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## Supreme Court Justice Stephen G. Breyer

To Speak in Plymouth Notch in July 2011

The Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation is pleased to announce that Stephen G. Breyer, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, will be the featured guest, on Friday, July 29, 2011, at its new Center in Plymouth Notch, Vermont. Justice Breyer will discuss his recently published book, *Making Our Democracy Work: A Judge's View*. This will be the first public appearance by Justice Breyer in Vermont since he took his seat on the Supreme Court on August 3, 1994, and the Foundation is marking this special occasion with a festive celebration to honor the Justice and the Foundation's 51st anniversary. Full details of the event will be forthcoming.



Justice Breyer was born in San Francisco, California on August 15, 1938. He received an A.B. from Sanford University, a B.A. from Magdalen College, Oxford, and an L.L.B. from Harvard Law School. His career includes service as a law clerk to Justice Arthur Goldberg of the U.S. Supreme Court, service in the U.S. Justice Department and with the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Professor at the Harvard Law School and the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government, and Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit.

On the eve of the publication of *Making Our Democracy Work*, Justice Breyer was interviewed by Jeffery Toobin of the *New Yorker Magazine*. Part of the interview took place as they paddled across the pond at the Breyer family summer home in

*continued on page 2*

## Speaking of Coolidge

The Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation is very excited about its fantastic, upcoming series of presenters scheduled to speak in July and early August at the beautiful new auditorium of the Calvin Coolidge Museum and Education Center in Plymouth Notch.

### Amity Shlaes



The series will open on Wednesday, July 6 at 4:00 p.m. with a presentation by Amity Shlaes, author of *The Greedy Hand*, a national best-seller and *The Forgotten Man*, a New History of the Great Depression. Shlaes is currently working on a new biography of Calvin Coolidge, expected to make its appearance in 2012. She is a senior fellow in economic history at the Council on Foreign Relations and a syndicated columnist at Bloomberg. She has

written for the *Financial Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*, where she was an editorial board member, as well as for the *New Yorker*, *Fortune*, *National Review*, *The New Republic*, and *Foreign Affairs*.

### Jay Parini



Next in the series on July 13, 2011 is Jay Parini of Middlebury College who has written biographies of Robert Frost, William Faulkner, and John Steinbeck. His most recent book is his biographical novel on Herman Melville, *The Passages of H.M.*, which followed *The Last Station: A Novel of Tolstoy's Life*, which was made into a movie starring Helen Mirren, Christopher Plummer, and Paul Giamatti. He is also a poet, as well as author of *Promised Land: Thirteen Books that Changed America*.

*continued on page 2*

New Hampshire. Toobin refers to Justice Breyer's distracted air complemented by a sunny disposition and congeniality, a temperament that "lends itself to compromise," and characterizes the new book as a "full accounting of his judicial philosophy, one that allows the federal government wide latitude in addressing society's problems."

Justice Breyer is known as an engaging, enthusiastic speaker, his oratorical skills formed as a captivating professor and a thoughtful, inspirational judge.

An attorney himself, President Coolidge only had one chance to appoint a Justice to the U.S. Supreme Court – Harlan Fiske Stone of New Hampshire, who had been Coolidge's Attorney General. Stone was later elevated to Chief Justice by President Franklin Roosevelt. Judge Breyer is a jurist in the tradition of Judge Stone.

For further information regarding the appearance by Justice Breyer, please contact the Coolidge Foundation offices (802) 672-3389 or go to [www.calvin-coolidge.org](http://www.calvin-coolidge.org).

Speaking of Coolidge continued from page 1

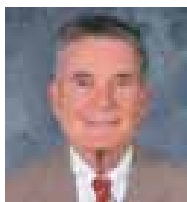
### Nicholas R. Clifford



On July 20, 2011, Nicholas R. Clifford, Professor Emeritus at Middlebury College will discuss *The Troubled Roar of the Waters: Vermont in Flood and Recovery, 1927-1931*, written by him and his late wife Deborah Clifford. It was following the 1927 flood that President

Coolidge delivered the oft quoted speech "Vermont Is the State I Love." Clifford was a member of the Middlebury College History Department from 1966 through 1993, served for roughly eight years as provost, and after his retirement became a trustee, and was co-chair of the College's Bicentennial Celebration Committee. *The Troubled Roar* was their first collaborative work, and in 2008 was a co-winner of the Vermont Historical Society's Hathaway Award.

