

A WORD FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR...

NH. There, campers are encouraged to go “unplugged” for the entire week. It wasn’t so hard and even our two pre-teenage grandchildren found plenty to do without their handheld devices. When we weren’t swimming or playing ping pong or volleyball or cards (or eating and sleeping), my husband and I read a lot. It was also a perfect time to recharge my batteries and indulge in some “summer reflections.”

As part of those reflections, I thought a lot about The Friends’ successes this season, and I hope that you can “see” them in the photos in this newsletter. We teamed up with the Division of Historic Preservation in June to “open the house” to the public. We were not deterred by a scheduling conflict with Strafford’s very poignant Celebration of its 90 Year Olds and a rainstorm. Both events were well-attended. Our musicians played valiantly through the rain, though a decision to move the live animal program inside was welcomed by all.

Another rainstorm visited us at the very end of our successful Gallery in the Garden opening reception and mini auction. What a great event! Our exhibiting artists were introduced in the Carriage Barn where their art was on display. And then the party moved to the Ed Center where the bidding on “Minis for Morrill” was fast and furious. It is our biggest fund-raiser and did not disappoint. Most of our wonderful auction bidders were on their way home with their new paintings when our dedicated board members got soaked taking down tents and cleaning up.

The excitement of the Fairy Village project comes through clearly in the photos. This is an event that attracts the very young and young at heart to the Homestead, and it is truly magical. A Sunday afternoon talk on art and artists in New England by Preservationist William Hosley was enjoyed by many. He told the story of the painters, printmakers and photographers who captured our region in art and also discussed Senator Justin Morrill’s collection of late 19th-century classical artworks.

AppleFest on September 25 will end the planned programs at the Homestead this season. It is always a merry time celebrating apples and harvest and our wonderful community where Justin Morrill planted his apple orchard so many years ago. Our fund-raising campaign to ensure that the apple orchard becomes successful and endures, like the legacy of Justin Morrill himself, continues to be a priority for us.

Speaking of fund-raising, I want to once more thank all those who have supported our 2016 efforts by attending, volunteering, and contributing. We literally could not do it without you! And for those who have not yet done so... well a donation envelope is included in this mailing, and I hope you will consider making a tax-deductible gift whenever you can.

Cameron Speth
Chair, Friends of the Morrill Homestead

CASEY MCCLELLAN
SUMMER EDUCATION & PROGRAMMING INTERN

The Friends were extremely fortunate to host Casey McClellan as our 2016 Summer Education and Programming Intern. An honors graduate with a B.A. in history from Mount Holyoke College, whose resume included stints at Mystic Seaport and the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York, Casey brought a depth of knowledge and experience to her work at the Homestead.

“My past museum experience had been in interpretation and giving tours,” said Casey, “so I was mostly just interacting with visitors. At the Homestead I also was able to do research, author brochures, help with special events, and get a behind-the-scenes look at how museum

professionals evaluate their practice and find new ways to tap into a site’s potential.”

Casey invested a tremendous amount of energy and focus into every project she was involved with, from preschool nature camp to editing and designing new brochures for interpreting the gardens and the historic artworks in the Morrill Homestead. Her sense of humor and good cheer welcomed visitors to the Education Center. Every Saturday Casey donned period clothing (on loan from Emily Howe) and led tours of the Morrill Homestead for the



Casey McClellan, in costume

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation.

In retrospect, Casey observes that, “What I most enjoyed was working with the public during tours, the summer camps, and special events like Gallery in the Garden and the Fairy House Festival. I also enjoyed the Vermont experience. I’ll never forget the beautiful views, amazing biking, and kind people that I encountered here!”

Into all of her interactions with members of the Board, with volunteers, with Friends staff and with visitors to the Homestead, Casey cast a ray of sunshine. “My next steps are to pursue a masters degree and a career in museum education, and I know that my experience here will be invaluable,” she says.

We’ll miss Casey, and wish her good fortune in her next adventure!

Michael Caduto
Director, Friends of the Morrill Homestead

The Friends wish to thank Martha Manheim for generously providing housing for our summer intern!

