From the Director’s Chair
—Vonda K. Givens

The Education Center building rehabilitation project, for the museum’s staff, began well before the groundbreaking (see story at right). To meet its target launch date, the Stickley-era garage at the ground level and the building’s offices on the upper level had to be emptied. This undertaking took months of planning, effort and literal heavy lifting, but it did have it a few bright spots.

One bright spot of this enterprise was a Saturday afternoon I spent reviewing 30 years of the museum’s media files. Many, unearthed from an old filing cabinet, hadn’t been touched in years. It was my task to review them and decide what should be set aside for the museum’s archives.

The timing for this project was perfect, coming, coincidentally, a few weeks before the 30th anniversary of the museum. In preparation for what will be a yearlong celebration, I had been thinking about the museum’s history, about the significance of reaching this milestone and about how to use this milestone as a springboard for the future.

As I sorted files dating as far back as 1982, I realized that, while I was knowledgeable about the rescue of Craftsman Farms from private development in 1989, I had more to learn. I knew that saving the property took years of work and civic will, but I was struck again by all of the obstacles on this path and by the

Continued on page 3

A Groundbreaking Day at Craftsman Farms

Depending on your perspective, the new Education Center at the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms has been in the works for five years or thirty years or even more than one hundred years.” With this statement, Executive Director Vonda Givens began her remarks at the Groundbreaking for the Education Center project on December 12, 2018.

As Givens went on to explain: the institution’s current Board of Trustees had evaluated options for this facility expansion since 2014, when a grant from the Township of Parsippany-Troy Hills, provided sufficient funding, essentially “seed money,” for feasibility studies and planning that led to the current Education Center project.

Facility improvement and expansion has, however, been a long-desired goal for the organization’s leadership. An original garage building, located behind the Log House, was, during the Stickley era, positioned at the edge of the developed campus and looked out over the orchard, which would later become the property’s parking lot. Around 1950 the building’s upper floors were destroyed by fire. Only one floor was rebuilt and it was divided into two apartments. As time passed, the entrance to the property was relocated, and by the time Craftsman Farms was rescued from development in 1989, this serviceable though lackluster structure was the de facto entrance to the historic property. Though, 30 years ago, restoration of the Log House was a pressing and necessary priority for Trustees, during these early years of the institution, they nevertheless dreamed of a more suitable entrance to this National Historic Landmark.

Continued on page 2
“It is also possible to imagine that more than one hundred years ago, Gustav Stickley himself, had he known the property would become a museum dedicated to honoring his legacy,” posited Givens, “would have envisioned a more impressive entrance for visitors.” Now, with the new Education Center underway, the property will have that beautiful entrance. Along with providing an entrance inspired by Gustav Stickley’s original vision, the Education Center will provide the institution—now celebrating its 30th anniversary—with a building that will serve the current and future needs of a growing, dynamic museum.

While the building’s groundbreaking took place on a cold and cloudy December afternoon, the enthusiasm of the fifty well-wishers in attendance more than warmed up the proceedings. The crowd first gathered in the building’s recently emptied, and soon-to-be demolished, upper level. There, attendees were invited to write on the walls of the old building, conveying “Wishes for Craftsman Farms.” Then everyone assembled in front of the building for a welcome and remarks from Board President Barbara Weiskittel and from Givens and commemorative photos, which included officials from the Township, Morris County and the New Jersey Historic Trust, the Board of Trustees and the Advisory Council, volunteers and the project design team. Finally, the assembled crowd was invited to the Log House to enjoy the holiday decorations and refreshments in the museum’s shop.

The Education Center project is now underway and is expected to be completed in 12 to 14 months. This project has been made possible by significant grant funding from the Township of Parsippany-Troy Hills and from the Morris County Historic Preservation Trust. The project is also supported by generous funding from contributors to the Education Center Capital Campaign, which is ongoing.

To learn more or to support the project, please call 973-540-0311.

