

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 26, 2018
CONTACT: Alex Dery Snider
aderysnider@bennington.edu, 802-440-4399

Public Open House Planned at the Robert Frost Stone House Museum in Bennington, VT

On Thursday, May 3 from 4 to 6 pm, the public is invited to celebrate the re-opening of the Robert Frost Stone House Museum, which was acquired by Bennington College last December as a gift from the Friends of Robert Frost, in recognition of the College's long and lauded literary history.

The house is located at 121 Historic Route 7A, Shaftsbury, VT 05262, two miles from the Bennington College campus.

This is the public's first opportunity to see the Frost Stone House and the seven-acre grounds under its new stewardship and to learn about the College's future plans for the iconic historic site. In addition to preserving the House for the public, Bennington will be using it as a platform for cross-disciplinary inquiry - for example, exploring the relationship between word and image, or landscape and narrative - and incorporating it into its acclaimed literature and writing programming.

"The Robert Frost Stone House Museum one of the most important historic properties among our region's many cultural attractions," said **Mariko Silver, president of Bennington College**. "We are honored to take it forward and further enrich our region and state with exciting new programs that explore Robert Frost, poetry, the arts, and the spirit of place."

"I am delighted to celebrate with the Bennington College community the beginning of this new chapter in the history of the Frost Stone House," said **Peter Gilbert, Vermont Humanities Council Executive Director and Robert Frost's literary executor**. "After fifteen years as a seasonal museum, the house becoming part of Bennington College is a wonderful development and an ideal and appropriate use for the property. It will be exciting to see how the College uses the House to advance the cause of poetry and the humanities in the years to come."

"We've been able to involve students, Frost scholars, and community members in every aspect of the museum reboot," **Museum Director Megan Mayhew Bergman** said. "I see the Stone House Museum as an interdisciplinary space where anyone can come to learn more about Frost, poetry, or place-based art-making. I can't wait to share the work we've done."

The May 3 event will include:

- Access to the house and grounds (weather permitting)
- folk music by Jacqui Alpine '17
- tastings of a special brew developed by Brown's Brewing Company in honor of the occasion, *Nothing Gold Can Stay*

- In the Red Barn, welcome and brief remarks beginning at 4:30 pm from:
 - Mariko Silver, President of Bennington College;
 - Peter Gilbert, Executive Director of the Vermont Humanities Council and Robert Frost's literary executor;
 - Mark Wundlerlich, poet and director of the Bennington Writing Seminars; and
 - Megan Mayhew Bergman, author and director of the Robert Frost Stone House Museum
- Research and new work by Bennington College students, which engages with Frost poetry and the house, grounds, and archives
- A lecture entitled "Robert Frost and the Language of Rural Authenticity" by scholar, essayist, and critic Stephen Metcalf from 5:00-6:00 pm

Frost House members and supporters are invited to attend a special preview gathering and toast just before the opening, at 3:30PM. Memberships will support all Frost House programs, including poetry readings, workshops, music, and outreach to local public schools.

RSVPs are appreciated but not required (802 447 6200).

About the Frost Stone House Museum

American poet Robert Frost (1874-1963) purchased the Stone House, built c. 1769, in 1920. It was there that he wrote one of his most famous poems "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" in June 1922, and where he was living when he won his first Pulitzer. The young apple orchard on the property was propagated from Frost's own trees planted when he moved to the farm.

The Frost House was officially acquired by the College on December 1, 2017, thanks to a generous gift from the Friends of Robert Frost. The property had been preserved and opened as a house museum fifteen years ago, which was made possible by donations from Peter J. Stanlis, a grant from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, and support from many others. During that time, it welcomed more than 50,000 visitors, scholars, and poets from all over the world.

The gift to the College includes the house, seven acres of property, and two barns. It is a five-minute drive from the College's campus, and Frost's grave is nearby in the cemetery at the Old First Church in Old Bennington.

The Frost House will provide enhanced learning and event space for Bennington's literature efforts, including the Masters of Fine Arts in Writing program; *The Bennington Review*, the College's literary journal; and Poetry at Bennington, a residency series that brings award-winning poets to campus for readings.

About Bennington College

Bennington College is a liberal arts college in southwestern Vermont that has distinguished itself as a vanguard institution within American higher education. It was the first to include the visual

and performing arts in a liberal arts education and the first to integrate work in the classroom with work in the field. To this day, Bennington stands apart in requiring that every student—every winter term—get a job, complete an internship, or pursue an entrepreneurial experience. Bennington students work intensively with faculty to forge individual educational paths around their driving questions and interests.

Notable literary alumni from both the undergraduate and MFA in Writing program include Donna Tartt, Brett Easton Ellis, Kiran Desai, Jonathan Lethem, Michael Pollan, Ann Goldstein, Safiya Sinclair, Anaïs Duplan, Anne Waldman, Mary Ruefle, Cynthia Sweeney, Jamie Quatro; Amy Gerstler, Morgan Jerkins, and Charles Bock.