



Shavings

The Newsletter of the Early American Industries Association

Volume 270
Winter 2024

The Annual Meeting Issue



The Early American Industries Association

www.EAIA.us

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The Early American Industries Association preserves and presents historic trades, crafts, and tools and interprets their impact on our lives. Membership in the EAIA is open to any person or organization sharing its interests and purposes. Shavings, the newsletter of the Early American Industries Association, Inc., is published quarterly in February, April, July, and November. Current and past issues (beginning with issue 204) are available at www.eaia.us.

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Submissions: EAIA's Shavings is a member-driven newsletter. Contributions are always welcome and needed. Please observe the deadlines.

Reporting an Address Change: Please notify Executive Director six weeks before the change. Contact information above.

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Front Cover: The Custis Square Archaeological Site will be among the many locations EAIA members will have the opportunity to visit during the 2024 Annual Meeting.

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For information or to join, visit:

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or contact Executive Director John Verrill, P.O. Box 524, Hebron, MD 21830 or e-mail him at: eaia1933@verizon.net.

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The deadline for the next issue (no. 271, Spring 2024) is April 7, 2024.

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Reporting an Address Change: Please notify Executive Director six weeks before the change. Contact information above.

Advertising: Go to page 18 for more information and advertising rates.

Requesting a replacement copy: Contact Executive Director John Verrill (see contact information above).

Both Shavings and the Chronicle are available on microfilm from UMI, 300 Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106.

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President's Message

Happy New Year! You might notice that this *Shavings* is being produced a month earlier than past winter *Shavings*. That's because the Annual Meeting is earlier than usual (April 25–27). We just wanted to be sure that you had a chance to read about the awesome plans for the Annual Meeting this year in Colonial Williamsburg, leaving plenty of time for you to make plans to attend.

I would like to note that there is a new donation line on the annual meeting brochure to support scholarships to attend the annual meeting. We have finally put the scholarship program together. Our first Annual Meeting scholarships will be offered to up to six Colonial Williamsburg apprentices, providing them with a chance to experience Colonial Williamsburg beyond their apprenticeships and to spend time engaging with the EAIA.

This will be a bonus Colonial Williamsburg year for me with two trips planned, since I will also be attending the Working Wood Symposium as part of my presidential duties. Not that I find it a hard duty as I thoroughly enjoy the symposium. Part of our sponsorship benefits includes providing an EAIA informational video, which is aired during the symposium. I have been revisiting our organizations history while creating this video. It is quite amazing. For our 85th anniversary we assembled a special *Chronicle* edition focused on our history. I read it at the time and have enjoyed revisiting the articles included. If you are a newer member, or would like to revisit the articles in the

85th anniversary edition, it is now available on our [website for download](#).

We are in the midst of membership renewals, and we thank you for your renewals. If you have not yet renewed, please do so by the end of February so that you can be included in the 2024 membership directory. The publications committee has been hard at work laying the groundwork for a 2024 PDF membership directory. We plan to have it assembled by late March.

In addition, we are asking again that you consider giving a \$90 donation towards our “90 for 90” campaign with the hopes of raising \$10,000 per year leading up to our 100th anniversary. The response to date has been excellent and we are well on our way. These donations help actively grow our endowment, creating revenue that we use to further our mission by providing grants, sponsor programs, support our annual and regional meetings, pay our staff, publish the *Chronicle*, and increase our on-line engagement.


Be aware that our grant opportunities have expanded beyond just grants for research to include grants for preservation/trades training, and object conservation. Although information about the new grant options are not yet in the [Policies and Procedures Manual](#) we will get them in there in the near future.

Speaking of the *Chronicle*, we are always looking for articles. I have been saying this since I started my term as president, and I would like to think that people have been re-

by Sally A. Fishburn

sponding. Please continue. Our 90 years of *Chronicle* articles create an extensive database for anyone researching tools, techniques, trades, crafts, and material culture history. I know that when I am contemplating how a tool might have been used, its history, or those who used it, the first place I go to is the *Chronicle* index.

The EAIA's original stated purpose is to “encourage the study and better understanding of early American industry, in the home, in the shop, on the farm and on the sea, and especially to discover, identify, classify, preserve and exhibit obsolete tools, implements, utensils, instruments, vehicles, appliances and mechanical devices used by American craftsmen, farmers, housewives, mariners, professional men and other workers.” We have simplified the mission statement over the years, but its helpful to remember the original. It reminds us of all the diversity in American industry and material culture.

As a parting note, I want to introduce you to a small museum north of me in Glover, Vermont, the [Museum of Everyday Life](#). The creator of this museum says, “What would a museum look like if it was dedicated to ordinary objects of no monetary value, but immense everyday life consequences?” The result is a museum that makes a strong case for finding beauty in everyday objects, from safety pins to tattered matchbooks and keys. In a way to me this feels like one woman's quirky extension of our organization. 

From the Executive Director

by John Verrill

A new year always brings excitement to the EAIA. We are lead sponsors of Colonial Williamsburg's *Working Wood in the 18th Century Symposium* again this year. We are proudly sponsoring keynote speaker Christopher Schwarz, who you may know from his publishing company Lost Art Press, and the many books, blogs, and woodworking projects he has shared over the years. Over 400 woodworkers attend this symposium and it is always a great opportunity for the EAIA to share with them our mission as they enjoy all aspects of tools, trades, and crafts. President Sally Fishburn, *Chronicle* Editor Sarah Thomas, Past President Dana Shoaf, and I will be at the EAIA booth to share our mission and to hand out copies of our publications and, of course, to sign up new members!

