General Information

Spiritualism is distinguished by its uniquely egalitarian approach to Spirit communication, affirming that it is equally accessible to everyone. By the 1880's, Spiritualism became recognized by leaders in the woman's right movement as "The only religious sect in the world...that has recognized the equality of women,"

Mission Statement

Hydesville Memorial Park seeks to inspire appreciation and knowledge of the origins of one of our uniquely American religious traditions by providing public access and maintenance of the site where the continuity of life was demonstrated in 1848.

Visit Hydesville Memorial Park

The park is located in
Wayne County · Finger Lakes Region, New York.
GPS: 1510 Hydesville Road, Newark, NY 14513.
(315) 879-8804

Supporting Hydesville Memorial Park

Would you like to help preserve and maintain this remarkable part of our American heritage? Donations are welcome. Send your tax-deductible donation to:

National Spiritualist Association of Churches
Fox Property Project
13 Cottage Row, PO Box 217
Lily Dale, NY 14752

Or through the NSAC website:
https://nsac.org/support-nsac
Fox Preservation Fund or
Hydesville Memorial Park Endowment Fund

Hydesville Memorial Park

National Spiritualist Association of Churches
13 Cottage Row, PO Box 217
Lily Dale, New York 14752, USA
www.nsac.org 716-595-2000

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Hydesville Memorial Park

Preserving Our Heritage

One of the many freedoms upon which our nation was founded is the freedom of Religious Pursuit. For nearly four centuries, a diversity of religious movements and institutions have been founded on American soil. One of these religions, Spiritualism, began here in 1848 on the site of the Hydesville Memorial Park, New York, which rapidly spread nationwide. Learn more about this amazing part of American history by visiting the Fox Park History link on the NSAC website (http://nsac.org) and other websites available on this topic.

Hydesville Memorial Park

Hydesville Memorial Park is dedicated to the founding of Modern Spiritualism. The Philosophy, Science, and Religion of Spiritualism are based on providing proof that "there is no death, there are no dead." The National Spiritualist Association of Churches, the oldest and largest Spiritualist organizations in the United States, now owns this beautiful site. It is also known as the "Fox Property" after the family that gave Modern Spiritualism its roots. Hydesville Memorial Park is located in Newark, New York on Hydesville Road.

Fox Cottage Foundation

The National Spiritualist Association of Churches became the owner of the Fox property in December, 1999. The stone foundation of the original Fox Cottage has been re-excavated, revealing a second inner stone wall that for many years concealed the bodily remains of a traveling peddler. In 1848, through a series of percussive raps, this peddler identified himself as Charles B. Rosna to members of the Fox family and offered a report of his own murder to a wide gathering of witnesses. This proof of the continuity of life was further confirmed by the evidential discovery of a male skeleton and a peddler's trunk hidden behind the false foundation wall. A permanent structure has been built over the excavated foundation to protect this site for future generations. The public is invited to visit this unique memorial.

The Fox Family at the Hydesville Cottage

The Fox family moved to the hamlet of Hydesville to build a new family home on land adjoining an elderly uncle's property. During construction, the family temporarily moved into a nearby cottage on December 11, 1847. This cottage property was the setting for the historical foundation of Modern Spiritualism.

The Fox Family

John Fox and Margaret Smith began their life together in 1812 in Rockland County, New York. The Fox's first child, Emily, was born in 1813 and passed in infancy. In 1814, Ann Leah was born followed by Maria, Elizabeth, and David. In 1834 Margaretta Fox was born, followed by the birth of Catherine in 1836.

Ann Leah Fox

Margaretta Fox

Catherine Fox

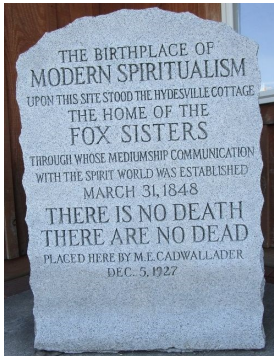
The Advent of Modern Spiritualism

Communication between the seen and unseen began at the Hydesville cottage. Manifestations of the unknown origin grew in strength in the cottage after the Fox family moved in. Raps were heard. Furniture was moved. The touch of a cold hand was felt, and the sounds of footsteps were heard walking through the hallway and down the staircase to the cellar.

On March 31, 1848, the family retired early. Mrs. Fox gave this account: "The children in the other room heard rappings and tried to make similar sounds by snapping their fingers. My youngest child (Cathy) said, 'Mr. Splitfoot, do as I do,' clapping her hands. The sound imitated her with the same number of raps. When she stopped, the sound ceased for a short time, then Margaretta said in sport, 'Now do just as I do, count one, two, three, four,' striking one hand against the other at the same time, and the raps came as before. She then said, 'Oh, look. Mother! It can see as well as hear!'"

Thus the two girls of the Fox family, Margaretta and Catherine, ages fourteen and twelve, are credited with initiating the unusual communication that came to be witnessed by hundreds, bringing the advent of Modern Spiritualism.

The Fox Cottage, Hydesville, New York

The Cottage

The Hydesville Cottage was constructed in 1815 by Dr. Hyde, who left it to his son. Subsequent occupants were Bell, Weekman, and Fox families. April 1916, Benjamin Franklin Bartlett of Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania, had the cottage moved to Lily Dale, New York. The cottage burned to the ground on September 12, 1955. An exact replica of the cottage was constructed on the original stone foundation through the efforts of John Drummond. This replica burned beyond repair in 1983. A stone marker now stands in its place in memory of the Fox sisters and the cottage in Hydesville.