



Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation, Inc.

STRAIGHT TALK

Charter Sponsors
Herbert C. Hoover
Harry S. Truman
Dwight D. Eisenhower
John F. Kennedy
Lyndon B. Johnson

John Coolidge
Jacqueline B. Kennedy
Paul Mellon

Honorary Advisors
Jimmy Carter
Nancy Reagan

Honorary Chair
50th Anniversary Gala
Caroline Kennedy

Officers
Frank J. Barrett Jr.
Chair, Board of Trustees
Catherine M. Nelson
Vice Chair
Barbara S. O'Connell
Vice Chair
Owen J. Stearns
Secretary
Christopher C. Jeter
Treasurer

Stephen S. Woods
Executive Director

Trustees
Milton F. Campbell, MD
Daniel W. Churchill
Arthur E. Crowley Jr.
Hon. James H. Douglas
Michael M. Galbraith
Roby Harrington III
Gerard E. Jones
Sarwar A. Kashmeri
Leslie Keefe
Robert P. Kirby
Thomas A. Murray
Hon. Alice W. Nitka
John S. Reidy
David H. Roberts
Ann Shriver Sargent
Amity Shlaes
Susan A. Sundstrom, Ph.D.
Milton G. Valera

National Advisory Board
Brian T. Allen
Hon. Randolph D. Brock
Alvin S. Felzenberg
Wyatt R. Haskell
Hon. Vincent Illuzzi
Patricia Krider
James H. Ottaway Jr.
David Pietrusza
Leni Preston
David M. Shribman
Cal Thomas
Jerry L. Wallace

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stephen G. Breyer Foundation Keynote Speaker

by Bill Brooks

On July 30, 2011, Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court Stephen G. Breyer was the keynote speaker at the Foundation's Annual Dinner. Before a sold out, enthusiastic audience of 220, the Justice discussed the core ideas from his recent book *Making Our Democracy Work: A Judge's View*. His central message is that for our courts to effectively protect unpopular individuals and ideas, it is critical that Americans have an understanding of how the judiciary works. He was accompanied by his wife Joanna Hare Breyer, Ph.D., who, as a psychologist at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, has counseled children stricken with cancer.

The Breyers, who have a summer cabin in nearby Plainfield, New Hampshire, toured the new Museum and Education Center and the Historic Site before the 5pm reception and book signing. This was their inaugural visit to the village. They were so impressed that they intend to return with their grandchildren. Justice Breyer signed and



Justice Breyer autographs *How Our Democracy Works* for Foundation Emerita Trustee Mimi Baird, while Dan Frank Jr. and his father await their turns.

inscribed copies of his book for over 80 guests, while engaging in attentive conversation with them. Guests brought already purchased copies of his book or purchased them at the signing from the inventory available through Ron Miller, proprietor of Shiretown Books in Woodstock.

continued on page 2

2011 Annual Meeting: Coolidge Foundation Elects Distinguished Slate of Trustees

At its Annual Meeting on July 30, 2011, the Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation unanimously elected seven new trustees to the Foundation's Board of Trustees. The new trustees included: Hon. James H. Douglas, former Governor of the State of Vermont; Amity Shlaes, Senior Fellow in economic history at the Council on Foreign Relations and author of *The Forgotten Man: A New History of the Great Depression*; Sarwar A. Kashmeri, Senior Fellow with Atlantic Council's International Security Program and author of *NATO 2.0: Reboot or Delete?*; Milton G. Valera, President of the National Notary Association since 1982; Catherine M. Nelson, Vice President and General Manager of the *Rutland Her-*

ald; Ann Shriver Sargent, business owner; and, Leslie Keefe, organizational development consultant and President of Leslie Keefe Consulting. In addition, the Foundation elected a new slate of officers, including Frank J. Barrett Jr., architect and noted author and historian, Chairman of the Board of Trustees; Catherine M. Nelson and Barbara S. O'Connell, Vice Chairs; Owen J. Stearns, Secretary; and, Christopher C. Jeter, great grandson of President Coolidge, Treasurer. The Board also honored the immeasurable contributions of Woodstock's own Mimi Baird to the Foundation and unanimously elected her Emerita Trustee.

Amongst the guests were four federal judges, a retired judge from the International Court of Justice, a large contingent of over twenty from the Vermont Law School, many from New England's legal community, longtime Coolidge Foundation members and supporters, and the general public. When agreeing to be the pro bono speaker, Justice Breyer indicated that this would be his first public appearance in Vermont since his appointment to the Supreme Court in 1994 by President Bill Clinton. When introduced, Justice Breyer and the audience were reminded of the importance of August 3—on that date in 1923 Calvin Coolidge was sworn in as 30th President of the United States at his father's home in Plymouth Notch, and on August 3, 1994 Stephen Breyer took both the constitutional and judicial oaths of office as Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court in Greensboro, Vermont, before Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist.

