



The Malabar Farm News

A publication of the Malabar Farm Foundation

Spring 2022

Maple Syrup Festival 2022

This year's Malabar Farm State Park Maple Syrup Festival, held the first two weekends of March, was a resounding success, with nearly 6,000 Park visitors experiencing the sights, smells, sounds, and tastes involved in the process of making maple syrup and maple sugar.



The only drawback to the event was caused by the weather — not because the weather turned foul — but, oddly enough, because it was too nice, the temperature climbing to the upper 60s and even the low 70s in the days leading up to the Festival. This temporarily stopped the flow of sap in the maple trees, limiting the quantity of syrup that could be produced. A typical year will see Malabar Farm make around 150 gallons of maple syrup. This year that number fell to about 120 gallons.

"Few things on earth taste so good as the syrup of the first sugaring off. It is fresh and new, the very essence of the earth . . ." — Louis Bromfield, *Pleasant Valley*, 1945

Case Western Reserve University Graduate Students Photograph Art and Artifacts At Malabar Farm



On April 8th, Malabar Farm State Park hosted four graduate students from Case Western Reserve University for a practicum photographing and documenting selected art and artifacts in the Big House. Their work will be included in the Ohio Department of Natural Resources virtual museum coming soon to a computer near you.

The students, all enrolled in the Art History Museum Studies program at Case Western Reserve, were accompanied by adjunct faculty member Holly Witchey. Ms. Witchey is in charge of Graduate Museum Studies at Case Western Reserve University and also serves as the Director of Education and Outreach at the Intermuseum Conservation Association (ICA) in Cleveland. The ICA is currently working with the Malabar Farm Foundation on a multi-year program to clean, restore, and preserve Louis Bromfield's extensive art collection on display on Malabar Farm's Big House.



Listening to the Past and Seeing the Future:

Louis Bromfield and Harry Truman

By Paul Sukys,

Professor Emeritus, North Central State College

One of the major aims of this column is to highlight Louis Bromfield's secondary career as a political analyst. This part of Bromfield's career dominated much of his writing in the 1940s and 50s. Three aspects of that career were (1) his skillfulness in unraveling the causes of the problems that faced his era, (2) his talent for understanding the essential elements of those causes and, (3) with that understanding, his ability to forecast future events with accuracy. Among those predictions were the Vietnam War, the formation of the European Union, and the fall of the Soviet Union. Moreover, Bromfield, quite often, formulated innovative, if unconventional, plans to solve those problems

The phrase "quite often" is significant because, while Bromfield has a strong record as a political prophet, he was not 100% accurate in his predictions. At the source of many of his mistakes was his inability to separate his ego from his analytical skills. Once he disliked someone at a personal level, he had difficulty seeing anything good in that person and so his predictions about their behavior were skewed.

It is not that Bromfield never modified an opinion, he did. He simply never wanted to. There is, after all, a reason that everyone on the farm, including his daughters, called him, "the Boss." Once Bromfield formulated an opinion, he did not want to be confused by the facts. – Case in Point – Bromfield's predictions about Harry Truman.

On January 13, 1952, *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* published an opinion piece by Bromfield which analyzed Truman's leadership abilities. At that time, Truman was in the final year of his presidency, and many of the pundits were predicting what the "show me" President's legacy

might be. Some of those pundits were fans of the President. Others were not. Clearly, Bromfield was not. He labels Truman a mediocre leader with an inferiority complex who surrounds himself with "cheap, inferior and corrupt politicians" who "impressed him and flattered him for the sake of power."

According to Bromfield, the result is a President who, when the advice he receives turns out to be wrong, lashes out at the press, his real friends, and other national leaders including those of our allies. Bromfield describes him as a "baffled, hurt, angry little man . . . who is nervy and scared and on edge and . . . who seems no longer able to distinguish right from wrong."

Following this analysis, Bromfield predicts that "the year 1952 will be a dangerous year for all of us," because he fears Truman's "hysterical, hair trigger temper could plunge the world into war in a second."

Overall, Bromfield was wrong about Truman's record in 1952. Truman did not blunder into a new war, as Bromfield had predicted. Instead, he skillfully handled the "police action" he was commanding, the Korean War. In fact, he carefully coordinated a balance of competing interests among the military, the intelligence community, and our allies, to prevent the use of nuclear weapons in that conflict, including the newly developed hydrogen bomb, while, at the same time, convincing North Korea, China, and Russia that he just might pull the nuclear trigger, after all. In addition, Bromfield forgets, or ignores, Truman's military record in other areas including the fact that, to avoid World War III, he orchestrated the Berlin Airlift in 1948 which delivered food, water, and medicine, for a year, to two million people trapped by the Soviet Union behind the Iron Curtain in West Berlin.

None of this is meant to denigrate Bromfield in any way, nor to downplay his accomplishments in other political areas, including, as mentioned earlier, his predictions about the European Union, the Vietnam War, and the fall of the Soviet Union. What it does do, however, is remind us that Bromfield, like all of us, was a human being with flaws, shortcomings, and weaknesses, along with his moments of glory. In addition, information like this helps us understand the man behind the legend, revealing, in part, the real Bromfield. Moreover, it is this knowledge that, oddly, makes him more accessible and more sympathetic than if we knew him only as the infallible "Boss."