This issue of *Shavings* should be called our Annual Meeting Issue, as in it you will find a number of articles about Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, the site of our 2024 Annual Meeting in April. We are excited to return to this historic venue as there will be private tours of many of the trades shops, with opportunities to interact with the apprentices and journeyfolk who have honed their skills using the best research techniques of 18th century tools, trades and crafts. Tours of research and collections facilities will also be available and there will be adequate time to explore this 200-acre site, which is the world's largest liv-


ing history museum. We hope you will consider attending as we have made available many unique opportunities not available to the general public.

Many members have requested a membership directory such as the one that was printed up until 2017, when the cost of production, printing, and mailing became unsustainable. Last year we created a digital version that is still available on our website, but this year we are in the process of producing another digital listing that will mirror the format of the old print version. Look for this new publication in early May—we will send you a link!

As I write this column, I am reminded that our annual membership drive is in full steam ahead mode. Thank you for your renewal and look forward to four wonderful issues of the *Chronicle* in the coming year, as well as four issues of *Shavings*, the Annual Meeting, and a regional meeting or two this summer and fall. We also are very gratified by your response to the 90 for 90 Campaign that continues this year; I am pleased to report that nearly \$8,000 has been donated to the endowment since our campaign began on December 1st.

Our publications depend on our members for submissions. It is an opportunity for you to share your knowledge, expertise, and research. *Chronicle* Editor Sarah Thomas is very patient and helpful when it comes to pursuing an idea for an article in that publication, and

she is eager to find new people to share their passions. *Shavings* also plays a role in allowing you to share your projects, whatsits, and activities at local museums and historic sites with your fellow members. Please don't be shy; we know you have talents to share!

Thanks for reading! See you in Williamsburg! 

The 2024 EAIA Annual Meeting is April 24 through April 27, 2024!



It's not too soon to make your hotel reservations. You can do that easily by going to the EAIA website at www.eaia.us, and right on the top of the page is a link to allow you to make your room reservations. You can also contact the hotel directly at (855) 235-1675. If you do call, make sure you tell them you're making a reservation for the EAIA meeting.

Grant Opportunities from the EAIA

- All grant applications must be received by March 15, 2024.
- The application is found on the EAIA website: www.eaia.us/grants.
- For scholarship and conservation grants, please contact Heidi Campbell-Shoaf at hcampbellshoaf@gmail.com Or John Verrill at eaia1933@verizon.net

Research Grants

The Early American Industries Association supports projects related to its mission to preserve and present historic trades, crafts, and tools, and the interpretation of their impact on our lives. Applications are due March 15th of each year. Individual grants up to \$3,000 may be awarded. Awards are announced each spring at the EAIA Annual Meeting.

Preservation Trades Scholarship

Open to students and apprentices studying to learn practical trades used in historic preservation, this scholarship provides a one-time award of up to \$3000. Applicants must submit a letter of application describing their historic preservation trade goals and how this scholarship will assist them. In addition to the letter, they must submit three letters of ref-

erence from instructors, supervisors, or other individuals who have direct knowledge of the applicant's work and intentions to pursue preservation trades.

Awardees must submit captioned photos of work or training the scholarship helped them accomplish and an accounting of what the funds helped them do, (pay for tuition, buy tools, books, etc.).

EAIA Annual Meeting Scholarship


The EAIA's Annual Meeting provides an opportunity to visit sites, attend presentations about a wide variety of early American trades and craft, and learn about early tools and processes—all in the company of EAIA members who share the same interest. Scholarships to attend the annual meeting cover the registration fee and lodging for a first time attendee who is a student, museum professional, or historic preservation professional. Applicants must submit a letter of recommendation and a brief statement (250 words) explaining how attendance would benefit them. The number of scholarships available may vary depending upon EAIA board approval.

To support the annual meeting activities, scholarship awardees are asked to volunteer two hours of time during the meeting, which

may include helping with registration, silent auction, or another task. They are requested to submit to the grants committee a final reflection of their experience of no more than 500 words.

Conservation Grant

The EAIA supports the preservation of historic trades and crafts. To this end, a conservation grant of up to \$3000 has been established to support conservation planning, object treatment services, educational interpretive services, and supplies related to sharing historic trades with the public. This grant is open to historic sites and museums who have 501(c)(3) status and that are open to the public on a regular basis. Applicants must submit a written proposal of no less than 500 and no more than 1500 words describing the project, how the funds will be used, and the anticipated end result. If the grant will be used to help pay for conservation treatment or for conservation planning, applicants will submit the credentials of those who will be providing treatment or planning services.

Awardees must submit a 500 word report following the project or program's completion along with captioned photographs. 

Historic Trades at Colonial Williamsburg

by Paul Van Pernis

Jay Gaynor was, for many years, the head of Historic Trades at Colonial Williamsburg, as well as a long-time Early American Industries Association member and past president. In the Winter 2004-2005 Colonial Williamsburg Journal, he wrote:

Some of the best traditional artisans in the country work at Colonial Williamsburg, where many were trained, serving six- or seven-year apprenticeships to become journeymen or journeywomen. Combining their range of skills and the variety of products they can produce, the program re-creates a realistic model of eighteenth-century production systems. Colonial Williamsburg is the only institution around that can construct a carriage or build and furnish a house, from the ground up, using almost exclusively eighteenth-century type materials, tools, and skills.

