

## Lemon Hill

Robert Morris, merchant, entrepreneur and financier, accumulated land along the East bank of the Schuylkill River circa 1770. Morris was a major financier of the Revolution, signer of both the Declaration of Independence and, later, the Constitution. The estate was known as "The Hills" and included an elegant greenhouse in addition to barns and outbuildings making up this working farm. By 1799, Morris was forced to sell his property to Henry Pratt, due to financial difficulties.

Pratt, a merchant, built the current house in 1800, which he named "Lemon Hill" after the lemon trees in the greenhouse. He spent time renovating and enhancing Morris's original greenhouse, and adding to its collection of exotic plants. Pratt would open his garden free to the public.

After Henry Pratt's death in 1838, Lemon Hill became the first private property acquired to protect the city's water supply, and the home became the first park land formally acquired by the City for the creation of Fairmount Park. Since then, Lemon Hill has seen a variety of uses, including a German beer garden with feasting, a site for concerts, a restaurant, as well the home of the first director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Fiske Kimbell. He restored the house to its original appearance, and lived here from 1926 until his death in 1955.

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*The house represents the important influence of classical antiquity on early American architecture of the time. Built in the neoclassical style popular in the Federal time period, Lemon Hill features a pair of impressive curving steps leading to the double door entrance. With elegant sidelights and a delicate fanlight, this is the entry to a refined, spacious country home. The most interesting feature has to be the unusual oval rooms on three floors, with unique curved doors and fireplaces. Lemon Hill's large porches allow for sweeping, dramatic views of the city and the river. During the Victorian era, the house gained some decorative elements such as cornice brackets, extra porches, and awnings, which were quite popular at the time.*

## Strawberry Mansion

Formerly known as "Summerville," the center section of Strawberry Mansion was built in the Federal style around 1789 by renowned lawyer, judge and state legislator, William Lewis. During his lifetime, Lewis dominated the American legal field and took on countless high profile cases involving slavery, British debts, privateering, and the Aaron Burr treason case. He is credited for drafting the first law in the US abolishing slavery and was an advisor to both George Washington and Alexander Hamilton.

Summerville's second prominent resident, Judge Joseph Hemphill, added the two expansive Greek Revival wings which create the exterior of the house as we recognize it today. The name Strawberry Mansion soon followed. Hemphill also had a distinguished record, serving as Judge of Philadelphia's District Court, elected six times to Congress and serving three terms in Pennsylvania's House of Representatives.

Strawberry Mansion became part of Fairmount Park and was then soon rented out as a restaurant. During its restaurant years, Strawberry Mansion grew into such a popular institution that, by the turn of the century, the nearby neighborhood and newly erected bridge were named after it. It was used as a this restaurant and popular picnic spot into the 20th century until the Committee of 1926, a group of civic-minded women, took over as the administration of the building. Strawberry Mansion has extensive grounds and features a large collection of American and European decorative arts and antiques.