As the reception concluded, the guests adjourned to an outside, festive tent for dinner and Justice Breyer's presentation. He began his remarks by praising Calvin Coolidge's "very impressive" judicial appointments, which included Court of Appeals Judges Thomas Walter Swan, Leonard Hand and his brother Augustus Noble Hand, all of the Second Circuit, and U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Harlan Fiske Stone, who was later appointed as Chief Justice by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Justice Breyer recalled the many opinions in cases he studied and admired that were written by these judges. He related that he had recently been reading of the court packing attempt by FDR and was reminded that in that era Chief Justice Stone often joined with Associate Justices Louis Brandeis and Benjamin Cardozo in decisions upholding the rule of the legislature as maximal and the rule of the judiciary as minimal.

In view of these judicial appointments by President Coolidge, Justice Breyer assessed that he might well be in the Coolidge tradition, and certainly shared the President's belief in "Persistence." He read aloud the full text of the oft repeated "Persistence" quotation, whose tenets he promised to read and recommend to his grandchildren.

Justice Breyer spent the majority of his forty-five minute presentation explaining that he had written *Making Our Democracy Work* to outline how our courts work and why nine unelected people had been given the authority they have. He summarized Alexander Hamilton's argument in *Federalist Paper #78* that the Court, not the President or the Congress, has the authority to interpret the Constitution, and the authority to say when the other branches have gone too far. The Court protects the people who are forgotten. He discussed the desegregation cases *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* (1954), and *Cooper v. Aaron* (1958), as stellar examples of protecting a minority by denying legal segregation. The Justice indicated that, contrary to popular opinion, probably 30 to 40 percent of the Supreme Court's decisions



Foundation's guests await Justice Breyer's presentation.

are unanimous, while 5-4 votes account for maybe 20 to 25 percent, and not always the same five and the same four.

The Justice championed the need for schools and communities to offer studies of U.S. history and civics, for young students to learn how government works, and for them to participate in local, state, and federal government. He offered as examples the study of the judicial appointments of President Coolidge, judges who brought reason, pragmatism, and prudence to their decisions, and who did not make decisions on the basis of contemporary political winds. Such educational courses and outreach have been offered by the Coolidge Foundation since its founding in 1960.

Justice Breyer received two standing ovations—one when introduced and another at the conclusion of his remarks. The Justice was presented the Calvin Coolidge Award for Public Service by the Foundation, which is given to an outstanding citizen "who demonstrates exceptional character and moral values; maintains a high level of integrity; is respected by the public; is a proponent of historic preservation; shows respect for the environment; demonstrates family values; and, is a devoted public servant." Prior recipients of either the Calvin Coolidge Award or the Grace Coolidge Award are Senator John H. Chafee, Edward Connery Lathem of Dartmouth College, James H. Ottaway Jr. of Ottaway Newspapers and Dow Jones, U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders, Vermont Governor Jim Douglas, Mary French Rockefeller, and Vermont Governor Madeline Kunin.



Vermont Public Radio recorded Justice Breyer's talk, which can be accessed through VPR's website www.vpr.net, and Woodstock Community Television Channel 8 filmed the event, website www.wctv8.com, email info@wctv8.com. Reporters from *The Vermont Standard* and the *Rutland Herald* covered the event. Catering services were provided by Occasions Catering of Rochester, VT www.occasionsvt.com; tent and dining accessories provided by Celebration Tents of Brandon, VT www.celebrateinvermont.com.



Bill Jenney, Site Administrator (the one with the name tag).

I made it up Route 100A to within about a mile of the Farmbrook Motel. I had to stop and park where I did because a small brook that was supposed to run under the road had inconveniently decided to run over the road and had brought along its friends from the Gravel family. I unhooked my bike, carried it across the brook and proceeded to pedal. Large sections of the road are untouched by the flood waters and look like nothing has happened, while other sections of the road show the devastating power of raging water. Two bridges along Route 100A are totally wiped out. Luckily, someone had placed some boards across the concrete abutments, and I was able to carry my bike across and continue on.

The Farmbrook Motel has been heavily damaged: their driveway bridge is gone, most of their front yard is gone, and the brook that flowed under the Motel has ripped out so much banking that the Motel is starting to sag due to lack of structural support.

