

Then & Now - Harrington Farm #178 Westminster Rd.

Harrington Farm Advertisement

"Harrington Farm" has a wide reputation as a place for summer recreation. It is favorably situated on the western slope of Wachusett Mountain, with an extensive view and all the attractions of running brooks, ponds, forests, orchards and gardens, which furnish an abundance of fresh vegetables. This farm first offered its attractions to city people in 1882; and though the buildings have been enlarged Mrs. A. R. E. Harrington and son Joseph C. in the 1890's, they have no difficulty in filling the house every summer. They accommodate about thirty guests at a time."



Original Harrington Farm Before Renovations Without Dormer and Read Addition

In 1882, the Harrington Farm began operating, as a summer boarding house, taking up to 35 guests at a time. Often whole families would come with cots to accommodate the parents and children in a single room. If there were more lodgers than the house could hold, Joe Harrington would pitch tents in the field and folks would bed down under the stars.



West View With Tents for Overflow Guests and People on the Porch

The trademark of the Harrington hospitality became the long table, three tables pushed end to end, with a seating capacity of thirty-four, where boarders and townspeople would enjoy wonderful home-cooked meals on this six hundred acre farm. Joe Harrington always had a big garden, mowing fields, dairy cattle, and did some logging. People still talk about the family-style holiday dinners

at the Farm when they had turkey and all the fixings. The only exception was the Fourth of July, when

Mrs. Harrington and the cook hired for the summer months, would boil salmon in a cloth bag and make a cream sauce for the fish, with fresh new peas.



1905 Harrington Farm, Barn, Pond and Out Buildings After Renovations

Summer always brought great excitement to children at the Farm. Bessie Harrington fondly remembers that the young boarders were eager partners for hide and seek in the barn, romping in the hay, and for discovering litters of frisky kittens tucked away in unknown crannies in the lofts.

"My father (Joe) would dam up our brook and make lovely pools for swimming. Mr. Woodbury helped with one that was especially beautiful so we called it the Woodbury Pool. They are all gone now; the rocks have fallen away.



Woodbury Pond and Dam

There were also wonderful walks up the mountain with a picnic lunch, eaten at one of the many mountain pavilions along the trail.



Most people don't know about those pavilions today, but they were beautiful and a fine place to have a meal. Our destination would be the gift shop in the Summit House to marvel over the authenticity of the Indian souvenirs. Things didn't look cheap or tacky then. An ice cream cone was the final treat, before we headed back down."

Winter was quite a different time in Princeton. The summer people had all returned to their cities. Their fine teams and buggies were stabled and maintained until the following season. Cars were put up on blocks, and roads were closed. The natives responsible for

One of Five Pavilions/Lookouts Built on the Roads and Trails on Mt. Wachusett from Which People Could Enjoy the Mountain Vistas.

running the town continued with their undeviating chores all through the long snowy months. The glamour and fascination was in nature now, the mountain provided spectacular winters.

"My father would go out and break the roads to open up," recalls Bessie. "My brother Francis was old enough to help and he would walk on ahead to make a path for the horses. My father would then lead the team pulling a pung (A low box-like sleigh designed to be pulled by one horse) with two garden plows attached to either side, which removed and compacted enough snow so the sleigh to get through. Sometime the drifts would be so high in the road that my father would have to plow a new route through a barway or someone's field."



Image of a "Pung Sleigh" used in Maine Found on Google Images

Joe as always in motion. After breakfast he's off to a hundred jobs that keep him on his feet for the next 12 hours.

At 9 each morning, he backs his Plymouth out of the barn and drives three miles to Princeton's village store for weekday errands, his mail, and his daily Telegram. On the seventh day he drives down to pick up his Sunday Telegram.

Home again, he's back at work. Maybe at noon he allows himself the luxury of a few minutes in his kitchen rocker to glance at the headlines, but he's soon back on the job. What does he do? Just try tagging behind Joe any day — provided you have enough stamina — and find out.

Joe's first car was a Chalmers, a 1907 model, and was sold to Princeton's Antique Auto Museum. He bought it in 1913 when he started in as one of Princeton's three town assessors. They had to provide their own transportation out of their wages of two dollars a day. He was a town assessor for 34 years."



View From Harrington Way Toward Harrington Farm on Westminster Rd, to the left is Greene Rd.

Joe was a slight figure of about 5 feet 5, 127 pounds, and has maintained that weight since young manhood, "except once when I got heavy and went way up to 145. But I took it off soon as spring work began. I'm apt to gain in winter — I rest more then."

Winter was a time for "rest", but Theresa didn't call what Joe did as rest. Joe splitting wood, carrying it to the woodshed, snow to shovel, porches to clear, paths from the house to the barn and henhouse, and paths to his bird feeders. He also crafted hand-hewn skis for his children

and bent them over steam to get just the right curve. The long, double runner sled that had been his as a boy would fly down the field to Westminster Road with his children at the helm. Years later it sold at auction for quite a lot of money because it still had its original coat of old red paint. ²

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This farm first offered its attractions to city people in 1882; and though the buildings have been enlarged, Mrs. A.R.E. Harrington and son Joseph C. have no difficulty in filling the house every summer. They accommodate about 30 guests" ⁴.



Westminster Rd. View of North West Corner of the Harrington Farm – the Barn was Across the Road on the Right

In 1982 David Krashes bought the entire 600 acres. He engaged LandVest to help inventory, value, dispose of parts of most of the acreage around the house and barn. Originally, he wanted to gift part of



Example from Caribou , ME 1930.

& breakfast. She configured the top floor as an apartment for her and her mother. Wendy Pape did much of the various bedroom wall stenciling. Unfortunately, in 1986 her Bank foreclosed on the property.

