Biographies

Dr. Michael (Mike) Mattek

Ever since reading Henry David Thoreau’s *Walden* and studying the American Revolution during his undergraduate years at UW-Whitewater, Mike Mattek has had an interest in the people, events, and places of New England. While at Marquette University, he wrote his dissertation on Albert Brisbane and the “Associationist” utopian movement in nineteenth-century America, and its influence on such major figures of the American Renaissance as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Margaret Fuller. In 2009, he was chosen to participate in a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) workshop that focused on the landmarks in Concord, Massachusetts, and explored their historical, social, literary, and theological connections. He would now like to help you experience first-hand both Boston and Concord, and the reasons why they are such important stops in understanding the foundations of who we are as “Americans.”

Bio for Dr. Robert (Bob) Gross

Dr. Robert (Bob) Gross is the James L. and Shirley A. Draper Chair in American History at the University of Connecticut, and winner of the Bancroft Prize—one of the most prestigious awards for the writing of American history—for his book *The Minutemen and Their World*. Dr. Gross resides in Concord, Massachusetts, where he continues to research and write his book-length study of Concord history: *The Transcendentalists and Their World*. Dr. Gross will be presenting a private lecture for our group at the Concord Free Public Library.

Bio for Charles (Charlie) Bahne

As a college student, Charles Bahne was captivated by Boston and its history. For three decades since then, he’s shared his enthusiasm about the city he loves, working as a tour guide, lecturer and even a park ranger. A graduate of MIT’s Urban Studies program, Charlie is author of *The Complete Guide to Boston’s Freedom Trail, and Chronicles of Old Boston*. Charlie will be guiding our group through Harvard Square, Literary Cambridge, and along the Freedom Trail in Boston.
New England Primer: What Sets Us Apart

Do you remember those large lecture halls in college where you felt lost in the masses? Do you ever feel that way when you travel? The big group gets on a bus, goes to the most crowded tourist spots, gets a quick overview of the site, and then is whisked off to the next stop?

Now, do you remember those small seminar classes in college, the ones where you were surrounded by others who shared your passion for learning? Where you sat around a table, asked questions, and added your own insights to the discussions? Where learning was more than just studying for the next exam, but was, instead, an experience that changed you from the inside out?

That is the experience we strive to recreate for you with our Educational Travel. We purposely limit the size of our trips to sixteen participants in order to create a small coterie of students and scholars. Some of the sites we visit qualify as main attractions, but we try to understand some of the nuanced reasons why they are even more important than most people realize. Other sites are just as important, but are no longer on the beaten tourist paths. We take you to these, talk about why they were important then, and what they can still teach us today.

If you enjoy reading about people and places, visiting those sites, and then chatting about them afterward, then this is the trip for you. Come to Boston and Concord with us to share in this deeper, richer travel experience!

Hear what others say...

*Our trip to Savannah, Georgia was one of the best organized and most enjoyable trips we have ever taken—and we have traveled a lot!*

*They brought in expert local tour guides who connected us to the city’s rich history, its sites, and its literary heritage.*

*The attention to details made by trip organizers made the trip one of the most enjoyable I have been a part of.*

Suggested Reading list


Thoreau, Henry David.  *Walden*  (A few pages a day works best)

Bahne, Charles (Charlie).  *Chronicles of Old Boston*

Alcott, Louisa May.  *Little Women.*  (Or for the unexpected, "Behind a Mask")