When I pedaled up the final hill into the village, I was amazed at how completely normal everything looked. Other than being able to hear Nancy Yale's generator and the trusty generator at the Union Christian Church, I saw nothing out of place, because nothing is out of place. The village is as it was and hopefully forever will be. I went into the Wilder House Restaurant and found Nancy, Monk Yale, and Bill Jenney finishing breakfast. Everyone was in great spirits and ready to tell a new set of ears all about their adventures. Other than being a little tired of having to get water from the spigot at the Country Store and the usual inconveniences of living without power, the Notch crew was in fine form. I took Bill Jenney's picture in part because I was amused to see him wearing his usual name tag even though every single person stuck at the Notch knows exactly who he is.

I checked on the Foundation's offices and the vault. Not a drop of water got in anywhere. I gathered a few records

needed by Kate Bradley and myself and then headed to the Union Christian Church. I went into the basement of the church—not a drop of water.

Just as I was about to start pedaling toward home, two helicopters came and dropped off supplies in the field behind the cemetery. Given how well Bill Jenney told me he is eating, I'm not sure he's ready for the military's MREs.

The Vermont Division for Historic Preservation should be very proud of how Bill is handling himself and his crew at the Notch. Nancy's and Monk's generosity in feeding everyone is just awe inspiring. Everyone up there has earned our deepest gratitude. Amazing.

That's all for now. Take care and stay safe.

—Steve Woods

Postscript: Road access to the Notch is fully restored.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Due to the recent flood damage caused by Hurricane Irene, the Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation has canceled all activities for the rest of 2011. The 2012 Calendar will be published in the Spring Newsletter and will also be posted on the website at:

www.calvin-coolidge.org

Have You Seen This Man?



This is reportedly a photograph of Oliver Coolidge, Calvin Coolidge's great-grandfather. Amity Shlaes, who is writing a biography of President Coolidge, is looking for information about Oliver and, especially, a photograph of him. If you know anything about this photograph or know of another image of Oliver Coolidge, please contact her at amityshlaes@gmail.com or Nikolai Krylov at nkrylov@cfr.org.

Thank you!

Coolidge Appreciated the Moral Obligation of a Contract

By Milt Valera, President, National Notary Association
Trustee, Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation



Admirers of the character of our 30th President, Calvin Coolidge, might naturally be inclined to believe that if this former chief executive of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts were in the governor's office today, he would respond to a new assault on the sanctity of legal contracts in the Bay State as forcefully as he did back in 1919 when his gubernatorial boldness ultimately thrust him into national prominence and onto the GOP's Presidential ticket as the running mate of Warren G. Harding.

The event that vaulted Governor Coolidge onto the national stage was the infamous strike when Boston police walked off the job in violation of their contract, triggering several nights of lawlessness on the streets of one of the nation's largest cities. Coolidge's now legendary response was to support firing the strikers and to declare, "There is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, any time." One senses that Coolidge's outrage was as much about the dishonoring of a moral obligation as it was about endangering Bostonians' lives and property. To Coolidge, a contractual obligation was a moral one.

We can only speculate today what Governor Coolidge would do or say about the current "robo-signing" scandals that have arisen amid the national avalanche of home mortgage foreclosures. These scandals reveal abuses of moral and contractual obligations on a staggering scale. Stopping such abuses is one of the very reasons that Notaries exist.

Robo-signing refers to a variety of dishonest practices. It can mean a lower-level employee forging an executive's signature or signing his or her own name with a phony title. It can also mean a qualified executive in the mortgage industry signing a foreclosure affidavit without verifying the

information it contains. These false affidavits were presented to courts, which then authorized taking homes away from cash-strapped borrowers on the presumption that the facts they contained were correct. Often they were not.

As president of the National Notary Association, I long have been aware of the pressures that may be exerted on individual employee Notaries to abandon lawful procedures in the name of expedience. Indeed, the NNA teaches techniques whereby a Notary may "educate" an employer or supervisor beforehand that the best corporate policy always is to obey the law—even when it conflicts with the dictates of expedience.

The national foreclosure crisis has compounded the pressures on certain employee Notaries in the mortgage industry to ignore both the law and the ethical best practices espoused in the NNA's *Notary Public Code of Professional Responsibility*. To keep up with the paperwork for an unprecedented volume of foreclosures, some loan servicers have resorted to virtual boiler room tactics, including gang forging of executives' and Notaries' signatures and group use of Notary seals.

The most surprising and insidious part of the robo-signing scandals are not the forgeries and the seal thefts. The more inexcusable violations are those involving *unforged* documents. They may involve signed foreclosure declarations by bank or mortgage officials, or by their attorneys, that the facts contained in the declarations are true and correct, when the truth is that too often the signers have not even read these statements.

