

AP/LISA RATHKE

The house where Robert Frost wrote "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" is now a museum, owned by Bennington College and open to visitors in Shaftsbury, Vt.

Poet's home a museum in Vermont

LISA RATHKE
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SHAFTSBURY, Vt. — On a warm June morning in 1922, Robert Frost sat down at his dining room table in southern Vermont and wrote "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," one of his most famous poems.

That house, including the 7-acre grounds with rugged old stone walls, a barn and some of the heirloom apple trees from Frost's orchard, is now open again as a museum under the ownership of Bennington College.

"This was a very important property for him and an important time in his life," said Megan Mayhew Bergman, director of the Robert Frost Stone House Museum at Bennington College. He hit his prime as a poet here, she said.

Frost's poems, with their simple rhymes, stories, evocations of rural life and sometimes dark allusions, were immensely popular in the 20th century. They were memorized by schoolchildren and recited at countless graduations. The first line of "Stopping by Woods" — "Whose woods these are I think I know" — and the final, haunting line, "And miles to go before I sleep" — are instantly familiar to millions of Americans.

Frost bought the Dutch Colonial stone house built in 1769 in South Shaftsbury and moved his family there with plans to be an apple farmer, after leaving a teaching post at Amherst College. He found it easier to write when he was farming, according to Frost biographer Jay Parini.

He and his family lived there for nine years, with Frost winning the first of his four Pulitzer prizes during that time.

The simple stone and timber house hasn't changed much since then. The museum has displayed photographs of Frost and his family, a facsimile of the "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" manuscript and woodcuts by artist J.J. Lankes, who illustrated Frost's books. The house now has Frost notations painted on some walls, including his epitaph, "I had a lover's quarrel with the world," from his tombstone where he is buried in the First Congregational Church cemetery in nearby Bennington.

Outside, many of the heirloom apple trees from Frost's orchard have toppled in wind storms in recent years. One of the remaining gray gnarled trunks stands in the backyard with new growth angling toward the sky. The museum has taken shoots from the tree and is working with an heirloom orchard to propagate them.

Frost gave the house to his son Carol, and then moved to a farm across the road. Carol Frost, who struggled with depression as his father sometimes did, took his own life at the house in 1940. The house stayed in the family and later was privately owned. It was opened as a museum in 2002. Bennington College acquired the house from the nonprofit Friends of Robert Frost last year.

The museum plans to have poetry readings at the Stone House, an outdoor film series and bluegrass concerts on the grounds.

IF YOU GO...

ROBERT FROST STONE HOUSE MUSEUM: 27 Historic Route 7A, Shaftsbury, Vt.; bennington.edu/robert-frost-stone-house-museum. In May, open Wednesday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. June-October, Wednesday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Admission, \$10 (senior citizens and students, \$6). About 190 miles from New York and about 150 miles from Boston.



ColorWorld/STEVE HAGGERTY

Located at 9,200 feet, 3,000 feet above Colorado Springs, Cloud Camp's 8,500-square-foot main lodge opened in 2014 on the site of Broadmoor Hotel builder Spencer Penrose's private retreat. Quality features include chinked logs, hand-hewn beams and local stone fireplaces.

WESTERN wonder

Rise above it all at Cloud Camp and get your fill of early American art

ANNE Z. COOKE
THE NEWS SERVICE

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — Here's the thing about Western art. Like rattlesnake steaks and Rocky Mountain oysters, it's an acquired taste. If your great-grandparents crossed the mountains in a covered wagon or homesteaded west of the Missouri River, it could be in your genes.

But when a friend from Connecticut scoffed at the genre's two most famous artists, Frederic Remington and Charlie Russell, dismissing paintings of cowboys and Indians as "just poster art, best painted on black velvet," I dared him to take the "immersion cure."

"Join me for a couple of days at Cloud Camp on Cheyenne Mountain in Colorado Springs," I told him. "I've been there. You'll be surprised." What I didn't mention was that Cloud Camp, one of three backcountry camps connected to the Broadmoor Hotel, in Colorado Springs (broadmoor.com/cloud-camp), was owned by billionaire Philip Anschutz, a Western enthusiast. Or that cowboy and Indian paintings were part of the theme at both places.

