



relevance

The "Many Voices" exhibit has seen a resurgence of interest. In times such as these, we have an even greater opportunity - and a responsibility - to offer a platform for civil civic discourse. The southern most stop on Vermont's African American Heritage Trail, the Pullman railcar and the exhibit surrounding the black Pullman porters' story create a space that invites necessary discussions in the struggle for change.

new mediums

When your audience is under quarantine, staying in touch requires new mediums. We ramped up our efforts of outreach through social media, video and communications. Digital outreach offers new and additional content, and continues to spread the word about the place and ideas behind our mission. For example, if you missed peony season (as so many did), watch a recap here: <https://bit.ly/2HyQzHI> Or, view all our new video shorts on our YouTube channel: <https://bit.ly/330PvUO>



preservation

Necessary adjustments have been made to operations in response to the covid pandemic, including a 5- rather than 7-day/week guest schedule. That's two days of behind-the-scenes functions that our talented crew has been able to tackle - from imperative upkeep, to maintenance and improvement projects leaving us looking even more spectacular than ever. Hildene's own version of "silver linings!"



*Where there is challenge
there is opportunity.*

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education

When spring (then summer, and then fall) in-person education came to an abrupt halt, our Youth Education team dove into new possibilities. Our summer experience kits (Camp-in-a-Box) and new fall programming alternatives (including Home Study Natural Science Investigation Kits), offer exploration and hands-on engagement, no matter where a child is learning. So, while the usual 3500 children we see yearly couldn't come to us, we found a way to go to them!



giving

While our production and cutting gardens are typically well-utilized by partner caterers, special functions were few and far between this year. But where one path is lost, another is discovered. Our Dene Farm Gardens Manager forged new alliances to share in our abundance through The Community Food Cupboard, "Grateful Hearts" program and Vermont Farmer's "Farmacy Project." Hildene donated bouquets and copious produce all season long and thus, we all thrive!



stewardship

You might know that Hildene's Randall cattle are a critically endangered breed. You may then also be thrilled to hear that our herd has grown! Four of our Randall ladies gave birth this summer, including to the first ever Randall now registered to Hildene, The Lincoln Family Home: "Lincoln's Legacy." From bobolink birds to pollinators, turtles and now livestock, we continue to breathe new life into the 412-acre haven that is Hildene.

community

Our calendar is usually filled to the brim with programming, from Goat Care 101 to Tomato Canning, but it all came to an abrupt halt in March. With our first successful iNaturalist webinar over the summer, we thought we'd continue the experiment. This fall, you'll find our popular soap felting workshop will be available online! While we prefer in-person, we have found our community grows exponentially through the web.



conservation

The wetlands on Dene Farm are an invaluable ecosystem, enjoyed by guests, students -- and both painted and snapping turtles! This year, we began a multi-year research project, led by renowned herpetologist Anders Rhodin, to track the status and struggles of these fascinating reptiles. Anders hopes to involve bright-minded students in the years to come - there is much to be done to ensure the health of our colony!



engagement

Safety protocols have required the temporary shut down of campus transportation. To entice guests down to Dene Farm, we are offering wagon rides through October. They've been a hit! Dene Farm Managers Kim and Ann, along with tractor driver Scott, have been hosting families or pods for 1.5 hour journeys where they experience all the plants, animals, and history that make Dene Farm remarkable.



*Staying the course and
forging new paths.*

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new audiences

Although Hildene is not typically known for the visual arts, it is well-known for environmental stewardship and explorations into sustainable practices in farming. With a grant from the American Sheep Industry Association and hard work from a friend at UVM's Extension Program, a felted fibers exhibit was born and Hildene was more than proud to host the exhibit. Animal fiber to utilitarian artworks - just the kind of creativity embodied by *Values into Action*.



perseverance

As wedding after wedding was cancelled and/or postponed, the grand affairs Hildene relies on hosting May through October were suddenly off the books. Our Private Functions team went into overdrive to accommodate these very important clients. Along the way, flexibility and big thinking inspired a whole new revenue stream: microweddings. The result? A 2021 calendar with almost twice as many celebrations!



new product

Hildene offered fans of our chèvre a new take on the popular seasonal cheese this year; our aged chèvre became an absolute hit and was in high demand. As our master cheesemaker, Maarit, explains, "By ripening for just a week, the cheese develops a soft, wrinkled exterior with a creamy texture just below the rind. At first the flavor brings to mind fresh butter and cremini mushrooms, but finishes with a bit of tartness not unlike our tangy fresh chèvre." Ready for a taste revolution?