### William Henkel



On July 27, 2011 William Henkel will discuss his experiences as a long time White House staff member. He began his career during the Nixon Administration, served in the Advance Office under Presidents Nixon and Ford, including as Director of the Advance Office from 1973 to 1975. In 1975 he was named Deputy Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Operations. When President Ford left office, Henkel left Government service for a position with the brokerage firm Merrill Lynch. He returned to work for President Reagan and remained in the White House until 1987, rising to the position of Special Assistant to the President and Director of Presidential Advance. He now resides in Manchester, Vermont.


### Joseph Ellis



August 10, 2011 Pulitzer Prize winner Joseph Ellis will discuss his new biography *First Family: John and Abigail Adams*. He is a professor at Mt. Holyoke College, and resides in Amherst, Massachusetts, with a second home in Plymouth. This will be Dr. Ellis' second appearance with the Coolidge Foundation. His other books include *His Excellency George Washington* and *American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson*.

The "Speaking of Coolidge" series is held on Wednesday afternoon at 4 PM. The public is invited to join us and urge you to ask your friends and family to accompany you to Coolidge's Plymouth Notch. Come early to tour the site and stay after to enjoy light refreshments on the terrace. There is no charge to Coolidge members. The non-member charge is \$8 per person, per event.

For current details, please check our web site [www.calvin-coolidge.org](http://www.calvin-coolidge.org) or call 802.672.3389



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# Orton Family Honors Vrest Orton with \$250,000 Capital Campaign Gift



John Coolidge thanks Vrest Orton August 3, 1957

Lyman Orton and his sons Cabot, Gardner, and Eliot Orton have honored their father and grandfather, Vrest Orton, by donating \$250,000 to the Coolidge Foundation's 50th Anniversary Capital Campaign. The entire foundation family extends their heartfelt gratitude to the Orton family for this fantastic gift.

Vrest Orton (1897-1986) played a seminal role in the preservation of Plymouth Notch as a Vermont historic site, the transfer of the Coolidge Homestead to the State, and in the establishment of the Coolidge Foundation. Mr. Orton, the founder of the Vermont Country Store, was born in Hardwick, Vermont, served with the Army in the medical corps during WWI, and not long thereafter worked for H.L. Menken's *American Mercury* in New York City. Upon his return to Vermont in 1934, he continued as a journalist for the *Rutland Herald* and other publications, while launching the *Countryside Press* of Weston. During WWII, Mr. Orton

served in the Pentagon assisting with publicity for industrial production programs. Following the war, he established the Vermont Country Store in Weston and became the motivating force in the village's revitalization.

In 1949, Vrest Orton was appointed to the Vermont Historic Sites Commission and served as its Chairman from 1951 to 1959, an appointee of Governors Lee E. Emerson and Joseph B. Johnson. During most of his tenure there were only three active commissioners aided by a part time executive secretary. Their accomplishments are legendary: identification of historic sites and installation of historic markers; acceptance and restoration of the Hyde Log Cabin of Grand Isle; acquisition and restoration of the Wilder House and Wilder Barn in Plymouth Notch; restoration of the presidential gravesite; management of the Hubbardton Battlefield and construction of a visitor center/museum; construction of a replica of the Chester Arthur birthplace in Fairfield; initiation of the program to preserve covered bridges; oversight of the Bennington Battle Monument, the establishment of the North American Association of Historic Sites Public Officials with its first meeting held in Woodstock, Vermont where Vrest Orton was elected president. His culminating accomplishment was the transfer of the Coolidge Homestead to the State of Vermont which following years of discussions between Vrest Orton and John Coolidge. The formal transfer took place on August 3, 1957. The accompanying photograph depicts John Coolidge acknowledging the formative role played by Vrest Orton in the transfer and for his wide-ranging, successful Vermont historic preservation accomplishments.

The Orton Family's gift is further recognition of the many notable achievements of Vrest Orton. We thank the Orton family for their philanthropy and join them in honoring Vrest Orton, whose legacy continues to inspire and motivate the Coolidge Foundation.



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## Comments from the Collection



On August 2, 1927 President Calvin Coolidge announced to the world “I do not choose to run.” He had decided not to campaign for another term in office. The news was a bombshell: the reporters present at the announcement were personally handed slips of paper with a single sentence of resolution from which they constructed their news articles. Likewise stunned

by the surprising news was the campaign train, which had already started its trip to the polls.