On 4/2/1987, Linda Yatzor, Barry Yatzor, Victoria Morgan and Michael Mercier bought the Harrington Farm from the Sharon Staz. They opened a bed-and-breakfast, which was open to guests all year-around, except for a week in January and over the 4th of July, as well as being closed Monday and Tuesday's no matter what (phone off the hook and doors locked). September through October historically proved to be their busiest season.

In 8/24/1990, John Bomba and Victoria Morgan purchased the farm from the Yarzer's. Much of the furniture were original pieces that have been in the house a century or more: the charming old carved wooden beds; antique washstands; a mahogany buffet server. And modern touches that have been added are in keeping with the period: Oriental rugs, some old and some new; a white cotton eyelet shower curtain; a copper tea kettle filled with flowers.

Each bedroom was named after the hand-stenciling that adorns the walls: the Daisy Room, the Lily Room, the Blueberry Room, the Orchard Room. Each room is as individual as its name. Sweet country breezes waft through open windows and sunlight slants across a snowy counterpane.

By 8/24/1994, John Bomba had bought out Victoria Morgan, and later that year, he stopped having overnight guests, but on some occasions, he would let brides stay overnight, the night before their wedding.

In 1997 John, after trying to repair the barn, had it dismantled and he sold off whatever salvageable timbers there might have been.

the land to the town for athletic fields, but they proved to not be suitable. He later ended up donating several hundred acres for Krashes Field complex. There was a 3-day auction in 1982 or 83 of the contents of the house and barn. One of the unique items auctioned off was a 6' wide by 3' in diameter wooden snow roller used to pack the snow on the roads for easy sleigh and horse traffic. One in storage was recently photographed on Mirick Rd. in a barn.

In 1983, Sharon Staz purchased the acreage around the house, barn in order to open a bed



2 Rollers Standing on End in a Princeton Barn



Post and Beam Banquet Hall Addition

Over the next few years, John hired Bufton Post & Beam to design and build two separate post & beam additions in 1997 and 2001.

“Sometimes, the Harrington Farm is not what guests expected it to be”, says Bomba. “You can tell just from the look on their faces. They expected something different ... like the Woodstock Inn, or the Marriott. This is more like staying in someone’s private home. There was no TV, no remote control, no room service. And there was no smoking. Once a guy walked up on the porch with a carton of Kents. He decided not to stay.”

“But 99 percent of people love it — it’s just what they expected. It was fun for me; I had a great time with guests. If I didn’t like it, I wouldn’t have continued to do it.”

Through the years his business model changed with the times. The bed-and-breakfast business faded, and it morphed into a special events venue with the Post & Beam building featuring a banquet hall and outdoor spaces for celebrations.⁸

In December of 2021 Patrick Gillan and business partner Georgianne Fsadni purchased the Harrington from John Bomba. Initially, John and his staff continued to run the business for the new owners, but as of 2023, the new owners have their own manager and staff running this fine venue.

Click on the following link to visit the current website: <https://harringtonfarm.com>

Summary of Ownership Through the Years:

- Prior to 1770, the Farm was built,
- Noah Norcross -, daughter m. Josiah Cutting Sr. - Josiah Mirick - b 1762 – was killed by a horse
- From 1788 – 1847, Deacon Josiah Cutting, m. Mary Moore (1830 map)
- In 1864, Lansford bought the Deacon Cutting Farm, he returned from the Civil War very ill.
 - Lansford Harrington born 10/6/1830, died 1/17/1886 originally from Westminster, married Almira Rebecca Harrington b. 3/28/1837, d. 12/1926 (born Everett) on 3/8/1855, before leaving to fight in the Civil War b. 3/28/1837, d. 12/1926
- In 1882, Mrs. A.R.E. Harrington and Son “Joe”, opened the “Harrington Farm” to 30 guests – they served family-style evening meals to guests and local residents during the summer months
- Joseph Collins Harrington b. 1874 m. Carlotta Jenks – had four sons and two daughters - Joseph remarried Teresa Degnan
- In 1982, David Krashes bought the entire 600 acres farm.
- In 1983, Sharon Staz purchased to open as a bed & breakfast.=.
- In 1986 her Bank foreclosed.

- On 4/2/1987 - Linda Yatzor, Barry Yatzor, Victoria Morgan and Michael Mercier bought the Farm from the Sharon Staz.
- On 8/24/1990, John Bomba and Victoria Morgan purchased the farm from Yarzer's.
- On 8/24/1994, John Bomba buys out Victoria Morgan
- In 1997, John Bomba has the barn dismantled, and he sells off the salvageable timbers.
- In 1997 and 2001, John Bomba hires Bufton Post & Beam to design and build separate post & beam additions.
- In 2021, Patrick Gillan and business partner Georgianne Fsadni purchased the Harrington Farm from John Boma – John and his staff stay on to help run the business for a few months.

Resources:

1. Michel Feinsilver's notes on Francis Harrington
2. *August 14, 1964 Worcester Sunday Telegram Article Entitled "He is 90 But Not in Spirit" - By Ruth H. Frost*
3. 1988 Garden Club Cookbook Summary of the Harrington Farm
4. Blakes p. 353
5. December 6, 1993 *Worcester Magazine Article Entitled "Bed-and-Breakfasting at the Harrington Farm - By Clare E. Karis*
6. PHS archive of Harrington Farm Pictures and Postcards.
7. Edson Harrington & Family genealogy notes and shared images.
8. May 18, 2022 Redemption Rock News article Entitled "New Owners, Same Venue:
9. Harrington Farm's Future in Princeton" - By Kristen Levine

This created and assembled by William "Bud" Brooks in 2022 and 2023 with many thank you's to the oral history provided by Richard Harrington, Christine Nichols, Victoria Taft, Harry Pape, and John Bomba. Images are from the PHS collection.