



THE GENERALS REDOUBT

ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024

FANCY HILL

One of TGR's most significant accomplishments in the last year was the purchase of Fancy Hill. An ante bellum estate located about 7 miles from the Washington & Lee campus. The cash purchase was made possible via a gift received by the Center for American Ideals and Jeff Southmayd. Closing occurred in early May 2023, and the sellers departed in late September.

Fancy Hill will become TGR's headquarters, a location for seminars and other events and a gathering place for students, faculty, and alumni. Prior to closing, TGR team members and legal counsel had multiple meetings with Rockbridge County land use and zoning officials concerning existing permissible uses and possible additional uses in the future. (Please see the prior eblasts, our webpage or prior postings on Facebook for more details.)

Rex Wooldridge was instrumental in interviewing potential design, architectural and renovation firms. Frazer and Associates, a Staunton firm with substantial experience renovating historic structures was selected for the engineering and design work. They began work in the second half of 2023 and have made significant progress, producing comprehensive drawings and plans, as well as participating in the interviewing of potential contractors for the renovations.

On behalf of TGR, Rex and his committee interviewed several renovation firms from The Valley and across The Commonwealth. Several expressed serious interest in the project, only to later fail to provide an acceptable contract or a realistic price.

Earlier this year, TGR contracted with a Lexington construction company to begin the renovation work, which started this month. The complete renovation is expected to take between 12-18 months and cost over one million dollars. TGR has raised over \$949,790 for the renovation and obviously this is an ongoing fundraising project.

In the meantime, John Lane and Barry Brown have spent many hours assessing and correcting immediately needed maintenance, cataloguing the furniture, artwork and other items that were purchased with the house and preparing Fancy Hill for the renovations. Margaret Robertson has also assisted with events and maintenance, as well as managing swag storage and distribution from Fancy Hill.

John Lane arranged for a trusted Lexington alum to reside at Fancy Hill, satisfying TGR's insurance obligations, until construction timetables alter this arrangement.

TGR held a very successful Founders Day reception on Jan. 20 at Fancy Hill. John, Barry and Tom Rideout have been meeting with local officials and neighbors, updating them on the plans and progress at Fancy Hill.

Fancy Hill will continue to be the focus of many of TGR's efforts and activities while the renovations continue.



FOUNDERS DAY CELEBRATIONS

In June of 2021, when officially reaffirming the Washington and Lee University name, the Board of Trustees announced that Founders Day, a 150+ year tradition, would be discontinued. As a result, TGR decided to sponsor the celebration until the university hopefully restores it to the official calendar. Since January of 2022, we have done so. This year events were held on January 19th in Lexington at the Georges Hotel and the following day at our new headquarters, known as Fancy Hill, just south of town in Glasgow. Other celebrations took place in Roeland Park, KS and Houston, TX, and a few weeks later in Birmingham, AL.



The Founders Day program was expanded this year to include a third honoree, the Rev. William Graham, who served as the Rector of the then newly named Liberty Hall Academy. This was due to Augusta Academy being moved to a new site in Rockbridge



County in the mid 1770's. Graham served as Rector of Liberty Hall Academy from 1776 to 1796. He was responsible for soliciting from George Washington the 100 shares of James River Canal Stock that beefed up the school's endowment and led to its renaming as Washington Academy and subsequently Washington College. A closing toast was offered to namesakes Washington and Lee, as well as William Graham.

Plans are underway to expand future celebrations to other cities with active alumni cohorts.

ALUMNI FREE SPEECH ALLIANCE (AFSA) EXPANSION

In the fall of 2021, TGR joined with similar groups from Princeton, Cornell, University of Virginia and Davidson College to create the Alumni Free Speech Alliance. As of today, there are 25 groups from coast to coast, with more in the pipeline. TGR is represented on the Board Executive Committee and its Membership Committee. A full member listing is available at: <https://www.alumnifreespeechalliance.org/find-an-existing-alumni-group/>. We have worked closely with the broad membership through bi-weekly Issue Forums and on special projects, most recently including relatively nearby UVA, UNC, Davidson and VMI.

In particular, TGR joined with a group of AFSA members before the U.S. Supreme Court in *Speech First v. Sands* (Virginia Tech) on petition for writ of certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit concerning a Bias Policy Claim that was successfully settled. TGR believes AFSA has enormous potential as both a grass roots organization, addressing free expression issues at the local college or university level, and offering a national voice as well.

MOCK CON 2024 PARTICIPATION

During the fall of 2021, TGR officers began meetings with members of the Mock Con Student Committee to discuss how as an active alumni group we could be helpful to their planned activities leading up to the 28th Mock Convention itself scheduled for early February 2024. This included financial support for the appearance of former Vice President Mike Pence in the spring of 2023, including an interview with him by Bret Baier of Fox News. It also included financial support for Mock Con speakers Mike Pompeo, Secretary of State in the Trump Administration, and Kayleigh McEnany, President Trump's Press Secretary and current Fox News Host. TGR also actively participated in the recruitment as Mock Con speaker of New York University Professor

Jonathan Haidt, who delivered a fascinating talk on the current state of Gen Z, which was very well received.

Mock Con was held at the Tennis Center with a potential audience of 2000. It was well attended and beautifully run. TGR was honored and pleased to be able to participate in this highly successful, student-managed event.