In our collection we have an item which clearly demonstrates the astonishment that Coolidge’s declaration caused: a 1928 Campaign Banner. This painted canvas banner, 72” x 99”, is truly a one-of-a-kind piece. The banner has reinforced edges and corners and has eyelets for display; it was obviously constructed with great care. The colors are still quite bold, and the unknown artist’s hand is striking. Recently re-housed according to archival specifications, I had a chance to familiarize myself with the astounding piece.

This hand-painted banner demonstrates that there was a contingent of Americans who were assured that Coolidge would seek reelection. Due to the loss of its original purpose and size, it is remarkable that the banner is still in existence, let alone in pristine condition. Representative of a pivotal point in Calvin Coolidge’s political career, the 1928 Campaign Banner is a highlight of our Collection.

*By Kate Bradley, Collections Manager*

## We Remember Two of our Docents: Dottie Yates and Dave McNally

**Dottie Yates (1925 - 2010)** just loved Plymouth and her family’s history there. She was a Brown, one of the village’s founding families, along with the Coolidges. The Brown family donated land to the historic site, to include the house where the site administrator now lives. Dottie was an enthusiastic volunteer. She was a summer docent from 1992 to 1998 for the Union Christian Church building. Visitors enjoyed her talks. On busy days, tourists would line up outside for a chance to hear her captivating history lessons about the site, the Foundation, her family, and, the Coolidge family. She willingly answered all questions. Dottie will always be remembered for her love of history and her devotion to Plymouth. She had a big smile and was tolerant of those of us who were just learning this important history.

*Remembered by  
Cyndy Bittinger, Former Executive Director*

**Dave McNally (1945 – 2011)** was new to volunteering at the Coolidge site. President of Schoelly Imaging in Worcester, Massachusetts, Dave had a home in nearby Bridgewater, Vermont. He was familiar with the Coolidge site and contacted me in the fall of 2009 to become a docent. He did some reading over the winter and enthusiastically joined our group of docents. Whenever his business responsibilities allowed, Dave led student groups during the spring and fall of 2010. He was wonderful with the students and enjoyed exploring the village with them. His company, his family and friends noted his pleasure in participating in the Coolidge education programs and have directed donations in Dave’s memory to both the Coolidge Foundation and the Coolidge Historic Site. I will miss Dave, who I was just getting to know, but am so glad that he did volunteer for the past year and that we had a chance to know him and remember him fondly.

*Remembered by  
Diane Kemble, Education Director*

## Gift of 5,000 Boston Cobble Stones for Outside Classroom



Tremont Street, Boston 1891

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew J. Ferrara of Boston, MA and Barnard, VT have generously donated 5,000 cobble stones, originally from the Tremont Street area of the City of Boston, to the Coolidge Foundation. These unique stones will be used for an outside and terrace to be located adjacent to the lower ground floor interior classroom and offices. In view of President Coolidge’s longtime tenure at the Boston Statehouse, we imagine that he might once have tread on these historic stones.

The gift provides the opportunity to raise funds for the Foundation’s expanding educational programming. We are in the midst of pricing the cost of the installation and will be launching the funding opportunities shortly. In the meantime, we will be hosting a cobble stone art project, inviting participants to design temporary artistic stone configurations to be exhibited for a short period on the flowing fields of Plymouth Notch. We are most grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Ferrara for their gift and look forward to announcing the funding and artistic projects.

# Education Opportunities Unfold

By Diane Kemble, Director of Education



The year-round and increased space possibilities of the new Education Center prompt expanded ideas for courses, workshops, special events, and collaboration with other organizations and individuals.

Last summer's course for teachers, Vermont on the National Stage, funded by a Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources Grant, is being followed by an exciting new summer offering for teachers, *Searching for History: From Internet to Inspiration* (July 12, 13, 26, 27). Director of Education, Diane Kemble, has teamed up with Sarah Rooker, Executive Director of Flow of History to plan a course that explores and selects from the vast resources of the Internet to construct inquiry-based lessons and activities using both technology and hand-made presentations.



## The Norman Williams Library, Woodstock, VT

...story times, summer reading club for kids, books, magazines, newspapers, DVDs, audio books, on-line databases, wi-fi, meeting rooms, author talks and more...

