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ETHAN ALLEN HOMESTEAD

BURLINGTON, VERMONT



The Ethan Allen Homestead is preserved as a part of a wetlands park along the Winooski River. The park is a municipal partnership that preserves the beauty of the river valley. Near the entrance is a wooden walking bridge that spans Vermont 127.

As you enter the park, there is a small parking area on the right in front a large bog that is part of the wetlands park. Depending upon the time of the year, you can see the homestead in the distance overlooking the bog. The home sits up on a hill on a small strip of land between the Winooski River and the bog.

Further down the road is a large parking lot in front of the Education Center.

Ethan Allen Homestead — The Education Center provides guided tours of the homestead from early May through mid October. The tour includes a walk through the homestead and the historic gardens. It begins in the education center with a multi-media show.

The center also includes a museum and gift store. The center is closed in the evenings but the park that surrounds the homestead is open until dusk.





The Land

Late in 1787, Ethan Allen arrived here with wife Fanny, five children and three servants. He had traded with his brother, Ira, for the acreage, and contracted with him for building materials. Near the house the Allens probably had a vegetable garden, dooryard and orchard, and Fanny may have had flowers. Outbuildings likely included a barn, woodshed and privy.



"I have lately arrived at my new farm of 14 hundred acres in which there are three hundred and fifty acres of choice river intervale, rich upland meadow interspersed with the finest of wheat land and pasture land well watered and is by nature equal to any tract of the same number of acres that I ever saw. I have about forty acres under improvement."

-- Ethan Allen, November 1787

Riverside Walk — There is a short walk that begins on the left side of the Education Center. The pathway leads between the homestead and the Winooski River down to the river and through the bog.

There is no doubt that Ethan and his wife, Fannie, traveled this path many times as the river was a major means of transportation, even in winter. Ethan Allen purportedly died of a heart attack bringing supplies by sleigh from a frozen Lake Champlain and up the Winooski River. Unfortunately, his death occurred just a few short years after moving in to the house.



WETLANDS WALK NORTH

Ethan and Fannie Allen moored their boat near here when they occupied the homestead. Both Ethan Allen and the Abernacki Indians relied on the Winooski River as a transportation route.

Travel was by canoe and other watercraft in the Spring, Summer and Fall and on foot or by horse and sleigh in winter.

The Winooski River helped shape the landscape in front of you. As the river moved back and forth across the land it formed broad fertile plain. Low lying areas became wetlands. The fertile plains and waters attracted Native Americans and Europeans looking for fish, wild game and farmland.

At the bottom of the hill, there is a wetlands marker at the river. There is also a series of markers along "Wetland Walk North." This walking trail can be reached by following the bike path away from the river for a short distance. At the end of the trail is a set of stairs that takes you by the other side of the homestead.

Overnight in Essex — A recommended nearby spot for the evening is the Inn at Essex. The inn is a AAA, four-star country hotel in Essex, Vermont. The rooms are furnished with period reproduction furniture, many with fireplaces. The restaurants at the inn are staffed by faculty and students of the New England Culinary Institute. Dining is always a remarkable event. Reservations are a must (802-878-1100).

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