ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING ISSUE

Also featuring more of YOUR Quarantine Projects!
Table of Contents

Early American Industries Association

Minutes of the Spring Board Meeting ........ 5

2019 EAIA Financial Statements ............ 8

2020 Board Election Results ............... 9

Apply Now for 2021 Research Grants ...... 8

Whatsits ........................................ 9

OSV Cabinetmaking Shop Update .......... 10

Quarantine Projects .......................... 11

Departments

President’s Message .......................... 3

From the Executive Director ................ 4

Welcome New Members ..................... 16

Front Cover: Bill Bilancio showed in-progress photos of his Hammacher Schlemmer bench restoration project. Here it is now finished and equipped with tools.
President’s Message

by Dana Shoaf

Annual Progress Report

The EAIA year has nearly always been defined by the time period between annual meetings. Annual reports are typically given at the membership meeting during the annual banquet. But this year has been like no other since 1943, when the events of World War II forced the meeting to be canceled.

Soon after the successful 2019 meeting in Lowell, Massachusetts our Annual Meeting committee began planning for the 2020 meeting to be held in Staunton, Virginia. During the summer of 2019, John Verrill and I visited Staunton several times to complete our plans. Hotel contracts were signed, and contracts with the Frontier Culture Museum, Monticello, and various food vendors were also inked. I was excited for the upcoming meeting. The Stonewall Jackson Hotel (now in the process of changing its name), and everyone we spoke with were gracious and anxious for our visit. And then the Pandemic hit.

Seventy people had registered by early March, but the news about the pandemic kept getting worse. We waited a bit to see if the pandemic would abate, but each day it became more clear that bringing our members together was going to be difficult, if not impossible, and the EAIA Executive Committee and Board made the very difficult decision to cancel the 2020 Annual Meeting and refund all registrations. We were able to postpone our 2020 plans until 2021, thus avoiding cancellation fees. The museums and other vendors also honored our wishes to postpone rather than cancel. We do hope and pray that we will be able to hold the 2021 meeting, but at this point no one knows. Our planning continues, however, as we don’t want to lose any momentum. Lost revenue due to the postponement cannot be recouped, and all of the costs already incurred cannot be replaced.

Some of the losses incurred by the cancellation were regained when we held an Online Silent Auction in June. First VP Sally Fishburn and Secretary Jane Butler did an amazing job of putting together the auction, and the many people who donated objects made it an exciting and worthwhile activity. Over 100 objects were auctioned, many of them made by the donors. We really have to send a great deal of thanks to all who donated and all who bid so generously!

Despite the challenges of this year, our organization is strong, and moving forward. Chronicle Editor Megan Fitzpatrick is doing a fantastic job keeping our renowned journal on schedule, she has made some attractive changes to the style of the publication, and has managed to make each issue full color. Each week Megan also publishes a blog post that contains an article from a past issue of the Chronicle. We have a lot to choose from, as it has been published continually since 1933! Visit our website to sign up to receive the blog via email, or watch our Facebook page for Chronicle Weekly! announcements each Thursday morning.

Chronicle Weekly! posts have also increased the likes on our Facebook page, and to help that along, John Verrill and I have also done some Facebook live posts as interviews with crafts-persons or tradespersons, as well as some videos of Whatsits. Social media has become an important part of marketing our mission. Our newsletter, Shavings, is now found exclusively online. It can be accessed through our website, and in keeping with the EAIA mission we are now including projects completed by our members to add another layer of interest and to have a place where you can share your projects with the entire membership.

