

A WORD FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR...

this, I really do feel grateful. Now the dictionary defines grateful as “feeling or showing an appreciation of kindness or benefits received—being thankful.” So what have I got to appreciate? That’s easy: a beautiful place to live... friends... good health... and purpose. I suspect you might have a similar list.

The Justin Morrill Homestead is located in a beautiful town in central Vermont. Having the spectacular Town House at one end of the Common and the Homestead at the other makes Strafford a beautiful place to live and to visit. People—friends—also make the Upper Valley so special. I have often joked that one should allow an extra 30 minutes to do almost any task or errand in our community because, undoubtedly, someone will want to stop and talk.

Good health is also abundant and obvious: witness all the hard working folks, the older citizens whom we cherish, and the vibrant young people whose happy voices are heard on the ski slopes and playgrounds. And that brings me to purpose.

We all have a purpose—sometimes many purposes. I wager the more purpose one feels, the happier one is. When you combine all these things (place, friends, health, and purpose), I hope you will think of the Homestead, and the many opportunities we offer our volunteers. We can help give you purpose. By volunteering to help with our activities, you, too, can reap the benefits of being a part of a group that enjoys giving back to the community. We have many exciting events planned for the 2018 season and we need your help. We need an hour or two of your time. We need your contributions of money or things (food, art, music) by specific requests.

When I think about the contributions of the Friends in our community, I feel extremely grateful to be a part of this effort to keep Justin Morrill’s legacy alive. Morrill was a remarkable person who contributed so much to our country and its educational system.

So I offer a huge “thank you” to all who have volunteered, donated, and participated in our efforts in the past and who will again. If you have not joined us yet, please do. We welcome all and are GRATEFUL for your help. To volunteer, please contact us by email (director@morrillhomestead.org) or phone (802-765-4288).

Cameron Speth
Chair, Friends of the Morrill Homestead

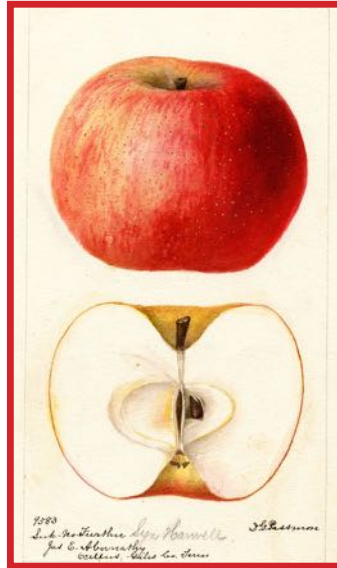
My word for this issue of the newsletter is “grateful.” Maybe it’s the season... or just a mood... but, as I write

ORCHARD RESTORATION UPDATE/GARDEN REPORT

Restoration of Morrill’s historic orchard continues in 2018, conducted by the Friends in conjunction with the VDHP.

Thanks to generous support from the Strafford community and our extremely successful 2017 Johnny Applesed Campaign, we were able to plant additional varieties of the original heirloom apples that had been grown on site by Justin Morrill and his family; these included Northern Spy, King of Tompkins County, Golden Reinette, Lady, Rhode Island Greening, and Swaar.

In March of 2017, orchardist Mike Hebb helped us gather scion wood from seven trees that were originally planted by the Morrill family and are still growing in the orchard; these scions were then grafted onto long-lived rootstock. Some two-dozen young “graftlings”



“Seek-No-Further” heirloom apple is one of the varieties being planted this springtime.

were successfully grown out over the summer, tended with loving care by our garden volunteers. These young trees will be transplanted next to their wizened forebears, thus supplementing the declining old trees with a new generation of genetically identical offspring. Several additional young heirloom apple trees will be also planted.

Working with our orchard manager Matthew Perry, we will create a long-term management plan designed to produce a harvestable crop that can be shared with local schools and with the Upper Valley Haven’s Food Shelf. Our fun dream is to produce a first run of Morrill’s Heirloom Apple Jelly!

We are especially thankful to the Campbell family for their longstanding commitment to replant and maintain Morrill’s historic orchard. As a private non-profit, the Friends greatly appreciate the financial support from individuals, area businesses, and foundations whose generosity makes possible the orchard restoration, and indeed all of our activities.

