The corner of King Street and Market Street in Leesburg, has been the center of government for Loudoun County since its formation in 1757. When Nicholas Minor divided his land into lots to establish “Georgetown,” known by 1759 as Leesburg, he knew that in order to draw people and commerce to this new town he needed the courthouse to be in the center. With that in mind he gave the justices and their heirs in perpetude two lots of land on which to build the courthouse. The courtyard then consisted of 1 acre, whereas today the court complex resides on 3.28 acres.

Many notable, and historic events have taken place on the courthouse lawn. In August of 1776 the Declaration of Independence was read at the courthouse door by the sheriff as ordered by the governor and council of Virginia. In August of 1825, General Lafayette came to Leesburg and was celebrated by the residents of the town with speeches and poetry readings by area students. The day’s festivities were concluded with a lavish banquet held under tents on the courthouse lawn for General Lafayette, former President James Monroe, President John Quincy Adams, and town leaders.

In 1861, Justice Asa Rogers became increasingly aware of Leesburg’s precarious position close to the border between the North and South. It was with this imminent danger in mind that he ordered Clerk of the Court, George K. Fox Jr., to remove twenty years of records and loose papers from the courthouse premises to keep them safe. Fox Jr. realized the value of the court records and chose to take all of the records instead of the twenty years ordered. When Union forces arrived, they found no records, and therefore the courthouse survived unscathed. Fox Jr. kept these records hidden in Campbell County until the end of the Civil War.

Because George K. Fox Jr. saved all of the county records, we were able to find the documentation of the court case Commonwealth vs. Grimes which took place in 1840. Grimes was accused of smuggling slaves out of Loudoun County to escape slavery. This case has allowed the court complex to be designated as an Underground Railroad site in the Network to Freedom as stipulated by the National Park Service.

Other events that have taken place in the courtyard include an open air market, circuses, horse shows, church events, school plays and dramatic readings. The current courtyard has included taverns, hotels, an academy, and a bank. The courthouse square has always provided space for important announcements, events, and memorials. Today, the courtyard is just as active, boasting concerts, protests, auctions, marriages, and many other social gatherings. This brochure is meant as a guide to the history of the court complex.
1. **Old Courthouse**
The first courthouse built on this site was started in 1758 and completed in 1761. There are no drawings known to exist, but court records indicate that the structure was built in this approximate location and was 40 feet by 28 feet. The first courthouse was razed to build a second larger courthouse in 1811 (pictured at right). The current “old courthouse” replaced the second structure in 1894 and is still used today.

2. **Academy Building**
The Leesburg Boy’s Academy was founded in 1797. This building held the academy until 1873 when it was moved to another location. The Clerk’s Office was moved into this building when the county purchased it in 1879.

3. **Old Valley Bank Building**
This building has seen many transformations since it was completed as a dwelling house by the second Clerk of the Court, Charles Binns Jr. between 1805 and 1817. It was then used for the Leesburg branch of the Bank of the Valley from 1818 to 1868. Used as a residence again, then as a location for the Leesburg Club, the structure was purchased in 1972 by Loudoun County and has been used as the Commonwealth’s Attorney Office.

4. **Leesburg Inn**
Many establishments have stood on this location. These include mention of a tavern stand beginning sometime before 1827 until around 1857 when William Pickett purchased the property for use as a hotel. This hotel had many owners and names over time, and was most notably known as the Leesburg Hotel/Inn from 1898 until it was demolished to make room for the building you see today.

5. **Column Bases**
The remnants of columns you see today are believed to have come from the second courthouse.

6. **Confederate Statue**
The Clinton Hatcher Camp of Confederate Veterans of Loudoun County, and the Sons & Daughters of the Confederacy of Loudoun County, erected this statue in 1908. Sculpted by Frederick William Sievers of Richmond, Va.

7. **Spirit of Loudoun**
Dedicated in 2015, this monument honors individuals and their families that fought for freedom during the Revolutionary War. Sculpted by Jay Hall Carpenter.

8. **Clerk’s Gate**
As you walk past this section of fence, take special care to notice the old Clerk’s Gate. This gate indicates the path the Clerk would have taken to an original Clerk’s Office structure that used to exist in this corner of the courthouse lot. The original Clerk’s Office was built in 1800 and razed in the late 1870s. Court records tell of a main office with storage above in a second floor for earlier records.

9. **War Monuments**
There are a series of monuments erected to memorialize the sacrifices of residents of Loudoun County throughout several wars and conflicts. The center monument is for WWI. The monument to the west is for WWII and Korea. The eastern monument is for Vietnam and those who have fallen since 9/11.

10. **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Marker**
This marker placed by the I Have A Dream Committee, established in 1992, commemorates Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s work towards equality. On his designated holiday, citizens come together to march from the courthouse to Douglass Community Center to commemorate King’s work and vision.