

# THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



Fall 2011 Newsletter

## ANNOUNCING TEN GIFTS FOR TEN YEARS



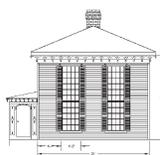
It has been ten years since the Thomas Cole National Historic Site opened its doors in July 2001. Now, as we celebrate this milestone, we are pleased to announce our initiative to acquire ten major gifts to set the organization on a path for success in the next decade. As of the printing of this newsletter, seven of the ten gifts have been either promised or given, moving us great leaps forward in the areas of collections, financial stability, educational programs, and our service to the public. We would like to express our deepest appreciation for the generous individuals and organizations that have contributed to making 2011 such a special year!

Thomas Cole, *A Sketch: Catskill Landscape*, ca. 1845-47, oil on wood pulp paperboard, 10 3/4 x 7 7/8 in. Transfer from the Seattle Art Museum; Gift of Julie and Lawrence Salander in memory of Ann Barwick

### MAJOR ACQUIRED OR PROMISED GIFTS TO DATE

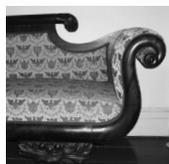
- **A \$1 million endowment fund** to maintain the buildings and grounds from the estate of Raymond Beecher.
- **An original Thomas Cole painting**, pictured above, from The Seattle Art Museum. This gift was championed by the museum's Ann M. Barwick Curator of American Art, Patricia Junker.
- **Thomas Cole's original Luigi Filano guitar**, which Cole purchased on a sojourn to Italy in 1842 from Filano's shop on Strada Speranzella in Naples. Donated by Rick Sharp with a contribution by Alex and Loie Acevedo.
- **A \$45,000 grant** from Hudson River Foundation for major repairs to the historic buildings including an upgrade of all electrical work in two buildings and painting all exterior facades of three buildings.
- **A set of high-quality, actual-size, color-accurate reproductions** of Thomas Cole paintings for use in educational programs, donated by EFI Inc. through David Barnes, Thomas Cole Trustee, and his brother Mark Barnes.
- **A fund to professionally record lectures** at the Thomas Cole National Historic Site and create DVDs for both current public use and archival record-keeping, donated by David and Laura Grey.

### WHAT WILL DEFINE OUR SECOND DECADE?



The next ten years will see the recreation of Thomas Cole's New Studio that stood a few hundred yards from his home for 125 years.

The reconstruction will complete the restoration of the Thomas Cole National Historic Site, bring back one of the few known architectural creations of Thomas Cole and provide a year-round, handicap-accessible gallery for exhibitions and events.



The c. 1815 Main House, where Cole lived with his large extended family, will receive a complete restoration of its interior rooms, including original furnishings and historically accurate finishes. Research by noted restoration specialists is now under way in our effort to help visitors understand Cole's private world.



The Hudson River School Art Trail, an innovative and popular program with maps and directions to the places that inspired Cole and other 19th-century landscape painters, will be taken into the 21st century with mobile applications for iPads and other handheld devices.

Continued on page 2

# THE 2011 THOMAS COLE FELLOWS

In 2010, the Thomas Cole Historic Site launched the Thomas Cole Fellows program for recent college graduates and graduate students. Now in its second year, the program received more than twenty applications from six states. The accepted Fellows commit to a five-month stay at the Thomas Cole site, June 1 to November 1, and in exchange receive free housing at the historic site, the resume-building experience of working in a museum environment, as well as a full schedule of training, professional development, networking and field trips. The staff, board and volunteers of the Thomas Cole site offer our profound thanks to these wonderful individuals who will be sorely missed!



**John Kingsley** graduated from Fordham University where he majored in Art History with a minor in History. Prior to his Thomas Cole Fellowship, he interned with the Department of Education and Public Programs at Morris-Jumel Mansion, a historic house

museum in the Washington Heights neighborhood of Manhattan. At the Thomas Cole Historic Site he has been working to organize, inventory and research items in our collection. Working with our Collections & Exhibitions Manager, he reorganized the site's collection storage and created an inventory of all the items on display in the period rooms. His research on specific items in the collection has centered on Thomas Cole's paintbrush, his "harp," his Luigi Filano guitar and a print of his painting *The Whirlwind* by E. Gallaudet.

He is now the Director of Education of the Seward House Museum in Auburn, NY.



