



Daily staff photo by
Rich Cooley

The historic Hupp Mansion will be included in the upcoming Shenandoah County Historical Society's House Tour.

Doorways to history

Hupp Mansion gracefully combines old and new

By Natalie Anzolut

It's a fall-like September afternoon and Eugene Trone, dressed in a pressed summer suit and pair of white bucks, welcomes a visitor to his home, which happens to be one of Strasburg's jewels, the historic Hupp Mansion.

With its massive columns and stonework, Hupp Mansion looks out over U.S. Route 11 like a sentinel of history — a reminder of the Northern Shenandoah Valley's past — as time's army of convenience stores, fast food restaurants and car washes marches by.

What lies behind the massive walls, however, is more than a glimpse of Civil War-era life.

At first glance in the entry hall, portraits of Confederate generals Lee and Jackson may go unnoticed. They are expected. Further in, however, this valley home begins to speak with its own eclectic voice.

An unusual covered chair from Sri Lanka sits comfortably in one corner, while an iron chandelier from Beirut lights the dining room table in an adjacent room.

"It's a curious mixture of stuff," says Trone, of a collection which spans his 20 years with the U.S.

State Department and service with five different embassies and consulates around the world.

Furnishings and other pieces were purchased by Trone and his wife, June, at different places they found themselves during his service. Evidence of four years spent in Sri Lanka, off the southern coast of India, is apparent throughout the residence.

For the curious, the residence will be one of five Strasburg sites featured during the Shenandoah County Historical Society House Tour on Sept. 11.

The first words out of Trone's mouth are "it's not finished yet," when discussing the residence he purchased nine years ago and the upcoming tour. A bedroom at the top of the stairs is the only room that will be off limits during the historical society tour. When completed, it will have an Egyptian theme filled with items from the couple's time in Cairo, his last State Department post.

A bright yellow living room confirms the couple's love for ornately carved Sri Lankan tropical hard-

woods. In the same room, a Victorian rocking chair looks right at home with an 1880s Pennsylvania dry sink and an old German organ, further illustrating the couple's love for antiques of all origins.

HOUSE TOUR

■ Time: 1-5 p.m.

■ Date: Sept. 11

■ Place: Strasburg

■ Tour sites:

Spengler Hall,

Strasburg Museum,

Museum of American Presidents,

Hupp Mansion, and

Fort Hupp and the Steel House.

■ Tickets: \$6,

available at tour sites.

"I think it's somewhat appropriate that it has gone full circle and is back in the hands of someone from this same area," says Trone, whose family comes from Hanover in York County.

One of the most interesting parts of the house is the kitchen — located in the original 1753 portion of the house — which includes an oblong shaped loft-like second story.

A black iron spiral staircase, installed by the Trones, leads up to the balcony area, which once served

as a social center for music and dancing, says Trone. Just two weeks ago the upper story seated 36 guests during a dinner party, rather than early American music makers, he says. The massive opening created by second story is filled by a rustic chandelier of moose, elk and deer horns, created by Trone's daughter, Eugenie. A massive stone fireplace was rebuilt by Strasburg craftsman Virgil Sager, who did the stone, brick and carpentry work throughout the house. It serves as the focal point for a small sitting room — decorated in rustic Americana — which adjoins the kitchen in the renovated floor plan.

An impressive staircase leads to the second floor of the house. The wide staircases served an important historical purpose — to accommodate the hoop skirts that were the fashion of the day, says Trone, whose enthusiasm for history comes alive within the walls of his home.

A massive Romanian armoire, a gift from American ambassador George Wadsworth, dominates the second floor hallway. An American spinning wheel reminds visitors of the home's real heritage.

A full bath, complete with Jacuzzi tub, is located off the master bedroom.

VISITING, B7

Group's goal is to save and preserve historic residences

By Natalie Anzolut

The Shenandoah County Historical Society's upcoming house tour has a goal as solid as bricks and mortar — to one day purchase an older home and preserve it.

"That's what preservation is all about," said Mildred Helsley, chairman of the society's committee charged with doing just that.

Proceeds from the tour, which in the past has focused on Mt. Jackson, Fort Valley and other areas of the county, will go toward compilation of a book on historic homes. Sale of the books will go toward building a fund to buy a historic residence and restore it, said Mrs. Helsley.

Early log and stone houses will be the focus of the first book, she said, and a second may focus on Victorian-style residences. The tour, which will be held Sept. 11, from 1 to 5 p.m., will be focus on Strasburg.

Fort Hupp, 551 N. Massanutten St. (U.S. Route 11), is the oldest house featured. Built in 1755, the fort was the home of one of the first settlers in Shenandoah County and is rare because it has never been rebuilt due to fire or other damage. The nearby Steel House, likely constructed in the early 1880s, once served as a distillery. The Hupp Mansion, across U.S. Route 11, is also included. Tour site Spengler Hall, 31501 Old Valley Pike (U.S. Route 11), was built by Anthony Spengler in 1820 and is still home to a direct descendant. The Strasburg Museum, originally built as a steam pottery, and the Museum of American Presidents, which contains such memorabilia as a lock of George Washington's hair, also will be included. Tickets are \$6 and will be available at each of the sites, which will be marked with yellow ribbons the day of the tour.