



# The Malabar Farm News

A publication of the  
Malabar Farm Foundation

Spring  
2025



## Malabar Farm's Maple Syrup Festival 2025

The 2025 Maple Syrup Festival held at Malabar Farm State Park during the first two weekends of March was a stellar success. More than 3,200 visitors learned about early maple sugaring practices and toured the Park's modern Maple Sugar Shack, and some 1,400 visitors toured Malabar Farm's Big House, a wonderful time capsule honoring the life of Pulitzer Prize winning novelist and conservationist Louis Bromfield. (See page 2 for additional 2025 Maple Syrup Festival photographs.)

## Art Restoration In Progress

In March the Malabar Farm Foundation delivered three pieces of artwork from Malabar Farm's Big House art collection to the non-profit Intermuseum Conservation Association (ICA) in Cleveland. These pieces included a Red Room print of Edouard Manet's 1868 painting *The Balcony*, a 1939 watercolor still life by Jimmy Reynolds from Mary Bromfield's Bedroom, and an unidentified watercolor from an upstairs guest room. It is hoped that in cleaning this piece the name of the artist will be found.

To date the Foundation has contributed nearly \$100,000 to the restoration and preservation of Louis

Bromfield's extensive art collection. This includes 43 oil paintings, several watercolors, one-of-a-kind twin drapery panels located in Louis Bromfield's Study that were designed by Jimmy Reynolds, and an original Bromfield era bedspread from the Honeymoon Room.



Foundation Board member Dave Crawford with ICA  
paper conservator Kate Passannante

## New Tour Wagon



This spring visitors at Malabar Farm will be able to tour the farm on a new tour wagon. Funding for the wagon, built by Weaver Wagons, an Amish company located in Dalton, Ohio, was provided by the Malabar Farm Foundation (\$5,789), and the Malabar Farm Foundation Fund of the Richland County Foundation (\$10,000).

## New Louis Bromfield Society Premium

The Malabar Farm Foundation has initiated an appreciation program for Louis Bromfield Society members in 2025. All those who donate \$100.00 + through their Society membership, or who donate through the Giving Tree will be mailed a copy of a book authored by Louis Bromfield. We value donations by our members and hope that they realize our appreciation of their support of our many projects on behalf of Malabar Farm and the legacy of Louis Bromfield.

## The Bluebirds of Malabar Farm



### *Malabar Farm Bluebirds —1962*

“The successful nesting of a pair of Bluebirds at Malabar Farm is the first in more than four years, and their home on a fence post near the Bromfield cemetery has attracted considerable interest.”

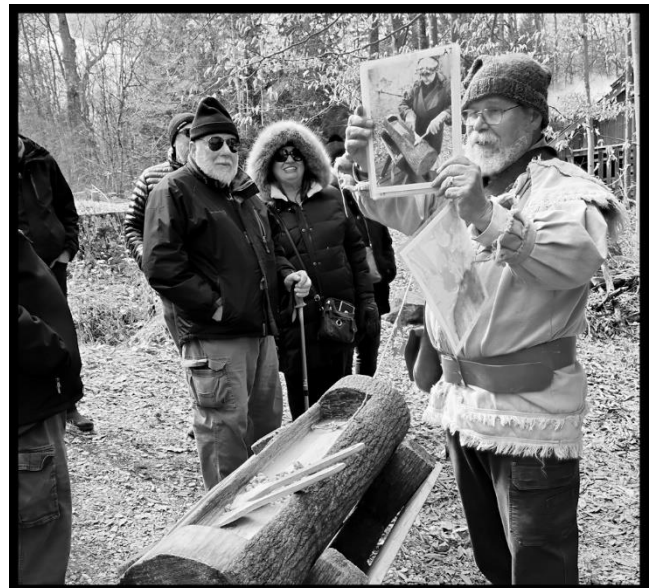
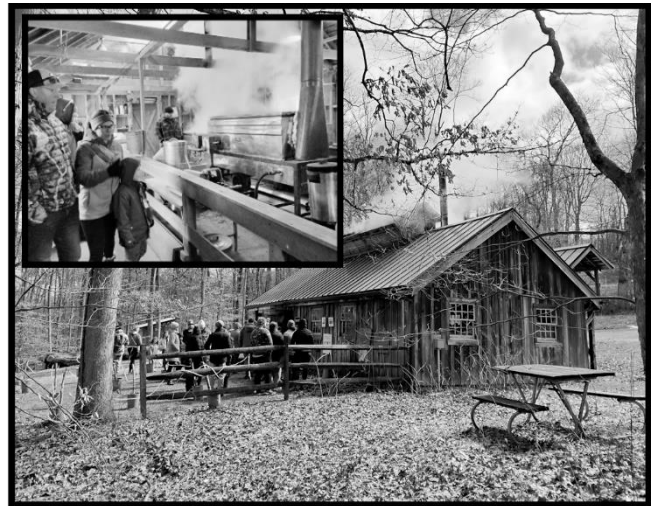
—Louis Bromfield Malabar Farm Foundation  
*Newsletter*, July, 1962

### *Malabar Farm Bluebirds—Today*

Spring means bluebird nesting time and signals the beginning of monitoring Malabar Farm’s bluebird trail. In addition to providing shelter for bluebirds to lay their eggs and tend to their young, swallows and wrens are also welcome to take up residence in Malabar's boxes. During the 2024 season the Malabar Farm bird boxes played host to 84 bluebird fledglings, 24 swallows, and 9 wrens.

A special thanks goes out to Chris McQuillan who has for decades cared for the Malabar Farm bluebird boxes and their many generations of lodgers.

