THE GATEHOUSE:
Something Old is New Again

It has taken a couple of months of often weather-delayed construction activity, but the new front gate entrance is now complete and is providing a more functional and landscaped front entrance to the 1,900-acre Stratford property.

The new entrance design returned the old brick gatehouse to its original purpose. Designed by renowned architect Fiske Kimball, the gatehouse has been restored and the entrance modified to feature the gatehouse as its focal point. Kimball supervised restoration activities at Stratford Hall, Colonial Williamsburg, Mount Vernon, and Monticello in the 1930s and 40s.

The brick gatehouse was completed March 1937 to replace a temporary wooden gatehouse built March 1935. The Society of Colonial Wars paid for the construction of the gatehouse and gates, as well as the adjacent landscaping which included dogwood trees. The entrance road was eventually paved in the 1950s. The small porch roof extension on the gatehouse was added in 1959. Stratford stopped using the brick gatehouse in 1999 because of traffic issues and it was replaced by a temporary wooden ticket house further into the Stratford property.

Separate entrance and exit lanes have been constructed on each side of the gatehouse structure, with an additional lane on the entrance side to accommodate traffic waiting for admission to the grounds. The new entrance design has improved traffic flow to make the entrance safer, especially for large vehicles and increasing event traffic.

Funds to pay for the project have come from charitable gifts from a number of Stratford Hall supporters, including many of the organization's former board members.
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To say that the passing of my friend Paul Reber was a traumatic transition for the people of Stratford would be an understatement. Life at Stratford came to a standstill and all of us were deeply affected. We are still feeling the effects of that transition. But life continues, as it has for many years here at Stratford.

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The next transition was the start-up of the Lee Family Digital Archive at Stratford. Dr. Colin Woodward has made the LFDA a working enterprise here and his interesting article can be read on page 5.

Another transition has been the overhaul of the infrastructure at the Visitor Center. I can relate to you that this was not easy and involved Stratford going without water for two extended periods. Visitors will not see the significant improvement in the air conditioning system for the collections storage room in the basement nor the I-beam replacement under the bridge porch. However, they may notice the new entrance doors and they will certainly see the newly renovated bathrooms. The staff sees them all and are most grateful for the improvements.

More recently, we started the transition to a new tenant house to replace the 1940 building that had been condemned due to extensive mold. The Westmoreland County Volunteer Fire Department held a training day in early April in the building, practicing entering procedures and holding safety drills. They then were to have conducted a real fire exercise, but the winds were much too high that evening. So in early May they returned and held a final training session. The structure is now completely gone.

This long transition since last summer will finally come to a close in early June with the arrival of our new executive, John Bacon. Of course, he will start his own transition and lead the people of Stratford in new and exciting directions. I have had the pleasure of meeting John on several occasions and I can assure you that we are in good hands. I am honored to be able to turn over the reins of operations at Stratford to an individual of his caliber.

Though the people of Stratford undergo transitions and their faces change, Stratford Hall remains as firm as ever, representing the ideals and integrity of some of the finest people our country has known. The people of Stratford, from the first occupants, Thomas and Hannah Lee and their extended family, to those who care for Stratford today have made it so. The course is straight and true, and Stratford Hall stands strong.

- Carter Refo, Executive Director
The Board of Directors of the Robert E. Lee Memorial Association announced that John S. Bacon has been named President of Stratford Hall. In this capacity, Bacon will be responsible for raising the profile of Stratford Hall’s mission, directing operations on site, representing the institution in the community and more broadly, and leveraging the property and programming to increase visitation and financial support.

Bacon previously was with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in Williamsburg, Virginia, for 28 years, where he honed his executive leadership skills through service as a member of the president’s senior staff and oversight of significant staff and financial resources.

As Senior Vice President for External Affairs, Bacon’s executive responsibilities included creation and supervision of a vibrant integrated marketing and communications strategy; oversight of the visitor center and admission ticket sales; community and government relations; publication of a quarterly history magazine; and corporate archives and records. He has also led fundraising and event initiatives.

Bacon first joined Colonial Williamsburg as in-house legal officer, assuming responsibility for all legal work at the Foundation and becoming the organization’s first in-house general counsel. He served as secretary of the Foundation with administrative responsibility for board relations throughout his tenure. Bacon represented the Foundation in many public capacities and served the community as chairman and board member of the Greater Williamsburg Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Alliance, chairman and board member of the Williamsburg Area Destination Marketing Committee, and board member of the United Way of Greater Williamsburg and the Greater Williamsburg YMCA.

