



Robert Frost Barn

Robert Frost Farm

 **122 Rockingham Rd
Derry, NH**

 www.robertfrostfarm.org



Story Map

What's Special About This Site

Four-time Nobel Prize-winning poet Robert Frost and his family lived at this historic site from 1900 to 1909. While living here, he farmed, taught at Pinkerton Academy and wrote much of the work that would eventually be published in his first three books. At the time the farm consisted of

about 30 acres that contained a pasture, fields, woodlands, orchard, and a gentle spring which often were the subjects of his poetry. Frost also kept chickens, horses, and a cow. In 1911 he sold the farm and relocated his family to London, England with the proceeds from the sale.



Photo courtesy of Ryan Cutting

Barn History and Use

The original farmstead was built in 1884 by Nathaniel G. Head. By 1900, when the farm was acquired by William Prescott Frost Sr. for Robert and his wife Elinor, it had a sizable apple orchard, along with hay fields and pasture. The farm provided the poet with inspiration for many works, including 'After Apple Picking'. Originally the property was in his grandfather's name; however, there was a condition that it would become Robert's after ten years and not a day less.

The last farming family to own

the site was J.A. Van Dyne, who sold it in 1942 to Eddy Lee. Lee turned the fields into the Frost Acres Auto Graveyard. In 1964, the State of New Hampshire purchased the site, with help from Frost's daughter Lesley Frost Ballantine, and in 1965 restoration began. In 1975 the Frost Farm opened to the public and has been open ever since. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its national significance as an historic landmark.



The Frost children at the Derry farm, 1908 (Marjorie, Lesley, Irma, Carol)

The Frost children in 1908 (Marjorie, Lesley, Irma and Carol) courtesy of the Robert Frost Farm.

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Architectural Features

The Frost Barn is a New England-style barn with a gable-end sliding door and a transom window above. Originally, there was a large barn door at the back, but it has since been boarded over. The basement has wooden posts supporting the barn and the foundation is made from field stone and chunks of cut granite. The timbers are sawn, and the floorboards down the middle of the barn lay the opposite direction, like an English-style barn's threshing floor. The whole first floor is whitewashed. The roof boards above run

horizontally along the length of the barn atop common rafters and major purlins. There are two levels of roof ties and bracing on the tops and bottoms of the middle beam between the first and second roof ties. A six-over-six sliding window looks out from the top floor in the back. The barn is sided in clapboard, and the roof is shingled. A small stone ramp leads to the opening of the barn. In the basement is an area where there was once a cow stanchion. Today, offices are on the main floor where the horse stall would have once been.



*Exterior photo of the barn's gable end
courtesy of Ryan Cutting*

What You Can Do Here Now

The Robert Frost Farm is operated seasonally by the New Hampshire State Parks Bureau of Historic Sites. Guided 45-minute tours are offered to view the interior of the farmhouse when staffed. However, the grounds are open to the public from sunup to sundown year-

round. The grounds include the half-mile Nature/Poetry Trail, a self-guided tour with 14 interpretive signs with Frost's poems located at various points of interest along the trail. There is also a gift shop where guests can purchase a memento of their visit.



*Interior of the barn
courtesy of Ryan Cutting*

For Further Reading

Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings, by Thomas Durant Visser (University Press of New England, 1997).

Barns: Their History, Preservation, and Restoration, by Charles Klamkin (Bonanza Books, 1979).

Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England, by Thomas C. Hubka (University Press of New England, 1984).

An Age of Barns, by Eric Sloane (Funk and Wagnalls, 1967).

Preserving Old Barns: Preventing the loss of a valuable resource, by John C. Porter and Francis E. Gilman (Peter E. Randall Publisher, 2019)