

News from the Farm

Summer 2020



12 Hallock Farm Sustainability Trail

Mock-Up
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Funded by the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation

Hallockville Awarded Grant For Virtual Sustainability Trail

Hallockville Museum Farm has been awarded a \$9,788 grant by the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation to be used to create a high-tech, virtual *Sustainability Trail* at Hallockville.

The trail will make use of some 30 informational guide signs that already dot the Hallockville grounds. Each would be fitted with a QR code. When scanned by a tour taker with a camera app on a smartphone, an audio narration will pop up, along with photos or videos—in some cases, both—that would bring a particular sustainability practice to life.

For example, the Hallocks recycled “gray water” from washing dishes and clothes to irrigate their garden. A video or photo opened by the code would show the receptacles used for that purpose while a voice-over describes the process.

Another example is the cisterns the Hallocks used to collect rainwater for domestic use. Another would be the way family farms fed table scraps to their hogs and used their droppings for fertilizer.

The narration at another location would impersonate

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From the Director's Desk

First and foremost, I hope that this newsletter finds you all well. At this writing it's difficult to believe that I have been here at Hallockville for 120 days, and two thirds of those were during our shelter-in.

Herb Strobel and I have come to Hallockville every day. Stella and Darla our cows are both fine and seem to have enjoyed a warmer winter than usual. Our sheep, D'Artagnan and Aruba, are happy since dandelions and clover are in bloom. It's a salad bar feast for them.

As you will read further in the newsletter, both chicken coops are functional and the chickens seem rather content in their current habitats. Also, many of you have benefited from the increase in eggs. Come by and see how the ladies are doing and you may go home with the fixings for a nice omelette.

The Community Gardeners proceeded with their opening, albeit with a few more guidelines and restrictions. They are vigilant about wearing masks and keeping socially distanced when working in the garden together. They bring their own tools and wipe down gates, hoses and faucets as necessary. There has been a harvest of some kale and spinach that were planted in late 2019.

One of the members of our Board of Directors, Dale Moyer, has planted a plot of potatoes in preparation for our *Fall Potatolicious Fest*. We have started a wait list for Gardeners for 2021, and if you didn't get in this year, please call Herb or me for inclusion next year.

This year we also started Children's Gardens. These are smaller raised beds, which can be purchased by parents or grandparents as partners with the kids. We felt that too many children had to be indoors during this pandemic and wanted to give them an outlet as well as an educational experience.

It is awe-inspiring to see children's faces when they see what they've planted go from seed to plant to table!

In addition to the grant we received from the Gardiner Foundation, explained in the left-hand column, other good news is that the *Hallockville Honeys* have sponsored seven hives so far, and our Master Beekeeper Chris Kelly has gotten our bees off to a buzzing start.

Read more about this on Page 4. If you wander around on the property, there are signs to indicate where the bees are. Remember, bees sting to protect the hive, so Bee Ware!

I am overwhelmed by the talent of the Hallockville community. From chefs, gardeners, knitters, weavers

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Virtual Sustainability Trail

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the voice of Ella Hallock as she describes how she cut up old clothes and sewed the pieces together into quilts. Audio recordings for the various sites would be made by museum farm volunteers with broadcast or theater experience.

"A 19th century farm like that of the Hallocks was a model of sustainable living," explained historian and Hallockville volunteer Richard Wines, who helped develop the grant application.

"The Hallocks recycled or reused virtually all of their waste," he said. "No garbage truck ever visited their farm because there was no garbage to cart away," he said.

"The sustainability practices of family farms provide vital lessons for how the world lives today," Mr. Wines said.

"The tour," he added, "will also fit perfectly with Hallockville's mission statement, which is not only to bring visitors back to our area's family farming roots, but also to explore their relevance to the modern world."

Hallockville's program director, Herb Strobel, said that the virtual tour would also be available on Hallockville's website, where it can be accessed from anywhere, most importantly from elementary and high school classrooms.