Our endowment has grown incrementally this year because of the generous bequest of John & Janet Wells. John’s extensive and important tool collection was auctioned over a year-and-a-half period, the proceeds were split between the EAIA and the Mid-West Tool Collectors Association. Additionally, the Wells’s IRA was also left to the two organizations. The net bequest was a bit more than $500,000, putting the EAIA endowment at just over one million dollars. The endowment will allow the
From the Executive Director

by John Verrill

I just returned from lunch, which I ate in the parking lot of the Port of Salisbury, Maryland. From my car window I was able to see technology at work. Chesapeake ship building has two sections of a new river cruise boat, the American Harmony, sitting on the ways ready to be welded together, and a completed tugboat sits waiting to have its name painted on the stern. Salisbury has been home to shipyards for 150 years. Early workers used the vast resources of timber to construct large sailing vessels, and later, fishing boats for the menhaden fleets that operated in the Chesapeake Bay and the mid-Atlantic. Today all of the ships are constructed of steel plate imported from mills in the US and abroad. Upstream, a barge is loading corn and soybeans grown on the large farms of the Delmarva Peninsula to be shipped somewhere to provide food for families or livestock. Two other barges are unloading petroleum products, and the city fireboat sits ready in case of any emergencies. The view today is much like it was in early America, with many of the same technologies but different materials.

This issue of Shavings seeks to provide you with the organizational information we would have presented at the Annual Meeting in Staunton had it not been canceled. We considered having a virtual presentation but felt that using Shavings would be a better way to present the information to you.

We think you will agree that despite the pandemic, the EAIA is doing well financially. We did take quite a hit by the meeting cancellation, but we were able to make up some of the expenses that were incurred but not retrievable by having the online silent auction. Because of the hard work of our board of directors and you, we had over 100 items in the auction bringing in approximately $5,000. If you were one of the donors or bidders, we thank you graciously for your generosity!

We present the minutes of the board meeting, rather than just the minutes of the annual business meeting, as they are much more comprehensive and we hope will give you an honest view of the operations of the board that serves you.

Please note that over this year our endowment has grown because of the bequest and sales of the tool collection of John and Janet Wells. Our current account balance is $1,365,000, quite an impressive feat in this time of economic distress. The EAIA board has a formula to allow use of some of the growth of the endowment to help fund operations. This is certainly good news as we enter our 88th year as a membership organization.

Thank you to all who submitted ballots for the election of new board members. We welcome returning board members Donald Lee Griffin and Noel Poirier, and new members Cheryl Fox and Rodney Richer, Jr. Those who serve on our board dedicate time to be sure that the EAIA grows and prospers. New ideas are constantly being put forward and in the coming months we will have two exciting changes to announce!

Thank you for your membership. Renewals go out next month and we hope you will respond when you receive your renewal notice either by mail or email. You are the heart of EAIA!

EAIA to operate for the foreseeable future, ensuring that the study and dissemination of information on historic trades, crafts and tools is carried on. Withdrawals for operations are made only from the growth of the portfolio, leaving the principal untouched, a hallmark of sound financial management.

I’d like to close with a positive anecdote. Recently, I was perusing Facebook when I saw that a young (30-year-old) acquaintance of mine who had begun dabbling in woodworking had purchased a wooden smoothing plane at an antique shop. I reached out to him on Facebook Messenger to congratulate him on his good buy, and merely mentioned EAIA to him. To my happy surprise, he went right to our website and joined. I had him sent some back issues of the Chronicle to get him started, and was again happy to see him mention that on Facebook—and that he went out and bought some other tools based on the knowledge he had gained from the journal.

This illustrates a couple of points. Social media and the Internet played an important role in this interaction, and allowed me to personally reach out to someone. It never hurts to engage people when you have the chance to do so. Also, there are young people interested in what the EAIA offers, and I’m cooking up some ideas to make our organization attractive to them. Stay tuned. The Early American Industries Association is going to keep rolling.
Early American Industries Association
Minutes of the Spring Board Meeting, May 15, 2019, Lowell, MA

Directors Present: Denise Richer (President), Dana Shoaf (1st VP & Treasurer), Sally Fishburn (Secretary), John Verrill (Executive Director), Chris Bender, Jane Butler, Richard Cunningham, Donald Griffin, Pam Howard, Ron Howard, Gwen Lasswell, Louise Muse, Bill Rainford, Bob Roemer, Noel Foirier. Absent: Robin Lee. Guests: Pat Laswell, Paul Van Perniss.

Meeting Convened: 4:00 PM EDT.