Michael Caduto
Director, Friends of the Morrill Homestead

Friends of the Morrill Homestead

State-Owned Site and National Historic Landmark

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*Em. Lindy Rogers,
Justin S. Morrill.*

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The Justin Morrill Historic Site, one of eight State-Owned Historic Sites and National Historic Landmarks, 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.



www.morrillhomestead.org

The MORRILL HOMESTEAD Chronicle

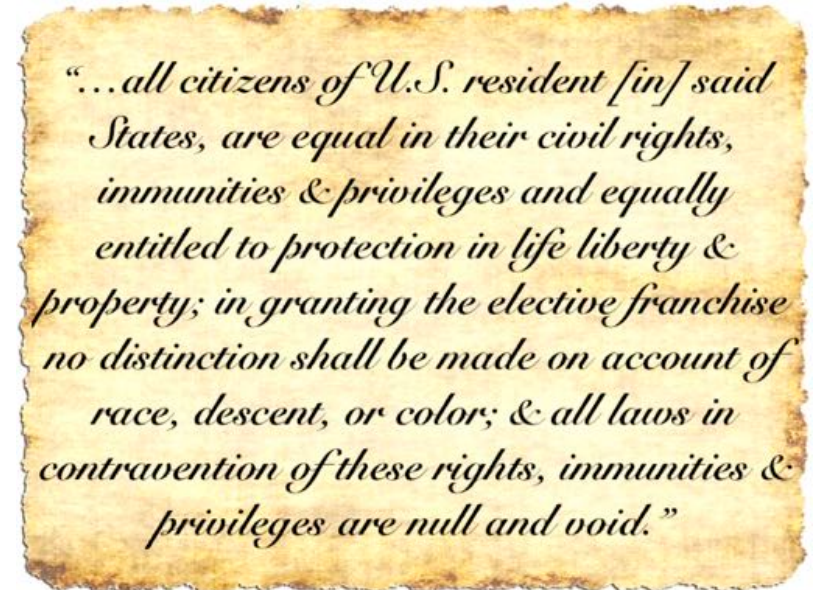
News and Information from Vermont’s First National Historic Landmark and State-Owned Historic Site
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TAKING THE PULSE OF EQUALITY

During the upcoming season, the Friends of the Morrill Homestead and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation will mount a major interpretive exhibit and public event to celebrate the sesquicentennial of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. In so doing, we will seek to examine what remains one of the most critical issues of our time — the struggle to ensure and protect the full realization of equal rights for all persons in the United States.

The groundbreaking exhibit will also examine Justin Morrill’s role as a framer of the Equal Protection and Immunities and Privileges Clauses. Research conducted by the Friends’ Director, Michael Caduto, in conjunction with Board member Roger Walke, has revealed that Morrill served on the Joint Committee on Reconstruction in the 39th Congress (1865-67) and had earlier drafted language strongly resembling the final core wording of Section 1 of the 14th Amendment.



Section 1 of the 14th Amendment: Here is the original language as framed by Justin S. Morrill in an 1865 letter to Charles Sumner, Chair of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction, on which Morrill served.

In 1865 Morrill outlined the principles by which the U.S. Constitution might afford equal rights and protections to all citizens of the United States, and thus extend those rights to freed slaves in the aftermath of the Civil War, holding that:

“...all citizens of U.S. resident [in] said States, are equal in their civil rights, immunities & privileges and equally entitled to protection in life liberty & property; in granting the elective franchise no distinction shall be made on account of race, descent, or color; & all laws in contravention of these rights, immunities & privileges are null and void.”

Titled “And Justice for All: Justin Morrill and the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution—Commemorating the Sesquicentennial of the Ratification of the 14th Amendment on July 28, 1868,” the exhibit will be on display in the Carriage Barn at the Homestead during regular visiting hours from Wednesday, August 1 through Monday, October 14.

The exhibit will also dovetail with a major speaker event and public forum, entitled “We the People: Equal Protection Under the Law?” to be held at the historic Strafford Town House on Sunday, August 5. Our featured speaker will be Dr. Shirley Jefferson, Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity and Associate Professor of Law at Vermont Law School in South Royalton.

