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Librarian and Researcher Judy Hynson to Retire from Stratford Hall After 50 Years

Stratford, VA (October 26, 2022) – Stratford Hall announced today that, after 50 years of dedicated service to Stratford Hall, long-time employee Judy Hynson will retire at the end of 2022. Judy’s commitment to Stratford Hall began in 1965 when, as a Girl Scout volunteer working on a community service badge, she gave interpretative tours of the four major outbuildings on the weekends. Once trained for Great House tours, she became a part-time interpreter working weekends and summer through high school and college.

While teaching junior high in Westmoreland County, Judy learned that Edith Healy, who originally trained her as a guide, was retiring. Hired by Stratford Hall Resident Superintendent Admiral Bass, Judy became part-time Custodian of Records and then part-time Library Assistant overseeing collections management, inventories for insurance, and generally answering any questions about the history of Stratford Hall. Her role evolved into librarian leading to her current role as Director of Research and Library Collections at the Jessie Ball duPont Library.

“While we will miss Judy tremendously in retirement, we are delighted that she will be staying on part-time to maintain her connection to our beloved site and its history. There is no one who can replace Judy’s vast institutional knowledge! Working with Judy over the past several years has been professionally rewarding, and also really fun. Judy is the kind of person you could sit and talk with for hours, and you’d love every second of it. Her dedication to Stratford over the past five decades is unmatched, and we are a stronger institution because of it.”

Judy's successor, Dr. Gordon Blaine Steffey, will join Stratford Hall as the new Director of Research and the Jessie Ball Ball duPont Library, beginning November 1. Dr. Steffey holds degrees from St. Olaf College, Yale University, and the University of Virginia. He is joining Stratford Hall after almost 20 years as a professor at Randolph College, where he was the Barbara Boyle Lemon '57 & William J. Lemon Professor of Religion and Philosophy. An award-winning professor, Dr. Steffey will bring his passion and dedication to research and education to Stratford Hall.

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About Stratford Hall

A National Historic Landmark, Stratford Hall preserves the legacy of the Lee family and its plantation community, inspires an appreciation of America's past, and encourages commitment to the ideals of leadership, honor, independent thought and civic responsibility.

Established by Thomas Lee in the 1730s, Stratford Hall is one of the great houses of American history. Four generations of the Lee family passed through its stately doors including Richard Henry Lee and Francis Lightfoot Lee, the only two brothers to sign the Declaration of Independence, Revolutionary War hero "Light Horse Harry" Lee and his son, Civil War General Robert E. Lee, who was born at Stratford Hall in 1807. For more information, visit www.stratfordhall.org.