Adoption of Agenda (Denise Richer): The motion to approve the agenda was moved, seconded, and approved.

Review & Approval of the Annual Board Meeting minutes from 11/4/2018 (Sally Fishburn): The motion to approve the minutes was moved, seconded, and approved.

Motion to Accept Officers reports (Denise Richer): The motion was moved, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Presidents Report (Denise Richer): Thank you all, board members, executive board, and ED for your work over the last two years. Even though we have been short a membership chair and 2nd VP, everyone has pitched in and we continue to grow. The Endowment Fund has grown due to two estate payments. The new interest groups have brought in some new energy and members. Hopefully more will form. The Chronicle has made a smooth transition to the new editor. Annual and regional meetings have been very successful.

Executive Director’s Report (John Verrill): I chose CharityProud for the new membership program and have started training in its use. Christina, our bookkeeper has also started training in the program. In addition to all of the membership related functions it will also allow us to have an online directory.

The Chronicle is almost back on schedule.

We have 112 new members with membership staying at the same 1,300 (households) mark. There are spikes in memberships around blog posts and in response to interesting information added to Facebook and Instagram.

More regional meetings would help with bringing in new members.

EAIA will receive $225,000.00 from the John Wells Estate in addition to the $100,000.00 already received from the sale of his tool collection.

Thanks to Paul Van Pernis and committee for planning the 2019 annual meeting. Plans are underway for the 2020 meeting in Staunton, VA, focused at the Frontier Culture Museum. We have committed to the 2021 meeting in Bath (Freeport), ME.

Discussions have been underway with the grants committee in regards to the use of grant money and its application for supporting interns or apprenticeships.

Treasurer’s Report (Dana Shoaf):
Income to date: $80,493.00
Expenses: $39,473.00
Endowment: $780,946.83

Total Assets, Liabilities, and Equity, 5/15/19: $930,072.69

Standing Committee Reports (Denise Richer): Denise made a motion to adopt the standing committee reports. It was moved, seconded, and approved.

Meetings and Programs:

2019 Annual Meeting – Lowell, MA (Paul van Pernis, Co-hosts: Bill and Alyssa Rainford)

- 137 people are registered for the meeting. 28 are new attendees.
- The goal attendance was 150. We are at a break-even point so we need to sell merchandise and have a good auction to make a profit.
- The hotel is the Westford Regency Inn and Conference Center, 219 Littleton Rd., Rt. 110, Westford, MA at a cost of $125/night.
- The meeting will include the usual tailgating, tool exchanges, displays, etc.

- The schedule includes Thursday spent at the Lowell National Historic Park which includes: Boott Mill, Mill Workers Tenements, the Boott Mill Museum, St. Anne’s Church, the Visitor Center, a boat tour of the canal system, the New England Quilt museum, and a tour of the Starrett Co.

Friday will sport lectures, demonstrations, and workshops at the hotel, with displays and the tool exchange on Saturday. Help would be great on Thursday night to set up for the Friday demonstrations.

- FIG and BIG will be actively involved in providing lectures, activities, and demonstrations.
- Display theme: Fiber Arts Tools and Machine Tools
- Andi Rebecki provided the Lowell quarters that everyone received in their information bags.
- The park service has been outstanding to work with. They have even brought out the trolleys and boats early for our meeting.
- Board members will need to help out by:
  - Greeting and interacting with attendees
  - Offering to drive people when we are carpooling
  - Volunteer as a runner for the Friday night auction (hosted by Great Plains Trading co.)
  - Help with registration
  - Bring a challenging “whatsit”
  - Bring a donation for the silent auction and help with the silent auction
  - Take pictures during the meeting
  - Be present and watch for things that can be done better in the future.
  - Donate to help pay for the ice cream social or a speaker
We need AV equipment – do you have a digital projector, projector stand, or screen that you could bring along?

John mentioned that there were several cancellations for the meeting and we have no official policy in regards to providing a refund for those who cancel. We should develop a cancellation policy.