CENTER FOR AMERICAN IDEALS (CAI)

The Center for American Ideals (CAI) was funded by a donation arranged by Board of Director Member Jeff Southmayd, and, as noted above made possible the cash purchase of Fancy Hill. CAI, through TGR, was a significant supporter of The Mock Convention, and funded several speakers, including former Vice President Mike Pence and former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. CAI/TGR has also held several campus events.

Jeff resigned from the Board of Directors last month and is establishing The Southmayd Center for American Ideals. TGR and this new group anticipate joint projects in the coming months and years.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT

As many of you recall, TGR hired an interim Executive Director about two years ago, and that did not result in a long-term arrangement. Since then, TGR has continued to function on a volunteer basis, with assistance from Margaret Robertson. The

Executive Committee decided early this year to explore the feasibility of hiring a full-time Executive Director. While we have received occasional inquiries about this position, The Executive Committee has decided to engage a professional search firm to assist TGR in locating ED candidates who hopefully are alumni with strong fund raising and prior management experience.

TGR is in the process of conducting due diligence and evaluation of a firm in Washington, DC that only works with non-profits. TGR expects to engage them by the end of the month.

TGR SUPPORT OF THE WASHINGTON & LEE SPECTATOR

TGR Assistance with Spectator Accomplishments include hosting Matt Walsh at Lee Chapel on September 18th (\$10,000 Contribution) in collaboration with Young America's Foundation. The Chapel was at capacity with over 400 individuals in attendance. The video of Matt Walsh's speech has received over 110,00 views on YouTube and over 1.3 million views on X (Twitter).

The Spectator has expanded its staff with the help of The Generals Redoubt. This year The Spectator hired 10 Staff Members including 6 Freshmen, which is quadruple growth over this time last year.

In addition, the Spectator website was redesigned by Byler Media in order to more closely resemble the WSJ or NYT websites. The Generals Redoubt contributed \$2,500 towards the new design. The Spectator website counts 17,675 visits year-to-date with increased article production of 22 articles published in Q1 of 2024.

SWAG/TGR MERCHANDISE

The Generals Redoubt has created a catalog of promotional merchandise that is offered to everyone, free of charge. The catalog consists of items such as caps, coffee mugs, water bottles, koozies, t-shirts, and hoodies. The catalog is available on our website, our social media accounts, and is easily emailed upon request.

Recently, TGR has recruited the assistance of two W&L students to assist with distribution of our merchandise on campus. Austin and Anthony are doing an amazing job! They have distributed hundreds of items since February and have been restocked several times, in addition to administrating the Instagram account for SWAG requests.

Below is a list of items that we have as well as the quantity of items given to Austin and Anthony for distribution.

<div>SWAG</div> <div>STUDENT DISTRIBUTION</div>						
ITEM DESCRIPTION	SM	MED	LG	XLG	XXLG	TOTAL
Retain The Name T-shirt			4	3		7
Long Sleeved Chapel Front T-Shirt		3	4			7
Hoodies/Sweatshirts		3	2	2		7
HATS						
RE Lee signature (blue)						3
General Lee's College						
Blue						3
Yellow						3
White						3
General Lee's Law School						
Blue						3
White						3
Cloth Bag "Save Lee Chapel"						10
Canvas Tote "Traditions"						10
Koozies						
Blue						20
White						20
ITEM DESCRIPTION						TOTAL
Water/Sport Bottle "Founders Mark"						10
Glass Bottle "Founders Mark"						3
"Founders Mark" Sticker/Label						14
"Founders Mark" Laminated						17
Traveller Coffee Mug						12

All TGR SWAG is now stored at Fancy Hill where we have a designated space for our promotional materials. Shelves have been constructed and materials are organized and easily administered.

Many of our promotional items are very popular, particularly the hoodies. Most days, if the weather is cool, several hoodies can be seen being worn around Lexington.

"UN-CANCEL ROBERT E. LEE, AN OPEN LETTER TO THE TRUSTEES OF WASHINGTON AND LEE" BY GIB KERR

Gib Kerr has written a book titled "Un-Cancel Robert E. Lee, An Open Letter to the Trustees of Washington and Lee". The book is currently in the final copyediting stages and is scheduled for release by Bombardier Books (an imprint of Post Hill Press) on May 21.



The book is both a defense of Lee—largely a response to Ty Seidule's negative portrayal of Lee—as well as a critique of modern cancel culture and woke academia. It is also a plea for W&L to restore Lee to his rightful place of honor on campus, starting with returning Lee Chapel to its status quo ante. And it is an attempt to tell the truth about Lee that, although opposed to slavery and secession, he believed it was his duty to defend Virginia, and he emerged as the leading voice for reconciliation after the war.

The Generals Redoubt has pre-ordered three thousand books for distribution to friends, supporters, and students. We are planning a May fundraiser in conjunction with the book release.

ANNUAL FUND

The Annual Fund ending June 30, 2023 raised \$1,000,013 from 855 individual donors. We have developed a large base of financial supporters, including many major contributors who have provided us with repeat gifts.

Our current Annual Fund, which will end June 30, has raised \$731,239 from 514 individual donors so far. We are on target to hit our goal of \$1,000,000 for the fiscal year and are planning a major fundraising initiative in May.