

The Owl “Who” Started It All...



This stunning barred owl was resting on a street sign one evening, just before dusk, as we walked our dog near the property we just purchased, formerly known as The Silver Service Inn.

This picture was taken with my cell phone, just feet away from the creature.

His presence was commanding. He saw us, we saw him, there was an acknowledgement. It was an amazing moment.

We had been thinking of possible names for the rebranded Inn, and had an idea for a theme, to honor the area’s rich history.

Owls already had special meaning for us, as my husband’s fraternity mascot was the Owl of Minerva and we were recently involved in the rebuilding of a regional golf club with the owl as its mascot.

Suddenly, it all became clear... it was a sign! The owl would be our symbol.

Greybourne House: Celebrating Vermont History While Enjoying the Present

The 19th-century German idealist philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel tied together the Owl of Minerva with the study and understanding of history. Just as the owl takes flight right before dusk as the sun is setting; wisdom (represented by the owl) comes with the end of history (represented as the setting sun). Only the wise philosopher (the Owl) at the end of history could look back upon the history of the world and see from dawn to high noon, to setting sun at night, and fully understand everything that had transpired to reach this moment.

“Philosophy, as the thought of the world, does not appear until reality has completed its formative process, and made itself ready. History [reveals that] only in the maturity of reality does the ideal appear as counterpart to the real, apprehends the real world in its substance, and shapes it into an intellectual kingdom. When philosophy paints its grey in grey, one form of life has become old, and by means of grey it cannot be rejuvenated, but only known. The owl of Minerva takes its flight only when the shades of night are gathering.”

— G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right* (1820), "Preface"; trans. by S Dyde, 1896

While that all is a bit deep, and brilliant philosophers have studied Hegel for years to understand his full meaning, we honor this tradition at Greybourne House. Our mascot, the Owl of Minerva, represents the celebration of historical context and the achievements of people who dared to do the impossible or refused to let obstacles stand in their way.

Each room is named in honor of Vermonters who have made a lasting impact. We hope you enjoy reading their stories and join us in celebrating their stories.

Welcome to Greybourne House!

Credit to: <https://hesiodscorner.wordpress.com/2017/10/10/hegel-and-the-owl-of-minerva/>

