

THE ESTHER THOMAS ATKINSON MUSEUM

OF HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE

FEBRUARY 2014

Dr. Irving and the Influenza

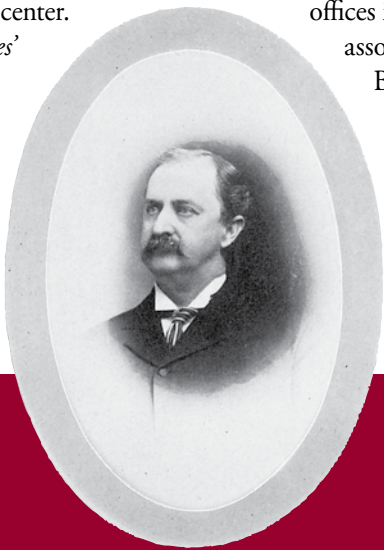
Angie Way

One afternoon in May 1918, the faculty, students, and community of Hampden-Sydney gathered in front of McIlwaine Hall to dedicate a flag. It was a solemn ceremony because many students were on the eve of departure for the various World War I training camps. Addresses were made by several Hampden-Sydney men, including Dr. H. C. Brock, who spoke for the Faculty: "If it be your part to pay the supreme price, to fall on Flanders Field where poppies grow, or to be laid to rest in the heroic land of France . . . or if, in a training camp in our own land, fell disease lays you low, you will be of those 'by all their country blest,' like the men of Marathon, your praises sung, your service proclaimed throughout the world..."¹

During the First World War, Hampden-Sydney participated in the Student Army Training Corps (SATC), helping the war effort by giving service as a training center. The 1918 and 1919 *Kaleidoscopes'* pages are full of uniformed students ready for service.

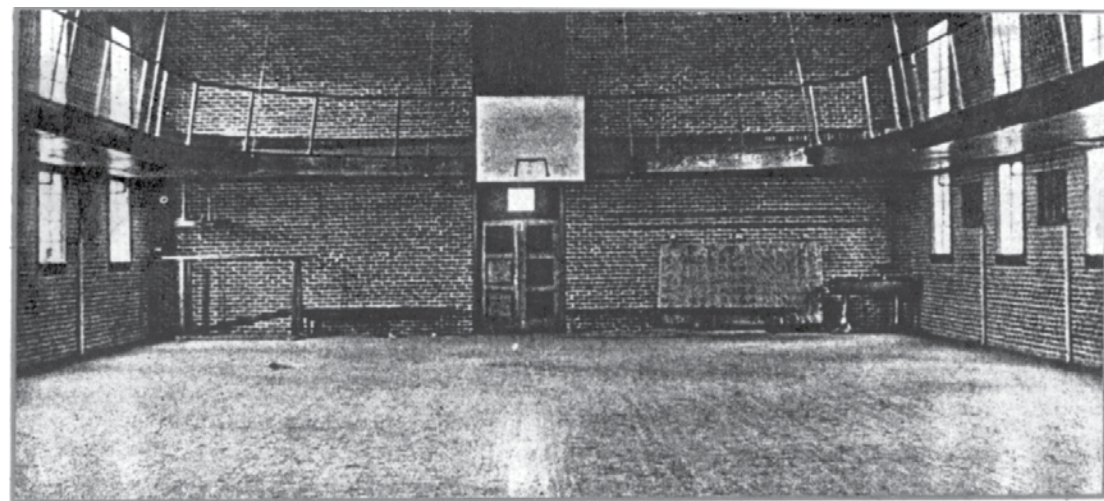
On only a few of those pages, however, can you see images of another dramatic occurrence of the time: the reaction of the students, faculty, and administration to the ravages of Spanish Influenza. Coming in waves through the western world in 1918, the second spread of influenza that year affected one-third of the United States population and, in the world epidemic, killed three times more people than died in all of World War I. Young adults, just like those in the SATC camps and colleges, were heavily affected.²

At one time



"The responsibility and tax on [Dr. Irving] were very great, and he never spared himself, working overtime by day and by night, to give to his patients the best possible treatment and attention."