From at least the early 1930s, the Williamsburg Restoration was thinking about a craft program, and in July 1936, the Restoration formed Williamsburg Craftsmen Incorporated, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Colonial Williamsburg. In October, President Kenneth Chorley announced the re-establishment of 'authentic handcraft industries.' The discussions were, and are, never-ending, but the goals can be summarized quickly. The program

preserves not only what is known about early trades, their products, and techniques, but also, as important, the physical ability of individuals to effectively and efficiently perform the skills involved, and therefore the nature of preindustrial work. Through documentary and hands-on research, the program strives to expand knowledge of the trades and their products and incorporate that knowledge into hands-on skills and techniques. Trades' technology-based research often results in insights into eighteenth-century attitudes and approaches to work and products that are impossible to discover through traditional curatorial connois-



seurship or documentary research. The only way to accomplish these preservation and research objectives is through practice of the trades. Historic Trades makes things, a lot of things. And, finally, and of utmost importance, it must present what it is doing—physically, intellectually, and philosophically—to guests.

That history and tradition continues today. The Historic Trades and Skills community at Colonial Williamsburg continues to employ 18th-century tools and techniques for staff to apprentice in and eventually master more than 20 historic trades and skills. These craftspeople are recognized globally as

some of the most world-renowned experts. They produce not only goods and provide services to the Colonial Williamsburg Historic Area, but they also consult and produce for other cultural institutions around the world. You will not find a trades community with so many experts in one place anywhere else. As you stroll the streets of Colonial Williamsburg, you will encounter all these craftspeople at work. You will encounter a community of men and women at more than twenty sites, with nearly one hundred masters,

EAIA Board Member Peter Hudson at Work in the Colonial Williamsburg Joiner's Shop



The Weaver's Shop at Colonial Williamsburg.

uniquely human skills. The tradespeople are professional, full-time artisans dedicated to specific occupations, who practice them publicly and share their knowledge with guests & participants at Williamsburg and around the world.

Many of these skilled tradespeople have graciously volunteered to provide EAIA members with an exclusive hands-on experience in ten of the trade shops during our

upcoming Annual Meeting in April. On Thursday April 25th, ten of the trade shops will close to the public in the late afternoon and EAIA


journeymen and journeymen, apprentices, and interpreters practicing more than thirty eighteenth-century trades: Millinery, mantua (gown) making, tailoring, wig making, weaving, dyeing, shoemaking, saddle & harness making, cabinetmaking, carpentry, coopering, basketmaking, wheelwrighting, blacksmithing, silversmithing, gunsmithing, founding, printing, bookbinding, medicine, brickmaking, cooking, and rural trades. You'll find that many of these tradespeople and craftspeople are members of the Early American Industries Association.

There is nowhere else in where in the world where you can go to learn so much about traditional, preindustrial, eighteenth-century trades! The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation researches and replicates eighteenth-century Anglo-American technology, while preserving and practicing these historic trades. Some survive only because of Colonial Williamsburg's dedication to preserving these

The Tinsmith's Shop at Colonial Williamsburg



members will get to choose to spend time in two of those ten shops and try their hand at one of these trades. You'll have the opportunity to spend time in two of the following shops: Joiner's, Cabinetmaker's, Tinsmith's, Founder's, Blacksmith's, Milliner's, Weaver's, Cooper's, Wheelwright's, and the Tailor's Shop. You won't want to miss this opportunity to try your hand at one of these eighteenth-century trades.

Come and join us for EAIA's Annual Meeting Wednesday, April 24th through Saturday, April 27th, 2024 at Colonial Williamsburg. A registration brochure will be mailed to your home soon, and you'll be able to register online at that same time. We look forward to seeing you there. For more information, go to www.eaia.us. 

The Irascible John Custis Left Colonial Williamsburg an Archeologic Treasure Trove

by Paul Van Pernis

I'll admit I knew nothing about John Custis IV (1678–1749) until a recent trip to Colonial Williamsburg to help plan the Early American Industries Association's 2024 Annual Meeting. He is historically linked to the founding of our nation as the first father-in-law to Martha Washington. Martha Dandridge married Daniel Parke Custis, the oldest son of John Custis, on May 15, 1750. Martha was 18 years old at the time and Charles was 38. The couple had four children, two of whom survived to adulthood. Daniel died in 1757, and the 26-year-old widow inherited a large estate from her husband. She eventually met and married George Washington in 1759. Martha was one of the richest widows in the colonies at the time of her husband's death and she brought all that wealth to her marriage to George Washington.

Her first husband's father was a real character! It turns out he was the wealthiest and certainly one of the more notorious characters in Williamsburg in the first half of the 18th century. Born into a wealthy Virginia slaveholding family, Custis was sent to London as a young man to learn all he could about the tobacco trade. He then returned to his grandfather's Arlington, Virginia, tobacco plantation in 1699 to manage the plantation and its large contingent of enslaved workers. He married Francis Parke in 1706, the year after he was elected to the Virginia General Assembly. His marriage to Miss Parke seems to have been more of a business arrangement than a marriage. They fought openly and it seems almost continual-



Portrait of John Custis IV of Williamsburg (1678–c.1749), American politician and a member of the Governor's Council in the British Colony of Virginia, by Charles Bridges (d.1747), 1725. Washington-Custis-Lee Collection, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia.

ly. According to one story, during an argument, Custis drove the carriage bearing him and his wife right into the Chesapeake Bay. The following exchange is said to have taken place: “Where are you going, Mr. Custis?” Frances asked, with the water swirling around them. “To hell, madam,” came the reply. “Drive on,”

said Frances, “any place is better than Arlington.” Their relationship was so contentious that in 1714 the couple drew up legal Articles of Agreement, which still survive. The Articles included a promise not to call each other “vile names or use any language of oath but behave themselves to each other as becomes a good husband and wife.”