The Malabar Farm Foundation approves \$40,000 in grants for preservation projects.

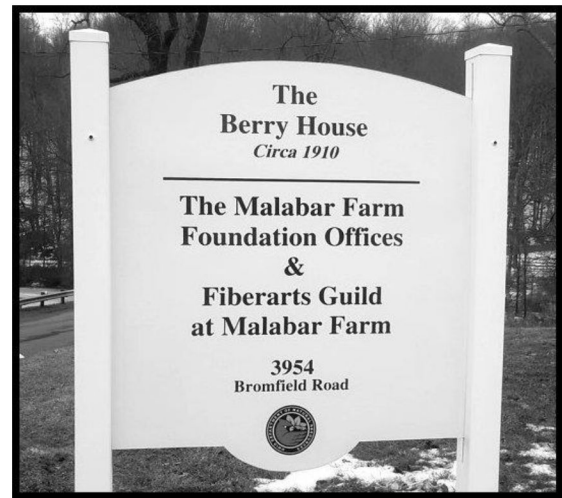
The Malabar Farm Foundation board approved grant funding for restoration and preservation projects at Malabar Farm State Park. The projects include \$21,000 for the replacement of flooring in the sitting room and three of the six bedrooms on the second floor of the main farm house known in Louis Bromfield's time as the Big House. The bedrooms belonged to Ann, Hope and Ellen, Bromfield's three daughters and the shared girls sitting room. Repairing the plaster ceilings and walls in the flower arranging room and the girls' bedrooms. Also, \$1,000 was awarded to the North Central Ohio Land Conservancy for removal of invasive species in designated forest areas, plus \$5,000 for wooden shutter restoration and window repairs for the Historic Big House. An additional \$12,000 for the continued preservation and restoration of original art and artifacts in Bromfield's Big House. And a grant for \$225 was awarded to Cleo Redd Fisher Museum in Loudonville for their summer History Camp field trip to Malabar Farm.

One of the missions of The Malabar Farm Foundation is the preservation of the Bromfield Big House and its historical contents. Projects include the restoration of artwork, furniture, sculptures, and documents. Conservation and preservation is an ongoing process. A portion of donations and the proceeds from many of our fundraising efforts go towards these efforts to preserve the legacy of Louis Bromfield and Malabar Farm for future generations. The Malabar Farm Foundation, since its founding 1993, the Malabar Farm Foundation has provided support totaling over \$2 million in projects to ODNR at Malabar Farm State Park, including the construction of the Visitors Education Center in 2006.

– submitted by Louis M. Andres



Louis Bromfield in his study, Malabar Farm, ca. 1945



The George W. Berry House, New Home of the Malabar Farm Foundation

This house has an interesting history we wanted to share. George Washington Berry (1854-1931) and his wife Angeline bought the property from his mother after the death of his father in 1905. Sometime after that they built the Berry house circa 1910. The Berry farm ran from where this house sits east towards today's Malabar Farm Restaurant. George and Angeline had 11 children, 8 of whom lived until adulthood.

Wilson S. Berry (1893-1968) helped build the house with his father in his youth and was the brother of Guy Berry of the Ceely Rose connection. The David & Rebecca Rose home [Today's Ceely Rose House] sits next to the Berry house along Switzer's Creek where the Charles Schrack Mill operated circa 1880. George W. Berry sold his farm including this house to George Beck, who in turn sold this house in early 1939 to Louis B. Bromfield. The Bromfield family moved into this house in the spring of 1939 while the Big House was being built. The house served as a residence for the Bromfield family until November 1940, when they moved into the newly completed Big House. Malabar farm employees resided in this house at various times between 1941 and 1972.

In 1972, the State of Ohio acquired the property and leased it to American Youth Hostel (AYH) Columbus Chapter-Outdoor Pursuits. It was operated as Hostel International (IH) until its closing in November 2017. The house was renovated by ODNR in 2020, and now serves as the home to The Malabar Farm Foundation and The Fiberarts Guild at Malabar Farm.

Louis Bromfield (1896-1956) his wife, Mary Appleton Bromfield (1892-1952), their three daughters Anne (1924-2001) Hope (1927-2016) and Ellen (1932-2019) lived in the house until moving into the Big House.

– Submitted by: Louis Andres

Did You Know?

You can support the Malabar Farm Foundation by shopping online at Amazon. Go to smile.amazon.com. Sign in with your Amazon.com credentials. Choose Malabar Farm Foundation as your charity. At no cost to you a percentage of each purchase will be donated to The Malabar Farm Foundation.

You can also support the Malabar Farm Foundation through the Kroger Community Rewards Program. Your Kroger Plus Card can be linked to a charity so that each time you shop for groceries or get gas a percentage will be credited to the charity of your choice. If you do not already have a Kroger Plus Card one can be obtained at the Kroger Customer Service desk. Then, go on-line at www.krogercommunityrewards.com, create an account and link your Kroger Plus Card to the Malabar Farm Foundation from the list of charities.

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