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE, JUNE 1919



LEFT: Dr. P. A. Irving, the College physician, used the H. Tucker Graham Gymnasium to house patients during the influenza outbreak on campus. From the 1917 Kaleidoscope.

practicing in Farmville, Richmond, and again in Farmville, Dr. Paulus Aemilius Irving was well respected among his peers. He served in multiple offices in the leadership of the state medical association and was secretary of the State Board of Health. He was described as having a "magnificent physique [with] courtly manners and aristocratic bearing... his strength was as the strength of ten because his heart was pure."³

Dr. Irving had another fine quality: he was fond of Hampden-Sydney. He attended from 1872 to 1876 and served from 1900 to 1928 on the Board of Trustees. He also served as college physician for ten years, coming from Farmville every morning to tend the sick.

With the start of the SATC at Hampden-Sydney, Dr. Irving also assumed duties at the College by serving as "designated surgeon for the Student Army Training Corps... to examine applicants for the unit."⁴ He was over sixty years of age at the time.

Students and locals at Hampden-Sydney were aware of an earlier outbreak of influenza, which had not had the high mortality rate associated with the fall 1918 spread. By the start of school, the College had reasonable medical facilities arranged. With the help of Dr. Irving, it had purchased new equipment and had hired a capable nurse, Miss Delia Brock. Students were required to pay \$5, which entitled them "to the services of the Physician during the session without further charge."⁵

Miss Brock cared for her students in the recently acquired Westminster, today's Atkinson Hall. The building's three floors were divided: "the lower floor... became school administration offices, and the two upper floors were fitted up as an infirmary for the use of the students needing medical attention."⁶

By September of 1918, a virulent influenza, which was spread through the air, was reported throughout the United States, hitting hard the military training camps full of the virus's main target, young adults. By October 1918, Hampden-Sydney students and residents reported a quick rise in cases, and infirmary beds were filled until the ill overflowed the facilities at Westminster.

The autumn wave of influenza took hold so quickly that Dr. Irving became the center of a campus wide epidemic. Dr. Irving's "acceptance of the office [college physician] was providential: for the epidemic known as the Spanish Influenza

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FAR LEFT: Dr. Paulus Aemilius Irving, College physician during the influenza epidemic.

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How he saved the students . . . PAGE 1

Honor Roll of Donors, 2012-2013

Friends who contributed to the operation of the Museum or to the addition. . . PAGE 3

CONSERVATION NOTES:

A recent project funded by the Museum was the repair and stabilization of this ca.-1830 Empire-style Officer's Chair used by the Union-Philanthropic Literary Society.



Student Museum Board events

Leading tours and unpacking exhibits . . . PAGE 3

Coming Exhibits

First ladies of Hampden-Sydney and student artwork. . . PAGE 4

INFLUENZA, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

soon invaded the community and so rapid was its dissemination that in a week's time the Doctor had many cases under treatment, making it necessary to convert the new Gymnasium [current bookstore and post office area in Graham Hall] into a hospital and call for volunteer nurses to assist."¹⁰ It is estimated that between 45 and 50 of the ill were students.¹¹

RIGHT: *Delia Brock, College nurse and superintendent of the Hampden-Sydney College Infirmary. The 1919 yearbook, from which this portrait comes, was dedicated to her.*

Hampden-Sydney people not on campus were also heavily affected. Elbert Lowman Rhoades, class of 1915, and principal at the High School at Clover, Virginia, enlisted on July 23, 1918. He was serving in Charlottesville in Mechanics Training School and was sent to Fort Hamilton to begin a trip with a "car of men in his charge," which arrived on September 21, 1918. The next day, he took ill with influenza, followed by pneumonia, and died on October 1. The illness took him so quickly that he passed "before his parents could reach his bedside."⁷

Others off campus were reported in the same stages of the disease, influenza, quickly followed by pneumonia, and then by death. Sidney Mathias Baxter Coulling, Jr., Class of 1912, enlisted at Pineville, West Virginia, in September of 1918 and served at Fort Slocum, New York, until he died of his illness on October 4. French Pendleton Carter, Class of 1917, joined in July 1918 and served only a brief time before he died at Camp Humphreys on October 8. Dean Mortimer Orgain, Class of 1918, enlisted in the U.S. Navy on July 1, 1918, contracted influenza in September, and died at Norfolk Naval Base only a few months later, on October 27.⁸