I believe that it would be the breach of trust by highly placed and highly paid executives that a 21st century Governor Coolidge would find most appalling in the current robo-signing scandals. Coolidge famously remarked that "The chief business of the American people is business," and if the purpose of government is to encourage and reward



Wilder House Restaurant Plymouth Notch, Vermont

802-672-4313

Open 7 days 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
May 23rd – October 18th

Bus groups and larger parties are welcome
with reservations.

Your Hosts, Kim and Nancy Yale
Email Nyale1@aol.com

entrepreneurship by allowing business to operate with minimal fetters, as Coolidge firmly held, then there must be an expectation that business leaders have certain moral obligations. Foremost among these is the obligation to be truthful in all contracts and sworn declarations that one signs. If there is a loss of trust in contracts and affidavits—as there was during the recent foreclosure crisis—American business and law will be the weaker for it.

Notaries well know the importance of maintaining trust in our commercial and legal systems. Indeed, a white paper published by the NNA in 2011 and describing notarization as “The Guarantor of Trust for Today’s Business,” elaborated as follows: “Trust is the lifeblood of modern society. It is the *sine qua non* of a complex culture in which business dealings between strangers are the norm rather than the exception.”

But as much as Notaries do in preventing countless forged, coerced and incompetent signings and in impressing oath-takers with the seriousness and consequences of dishonesty, even Notaries cannot always prevent an executive from being untruthful in a contract or affidavit. The executive may have made a cynical, calculated judgment that pursuing profits has a greater upside than the imposition of penalties has a downside.

This is one reason why all Americans—especially young people—must learn more about the moral example set by our 30th President. A pro-business Chief Executive who was at the same time a paragon of integrity and due process, Calvin Coolidge may serve as a moral guide in these times when increasing market share seems too often to be a company’s sole priority. In light of this, the mission of the Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation in fostering understanding of Coolidge’s legacy takes on a heightened importance and urgency. With that in mind, I am honored to have recently been named to the Foundation’s Board of Trustees.

As I have often mentioned, America’s Notaries have long felt a special bond with President Coolidge. Notaries are drawn to Coolidge’s integrity, his humility, his common touch, his love of family, his inclination to surrender the spotlight to others, and no doubt also to the fact that his importance and his role in American life, like their own, has long been underestimated and underutilized.

Donation Partnership with The Cheese Factory

The Coolidge Foundation and Fairfield Farms Artisan Cheese, LLC, famously known as “The Cheese Factory,” in Plymouth Notch, VT, are pleased to announce an exciting promotional program in which The Cheese Factory has generously agreed to donate to the Coolidge Foundation **ten percent (10%)** of the proceeds of cheese sales purchased by Members and friends of the Foundation between now and December 31, 2011. All a purchaser needs to do to take advantage of this special donation program is to reference promotional code “**COOLIDGE**” when making a purchase from The Cheese Factory. (*See ad below.*)

Located next door to the Coolidge homestead, The Cheese Factory was originally owned and operated by Colonel John Coolidge, President Coolidge’s father. Jesse Werner, a native Vermonter, is the Master cheese maker who is re-establishing the story and heritage of The Cheese Factory.

This special promotional partnership between the Coolidge Foundation and The Cheese Factory allows Members and friends to enjoy the unique tastes of this historic American artisan cheese and to know donations resulting from their purchases are helping the Coolidge Foundation’s advocacy for President Coolidge’s legacy.




A Real North Country Hotel
Named for Col. John Coolidge

Lodging
Meeting Rooms
Banquets

David C. Briggs
Innkeeper

www.hotelcoolidge.com
White River Jct., Vermont



COOLIDGE HOMETOWN CHEESE
MADE IN THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY

Cheese is once again being made by hand to the highest standards of excellence at the historic Plymouth Cheese Co.
Experience this unique part of America's history.

Open Daily 9am-5pm
(802) 672-3650
www.plymouthcheese.com

GREETINGS FROM THE NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Supporters and Friends of the Coolidge Foundation,

As the new Executive Director who has been blessed with the management of a wonderfully strong and committed organization, I must begin by thanking you for your support of the Coolidge Foundation. We all recognize that without your help we could not have had such an enormously successful 2011 and could not have confidence about what we intend to accomplish in 2012. I am absolutely dedicated to promoting the Foundation's mission—to *open the eyes of the world to Calvin Coolidge*—and all that President Coolidge's legacy of integrity, leadership, and public service can contribute to public life today.

If there were ever any doubts regarding what we could achieve with new expanded facilities here at Plymouth Notch, the summer of 2011 laid those doubts to rest. Our "Speaking of Coolidge" summer series featured a Pulitzer Prize winner, a U.S. Supreme Court Justice, and other prominent authors and scholars. Those fortunate enough to attend these events voiced overwhelming praise for the quality of the presentations and gratitude to the Foundation for bringing to the Notch such world-class

talent. Rest assured, the 2012 speaker series will continue to inspire a national conversation about the relevancy (I would go so far as to say the essential need) for President Coolidge's values in a critical election year.

