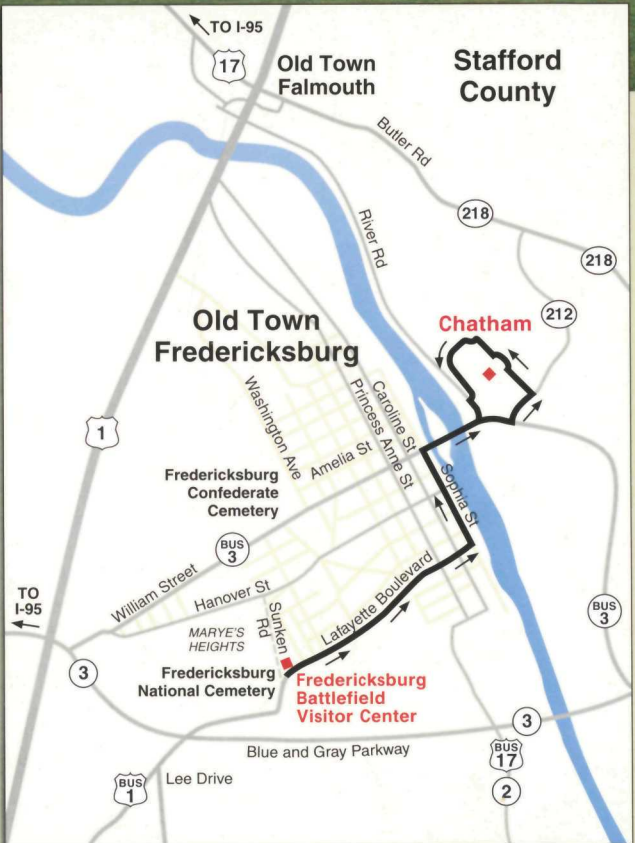
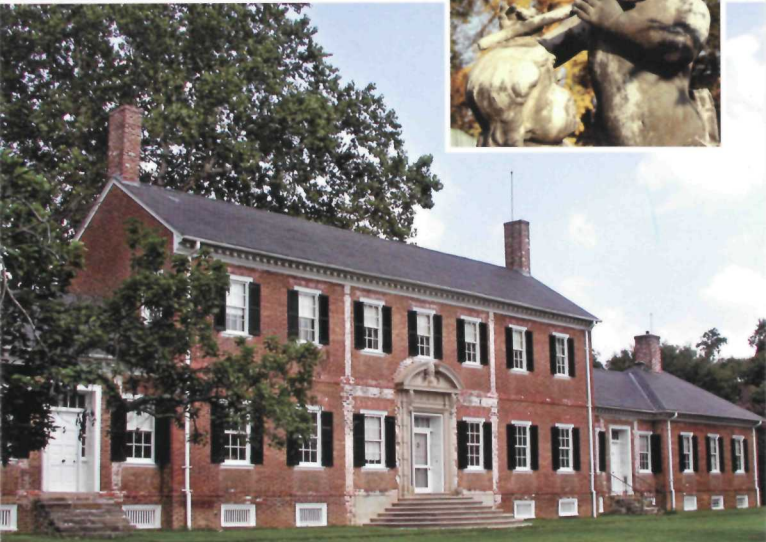


Chatham



Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park



From its commanding position on the bluffs of Stafford overlooking the Rappahannock River, Chatham looks down benevolently on the town of Fredericksburg, as it has done for the past 250 years. Its builder, William Fitzhugh, built the house in 1771 to be the center of his 1,228-acre estate. Here he hosted George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and other influential men of his time.

President Abraham Lincoln came to Chatham during the Civil War. So too did Clara Barton, Walt Whitman, and a host of Northern generals. During the Battle of Fredericksburg, the Union army occupied the house, first as a headquarters and later as a field hospital. Hundreds of wounded men came to the house. Many died there.



Chatham too suffered. Union soldiers tore paneling from its walls and used it as firewood, then scribbled their names on the plaster beneath. Outside they cut down trees, trampled the gardens, and destroyed fencing. By the war's end, Chatham was a scene of desolation.

And so it would remain for fifty years. Owners in the 1920s, however, renovated the house and grounds, restoring Chatham to its former beauty. Since then, it has regained its position as one of Virginia's finest homes.

Today, Chatham is administered by the National Park Service (540-654-5121; www.nps.gov/frsp). The building and grounds are open daily, free to the public, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Come share its history.