Friends of the Morrill Homestead

State -Owned Site and National Historic Landmark

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The Justin Morrill Historic Site, one of eight State-Owned Historic Sites and National Historic Landmark, is maintained and operated by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, which encourages the discovery and appreciation of the state’s rich heritage through the stewardship and interpretation of the historic sites by evoking an authentic sense of time and place.

In partnership with the Division for Historic Preservation, the Friends of the Morrill Homestead fosters an awareness of the life and legacy of Sen. Justin Morrill with programs, events, and public outreach to enhance the visitor experience.



Some of the exceptional artwork in the Morrill Homestead. See “New Art Brochures” story on Pg 3.

www.morrillhomestead.org

The MORRILL HOMESTEAD
Chronicle

News and Information from Vermont’s First National Historic Landmark and State-Owned Historic Site
POST OFFICE BOX 98 • STRAFFORD, VERMONT • 05072

Summer 2016

HOSLEY LECTURE LIMNS RISE OF
NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL ART

Preservationist and museum specialist William Hosley enlightened a capacity audience at the Education Center on August 7 with an illustrated talk entitled, “New England Impressions: Art and the Making of Regional Identity, 1885-1950.”

Citing the career of western Massachusetts painter Robert Strong Woodward (1885-1957) as just one example, Hosley led the audience through the growth of the New England regional art movement of the period around the beginning of the 20th century. At that time there were about 30 or so towns in New England with significant concentrations of artists, including Springfield, Stockbridge and Gloucester, Massachusetts; Manchester, Vermont; Monhegan and Ogunquit, Maine; and Cos Cob (Greenwich) and Cornwall, Connecticut. These artists often painted outdoor scenes within a few dozen miles of home, thus creating a strong sense of place (reinforced by depictions of street scenes of identifiable places such as the New Haven green). Other favorite subjects were sweeping landscapes reminiscent of the earlier Hudson River school, gardens, historic buildings (including interiors), maritime scenes, and churches and meetinghouses (of which Strafford’s, Hosley noted, is “...among the top five”).



The movement eventually branched out to include photography, perhaps most memorably personified by Wallace Nutting, and led to the appearance of New England-based paintings and photographs on the covers of magazines such as Yankee and Country Life. The natural result was the modern tourism magazine, most notably Vermont Life.

Hosley illustrated his talk with numerous photographs of paintings, places and artists. He also highlighted gaps in the scholarship of the movement, notably the contributions of women artists who were significantly underrepresented in the many regional exhibitions of the era.

A graduate of Middlebury College and the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture at the University of Delaware (and an erstwhile Vermonter), Hosley is now Principal of Terra Firma Northeast in Enfield, Connecticut. The program was sponsored by the Friends of the Morrill Homestead, supported by a grant from the Vermont Humanities Council and a number of donations.

Chuck Ashton
Vice-Chair, Friends of the Morrill Homestead

APPLE & CHEESE HARVEST FEST TO
CLOSE OUT ANOTHER GREAT YEAR

Morrill scholars and friends of Justin agree: There is NO better way to celebrate the first days of Autumn than with the 19th Century Apple & Cheese Harvest Festival, to be held on Sunday, September 25 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Morrill Homestead in Strafford.

This is an event for all generations, for traditional Vermonters, for transplants, and for visitors. With your ticket (\$10 for adults and \$5 for those under 14), you get a tour of the house any time that day... plus lunch and dessert when they are served.

Stroll the grounds listening to acoustic music played by Out on a Limb and check out the antique automobiles parked on the lawn. There will be games, activities for the young, and farm animals to pet.

Whether the day is brisk or sultry, enjoy a brimming cup of fresh cider straight from the antique press. Whether you are young and spry or just vaguely remember the day when you were, you can take a turn at the crank and experience the art of cider-making through all five of your senses. If you like, for a few dollars you can take home a bottle of cider corked and labeled before your eyes.

Learn from experts about artisan cheeses and heritage apples and then climb the hill to the orchard and see the restoration project at work. If you are feeling generous, you can contribute to the project, but whether you do or not, you might catch a glimpse of Johnny Appleseed on the way. Now that whimsy has made an appearance in your day, you should look for the table where you can learn about “Autumn Ephemeral Figures” and make one of your own.

