

Title

Holding fast...

History ...deep in the roots...

Text

Amanda Roper ,

Executive Director at Lee -Fendall House and Garden Museum sees the staff and volunteers role as “ to educate our community in our shared past.”

The Lee - Fendall House was built by members of two prominent families, the Lees of Virginia and the Fendalls of Maryland on land purchased from “ Lighthorse “ Harry Lee.

Between 1785 and 1903, the house has been home to 37 members of the Lee family.

It has also been home to enslaved and free African American servants and convalescing Union soldiers.

The Museum has an ongoing program of exhibitions and events for visitors of all ages and in April will host their popular Easter Egg Hunt on April 16th and 17th,

A chance to find Easter Eggs hidden in the Lee-Fendall House Garden and visit with the Easter Bunny!

Attendance is limited and reservations must be made in advance!

Ongoing and upcoming Exhibits at Lee-Fendall include ;

‘ Hosting the President: Presidential Connections to Lee-Fendall House’, and ‘John L. Lewis Public Figure,Private Man’

Visitors are welcome Wednesday through Sunday until 4pm.

For further information check out their website www.leafendallhouse.org or call 703- 548-1789

For Matt Gitlin, owner of Brutto Breads and a vendor at the Old Town North Farmers’ Market his connection to history at the roots and in the soil came from his dedication to baking bread in the artisan manner, using traditional techniques and organic grains.

“Baking naturally fermented rustic breads has always been a passion of ours.As we set out to begin Brutto Breads, we aimed to focus our bread making on locally sourced , sustainable breads which also maximize the nutritional benefits of wheat and natural fermentation. This was achieved through the discovery of the Common Grain Alliance, an organization who promotes regenerative farming practices and connects bakers with mid-Atlantic farmers and millers.

Through our interactions with the Common Grain Alliance, we discovered local mills and farms to provide us with freshly milled whole grain flour.

The breads we bake truly embody the earth from which the flour was grown and the freshness is achieved from locally sourcing fresh milled flour..It is simply a different experience than making bread with an off the shelf product.”

Matt’s search for a source for organic flours led him to Grapewood Farm in Northern Neck, Virginia, Located in Montross, Virginia Grapewood Farm is the only grain farm on the Northern Neck and proudly proclaims “Virginia Grown, Virginia Ground.

Grapewood Farm is owned by Fred and Cathy Sachs , long time residents of Alexandria and their son, David of Arlington.

The Sachs family share a passion for the soil and a commitment to acting as good stewards of the land.

Grapewood Farm was established in 2000 and has grown from the original 150 + acres to over 500 acres., including grain fields, fruit orchards and wildlife sanctuaries.

The farm is very much a small , family run operation with assistance from one local employee. Fred and David work the soil, and plant the fields, using sustainable farming techniques of crop rotation and cover crop to “ feed the soil” Cathy maintains comprehensive records on the different qualities of each grain grown, in a modern testing space , packs the bags of milled kitchen and keeps the farm’ s loyal fans posted on updates at the farm through her blog., particularly helpful over the past two years when the Sachs were forced to curbside pick up, although small targeted tours of the farm for bakers continuing throughout the pandemic. “We like to get people down here to see the farm and the crops in the field so they can appreciate the grain and how it is grown” says Fred Sachs.

The decision to begin milling their own flour came about after a few years of Ttial and error . States David “ milling our flour allows us to ensure the integrity of the grain and offer the flour to our customers at it’s freshest state, at a reasonable cost ,better for us better for our customers wallets.”

Unstated but clearly a consideration is the positive impact of eliminating the shipping of grain from the farm to another location to be milled, harkening back to the time when local was grown and along with passengers and other goods produce traveled up the waterways of the Potomac River from Popes Creek , George Washington’s birth place to the City of Alexandria. The Sachs family has introduced sustainable farming practices including crop rotation and the planting of cover crops to feed and revitalize the soil .

Water used in the milling process is recycled in non potable ways and solar power is key in providing power to the farm.

The Sachs family’s shared passion for the soil, the environment ,the history of the region the use of non harmful farming techniques are the cornerstones of Grapewood Farm

Truly Virginia Grown, Virginia Ground.

www.grapewoodfarm.com