At Cloud Camp, where paintings and North American native artifacts are displayed in every room, all the guests — whoever they are, willing or not — are exposed to a double-dose

of what AI (artificial intelligence) scientists call "deep learning."

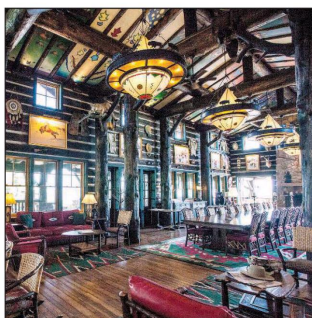
Simply put, this is the ability to recognize individuals in a particular group — dogs, faces, airplanes, or in this case, Western paintings — because you've seen so many of them. Deep learning is why trained robots can distinguish between a human face and last year's Halloween pumpkin.

Agreeing to a date, and the terms of the bet — a spa treatment for the winner — we booked a couple of nights at Cloud Camp and a couple at the Broadmoor. Then we bought tickets, flew to Colorado Springs and checked in with staffer Hannah Benemann at the Broadmoor's Base Camp reservations desk.

Spotting a familiar-looking painting behind the desk, and two more in the hallway, I mentioned it to Benemann, telling her I thought I'd seen it somewhere. Could it have been in a museum?

"You could have," she said. "Or it could be a copy, though I don't know for sure. There are a number of copies in our collection, but nobody knows which ones they are. You'll see some up at Cloud Camp, but they don't know either. And here's your shuttle," she added, escorting us to the door. "It's seven winding miles, with 12 steep switchbacks to the top. Enjoy the views!"

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ColorWorld/STEVE HAGGERTY

The Great Hall and other Cloud Camp rooms display a 35-item collection of art and artifacts, including traditional American Indian garb, leather chaps, a saddle, antique spurs and custom-commissioned art panels that pay tribute to the American Indian tribes of the Western Plains.



ColorWorld/STEVE HAGGERTY

On the outdoor deck at Cloud Camp, the sun's rays are twice as intense as at sea level. In addition to the umbrella, sunglasses and sunblock are advised.

Irish villages vie for annual 'Tidy Town' crown

TRAVEL IN EUROPE



RICK STEVES

When someone asks me about visiting Ireland, I tell them not to miss the southwest coast. This is the place to experience the wonders of the Gaelic language and old Irish civilization, as well as the country's contemporary charms. It's the most mystical, Celtic, spiritual and rugged region of Ireland — and the towns along the way are just plain cute. There's even a competition for the best-kept town.

Every year, the Irish government holds a "Tidy Town" contest — and competition is fierce. Dozens of villages are judged for their beauty, charm, and, yes, tidiness. My own top contenders for the title of tidest town hug the southwest coast, where each town is more endearing than the last. Beyond their pastel facades and prim potted flowers, Kinsale, Kenmare and Dingle offer rich history, natural beauty and warm Irish hospitality.

About a half-hour south of Cork, Kinsale is a pint-size Tidy Town winner, with 3,000 people, 25 pubs and a super-size history. In its day, this town was home to one of the most strategic forts in the British Empire. It had Ireland's best nat-

ural harbor and offered a gateway to Spain and France — providing a potential base for either of these two powers to cut off English shipping. In what became 17th-century Britain's version of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Spanish nearly took over Kinsale, almost gaining naval advantage over England. But England won and eventually built two huge, star-shaped fortresses to ensure control of Kinsale's narrow waterway.

The town's long and skinny old center is part modern marina (attracting wealthy yachters) and part pedestrian-friendly medieval town (winning the affection of scalawags like me). On my last

See **STEVES** on Page 5E



Rick Steves' Europe/PAT O'CONNOR

Ireland's legendary green countryside is the backdrop for the coastal town of Kinsale, a winner in the annual "Tidy Town" contest.



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ColorWorld/STEVE HAGGERTY

Cloud Camp ranger-guide Peter Vozzola leads tours of the Meeting Cabin, a popular destination for business meetings and cocktail parties.