“Stratford Hall’s mission, centered on the leadership of generations of the Lee family, and the range of opportunities on site are gems, and I am excited to help convey that identity to current and future audiences,” said Bacon. “The historic site arena is challenging but immensely important and enriching, and Stratford Hall, with its exceptional grounds and riverfront, has fascinating stories to tell and memorable experiences to offer.”

“John is a seasoned and proven nonprofit executive who is uniquely qualified to move the organization forward,” said Mary Wilson, Chair of Stratford’s Board of Directors. “We are very pleased to have him on board with us.”

Bacon’s appointment, which begins June 6, is the result of a comprehensive search process. “Over the past six months, the Search Committee worked with the search firm Russell Reynolds Associates in a very thorough executive search,” said Mary Jane Brock, chair of the board’s Search Committee. “John emerged as the committee’s first choice, and the Board of Directors unanimously voted to approve the committee’s recommendation during its most recent meeting.”

Bacon holds a B.A. in history from Amherst College and a law degree from the University of Virginia. He and his wife Margaret have four grown children.

Bacon succeeds Stratford Hall’s current Executive Director, Captain Carter B. Refo. Captain Refo, a Lee family descendant and graduate of the United States Naval Academy, retired from the Navy after 30 years of distinguished service and command assignments and has been serving as Stratford Hall’s leader since July 2015, following the tragic death of Stratford’s previous Executive Director Dr. Paul C. Reber.
Notes From General Cheatham’s Diary

Editor’s Note: General Cheatham was Stratford’s first resident superintendent and served in that position from 1932 to his death in 1944. Lucky for Stratford, the General recorded all sorts of plantation activities in a daily diary—copies of which are in Stratford’s archives.

Benjamin Franklin Cheatham was born in 1867 on a horse farm in Tennessee. He studied engineering at the University of the South at Sewanee, Tennessee, and worked as an engineer in his civilian profession while also serving as captain in the Tennessee National Guard. Cheatham served as a major in the Spanish-American War in 1898 and was promoted to colonel during the Filipino insurrection. His outstanding service in the Philippines brought him a Regular Army commission in the Quartermaster’s Department. Cheatham served in various Quartermaster assignments until 1915. During WWI, Cheatham was given command of an infantry regiment, for which he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal. The following years he attended the General Staff School and Army War College, and President Coolidge appointed him Quartermaster General in 1926. In 1927 Cheatham was awarded the French Legion of Honor by the President of France. Gen. Cheatham applied for retirement in 1930 after more than 31 years of service.

After retirement, Gen. Cheatham was called by the Robert E. Lee Memorial Foundation to become the first resident superintendent at Stratford. General Cheatham arrived at Stratford in July 1932, setting up his office in a room on the lower floor of the Great House. Organized, energetic, thrifty and creative, General B. F. Cheatham immediately began to make the 1100-acre property come alive. Within a few years, the Cheathams had become immersed in the local community and had turned Stratford into a working farm and historic destination. Cheatham revived Stratford’s historic horse breeding activities, started egg production, cured ham and beef cattle industries, and oversaw the reconstruction of the mill, millpond and dam, and springhouse, as well as the new construction of the director’s cabins, the first public dining room and his own house. He implemented new agricultural practices on the farm and served as host or guest speaker at many Stratford-related functions.

Excerpts from General Cheatham’s Diary

“Mrs. Hawes phoned that the Foundation would be hosts to Mrs. Roosevelt on Wednesday instead of the Senate Ladies and that lunch would be required for 100 instead of 60. Mrs. Chinn was so informed at once.” May 15, 1933

“Many evidences of the existence of pre-historic animals, or reptiles, in the Stratford Cliffs have been found in the river in the form of petrified teeth, bones, vertebra, etc. A few days ago we found what looked like a skeleton, in the face of the upper cliff about 3 feet above the water; I investigated it today and found the bones to be quite large but so soft as to require great care in excavating them, I decided to give the National Museum of Natural History an opportunity of doing the digging if they desire to do it.” May 31, 1933

“Something over two weeks ago one of our very young lambs had gotten in to the pasture with the mules and was very seriously injured, two legs, one front and one rear on the same side were broken. The lamb should have been destroyed but my family thought otherwise and proceeded to put splints on the legs and began to feed it with a bottle, today the lamb is running around with a couple of crooked but rather serviceable legs and is definitely saved to the flock.” April 30, 1934