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**2020 Annual Meeting (Dana Shoaf)**

The meeting will be held in Staunton, VA. Dana and John Verrill are working on it in an advisory role. John Verrill will be in charge of lining up the hotel. Tom and Mary Anne Graham are also working on it.

A contract has been signed with The Frontier Culture Museum to provide two days of programming.

They are considering a visit to Monticello for a day event.

The hotel is the Stonewall Jackson Hotel at $139/night.

There will be the usual Saturday programming and they are contacting Tom Barker who portrays Thomas Jefferson.

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**Publications (Louise Muse)**

Nothing new to report. The publications committee is thrilled with Megan’s work as the Chronicle editor. The Editorial Board will meet with Megan this weekend and get her on board with utilizing the Editorial Board.

Chronicle Editor’s Report—Megan has been reaching out in many directions to find authors and those queries are starting to bear fruit. The goal is to always be working on the content for the edition at least one edition ahead.

Using some legacy articles for content the Chronicles are almost back on schedule. The use of legacy articles will not be a regular occurrence.

The June issue has been designed in four colors and is ready to share with the Publications Committee at the Annual Meeting. There is an $850 per issue increase in printing costs for color.

Although Megan finds the current printer satisfactory she has solicited for competitive bids with other printers with little response.

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**Endowment Fund (Noel Poirier)**

The balance of the Endowment Fund remains strong with an ending balance as of March 31, 2019, of $84,731.67. This includes $100,000.00 from the John Wells estate. We will receive another $100,000.00 from tools sales in the next year.

We will withdraw $24,441.96 for the three quarterly withdrawals to pay operating expenses. (4% of total during 12 quarters ending 12/31/2018–$611,049.04)

Funds to be taken from the BB&T Money Market Account.

Paul suggested contacting a financial person for good investing options with the added money from the Wells estate.

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**Research Grants (Heidi Campbell Shoaf)**

The Research Grants Committee met and reviewed three applications this year. Two grants were awarded:

- The James M. Gaynor Memorial Grant to Christian Matthew South-Anderson, of Evansville, Indiana, for his research entitled 19th Century American Tool Makers: For the Saddle and Shoemakers Trade, an effort to document tools and tool manufacturers for this specialized trade. ($3,000.00)
- The Winthrop R. Carter Grant to Dr. Philip F. Reid, of Wilmington, North Carolina, for his research Sultana: An American Schooner, the Royal Navy and British American Shipwrighty, investigating American-based ship building during the eighteenth century. ($2,000.00)

The Committee extends deep appreciation to Carl Bopp who served many years on the Grants Committee providing thoughtful insight to every grant review. Carl resigned from the committee as of this year. Thank you Carl.

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**Awards (Dan Semel)**

No nominations have been received to date for the LTS award.

Tom Elliot will receive the Hatch Award.

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**Nominating (Pat Lasswell)**

The Nominating Committee has received the names of four individuals who have put their names forward as candidate to run for the four Board of Directors positions, which will be open as of our May 2019 Annual Meeting. These four candidates are Carol Culnan, Bob Roemer, Marc Sitkin, and Terry Wakeman.

Jane Butler has agreed to run for the open Secretary position and Donna Page has agreed to be considered for the board position which will open as a result.

The executive committee is searching for a new 2nd VP.

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**Website (Bill Rainford)**

Bill Rainford remains the Chair and only member of the committee.

Total views to the website are 248,000, up from 220,500 since May. The best day was 558 views. There were five published blog posts since May.

The website committee needs more material. This will be accomplished by getting more people involved with blogging and adding content. We now have a small core group who are trained and helping (John Verrill, Paul Van Pernis, Pat Lasswell, Gwenn Lasswell, Bill Rainford, Robert Roemer, and Jim Gillis)

Committees need to contact Bill with any changes to their website information with the exact text and placement with a link to the existing page. Changes can be emailed directly to Bill or submitted via the Website Committee feedback form.

Goals for the upcoming year: increase the number of folks creating content for the site and to increase awareness of the site and the number of people following the site through the various platforms.

Bill has suggested hiring someone to help migrate and maintain the website.