Dr. Jefferson’s speech will be followed by a discussion panel consisting of elected officials and representatives of organizations that are active in the fields of civil rights and social justice — engaging the audience in a far-ranging discussion about the current state of our Constitution’s promise of equal rights and protections for all.

Admission to the event will be free of charge, but space is limited so those interested in attending are encouraged to make reservations by pre-registering online at morrillhomestead.org.

Our business and foundation supporters

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REPORT FROM THE STATE OF VERMONT

Staff and volunteers from the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation had another productive season in 2017, working in close collaboration with the Friends of the Morrill Homestead. We are pleased to report that the number of visitors who toured the Morrill House increased by 30% last year, an indication that our joint marketing efforts are proving successful!

Last season was also a constructive one for collections management work at the site. A project to inventory the books in Morrill's library evolved into a more comprehensive effort to assess the collection and to develop a plan for improving the environmental conditions under which the books are housed. Thanks to the work of our intrepid intern, Adriene Katz, the books have been removed from the house and are now being stored in the more stable environment of the Morrill Education Center. This step will also allow for much needed restoration work to be carried out on built-in bookshelves in the library. A drainage study, planned for the coming season, should provide guidance on how to alleviate the damp conditions in the library and in other rooms at the back of the house.

The long-anticipated project to restore a section

of the house roof was completed last fall. Skilled contractors installed embossed metal roofing shingles identical to the shingles installed under Morrill's direction in 1888. The reproduction shingles replaced those damaged over many years by ice damming above the south side of the old kitchen. We are thrilled with the final result, especially because it will put an end to the occasional leaks above the back stairway. This year, plaster in the stairway will be restored and the door to the back hallway can once again be opened for the public.

We look forward to welcoming the public for tours of Justin Morrill's remarkable home in the coming season. This year we are also pleased to be collaborating with the Strafford Historical Society to offer monthly walking tours of the Upper Village. Walking tours, led by Historical Society member and Site Tour Guide John Freitag, will begin at the Morrill House and will take place on the third Saturday of each month from June through September.

*Tracy Martin
Historic Sites Section Chief
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation*

HISTORIC PRESERVATION MEETS THE DIGITAL AGE AT THE STRAFFORD TOWN HOUSE

Back in 2014, the Friends initiated an effort to raise funds for a state-of-the-art audiovisual system for the Strafford Town House. This project—a collaborative effort involving the Friends, the Town House Advisory Group, and the Town of Strafford—was finally rewarded with a generous Cultural Facilities Grant from the Vermont Arts Council and the State of Vermont.

The funds purchased a versatile, digital audiovisual and lighting system that integrates with the historic architecture, ensuring that this iconic building will remain a vital meeting space for future generations. The enhanced sound and lighting experience will increase the number and diversity of programs and performances that can be accommodated at the Town House, including music, art, theater, celebrations, speeches, and other gatherings.

Many thanks to everyone involved in this project, including the indomitable Paul Kifner.

CALENDAR PREVIEW: 2018

Again this year, the Friends of the Morrill Homestead will offer visitors of all ages an exciting and diverse lineup of programs, events, and exhibits on art, horticulture, history, gardening, and sustainable farming skills.

Events held before this issue of the Newsletter hit the press included Mike Hebb's Pruning and Grafting Fruit Trees (March 17 & 24)... A guided walk on pruning at the Whitman Brook Orchard (March 25)... Sex and the Single Maple: Our Blooming Trees and Shrubs (April 29)... A guided walk on grafting at the Whitman Brook Orchard (May 5)... and Wake Up the Garden: Reconstructing Morrill's Historic Landscape (May 19).

Please visit the Friends' website for more complete descriptions of all upcoming events.
<https://www.morrillhomestead.org/news-events/2018-programs-events-exhibits/>

We look forward to seeing all of our friends, families, and new visitors in 2018. A colorful season of gardens and blossoms on the bough awaits!

Perennial favorites returning to the 2018 calendar will include:

☞ **Open House at Morrill State Historic Site** on June 10, featuring free admission to Senator Morrill's historic home and a visit from Justin Morrill himself.

☞ **The Gallery in the Garden & Silent Auction of Morrill Minis** on July 6.



Justin Smith Morrill (David McWilliams)



☞ On July 21, we will welcome all fairies, gnomes, and elves to an expanded edition of the popular **Fairy House Festival**.

