



PLAN BY BROWN, RICHARDSON + ROWE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Period Plan showing how The Old Manse's landscape looked in 1850.

Cultural Landscape Revitalization Nears Completion at The Old Manse

Built in 1770 for patriot minister William Emerson, The Old Manse, a National Historic Landmark, sits on the banks of the Concord River among rolling fields edged by centuries-old stone walls and graced by an orchard. Care, preservation, and presentation of the Manse requires constant renewal. The Trustees' vision for the one-time home of both Ralph Waldo Emerson and Nathaniel Hawthorne includes scholarly study and documentation, collections preservation, bookstore improvements, inspired new engagement and visitor programs, and the rehabilitation of the landscape to maintain the fabric of its authors' muse. This year, Trustees began a revitalization of the historic landscape, in order to evoke the vernacular landscape of the late 18th and early 19th centuries when the Manse was a center of community life in Concord. The work, which is scheduled for completion in May, enhances the site's accessibility and the contemplative experience of the landscape for modern visitors. Aspects of the project include: establishing a detailed

landscape plan to guide the renewal of the site's trees and other native plants; identifying and removing invasive plants; restoring the upper drive to historic dimensions; enhancing parking and visitor entrance areas to meet accessibility standards; and developing new and thoughtfully integrated interpretive signage. Trustees staff—including Ecology, Stewardship, and Cultural Resources team members—have been working with Concord's Natural Resources Commission, Historic Districts Commission, the UMass Fiske Center for Archaeological Research, the Massachusetts Historic Commission, and our local Concord Cultural Landscape Working Group, all with the goal to ensure that the work being done will enhance the landscape and maintain the cultural significance of this very special place, and will truly be the next steps in a revolution of site experiences that bring The Old Manse and its people to life.