Board President Barbara Weiskittel speaks at the groundbreaking ceremony.

Evenings at Craftsman Farms: The Twilight Tour

It’s in the soft evening light that Gustav Stickley’s Log House really shines. On our original after-hours tour, you’ll visit Stickley’s family home as day gives way to dusk and night falls. At twilight, we’ll settle in and delve into Stickley’s story and how it intersects with the development of electricity in New Jersey.

Saturdays, March 16, 23, & 30, 2019
5:30 p.m.
$5 Members
$12 Non Members
Advance Reservations Required
improbability of success.

Of course, the obstacles didn’t stop in 1989. During that afternoon of paging through old magazine articles, newspaper stories, and press releases, I saw—in black and white and color—the museum’s 30 years pass before my eyes. Those media files told the story, not just of the property’s rescue but of its path to preservation and to becoming the museum it is today. It was quite a story, complete with fascinating characters, drama, comedy and an occasional cliffhanger or two. This column does not provide sufficient space for the whole story, but I’ve been thinking about how to relate it more simply. Two words come to mind: roller coaster.

Now, let me pause here for clarity. I love roller coasters. I have loved them since I was 5 years old. For me, a roller coaster ride is exciting, scary, thrilling and even inspirational.

When I say the 30-year story of the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms has been a roller coaster ride, I mean this in every sense of that metaphor—periods of smooth calm, periods of soaring greatness and periods of bumpy ups and downs, mixed in with one or two sheer drops. What a ride!

Thinking about this ride has multiplied my appreciation for this organization’s leadership. We are indebted to all Trustees who have born the mantle of leadership, who have endeavored to shape a vision for this organization and accepted the responsibility to carry it out. We also have been extraordinarily fortunate to have devoted friends, who, often from far distances and for many years, have nurtured and rooted for the museum and cheered its successes.

I am reminded of the volunteers, hundreds over 30 years, who have worked both in front and behind-the-scenes to help maintain the museum’s operations and ignite the sparks in visitors that keep the Stickley story alive. Naturally, I also think about the many diligent staff members who, perhaps, have most experienced the day-to-day ups and downs of this organization.

Certainly, I would be irresponsible if I didn’t expect this roller coaster ride to continue at the 30-year mark.

All year we will be in the midst of a major construction project, and through it all, the museum will be open for tours. We will spend the year celebrating our 30th anniversary, leading Girl Scout workshops, mounting a new exhibition, hosting a retreat in the summer and the Stickley Weekend in the fall and much more. We will continue to protect and expand understanding of the museum’s significant collections. We will care for the Craftsman Farms property, including its historic landscape and its nine historic buildings. And in doing that, we’ll face down both expected and unexpected threats, from wear and tear brought on by humans to scratches, dents, cracks and drips caused by wind, rain, snow and sun and by the critters and the creepy-crawlies that come with the territory.

Sounds, ahem, like a roller coaster ride. It also sounds exhilarating. At 30 years, this museum could be a sleepy institution. It could be coasting instead of accelerating. It could be winding its way into the station instead of preparing for a loop-de-loop. At 30 years, the tracks of this roller coaster ride are stretched out behind and in front of this museum. I hope you’ll take the ride with us.

2019 Event Calendar

Check our eblasts or follow us on Facebook and Instagram for updates:

- March 16, 23 & 30
  Twilight Tours
- June 1, 2019 to Jan. 5, 2020 with opening reception on Saturday, June 1
  “The American Arts and Crafts Chair: A Message of Honesty and Joy”
  Guest curated by David Cathers
- July 9–12
  Farms Afield: Mohonk Mountain House Retreat in New Paltz, NY
- September 21
  Fall Family Day
- October 12–13
  Stickley Weekend, including the Scholars Symposium, Craftsman Gala, and Open House
- December 7
  Holiday Open House