I am proud to offer the diversity of articles contained in this newsletter as a small example of the broad reach and intellectual depth of the Coolidge Foundation and its supporters. Coordinating the creation of this newsletter is fun. However, other work—hard work—remains. Even a casual reading of the national news reveals the desperate need for the lessons taught by President Coolidge's life and career. People generally learn best by example. President Coolidge can provide that example.

I respectfully ask for your financial support of the Foundation and its work as a teacher of the Coolidge legacy. Your donation will allow you to take an ownership role in helping to improve civic and public engagement in a meaningful way.

Sincerely,

Stephen S. Woods
Executive Director



A Place in Time
The Coolidge Foundation
A Historic Village
for your Wedding Celebration

Plymouth Notch, Vermont 802.672.3389 calvin-coolidge.org

A Sense of Place

by Frank J. Barrett Jr. AIA, Foundation Chairman



For many of us, the first exposure to the life and legacy of President Calvin Coolidge came by way of a visit to the historic village at Plymouth Notch. This place of honest, functional buildings, carefully nestled within the timeless landscape of Vermont's Green Mountains, offers a warm and welcoming presence that leaves a lasting and gentle impression on the first-time visitor that is not soon forgotten. So it was with me, Chair of the Board of Trustees, more than fifty years ago, and a year prior to the founding of this organization in 1960 that honors and celebrates the life and times of our thirtieth President of the United States of America.

With each passing year, I give increasing thanks for the opportunity to have grown up in the college town of Hanover, New Hampshire, the third son of two well-educated parents who valued history and encouraged developing interests within their children. My father, an established architect and landscape painter of ancient New England genealogical routes, had a deep love of history that he enjoyed sharing with his children. And, at a very young age, I almost hung on every word that he would tell me about the broad patterns of history, buildings, and people. When I was about 6 ½ years of age, one lovely Saturday morning we made a family outing to Plymouth Notch. My parents were aware that through the efforts of the Coolidge Family and the State of Vermont, the village was being preserved intact as an important historic site. Plus, there was talk of John Coolidge's old cheese factory being reopened, and we all loved good ripe Vermont cheddar cheese! So, off we went to visit Plymouth Notch—all for the first time.



Cilley Country Store, circa 1959.



Jay Barrett, future Foundation Chairman.

My recollections of our visit was that my mother and two older brothers headed up to see what might be going on at the cheese factory, while my father and I headed for the Wilder barn to check out the horse drawn wagons, buggies, and sleighs on display. Dad would tell me about the various vehicles, as well as about the barn itself. He and I wandered out behind the Wilder barn where there sat an old wagon in the tall grass. I got up in the driver's seat and Dad took my picture.

Over the years, I have often thought about this family outing and how much of a lasting impression that it made on me at the time. As I matured, I developed a deep interest in American history, our country's presidents, and rural architecture. I often think much is owed to that first visit to the Notch, which now seems such a long time ago. If I were in the vicinity, I would on occasion swing by the Notch and briefly revisit the historic village and take great delight in its presence, its history, its beauty, and its unique sense of place. Most recently, serving on the Board of Trustees and furthering my interest in and understanding of President Calvin Coolidge, I have come to better embrace the all-important role that the village at Plymouth Notch played in shaping the exceptional character of an exceptional man and his family. Those characteristics, so integral to the man, are also so well founded in this village a century or more later—truly a sense of place.

This is a story about the importance of education and introducing our children to history, significant historic persons and places so our children might come to better understand the importance of such things—the importance of a sense of place and the shaping of the uniquely American character.

**“There is no dignity quite so impressive,
and no independence quite so important,
as living within your means.”**

—Calvin Coolidge, *Autobiography*

A Tale of Two Vermont Floods, 84 Years Apart

By Amity Shlaes



Montpelier after the 1927 Flood.

President Coolidge didn't believe the federal government should be an 'insurer of its citizens against the hazards of the elements.'

Late this week President Obama declared Vermont a disaster area, clearing the way for federal aid to flow into several counties unexpectedly ravaged by Hurricane Irene. One is Windsor County, birthplace of President Calvin Coolidge, who was in the White House when the Green Mountain State experienced a natural disaster even greater than Irene: the flood of November 1927. Coolidge's limited response—shaped by his bone-deep federalism and localism—would be almost unrecognizable to politicians and citizens of the 21st century.

In 1927, too, there was a flood before the flood. The Katrina of that year was the spring flood of the Mississippi River, which poured up to 30 feet of water from Illinois down to the Gulf of Mexico, rendering nearly a million homeless along the way.

