



For Immediate Release
August 26, 2021

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Twilight Stars Party Returns September 4

Historic Brownington Village, Vermont—The Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village’s annual Twilight Stars Party will return after a year off due to Covid19 at 5:00 PM on Saturday, September 4. The festivities will feature live music with Evansville Transit Authority, food with Runaway Tomato and the Ladies Aid Society of Brownington, a beer garden and astronomy with Bobby Farlice-Rubio from the Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium.

Held on Prospect Hill in the museum’s historic village, the party starts at the base of the hill with music, food and drink. Families of all ages are encouraged to attend together to enjoy games for children and then later to gaze at the late summer night sky. At twilight, Farlice-Rubio will lead participants to the top of the hill where a bevy of telescopes will be on hand to journey through the cosmos. Participants will learn how to recognize constellations and hear the greatest stories handed down to us from past generations of star gazers.

“There is no better place to learn astronomy than outdoors under a starry sky in this epic location,” Molly Veysey, Executive Director of the Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village, said. “Bobby makes it fun for all ages, whether you want to learn the constellations or simply hear the amazing stories he tells. All are welcome to join us for food, music and fun.”

Early bird tickets are on sale now at \$8 for adults and \$4 for children. On the day of the event, tickets cost \$10 for ages 12+, \$5 for children 5-12 and are free for children under 5-years-old. To purchase tickets ahead of time, visit:
<https://www.oldstonehousemuseum.org/twilight-stars-party/>

Volunteers are needed to run the party as well and can bring their entire family for free. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Gillian Dacierno at publicprograms@oldstonehousemuseum.org.

To protect our guests from Covid19, the museum has instituted protocols to ensure safety. Following United States Center for Disease Control recommendations, all participants are required to wear masks indoors, keep at least three feet of social distance from those outside your group and stay home if you are not feeling well. Disposable masks and hand sanitizer will be available.



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About Alexander Lucius Twilight

Born on September 23, 1795 Alexander Lucius Twilight graduated from Middlebury College in 1823, becoming the first African American graduate of any United States college or university. In 1829 he was hired to be principal of the Orleans County Grammar School and was minister to the Brownington Congregational Church. In 1836 he was elected to the Vermont House of Representatives, becoming the first African American to serve in a state legislature. Under his leadership, the Orleans County Grammar School thrived as a co-educational institution attracting both boys and girls from throughout New England who came from as far away as Boston and Montreal. Between 1834 and 1836 Mr. Twilight designed and built a four story granite dormitory, which he called Athenian Hall.

Mr. Twilight's father Ichabod was born in Boston in July 1765. Both he and Mr. Twilight's mother Mary were free and mixed race, most likely of African slaves and English colonists. Ichabod served in the Revolutionary War in a New Hampshire regiment and later moved with his family to Vermont where he and his wife were listed as "the first negroes to settle in Corinth" where they bought property, moving from Bradford on November 28, 1798.

Typical for children of his class, Alexander began working for a neighboring farmer when he was only eight. Reading and studying mathematics while performing farm labor, he was able to enroll in the Randolph Orange County Grammar School in 1815 at the age of 20. He enrolled in Middlebury College in 1821, graduating as the first known African American to receive a degree from any institution of higher learning in America in 1823.

In 1826, Mr. Twilight married Mercy Ladd Merrill from Unity, New Hampshire and taught in both New York and Vermont before assuming his position as principal at the Orleans County Grammar School. In addition to acting as minister for the Brownington Congregational Church, he led worship services and delivered sermons in numerous other churches. In 1847, he relocated to Quebec where he taught briefly. However, without his leadership the Orleans County Grammar School experienced declining enrollment. He was persuaded to return to Brownington where he resumed duties as both teacher and pastor. In 1855 Mr. Twilight suffered a stroke and retired. He died on June 19, 1857 and is buried along with his wife Mercy in the Brownington Congregational Church Cemetery.

About the Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village was established by the Orleans County Historical Society and has



been operating as a museum since 1926. It has now grown from one building to become an impressive historic site with seven restored buildings and three neighboring structures, all dating from the early 1800s. Dedicated to its mission to preserve, educate and inspire, the museum annually attracts nearly 10,000 visitors from across the country and abroad.

Education has long been a cornerstone of activity in Brownington, Vermont. The former granite dormitory is not the only historic building at the museum to tell the story of progressive education and diversity. Alexander Lucius Twilight's 1830 Federal style home houses his books and letters, along with letters from his students, in an archival vault. Further up the hill an 1831 Federal-style Hall House stands as a testament to Samuel Reed Hall, a recognized pioneer in progressive education. Hall founded America's first teacher training college in 1823 in Concord, Vermont, invented the chalkboard, and published the first teacher-training textbook in 1829.

Through unique educational programs that use select items from its permanent collection as teaching tools, the Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village embraces hands-on, experiential learning as a way of connecting individuals to a way of life that still has much to teach us. Notable past activities have included a barn raising with area vocational students and a tree trimming and replanting project that was incorporated into the 3rd grade science curriculum at the Brownington Elementary School. A thriving adult education program teaches such traditional crafts as blacksmithing, rug hooking, stone wall building, and tree pruning. Spring and Fall Field Days for area schools, as well as its summer "Time Travelers Day Camp" emphasizes hands-on craft activities, theatre, and the scientific exploration of the garden and grounds.

The Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village is located in the Brownington Historic District just off Hinman Settler's Road in Vermont's scenic Northeast Kingdom. The museum is open Mid-May to Mid-October 11:00-4:00 PM on Wednesdays through Sundays. For more information, call (802)754-2022 or visit www.OldStoneHouseMuseum.org.