

Key Facts about Kenmore, Ferry Farm, and the Washington and Lewis families.

The George Washington Foundation

- The Foundation owns and operates Ferry Farm and Historic Kenmore.
- The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
- The Foundation (then known as the Kenmore Association) was formed in 1922 in order to purchase Kenmore.
- The Foundation purchased Ferry Farm in 1996.

Historic Kenmore

- Kenmore was built by Fielding Lewis and his wife, Betty Washington Lewis (George Washington's sister). Fielding Lewis was a wealthy merchant, planter, and prominent member of the gentry in Fredericksburg.
- Construction of Kenmore started in 1769 and the family moved into their new home in the fall of 1775.
- Fielding Lewis' Fredericksburg plantation was once 1,270 acres in size. Today, the house sits on just one city block (approximately 3 acres).
- Kenmore is noted for its eighteenth-century, decorative plasterwork ceilings, created by a craftsman identified only as "The Stucco Man."
- In Fielding Lewis' time, the major crops on the plantation were corn and wheat. Fielding was not a major tobacco producer.
- When Fielding died in 1781, the property was willed to Fielding's first-born son, John. Betty remained on the plantation for another 14 years.
- The name "Kenmore" was first used by Samuel Gordon, who purchased the house and 200 acres in 1819.
- Kenmore was directly in the line of fire between opposing forces in the Battle of Fredericksburg in 1862 during the Civil War and took at least seven cannonball hits.
- Kenmore was used as a field hospital for approximately three weeks during the Civil War Battle of the Wilderness in 1864.
- In 1881, nineteen-year-old William Key Howard, Jr. saved and restored the plasterwork ceilings.
- There have been eleven different owners of Kenmore over the years. Since 1925, the house has been owned by a non-profit organization, now called The George Washington Foundation.
- Kenmore was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1970.

George Washington's Ferry Farm

- The Washington family moved to Ferry Farm in 1738 when George was 6 years old.
- In the Washington era, Ferry Farm was approximately 600 acres in size. Today, the Foundation owns 113.9 acres of the original farm.
- The Washingtons grew corn, wheat, and tobacco at Ferry Farm.
- The Rappahannock River frontage of Ferry Farm today is approximately the same as it was in George Washington's time.
- The Washingtons did not use the name "Ferry Farm" but rather called it the "Home Farm."
- Although there was a ferry landing and the ferry road crossed the Washington's property, the Washingtons did not own the ferry or derive any income from it.
- Ferry Farm was left to George upon his father's death in 1743.

- Although George no longer lived at Ferry Farm after the age of 22, his mother, Mary, remained there until 1772, at which time she moved across the river to Fredericksburg.
- George Washington sold Ferry Farm to Hugh Mercer in 1774.
- Ferry Farm was the site of the middle pontoon bridge during the battle of Fredericksburg in the Civil War.
- Ferry Farm was acquired in 1996 by the Kenmore Association, a non-profit foundation that subsequently changed its name to The George Washington Foundation.
- Ferry Farm was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1972 and was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2000.
- The oldest building on the Ferry Farm property is a small shed dating to the late 1800s.

The Washington Family

- Betty Washington was not George's only sister. He had a half sister, Jane, who died in 1735 (when George was 2 years old) and another full sister named Mildred, who died in 1740.
- Betty's name was not Elizabeth. Her name appears in the Lewis family Bible as Betty.
- George and Betty were both born at Pope's Creek Plantation in Westmoreland County, about 40 miles southeast of Ferry Farm.
- George Washington had no children of his own. His wife, Martha Dandridge Custis, had two children from her previous marriage. Betty Washington Lewis gave birth to eleven children.

The Lewis Family

- Fielding Lewis' first wife, Catharine Washington, was a second cousin to Fielding and a first cousin to George and Betty Washington. They had three children together.
- His second wife, Betty Washington, was also a second cousin to Fielding and sister to George Washington. They had eleven children together.
- Fielding gave his all to support the patriot cause during the Revolutionary War. He died in 1781, in poor health and deeply in debt.
- There is local lore that Fielding is buried under the steps of St. George's church in Fredericksburg. However, he died near what is today Berkeley Springs, West Virginia, and is believed to be buried in that area, although his exact resting place is unknown.
- Betty Washington Lewis died in 1797 while visiting her daughter near Culpeper and is buried in that area.
- Fielding Lewis owned approximately 132 slaves at the time of his death.
- Famed explorer, Meriwether Lewis, is related to Fielding.