☞ Our annual **Apple and Cheese Harvest Festival**, which the Vermont Chamber of Commerce has chosen as a Top Ten Event Winner for Fall of 2018, will be held on September 30!

The full 2018 calendar also includes:

☞ **Nature vs Culture**, an art show: (July 6-July 22)



Gail Boyajian: "Fable"- oil on panel, 14"x 36"

☞ A special exhibit: **"And Justice for All: Justin Morrill and the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution"** (August 1-October 14)

☞ **A Guided Walk at Whitman Brook Orchard** focusing on summer apple varieties (August 19)

☞ A major speaker—Dr. Shirley Jefferson from the Vermont Law School—and discussion panel with public discourse on **"We the People: Equal Protection Under the Law?"** (August 5)

☞ A plant walk: **Fiddleheads, Lamb's Quarters, Nettles and Nuts: Wild Edible, Medicinal and Poisonous Plants** (September 9)

Expanded hours for guided tours!

Expert docents from the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation will conduct tours of Morrill's historic Gothic Revival cottage from Memorial Day weekend (May 26) through October 14, from 10:00am-5:00pm, Wednesday through Sunday.

Plus a full contingent of art classes and camps:

☞ **Nature Camp** for ages 6-12 (July 9-13)

☞ **A Drawing and Watercolor Camp** for ages 6-12 (July 30-August 3)

☞ A one-day **Watercolor Painting Workshop for Adults** with Jennifer Brown (August 11)

☞ **A Continuing Watercolor Painting Workshop for Adults** with Jennifer Brown (September 6, 13, 20, 27)



And there are always [volunteer opportunities...](#)

☞ **Putting the Garden to Bed** (October 6).

REFLECTIONS OF A HOMESTEAD TOUR GUIDE

When I took the job as a guide at the Justin S. Morrill State Historic Site, many years ago, I decided, for fun, that being a "domestic historian" and owning more period clothing than modern, I would experiment with dressing the part every day.

I was vaguely curious what it would be like, on a day-to-day basis, to BE a Victorian woman. So, if I needed to go directly to my children's soccer game after work, I didn't bother to change. I learned to pump gas in a hoop skirt, and to navigate the steps to the bank in high buttoned boots with ease. The cashier in the general store finally stopped giving me weird looks when I, in a ridiculous feathered hat, ordered a sandwich. The locals eventually no longer noticed my clothes any more than I did. What began as a silly summer whim, turned into an educational opportunity, a bit of an obsession, that has lasted all the summers since, and led to life-changing revelations.

In costume, I feel confident. By dressing as someone else, I can be my real, truest self, without the ever-niggling fear about size or shape. A Victorian lady need not be concerned by the snugness of her jeans or imperfect eye make-up. I felt free to think of other things. Perhaps wearing a voluminous dress would seem oppressive to some, but to me, it's quite liberating to shun the modern idea of beauty and embrace one that suits me. We should all be so lucky.

My job, in a gem of a house, unchanged by years, which allows me to physically and mentally go back in time, has taught me more than I could have imagined. On slow days, when I look around the Morrill Home, there is not a single modern object (including myself!) in my line of vision. On busy days, I get to hold the key to a time travel machine for others (and only occasionally have to fix the toilet!).

Morning after morning, I walk the same worn paths, breathing deeply, holding my skirts clear

of the dew, thinking and seeing things I forgot about during all those years when I was in a rush, feeling stressed, trying to keep up with everyone else. In the basic daily rhythms and routines of opening and closing and locking and checking... taking guests on tours... talking about a bygone era as though it were yesterday... dusting and tidying... I find not only that time doesn't seem to exist but also that each moment is crystalized and full of richness.



I understand the passing of time better through little things that would have escaped my notice before. Each day, as the weather shifts, ancient wooden doors shrink or swell and creaky floorboards warp and straighten—patterns I have now subconsciously learned to predict. Following the same trail around the grounds daily, I have begun to notice the subtle changes in a wayward flower that leans over the narrow lane between garden rows. I've watched the bud swell, bloom, tip toward the sun, fling itself open in full summer ecstasy and then wither away over the course of several weeks. Would I have noticed a stray blossom every single day otherwise?