“The opening of the store was a very satisfactory occasion on Saturday with a large and rather enthusiastic crowd and a beautiful day. I have no figures of the exact receipts but I think everyone was satisfied.” May 7, 1934

“Had quite an influx of family today so I played hooky in the afternoon.” April 9, 1934
After the Civil War, Robert E. Lee’s fate was uncertain. On April 9, 1865, Lee had surrendered his fighting force, the Army of Northern Virginia, to Ulysses S. Grant. After leaving Appomattox, Lee lived briefly in Richmond, where he tried to keep a low profile. Nevertheless, Lee had made many enemies.

On June 7, a Federal jury in Norfolk, Virginia, indicted Lee for treason. Lee appealed to General Grant, saying that Lee thought he was protected from prosecution by the conditions of his surrender. Grant agreed, and he told the new president, Andrew Johnson, that at Appomattox, both he and Lee put an end to further bloodshed, especially a guerrilla war. Lee believed he and his men should not be again bothered by federal authorities, so long as they remained good citizens.

On June 13, Lee wrote a letter to Johnson, asking that the president restore his citizenship. Grant supported his former adversary, and he threatened to resign should the Johnson Administration arrest Lee. Johnson soon backed down. With Grant’s help, Lee did not need to worry again about being put on trial, and possibly facing imprisonment or even execution for treason. But Lee was, technically, still a man without a country.

On October 2, the general took two important oaths. The first was his oath as President of Washington College, what would become after his death Washington and Lee University. That same day, Lee also took an oath of allegiance to the United States government. His oath, however, which he had sent to Secretary of State William Seward, was put in a file and forgotten about, and it remained there for more than 100 years.

In 1970, an archivist sifting through records in the National Archives found Lee’s oath and the general’s application for pardon. In 1975, Congress at last restored Lee’s citizenship.

Stratford Hall has several copies of Senate Resolution 23, which posthumously restored Lee’s full rights of citizenship, retroactive to June 13, 1865, when Lee had written to President Johnson. The resolution, which is available online at the Lee Family Digital Archive, noted, “this entire Nation has long recognized the outstanding virtues of courage, patriotism, and selfless devotion to duty of General R. E. Lee, and has recognized the contribution of General Lee in healing the wounds of the War Between the States.” On August 5, 1975, President Gerald Ford made it official: Lee was again a United States citizen.
SPECIAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The following are special funding needs at Stratford Hall. We invite our supporters to underwrite – in full or partially – any of the programs below. For more information, please contact Kim Packett at the Stratford Hall Development Office at (804) 493-1970 or kpackett@stratfordhall.org.

School Tours Education Fund

Stratford Hall is known for its quality school tours program, attracting children from school districts as far away as Northern Virginia and Maryland. Local schools on Virginia’s Northern Neck, however, have had difficulty attending in recent years due to lack of funding. Several area donors helped Stratford Hall establish a School Tours Education Fund to provide financial assistance to schools on the Northern Neck. This made it possible for nearly 1,000 students to visit Stratford in 2015. Now, the School Tours Education Fund is nearly depleted.

Much can be learned from the visionary members of the Lee family – its entrepreneurs, patriots and forward thinking women – and members of the Lee’s plantation community. During their visit to Stratford, students experience a tour of the Great House, the historic home of the Lees, the militia in Virginia, colonial cooking, a tour of the gristmill and the opportunity to hunt for fossils on the beach. A visit to Stratford Hall helps students to better understand American history, and inspires future historians, architects, museum professionals, archaeologists, paleontologists, writers, and artists. $5,000

Public Programs –

Robert E. Lee Birthday Celebration

Celebrating Robert E. Lee’s birthday is one of Stratford Hall’s biggest annual events. As many as 800 guests visit on January 19. Next year will mark the 210th anniversary of his birth! We will have one celebration on Thursday, January 19 as well as a larger public event on Saturday, January 21. Children participate in a historic scavenger hunt, arts and crafts, and other activities. The Civil War Civilians of Spotsylvania, a historic interpreter’s organization, demonstrate for visitors civilian life in Spotsylvania County, Virginia, during the Civil War. Also in attendance is General Robert E. Lee, portrayed by interpreter Al Stone. This celebration helps make history come alive to children and adults. And, of course, there’s birthday cake! Admission to the event is free every year and includes a free self-guided tour of the Great House.