Historical evidence suggests that he was a savvy businessman and made a fortune as a tobacco farmer. After he inherited land owned by his father, he controlled over 15,000 acres of land and owned close to 300 slaves. By 1717, he'd moved to Williamsburg, where he built a large house on Francis Street. He enjoyed reading, acquired prints and paintings, and created a large garden that encompassed nearly four acres featuring topiary, classical statues, and formal gravel walkways. Custis avidly collected, imported, traded, and cultivated plant specimens, especially flowers, trees, and shrubs. He entertained lavishly and often. He sired a son with one of his slaves and later in life took up with one of the women tavern keepers in Williamsburg.

The house and gardens are long gone and the four-acre site is now part of Colonial Williamsburg. Until recently, this rich archaeological site had not been thoroughly explored. But a recent donation to Colonial Williamsburg will allow full exploration of the site. Archaeological evaluation of this site will add significantly to the understanding of early American gardening, enslavement, colonial consum-

erism, and 18th century scientific thought. This interdisciplinary archaeological project hopes to uncover the remains of long-hidden landscapes at Custis Square, the ornamental grounds designed by Custis, and the places where enslaved men and women lived and worked on the property. John Custis wrote his will on November 14, 1749, and died on an unrecorded date not long thereafter, probably within a few days. In his will Custis required that “my Real Dead Body and not a Sham Coffin” be buried next to his grandfather’s grave at Arlington, his plantation on Virginia’s East-

ern Shore. Custis set aside £100 for a handsome tomb of the finest white marble and directed his son, on pain of being cut off with only one shilling, to place on it the infamous wording, “Yet lived but Seven years which was the Space of time he kept a Batchelors House at Arlington on the Eastern Shoar of Virginia. This Inscription put on this Stone by his own positive Orders.” Even in death, Custis had to insult his long deceased wife one more time.

A visit to this archaeological site and more information about the life and times of John Custis and his connection to the founding of

our country, is just one of the activities that will be part of the EAIA’s Annual Meeting in Williamsburg. Come and join us on April 24th through April 27th, 2024. The registration form will be available in late January 2024. You can find out more about the meeting at www.eaia.us. For more information on the Custis site at Colonial Williamsburg, go to <https://www.colonialwilliamsburg.org/learn/research-and-education/archaeology/custis-square-archaeology-project/>. 

The Restoration of Colonial Williamsburg

As we look forward to the 2024 EAIA Annual Meeting in Colonial Williamsburg, it’s worth remembering how the world’s largest living history museum came to be. William Archer Rutheford Goodwin was the rector of the Bruton’s Parish church in Williamsburg and the head of the department of biblical literature and religious studies at the College of William & Mary. He loved history and had a dream of returning the former colonial capitol to its 18th century glory. Williamsburg’s glory faded rather quickly after the Revolutionary War and was on the brink of sliding into oblivion. One author said of Williamsburg, “The town had desperately tried to keep up with the 20th century, and its antiquities seemed doomed to become parking lots and cheap eateries. In the oxcart days of Goodwin’s first residence, its rural funkiness had been at least interesting. But in the Model-T days, it had

degenerated to grease-stained filling stations slapped together with sheets of corrugated iron. Utility poles paraded down the middle of Duke of Gloucester Street, sprouting skeins of overhead wires. A tin garage near the Magazine bore a sign reflecting the early ‘20’s interest in King Tut: “TOOT-AN-CUM-IN’.”” He pursued his dream for many years and tried on several occasions to interest benefactors into undertaking the project. He tried to convince Henry Ford to take on the project, but Ford made it very clear he had no interest.

As luck would have it, Goodwin was sent to New York to give a speech in honor of the 150th anniversary of Phi Beta Kappa (the organization was founded at William & Mary in 1776). John D. Rockefeller Jr. just happened to

¹ History of the Restoration: My Dream and My Hope by Edward Parks, research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/Foundation/general/introhis.cfm

by Paul Van Pernis




G. A. R. Goodwin and John D. Rockefeller Jr. at Colonial Williamsburg.

be in the audience for that speech and he and Goodwin struck up a relationship. In March of 1926, Rockefeller, his wife, and five sons visited Williamsburg at the invitation of Goodwin.

Shortly thereafter, Rockefeller committed to the project and promised the financial support necessary to make Goodwin's dream a reality. In 1927, Rockefeller pledged five million dollars to the project. At the time of his death



John D. and Abby Alrich Rockefeller, the chief benefactors of Colonial Williamsburg.

provide the funding to preserve the many important architecture, artifacts and places that weave together our past. EAIA members are a part of that as we work to fulfill our mission to "preserve and present historic trades, crafts, and tools, and interpret their impact on our lives." 

in 1960 John D. Rockefeller Jr. had given the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation nearly fourteen times that. The Rockefeller family continues to provide significant ongoing support to Colonial Williamsburg.

We can all be thankful for the dreamers and the philanthropists who have the foresight and who

The Bray School at Colonial Williamsburg

by Paul Van Pernis

In 2020, members of Williamsburg's Grainger Department of Architectural Preservation and Research were studying a building on the campus of the College of William & Mary. The building housed the Department of Military Science, and researchers felt that within the structure of this remodeled building there might be an original 18th century

building. Speculation was that this building may have once housed the Bray School. With lots of sleuthing and confirmatory dendrochronology, the building was indeed determined to contain the original 18th century Bray School building. These research findings make this building the 89th original structure in Colonial Williamsburg. It turns out that this building was home to one of the earliest schools in America dedicated to the education of Black children

The Bray School took its name from the Reverend Thomas Bray, a British Anglican clergyman who started the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. After his death in 1730, an organization called the Associates of Dr. Bray committed to take on the mission of educating Black children in the American col-



An early image of the Bray School in Williamsburg, Virginia.

onies. Benjamin Franklin, who was a member of this group, suggested Williamsburg as a good site for a school. Funds were raised, and in 1760 the school was built. The Bray School educated both enslaved and free Black children for fourteen years (1760-1774). Bray School students were taught to read and spell, largely through lessons using the Bible and the Anglican cate-

chism. Girls also learned to sew and knit. In 1760, Williamsburg's population was somewhere between 1,200 and 1,400, half of whom were of African descent. The children attending the Bray school lived in a society dominated by human slavery. The majority of these children were owned by white men. Teaching some of their slaves to read would increase their usefulness and their value as a human enslaved commodity. While the founders of the Bray school may have been committed to bringing practical education and religious training to enslaved children, they also wanted to ensure that these children were taught to accept their slavery as a natural part of their existence.