Cloud

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Before "taking the cure," we decided to tour the Lodge, a monumental chinked-log chalet worthy of a small Tudor castle. Wedged between weathered hoolers and a pine and spruce forest, at a breezy 9,200 feet, the building is supported by giant logs so long and broad they had to be carried up the mountain one by one.

The views from the rear deck outside took my breath away, with the valley below and Pikes Peak to the north, its bald summit rising above timberline. It's that rare sort of view you get only from the top of another mountain.

Inside the Lodge, the Great Hall soared to the ceiling, 24 feet at the highest point. Rows and rows of windows and 20-foot walls offered enough space and light for the paintings, as well as Navajo rugs, buckskin clothes, a saddle, leather chaps, antique spurs and a stuffed black bear.

Dark-stained beams, two big fireplaces, sofas and chairs and a banquet table set for 26 announced that this was the gathering place. And it was here, in the Great Hall, where it sank in: We were at the heart of what might be the single largest collection of Western art ever displayed on a mountain top.

The paintings, vertical and horizontal canvases in gold frames, were everywhere, hanging between and over the windows, above the doors, in the halls, over the fireplaces

and near the ceiling. Following a detailed printed guide, we wandered from one painting to the next, comparing Remington to Russell, and both of them to Henry Farny, Charles Schreyvogel, Joseph Sharp, Walter Ufer, Ralph McGrew and others.

A couple of them were new to me. And my friend, now three-quarters of the way toward losing our bet, confessed that he hadn't expected such painterly skills, such skillfully rendered shadows, and so many different scenes and subjects. "You could tell the history of the West through art alone," he said.

After that, with the argument nearly settled, we put on our hiking boots and headed for the closest trail. And like most visitors to Cloud Camp, we crammed in most of the activities, from a guided archery lesson, a mule ride and a cooking clinic (with the chef). Horseshoe contests and beanbag games with other guests filled in the gaps.

But it was the evenings, with sunsets over the horizon, the three-course dinners, the inventive recipes and fresh ingredients and the other guests, convivial new acquaintances, that won me over.

"This is a special place," said Julie Fuller, seated next to me, explaining that it was her eighth visit to Cloud Camp. "My husband, David, surprises me by organizing it every year. Up here on the mountain we're above it all, down there. It makes you feel as if you've left your troubles behind."

The Fullers, traveling with family, said that one of their

group had tried the zip line, 10 separate double cables, ranging from 200 to 1,800 feet long. Connected by short hikes, it included two perilously swaying suspension bridges. And for those with a taste for fright, you could finish with a 180-foot-long "horribly, excitingly scary rapped-down to the Seven Falls." Next time, I said, wishing I'd tried it sooner.

If you want to include tennis or golf, spend your last couple of days at the hotel on the expansive Broadmoor "campus," at the foot of Cheyenne Mountain. You can take a paddle boat out on the lake, work out in the lap pool or sign up for fishing lessons. There's a bowling alley, a movie theater, a half-dozen pubs serving craft beers and at least eight different restaurants.

If time allows, consider buying a ticket to visit the Seven Falls, which rush downhill in a nearby box canyon. But you won't see both the falls and the pools between them, unless you're willing to climb up 224 steps installed along the side walls. Once a scenic pearl, lauded on many a sepia-toned postcard, the Seven Falls have become a commercial attraction. So I passed it up, and collected my winnings instead: a more than satisfying massage.

If you haven't already oversold on paintings, there are plenty more in the Broadmoor's dress wings 150 meters to be exact. We're saving them for next time.

For more information, call (855) 634-7711 or visit broadmoor.com/cloud-camp.



ColorWorld/STEVE HAGGERTY

A corner of the Great Hall displays Georg Heinrich Kuhnner's 1906 painting *The Indian Braves* with clothing and artifacts from different Indian tribes. The furniture and lamps are classic Western designs.



ColorWorld/STEVE HAGGERTY

Log cabin charm makes for memorable days in the Honeymoon Suite at Cloud Camp. Tucked into a corner of the lodge, the room's private porch door leads to a bench for two perched on a rocky outcrop.