"It will serve as an important component of our educational outreach programs," he said, "especially given that reductions in school budgets have significantly cut down on school visits to Hallockville."

Mr. Strobel was also instrumental in developing the grant proposal, as were Hallockville's new executive director, Roberta Shoten, and Hallockville vice president, Suzanne Johnson.

The Gardiner Foundation was established in 1987 by Robert David Lion Gardiner who, until his death in 2004, was the Lord of the Manor of Gardiner Island. His descendants have owned Gardiner Island since 1639, obtained as part of a royal grant by King Charles I of England. The foundation primarily supports the study of New York history, particularly that of eastern Long Island.

From the Director's Desk

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carvers and quilters, there's nothing they can't do.

We can use your help too, and we would welcome your input. Please call and let us know what you'd like to be doing here at Hallockville..

By the time you read this, we will have had our yard sale and perhaps the first concert in the Naugles Barn, whether it's a drive-in or sit on-your-blanket affair.

In closing, let me say that people stop by frequently to say hello and introduce themselves. I'm here and look forward to meeting you at whatever distance we need to say hello.

Sincerely, Roberta.

During the Shutdown, Garden With the Kids!

Given the pandemic, the past months have been challenging, especially for parents and grandparents with kids to keep busy. But the return of warmer weather means everyone can get back outside. So we've put together some sustainable gardening projects that you can do together as a family.

Plant a tree: They provide food sources for all sorts of animals, nesting habitats for birds and, create micro-climates to keep the soil underneath them moist and cool. On top of this, they create oxygen that we need to breathe.

Get the kids involved in researching the tree species best suited for your property. Then have them dig the hole, plant, mulch and water.

Build a compost: Stop dragging leaves and lawn clippings to the curb.

Stop tossing food scraps into the trash. Throw it all on a compost pile.

Again, have the kids do on-line research. Choose the type that best suits your situation -- a three-

bay pile for a large property, a classic upside-down bin for an average-size garden or a tumble-type bin for a smaller area. You will be decreasing material going to the landfill, reducing carbon emissions and creating a rich soil conditioner for your outdoor garden spaces.

Create a better lawn: Lawns are part of the suburban landscape and there are some simple, yet important, ways that your lawn-care practices can lead to greater sustainability. For example, don't collect lawn clippings. Instead, use a mulching mower and leave the clippings in place. They'll supply valuable nutrients and help retain soil moisture.

No lawn at all: Lawns do little for the environment and, in fact, are harmful in many ways. Some of us apply synthetic chemicals that can leach into the groundwater.

Many lawns are also "mono-cultures" consisting of just one or two grass species, and this lack of diversity does little to support a healthy ecosystem for insects and birds.

Instead of a lawn or to decrease the size of a lawn, why not widen your flower beds or, better yet, create a native plant garden? Native plants use less water and require less care than lawns, and they look fabulous while sustaining birds and pollinating insects.

Here again, engage kids in researching which native plants for your own home environment.

Pull that weed: Most of the time they are just an annoyance. but an increasing number of aggressive and invasive weeds can choke out and smother native plants. So have the kids identify which invasive weeds are in your yard. Once identified, pull them up by the roots. And no herbicides, please.



Volunteers Collaborate To Revive Chicken Yard

Chickens have been an important part of small family farms for centuries, serving as a source of eggs, meat, insect control and the recycling of food scraps. The Hallocks had a coop conveniently located behind the Homestead.

The original coop and chicken yard were rebuilt about 30 years ago and had played an important part in Hallockville's educational programs. Thousands of school children and



summer campers have fed the chickens, collected eggs and learned the importance of keeping poultry.

After more than three decades, however, the yard was showing its age. Surrounding trees had grown too big, the fencing had holes and the wooden support posts were no longer sturdy.

Numerous storms hadn't helped either, thus it was time to renovate the chicken yard.