A Williamsburg area widow named Ann Wager taught over 300 students during the life of the school. The few bits of historical infor-



Above left: The original Bray School building was found hidden beneath the additions to this building on the William & Mary campus.


Above right: The original Bray school building after “deconstruction” of the later additions.

mation about Ann Wager suggest that she was a competent and well-liked teacher who was committed to the care and education of the children in the school. Ann Wager died in 1774 and her death put an end to the Bray school in Williamsburg. Research into the life of Ann Wager is ongoing.

In 2022, the Department of Architectural Preservation and Research at Colonial Williamsburg worked with a contractor to remove the nineteenth and twentieth century additions. This work was done with extreme care to avoid any damage to the original building. In February of 2023, the Bray School building was moved to a site within the boundaries of Colonial Williamsburg and has been placed on a new foundation. The plan is to restore the building and hopefully open it to the public in the fall of 2024 so that it can help the public

better understand and learn the complicated story of race, religion, and education in Williamsburg and in Colonial America.

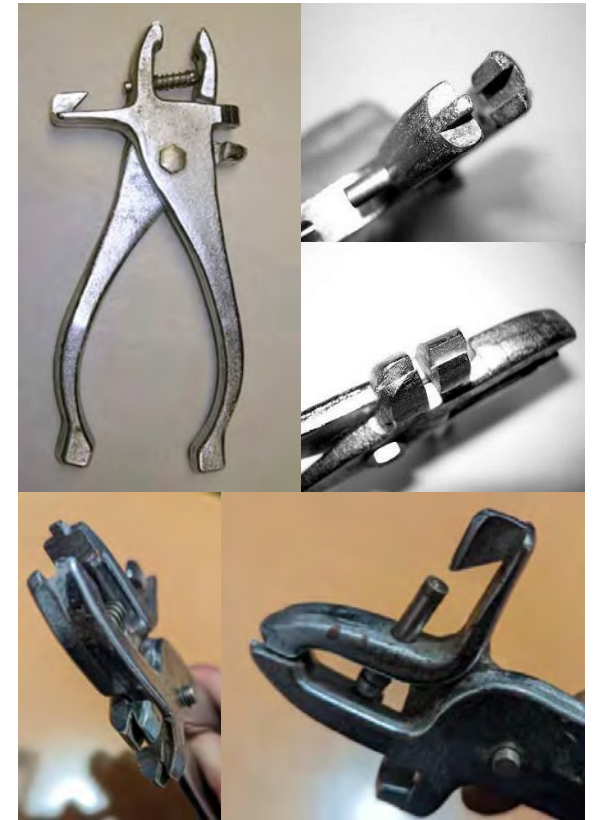
On Thursday morning, April 25th, at the EAIA Annual Meeting, we’ll spend time learning more about the Bray school, its architecture, history, and the restoration process. It’s just one of the many activities we have planned for our Annual Meeting in Williamsburg. Even if you’ve been to Williamsburg in the past, there are lots of new and exciting things to see in America’s Colonial capitol. Visiting the Bray school is just one small part of EAIA’s Annual Meeting. Come and join us!

If you’d like to learn more about the Bray school, go to: www.colonialwilliamsburg.org/learn/research-and-education/architectural-research/williamsburg-bray-school-initiative/ 

Whatsit?

This mystery tool, shown in the photos below, is 7 inches long. I have seen a few of these on the web, but they are all unidentified. One person said they found it in a box of old cobbler tools, but I don’t think it is for leather; maybe someone just happened to throw it in the box. I don’t own this item, I saw one at a tool meeting about ten years ago, then saw it again recently on eBay, and thought I would do some searching to see if I could dig up an answer for it.

Rob Hartmann
What’s It Chairman
Mid-West Tool Collectors Association



The Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg

by Paul Van Pernis

The Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg underwent significant renovation and expansion between 2017 and 2020. The donor-funded 41.7 million-dollar project broke ground in 2017 and added 65,000-square-feet to the facility's existing 100,000-square-feet, allowing for a 22% increase in exhibition space. If you haven't seen the museums since they reopened, you're in for a real treat. You'll have plenty of time to explore these two museums contained in the new building during the 2024 Early American Industries Associations Annual Meeting, which will take place April 24–27, 2024, in Colonial Williamsburg.

The DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum showcases the best in British and American fine and decorative arts from 1670–1840.

The museum was founded with donations from DeWitt Wallace (1889–1981) and his wife Lila Bell Acheson Wallace (1889–1984) who were co-founders of *Reader's Digest* magazine. A vast collection (8,000 objects) from 17th,




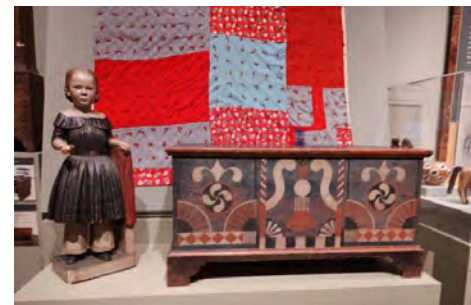
18th and early 19th century America are on display at the DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum. The museum features diverse collections including furniture, paintings, silver, numismatics, ceramics, tools, textiles, glass, maps, weapons, media, and other objects related to the founding of the United States. The museum is truly amazing!