Coolidge, who had been a governor, considered it inappropriate for the president to enter states willy nilly. So in his stead he sent south his commerce secretary, Herbert Hoover, to organize and run a public-private rescue with the American Red Cross. Neither Coolidge nor Congress believed that Washington should send a massive federal aid check—

Washington might provide help, they thought, but it should be smaller than state and charitable giving.

Like Katrina, however, the Mississippi flood reshaped the policy landscape. Natural disasters provide unflattering snapshots of federalism. It was clear that new flood-control legislation was coming and that federal government interventions would be faster and more lavish in the future. The only debate, one that continued even as the waters subsided, was how many millions the legislation should spend.

Coolidge considered this legislative push a kind of parallel flood besetting states and their authority. The president was the boy with his finger in the dike: He couldn't stop this figurative flood, but he might at least delay it, or limit its effect.

In the midst of Washington's legislative debate, nature tested Coolidge's convictions in the most fundamental way. Unrelenting rains in New England and Canada converted a warm autumn into a watery hell. The waters came from everywhere but (as with Irene) Vermont suffered especially. The state found itself under a "cube of water more than a mile high, a mile long, and a mile broad," as the Burlington Free Press, citing experts, breathlessly put it at the time. Montpelier, the state capital, where Coolidge's father and grandfather had served as lawmakers, lay under 40 feet of water.

Vermont was desperate. More than 80 died. The lieutenant governor drowned trying to get home. Railroads were what kept Vermont from isolation and allowed the export economy to send granite, marble, lumber and milk to New York and Boston. Even in the best of times roads were 90% unpaved, and now the state's ruined railroad tracks equaled the mileage from Boston to Chicago.

A neighbor of Coolidge from his hometown of Plymouth died of exposure when the auto taking her for medical treatment was stranded between Mendon and Rutland. Ludlow, the town of Coolidge's high school—where this weekend students are hauling muddy furniture out of flooded houses—was submerged.

Coolidge and Vermonters didn't turn away every penny offered from outside their borders. Even then they knew that for Vermont to reject all aid would have been to cut off its nose to spite its Yankee face. Vermonters tell a story about Gov. John Weeks: He insisted that "Vermont can take care of its own." For that he was mocked—an army captain, Charles Ferrin, noted that Weeks rejected army help without knowing "that the streets of Waterbury are littered with dead cattle and the railroad station is being used as a morgue." As today, Vermont's congressional delegation was asking for federal relief within days. A million in Red Cross funds raised that year went to Vermont.

But Coolidge didn't rush home, an excruciating call that left him exposed to allegations that he didn't care. A stickler for consistency, Coolidge sent Hoover again. Even this he didn't do without hesitation, though, as authors Deborah and Nicholas Clifford note in their definitive Vermont flood history, "The Troubled Roar of the Waters."

Coolidge also made sure to signal that there must be a limit to the federal presence, even as Vermonters endured great hardship that winter. "The government is not an insurer of its citizens against the hazards of the elements," Coolidge

said in his State of the Union address in December. A state might receive relief when overburdened; "this however does not mean restoration."

Individual Vermonters, companies, charities and the state government did much to help themselves and the citizens. To rebuild, Montpelier voted \$8.5 million in state bonds, close to the state's entire annual tax take. Lawmakers also lent some capital to the St. Johnsbury and Lake Champlain Railroad. Private railroads stepped in to fund their own fixes.

States in the region helped by funding a credit corporation to guarantee 75% of reconstruction loans. The next spring, after bargaining and buying time for half a year, Coolidge finally took his finger from the federal dike and signed federal flood legislation for the South, authorizing the Army Corps of Engineers to engineer flood prevention. He also signed a law that gave highway funds to states, including money for needed Vermont roads. In the end, he manifested the view that presidents can and should inspire and coordinate, but states should take the lead in their recovery.

Coolidge finally traveled home in September 1928, nearly a year after the flood. At Bennington, he told his fellow citizens in a prose poem what they already knew:

"Vermont is a state I love. I could not look upon the peaks of Ascutney, Killington, Mansfield, and Equinox, without being moved in a way that no other scene could move me. . . . I love Vermont because of her hills and valleys, her scenery and invigorating climate, but most of all because of her indomitable people." The federal hand had helped Vermont, but what endured were Coolidge's words.

Miss Shlaes, a trustee of the Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation, will publish "Coolidge," a biography, next year.

Reprinted from *The Wall Street Journal Online*, September 3, 2011 <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424053111904583204576546291552953816.html>

CALVIN COOLIDGE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION, INC.