**Meredith Mueller** graduated from Vassar College where she majored in Art History with a specialization in American Art. Her love of the Hudson River School in high school prompted her to attend college in the Hudson Valley. She has worked as a research

and cataloging intern at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Getty Research Institute, and in the curatorial department at the Cleveland Museum of Art. At the Thomas Cole Historic Site she created two digital presentations that will soon be available on our website: one of Dr. Barbara Novak's 2009 lecture and one for an exhibition to commemorate the site's 10th anniversary. She also conducted research on the artworks on display in the Main House



- including critical provenance research - in order to provide accurate information to our volunteers and visitors.



**Caitlin Mahony** graduated from Skidmore College with a double major in History and Government. She studied The Arts and Social Change at the School for International Training in Prague, Czech Republic. At Skidmore she served as a research assistant in

the Government Department and worked as a tutor in Twentieth Century European and American History. Caitlin grew up in Maplewood, New Jersey, right near the Durand-Hedden House and volunteered as a tour guide there. At the Thomas Cole Historic Site she conducted and recorded interviews with people knowledgeable about the recent history of the site in order to create an archive of oral history for posterity.

## TEN GIFTS...Continued from cover

- A detailed new **Guidebook** for visitors to the Thomas Cole National Historic Site, featuring new research about Thomas Cole's home and the people who lived here, funded by Furthermore Foundation.
- To round out this list, we are seeking **original Cole family furniture and artifacts** that date to Thomas Cole's lifetime in order to repopulate his home and studio here at Cedar Grove, and a major gift or pledge to help fund **reconstruction of Thomas Cole's New Studio**. If you would like to be a part of the "Ten Gifts" project, please contact Elizabeth Jacks, the Executive Director.

## NATIONAL COUNCIL IS FORMED

Over the last ten years, the Thomas Cole National Historic Site has been the beneficiary of the advice, research and countless acts of generosity from preeminent scholars in the field of American art. On the occasion of our tenth anniversary, we are formally recognizing their invaluable contributions by forming The National Council of the Thomas Cole National Historic Site:

Kevin Avery, Senior Research Scholar, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY  
Gerald Carr, Independent Scholar, Newark, DE  
Linda S. Ferber, Vice President & Senior Art Historian, New-York Historical Society, New York, NY

Ella M. Foshay, Independent Scholar, New York, NY  
Eleanor Jones Harvey, Chief Curator, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC  
Ashton Hawkins, former Executive Vice President & General Counsel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY

Patricia Junker, Ann M. Barwick Curator of American Art, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA  
Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser, Curator, Department of American Paintings and Sculpture, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY  
Katherine Manthorne, Professor of Modern Art of the Americas, City University of New York, New York, NY

Barbara Novak, Helen Goodhart Altschul Professor of Art History Emerita at Barnard College and Columbia University, New York, NY  
Paul Schweizer, Director and Chief Curator, Museum of Art, Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute, Utica, NY  
Nancy Siegel, Associate Professor of Art History, Towson University, Towson, MD  
John Stilgoe, Robert & Lois Orchard Professor in the History of Landscape, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA  
Alan Wallach, Ralph H. Wark Professor of Art and Art History, The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA

## PROGRAMS COMING UP

January 15, 2012

Sunday Salon: The Hunt for Thomas Cole's Last Lost Series, "The Cross and the World"  
by Christine I. Oaklander

February 12, 2012

Sunday Salon: Thomas Cole in Love  
by Kevin Sharp

May, 2012

New Exhibition: Louis Rémy Mignot  
curated by Katherine E. Manthorne, Professor of Modern Art of the Americas, City University of New York.

## WELCOME NEW STAFF



**Kate Menconeri, Collection and Exhibition Manager,** joins our team with experience as a curator, writer, and educator. She holds a BA in English and an MA in Curatorial Studies and Contemporary Art from Bard College, 2009. From 1999 to 2007,

she served as the Program Director at the Center for Photography at Woodstock (CPW) where she co-edited PHOTOGRAPHY Quarterly (Pq) magazine, organized over 100 exhibitions, and curated over two dozen shows. Kate has been a juror for FotoFest's Discoveries of the Meeting Place, Photo Lucida's Critical Mass, the Annual PDN/Nikon Self Promotion Awards, and the Dutchess County Arts Council, among others. At the Thomas Cole Historic Site, Kate manages our collection objects, manages the exhibitions gallery, and supervises the Cole Fellows program.