The second museum is the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum which is the United States' first and the world's oldest continually operated museum dedicated to

the preservation, collection, and exhibition of American folk art. Abby Aldrich Rockefeller was an early collector of American folk art and was very influential in elevating folk art from an obscure art form to a highly regarded form of American art. Her collection of 424 pieces became the basis of a collection that now includes more than 7,000 folk art pieces dating from the 1720s to the present. The museum at Williams-

burg was funded through an endowment from her widower, John D. Rockefeller Jr, heir to the Standard Oil fortune and co-founder of Colonial Williamsburg. More information about the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg is available at www.colonialwilliamsburg.org.

You'll have plenty of time to spend time in both of these incredible museums during the EAIA's 2024 Annual Meeting. For more information about the meeting go to www.eaia.us. We sincerely hope you'll join us for what will be a great meeting! 



Candidates for the Board 2024

Preston Sweeney
Mechanicville, New York

I am from Mechanicville, New York, which is located about twenty minutes south of the historic city of Saratoga Springs. Growing up in a family of do-it-yourselfers, my father, a carpenter by trade, was always fixing or repairing something.

I spent many hours watching him tinker while holding the flashlight. My interest in antique tools started at a young age when my father gave me a Stanley No. 4 bench plane. That was the start to what has been an enjoyable time of collecting and researching early tools and the industries they were a part of.

I have a degree in Technical Education, formerly known as Industrial Arts, from the State University of New York at Oswego. I have been teaching now for the past nineteen years, covering topics from woodworking to robotics and tossing in a few historic industries from time to time. One of my interests is early trade education, which was one of my research topics that was published in the December 2019 issue of the *Chronicle*.

I am looking forward to being a member of the board for the EAIA and to offer continued support of the organization's mission and to assist with its continued growth into the future.



Jerry Davis
Lexington, Kentucky

My interest in historic tools and trades was sparked by watching episodes of the *Woodwright's Shop*. When the Internet came along I realized there were other people with similar interests and organizations devoted to sharing knowledge about these interests. This led me to join the EAIA over twenty years ago. I enjoy the articles in the *Chronicle*, the newsletter *Shavings* and other publications and perks I've gotten through my EAIA membership.

In 2010 I found out how much fun the annual meetings are when I attended the meeting in Mystic Seaport and have missed only one meeting since then. Visiting historic sites with knowledgeable and interesting people and renewing friendships are great experiences. Adding to my tool collection is also a compelling reason to attend meetings. While I collect and use tools, there are admittedly more in the collection than the toolbox.

I spent my professional career with the University of Georgia as a Research Statistician in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. After retiring, I moved to Lexington, Kentucky, and enjoy hiking, gardening, woodworking, and volunteering at several local nature preserves doing habitat restoration activities.

All my experiences with the EAIA have been positive and if I am elected to the board, I hope to make a positive contribution to the EAIA and its future.



ELECTION OF OFFICERS 2024

The officers of the EAIA are elected by the membership in attendance at the annual meeting which will be held on April 27, 2024, at Williamsburg, Virginia

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

BALLOT

The following two candidates have been placed in nomination by the Nominating Committee to fill two vacancies on the Board of Directors. No additional nominations were received from the membership. For information about these candidates, please refer to their written statements in this issue of *Shavings*.

Note: if both husband and wife are members, please mark the ballot twice or make a photocopy of this page and mail it to the address on the reverse side.

To vote, print this page, mark the ballot, and mail it to Jane Butler, EAIA Secretary, PO Box 487, Antrim, NH 03440. You may also email your vote to jane@icloud.com

Vote for two

____ Jerry Davis

____ Preston Sweeney

Williamsburg Conference Review: *I Made This*, Fall 2023

by Cheryl Fox

Last May, during the EAIA's 2023 Annual Meeting I picked up a copy of *The Cooking Gene* by James Beard Award-winning author Michael Twitty. This book is about his work as an historical re-enactor during cooking residences at Monticello, Colonial Williamsburg, and other historic sites. When I learned that he would be part of a conference in November at Colonial Williamsburg, I jumped at the chance to see Twitty in person.

On the second night of the conference, Twitty curated a dinner and made a presentation on the African influence on American cuisine. The black eye pea relish and sorghum butter, West African coconut-braised greens, and the Madeira-brined and slow-cooked pork shoulder were standouts for me.



Chef Michael Twitty

The conference coincided with the new exhibit, *I Made This: The Work of Black American Artists and Artisans*, at the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum. The exhibit includes thirty examples of pottery, furniture, textiles, decorative sculptures, quilts, tools, and metal objects that have been documented as crafted by African Americans. Included are works by Colonial potter Dave Drake, one of the very few enslaved craftsmen to sign and date his

work. He often inscribed verses on his pots; several began with the words, "I made this." This small number of items can only represent the countless works by African American artisans who remain anonymous, their skilled labor never acknowledged or documented.

The exhibit was developed by an exhibit planning committee comprised of museum curators and historic interpreters. They discussed their work, specifically the selection of items to be displayed, during a panel session later in the conference.

My first tour was the Peyton Randolph House. We entered from the yard, not the house's main entrance on Nicholson Street, which set the whole tour in context of the labor necessary to run the household and thereby facilitate the work of the patriots. The 27 enslaved members of the Randolph household were essential to the ability of Randolph and other founders to both run the Virginia colony and organize the Revolution. Historical interpreter Linwood Tyson presented an inventory of the Randolph estate to demonstrate that the labor force was listed as property that could be sold or bequeathed at any time.