When it’s time for lunch, head for the Education Center, where you can tie into a steaming bowl of chili ... and maybe sample some of the winners in the pie-baking contest.

Once again, it’s Sunday, September 25 from 11:00-3:00 at the Morrill Homestead. See you there!

Jonathan Stableford
Board, Friends of the Morrill Homestead

REPORT FROM THE STATE OF VERMONT

This year’s buildings and grounds projects at the Justin S. Morrill State Historic Site began in March with the surgical demolition of the hot house foundation. A crew from Vermont Concrete Cutting expertly cut the foundation to follow the grade of the hillside. The foundation interior was filled with gravel, topped with soil, and seeded with grass. What remains is a clear footprint of the structure which will be interpreted for the public with new exterior signage installed for the 2017 season.

In April, Historic Sites Section Chief Tracy Martin and Historic Preservation Review Coordinator Jamie Duggan accompanied engineers from EMG on a thorough tour of each building at the site. EMG is working with the Department of Buildings & General Services (BGS) to provide condition assessments of state-owned buildings. Based on their observations, and on background material provided by Tracy and her partners at BGS, EMG produced detailed assessments for each structure. Tracy has used these assessments to develop a ten-year plan for major maintenance projects at the Justin Morrill site.

Other work on the property this season has included the restoration of deteriorated architectural details on the house... significant

exterior repainting of the house and outbuildings... drainage improvements... and tree work.

Buildings and grounds aside, perhaps the most exciting development at the Justin Morrill site this season has been the effort toward increased joint programming by the Division and the Friends. The ice cream social and children’s activities at the Open House, art-themed tours of the house at the Gallery in the Garden event, and family activities for the Master Gardener Day, all reflected this new commitment. Staff at the Division for Historic Preservation look forward to exploring other joint programming opportunities for the 2017 season.

We have had an extremely knowledgeable and enthusiastic team of seasonal tour guides at the site this year. If you have had a tour of the house with Sabrina Durkee, Emily Howe, Casey McClellan, Sid McLam or Fred Pond, you have been fortunate indeed! Our thanks to them, and to the dedicated volunteers, board members, and staff of the Friends who help us share Justin Morrill’s story with the world.

Tracy Martin
State Owned Historic Sites Section Chief
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

HIDDEN TREASURES OF THE HOMESTEAD: THE POND

(Note: This is the third in an occasional series about the “hidden treasures” at the Morrill Homestead.)

What could be more inviting on a hot summer afternoon than finding a shady woodland pool, with a grassy picnic spot and a brook quietly gurgling nearby? If only there were such a place within a convenient distance of the Morrill Homestead...

Incredibly there is, and in fact it is part of the state historic site itself. It is not a natural pond but is part of Justin Morrill’s plan for the homestead; unlike most ponds, it is not at the bottom of the hill but at the top, invisible from below. Go up the farm lane, past the carriage barn and the other outbuildings; straight ahead, just at the edge of the woods, is Justin Morrill’s pond.

It will come as no surprise to Morrill aficionados that the pond was built for a strictly utilitarian purpose: to meet the homestead’s domestic and agricultural water needs. In developing the property, Morrill diverted a stream--the same stream that runs alongside the drive--to create a small reservoir, high enough on the hill to supply water to the gardens, the barns and the house below. Even though the house did not have running water as we know it today, the pond fed a brick cistern in the basement, from which water

could be pumped up to the sink in the “new” (1860s) kitchen. Another pump supplied a cistern in the attic, whence water was piped down to the water heater attached to the cook stove for cooking, bathing and laundry use. The pond also provided ice for the household; blocks were cut in winter and transported down the hill to be stored in the ice house for use throughout the year.

Chuck Ashton
Board Vice Chair, Friends of the Morrill Homestead



Photo: Chuck Ashton

TRAVELS WITH ‘FLAT’ JUSTIN

If you have young children in your life, you may be familiar with the “Flat Stanley” phenomenon. What you may not know, is that a similar craze has taken hold at the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation in a form that we fondly call “Flat Justin.”



