

President's Letter

Although these are the last months of my tenure as president of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Lou and I have not done a lot of reminiscing. Rather, the focus has been on day-to-day operations, ongoing projects – especially the development of the Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center and Smith Education Center – as well as long-term planning.

In addressing these tasks, I do not work alone. Far from it. As has been the case for the past 23 years, my efforts are in concert with colleagues whose expertise, experience, and enthusiasm make work a pleasure and achievement inevitable.

It is not possible here to recognize all the current and former staff members whose labors, both intellectual and physical, have contributed so much to Monticello over these years. But I would like to take this opportunity to single out a small, representative set of current colleagues: those who have been here longer than we have.

The “junior” members of this group are Peggy Cornett, who joined the staff

in 1983 and has been director of the Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants since 1992; Glen Slosson, currently director of visitor operations, who has served our visitors' needs in a number of capacities since 1982; and Interpreter Sally Meyer, who has introduced thousands of those visitors to Jefferson and Monticello on tours she has been conducting since 1980.

As director of gardens and grounds since 1977, Peter Hatch has brought a scholarly approach to preserving, restoring, maintaining, and improving Monticello's landscape. Two members of the gardens and grounds crew – Senior Groundskeeper Robert Johnson, Jr., and Groundskeeper Eugene Jones, Jr. – have shared in this stewardship since '77.

Shannon Senior Research Historian Lucia “Cinder” Stanton first joined the staff in 1969 as assistant to my distinguished predecessor, James A. Bear, Jr. Cinder, who has been here continuously since 1979, is best known for her groundbreaking research into the Monticello plantation and the people, both free and

enslaved, who lived and worked on it.

Finally, there's William L. Beiswanger, the Robert H. Smith Director of Restoration, who did his first work at Monticello in 1969 and has been here continuously since 1971. Bill has played the lead role in a long series of vital projects over the years, and it has been said that he knows more about the architecture of Monticello than anyone since Jefferson. I'm not about to dispute that.

I encourage you to visit Monticello so you can experience first-hand what these individuals and so many others – Buildings Supervisor Nancy Dudley (1989) and Senior Restoration Specialist Rob Newcomb (1986), to name just two – have accomplished over the years, and perhaps share my deep appreciation of their efforts.

Daniel P. Jordan
President

COMMENTS?
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