Voices of their Hands, an historic trades walking tour, included several sites such as the tin smith shop. The guide noted that plantation owners invested in training the people they enslaved to work not only at their own properties, but also to enhance their value as rented laborers and as part of their estate.

During panel sessions, historical re-enactors described their work at the Colonial Williamsburg. Speaker Janice Canady's family has lived in the vicinity of the Colonial Williamsburg's 173-acre campus for generations and she and family members have worked in various shops and sites.

Adam Canady, a journeyman coach driver, joined other historic tradespeople in a panel to discuss their specific work at Williamsburg, including Undra Jeter, the Bill and Jean Lane Director of Coach and Livestock, Master Blacksmith Ken Schwartz, Journeyman Silversmith Preston Jones, Apprentice Carpenter Harold Caldwell, and Journeyman Carpenter Ayinde Martin.

Master Cabinetmaker Bill Pavlak and Angelika Kuettner, Associate Curator of Ceramics and Glass, gave outstanding presentations highlighting their specific craft areas.

Conference presentations included Tiffany Momon, Assistant Professor at Sewanee: The University of the South, D. Torren Gatson, Assistant Professor, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and a presentation by founding members of the Black Craftspeople Digital Archives.

It was a very rich experience for me, but I feel I have just scratched the surface of what Williamsburg has to offer. The conference was exceptionally well managed. I am looking forward to visiting again in May. 

Cheryl Fox is a member of the EAIA board of directors.

Training the Next Generation of Historic Trades Workers

Emma Lucier-Keller dons her safety glasses and ear protection before starting up the table saw. She and her fellow intern, Ben Lammers, are building wooden screen sashes for enslaved quarters at Hampton National Historic Site in Maryland. Prior to this, Emma had little experience with power tools. She is spending her summer with the National Park Service between school semesters pursuing her Master's Degree in Historic Preservation.

"Coming from a purely academic background, I've got the theoretic side of historic preservation, but I've never really got the hands-on experience that I've been able to get through this program. You don't have to have a lot of experience. It's about introducing people and getting people who are enthusiastic about preservation involved in this career field," Emma explained.

Over the summer of 2022, Emma and Ben participated in the Traditional Trades Advancement Program (TTAP). Founded in 2017, TTAP is one of the National Park Service's many youth programs geared at getting young people involved in public lands careers. TTAP focuses on the historic trades and gives the participants introductory, apprenticeship-style experience in the trades. They earn a living wage, and completing the program gives them an accelerated path to NPS careers.

Ben had been looking for an opportunity to learn hands-on preservation. "I really felt like TTAP was a fantastic experience as someone who wanted to get introduced to the preservation trades but didn't really know where to start. The opportunity to join the workforce at NPS and really get hands-on experience

from leading professionals is a great program. I've had great training, and I look forward to my future after TTAP."

Emma and Ben worked 40 hours a week under the supervision of Mark Wilson, a Preservationist at Fort McHenry National Monument & Historic Shrine and Hampton National Historic Site. In addition to carpentry, Mark led them through a variety of trades and projects that included re-pointing brick work, painting, replacing wood siding of buildings,



Emma & Ben at Fort McHenry

and glazing and installing windows.

"I had the privilege of working with two extraordinary individuals teaching them hands-on trades, masonry, carpentry, wood crafting, window installation, you name it. The amazing thing about TTAP is being able to teach others, the next generation, the hands-on side of preservation. A lot of preservation degrees out there will give you the administration side and the book knowledge. But it's very difficult to find a program, where you can come to a

National Park like this, where you have access to some of the beautiful treasures of our nation and be able to work with your hands on historic structures on a day-by-day basis."

To complement their hands-on training, Emma and Ben also received classes in entry-level safety and historic preservation fundamentals, earning professional certifications in OSHA-10 safety training and EPA Lead Renovation, Repair, and Painting certification. These certificates were not only crucial for the projects they completed at Fort McHenry but they will also make them desirable to future employers.

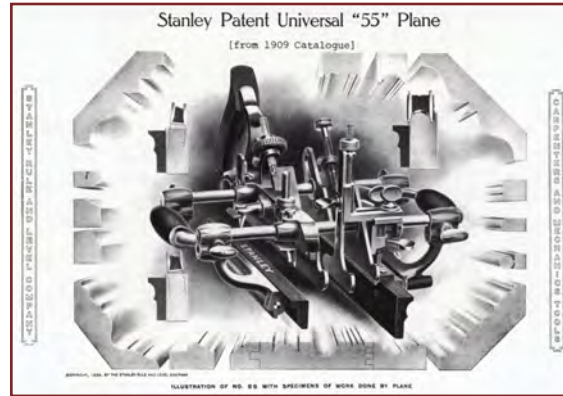
Just over 40% of the structures in the United State were built at least 50 years ago. These 39 million structures require specialized training to maintain and restore. Despite heritage trades workers earning 9% more on average than construction workers, professions in the historic trades face more severe labor shortages than their modern construction counterparts. In 2022, the Campaign for Historic Trades published an analysis of this disparity. The study correlated historic tax credit data with labor data, and estimated there is an annual average of over 10,000 job openings in historic trades. Because this baseline relies on historic tax credit data, it is underestimation of the actual labor need in the United States.

Programs like TTAP are effective ways to introduce and train new tradespeople to enter these high-demand careers. People like Emma and Ben are looking for opportunities to get into the trades, while employers are searching for qualified candidates. The Campaign for Historic Trades is helping to bridge these

gaps through the promotion and development of training programs like TTAP – one of our many methods to address the workforce shortage. The Campaign is a national workforce development initiative dedicated to expanding and strengthening careers in the historic trades. To learn more about how we work and how you can get involved, please visit historictrades.org.