New York Times Crossword Puzzle

Answers on the next page

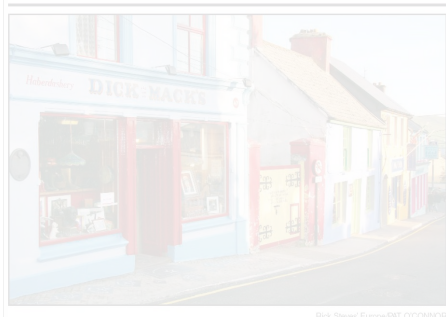
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PROVING THEM WRONG
By David J. Eidel/
Edited by Will Shortz

ACROSS

- 1 Overcast
- 2 Wings falling out of (verb)
- 3 Words for a Spanish word (noun)
- 4 Mover but not a shaker (noun)
- 5 Atlantic 10 Conf.
- 6 Where techno music originated
- 7 In
- 8 Cancer's hair color
- 9 Stryker
- 10 Where the Sun shines
- 11 Doesn't let it go
- 12 "Star Wars" name
- 13 Get into a mess?
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- 16 Call a baby... or a cancer
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Rick Steves Europe/EM O'DONNOR

On the colorful streets of Dingle, you'll hear a steady beat of Irish folk music ringing out through vibrant pubs like Dick Mack's.

Steves

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visit, my local guide showed me a clever "Tumbler Cart" parked in the center of town. In the 18th century, this service vehicle made the rounds picking up the townfolk's sewage, and then dumping it in nearby fields. Today, it's just a delightful ornamental decoration filled with flowers — one of Kinsale's many quirky surprises.

Northwest of Kinsale is Kenmare, another recent Tidy Towns winner that looks like a village. It's a town of visitors right away with rows of vividly painted shop fronts and a go-for-astro atmosphere. And it keeps visitors around with the town square's traditional fairs and markets, as well as an ancient stone circle opportunities for horseback riding and golfing, and the Kenmare Lace and Design Centre, which highlights the trade that put Kenmare on the map. (The town's knack for making exceptionally delicate lace helped it survive the devastating Irish famine of the mid-1800s.)

Quiet Kenmare is the perfect base for tackling the dramatic Ring of Kerry, the

road that loops around the deservedly famous western peninsula. Along the way, treat yourself to a stop at the Kinsale Sheep Farm to enjoy an up-close look at sheep farming and the expertise of Ireland's competent sheepdogs. Meeting the farmer, his family, and their well-trained dogs is one of the best hours Ireland offers.

In the evening, I like to sit up a little serenity just wandering the town. The pub scene changes every couple of years, but locals with the gift of gab are always up for a pint and a good time.

Further north along the coast, colorful little Dingle — my favorite town in all of Ireland — perches on Ireland's westernmost point. The dramatic scenery of the remote Dingle Peninsula is enough to draw anyone, but the prehistoric wonders that dot this region make it particularly intriguing.

Dingle hasn't won a Tidy Town award yet, but it's only a matter of time. Its few streets, lined with unadorned but gaily painted shops and pubs, run up from a bustling harbor always sheltering fishing boats and leisure sailboats.

For an English-speaking traveler, the best "sights" in this town are its people. You may not find the proverbial pot of gold, but you'll treasure your encounters with the engaging, feisty people who live here. Most transactions come with an ample side-helping of friendly banter. As an Irishman once joked to me, "How can I know what I think until I hear what I say?"

Dingle feels so traditionally Irish because it's part of the Gaeltacht, a region where the government subsidizes the survival of the Irish language and culture. Despite governing more tourism, Dingle's traditional charms are resilient. As the older generation slows down and fades away, a new generation of entrepreneurs is giving Dingle fresh vitality.

There's something delightful about small-town Ireland, where the people's connection to their culture and to their town is so vivid. These tiny little hubs offer a healthy dose of Irish culture, and their locations make them the perfect springboards for experiencing the plush beauty of the Emerald Isle. When the next Tidy Town competition rolls around, I'll be rooting for these three.