Fortunately, not everyone who became ill perished! Stephen Sanders Simmerman, Jr., Class of 1910, entered service at Fort Myers, Virginia, in 1917. He trained for three months before qualifying for Officers' Aviation School at Princeton University. Serving later at Camp Lee, Virginia, he became ill with the disease, but recovered and served until his discharge on November 29, 1918.⁹

Throughout the state, the potential spread of the illness resulted in swift action. Richmond schools were closed, and while the Virginia State Fair opened, it ran only briefly before the State Board of Health closed its gates.¹² On October 11 a *Farmville Herald* article announced that

Prince Edward County Schools were closed as well. Because of the large number of cases at the College, Hampden-Sydney and its surrounding community were quarantined. However, by

October 25, "by order of the Mayor, S. W. Paulett, of the town of Farmville, the quarantine against persons living at Hampden-Sydney, has been lifted and they will now be allowed to move in and about our town as before."¹³

Communities around the state issued a call for nurses.

The minutes of the College's trustees mention that "four nurses were engaged and practically the entire community volunteered to help in the diet kitchen and other necessary ways."

Especially noted were community members who came to the aid of Hampden-Sydney as volunteers: Mrs. Bugg from Farmville, Miss Obenchain Grant of Worsham, and Miss Show of Rice.¹⁴

Dr. Irving's professionalism and employment of such practices as airing out the "hospital" by opening the upper windows in the Graham Gymnasium were noted. Such "airing" was common practice, recommended by the Surgeon General of the Army: "Open your windows, at home at night; at the office when it is practical."¹⁶

But Dr. Irving wasn't privy just to national recommendations, but also to current medical thinking at the state level as well. During the autumn of 1918 and later, he served as president of the Medical Society of Virginia. Its publications of the time discuss treatments and their successes, as well as failures.¹⁷ Whichever form of treatment Dr. Irving subscribed to, his results were better than the national rate of 2.5 deaths per 100 cases.

Dr. Henry C. Brock wrote one year after the outbreak that one person was lost. His remarking on this fact indicates that Dr. Irving was very successful in his care for about 200 of the students and residents. On a national average, five deaths would be the expected mortality at Hampden-Sydney.

Dr. Irving's success in treatment at Hampden-Sydney earned him praise from the administration: "Too much cannot be said in commendation of the faithful and efficient service rendered by Dr. Irving... the responsibility and tax on him were very great and he never spared himself working overtime by day and by night."¹⁵

A year later, students and administrators remembered the 1918 outbreak in their own way. The College Trustees issued statements of appreciation, as mentioned above, and recorded expenses of \$554.20 for the year at the hospital-infirmary.¹⁶ College students bemoaned the effect the illness had on the football team:

"[H]ardly had practice gotten under way when the 'flu' paid its visit, and for weeks all thoughts of football were banished. When the men recovered from this epidemic it was in the late Fall, and, with only one hour each day allowed for athletics, football prospects were not booming."¹⁸ However, the year wasn't totally

lost. The outcome of the 1918 game between Hampden-Sydney and Randolph-Macon was a win for the Tigers, 28 to 7.

NOTES

1. *The Record of the Alumni Association of Hampden-Sydney College [Record]*. Oct. 1, 1929. Page 4.
2. *Science*. Volume 303. 19 March 2004. Page 1787.
3. *Record*. July, 1929. Pages 14-15.
4. *Virginia Medical Monthly*. Volume 45. October 1918. Page 1.
5. *Hampden-Sydney College Bulletin*, Volume XIII, No 1. 1917-1918. Pages 66 and 67. Volume IV, No. 4. 1919-1920. Page 75. *The Hampden-Sydney College Bulletins* seem to indicate that the nursing fees were extra and separate from the \$5 doctor's fee.
6. *Kaleidoscope*. Volume 1927. Page 8.
7. *Bulletin of Hampden-Sydney College*. September 1920, Number 3. Page 43.
8. *Ibid.* Pages 13, 16, & 38.
9. *Ibid.* Page 47.
10. Dr. Henry C. Brock, *Kaleidoscope*. Volume 1919. Page 13.
11. *Hampden-Sydney College (Trustee) Minutes*. June 1919. Page 223.
12. *Farmville Herald*. October 11, 1918. Page 1.
13. *Farmville Herald*. October 25, 1918. Page 1.
14. *Hampden-Sydney College (Trustee) Minutes*. June 1919. Page 223.
15. *Idem*.
16. *Farmville Herald*. Nov. 1, 1918. page 1.
17. *Virginia Medical Monthly*. Volume 46. 1918.
18. *Hampden-Sydney College (Trustee) Minutes*. June 1919. Page 223.
19. "Football Retrospectus." *Kaleidoscope*. Volume 1919.

