



Visit Alexandria
Mercy Street 101 Fact Sheet

As of Jan. 12, 2016

www.VisitAlexandriaVA.com/mercystreet

PBS' first American drama in 10 years is MERCY STREET, a six-part series based on real events in Civil War Alexandria, Virginia. MERCY STREET premieres Sunday, January 17 at 10 p.m. nationwide after the third episode of Downton Abbey during its final season.

To capitalize on the show, Alexandria presents more than two dozen new visitor experiences in 2016.

Get Mercy Street Certified!

Train your colleagues, staff and ALL docents and front desk staff so that visitors have the extraordinary Mercy Street-inspired experience we've been promoting. This fact sheet and a related PowerPoint are available for your use from Visit Alexandria. Contact Sara Stanton, Communications Assistant & Writer, sstanton@visitalexva.com; 703-652-5373.

Visitor Information

For information on the Alexandria connection and Mercy Street related sites, plus more than two dozen new exhibits, events and tours:

- www.VisitAlexandriaVA.com/mercystreet
- Alexandria Visitors Center, 221 King Street, or call (703) 746-3301
- See rack card/flier
- Social Media

Hashtag	#ExtraordinaryALX
Facebook	/VisitAlexandriaVA
Twitter	@AlexandriaVA
Instagram	@VisitAlexVA
Blog	blog.VisitAlexandriaVA.com

PBS Information

For information about the series, go to:

- www.pbs.org/mercy-street/home/
- Social Media

Hashtag	#MercyStreetPBS
Twitter	@PBS
Instagram	@pbsofficial

Elevator Speech

- PBS' first American drama in ten years is inspired by real events in Civil War Alexandria, Virginia.
- Mercy Street tells new stories from one of the most pivotal moments in our nation's history.
- We're thrilled that PBS and Mercy Street are bringing Alexandria's history to life.
- In celebration of the show, the city is **launching more than two dozen new tours, exhibits and events in 2016**. Details at www.VisitAlexandriaVA.com/MercyStreet.
- Premiering on Sunday, January 17 at 10 pm on PBS, Mercy Street will air during the final season of "Downton Abbey" for six episodes.
- Mercy Street is set in 1862 in Alexandria during the Civil War. The series follows the lives of two volunteer nurses on opposite sides of the conflict; nurse Mary Phinney, a staunch New England abolitionist, and Emma Green, a young Confederate belle. The two collide at Mansion House Hospital, which was the Green family's luxury hotel that has been taken over and transformed into a Union Army Hospital.
- Ridley Scott is an executive producer and the series is filmed in Virginia (Richmond and Petersburg).
- Many characters are based on real people in Alexandria during the Civil War.
- PBS worked with an all-star team of historical advisors including **Audrey Davis, Director of the Alexandria Black History Museum**.
- The show was researched extensively in Alexandria; producers spent time here getting inspired by our history.

Major Themes in the Show: Civil War medicine, women's changing roles, African Americans claiming their freedom

Brief History

Alexandria is the only place where personal stories of the Union and Confederacy converge in a city setting. Alexandria was the longest Union occupied territory of the Civil War. Virginia seceded from the Union on May 23, 1861, and due to the city's proximity to Washington, DC, Alexandria was quickly taken over as part of the defenses of Washington and was occupied by Union forces for the entire duration of the Civil War. Alexandria was a very attractive asset as a key transportation hub both on the Potomac River and on the rail system. More than 30 buildings were taken over as hospitals.

Even while ruled under military law, many residents remained in Alexandria and it became the melting pot of the region. Our city was filled with soldiers, civilians, female volunteers, doctors, wounded fighting men from both sides, spies, and African Americans including those who were free, enslaved and 'contrabands'.

What's different about Mercy Street?

It's a medical drama (think Civil War 'ER') that focuses on the homefront with the deeply entrenched allegiances present during the Civil War. What brings these characters together is their humanity. You see them wrestle with what truly matters – freedom, dignity, loyalty – when lives are on the line.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When does the show air?

- Premieres January 17 and runs for 6 episodes on PBS
- Airls Sunday nights at 10 p.m. after Downton Abbey
- Posted Sunday nights on PBS.org at 12:01 am (just after midnight)

Where can I watch?

Broadcast TV: PBS stations nationwide.

Streaming: Each episode starts streaming at 12:01 am Sunday night on all platforms.

Desktop and Mobile: Each episode will be available on the website for 2 weeks starting at 12:01 am Sunday night posting and can be found via the PBS website www.pbs.org/mercy-street/home/ and on the video show page www.pbs.org/show/mercy-street/

Streaming Devices (Apple TV, Roku, Amazon Fire, etc): Find info about PBS streaming channels/apps: www.pbs.org/anywhere/home/

Where is Mercy Street in Alexandria?

- Mercy Street is a fictional nickname created for the show
- We recommend Fairfax Street, the location of the former Mansion House Hospital, the Carlyle House (the Green family home featuring a Mansion House Hospital exhibit), and the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum, as a place to start your Mercy Street-inspired visit.

