

Thank You for Visiting

Thank you for visiting

Hamilton Grange National Memorial.

We hope you enjoyed your visit.

Your time with us does not have to end with the tour.

We have a wonderful movie in our media room of

Alexander Hamilton's life that we recommend

Watching (Closed Captioned).

Also our site holds monthly events. Keep check our

website at www.nps.gov/hagr and follow us on

twitter @HamiltonGrngNPS to learn more about

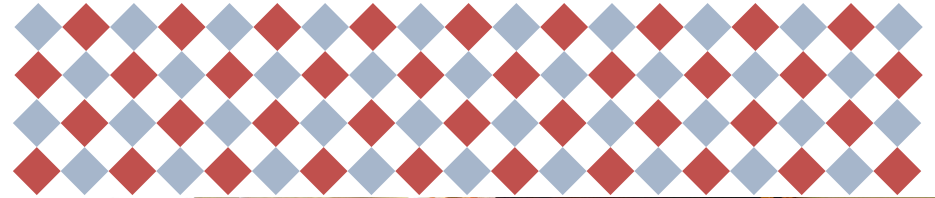
future events and programs.

Please return this copy after use.



Hamilton Grange

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Memorial
New York



Introduction

On behalf of the National Park Service we would like to welcome you to Hamilton Grange National Memorial. There are over 400 National Parks and the Grange is one of twenty-two sites that is part of the National Parks of New York Harbor. Please note the furniture on the historic floor should not be touched (see with your eyes not your hands). Also please do not lean on the walls or put your feet up, and stay behind the velvet ropes. Photography is allowed upstairs with no restriction. The tour is approximately 30 minutes. Welcome to Alexander Hamilton's Home, the only house he actually owned. Some of you may ask why here in Harlem? In the fall of 1799 Alexander Hamilton rented a country house in Harlem Heights mostly to get his family away from the yellow fever downtown. He was so enraptured by the exquisite vista from the house that he tried to buy it. However during the 1800's he ends up buying 32 acres in the adjacent area. He commissioned the architect John McComb Jr. to design his home which he dubs his "sweet project".

The two-story frame Federal style house was completed in 1802, just two years before Hamilton's death during a duel with political rival Aaron Burr on July 11, 1804. The house was named "The Grange" after Hamilton's grandfather's estate in Scotland.

Mystery Rooms

Not much is known about the rooms toward the back of the home. These rooms may have been used as guest rooms, a sewing room possibly even a smoking room. Unfortunately there is no historic evidence dictating what these rooms may have been used for or even what furniture belonged there. That is why the National Park Service Converted these rooms into what you see today. One room is used to explain the history of the house and all its moves and the process it took to restore this 1802 home back to its former glory. The other room is used as an interview room where guest can schedule an appointment and leave their thoughts about Hamilton Grange National Memorial.

Bed Rooms

The bedrooms would have been located upstairs unfortunately like the backrooms there is no historical evidence to dictate what the bedrooms would have looked like or even whose room belonged to whom.

Unfortunately due to fire code regulations we are not allowed to bring visitors upstairs because the home does not have a second exit.

The Dining Room

If you turn around and look to your left or right you will see mirror doors. All three doors have mirrors on them and they are also the same height as the French windows. The purpose of the mirror doors, would reflect the oil lamps and candles which would illuminate the room. The second purpose of the mirror doors is to reflect the very beautiful and lushes landscape making for a very pleasant setting. The mirror doors also help to expand the room, making it feel larger than it actually is. The plates, the knives, the forks, and the spoons they are all reproductions from the period. The decanter and candle holder are c. 1790. The fruit bowl is c. 1781 and made by the silversmith Robert Hennell. What is original to the home and what Hamilton owned is the silver center piece. This item was here when Hamilton was entertaining his guests and enjoying his meals. There is another item in this room that is not an original item, but a reproduction, and it is the wine cooler. This wine cooler speaks volumes of the relationship between George Washington and Hamilton. In 1797, it was a very trying time for Hamilton. The wine cooler was one of four that Washington had commissioned during his first administration. I highlight this event not to show the darker side of Hamilton, but to show that he was no different from any one of us, capable of making mistakes but equally capable of taking responsibility for his actions. This event also shows the enduring relationship between Washington and Hamilton.