**Alice Tunison, Historic Site Interpreter,** is a resident of the nearby town of Cairo and a long-time friend of the arts. She has enjoyed an accomplished career as a professional artist, actor, costume designer, published author of short stories and articles, and

schoolteacher in both public and private schools. In addition, she served as Councilwoman on the Cairo Town Board from 2006 to 2010, and she manages all facets of a sculpture business. She holds a Masters Degree in Education and Art from Hunter College and a Permanent Public School Teacher Certification for Nursery, Kindergarten and Grades 1 through 6. As Historic Site Interpreter, Alice leads guided tours of Thomas Cole's house and studio, conducts school programs, and ensures that all visitors enjoy the highest quality experience. 

In celebration of our 10th anniversary, we are pleased to present a scholarly milestone: new research on the origin of “Hudson River School” as a designation, and on the discovery of Thomas Cole in 1825.



## Initiating and Naming “The Hudson River School”

by Gerald L. Carr

The “Hudson River School” of American landscape painters came into being a half-century before it was named. The advent was 1825 to 1826, while the designation “Hudson River School” was not applied until 1874. The gist of the advent, 1825-26, is well known today; but *not* known are most details and the broader picture. Nor are the phrase-maker or his milieu, 1874-78, part of current scholarship. I outlined both of these in talks given during the past few years, but otherwise my findings are new to historical discourse.

At the outset, I need to acknowledge Thomas Cole as the father of nineteenth century American landscape painting. Where and when Cole (1801-48) started, the Hudson River School can be said to have started as well. Certainly, that is what Americans from his generation, and the generation after his, believed.

The 1820s advent of the Hudson River School, with Cole at its center, comprised four active ingredients, three of them tied to period newspapers and periodicals. The first was the 1824 opening of the Catskill Mountain House, a sprawling resort hotel, and its enlargement over the next two years. The hotel greatly increased Catskill region tourism and became the subject of newspaper articles and advertisements up and down the East Coast.

The second ingredient arose during the spring of 1825. Shortly after moving to Manhattan from Philadelphia, Thomas Cole consigned several of his pre-Hudson Valley pictures to George Dixey’s carving and gilding shop on Chatham Street. Dixie had inherited the firm from his father in 1820. There a local merchant and art collector, George W. Bruen, encountered Cole’s work, purchased at least one picture immediately and, within a short time, bought three more paintings by him, while Dixie himself bought a fifth painting (all unlocated). Thereafter, Bruen encouraged Cole to make a sketching trip up the Hudson River and helped finance that excursion.

The third ingredient in the birth of the Hudson

River School was Cole’s Hudson Valley journey, later in 1825. While several extant sketches by Cole retrace his itinerary, precisely when and for how long he traveled remain unclear.

The fourth component was Cole’s second “discovery” that year. By October 1825, Cole completed and consigned three new paintings depicting Hudson Valley scenery to another Manhattan shop, at the corner of Broadway and Wall Street, owned by William A. Colman (d. 1850). Colman was an enterprising bookseller and multi-commodity merchant with international connections whose store comprised art display space on the second floor. There, John Trumbull (1756-1843), aging President of the American Academy of Fine Arts and a Colman customer, happened upon Cole’s three canvases and was smitten by Cole’s latest offering, *The Falls of the Kaatskill*. Unfortunately, that particular painting is lost. However, we know it by what Cole termed a “copy” (Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford) that he painted the next year for Daniel Wadsworth.

After seeing the Cole paintings, Trumbull contacted three colleagues: William Dunlap (1766-1839), also an active author; Asher B. Durand (1796-1886), then primarily a printmaker and portrait painter; and, probably, Benjamin Trott (ca. 1770-1843), to inspect *his* chosen Cole canvas and Cole’s other paintings then at Colman’s: *Fort Putnam* (Philadelphia Museum of Art), rediscovered in 2004; and *Lake with Dead Trees (Catskill)* (Oberlin College Art Museum). The onlookers marveled; Trumbull, Dunlap, and Durand bought one Cole painting each. Cole’s career was launched by their praises and purchases alone.

Today we know of the *ménage à quatre* at Colman’s because tens of thousands of Cole’s contemporaries soon learned of it. On November 15, 1825, Dunlap described encountering the Cole paintings at Colman’s in a lengthy letter to a local daily newspaper, the *New York American*. Dunlap bylined his communication, “An Artist.” Nine years later, in his 1834 book on American artists, Dunlap retold the story with some differing details.