Come visit our historic building on Woodstock's beautiful Green. Enjoy our free wi-fi from the Green or while having lunch at one of our restaurants. Read in our comfortable reading room or surf the internet on one of our high speed work stations. Read one of the current best sellers or enjoy a magazine. Join our Reading Group, Genealogy Group or the Camera Club at one of their meetings. Bring your toddler to a special Toddler Story Time. *Or just come browse!*

**The library isn't just about books any more.  
It's about FUN!**

The classroom is available during school vacations for student activities. A two-afternoon workshop was offered on April 19 and 20: *Art Journey - Make Marbled Paper and Books*. Plans are in the works to offer activities for all ages next President's Day.

Another exciting venture is our annual Summer Day Camp, planned for August 15 to 19 for interested people from age nine through twelve. *Exploring Coolidge's Plymouth Notch with the Questions of an Historian and the Eyes of an Artist* will utilize the entire Coolidge Historic Site to follow our curiosity and interests through many hands-on experiences. Student voices will fill the Union Church with its perfect acoustics for a variety of dramatic readings and improvisation. The week's activities will be shared with family and friends on the last afternoon of camp, when students become the guides around the village.

Plans are in the works with muralist Terry Sylvester of Brattleboro to paint a mural in three panels for the classroom on the life and times of Calvin Coolidge. This will be coordinated with high school students from Springfield and Black River High Schools. Room is still available for one other school to participate.

Patrick Cody, from the local access television station in Ludlow, LPCTV, will train the volunteers and staff in the use of video cameras, and has offered to loan a camera for our events, of which there are many.

## New Trustees

Catherine Nelson

Catherine Nelson, newly elected Coolidge Foundation trustee, has long been in newspaper publishing, and is the General Manager and VP of *Vermont Community Media* and its affiliates the *Rutland Herald* the *Times Argus*, and the *New England Business Journals*.



David Pietrusza



The Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation is pleased to announce that David Pietrusza has joined its National Advisory Board. David is a noted historian having won the Casey and F.C. Lane Awards. "He has a gift for making the past both real and dramatically gripping," according to Richard Norton Smith. He is author of *Silent Cal's Almanack: The Homespun Wit and Wisdom of Vermont's Calvin Coolidge*, and the *Year of the Six Presidents* which was recognized as one of the "Best Books of 2007." David was also one of the presenters at the Symposium "Straight Talk" held at the JFK Library in Boston in October, 2010, and is a past member of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation.

In its fifty-first year the Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation enthusiastically reports a surge of national interest in the legacy of our 30th President. The dedication of the new offices in the President Calvin Coolidge Museum and Education Center in Plymouth Notch, Vermont, gives energy to programming twelve-months a year. A spectacular 50th Anniversary celebration, capped by the Symposium *Straight Talk* and Gala Dinner at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Boston in October 2010, paved the path to honor Calvin Coolidge in 2011.

The Foundation introduced its new program for the year: "Speaking of Coolidge." The Foundation's National Advisory Board scholars published 13 articles during Presidents' Week 2011 to national audiences which provided a platform for further questioning, curiosity and debate. The extraordinary Presidents' Week output is a reflection of the increasing awareness and interest in the quiet-spoken president from Vermont who engineered powerful concepts and produced outsized results. (See details at [www.calvin-coolidge.org](http://www.calvin-coolidge.org)).

A summer *Speaking of Coolidge* series in Plymouth Notch will feature Amity Shlaes, best-selling author and columnist; Joe Ellis, presidential scholar and professor of history at Mount Holyoke; Jay Parini, poet, novelist and Robert Frost scholar at Middlebury College; Nicholas Clifford, professor emeritus at Middlebury College and author of *The Troubled Roar of the Waters – Vermont in Flood and Recovery, 1927-1931*; and Joe Citro author and lecturer.

The afternoon programs at the President Calvin Coolidge Museum and Education Center in Plymouth

Notch, VT, are augmented and reinforced by C-SPAN's national broadcasts of the *Straight Talk* symposium presentations. The presentation of the first such speaker, Carl Sferrazza Anthony, Historian of the National First Ladies Library, was broadcast in January and addressed family values and gave insight into the private lives of Grace and Calvin Coolidge. A second presentation, by scholar David Pietrusza in mid-March, featured the Coolidge prosperity and how Coolidge restored fiscal order and orchestrated government to run smoothly. Other presentations by former Vanguard Chairman John C. "Jack" Bogle; former Governor Michael Dukakis; best-selling author Amity Shlaes; financier Garland Tucker III; and PhD's Joseph J. Thorndike, Martha Joynt Kumar and John Van Til will be aired throughout the year. The C-SPAN films take the Coolidge message to a broad audience and illustrate the timeless fundamental values that served the nation well in the 1920's.