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**Fiber Interest Group (Pam Howard)**

The Fiber interest group now has 82 members on Facebook.

FIG will provide two hands on workshops at the 2019 Lowell Meeting: sampler/cross stitch and weaving with a Ridged Heddle Loom. Robin Lee produced the Ridged Heddle Looms for the workshop and Paul Van Pernis is making the stick shuttles.

Gwenn Lasswell is organizing a gathering for those who are interested in the group and want to learn more.
There will also be ongoing demonstrations for members to see how fiber arts are created “to bring people in a get them hooked on fiber.”

Robin Lee made 60 looms, leaving Pam with 30 extra. A discussion ensued as to whether we could sell them in the workshop and at the conference. If any remain afterwards then we will have to figure out what to do with them.

**Blacksmith Interest Group**

BIG will be participating in the workshops, lectures at the 2019 Annual Meeting with a lecture by Derek Heidemann, demonstration by Richard Wright and two workshops at the Roemer’s forge in Bolton, MA.

A fall 2019 regional meeting similar to last Julys is being planned.

Bob Roemer stressed the importance of the regional meetings.

**New Business**

After a discussion concerning the migration of the website to WordPress and website maintenance, a motion was made and approved to “increase the expenditure of $500–$1,000 to $2,500 to change the web hosting to WordPress. If there is an increase in the cost Bill Rainford can contact the Executive Committee for approval.”

Regarding the design and maintenance of the website the board agreed that the website could and should be improved. To that end a motion was made and approved that “John Verrill approach no less than two, no more than three firms to obtain costs and features they would incorporate into a redesigned website, to report at the fall meeting.”

Adding color to the *Chronicle* will increase the production cost by $3,400 annually. Dana moved “to print the *Chronicle* in color at $850/issue starting immediately.” The motion was seconded and passed.

Bob Roemer opened a discussion in regards to regional meetings and how to attract younger new members possibly through teaching. He asked “What is the value of membership and to whom? How can we turn the membership on its head to attract younger new members.”

He suggested contacting student members to ask what they would like to see in the organization.

He also noted that the younger generations are more interested in learning, not collecting. To that end he suggests that some of the regional meetings should be more hands on and has been working on a lesson plan.

How should we make EAIA more accessible to younger folks? The suggestion was made that we need a stronger Internet interface and should strengthen our social media presence.

We need to create a social media/membership committee. Bill has been doing some of this but he will need help.

The question was raised as to how we can fit into the Maker Movement and sell that. Do we need to hire a consultant to help create advertising and changes to attract the younger generations?

Finally, should we consider tweaking out mission statement to reflect these proposed changes?

John Verrill raised a question in regards to using grant money to pay a salary. The issue was raised when one of last year’s grants proposed to use the money to hire a translator to transcribe some records written in German. Previously grant money was restricted from being used to pay a salary. A motion was made and approved to change the P&P manual with the wording Paul Van Perniss provided in regards to use of grant money as follows:

> “Research grants from the Early American Industries Association shall not be used to pay for salaries in whole or in part. However, grant monies may be used to pay services contracted by the grantee for translation, copying, or fees for authorization to use images or copies of documents that are not available in the public domain but are held in museum or historical society collections.”

While at the Annual Meeting please use #EAIA2019 on any social media postings.

Where shall we go for the 2022 meeting and beyond? Some possibilities: Vermont, Cincinnati, Ohio, Buffalo, NY.

John G. Wells estate: The board supports the proposal made by Paul Van Perniss to use the interest and capital gains received from the John G. Wells Estate be used to fund a John G. and Janet K. Wells Research and Traditional Trades Grant. Paul’s full proposal is included in the Executive Directors report.

Bimonthly Conference Call meetings: Bob Roemer made a motion to “have bimonthly meetings on B. J. (phone conferences) with an agenda of action items.” The motion was moved and approved. This will keep the action items moving forward with regular check ins. The meetings are to happen on a Sunday evening set at the discretion of the secretary. The secretary will announce and set up the meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm.

