

History on the Rocks: Gadsby's Historic Ice Well

Eau de Ice Well

Ice Well Temp: 50: Alexandria Temp: 45

Ice is an intimacy to the self. It's like you alone in the world. That was it's like to think about ice.

As I watched a show on Planet Green about the Ice Hotel in Sweden, I heard this from an artist working to create one of the hotel suites. That hit me a few weeks ago and it hit me today.

To assess how much ice we really have left, the team removed all the straw to get a good look at the remaining blocks. Well, they aren't really blocks anymore. More like jagged ice pieces. Using our knowledge of 18th century ice preservation we mounded the remaining pieces together to create one ice mound and repacked it with straw. This is exactly how John Gadsby, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and the many others before us saved their ice through the winter, spring, and summer.

As I stared our small mound, it really hit home that this fun creative project is almost to an end. Now don't get me wrong, we are totally NOT going to miss lugging water up the 10 ft ladder, having straw in our hair all day, and having our scent be "Eau de Ice Well." But over the past 36 days, we have been caring for this ice mound of 6,300 pounds and now it has melted, based on the Science Geek measurements, 2 feet deep x 1/12 feet wide x 1/14; feet high anthill. It has been us and the ice against the world.

And I hate to admit, but it will be a sad day for me when all the ice is gone. But at least I know I can go to the ice maker in my fridge to get more. Gadsby, Washington, and Jefferson never had that luxury.



Section of ice left on the cooler side, away from the windows.



Science Geek looking on to monitor progress

With that, the team has decided to stop selling the ice melt contest tickets as of Sunday at midnight. So get your guess in this weekend, then sit back and relax and enjoy watching the last of our ice melt away to nothing.

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What remains of a block of ice