Today the country's financial realities are seen to mirror conditions of the early 1920's with staggering federal debt, growth-throttling government spending and high unemployment. The record is being re-examined by scholars and politicians to understand Coolidge's character and values and how they lead to robust success. We invite you to the World of Coolidge. Please visit our Website: [www.calvin-coolidge.org](http://www.calvin-coolidge.org) for a new appreciation of Coolidge and log onto new articles written by our Coolidge scholars.

—Robert P. Kirby

President, Board of Trustees April 21, 2011

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## Historic Sculpture on Loan to Coolidge Foundation



The Woodstock family of the late William Duane Wood has lent to the Coolidge Foundation the historic sculpture *Coming Through the Rye* by Frederic Sackrider Remington, which is now on view in the Coolidge Library of the new Calvin Coolidge Museum and Education Center. Immediately after the center's dedication in August 2010, Bill Wood's widow, Kay Wood, and their children Randy Wood and Mitzie Laidlan, concluded that the Vermont library devoted to President Coolidge was the perfect setting for the sculpture. They were cognizant that another rendering of the same sculpture is in the collection of the White House in Washington, D.C.

*Coming Through the Rye* depicts four exuberant, pistol waving cowboys, sitting astride horses at full gallop. Kay

Wood recalled when her father-in-law offered the statuette, which depicts the drama of the old west, to members of the Wood family and her longtime interest in horses prompted her to accept. Frederic Remington's original bronze castings were done in the early 20th century, and subsequent castings were executed in the 1970s, from which the Wood family's cast came. Remington outlined his biographical interpretation of the cowboys – when turned loose, after completing their seasonal work at low wages, they do so in a thorough way, by riding to town at a frenzied gallop, venting their enthusiasm with shrieks and yells, and firing their revolvers.

The statue was relocated from Woodstock through a coordinated, community volunteer effort. Spurred to action by the generosity of the Wood family, Coolidge trustees Barbara O'Connell and Mimi Baird oversaw the transfer. Scott and Chris Aiken, owners of Custom Moving and Storage in West Lebanon, N.H., donated the truck and three able bodied men for the move – Jeff Brown, Mike Boutin and Evan Hammond. The sculpture is displayed on a solid maple pedestal table lent by Brent Karner of Clear Lake Furniture in Ludlow, VT, while Hasse K. Halley of Shiretown Books in Woodstock, VT researched, located, and contributed to the Foundation the pictorial art history text *Icons of the West: Frederic Remington's Sculpture* by Michael D. Greenbaum, published in 1996. Members from the communities of West Lebanon, Woodstock, and Ludlow, banded together in volunteer support of the Coolidge Foundation's history education programming. Stephen McKay of the Vermont Standard recorded and photographed the half-day journey through Windsor Country of the romanticized western riders of *Coming Through the Rye*. We invite you to visit and view these frenetic, bronze cast cattlemen and speculate as to whether they have already imbibed in too much rye alcohol or are on their way to the saloon.



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## 1924 Election Conflicting Minority Endorsements

As the 1924 presidential election approached, two leading African American Republican Party leaders, longtime associates of President Calvin Coolidge, were divided on their endorsements. William Clarence Matthews (1877 – 1928) endorsed Calvin Coolidge and William Henry Lewis (1868-1949) endorsed the Democratic Party nominee John W. Davis of West Virginia.

Both gentlemen were from the south – Lewis was born in Berkley, Virginia, the son of former slaves, and Matthews was born in Selma, Alabama. Lewis attended Amherst College from 1888-1892, while Coolidge was there from 1891-1895; they overlapped during one academic year. Lewis went on to Harvard Law School 1892-1894, where Matthews was later an undergraduate from 1901-1905. Both Lewis and Matthews were spectacular athletes. Lewis played football at both Amherst and Harvard and then coached at Harvard from 1895 to 1906, and he trained Matthews, who excelled in both football and baseball. They were loyal Republicans, the party of Lincoln, as were most African Americans of the period. [During their lifetimes they were identified as “colored” or Negro,” but I have chosen to use the modern identification of African American.]

