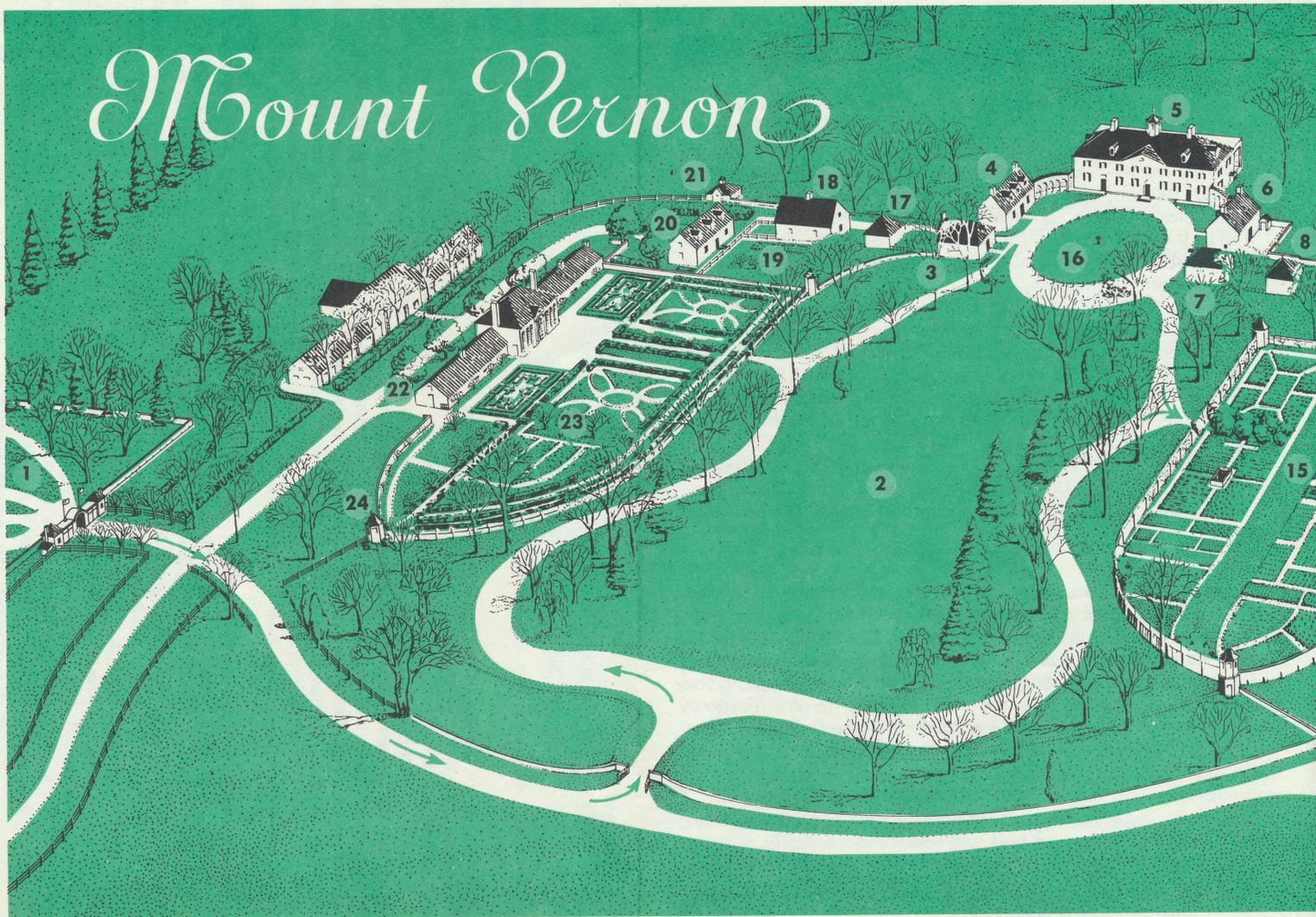


*Washington's Mount Vernon*



1. **Entrance Gate**
2. **Bowling Green** — Developed by General Washington in 1785. A few of the larger trees bordering the serpentine walks survive from the original planting.
3. **Gardener's House** — Records indicate that this building was used from time to time by the gardener, the shoemaker and the tailor. A part of the building may also have been used to accommodate the sick. The building is not open for exhibition.
4. **Office** — Records indicate a sequence of uses for this building: servants' hall, guest house, manager's residence and office. It is now an administrative office.
5. **Mansion** — In 1759 George Washington repaired and enlarged the structure from one and one-half to two and one-half stories. Shortly before the Revolution, he made plans for additions at each end of the house. The Mansion was completed in 1787.
6. **Kitchen, Scullery and Larder** — Equipped with utensils and kitchen furnishings of the eighteenth century.
7. **Storehouse and Overseers' Quarters** — A storekeeper distributed tools and equipment from the storeroom facing the courtyard.
8. **Smokehouse**
9. **Laundry Yard**
10. **Washhouse**
11. **Coachhouse** — Rebuilt on the original site in 1893, housing a rare eighteenth century riding chair.
12. **Stable** — Built in 1782. The center section houses a rare American eighteenth century crane neck coach owned by the Powel family of Philadelphia, close friends of George and Martha Washington.
13. **Paddock**
14. **Tomb of George and Martha Washington** — Built in 1831-1837 by General Washington's executors.
15. **Kitchen Garden** — Restored within the original enclosing walls in a manner true to the time of General Washington. Enter through gate on south serpentine.
16. **Courtyard** — The dial post supports the original sundial.
17. **Storehouse** — Used for storage of salt for preserving and curing fish and meat.
18. **Spinning House and Slave Quarters**
19. **Botanical Garden** — Used by General Washington for experimental planting.
20. **Museum** — Built in 1928. **Public restrooms** are located under the Museum.