MUSEUM PROGRAM BOARD

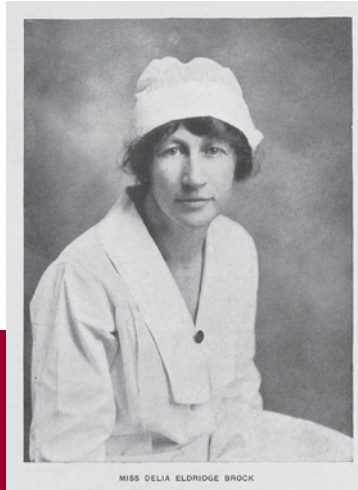
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"The homesick sufferer is sure of the sympathy and loving care of the white-robed superintendent, the warm-hearted 'students' friend'."

DR. W. H. WHITING, JR.
 concerning Miss Delia Brock in 1927.



Westminster Hall (now Atkinson Hall) held the infirmary on its second and third floors. This image is from a set of colored lithographs of campus landmarks, published around 1910.

Personalized Bricks *A Lasting Tribute*

REMEMBER! You can purchase inscribed memorial bricks to be placed in the Museum's front walk. They are an ideal way to recognize graduates, loved ones, beloved teachers, or classmates—even (as one of our students did) to propose.

To request a brick order form, call the Museum at (434) 223-6134, or download one from www.hsc.edu/Museum/Personalized-Brick.html



Student Museum Board Events

Nate Sterling '14
Chairman, Student Museum Board

Historic Homes Tour

On September 14-15, the Atkinson Museum hosted a tour for individuals eager to see some of the treasured historic buildings of the College campus: Peshurst, Venable, and Middlecourt. Student Museum Board members and the President's Men volunteered as tour guides, along with Dr. Richard McClintock.

Each party consisted largely of Hampden-Sydney alumni and Virginians with a love of history. The event was Hampden-Sydney's offering as part of the statewide Historic Homes of Virginia tour, set up by Governor McDonnell in observance of the 200th anniversary of the Executive Mansion in Richmond.

Unclassified—The Military Kids Art Show

The BRATS had come . . . an exhibit of artwork by students in Ms. Lora Beldon's class involved in the Military Kids Art Project, which encourages children of people in the military to express their feelings about their unique position, mainly through art. (BRATS is the acronym of a late-19th-century British term for military dependents.)

The exhibit featured artwork by military dependents; interpretive images by Ms. Beldon, herself a former BRAT; large photographs of a woodland installation by a veteran, designed to express memories, good and bad, of his time in the service; and an Army trunk filled with souvenirs of life as a peripatetic military child, from treasured teddy bears to diplomas from schools on military bases around the world.

Student Museum Board Members Patrick Ford and Michael Casterlow did an excellent job of unpacking and assembling the encased display for the BRATS exhibit.

On the night of the opening, Lora Beldon



To honor Student Museum Board members, the Museum held a foccacia party in December.



Student Museum Board members held a H-SC Birthday party on February 3, recalling the first Trustees' planning session, February 1-3, 1775.

and co-curator Donna Musil spoke on what life as a BRAT is like, how the exhibit idea took shape, and how they hoped viewers could better appreciate the special problems and privileges involved with growing up as military dependents. They then took attendees through the exhibit.

SMB members helped with the refreshments and greeted visitors.

New Member Initiation

During the evening of October 3, a Student Museum Board initiation meeting welcomed new Board members. Each newly elected member was granted the privilege, honor, and duty of having and wearing a Museum Board pin, receiving a SMB shirt, and taking home history booklets

about the Navy V-12 unit at Hampden-Sydney.