The issue that led to their contradictory presidential endorsements centered on the party platforms, or rather their interpretations of those platforms, and the candidates’ positions on the Ku Klux Klan. Lewis concluded that the Republican Party platform was not strong enough in its criticism of the KKK and censured President Coolidge for not being more public in denouncing the Klan. He issued a fifteen page criticism of the Republican Party platform and the President on the issue of the KKK. Lewis endorsed the candidacy of John W. Davis of West Virginia based on the Davis renunciation of the KKK in a speech by Davis on August 21, 1924 at Sea Girt, New Jersey: “If any organization, no matter what it chooses to be called, whether it be KKK or any other name, raises the standard of racial and religious prejudices, or attempts to make racial origins or religious beliefs the test of fitness for public office, it does violence to the spirit of American institutions and must be condemned by all those who believe in American ideals.”<sup>1</sup>

### William Henry Lewis



In 1903, Theodore Roosevelt advocated Lewis’s appointment as Assistant District Attorney of Boston and later Naturalization Attorney for all New England. In October 1910, President William Howard Taft appointed Lewis as the United States Assistant Attorney General. After a prolonged fight in the U.S. Senate, Lewis’ nomination was

confirmed in June 1911. With the election of Woodrow Wilson the next year, his federal patronage position ceased and he then practiced law full time in Boston.

Later, after Coolidge assumed the presidency, Lewis endeavored “to generate more Afro-American political support for the Coolidge administration throughout 1923 and 1924; Lewis was also particularly keen on recommending the political appointments of Tuskegee men of the Washington era. Demonstrating his loyalty to Coolidge and the Republican Party, Lewis anticipated receiving the administration’s high-ranking and coveted post of official political organizer within the black community during the presidential election of 1924. Frustrated with the loss of the position to another prominent black in Boston, William Matthews, Lewis defected from the Republican ranks in 1924. In returning to the party almost immediately following the election of 1924 ... Lewis affected another curious volte face, but he was unable to regain his former status as a major black advisor.”<sup>2</sup> Many concluded that his support of Davis rather than Coolidge in the 1924 election was occasioned by the President’s failure to appoint him to a federal office.

### William Clarence Matthews



William Clarence Matthews, 12 years younger than Mr. Lewis had also been appointed by President Taft, but in 1912, as Special Assistant United States Attorney in Boston. Twelve years later it was he who was chosen as Head of the Colored Division of the Republican National Committee in the presidential election of 1924. His appointment followed his participation in the successful effort forcing “the G.O.P to recant their action of 1921 cutting down the Southern representation at the national convention, with the threat that the Negro race would be led en masse out of the Republican party as protest against ‘the gross injustice’ of nullifying their power in the councils of the party.” Both Lewis and Matthews were friends and long-time leaders of the Republican Party African American community. *The Pittsburgh Courier*<sup>3</sup> carried an article on August 18, 1923 “Colored America Generally Ignored at Harding Funeral: Race Overlooks Rebuffs and Pays Respect in Flowers and Telegrams,” without indicating whether they attended the service in the rotunda of the Capitol or sent floral tributes noted: “William C. Matthews and William H. Lewis, distinguished citizens of Boston, are very cordially acquainted with President Coolidge, and speak very favorably of the attitude of President Coolidge on the problems of human relations.”

During the campaign their differences were quickly made public. In an interview reported by the *New York Times* on October 25, 1924, Matthews said: The cooperation of the various factions of colored voters, for which I have striven from the time of my appointment, has been remarkable. It



is true that the colored voter was disturbed at the beginning of the campaign by the desertion of the Republican party by such men and women as William Henry Lewis, Alice Dunbar Nelson, and others, but time has reviewed to him the following such radicals.. I am satisfied that the bulk of the colored vote will be cast for Coolidge and Dawes on election day.” He estimated that over 90% of the 5,810,000 colored votes would be cast for Coolidge.

Matthews’ criticism of the Lewis desertion was echoed by other leading African American leaders and on the editorial pages of the African-American weeklies. The black vote contributed to Coolidge’s eventual overwhelming victory over Davis and Progressive candidate Robert M. La Follette. While there was no exit polling to estimate the number of African Americans who voted for Coolidge and no known quantitative analysis of the their vote in 1924, historian John Berry noted “in the 1924 election well over 90% of northern blacks voted Republican, with most of the remaining votes going to La Follette’s Progressives, not to Democrats ...”<sup>4</sup>

Following the 1924 election, William Clarence Matthews delivered a speech outlining a “Race Plank,” of seventeen demands which were part of a “comprehensive survey of conditions as they confront Negro.” Most demands dealt with appointments to federal office. Soon thereafter, Matthews was appointed to the Justice Department by President Coolidge: (1) October 1925 named a special assistant to the attorney general of the United States and posted to Lincoln, Nebraska to represent the government in certain federal prosecutions; (2) December 1925 named Assistant United States Attorney at Springfield, Illinois; (3) June 1926 reassigned to San Francisco, California in charge of water litigation for the government.