I've seen the raspberries grow to bursting with sweet, warm juice and know exactly when they'd

be ripe. The fat, grey spider living beneath the eaves of the Icehouse has spun and repaired her intricate web a dozen times, each new weaving a bit different from the last, and towards fall she huddles up high on cool mornings, her egg sac close by. Without meaning to, I've begun measuring the water in the brook by the millstone's low gurgle heard from the pink, gingerbread porch.

Away from the stress and worries of real life, these things matter more and become beautiful and important. When at the Homestead with me, my two young boys are content to lie on their backs, costumed, but barefoot in the grass, and stare at pictures in the clouds, or sail homemade boats in the stream. Magic lurks in simplicity and highlights what we usually miss. I, for the first time, wondered if "real life" should take a backseat more often, and gave myself permission to delight in the little things.

The clock in the Morrill Homestead's hall ticks slowly, its tarnished pendulum swinging back and forth deliberately, its tick is always a bit lower than the tock. History is no longer just dry pages in a yellowed book, it's alive and speaking with us here. In the past, I've laughed at finding myself saying goodnight to Justin, Ruth, Louise and Jimmy, each in turn, as I close their bedroom doors for the night; but maybe it's not so strange after all.

An elderly couple taking a tour a few summers ago, paid me my favorite compliments. The gentleman said: "I can't imagine you anywhere else" and his wife said that the whole day made her feel peaceful. If I, along with this special place, can help people slow down, take a glimpse into the past and find themselves inhaling the faint, nostalgic traces of one hundred year old smoke and polished wood, catching lingering whispers of amazing people who lived and loved so long ago, changing the course of history, then I will be very, very glad.

*Emily Howe
Tour Guide, Justin Morrill Historic Site*

MORE TRAVELS WITH FLAT JUSTIN



Over the past several months, Flat Justin has hit the road again, traveling with VDHP staff members Caitlin Corkins and Yvonne Benney Basque. An image of Flat Justin was captured in front of Holyrood Castle in Edinburgh. Friends of the Homestead

will remember that the ruins of the Abbey at Holyrood appear on a stained glass window in Morrill's library. Flat Justin was also thrilled to visit the U.S. Capitol, a place where his namesake spent so many productive years in the House and Senate.



CHEERS TO 20 YEARS!!!

We began in 1993 as a committee of the Strafford Historical Society with an ice harvest and ice cream social. In 1998, we received our non-profit 501(c)3 status. Two decades later, our mission to promote the life and legacy of Sen. Justin Morrill and help preserve the Morrill Homestead is as engaging and inspiring as ever.

Our founding board members—Floyd and Kay Campbell, Vi Coffin, John Dumville, John Frietrag, Phyl Harmon, and I—spearheaded projects to honor Sen. Morrill: we raised \$75,000 from the USDA to fund film productions of "Land for Learning, Justin Morrill and the Land Grant Colleges and Universities," produced by Vermont Public Television. Copies of the Land for Learning companion booklet, "Justin Morrill; His Life and Times," a teachers' guide, were sent to every school and home-school in Vermont.

Thanks to a \$50,000 grant from the Vermont Legislature in 1998, the Friends purchased furnishings from the family of the Homestead's last private owner, Elizabeth Sullivan, further preserving the history and stories of Morrill's past.

In July, 1998 the Friends hosted a two-day centennial symposium on "The Life and Legacy of Sen. Morrill and the Land-Grant Act" offering programs and academic panels led by

30 lecturers and academic panelists. Speeches by two university presidents, a former Vermont governor, and a well-known author, as well as performances by period musical groups. Over 175 people from around the country attended, including representatives from many Land-Grant Universities.

The Friends' long range goals for the restoration of Morrill's gardens, orchard, and landscapes have breathed fresh air and colors back to Vermont's first National Historic Landmark. The amazing construction of the Education Center now provides a location for meetings, programs and visitors from throughout the United States. For several summers, the "Ed Center" served as headquarters of the "Justin Morrill Scholars"—students from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences Schools.

But we are not resting on our laurels. The Friends' 20th anniversary programs offers exciting new events, as well as old favorites. Come and visit new exhibits, bring a picnic and friends. We hope to see you at the Homestead this season! CHEERS to the Next 20 Years!

*Andersen Thorp
Board, Friends of the Morrill Homestead*