the world as well as locals.

The museum was very fortunate to be given another full-time position by the County of Lexington, a collections coordinator position. To fill that position, Patrica Shandor, formerly our visitor services coordinator, was hired. The museum currently is trying to find a candidate to fill the vacancy left by Patricia's move to collections coordinator. We are very excited about the addition of the position and are hopeful the addition will help us improve the management and care of the priceless artifacts in our collections.



Current and former museum employees gather to celebrate Lisa Mallory's retirement.

Lisa Mallory in her colonial outfit



Friends of the Museum Plan Historic House Tour Fundraiser

The Friends of the Lexington County Museum are planning a historic house tour fundraiser on April 25th. This tour will allow attendees to visit five privately owned historic homes in the Lexington area. Attendees will end the tour at the historic Palmetto Collegiate Institute for tea and snacks. More information will be coming in the next few weeks as details are finalized. Check out our website and on social media to stay up to date.

The John Fox House Parlor's New Look

In 2024 the Friends of the Lexington County Museum raised money to replace the 50-year old peeling wallpaper in the John Fox House parlor. A reproduction pineapple design, originally manufactured in the 1840s, was selected and printed for us by Adelphi Wall Hangings and installed by Wallpaper Pros in 2025.

The new wallpaper brightened and enlivened the room whose appearance had not changed in nearly forty years. These vibrant walls also highlighted the aging furnishings. The once-dark emerald green empire sofa and chair were now faded to beige and worn thin after decades of being on display. The piano stool stood tattered and the reproduction lace curtains also showed their age.

Members of the Lexington Woman's Club saw an opportunity to assist our museum through pursuing a Community Impact Project award. The co-chairs of the Arts & Culture division, Leslie Green and Julia Iseman presented the John Fox House parlor rehabilitation project to the Woman's Club. They awarded the museum \$3,000. Using this money we were able to reupholster the sofa and add new window treatments including lace curtains.

The entire project was completed within budget thanks to the efforts of Deidre Harmon and Linda Register who designed, made and installed the reproduction Greek Revival style window treatments themselves. The fabrics for the upholstery and window treatments were carefully selected to both complement the wallpaper and be period-correct for the age of the interpreted parlor (mid. 1800s). Enough money was left over to allow the museum to install retractable UV blocking shades in the windows to protect the wallpaper and artifacts within the room from light damage. This will ensure that the work will be better preserved over many decades to come. The museum and the Friends of the Lexington County Museum are grateful for the hard work of Linda Register and the generosity of the Lexington Woman's Club which have truly brought new life to this room.



Museum Visitation in November and December 2025

Visitation remained high as school groups returned in November and December

In November, 998 visitors came to the museum, including visitors from six states other than SC and

Canada. In December, the museum saw 863 visitors, including tourists from twelve states other than SC and Germany.

The number of school groups visiting the museum stayed high. We

had various public and private groups from Florence, Newberry, Richland, Saluda, and Lexington Counties come out for field trips.

Christmas Open House Photos



Museum Calendar of Events



- Feb. 12 Native American History of Lex. County Presentation
4:00 pm
Gilbert-Summit Branch Library
405 Broad St. Gilbert, SC
Free to the public/No reservations or tickets needed
Attendees will learn about the Congaree and the effect the devastating Yamasee War had on the area.
- Feb. 14 – 16 Presidents Day Holiday
Museum will be closed
- Feb. 17 Lexington County in the Civil War
6:30 pm
Lex. County Main Library
5440 Augusta Road Lexington, SC
Free to the public/No reservations or tickets needed
Attendees will learn about the buildup to the war in Lexington County as well as the experiences of residents in Lexington County during Sherman's March.
- April 11 "It's All About Herbs" Herb Festival
9 am to 3 pm
Free to attend
Lexington County Museum Complex
Activities include a plant sale with many varieties of herbs, herb and plant related vendors, food vendors, free herb mini-demonstrations, seminars, and a silent auction.

Call the museum at 803-359-8369 or email
museum@lexingtoncounty.sc.gov to find out more about these events.

Lexington County Museum

231 Fox Street
Lexington, SC 29072

Phone 803-359-8369
Fax 803-808-2160
E-mail museum@lex-co.com

A Story Behind Every Door



We're on the Web!

<https://lex-co.sc.gov/lexington-county-museum> and
www.lexingtoncountymuseum.org

The Lexington County Museum was started in 1970 to collect, preserve and present the history of Lexington County. After initially having only one historic house, the museum expanded and now has thirty historic structures over seven acres in downtown Lexington. Through exhibits in historic houses, the museum interprets everyday life in the town of Lexington and throughout Lexington County from the eighteenth century to the start of the Civil War. The museum offers guided tours to visitors for a small fee and has thirteen different hands-on programs for school groups free of charge by appointment. These programs attract schools from around the state and educate students about the history of Lexington County and about the everyday life of Lexington County residents in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The Friends of the Lexington County Museum is a non-profit group founded in 1997 with an advisory board, officers, and a board of trustees representing all municipalities in Lexington County. Its mission is to enhance the Lexington County Museum through its duly appointed commission and to support, aid, and assist in the improvement and expansion of the Museum. The Friends group sponsors fund-raising projects to help further the Museum's valuable contribution to the county. The Friends group has raised over \$300,000 for the museum so far. To learn more about the Friends or to join, visit the museum's webpage (<https://lex-co.sc.gov/lexington-county-museum/friends-museum>).

Highlighted Artifact from the Museum's Collections

Our highlighted artifact for this issue is a ca. 1864 heart carved from bone by Eli Wessinger while he was a prisoner of war during the Civil War. He inscribed the names of his children on either side. It was later painted.