Why is the show called Mercy Street?

From Co-Executive Producer Lisa Wolfinger: "The name of the actual place, 'Mansion House Hospital' and the streets around it, King Street and Fairfax Street said very little about the series. So we came up with a fictional nickname for the street that led from the docks to the hospital: 'Mercy Street.' It fit thematically-- nurses were referred to as 'Angels of Mercy' and the theme of 'mercy' is in all the literature of the period."

Where is the show filmed?

Mercy Street was filmed in Virginia in the Richmond area. Most interiors were filmed in Richmond and exteriors in nearby Petersburg. Richmond has a robust film industry and infrastructure, offering a good value which attracted the production. Petersburg has similar streetscapes to Old Town Alexandria but is a much quieter town that was not disrupted by shutting down areas for weeks at a time with a fleet of production trailers and vehicles and even filling the street with dirt.

What are some of the sites I can visit in Alexandria?

- Mansion House Hospital (exterior view)
- Carlyle House
- Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum
- Alexandria Black History Museum

More related museums and sites to visit:

- Lyceum – Alexandria’s History Museum
- Fort Ward Museum & Historic Site
- Contraband and Freedmen Cemetery
- Ivy Hill Cemetery
- Lee-Fendall House
- The Athenaeum
- Gadsby’s Tavern

If I have just an hour or two, what should I do first to explore the stories told in Mercy Street?

- Tour Carlyle House and see exhibit ***Who These Wounded Are: The Extraordinary Stories of the Mansion House Hospital***
- Tour Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum – ***Green Family Exhibit***
- If planning in advance, consider booking a tour via the Alexandria Visitors Center 703-746-3301 ask@visitalexva.com and check website www.VisitAlexandriaVA.com/mercystreet

If I have an entire weekend and wanted a truly in-depth experience, what would you suggest?

- Book the “Have Mercy” package at the Hotel Monaco Alexandria
- Book a tour from list at www.VisitAlexandriaVA.com/mercystreet (Some require advanced reservation. Contact via the Alexandria Visitors Center 703-746-3301 ask@visitalexva.com)
- Check calendar at www.VisitAlexandriaVA.com/mercystreet for special events
- Visit more historic sites and exhibits – see list at www.VisitAlexandriaVA.com/mercystreet
- Visit Jackson 20 and Blackwall Hitch for Civil War-era throwback cocktails

How to Handle Sensitive Questions

Visitor feels “One side of the war is getting more coverage than another.”

Recommend history resources on PBS.org and www.pbs.org/mercy-street/home/

Mercy Street and our sites present all sides of the story from diverse perspectives so that people can understand the human side and how the war affected people living in Alexandria at the time.

Visitor says “I heard City of Alexandria is evaluating Confederate monuments and street names.”

City Council has appointed an advisory group to make recommendations about Confederate memorials and street names. Go to alexandriava.gov/confederate for updates and to submit feedback.

MARKETING AND PRESS

How can my business get involved?

Alexandria's restaurants, shops, attractions, hotels and more are invited to join the city's historic sites and tour operators in creating Mercy Street-inspired experiences.

- Ideas: Create a cocktail, menu item, promotion, event, watch party – get creative.
- **DON'T** use "Mercy Street" in your experience or product name. Legally that would require a license from PBS. NOT LEGAL Examples: "Beyond Mercy Street" – DON'T USE. "From Fairfax Street to Mercy Street" – DON'T USE
- **DO** come up with a clever name using series themes and character names of real historical figures. LEGAL Examples: "Have Mercy" package at Hotel Monaco Alexandria; "Confederate Flip" cocktail at Blackwall Hitch; "Beyond the Battlefield" walking tour by Lee-Fendall House; "Green Family Exhibit" at the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum; "Medical Heroism in Alexandria" land and water tour by DC Military Tours and Potomac Riverboat Co.
- **DO** use "Inspired by PBS's Mercy Street" in your description or "Mercy Street-inspired" and "Civil War-inspired" to describe a category of something.
- **Notify Visit Alexandria** of your new item so we can include in our promotions:
 - Sara Stanton, Communications Assistant & Writer, sstanton@visitalexva.com; 703-652-5373
- Use the hashtags #MercyStreetPBS #AlexandriaVA #ExtraordinaryALX when promoting on social media. Tag @AlexandriaVA on Twitter and @VisitAlexVA on Instagram.
- Include www.VisitAlexandriaVA.com/mercystreet in your publicity, to reinforce the scope and variety of the city's experiences tailor-made for fans.

Marketing Materials

Contact Melanie Fallon at the Alexandria Visitor Center, mfallon@visitalexva.com 703-746-3301 for rack cards and posters.

Press Inquiries

Press inquiries about the larger scope of Alexandria's visitor experiences, questions about the series, and inquiries about Confederate memorials should be directed to: Claire Mouledoux, Visit Alexandria Director of Communications, cmouledoux@visitalexva.com ; 703-652-5367. Claire manages press needs, connecting with appropriate parties at PBS and within the City of Alexandria.