The Foyer

Guests entering Hamilton's home would not see this large painting of Alexander Hamilton instead there was a Gilbert Stuart painting of George Washington, which was a gift from a wealthy merchant. This painting here was originally done by John Trumbull in 1792 however this isn't the original but a replica from the 1980's. The next item to highlight, that we would have seen, is this bust. This is a reproduction of the original Giuseppe Ceracchi bust of Hamilton which was originally done in 1792. A little story about Ceracchi on how he gets people to sit for him: He approaches Mr. Hamilton, and States "Mr. Hamilton I would love to do a bust of you." Hamilton says fine, great, go ahead. Hamilton sits for Ceracchi. But upon completion of the bust, Ceracchi hands Hamilton a bill for \$620. Apparently Ceracchi did this with a lot of people. When he did this to General George Washington, the General was not happy, to say the least. But apparently Hamilton paid the bill. Ceracchi's goal was to make Hamilton into a heroic figure, bringing him back to the days of the Roman Senate, and that's why he looks like Caesar. Another thing to highlight in this room is the floor. Hamilton would of had a floor like you see here which would have been an oil clothe which was canvas painted to look like marble.

The Study/Library

In the study there are several items to highlight, starting first with that bright vibrant green paint on the walls. This room, along with the other period rooms, is the original color. After going through the layers and layers of paint and through pigment analysis, they came to the conclusion that this was the original color. The color says something, it was a very expensive pigment and to paint the entire room this color was Hamilton's way of showing off his wealth. A brief note, the majority of the furniture is period pieces: meaning they are from the 1700s and early 1800s. There is also a large percentage of reproduction. There is a very small percentage of what Hamilton actually owned that is in the home. Starting on the wall to the right, that very elaborate looking desk is called a secretary desk; it is a reproduction of one that Hamilton had. The original is located at the Museum of the City of New York. The chair right next to the desk is from the 1790s and the circular table is from the 1770s. The chair to our left called a Chippendale Wing Chair and it's from the 1780s. If you look to the window on the far left, the item right below it sitting on the desk is Hamilton's Laptop of the day. It's called a lapdesk; everything Hamilton needed to write his letters and other documents when he was on the go was within those compartments and it folds together to make a rectangular briefcase. This being Hamilton's study, what type of books did he read? Well, he was a voracious reader. He read everything that came across him and he apparently had over a thousand volumes within this home. Today the National Park Service was able to acquire three of those books. Those three books sitting on the circular table were owned by Hamilton or his wife, you open the first page and you'll see their signature. Sadly they were rebounded in 1977-78. One is *The Origins of Commerce* (1790) by Anderson, another on *The Roman Republic* (1783) by Adam Ferguson, and the third book is called *The History of Modern Europe* (1794).

The Parlor: The Living Room

This room and the one right behind us are fairly unique rooms. They are octagonal to begin with, but what Hamilton and Macomb Jr. was trying to do, with the windows from the floor almost to the ceiling, was to create a very open environment. Hamilton had four fire places on this level and four on the second level. A little trivia, when you leave the Grange look back to the roof, you'll see four chimneys. The two back ones were operational, the two front ones were decorative, to keep the theme of the Federal style going, to keep the symmetry of the home. Hamilton was a lover of the British form of government. He thought that the British Parliament was the most perfect form of government ever created; he did not like the British style in furniture for this room. These are Louis XVI style furniture. There are nine chairs and they are original to the period crafted by Adam Hains of Philadelphia. What is original to this room and to Hamilton is the piano. It is called a piano-forte. The piano was a gift from Angelica Church to her niece Angelica Hamilton. A little tragic story, there are many in Hamilton's life, but this one will foreshadow the next two years of Hamilton's life. In 1801 Hamilton's eldest son, Philip, gets caught up in a duel, gets killed in that duel, doing basically the same the father will be doing two years later; defending the father's honor. Angelica Hamilton was very close to her older brother, and with Philip's death she basically has a nervous breakdown.