# Mount Vernon

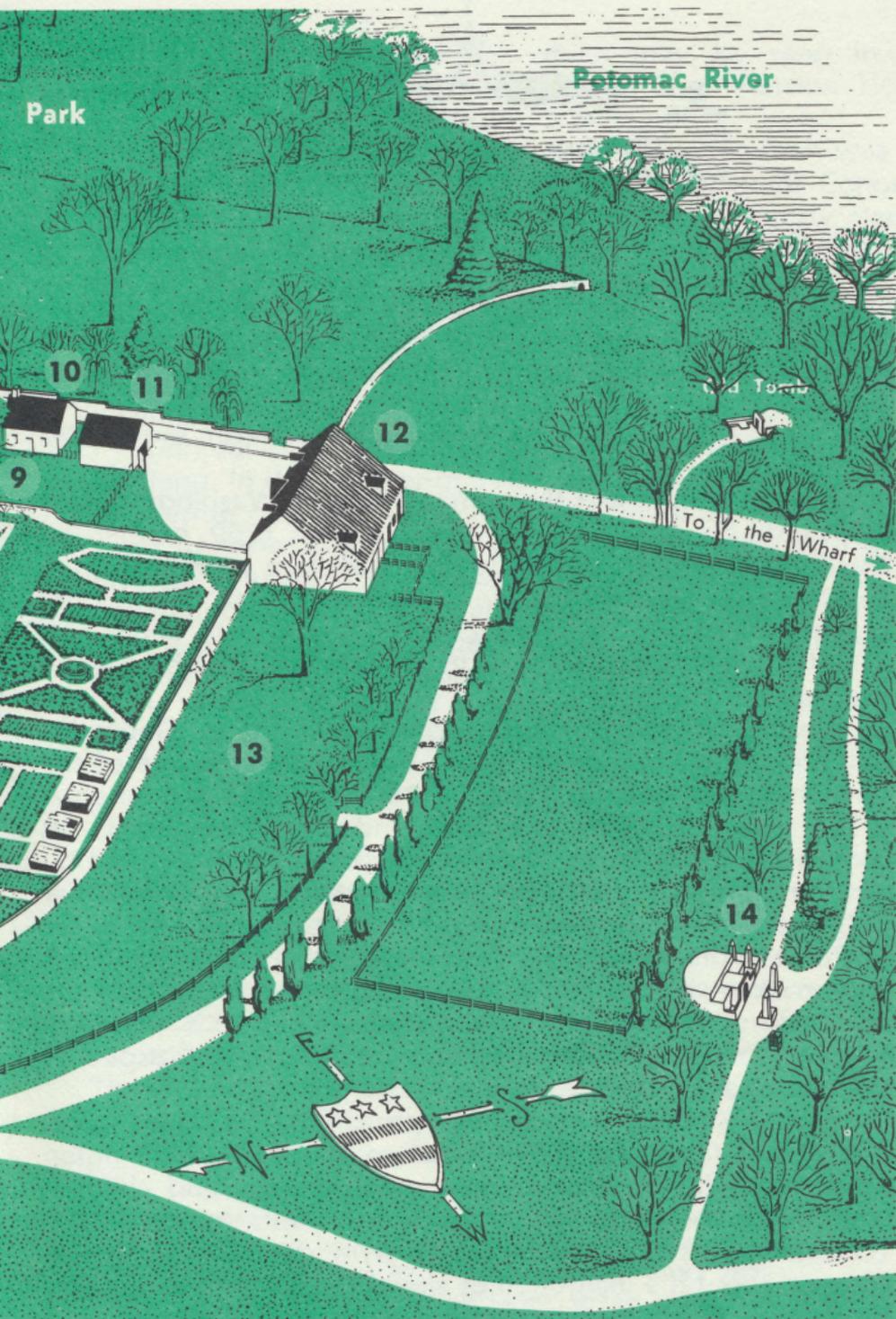


**21. Icehouse**

**22. Greenhouse and Slave Quarters** — Destroyed by fire in 1835 and reconstructed on the basis of documentary and archeological evidence on its original foundation. The salesroom and archeological museum are also located in the building.

**23. Flower Garden** — An eighteenth-century garden. The boxwood hedges are believed to have been planted in 1798 to edge the flower beds in which are displayed flowering plants familiar to eighteenth century Virginians.

**24. Schoolhouse or Garden house**



**Smoking prohibited** on entire plantation.

**Public Rest Rooms** are located beneath the Museum - see #20 on plan.

**Salesroom** is located in Building #22, Greenhouse and Slave Quarters, near entrance to Flower Garden.



## BRIEF HISTORY

*"... I can truly say I had rather be at Mount Vernon with a friend or two about me, than to be attended at the Seat of Government by the Officers of State and the Representatives of every Power in Europe."*

George Washington to David Stuart, June 15, 1790.

Mount Vernon was the home of George Washington from 1754 until his death in 1799. In January of 1759, he married Martha Dandridge Custis, a widow with two young children. Settling with his new family at Mount Vernon, Washington began to enlarge and improve his house and farms, an activity that would continue to absorb him for the rest of his life.

George Washington's first love was farming. Under his enlightened management Mount Vernon became one of the outstanding estates in Virginia. He expanded the original 2,126 acre tract into five independently managed farms comprising 8,000 acres. Early in his career, he diversified his crops, turning from soil depleting tobacco to wheat and other grains. Grain was ground at his mill for export as well as for use on the plantation. The wharf accommodated river boats and an extensive fishing industry. Despite his many absences from home, Washington's correspondence with his farm managers reveals his detailed knowledge of every aspect of the operation of the estate.

Mount Vernon was farmed principally by slave labor. In a census taken the summer before his death, Washington listed three hundred seventeen men, women and children who lived and worked on the five Mount Vernon farms. Throughout his life, Washington's writings show a constant concern about the institution of slavery and the freeing of his slaves was an important provision of his will.

The development of the Mansion, grounds and outbuildings on the service lanes was carefully planned by Washington. Today, with the exception of the reconstructed Coach House and Greenhouse-Slave Quarters, all of these buildings are original. Washington's formal landscaping and gardens have been restored. Some of the trees he planted along the serpentine walks outlining the Bowling Green still survive.

The original Vaughan Plan, which may be seen in the Museum, provides a unique view of the Mansion House complex as it appeared in 1787.