To get involved, make a donation, become a member, join the volunteer team, email info@stickleymuseum.org or call 973-540-0311.
Show your **LOVE** to the **Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms** as we **Kick-off our 30TH ANNIVERSARY** with **BBQ, BREW, BLUEGRASS, AND FRIENDS**

**On Valentine's Day**
**Thursday, February 14, 2019**

**New Time! 7:00 P.M.**
**The Skyline Room at The Grove Park Inn**

**YOUR EVENING WILL INCLUDE:**
* BBQ and Southern comfort food Asheville style
* Local craft beer and wine
* Live Bluegrass music
* Door prizes
* Free commemorative beer mug
* **Good times and good friends to start the weekend**

**RAISE A GLASS TO GUS! RECEIVE A COMMEMORATIVE BEER MUG WITH EACH TICKET PURCHASE!**

A portion of your ticket purchase will directly support the National Historic Landmark, Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms in Parsippany NJ. The country estate of Gustav Stickley is a significant landmark of the early 20th century American Arts and Crafts movement. Beginning in 2019, the museum is celebrating its 30th anniversary.

**$150 PER TICKET ($50 TAX DEDUCTIBLE) **

**RSVP by February 8, 2019**

**PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS ONLINE AT STICKLEYMUSEUM.ORG**

For more information please call 973.540.0311 or email ecastelli@StickleyMuseum.org
2019 Farms Afield: Mohonk Mountain House Retreat
July 9–12, 2019

This year’s Farms Afield will take us to Mohonk Mountain House, located in New Paltz, NY, in the beautiful Hudson Valley. This Victorian Resort, family-owned and operated since 1869, welcomes guests to their “castle on the lake” for hiking, canoeing, swimming or simply drinking in the mountain views.

Join us to enjoy the fresh air, relax in the company of friends, who share your interest in Arts and Crafts, and experience the ease of a delicious, all-meals-included summer retreat. Breakfast, lunch and dinner feature plentiful and superior options for every taste and diet and take place in the Main Dining Room overlooking the Catskill Mountains.

Our trip will include ample time for exploring the 280-acre National Historic Landmark, Mohonk Mountain House, but plans are also in the works for additional VIP-style side trips. These local trips are planned with Arts and Crafts enthusiasts in mind and will include an exclusive visit to a private Arts and Crafts home, with a remarkable collection and exquisite details, and a visit to the historic Arts and Crafts arts colony, Byrdcliffe, for a customized walking tour. Founded outside Woodstock in 1902 by Ralph Radcliffe Whitehead, Byrdcliffe continues to be home to a year round and seasonal community of artists.

Our retreat will begin with a reception before dinner on Tuesday, July 9 and end with lunch on Friday, July 12. Once the trip begins, all meals, activities and transportation via motorcoach are included.

Transportation to and from Mohonk Mountain House is not included. Visit https://www.mohonk.com/directions/ for travel information.

Farms Afield is a Member Exclusive and open only to members of the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms.

$1900 based on double occupancy when you register by 3/31/19. After 3/31/19: $1950 per person based on double occupancy. $250 supplement for a single room.

Watch our website for information as plans continue to unfold but if our Mohonk Mountain Retreat is for you, don’t wait to register! Space is limited. By prior arrangement, attendees are welcome to pay trip fees in installments of their choosing.

Trip activities require moderate walking each day, rain or shine. Please plan accordingly.

Full refunds are available through Saturday, June 1; after this date 50% refunds will be provided. No refunds are available after the trip begins.

Save the Date: Byrdcliffe Art Colony Presentation

On Saturday, April 6 at 11 a.m., we’ll welcome Henry T. Ford, for a presentation on Byrdcliffe Arts Colony. This Arts and Crafts community, founded outside Woodstock, NY in 1902 by Ralph Radcliffe Whitehead, will be a featured stop on our upcoming Farms Afield: Mohonk Mountain Retreat (see above). In preparation for our visit, Ford will speak about Byrdcliffe’s past, present and future. Join us as we welcome Ford, a longtime champion of this historic property, which continues to be home to a year round and seasonal community of artists.
More than any other artist, Eloise Roorbach formed our image of The Craftsman. She designed more covers than any other designer in the magazine’s history. And yet, for most of us, her life remains a mystery. This is the second in a two-part article that pieces together the life and person of Eloise Roorbach. (For Part I, see the Summer 2018 newsletter.)