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**What is the Chronicle Missing? YOU!**

Share your knowledge and research with all the members of the EAIA—write an article for the *Chronicle*!

The editor would be pleased to receive queries on any and all aspects of the tools, trades, and professions that helped to build this country, as well as scholarly articles on all aspects of daily life in the Colonial era through the early 20th century. (And don’t worry if you’re not an accomplished writer—that’s what editors are for.)

Please send any questions about writing for the *Chronicle*, and any queries, articles, theses or dissertations to: editor@eaiainfo.org
### Statement of Financial Position

**December 2019 & 2018**

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<td><strong>Current Assets:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</strong></td>
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Abbreviated Report Prepared by John H. Verrill

A copy of the full, audited report is available to any member upon request to the Treasurer, C/O EAIA, PO Box 524, Hebron, MD 21830-0524

Notes: From Audited Financial Statements—2019 Audit is not complete.
2020 Board Election Results

The election of directors for 2020 was held by votes submitted by ballot that was attached to the June issue of the Chronicle. We are pleased to announce that the following candidates were elected:

- Cheryl Fox  First Term
- Donald Lee Griffin, Sr  Second Term
- Noel Poirier  Second Term
- Rodney Richer, Jr  First Term

The full list of the directors of the EAIA is on page 2.

Correction

In the spring 2020, issue of Shavings, Laurent Torno was mistakenly listed as the author of Codes & Symbols of European Tools. We regret this error and recognize that Laurent Adamowicz is the author of this book. We send our apologies to Mr. Adamowicz for this editing error. —Ed

Apply Now for 2021 Research Grants

Since 1979, the Early American Industries Association has awarded research grants to individuals and institutions for projects that promote the purpose and mission of the EAIA.¹ The grants, which are awarded in amounts up to $3,000, may be used to supplement existing fellowships, scholarships, or other forms of aid. Up to three grants may be awarded each year.

In 2020, the James M. Gaynor Memorial Research Grant was awarded to Karl J. Schmidt of Esteline, South Dakota, for his project Thomas Passmore; Tinsmithing Entrepreneur in the Early Republic. 1793-1809.

We encourage you to apply if you are doing research on the tools, trades, and crafts that built America. The grant funds can be spent on travel, copying, library fees, and photography. A bonus to the grant recipient is that you get to publish an article in the Chronicle, our premier publication. Sharing your knowledge with other EAIA members helps us all to better understand our industrial history. Chronicle editor Megan Fitzpatrick is great to work with and will walk you painlessly through the publication process.

The application for the grants is available on the EAIA website (https://eaiainfo.org/research/research-grants/). The grant application and supplemental materials may be filled out and submitted online. The deadline for the 2021 EAIA Research Grants program is March 15, 2021. If further information is needed or there are questions about the program please call or email Executive Director John Verrill at executivedirector@EarlyAmericanIndustries.org or 703-967-9399.

¹ The Early American Industries Association, Inc. preserves and presents historic trades, crafts, and tools, and interprets their impact on our lives.

Whatsit

We have located two tools for which we hope someone can identify. One was located by Edna & Lee Gorzell and the other by Bob Thompson. The Gorzell tool measures 7 cm long and 5 cm wide. The pivoting leg is 4.5 cm long. The “finger holes” are 1.5 cm in diameter and are too small for any of my (Laude’s) fingers that are not too robust. The pivoting leg on the Gorzell tool now opens to about 3 cm but it is still pretty frozen. I believe the Thompson tool pivoting leg opens much farther but did not measure it.

The Gorzell tool is more roughly cast compared to the Thompson tool but the Thompson tool is thicker. The legs on the Gorzell tool are closely parallel while on the Thompson tool they are bowed at the pivot. The finger holes are a bit larger and the rivet is prominent on the Thompson tool. The Thompson tool has H579 stamped on it. Both tools are apparently for a similar purpose.