The Washingtons' peaceful life at Mount Vernon was not without interruptions. At the Second Continental Congress in June, 1775, George Washington was unanimously elected Commander-in-Chief of the American Army. He returned to Mount Vernon only twice during the eight years of the Revolutionary War, on his way to and from Yorktown in 1781. It was not until Christmas Eve of 1783 that he was finally able to return home, following the resignation of his commission to Congress.

General Washington's retirement from public life did not last long. In the summer of 1787, he travelled to Philadelphia to preside over the Constitutional Convention. In 1789, he went to New York City to begin his two terms as the first elected President. After concluding his second term in Philadelphia in 1797, Washington returned to Mount Vernon where he actively managed the estate until his death on December 14, 1799. According to his wishes, he was buried in the old family vault at Mount Vernon. Martha Washington died in May of 1802 and was entombed beside her husband.

## THE TOMB

Before his death, Washington selected the site for a new family burial vault and included directions for its construction in his will. However, the New Tomb was not built until 1831. The marble sarcophagus which contains the body of General Washington was presented in 1837 and the outer vault and enclosing wall were added at that time. Martha Washington's sarcophagus was provided by the family the following year. The Old Tomb, a short distance to the east, has been restored.

## IMPORTANT DATES

- 1674** Great grandfather of George Washington patents Mt. Vernon site.
- 1732** George Washington born in Westmoreland County, Va.
- 1743** Elder half brother, Lawrence, names estate Mt. Vernon.
- 1754** George acquires Mt. Vernon from Lawrence's widow.
- 1759** Marries Martha Dandridge Custis, widow and mother of John Parke and Martha Parke Custis.
- 1775-83** Years of the Revolutionary War. Commander-in-Chief of Continental Army.
- 1789-97** Years of the Presidency. Visits Mt. Vernon fifteen times.
- 1799** Dies and is entombed in the old family vault.
- 1802** Martha Washington dies and Mt. Vernon passes to a nephew, Bushrod Washington.
- 1858** The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association receives its charter from the Commonwealth of Virginia and purchases Mt. Vernon from John A. Washington, Jr., a great grandnephew of George Washington.

## RESTORATION AND MAINTENANCE

After Martha Washington's death maintaining the estate and hosting the large numbers of people who came to visit Mount Vernon became increasingly burdensome to successive family owners. By 1850 John A. Washington, Jr. was attempting to interest the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Federal government in purchasing Mount Vernon but without success. However, Miss Ann Pamela Cunningham, a strongly motivated South Carolinian, became very concerned about Mount Vernon's fate. In 1853 she organized the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union as a private non-profit organization to acquire the property and to hold it in trust as a national shrine. The Association's charter was granted by the Virginia General Assembly in 1858 and funds were raised throughout the nation to purchase the principal buildings and two hundred surrounding acres.

Restoration began immediately, as did efforts to refurnish the house. Year after year original furnishings and manuscripts have been returned by donation, bequest, loan, and purchase to enhance the collection and document the restoration of the buildings and grounds.

The entrance fee and sales of Mount Vernon publications and other items provide the principal revenue for continuing preservation and restoration of Mount Vernon and its exhibition to the public. To provide revenue enabling the Association to purchase, restore, and preserve objects, manuscripts and documents associated with Washington's life at Mount Vernon, the Association welcomes and encourages contributions from the public.

A **Special Gifts Fund** has been established for gifts and bequests to assist in purchasing authentic items when they become available. The Association also maintains a **Capital Improvements Fund** for contributions designed to help finance restoration, preservation, reconstruction, and new building projects.

Donations to the **Operating Fund** help to keep the admission fee low. Since the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association is a private, non-profit organization, gifts made to it qualify as tax-deductible contributions under Federal Income Tax laws. Contributions and inquiries may be sent to: Resident Director, Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, Mount Vernon, Virginia 22121.

Mount Vernon is open to the public every day in the year from 9:00 a.m. Entrance gate closes from March 1 to November 1 at 5:00 p.m. and from November 1 to March 1 at 4:00 p.m.

RESTORED AND MAINTAINED BY

*The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union*  
MOUNT VERNON, VIRGINIA 22121 (703) 780-2000