## 2025 Maple Syrup Festival



## Listening to the Past and Seeing the Future: The Lost Author of the Lost Generation? Maybe Not

By Paul Sukys, Professor Emeritus  
North Central State College

It's difficult for those of us who admire Louis Bromfield to recall that most people who live outside Ashland, Richland, and Crawford counties (and, even some who live within that area) know very little about Mansfield's favorite son.

This is a man whose name, from 1924, the year of the publication of his first novel, *The Green Bay Tree*, to 1956, the year of his death, was a household word. He was a national celebrity who had his own Saturday morning radio show on NBC, who was considered by Robert Taft for the position of Secretary of Agriculture, who won the Pulitzer Prize in 1927 for his fourth novel (Steinbeck had to wait until 1941 to win his; Hemingway until 1954) and who, not only hosted the wedding of Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall, the most famous newlyweds in America, but also served as Bogart's best man.

Despite all this—December 27, 2025 will be the 129th anniversary of his birth—Bromfield has become the Lost Author of the Lost Generation. A symptom of this injustice is found in the fact that not one of three recently published books about the influence of 20<sup>th</sup> century authors on the politics of that era mentions Bromfield, not even by accident.

The first book, titled *Cold Warriors: Writers Who Waged the Literary Cold War*, examines the work of such writers as Ernest Hemingway, Stephen Spender, Mary McCarthy, William Faulkner and John Steinbeck, without so much as a nod toward Bromfield.

Similarly, the second book, *The Free World: Art and Thought in the Cold War*, includes references to the works of Joseph Conrad, William Faulkner, Norman Mailer, and, of course, Ernest Hemingway, while ignoring Bromfield entirely, even though he wrote two political treatises, *A Few Brass Tacks* (1946) and *A New Pattern for a Tired World* (1954).

The third book in this trilogy, titled *The Book at War: How Reading Shaped Conflict and Conflict Shaped Reading*, crowns the 1920s as the Golden Age of American Literature and identifies Sinclair Lewis, Edith Wharton, Thornton Wilder, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, and Dorothy Parker, as key members of the Literary Royal Family, without even offering to add Bromfield's name to a footnote.

Several reasons have been offered for Bromfield's fall from grace. One often repeated explanation is that the left-leaning critics of the 1930s and 40s turned their backs on Bromfield after pro-labor themes began to fade from his writing. If this were the case it would not explain why other authors, like John Steinbeck, who also abandoned the left side of the political spectrum, did not experience the same level of rejection.

Other observers blame Bromfield's fall from grace on his inability (or his unwillingness) to embrace the experimental literary styles of the Avant Garde movement and, to instead, insist on clinging to outmoded Victorian plots and techniques. However, the explanation must rest elsewhere because Bromfield did, in fact, experiment with new story-telling techniques in novels like *The Strange Case of Miss Annie Spragg*, *Twenty-Four Hours*, and *Mr. Smith*, with varying degrees of success.

Now before you get too depressed and toss this column out the window in despair or disgust, let me reassure you that the rest of this column is not devoted to doom and gloom. On the contrary, I'd like to suggest that the news of Bromfield's literary and agricultural demise has been greatly exaggerated, and that Bromfield's fame has simply been briefly suspended and is about to emerge, once again. Evidence for this can be seen in a recent increase in Bromfield's presence in the popular and the academic book trade.

Here is a brief list of recent Bromfield related books: *The Planter of Modern Life: Louis Bromfield and the Seeds of a Food Revolution* by Stephen Heyman; *Malabar Farm: Louis Bromfield, Friends of the Land, and the Rise of Sustainable Agriculture*, by Anneliese Abbott; *Soldier Boy: Louis Bromfield, Letters Home From World War I, 1917-1919* by Thomas Bachelder; and *An Agitated Existence: Louis Bromfield, Conservation's Enigma*, by Thomas Bachelder.

Bromfield also appears prominently in *A Green and Permanent Land: Ecology and Agriculture in the Twentieth Century*, by Randal Beeman and James Pritchard; *The Ohio Literary Trail: A Guide* by Betty Weisel; and *The New Agrarian Mind*, by Allan Carlson; and, of all the unlikely places in the chapter on International Law in *Business Law with UCC Applications* published by McGraw-Hill, Chicago.

This list need only be the beginning. In fact, it occurs to me that now may be the time to start planning to honor Louis Bromfield in 2026 on the 130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his birth. Any takers?

### Did You Know?

You can help the Malabar Farm Foundation support Malabar Farm 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 online at [www.krogercommunityrewards.com](http://www.krogercommunityrewards.com), create an account and link your Kroger Plus Card to the Malabar Farm Foundation from the list of charities.

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
DOVER OH  
PERMIT #380

#### The Malabar Farm Foundation

##### -Contact Us-

Website - [www.malabarfarm.org](http://www.malabarfarm.org)

Facebook - [www.fb.com/malabarfarm](http://www.fb.com/malabarfarm)

email - [info@malabarfarm.org](mailto:info@malabarfarm.org)

Mail - P.O. Box 551, Lucas, OH 44843



Tax deductible donations to the Malabar Farm Foundation can be made by cash, check, or credit card.

- ☐ **Member** - \$50 / year    ☐ I would like to make an additional donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Friend** - \$100 / year

**Make checks payable to:**  
**Malabar Farm Foundation**  
**P.O. Box 551**  
**Lucas, Ohio 44843**



#### Please fill out and return form with payment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Information: Card type: \_\_\_\_\_

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_