During the mid-1820s New York buzzed with fine arts news, portions of which routinely re-circulated up and down the East Coast. From late 1825 on, Cole shared in it. Co-edited by Charles King (1789-1867) and Johnston Verplanck (1789-1829), the *American* was the most fine-arts-attuned American newspaper of the day. Along with other Manhattan journals, the *American* had lately applauded a huge new canvas (now lost) painted by Dunlap, based on Benjamin West’s earlier masterpiece, *Death on a Pale Horse* (1817; Pennsylvania Academy of the

Fine Arts, Philadelphia). A week after his *American* missive on Cole, on November 22, 1825, Dunlap wrote a five-paragraph supplement about Cole. And three days before that, November 19th, the *American* had reported a meeting at the American Academy, chaired by Trumbull, including a toast by an unclearly identified member to “Mr. T. Cole,” as “Evidence that real talent may be nourished in this country.” One other Manhattan paper relayed the Academy proceedings; it did not mention the toast to Cole.

Not to worry. Through abridged but credited republications, Dunlap’s initial communication on Cole in the *American* spread from Maine to South Carolina to Ohio to Arkansas Territory at least. As of this writing, I know of *thirty-three* reprints of the letter into January of 1826, including one by the New York *Evening Post* on November 22, 1825, previously believed by modern scholars to be Dunlap’s original article on Cole. Nationally the number of reprintings must have exceeded fifty. At least six East Coast journals—three from Manhattan, one from Boston, and two from Baltimore—reprinted Dunlap’s letter before the *Evening Post* did. A few reprints retained the byline, “An Artist.” Several carried a headline, most often, “Natural Talent Detected.” A few of those headlines invoked the word “Genius.” One Baltimore paper published the letter with a preamble thrice using the word “discovery.” I have seen a reprint (from Charleston, SC) of the toast to Cole, as well.

Sensibly, Colman tried to capitalize on his young client’s escalating renown. Through timely, selective local newspaper advertising, Colman offered Cole paintings “at moderate prices” on December 17, 1825, and evidently sold “2 more fine Landscapes by Mr. Cole” (unlocated), both probably depicting Hudson Valley scenery at Cold Spring, NY. Six months later, in June 1826, Colman and Cole renewed their partnership through press publicity with a fresh, sizable canvas by Cole (1826; Mead Art Museum, Amherst College) of “Col. [Daniel] Boone, sitting at the door of his cottage.” Meanwhile, starting on December 19, 1825, several Manhattan journals carried advertisements for a “continuation” exhibit at the American Academy. Cole’s *Falls of the Kaatskill* owned by Trumbull was not the first work referenced in the ads—Dunlap’s *Death on a Pale Horse* was—but Cole was the first artist cited by name. There, Cole’s *Kaatskill* was categorized among “the finest pictures in America.”

Celebrity, especially emergent celebrity, attracts. Indeed, within weeks, *five* further Manhattan journals published articles involving Cole.

Foremost among them were a three-quarter-column discourse of December 28, 1825 in the daily *New-York National Advocate* and a one-column piece across two pages of the January 12, 1826 issue of the *American Athenaeum*, a weekly. Published and edited by Modocai Manuel Noah (1785-1851), the *New-York National Advocate* mentioned Dunlap by name. Both articles heralded George Bruen for having first recognized Cole’s talents; and the *Athenaeum* cited George Dixey. Bruen and Dixey wanted their insights known. The *Advocate* also extolled Mr. Colman and his shop, but, somewhat sadly, the *Athenaeum* noted the economic duress under which Cole had lately labored. The *Advocate* write-up, shorn of its final paragraph, was reprinted at least twice—once in Manhattan and once in Providence, Rhode Island.

Were we to follow Cole’s ascent through the spring and summer of 1826, we’d find a diverse cast of surrounding characters and an entirely new American artists group, the National Academy of Design. We’d also find American fine arts centered in Manhattan. Cole, a founding member of the new Academy, split his presentation loyalties in 1826, tilting toward the older Academy. At the American Academy meeting that season, as reported in the *American*, Cole was again toasted, this time by an Academy Vice President, Dr. Jeremiah van Rensselaer: “I give you, Sir, an answer to the Question of the Poet [James Thomson]—‘Who can paint like nature?’ Mr. T. Coales [sic].”