Special benefits for $1,000+ sponsors including dinner with General Lee! $8,000
STRATFORD INTERNS UPDATE:
From Stratford Hall to one of America’s Newest Museums

Internships at Stratford Hall benefit both the organization and the young professionals who study here. Over the years many hardworking students have gained hands-on experience in collections management, preservation trades, research, interpretive education programs, and more. Below you will see how an internship at Stratford Hall has helped a young professional advance in her chosen field. In addition to providing students with hands-on learning experiences, internships provide important project support for Stratford Hall and allows us to give back to the museum community. And, thanks to these internships, we have hundreds of ambassadors for Stratford Hall throughout museum and education institutions across the country.

Lindsay Laws
2013 Summer Intern

George Washington University, M.A.
in Museum Studies with a concentration in Collections Management

While still a graduate student, Lindsay Laws had the interesting assignment of cataloguing images from two very different time periods: Stratford Hall’s collection of 250 cartes de visite from the 1800s to over 1,600 digital images from the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Lindsay’s work has allowed us to easily access and identify images from that time period. Lindsay worked under the direction of Judy Hynson, Stratford Hall’s Director of Research and Library Collections. According to Judy, “Lindsay was a particularly talented intern…great with a camera and scanner…and blessed with an extremely organized mind. She was a lot of fun, always upbeat and seeking challenges. Lindsay had great editorial skills and helped her intern colleagues to perfect the required blog posts on their projects. Lindsay’s work during her summer internship helped us to ‘save’ for posterity the large number of archival images on-out dated 3 1/2” floppies.”

Where is she now? Lindsay is the Collections Coordinator at the National Museum of African American History and Culture – the new Smithsonian museum that’s opening in the fall of 2016. As you can imagine, with the museum’s opening mere months away, her days are very busy.

From Lindsay: “My knowledge of handling carte de visites at Stratford has come in handy, as we have quite a few in our collection! Next month I will begin helping with the installation of artifacts in the new museum building. Everything is moving along at a very fast pace as our opening date approaches! On a daily basis, I rehouse artifacts and prepare them for transportation to the Mall. I have also been conducting research to determine the appropriate environmental levels for each display case. This meant that I became very familiar with the nearly 2,500 artifacts going on display. Talk about information overload!”

Lindsay is just one of many preservation, museum and scholarly professionals whose careers were enriched through an internship at Stratford Hall. For more information about how you could become a sponsor for Stratford’s internship program at a funding level of $1,000, contact Kimberly Packett in the Development Office at (804) 493-1970.
Summer Teacher Institute
Will Feature Environmental History

Twenty-five teachers from across Virginia and the nation will have a unique opportunity to participate in a practical educational experience during the 2016 Stratford Hall Summer Institute for Teachers held July 20-23. This four-day workshop set on the grounds of Stratford Hall, will feature lectures from four nationally respected scholars and workshops led by a nationally prominent master teacher.

The 2016 Stratford Hall Summer Institute will offer teachers:

- A practical knowledge of Native American adaptations to environmental changes between 1300 and 1700 which created a complex cultural and diplomatic landscape to which European newcomers were forced to adapt.
- An understanding of the complexities of colonial land ownership and its repercussion among native Virginia Indians.
- Application of the concepts of Geo-literacy as a learning framework which promotes interdisciplinary inquiry.
- An awareness of the unique geography of the Chesapeake Tidewater.
- A practical knowledge of early colonial Virginia history through exposure to selected primary source materials.
- Application methods to select primary source materials in the construction of lesson plans that complement existing Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs) or another state’s curriculum guide and/or standards.
- Improved technological methods to facilitate the acquisition of primary source materials that complement classroom applications.

Faculty for this year’s institute will be Dr. Michael Allen, Dr. Kevin Hardwick, Dr. James Rice, Dr. Edward Kinman, and Ms. Regina Stuck, Master Teacher. A certificate of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for 30 hours will be awarded within three weeks of the conclusion of the Institute to each teacher who has met the Institute expectations set forth under the supervision of the master teacher.