Office Staff

Stephen S. Woods
Executive Director

Kate Bradley
Office Manager
Collections Manager

Diane Kemble
Education Director

Jonathan Guy
Accounting Manager

Vision Statement

To Become the Gateway to All Things Coolidge

Mission Statement

To Open the Eyes of the World to Calvin Coolidge

How To Reach Us

P.O. Box 97, 3780 Route 100A
Plymouth Notch, VT 05056

Phone: 802.672.3389

Fax: 802.672.3289

Email: info@calvin-coolidge.org

Website: www.calvin-coolidge.org

From the Vault

By Kate Bradley, Collections Manager

The Library and Special Collections of the Coolidge Foundation is growing exponentially with the recent donation of three historic collections. Each collection, or accession, demonstrates decades of dedication by the donor to the legacy of Calvin Coolidge. In their entirety, the accessions include furniture, books, ephemera, memorabilia, photographs, business records, correspondence, and a hefty amount of miscellany. As we begin to enter each item into our database, we have realized the exceptional nature of the items in each collection.

The first accession is primarily “Vermonty,” or local, in nature. Of great interest is the lamp that hung in the parlor of the Goodhue home, which undoubtedly shown light on Calvin and Grace’s wedding. In addition, we now have Calvin and Grace’s wedding announcement. The announcement, a little larger than a business card, is printed on quality card stock. The hand-written envelope lists an unknown Mr. & Mrs. Slack (no address given). This memorable piece has now been scanned and will be part of the new exhibit in the Calvin Coolidge Museum and Education Center. Other items include a selection of records from both the Plymouth Cheese Factory and the Top of the Notch tea house and restaurant. A scrapbook of news articles pasted into an early 20th century Agriculture Yearbook displays a waste-not, want-not mentality that Calvin Coolidge was known for. Of final note is an Autograph Book featuring a childhood signature of Calvin Coolidge, as well as those of many other residents of Plymouth Notch and the surrounding area.

The next accession, the Larry Krug Collection, centers on the political life of Calvin Coolidge and his contemporaries. Rare campaign posters, banners, buttons and bells, and even a cigar box provide insight into 1920s campaign culture. Truly unique items include a hand-made campaign doll crafted by a suffragette; a water bottle purported to be used by President Coolidge during the White House years; and a music roll for a player piano containing the song “President Coolidge March.” As a society we enjoy drawing parallels between today and the past. Another special item, a cigar advertisement, provides an interesting point of comparison. The ad, dated 1923, reads “Diehl’s Old Hickory Cigar. Our President’s Choice. Our President Calvin Coolidge asks for ‘Old Hickory’ at Kimball Hotel.” This was a brand named after one president, supported by another. In today’s world with an aversion to marketing nicotine products this ad would not be possible. It has been argued that President Coolidge was known to downplay his cigar-smoking. One can only imagine his reaction to such an advertisement.

The final accession, the Waterhouse Collection, is the most recent of the three collections. The centerpiece is a woodcraft desk used by Coolidge while campaigning in the



Suffragette’s campaign doll and cigar box claiming Coolidge endorsement.

Mid-West. Provenance is key when accessioning items such as the desk, and we are happy to have a series of letters supporting the background of the piece. Also included in this accession are framed photographs and prints. A small library is incorporated, and we even have a wicker tray and cigar. Similar to the other collections, this extensive accession is amazing in its range.

The three collections demonstrate many years of dedication to the memory, history, and legacy of Calvin Coolidge and Plymouth Notch. Regardless of size and shape, each item in each collection provides us with new insights into the legacy of Calvin Coolidge. Processing of these accessions is by no means finished. The next step is to ensure access and preservation for years to come; with that in mind many pieces will need to re-housed according to archival specifications. The project ahead will undoubtedly open our eyes to once-forgotten moments in Coolidge history and his legacy. The Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation is truly proud to welcome these collections into our holdings and is extremely grateful to all the thoughtful donors.

First “Speaking of Coolidge” Summer Series Deemed a Success

An essential element of the Coolidge Foundation’s strategic plan is the introduction of programming and events that generate interest, stimulate thinking, and result in a greater awareness in what the Foundation can bring to the community.

This summer, the first “Speaking of Coolidge” series, held at the Coolidge Center, featured notable authors, speakers, and historians. Beginning on July 6th and scheduled at 4:00 p.m. on successive Wednesday afternoons, the series led off with Ms. Amity Shlaes, author of *The Forgotten Man*, and the soon-to-be-completed *Coolidge*, a new biography to be

released in 2012. A week later, the audience was treated to the logic and conservative commentary of Cal Thomas, well-known syndicated columnist. Nicholas Clifford discussed his book, *The Troubled Roar of the Waters*, which tells the story of the terrible floods that hit Vermont in 1927, stimulating President Coolidge to utter his famous speech, "Vermont is a State I Love." Who knew that just a few short weeks after Professor Clifford's appearance, Vermont would suffer what is now being called the "500 Year Flood," which caused serve damage to roads, bridges, homes, businesses, and lives. In fact, the entire village of Plymouth Notch was cut off for days, waiting for the roads to be opened and power restored. The timing of his talk was somewhat prophetic.