*Natalie Henshaw, Director of Historic Trades
The Campaign for Historic Trades
Powered by Preservation Maryland*



We Welcome New Members

We wish to express our thanks and extend a warm welcome to these members who have joined since last fall. Your interest and support is very much appreciated.

Robert Arredondo, Weare, NH
Bill Beardsley, Melrose, MA
Justin Boesch, East Greenwich, RI
Edward Brown, State College, PA
Sam Cady, Colo, IA
Keith Clemens, Hanson, MA
Heath Dewey, Chico, CA
Neil English, Epsom, NH
Ron Gill, Indianapolis, IN
Peter Goutos, Saratoga Springs, NY
Asa Graham, New Market, TN
Oak Hallet, Richmond, CA
Michael Hollins, Freeland, MD
Sean Hollowood, Williamsburg, VA
Kevin Ireland, Elliot Lake, Ontario
Alexander Key, Sante Fe, NM
Daniell King, Newfane, NY
Mark Kimball, Cameron, NC
Dave Laun, Granby, CT
Dan Linski, Breinigsville, PA

Josiah Locher, Brunswick, ME
Paul Manley, Huntersville, NC
Richard Marks, Charleston, SC
James McDonald, Missoula, MT
Joseph Metzger III, Cambridge, NY
Benjamin Moore, Siasconset, MA
Tom Reagor, Lampe, MO
Timothy Riva, Jacksonville, IL
Pete Seroskie, Falls Church, VA
Jim Shadle, Fort Wayne, IN
Tyler Smith, Greenbelt, MD
Scott Stewart, West Chester, PA
Douglas Stinson, Reading, MA
AJ Thackrah, West Chester, PA
Mark Thomas, San Antonio, TX
Lee Westlund, Marengo, WI
Jennifer Wilkoski, Williamsburg, VA
Catherine Wolfe, Falls Village, CT
James Wright, Machesney Park, IL

Working with Exotic Wood



A deceased Jesuit woodworker friend of mine left some beautiful wood in his workshop: padauk (a Central African hardwood) and morado (a Bolivian hardwood, sometimes called Bolivian rosewood). I've inherited that wood and have made some octagonal paper weights of padauk and morado. Both woods are so beautiful I couldn't throw out any scrap cuttings—so I made other objects, like the one pictured here, using both woods. I'd be interested to hear from anyone else who has worked with either or both of these woods.

Ftr. Daniel Gatti
dgatti@fordham.edu

EAIA Regional Meeting
April 13, 2024, 8 am - 1 pm
American Precision
Museum -

Explore the story of American precision manufacturing

196 Main S. (U.S. Rt. 5)
 Windsor, Vermont



Please join us for a day of tailgating, sharing displays and WhatsIts, and exploring the Precision Museum. See their film "Igniting Innovation: The manufacturing revolution in Precision Valley," plus the current display on the Science and Technology of Measurement featuring tools that measure speed, power, time, distance, hardness and weight, the exhibit features Edison's Gage Blocks, a ballistic chronograph, and more. The permanent exhibit "Shaping America" starts in 1840's Windsor

where the American system of manufacturing was developed combining interchangeable parts with mechanized production. A docent will be available to discuss the exhibits.

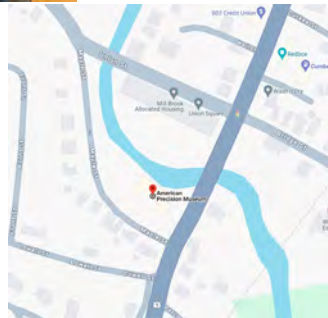


*Bring some
 WhatsIts
 to share*

R.s.v.p. to Jane Butler - janebutler@icloud.com by April 5 or 603-588-2603. Registration fee \$10 for the facility rental.

<https://americanprecision.org/>

Directions: From I-91 take Exit 8 to north on Rt. 5 into Windsor. The Museum is on the left just before the river, but it is a very sharp turn into the driveway. Better to cross the river, turn left on Union St. at the light, then left on Maple St. which is one way going south. Then you can easily enter the back parking area where we will be tailgating.



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 FREE FOR MUSEUM MEMBERS, AND CHILDREN AGED 5 AND UNDER

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Knowles jack plane
Patented August 24, 1827

Please take note!

*The deadline for the Fall
issue of Shavings is
April 7!*

Please submit articles, events, classified ads
and display ads to:

Dan Miller (shavings@eaia.us) or
John Verrill (eaia1933@verizon.net)
by this date!

Advertise in *Shavings*

ADVERTISING: Contact Editor Dan Miller, 315-777-7007; E-mail: dan@dragonflycanoe.com (Subject Line: *Shavings* Ad); or mail to EAIA, P.O. Box 524, Hebron, MD 21830.

Display Ads

Full Page (9.875" h x 7.5" w): \$175

Half Page (4.75" h x 7.5" w): \$110

Quarter Page (2.375" h x 7.5" w or 3.625" h x 5" w): \$60

Business Card (2" h x 3.5" w): \$35

20% discount on three or more display ads for members. Ads do not need to run consecutively to receive the discount. Display ads are published in full color in the electronic version of *Shavings*. Advertisers may also add links from the ad to Web pages or e-mail addresses.

Classified Ads

25 words or less—\$4.00; 15¢ per word thereafter. Box around the ad—35¢ (A word is anything with a space on both sides of it.) Please make checks payable to EAIA. (Non-Members add 20% per ad for either display or classified ad.)



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