

Planting
Fields
Foundation



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**PLANTING FIELDS FOUNDATION AND NEW YORK STATE OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION AND
HISTORIC PRESERVATION MOURN THE LOSS OF MICHAEL D. COE**

Oyster Bay, New York – October 7, 2019 – Planting Fields Foundation (“Planting Fields” or “the Foundation”) and New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation are releasing a statement regarding the death of Dr. Michael D. Coe, grandson of W.R. Coe and Mai Rogers Coe and influential figure in the preservation of Planting Fields.

“We are profoundly saddened by the recent news of Dr. Coe’s death. His contribution to Planting Fields over the past decades was immeasurable. In addition to his lengthy tenure as Chairman of the Foundation’s Board of Trustees from 1986-2018, he championed numerous significant initiatives at Planting Fields including the development of Coe Hall as an historic house museum and the subsequent acquisition of various original furnishings from Coe Hall, the ongoing preservation of the Robert Winthrop Chanler Buffalo Room at Coe Hall, the genealogy project which collectively captured over 800 family members and respective lineages, and he conceptualized several Foundation exhibitions, including the 2019 exhibition, *From Pursuit to Patronage: Industries and Ambitions that Influenced the Legacy of Mai Coe*. Dr. Coe was widely respected and admired as an exceptional academic and scholar, but we at the Foundation remember him as a visionary and fervent friend, as well as an inspiration in our work toward the preservation of Planting Fields,” states Gina Wouters, Executive Director, Planting Fields Foundation.

Vincent Simeone, Director of Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park adds, “Dr. Coe lived an extraordinary life to its fullest and his legacy at Planting Fields will live on every day through all the great work the staff and volunteers here continue to do. Among the many accomplishments and accolades that he received over the years was the hybridization and official naming of the Michael D. Coe Rhododendron, which was presented to him in 2016 and for which we will always remember fondly.”

A graduate of Harvard University with a PhD in anthropology, Michael D. Coe was the Charles J. McCurdy Professor of Anthropology, Emeritus, Yale University. He served as Curator of the Peabody Museum of Natural History anthropology section from 1968-1994. As an archeologist, Michael conducted groundbreaking work across a variety of archaeological sites in North and South America and was the author of several books, *Final Report*, *Breaking the Maya Code*, *The Maya*, *Reading Maya Glyphs*, *Mexico*, *The True History of Chocolate*, and most recently *Angkor and the Khmer Civilization in 2018*. He was also an epigrapher and prominent speaker. As Chairman Emeritus of Planting Fields Foundation, his legacy ensures Coe Hall will be preserved and interpreted for visitors for generations to come.

About Planting Fields Foundation

Planting Fields Foundation preserves and interprets Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park as the premier public garden and Gold Coast estate for today and tomorrow while creating enriching experiences for the visiting public. Founded in 1952 by William R. Coe, the Foundation is a not for profit public educational foundation chartered by the New York State Board of Regents and tax exempt under the status for a 501C3 organization.

Located in Oyster Bay, New York and originally landscaped by the Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Massachusetts, the Arboretum grounds feature 409 acres of greenhouses, rolling lawns, formal gardens, woodland paths and outstanding plant collections. The original historic estate buildings remain intact including Coe Hall, a 65-room Tudor Revival mansion designed by Walker & Gillette. The interior of the house is a showcase of artistry and craftsmanship and features a distinctly American aesthetic through original ironwork commissions by Samuel Yellin and murals painted by artists Robert W. Chanler and Everett Shinn. Planting Fields is included in the National Register of Historic Places, the official list of the Nation's historic sites worthy of preservation.

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