



## ***Historic Rock Ford After Dark***

By day, the sunlit rooms of General Edward Hand's 18<sup>th</sup> Century Georgian mansion are frequented by guides and visitors from across the nation who have come to enjoy the beauty of its collections while learning about the lives of those who lived and labored here during the early years of the American Republic. After darkness falls, however, Historic Rock Ford takes on an entirely different atmosphere in which the echoes of the past begin to feel very present. The sounds of the old house and the wind in the ancient trees which surround it that go unnoticed during the day are now heard. Shadows appear to move within darkened corners. The legends and stories of hauntings that have

surrounded the mansion since the eighteenth century suddenly become more difficult to dismiss. We welcome you to come and discover the rare opportunity of being in the mansion after dark. Will you experience the presence of those who, in life, inhabited these rooms?

This October, our Board President, our Executive Director and our Curator will be leading intimate, after dark tours of the mansion in which they will share some of the many legends and accounts of ghostly activity at Rock Ford over the centuries. Each tour will be limited to eight adults so early reservations are advised to avoid disappointment. Additionally, because the rooms will be shrouded in darkness with only a few candles being lit, each participant must be able to navigate in areas with limited visibility and be able to go up and down stairs with confidence. *Historic Rock Ford After Dark* does not seek to startle visitors but, rather, to invite them to enter the mysterious world of Rock Ford's haunted past—in the dark.

Some of the content that will be shared is of an unsettling nature which is not for the faint of heart. Consequently, this tour is not recommended for children.

Tickets are \$25 and include an 18<sup>th</sup> century inspired hot buttered rum served by the outside fire following your tour. (Non-alcoholic cider also available.)

*Historic Rock Ford After Dark* tours are scheduled for Thursday, October 15, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> with tours scheduled for 7, 8 and 9 pm. In accordance with CDC guidelines, mask wearing is required. Reservations are to be made online through Yapsody ([www.rockford.yapsody.com](http://www.rockford.yapsody.com)). Proceeds for *Historic Rock Ford After Dark* will be used to support educational programs at Rock Ford.

Historic Rock Ford acknowledges and thanks our 2020 Season Sponsors for their generous support:

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## 2019-20 Membership Appeal

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## Yes, We Are Open for Tours!

We are happy to report that even on a limited tour schedule we are still receiving visitors. We cautiously opened for tours on July 7, making Historic Rock Ford one of the few museums open in Lancaster County. Tours have been going as well as can be under the circumstances with no major issues. Visitors to Historic Rock Ford have been extremely appreciative of our willingness and zeal to re-open safely. We are thankful to all visitors who venture out to take a tour! Many of our volunteers are glad to be back, and we will continue to listen to all feedback we receive moving forward.



Historic Rock Ford is currently open Tuesday through Sunday with limited tour times at 10:00 am, 12:00 pm and 2:00 pm. Our normal tour season ends on the last day of October, and we expect to follow that trend. Operating on a limited tour schedule gives us time to clean in between tours. We have been using disinfecting wipes to clean the door handles, banisters, chairs, and any other surfaces that visitors come in contact with. We have limited the maximum number of visitors on a tour to 10 people instead of accepting up to 20 visitors at a time as we usually do. All visitors and tour guides are required to wear masks while on a tour. Thank you to all our hardworking volunteers for allowing us to once again welcome visitors to Historic Rock Ford!

## Announcing an Exciting New Yuletide Program!



Rock Ford special event coordinators are putting the finishing touches on an exciting new concept for Yuletide 2020! Our traditional after-Christmas celebration left little to the imagination with many opportunities for visitors to interact face to face with dancers, cooks, musicians, and other guests but, this year calls for something altogether different.

Our new program, *Silent Night*, is designed to thoroughly immerse participants in the atmosphere of a winter's evening in the late 18th century as they tiptoe about the candlelit mansion, eavesdropping on the residents who always seem to be just a room away. Visitors sense activity all around which remains unseen.

The evening will conclude with visitors following the family to the scene of a glittering Masquerade Ball held in a large decorated tent by the Barn and attended by all the finest ladies and gentleman of Lancaster, dressed to the nines and ready to show off their skills on the dance floor.

This new and imaginative way of celebrating Yuletide at Rock Ford will allow us to share in the magic of the season while still complying with current health and safety guidelines. Watch our website for more information.



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The Rock Ford Foundation is a  
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The Foundation is supported by  
admissions, gifts, grants, earned  
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fundraising events, and bequests.

#### **Fragraria Vesca in the Kitchen Garden**

By Cynthia Trussell, Chair of Historic Rock Ford Garden Committee

The next time you visit the Rock Ford Kitchen Garden, look for our heirloom strawberries. *Fragraria Vesca*, also known as the Woodland Strawberry, Fraises de Bois, or commercially sold as the Alpine Strawberry, is one of several strawberry varieties native to North America. This humble berry is found throughout most of North America, including Pennsylvania, and was most likely what Native Americans and colonists were eating when Edward Hand arrived in the New World. The fruit of Alpine Strawberries are distinctly different from their modern, hybridized counterparts, in both size and flavor. As far back as the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, strawberry hybridization had been attempted with native European varieties, but it was not until the introduction of strawberries discovered in the New World, that hybridization of strawberries began to see progress. The development of the modern strawberry advanced in fits and starts for the next two centuries, and finally, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, strawberries began to look like the fruit we buy in the supermarket today.



Alpine Strawberries are herbaceous perennials that do not grow the characteristic runners of modern strawberries, but instead are rather well behaved. They can be started from seed, though they can be finicky. In the right conditions of consistent moisture, well drained, and organically enriched soils, Alpine Strawberries will self-seed, providing a gardener with a few extra volunteers a season. They can also be easily propagated through division in the Spring. At just 1/5<sup>th</sup> the size of the average modern strawberry, the fruits are quite small, so plan on having several plants to be able to add a little sweetness to your morning bowl. This unmistakable berry, with its sweet, fragrant scent, is an interesting and enjoyable alternative to it larger, more familiar modern cousin.