The marriage of Eloise and George Roorbach deteriorated throughout the four years following the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. George had been a talented member of the famed Carmel Art Colony, described as “the successor of Tonalist painter William Keith.” Like Keith, Roorbach’s paintings were in the spirit of Albert Bierstadt, Worthington Whittredge, and George Inness. His landscapes were in such notable collections as that of Marie and Averell Harriman and J. Pierpont Morgan. But George began showing his paintings less frequently, and by 1910, he had resigned from the Carmel Art Colony. He spent time carving redwood signs for “ornament and designation” of Santa Cruz houses.

In the same four years, Eloise was extremely productive, with numerous articles and illustrations appearing in Overland Monthly, Western Field Magazine, and Pacific Monthly. She used her earnings to purchase property in the Santa Cruz mountains. Ever curious about the world, Eloise studied forestry, dendrology, botany, arbor culture, mountain climbing, and established a reputation as a naturalist. In February 1909, the Santa Cruz Evening News described a lively and entertaining lecture she gave on the latest scientific research on toadstools, illustrated with her own detailed drawings. Other detailed botanical drawings appeared in publications such as in The Silva of California (University of California, Berkeley Press).

Always productive, she grew increasingly unhappy in the state of her marriage. She left George behind in the cabin she owned and moved to New York, where she asked Mr. Stickley for a job. “Why did you come to me?” Mr. Stickley is reported to have said. “I liked your magazine.” Eloise replied simply. And indeed, her writings and artwork resonated with the publication. That year, she designed four covers for The Craftsman. She would eventually become its most prolific cover designer and a significant bylined author.

Two years later, she quietly returned to California to file for divorce, citing George’s “failure to provide the common necessities of life.” She described George as “an artist with sufficient income to support her comfortably” who “ever since the wedding has frittered away, squandered and dissipated his income and wasted the same by his extravagance and unwise use thereof.” Their divorce proceedings were widely reported and quite sensational. The Oakland Tribune reported on August 8, 1912: “The fashionable and exclusive colony at Carmel-by-the-Sea have been shocked and thrilled as the result of the filing of a divorce suit here today by Eloise Roorbach, the wife of George S. Roorbach, an artist of note.” On that same day, The San Francisco Chronicle reported, “Roorbach is at present living in a small cabin near Brookdale, in the Santa Cruz mountains, owned by his wife. The place is said to be a treasury of oil paintings, valuable as works of art, which Roorbach has taken no trouble to put on the market.”

Eloise wrote to her mentor, Craftsman editor Mary Fanton Roberts about the impending divorce, saying, “… you have been so kind always and shown so much patience that I feel this little statement … is due you … My heart has been so beauty-numbed and lifeless and hopeless these last painful years that I have at last taken … a firm and desperate hand and am going to try to set my life in better working order … I have applied for a separation and will be legally free in two or three weeks. … You can do as you wish about telling Mr. Stickley, he may strenuously object to the legal methods of bringing peace and a mite of relief into a life.”

Eloise had right to be concerned. Divorce was considered both a scandal and a social disease. However, earlier that same year, Mr. Stickley’s magazine had run an article entitled, “Education as a Preventative to Divorce.” Its author, Marguerite O.B. Wilkinson, expressed the progressive sentiments that “If the marriages of tomorrow are really to be happier than the marriages of today, girls must demand this status of full equality with the men they marry…” and “The young wife must be strengthened in her vague belief that, although married, she is still a person and should be the director of her own physical, mental and spiritual activities, and responsible for them…” Mr. Stickley was as open-minded and progressive as his publication, and he did not object to having a divorced woman on his staff. Eloise returned to The Craftsman promising new energy and dedication to the magazine.