## Conclusion of Careers

Matthews’ career was cut short by his death resulting from a perforated gastric ulcer in April 1928 while in Washington on government business. His funeral service, held in Boston, was attended by 1,500 mourners according to the April 21, 1928 edition of *The Pittsburgh Courier*. The article also reported that telegrams of condolence were sent by President Coolidge and U.S. Attorney General Sargent. Amongst the honorary pallbearers was William Henry Lewis.

Lewis lived another twenty one years practicing law in Boston until his death on January 1, 1949. Boston Mayor James Michael Curley (President John F. Kennedy’s grandfather) eulogized him: “Lewis in his vast and noble labors erected his own monument.” *The Chicago Defender* reported that “The passing of Mr. Lewis removes the last member of the great organization and intellectual political and political power that dominated the thoughts and activities of the Afro-American people for almost half a century.” Both powerful men are buried in Cambridge Massachusetts - Matthews at the Cambridge Cemetery overlooking the Harvard Stadium, where they both played football, and Lewis at Mt. Auburn Cemetery. Men from the South who excelled as athletes and civil servants, who advanced the rights of African Americans, found rest in nearby hollowed grounds of the North.

<sup>1</sup>Garland S. Tucker, II, *The High Tide of American Conservatism*, (Austin, TX, Emerald Book Co. p. 224, quoting from John W. Davis Papers, Sterling Library, Yale University).

<sup>2</sup>Maceo Greshaw Dailey, Jr., *Calvin Coolidge’s Afro-American Connection*, Contributions in Black Studies, Vol. 8, Article 7, p. 92

<sup>3</sup>*The Pittsburgh Courier*, founded in 1907, and once the country’s most widely circulated black weekly newspaper with a national circulation of almost 200,000. Today it is published under the name *The New Pittsburgh Courier*.

<sup>4</sup>John M. Barry, *Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America*, (New York, N.Y., Simon & Schuster) p. 318 based on.

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**“If I had permitted my failures, or  
 what seemed to me at the time a  
 lack of success, to discourage me,  
 I cannot see any way in which I  
 would ever have made progress.”**

—*The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge*

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## 2011 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### May 28

Calvin Coolidge Historic Site opens to the public

### July 4

#### Annual Celebration of the Birthday of President Calvin Coolidge

12pm: parade, laying of the wreath sent by the White House on President Coolidge's grave, Speaker: Megan Smith, Tourism Commissioner for the State of Vermont

#### "Speaking of Coolidge" – Summer Speaker Series

Four Wednesdays at 4:00pm, presentation & refreshments.

\$8 at the door, members free.

- July 6 – Amity Shlaes
- July 13 – Jay Parini
- July 20 – Nicholas Clifford
- July 27 – William Henkel
- August 10 – Joseph Ellis

### July 12-13 & July 26-27

#### Searching for History: From Internet to Inspiration

A course for teachers to guide students in using historical thinking and focused intent as they explore the vast resources of the Internet.

### July 29

Supreme Court Justice Stephen G. Breyer

### August 6

Plymouth Old Home Day & Annual Meeting

3:00pm Annual Meeting

### August 15-19

#### Summer Day Camp

*Exploring Calvin Coolidge's Plymouth Notch with the Eyes of an Artist and the Questions of an Historian, Ages 9-12, 9am – 2pm*

### September 3-4

Plymouth Folk & Blues Concerts

### September 10

Plymouth Cheese & Harvest Festival

### September 15

Hildene, Manchester Vermont

Family home of Robert Todd Lincoln

Sponsored by Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation and Hildene, Inc.

*Featured Speaker, time and additional information to be announced*

### September 15-October 13

History Exploration Programs

Explore where Calvin Coolidge, our President from Vermont, grew up.

Learn about life in this 1800's hilltop village.

### October 15

Harvest Dinner

7:00pm Talk by Author Joe Citro - "Spiritualism in Vermont"

### December 10

Coolidge Holiday Open House

*www.calvin-coolidge.org*

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