Interested individuals should apply as soon as possible; the deadline for application is midnight July 11, 2016. The costs that participants will have to cover are their transportation to and from Stratford Hall and three evening meals. To apply, please print out a 2016 Stratford Hall Summer Institute for Teachers application form and compose a 250-450 word essay on “The Critical Use of Primary Sources in the Classroom” and either mail them to Jon Bachman, Manager of Public Events, Stratford Hall, 483 Great House Road, Stratford, VA 22558, fax to 804-493-0333, or e-mail to jbachman@stratfordhall.org.

The 2016 Stratford Hall Summer Teacher Institute is sponsored by the late Mary Dell Pritzlaff, Dr. Gaye Dawson, and the Virginia Geographic Alliance.
Cheatham revived Stratford's historic horse breeding activities, started egg production, cured ham and...
Join us on July 4 from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

We will be having a wide range of family-friendly activities on, or near, the Oval:

- Treakle’s Train will provide barrel-train rides around the festival site on the Oval— for children and adults
- Hands-on Geocaching — Three local geocaching groups will provide displays and activities (Geocaching is a recreational activity of hunting for and finding a hidden object by means of GPS coordinates. Stratford Hall has a number of objects hidden—and more added just for this event!)
- Free sketches by local artist/caricaturist Phil McKenney
- Dressing up in colonial period costumes — provides fun and “photo-opp”
- Kids’ Scavenger Hunt — kids will receive prizes in the Gift Shop for completing the hunt and parents are encouraged to assist in the hunt
- Westmoreland County 4H Livestock Club — showing miniature varieties of familiar farm animals near the goat pen area
- “Signing the Declaration of Independence” — signing document facsimiles with quill pens
- Face painting
- History and the Lees
- The Art Tent
- Colonial games — Stratford’s interpretive staff will coordinate games in various places on the Oval
- Great House will be open for free visitor walk-throughs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Gift Shop will be open 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- Dining Room (The Inn at Stratford Hall) will be open for lunch 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
- Plan B Bar-B-Que will be selling its famous BBQ, sides and soft drinks
- Fossil collecting and identification opportunities in beach area
- Hiking trails open, weather permitting
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- Carter Refo, Executive Director

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Enjoy Fall at Stratford Hall!

This popular event features wines from Virginia wineries and oysters from Chesapeake Bay and Tidewater Oyster growers. Savor the varied tastes of oysters and a wide variety of seafood options. Enjoy other specialty foods, arts and crafts, family entertainment, FREE self-guided Great House tours and much more!

SAVE THE DATE! SEPTEMBER 17 & 18, 2016

SATURDAY 10 AM - 6 PM & SUNDAY 10 AM - 5 PM

For info, to participate as a sponsor, volunteer or vendor, call 804-493-1972,jbachman@stratfordhall.org.
Calendar of Events

**July 4** The Lees and Independence
FREE ADMISSION on July 4 with a ton of activities for the whole family, including barrel train rides, a scavenger hunt, arts and crafts, and face painting. Children can learn about historic clothing while dressing up in colonial garb, practice their penmanship with quill pens as they sign the Declaration of Independence, and learn about life in the 1700s with George Washington’s Young Friends of Fredericksburg, a group of living history interpreters. 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**July 5–7, August 2–4** Grandparent/Grandchild Camp
Our popular summer camp will be offered in July and August. Three days of fun-filled, 18th-century activities offer a memorable family bonding experience. This year campers will experience programs and activities, such as cooking apple pies over an open hearth, milling, colonial music, and basket weaving. Playing colonial games and hunting for shark teeth are also favorite activities. Registration available on Stratfordhall.org.

**July 20–23** 6th Annual Summer Teacher Institute: The Environmental History of the Virginia Tidewater: 1300 - 1700
This institute is open to middle and high school educators and focuses on how geography has helped shape the history of Tidewater Virginia from 1300 to 1700. For more information see page 8 of this issue.

**August 20** Stratford Under Our Feet
Noted paleontologist Dr. Robert Weems offers a lecture followed by a field trip to the beach and cliffs areas, discussing Stratford Hall’s unique paleontological history. Pre-registration is required. Information for this event can be found on Stratfordhall.org. 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**September 17 & 18** 10th Annual Stratford Hall Wine & Oyster Festival
Mark your calendar now to join us for our expanded wine festival which will include many local oyster growers this year. See page 11 of this issue for more information. Be sure to check Stratfordhall.org for updated event information and the opportunity to buy discounted advance tickets. Also sign up on the website for our e-newsletter. Discounted tickets now on sale!