Eloise remained true to her promise. In addition to her unattributed works, she produced at least 25 bylined articles, along with assorted illustrations. Some of her articles, such as her December 1912 feature, “Bells of History and Romance” continue to be referenced by researchers today. So too, are her writings about her friend, Irving Gill, beginning with a September 1913 Craftsman feature, “Outdoor Life in California Houses, as expressed in the new architecture of Irving J. Gill.” Her appreciation of the work of that innovative architect, earned her the title as “Gill’s biggest fan.” She would later, in 1921, publish an analysis of a house Gill designed for Walter Dodge in House Beautiful, which would be considered the defining moment for the architect’s work. She herself lived for a time in Sunny Slope Lodge, a home Gill designed in 1902, now on the national historic register. But those events had not yet occurred in the fall of 1913.

At that time, with her divorce still pending, Eloise was in search of a fresh perspective on life. She departed on an extended trip to Japan, and was abroad when her divorce was finalized on November 20, 1913. Returning from her travels on April 21, 1914,
Eloise Roorbach — Heather E. Stivison

She had new energy and inspiration. Her article, “A picturesque Japanese finishing school, where girls are taught to be charming women and good housekeepers,” appeared in September. The November issue of The Craftsman announced that she was “in charge” of the Garden Department. Her article, “A Japanese garden in America: garden-making that in formal manner expresses history, romance, and poetry,” was published in March. In October, she was appointed “Garden Editor.” While working at The Craftsman, Eloise continued her busy freelance career in publications as varied as St. Nicholas: An Illustrated Magazine for Young Folk, Sunset Magazine, Technical World Magazine, and The Theatre Magazine.

She was faithful to The Craftsman until its demise in December 1916. In the spring of 1917, she published half-page illustrated garden articles in the New York Tribune. Loyal to her friend and mentor, Eloise then followed Mary Fanton Roberts to her start-up publication The Touchstone magazine, which began publishing in May 1917. Eloise appeared on the masthead with the title “Associate Editor and Garden Department,” and many articles on flowers, nature, garden design, architecture carried her byline. She worked with Touchstone architect, George E. Fowler, designing gardens on paper to make his house designs feel like homes. Eloise served as a garden design consultant for Touchstone readers, and famously designed the gardens for The Touchstone offices, located at 118-120 East 30th Street, New York City. She rented an apartment a few doors away, at 130 East 30th Street. A feature article showing her working in the Touchstone gardens ran in major newspapers including the New York Tribune.

The Touchstone struggled financially and in 1920, Eloise returned to California. Her title at Touchstone was changed to “California Representative.” She gave talks about presentations on Spanish architecture, to helping to create a thriving astronomy club, to teaching children about Japanese ceremonial dolls.

Eloise always loved adventure and learning new things. One notable experience was a 1928 world tour with her sister Grace, niece Jean, and her young friend. They traveled through Japan, China, the Philippines, Dutch East Indies, India including the remote Kashmir district and the Khyber Pass. They continued into the Persian Gulf, on to Europe, and returned to New York in July 1929. Another trip was revealed in a 1935 letter she sent from Papeete, Tahiti, in which she describes seeing the camps of Robert Louis Stevenson and Zane Grey, the homes of Hall and Nordoff, Gauguin, Keeble, and Rupert Brooks. During World War II, she entertained women of the Red Cross Surgical Dressing Unit with a talk entitled “Kings that I have seen and met on my travels.” The Santa Cruz Sentinel reported, “She has a dry humor and kept the guests in gales of hilarious laughter.”

This multi-talented, adventurous, witty, woman lived life to the fullest for 92 years, passing away on February 16, 1961. She left her mark on the Arts and Crafts world, and gave a special gift to us at Craftsman Farms. Next time you admire the conventionalized “S” that graces the Log House staircase, remember Eloise. It was she who designed the bannister for Mr. Stickley.

