Kennedy House was built in 1889, four years later than the rest of the Circle, and designed in the Queen Anne style by the architectural firm of Peabody and Stearns of Boston, Massachusetts. It was enlarged to accommodate additional students in 1895. Kennedy House was the central locale of author Owen Johnson L.1910’s The Lawrenceville Stories, which was made into a movie, The Happy Years, in 1950 and later adapted into a TV miniseries in 1986. The House was named for Robert Lenox Kennedy, a close friend of John Cleve Green, the School's primary benefactor.

ROBERT LENOX KENNEDY

Robert Lenox Kennedy was a close friend of Lawrenceville benefactor John Cleve Green, and was one of the executors of Green’s estate after he died in 1875. Kennedy was born in New York City in 1822, the son of banker Daniel S. Kennedy of the banking house Maitland & Kennedy.

After graduating from Columbia College in 1844, Kennedy studied law, but instead decided to work under his father in the banking industry. In 1859, he was elected a director of the National Bank of Commerce in New York, and served as its president for ten years. But his interests were not only financial; he served on the Board of Trustees for several institutions, including the Western Union Telegraph Company, the Presbyterian and New York Hospitals in New York City, the United Railroads of New Jersey, and the Princeton Theological Seminary. Kennedy was also fond of literature and art; he was an avid collector of Spanish artist Eduardo Zamacois's works, and the president of the Lenox Library in Lenox, Massachusetts (founded by his cousin, James Lenox). Kennedy’s health began to fail in 1886, and he died at sea in 1887 while returning from a trip to Europe.

The Kennedy House colors were initially red and green, but by the early 1930s, they were changed to the current blue and gray in honor of the national flag of Scotland, the St. Andrew’s Cross. The original flag of Kennedy once possessed a set of scales, representing the balance between athleticism and scholarship. The current flag contains two polar stars which represent the possibility of a goal pursued. The stars are rumored to have been copied from the Hamill House flag.

KENNEDY HOUSE FLAG
Kennedy House received the Foresman Trophy, the Head Master’s Cup (for sportsmanship) and the Cloney Cup (for inter-House debate) several times—but is most notably a competitor for The Crutch, in an annual football game against Hamill House. In 1947, Kennedy player Sandy Souter ’49 tackled his coach, John “Jack” Chivers, breaking Chivers' leg. A few games later, Souter tackled Hamillite Jeb Wofford ’49, and the two tumbled into Chivers, breaking his crutch. Kennedy and Hamill have competed for the broken crutch ever since.

Other Kennedy traditions include the Kennedy Rent-a-Friend program, in which Lawrenceville faculty hire "Kennedyites" to run errands or perform chores, with the proceeds going to charity.

Notable Kennedy Housemasters include John C. Chivers, the former Dean of Faculty (for whom the Chivers Cup is named), and Kenneth Mills, varsity football coach and Science Master.

Kennedy alumni include Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Fox Butterfield ’57, and Bob Ryan ’64, ESPN contributor.

Kennedy House Cheer

"K-E-N-N-E-D-Y!
Circle K will never die!"
(Chanted several times in succession)