

**Historic Name – Leesylvania**

**Date or Period – ca. 1750**

**Original Use – Residence**

**Vicinity - Leesylvania**

**Source – Prince William: A Past to Preserve**

Located on Freestone Point, so named because of the gray sandstone found abundantly on this peninsula , the estate took its name from Henry Lee II, the father of “Lighthorse” Harry Lee and the grandfather of Confederate General Robert E. Lee. Lighthorse Harry Lee eulogized George Washington at his funeral, saying he was, “first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen.” The Leesylvania house stood on the crest of a high hill overlooking the Potomac River. Also born here were Charles Lee, U.S. attorney general; Richard Bland Lee, the first U.S. Congressman from this district; and Edward Jennings Lee, mayor of Alexandria, who delivered the welcoming speech when the Marquis de Lafayette visited Washington DC, in 1824. The house which was thought to have been stylistically similar to the nearby Rippon Lodge burned in about 1790. Leesylvania figured prominently in the Confederate blockade of the Potomac River from October 1861 to March 1862. Batteries installed at the end of the point where the northernmost gun positions along the Potomac River from the Chopawamsic Creek to the Occoquan River. After the Civil War, the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad line crossed Freestone Point and the property was leased to Quakers, who are said to have cut down all the trees. From the late 1890s and into the twentieth century, the tract was used as a hunting and fishing retreat for leading citizens from Washington, D. C., who arrived and were lodged in a private railroad car. In the late 1950s, Freestone Point became the home of the S.S. Freestone, a floating gambling parlor. Since the boat was moored in Maryland waters, gambling and liquor by the drink, then illegal in Virginia, were available. Recreational facilities were also added. The resort floundered, through, after the governors of Virginia and Maryland agreed to make riverboat gambling illegal. In the early 1980s, the Freestone Point tract was donated to the state of Virginia by Daniel Ludwig and the American-Hawaiian Steamship Company for the creation of Leesylvania State Park.

Alexandria Gazette 3 Jan 1840

MARRIED – AT LEESYLVANIA on Tuesday evening 17<sup>th</sup> by Rev. Alexander H. Bennett, Mr. William Betts of Stafford, to Miss Sophia, daughter of Capt. Harry Fairfax of Prince William County, Virginia.

Alexandria Gazette 6 Dec 1849

PUBLIC SALE – On Thursday, the 20<sup>th</sup> of December next, I will sell, by Public auction on the farm called LEE’S NECK, the late residence of Henry Fairfax, deceased, in the County of Prince William, on the Potomac River, between Aquia Creek and Alexandria, and about 25 miles below the latter, one half of all the personal property on the same, the slaves excepted, which consists of that interest in the farming utensils, of every description, household, and kitchen furniture, 4 or 500 bbls. corn, fodder, oats, hay, oxen, horses, 75 head of sheep, 100 doz. Of hogs, 98 of cattle, 8000 good salt herrings, and many other articles. Terms – All sums under \$20 cash; over that amount 9 months, interest added.

Will be offered at the same time “LEESYLVANIA” for rent or lease, containing about 1000 acres of land, and about 50 bushels of wheat, seeded on the same. Terms for sale: no postponement on account of the weather.

T. B. Robertson