A celebratory meal ensued. Delicious pizza-like food known as focaccia was the main course, followed by pre-Halloween treats. Afterwards, we were sent on a journey to find a treasure box, fittingly with Hampden-Sydney history facts as the clues. There were enough people to split into two teams, and after the first clue was read, we took off and successfully followed the clues to the treasure.

October 4th Museum Exploration Day

The Museum's Family Weekend open house, Exploration Day, featured Student Board member Robert Mull, who was put to work staffing the Military BRATS traveling exhibit. Meanwhile, a detailed description of the Hampden-Sydney coat of arms was provided by members Alex Towery and Nate Sterling. Curator Angie Way and Program Board members Richard McClintock and Willie Thompson stood at other stations to explain exhibits.

A majority of the large crowd that day was composed of parents of Hampden-Sydney students and their sons; attendance numbers were gratifying.

October 4th Ghost Walk

It was a dark spooky night, and many parents were out roaming the college campus. Their presence caused a disturbance, and ghosts possessed various Student Museum Board members to tell their story!

Alexander Towery was the ghost at the Bell Tower, Taylor Anctil was Ned Langhorne, and Nathanael Sterling was a World War I Hampden-Sydney Boy. Dr. Richard McClintock awaited arrivals at Venable, giving a brief history of the building as families waited to take the tour. Our curator, Ms. Angela Way, split the parents into different groups led by various Hampden-Sydney students.

The addition of glow sticks and the exuberant spirit of the Student Museum Board members enlivened the deadly atmosphere. By the end of the night, the lively glowing smiles were evidence enough of our success.



Angela J. Way,
Director-Curator,
Atkinson Museum
of Hampden-Sydney
College

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Supporting the Museum

The Museum's operating budget comes principally from gifts from its friends, augmented by income from its small endowment.

As a result, individual gifts of annual support are extremely important to the continued health and progress of the Museum, both as a guardian of Hampden-Sydney's heritage and as a memorial to Mrs. P. T. Atkinson, who founded it.

Gifts may be mailed in the enclosed envelope or submitted online at www.hsc.edu/Making-A-Gift.html. You may specify that your gift be used by the Museum. All gifts to the College are tax-deductible.

The MISSION of the Esther Thomas Atkinson Museum is to promote an awareness and understanding of the history of Hampden-Sydney College as it relates to its role in the history of Virginia and the United States, while serving to support and enhance the College's mission to form good men and good citizens in an atmosphere of sound learning.

MUSEUM SPOTLIGHT

Upcoming events and exhibits

This semester will feature two exciting new Hampden-Sydney history exhibits.

The first, a temporary back-gallery exhibit, will feature the *First Ladies of Hampden-Sydney*—some of the many women who have brought character to the lives of the students and local citizens. From research done by Alex Towery, student assistant, we have created an interesting list of honorees, some of whom received dedication in the *Kaleidoscope* and others who were instrumental in forming the character of the College as we know it today.

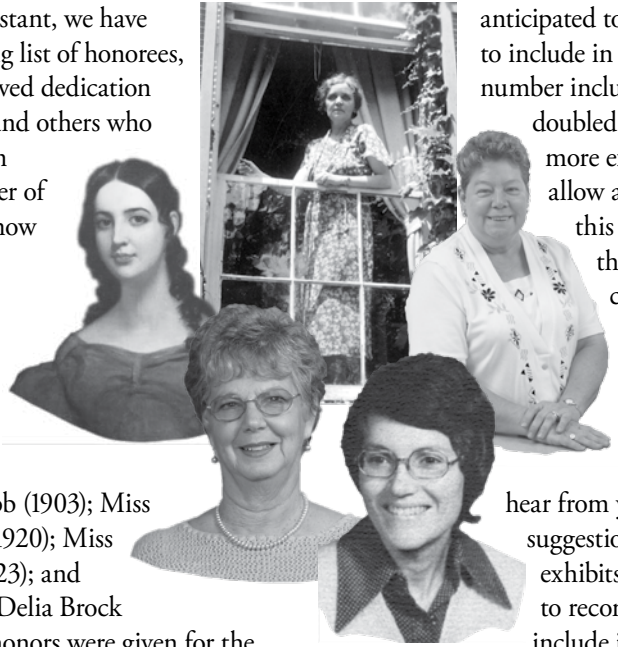
The yearbook dedications include College sweet-hearts Miss Loulie Marcia Morton (1900); Miss Jennie M. Cobb (1903); Miss Dorothy McCraw (1920); Miss Agnes Atkinson (1923); and College nurse Miss Delia Brock (1927). No further honors were given for the next 50 years, until Mrs. P.T.