Cole continued to sketch and paint the Hudson Valley for the rest of his life. His residency in Catskill between 1836 and 1848, and his family’s home there after his death, helped assure that American artists, writers, and tourists retained interest in the region. During the 1850s into the 1860s, at first proudly, then, for some onlookers, disappointingly, landscape painting became the prevailing American art form. And during the run-up to the American Centennial celebrations in 1876, American exhibition organizers and commentators renewed their attentions to Cole and his influence.

In that regard, an unsigned article of July 24, 1876, in the New York *World* newspaper, discussing American art shown at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, was on target. The writer’s purpose was largely analytical. Twice using the phrase “Hudson River School” as though it were his own coinage, he thought the display there offered an apt opportunity to chart “the growth of American landscape art since Cole painted.”

The *first* appearance of the phrase “Hudson River

School” in an art-related context in print that I know of, occurs in an unsigned review, also in the *New York World*, of the Academy of Design annual exhibit of 1874.

I believe Montgomery Schuyler (1843-1914), the newspaper’s multi-tasking critic of the period, authored the review of 1874, the rumination of 1876 just cited, and another of 1878 discussed below. Today Schuyler is known as the zestful, bylined architectural writer he became in the late 1870s. But he was chiefly a journalist with leanings toward the visual arts. An omnivorous reader and prolific (unbylined) writer on politics, literature, music, architecture, and art, he was also a diligent socialite.

On April 27, 1874, Schuyler (I’ll take the plunge), writing in the *New York World*, dropped the phrase “Hudson River School,” casually but insistently, three times and part of a fourth, into an overview of landscapes then hanging at the National Academy of Design. The flavor of the phrase was disinterested, leaning toward critical. The aimed-at painters were John Casilear (1811-93) and William Hart (1823-94), respected Manhattan-based landscape specialists. Both were assumed by the writer to represent a cluster, a “school,” which encompassed Frederic Edwin Church and Sanford R. Gifford, among others. Church’s contribution to the Academy that year was his big, glowing canvas, *El Khasné Petra* (1874), nowadays normally on display at Church’s Hudson River Valley home, Olana. Schuyler was displeased with Church’s painting, which Schuyler thought beneath the artist’s recent efforts and “numbers of [his] earlier works [which] distinguished him in the group of workers who were following in the pathway Cole opened without possessing any of Cole’s epic power.”

I next find the words “Hudson River ‘school’” and “Hudson River work” in a paragraph of February 25, 1878, again in the *World*. Unbylined as usual, the author was probably again Schuyler. This third time, the tilt was disparaging. The eleventh annual show of the American Water Color Society included a ballet scene (1876-77; Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO), a tinted monotype by Edgar Degas (1834-1917), which is believed to be the first American display of a French Impressionist work. The *World*’s reviewer thought the Degas a fine thing, had heard of “impressionism,” and used both the picture and the French word as a premise. The essence of his comments—that American art was then under siege by European art and that an American critic perceived insipid uniformity and growing obsolescence for what we continue to call Hudson River School painting—

were not new for the date. But the summoning of the *phrase* “Hudson River ‘school,’” of the *word* “impressionist,” and of a *figural* image by an actual French Impressionist, those *were* new. So, for the most part, were the critic’s astuteness and sensitivity.

In conclusion, we can say, first, that Thomas Cole’s breakthroughs in 1825-26 were episodes of American economic, cultural, and artistic prowess, publicity, and jingoism, and that various individuals besides Cole were seeking uplift, notably, Trumbull, Dunlap, Durand, Colman, Dixey, Bruen, King, Verplanck, and Noah, as well as two competing artists’ enclaves—the older American Academy of Fine Arts and the newer National Academy of Design. At the same time, those breakthroughs involved genuine enthusiasm and gratitude, as well as constructive personal recognition. Today, *we* might almost say, “America’s Got Talent,” and “suddenly Mr. Cole.”

By contrast, the phrase “Hudson River School” was an American journalist’s solo invention, with both diagnostic and judgmental meanings. It, too, appeared within an active American fine arts discourse but, best I can tell, the phrase-coiner himself used it intermittently, and several years elapsed before colleagues adopted it. That is not surprising. Euro-American art writers of the period had their own interests to advance. Hence, when one of them originated a phrase or point of view, it likely stayed his or hers at least for a while. Even after the phrase “Hudson River School,” with a pejorative slant, generally entered American fine arts literature starting in 1879, its creator did not step forward. Ultimately his identity and his circumstances receded. His phrase was not a eureka moment, any more than was the contemporaneous creation of the word “impressionism” in France, also initially used with a negative connotation. However, the “Impressionists” and their acolytes turned things around fairly quickly. After decades adrift, the phrase “Hudson River School,” too, now deservedly signifies affirmation.