It all began when Administrative Assistant Jenni Lavoie was charged with finding an image of Justin Smith Morrill to hang in a conference room named for him. Jenni was quite taken with the photographic

portrait that she found. On a whim, she made a second copy, cut out the image, and took it with her on vacation to Jamaica. Jenni then made a wonderful slide show illustrating the highlights of Flat Justin’s tropical adventure.

Since that first expedition, Flat Justin has explored Costa Rica, gone zip-lining in Nicaragua, and enjoyed a White Sox Game at Chicago’s U.S Cellular Field. Most of his trips are well documented, several with artfully produced slide shows. After an unfortunate incident on the ski slopes of Colorado, a fully-laminated version of Flat Justin was created.

Although he has journeyed far and wide, Flat Justin’s sweetest outing to date was to the



a flat scuba mask. Where did he go? Why, back to Jamaica, of course!

Tracy Martin
State Owned Historic Sites Section Chief
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

2016 WAS AN ACTIVE YEAR



Peter Hollinger bids for a hotly contested Morrill Mini at this summer’s Gallery in the Garden opening reception on July 1st. (Photo ©2016 Donna Hollinger)



6-year-old twins, Molly & Pearl Aeberhard, at the Fairy House Festival (Photo ©2016 Donna Hollinger)



Spitzenburg heirloom apple, the first from trees planted in the Homestead’s newly restored orchard. (trees from E.C. Browns’ Nursery in Thetford Center, VT) (Photo Casey McClellan)

Closeup of one of the many fairy houses created at the Fairy House Festival. (Photo ©2016 Donna Hollinger)

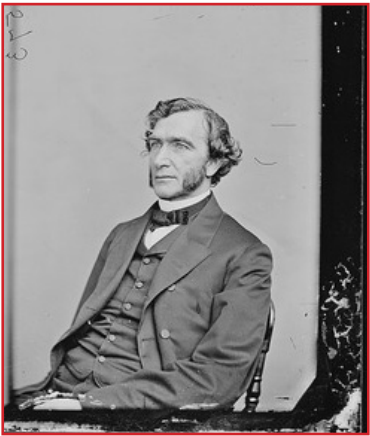


Tim Cummings (l) and Jemiah McLane entertained the crowds at this summer’s Open House (Photo: Chuck Ashton)

SESQUICENTENNIAL OF MORRILL’S FIRST ELECTION TO THE UNITED STATES SENATE

October 23, 2016, will mark the 150th anniversary of Justin Smith Morrill’s first election to the U.S. Senate. He took his seat in the Senate on March 4, 1867, the start of the 40th Congress. Morrill would be re-elected to the Senate five times, serving over 31 years before his death on December 28, 1898, during the 55th Congress. Together with his 12 years of service representing Vermont’s second district in the U.S. House of Representatives, this gave Morrill over 43 years in Congress, a record at the time.

For each of his six terms in the Senate, Morrill was elected by the Vermont state legislature. (Under the Constitution as it then stood, senators were elected by state legislatures. Popular election of senators did not begin until 1913, under the 17th Amendment.) In his first Senate election, Morrill sought the seat formerly held by Jacob Collamer, who had died in office in November 1865. Morrill’s opponent was the man appointed by the state governor to complete Collamer’s term, Luke P. Poland. Poland was the former Chief Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court, but Morrill had a long record in the House, writing the Land-Grant College Act and the revenue bills that funded the Union government through the Civil War. He also sat on the powerful House Ways and Means Committee (which then handled not only revenues



but also appropriations) and on the Joint Committee on Reconstruction, which proposed what became the 14th Amendment to the Constitution.

As Morrill’s biographer Coy Cross explains, Republicans dominated Vermont politics then, including the state legislature. County conventions nominated the Republican candidates to the legislature, who were likely to win election. Senate candidates did not actively campaign for public office then. But Morrill and his supporters used his strong House record, and deft contact with important editors, to gain support in county after county. Orange County even required that its nominees vote only for Morrill for senator. Before the legislature met, Morrill’s election was obvious. Poland withdrew, and with support from Morrill’s friends won Morrill’s old seat in the U.S. House.*

Roger Walke
Board, Friends of the Morrill Homestead

* Coy Cross, Justin Smith Morrill: Father of the Land-Grant Colleges (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1999), chap. 6.