William Henkel, former head of the Advance Office of the White House under President Ronald Reagan, entertained the audience with his photos and stories of days spent with the gregarious president, who was a huge fan of President Calvin Coolidge. Winding up the series, Pulitzer Prize winner, Joe Ellis, discussed his book about the lives of Abigail and John Adams in *First Family: John and Abigail Adams*.



**The Calvin Coolidge
Memorial Foundation**
Is Going GREEN
Start receiving
your newsletters by email
Contact us at
info@Calvin-Coolidge.org

The success of this series is being measured in several ways. Revenue generated from admission fees, new memberships, and other donations added much needed income to fund these and future programs. The generosity of major sponsors guaranteed that the Foundation would end the season in the black. We are deeply grateful to Jim and Mary Ottaway, FOX News, Northern Trust, Vermont Mutual Insurance Group, *The Vermont Standard*, the *Rutland Herald*, O'Brien Shortle Reynolds & Sabotka, and Plymouth Artisan Cheese. Promotional materials reached a new level of professionalism thanks to Mark Eckstein of MECreative. Local newspapers faithfully carried the story of each upcoming speaker, creating consistent awareness. Finally, the people who attended, those who read about the presentations, and our many generous sponsors came away with renewed excitement that the Coolidge Foundation was presenting high quality programs available to all.

The Foundation's staff is hard at work, making preparations for the "Speaking of Coolidge" series for 2012, which is certain to stimulate elevated interest in the philosophies of President Coolidge, with focus on civics, leadership, and civility. Major funding is needed to insure that the best programming will be presented each year.

Farewell to Bill Brooks

The Coolidge Foundation bid farewell to Bill Brooks at the end of August. In keeping with his dedication to the Foundation's mission, Bill submitted as one of his final works an article (see page 1) about the annual dinner gala that featured U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Stephen Breyer. Bill successfully secured Justice Breyer's participation through a long series of communications. It was Bill who introduced Justice Breyer to President Coolidge's persistence quote, which Justice Breyer then used to excellent and well-received effect. Bill was also an important part of the fundraising team that brought to reality the new Educational Center and Museum. We will miss Bill's incomparable élan as he engaged with supporters in person or by telephone, and we wish him the best in all his future endeavors.

In Memoriam – Susan Webb

It is with sadness the Foundation reports that its first woman Chair of the Board of Trustees, Susan Webb, passed away on September 9, 2011, at the age of 103. Mrs. Webb chaired the Board from 1979-1983 and is fondly remembered by all those who knew her. The Coolidge Foundation honors her dedicated service to the legacy of President Coolidge. At Mrs. Webb's request, a memorial service in the Friends (Quaker) tradition will be held for her in Plymouth in June of 2012. On behalf of the Trustees, Members, staff, and supporters of the Coolidge Foundation, we express our deepest and most sincere condolences to Mrs. Webb's family.



COOLIDGE

The Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 97, Plymouth Notch, VT 05056

NONPROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
WHT RIV JCT, VT
PERMIT NO. 86

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

www.calvin-coolidge.org

Journey to the Notch

Within days of the flood devastation to central Vermont caused by Hurricane Irene on August 28, 2011, which cut off all vehicle access and power to Plymouth Notch, Executive Director Stephen Woods submitted via email the following account to the Foundation's Board of Trustees and National Advisory Board.



Route 100A to Plymouth Notch

Dear Friends,

I made it to Plymouth Notch this morning (September 1, 2011). In brief, the Coolidge Historic Site is absolutely unscathed. By ignoring a few ROAD CLOSED signs along Route 4 (please don't turn me in Governor Douglas), I was able to drive a few miles up Route 100A after the turn at the Bridgewater Corners Country Store. The temporary bridge, which was built to facilitate the new bridge, is still passable. In fact, the temporary bridge is strong enough to handle a large excavator. I know that because despite having a green light to cross the bridge, I met an excavator half-way across coming in my direction. I chose not to argue over the finer points of rights of way, but simply backed up and let the excavator continue on. Unfortunately (and I may be using this word too much in this email), the new, under-construction bridge was moved by the flood waters and is much closer to the temporary bridge than it was and is supposed to be. I don't know what it takes to move a partially constructed bridge back to its proper location.

continued on page 3