Gerald L. Carr is an art and architectural historian and head of the Frederic E. Church Catalogue Raisonné Project. He earned his BA at Michigan State University in 1964 and his PhD at the University of Michigan in 1976. He has held teaching positions at the University of Michigan, the University of Cincinnati and Southern Methodist University. Dr. Carr is the author of several books including *Frederic Edwin Church: The Icebergs; The Early Landscapes of Frederic Edwin Church, 1845-1854* (with Franklin Kelly); *Olana Landscapes*; and *Frederic Edwin Church: Catalogue Raisonné of Works of Art at Olana State Historic Site*. 

# THANK YOU TO OUR 2011 SUMMER PARTY SPONSORS!

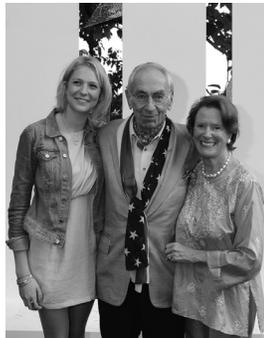


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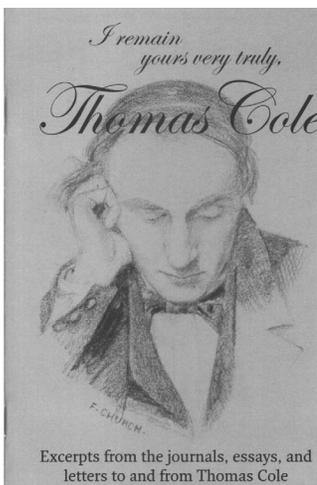


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## NEW PUBLICATION



*I Remain Yours Very Truly,*  
Thomas Cole  
Stemming from new research, the Thomas Cole Historic Site published a collection of excerpts from the journals, essays and letters to and from Thomas Cole. It includes love letters between Cole and his wife Maria, intimate descriptions of their children, new details about his art-making, and his inspiring

thoughts about nature. The quotes are interspersed with beautiful reproductions of pencil drawings of Cole's wife and children, as well as several nature studies. The editing and design were donated by Marie Spano and Debra Klein as a pro-bono project. The book can be purchased from our online shop at [www.thomascole.org/shop](http://www.thomascole.org/shop).

## MAKING YOUR GIFT A LASTING LEGACY

Thomas Cole's creative life and art proves how one person's efforts can have lasting impact. You can create your own legacy with a planned lifetime or estate gift to the Thomas Cole Historic Site. Your commitment will continue the preservation of Cole's home, studio and landscape, and help us expand awareness of his pivotal role in defining American art and culture. Whether a donor uses cash or other assets, such as appreciated stocks, real estate, or annuities, the benefits of funding a planned gift can make this type of charitable giving very useful to both the donor and the charity. Please consult your own financial or legal advisor before proceeding with any planned gift arrangement. For more information about how to make a gift to the Thomas Cole Historic Site, please contact Elizabeth Jacks, Executive Director, 518-943-7465 extension 3.

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## CELEBRATING TEN YEARS



Thomas Cole's beloved home at Cedar Grove is alive with activity, and we have a great many milestones to celebrate. In the last ten years, over

60,000 people have visited the historic site and experienced the serenity and inspiration that Cole found here. Attendance is now ten times what it was in the inaugural year, and the organization's operating budget has increased nearly six-fold. Once near ruin, the house and grounds now provide an evocative environment where visitors can learn about the founder of the Hudson River School of art. This year as we take a look back, we will also be deeply engaged in work for the future. Our thanks go to you, our community of members, volunteers, supporters and scholars, for being with us along the way.



### Milestones: The First Ten Years

- 2001: Restoration of the Main House
- 2004: Restoration of Cole's "Old Studio"
- 2005: Opening of the Hudson River School Art Trail
- 2009: Launch of the award-winning "Learning Portal" online  
Premiere of the Thomas Cole film
- 2010: Becoming an independent non-profit organization  
Annual attendance hitting 10,000
- 2011: Restoration of the historic grounds 