

Gallery 263

263 Pearl Street, Cambridge, MA 02139 email curator@gallery263.com

Af-ter-math: Photographs from Concord and Lincoln, Massachusetts
Sally Gregg and Michael McKeen

3 September – 11 October 2009

Reception: Friday, 11 September 2009, 5:30 – 8:30 PM

Main Entry:

af-ter-math

Pronunciation:

\- math\

Function:

noun

Etymology:

⁴after + mathematics (mowing, crop)

Date:

1523

1 : a second-growth crop — called also rowen 2 : consequence, result <stricken with guilt as an aftermath of the accident> 3 : the period immediately following a usually ruinous event <in the aftermath of the war>

"aftermath." Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. 2009.

Merriam-Webster Online. 29 July 2009

<<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/aftermath>>

Minute Man National Historic Park was created by an act of Congress, on September 21, 1959, and entrusted to the National Park Service to preserve the sites associated with the opening battle of the American Revolution on April 19, 1775. These sites include a section of road from Boston to Concord (now known as Battle Road), where a series of bloody skirmishes occurred, and many other sites including the Paul Revere Capture site, Bloody Angle, and the Old North Bridge in Concord, Massachusetts.

The park is located about 15 miles northwest of Boston, Massachusetts, and consists of 967 acres. Many of these acres are covered by forests that contain a mixture of sugar maple, silver maple, white oak, and American beech trees. Also found are many shrubs that include (the non-native species) European buckthorn, common buckthorn, and Morrow bush honeysuckle. Approximately 180 acres include non-forested wetlands and several ponds. Meadows and fields cover an additional 250 acres, including the approximately 100 acres farmed under the park's agricultural leasing program.

According to the National Park Service (NPS), "The extent and condition of environmental conditions at Minute Man National Historical Park has been and continues to be influenced by a variety of factors." These factors include natural and social changes, such as the invasive non-native plant species introduced to New England in the 19th and 20th centuries and the historical and modern land-use by its inhabitants. The NPS states that "...extensive meadows existed in the area prior to European settlement [and] acres of forest were cleared to create pasture and cultivated cropland" by the English settlers. At that time, in the 1600's, an estimated 30 percent of 849 acres of the park land supported open fields and meadows. By 1775, the percentage of fields had increased to more than 80 percent. By the beginning of the 19th century, approximately 90 percent of the land currently within the park's boundary had been converted to agriculture. By the end of the 19th century and through much of the 20th century, many acres of agricultural land had been abandoned and by the time of the creation of the park in 1959, much of that land had reverted to forest and many acres had been developed for residential and commercial purposes.

In 2003 Minute Man National Historic Park and environs were listed among America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places by the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP). The reasons for this listing were due to factors of noise, visual intrusions, and ground traffic generated by the adjacent Hanscom Field civilian

airport.

The exhibition is comprised of 16 photographs by Sally Gregg and 12 photographs by Michael McKeen, and chronicles part of the life of The Minute Man National Historic Park and environs for a period of about one year.

Through a combination of narrative, documentary, and traditional landscape photography, Sally Gregg's and Michael McKeen's photographs show the traces of both the natural and the social history of the park and environs. By working throughout the various seasons under specific weather conditions, and through their use of the documentary style, the photographs allow for an observation of the visual changes in the landscape that have occurred during the year. In so doing, the photographs, with compositions that are both formal and detailed, record an experience of the landscape and leave the viewer with a new sense of place and understanding of the park and its environs.

References:

Websites:

<http://www.nps.gov/mima/>

<http://www.preservationnation.org/travel-and-sites/sites/northeast-region/minute-man-national-historical-park-and-envvions.html>

Books:

Bode, Carl. ed. *The Portable Thoreau*. New York : Penguin Books, 1977, c1964.

Donahue, Brian. *The Great Meadow : Farmers and the Land in Colonial Concord*. New Haven : Yale University Press, c2004.

Nash, Gary B. *The Urban Crucible: The Northern Seaports and the Origins of the American Revolution*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, c1986.