While the final list will be much broader, it is interesting to see the influence that so many women had on our school. This exhibit was recommended by program board member Dan

Hawks '61, curator at the Jamestown-Yorktown foundation. The First Ladies exhibit is planned to run for 6 weeks.

A second new exhibit features the *Professors of Hampden-Sydney College*. Research for the many exceptional men and women who have inspired the students at the College is anticipated to yield at least 30 persons to include in the exhibit. While the number included could easily be doubled, tripled, or made even more extensive, space will only allow a limited number in this first display. However, the display is planned to change and grow through annual review. The exhibit will be part of the main gallery exhibit renovation.

We would like to hear from you if you have any suggestions on these or other exhibits, or if you would like to recommend individuals to include in either display.



ABOVE CENTER: *Some of the First Ladies of Hampden-Sydney, clockwise from top: Miss Minnie Lacy, Erlene Bowman, Anne Lund, Gerry Pettus, and Lucy Cushing.*

Museum classifieds

WANTED

Donation of one *Kaleidoscope* date 1919. Any condition appreciated.

WANTED

Donation of school mascot costume. Any former Tigers please contact Angie at 434-223-6134.

FREE TO GOOD HOME

Assorted posters from previous Museum lectures and events. For list, contact away@hsc.edu.

NOTICE!

New hours at the Museum:

Tuesday through Friday, 10 am to 12 noon and 1 pm to 5 pm.

Also open during special events and on game days, or by appointment.

At the November Museum Advisory Board meeting at Maymont in Richmond: Richard McClintock, Ed Ayres '66, Nathan Ryalls '11, Nate Sterling '14, and Deborah McClintock.



HOW TO HELP THE MUSEUM

Financial donations to the Atkinson Museum are welcome and help fund our special projects and exhibits, which are planned to complement the course offerings of Hampden-Sydney College and serve our students.

To make a monetary donation, please mail your check to the Atkinson Museum, Box 745, Hampden-Sydney College, 23943. Please be sure to write Atkinson Museum in the memo line of your check.

For donations of items, we are looking for Hampden-Sydney personal items from former students, faculty, and staff that depict the close relationship and influence the school has had on the people associated with it. Whether the item is a letter to home from a 1920's student on College life or an early version of the Tiger Mascot costume, we appreciate the chance to share these special items with our students and alumni.

MUSEUM EVENTS, SPRING SEMESTER 2014

Through March

First Ladies of Hampden-Sydney Exhibit

February 3

Happy Birthday, Hampden-Sydney!

March 18 – April 25

Theater of Hampden-Sydney

An exhibit curated by the Student Museum Board

March 20, Tiger Inn

Student Museum Board Pub Quiz

March 23

Central Virginia Arts Lecture at the Atkinson Museum

David Lewis

Portraiture: Capturing the Soul of the Sitter

THE ESTHER THOMAS ATKINSON
MUSEUM
OF HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE

HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE
HAMPDEN-SYDNEY, VA 23943

Tuesday–Friday, 10 am–12 noon, 1 pm–5 pm.
Game-day Saturdays, 11 am–2 pm.
Other times by appointment, (434) 223-6134.

www.hsc.edu/museum.html

April 17, Parents & Friends Lounge, Venable Hall, 4:30

Co-sponsored by Fine Arts Department & Atkinson Museum

Richard Guy Wilson

Jefferson and Cosby

May 1 – May 11

Hampden-Sydney Fine Arts Department Student Show

May 18, 3 pm

Central Virginia Arts Lecture at the Atkinson Museum

Professor Mary Prevo

Symbolism in Dutch Floral Still Life

May 20-August 1

Central Virginia Arts Members Show

Opening Reception on May 22 at 6 p.m.



Student Museum Board Chairman Nate Sterling '14 with Hampden-Sydney Birthday balloons.

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