About the Author: Heather E. Stivison is the former executive director of the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms. This two-part article is excerpted from her biography of Eloise Roorbach to be released in 2019. The research is generously funded by a grant from the Arts & Craft Research Fund.
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August 31, 2018 to December 31, 2018

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In Memoriam: A Shared Vision for the Future

What did a prominent New Jersey surgeon, Dr. Donald Stahl, have in common with widely published California lecturer, author and TV personality, Paul Duchscherer? One important connection became apparent this spring – love for the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms and a dedication to its preservation. By leaving legacies in their wills, they both made a commitment to the future of this historic landmark.

Soon after retiring in the 1990s as an orthopedic surgeon, Don began volunteering. He truly loved being involved. In addition to leading tours, serving on the Board and heading the Landscape Committee, Don established the Amy Stahl Educational Fund (in memory of his late wife) which funds the Annual Scholars Symposium keynote speaker. He was honored with the Als Ik Kan award in 2008. Don especially enjoyed making furniture and several of his pieces were part of the annual Gala Auction.

An expert in architecture and interiors, with a special interest in history and period landscape, Paul was an avid proponent of historic preservation. He lectured, wrote and taught about historic design, especially relating to the Arts & Crafts era. Paul visited Craftsman Farms, which often appeared in his 17 books and was mentioned during his presentations. One of the most popular speakers at the National Arts and Crafts Conference at the Grove Park Inn, Paul also shared his expertise with television viewers, appearing on “This Old House” and as host on the popular HGTV Curb Appeal.

Don and Paul will be remembered fondly by everyone at Craftsman Farms and the wider Arts and Crafts Community. Through their generosity, generations of visitors will enjoy the beauty and history of Craftsman Farms, thanks to these two men who shared the same vision.

If you would like to learn more about leaving a gift in your will or your estate, please contact Executive Director Vonda Givens at 973-540-0311.

Want to be a Superhero? Become a Monthly Donor!

Did you know that you can have a supersize impact at the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms by becoming a monthly donor? Your small gift each month can have a big impact.

Monthly donors, known as Stickley Sustainers, provide critical, regular support to the Museum. They don’t need to worry about forgetting to make a contribution and they don’t receive mailings asking for donations, thereby saving on paper and postage.

So, put on your cape and become a monthly donor. To sign up, call us at 973-540-0311 or email lblume@stickleymuseum.org. And, thank you for being our superhero!
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In Honor of Barbara Nichtie Fuldner
From Janet Gourley
Mary B. McWilliams
In Honor of Barbara Weiskittel
From John Shank
Debbie Weiskittel and John Koelsch
In Honor of Lorraine Jordan
From Elizabeth Earley and Mark Mishler

INSTITUTIONAL
Clark Public Library
Cranford Public Library
Friends of the Madison Public Library
Kinnelon Public Library
New Providence Memorial Library
Westfield Memorial Library

Recent Memberships continued from page 8
Guests gathered at the Mountain Lakes Club on October 13 for a night of celebration and camaraderie in support of the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms. This formal party, the museum’s biggest fundraising event of the year, paid tribute to Robert A. Ellison Jr., a pioneering collector of American Art Pottery.
Craftsman Farms, the former home of noted designer Gustav Stickley, is owned by the Township of Parsippany-Troy Hills and is operated by The Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms, Inc. (“SMCF”) (formerly known as The Craftsman Farms Foundation, Inc.). SMCF is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization incorporated in the State of New Jersey. Restoration of the National Historic Landmark, Craftsman Farms, is made possible, in part, by a Save America’s Treasures Grant administered by the National Parks Service, Department of the Interior, and by support from Morris County Preservation Trust, The New Jersey Historic Trust, and individual members. SMCF received an operating grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission. SMCF gratefully acknowledges a grant from the New Jersey Cultural Trust. Educational programs are funded, in part, by grants from the Arts & Crafts Research Fund.