A leader was needed, and Bev Vlcek, a Hallockville Gardener and master gardener, assumed the role of master cheerleader. She recruited other volunteers to help in the many different phases of the work.

Mark Vosburgh, Dale Moyer and Alfonso Martinez-Fonts



provided the design and other volunteers soon pitched in, including Nancy Frankman, Nancy Ziino, Lois Leonard and Hallockville's co-president Christine Killorin.

One of the most challenging aspects was placing chicken wire over top to fend off unwelcome visitors. Someone said it would be tough for even a bear to get in—or out!

On April 17th, the last nail was hammered in by Mr. Moyers and Mr. Martinez-Fonts, Hallockville's other co-president, gave an impromptu speech.

The chickens were then introduced to their new outside space and promptly started to enjoy the beautiful spring air.

The project was a great example of Hallockville volunteers pulling together and working towards a common cause, providing proof once again that volunteers and other supporters are at the heart and soul of Hallockville and the sine qua non to our success.

Top photo: Dale Moyer, Christine Killorin and Bev Vlcek.

Outhouses Were Sometimes Referred to as 'the Necessary'

Each of the 19 historic buildings on Hallockville's 28 acres has its own story. Here's the tale of the Hallocks' privy as told by historian Richard Wines.

Not until 1926 when electricity finally reached the farm were the Hallocks able to install a small bathroom in the Homestead. Before that, it was necessary for them to use an outhouse. Indeed, the outhouse was often referred to as "the necessary."

The current structure may date to 1877 when a Hallock diary recorded that Nathan Downs was engaged to build the privy reservoir.

Or to 1884, when another diary entry recorded paying \$12.00 to a local carpenter to work on the privy.

It is approximately 5' by 6'. Inside are four seats, but that does not mean the family all used it together. Heaven



forbid! The very word "privy" was a shortened version of "privacy." However, same-sex children might have gone out together at night when it was too scary to go alone.

One curious detail is that this little building has two doors. Supposedly this was a safety feature in case the outhouse blew over in a storm or the front door was blocked by snow. The family told a story about the time during the famous blizzard of 1888, when the drifts were so high that they had to dig a tunnel.

The outhouse will be a stop on Hallockville's new *Sustainability Trail*, fitting into the recycling system on the farm in two ways. First, in the days before toilet paper was invented or affordable, the Hallocks recycled corn cobs and old newspapers to be used for the same function.

Walk around to the back and you will see the second form of recycling. Beneath the seats was a cement-lined reservoir. The Hallocks shoveled out the contents from time to time and used it as manure to fertilize their fields.

Unlike modern septic systems, an outhouse used no water and did not threaten to leach nitrates into the groundwater. To lessen smells and reduce flies, the Hallocks would have sprinkled lime after each use. They may also have planted tansy outside to keep flies away. A louvered window provided ample ventilation.

When Halsey Hallock and his second wife Emilie were living in the large west wing of the Homestead, she had to walk past her in-laws' sitting room to get to the outhouse, causing her much embarrassment when they had guests.

Photo: The privy is in the background as Ella Hallock cuts the grass.



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Seven Donors Step Up To Sponsor Bee Hives

A program to encourage members and friends of the Museum Farm to sponsor their own bee hives has already drawn seven benefactors. Each has donated \$400 to finance their own bee hive..

The program is a sustainability initiative to foster bee keeping at a time when bee populations are in perilous decline, threatening a species that pollinates 75 percent of our nation's vegetables, fruits and nuts.

The program is in partnership with Chris Kelly of North Fork Promised Land Apiaries, who stocked the hives and will oversee maintenance.



Bee hive sponsors gathered last month for a lecture by beekeeper Chris Kelly and see their names on the bee hive they financed.

Hallockville's Mission To take Long Island back to its family farming roots and explore their relevance today.

Our Vision To create a vibrant, active and inclusive Hallockville community rooted in history and focused on the future.