Wm. F. Laudenslayer, Jr. and Rogert H. Thompson, Lake City and Bieber, California, respectively.
In 2017, Old Sturbridge Village committed to revive the active and regular interpretation of cabinetmaking as a historic trade. As part of this effort, a new cabinetmaking shop on the Common will serve as a permanent space for demonstration and interpretation. Following delays related to COVID-19, we began site preparation and construction this July. We are on track to celebrate the opening of the new shop in early fall 2021.

General Updates:
- Our staff working group continues to meet biweekly to share project updates and troubleshoot. The team includes representatives of the Campus Operations, Curatorial, Development, Finance, Interpretation, and Marketing Departments.
- Site preparation and excavation began in July 2020 under the supervision of Brad King. Work on the modern foundation, including stone veneering, continued through September. Outside contractors performed much of the labor.
- Interpretation staff continued to prepare materials for the timber frame. Under Tom Kelleher’s direction, costumed staff interpret historic construction techniques every day that we are open to the public. The team anticipates that joinery on the shop frame will be complete by the end of October.
- Due to low water levels resulting from this year’s drought, we have been unable process lumber in our sawmill this summer and will purchase necessary materials from a nearby mill.
- The Marketing Department has developed a communications plan for the new shop, and for Village cabinetmaking in general, through the end of 2021. The overall goal of the plan is to raise awareness and build excitement for the new Cabinetmaking Shop and woodworking at the Village.

Construction Timeline:
- Interpretation staff will complete preparation of timbers, studs, and joists for the first floor frame by the end of October.
- In November, the first floor platform (frame and decking) will be tarped for the winter.
- In early spring 2021, Interpretation staff will raise the first floor frame.
- Following completion of the first floor, Campus Operations will complete the shop roof, complete wall insulation and exterior treatments, and finish exterior painting and landscaping.
- Interpretation staff will complete the interior outfitting of the shop by shifting tools and other materials from the interim cabinet shop and installing benches and other tools donated to the new shop.
- Cabinetmaking activities will have fully shifted to the new cabinet shop by early fall 2021.
**Quarantine Projects**

*Re-purposing an old handsaw handle.*  
*Marc Sitkin, Harwich, MA*

One of the more interesting projects I made this summer was a cane. I took the handle off an old compass saw, removed the broken blade, and cut a $\frac{1}{4}$" mortise into it.

I selected a nice piece of African mahogany, and cut it to the maximum length my lathe could take. At 34”, it was just long enough for its intended use. With the tailstock of the lathe hanging off the bed, I had just enough metal to securely mount the blank and start turning.

Turning the blank became a two handed operation. One hand held the roughing gouge, and one hand rode behind the now rounded blank to support the work behind the tool to cut down on vibration. While mounted, I applied several coats of shellac with a few drops of boiled linseed oil, followed by polishing compound and wax for a smooth satin finish.

Once the turning was done, I removed it from the lathe, carefully cut and fitted a tenon to the mortise cut into the handle, and glued the assembl-ibly up. Some hand work with rasps, files and sandpaper finished the woodworking portion of the project. A fresh coat of garnet shellac on the handle blended it in with the shaft.

There was a metal wingnut and stud that I re-attached to the handle to finish the assembly. It needed a trip to the wire wheel to add a little shine, and the threads in the wingnut needed to be chased with a tap to allow it to smoothly work with the stud.

All in all, a challenging little project with some unexpected complexity!

*Tom Scarsella, Seabrook, Texas*

This photo shows an assortment of small tools I’ve made over the years. Bow saws are probably my signature pieces as it were; I make them on a regular basis. The small rounding plane at the upper right is my attempt at one of the Vi-mose planes discussed in the *Chronicle* by Der-ek Long several years ago. The chisel and awl were made as demonstration pieces with the Houston Area Blacksmiths Association.

I retired early, not by choice. Being happy with my hobbies has been a godsend.

*Pre-Civil War Leatherworking Tools*  
*Norman Walzer, DeKalb, Illinois*

Working with leather tools began in grade school when my dad taught me to mend and repair harnesses for our 10- and 12-pony hitches. Those experiences led to carving and tooling leather and launched an interest in historical shoe and boot-making. In the 1970s,
Lincoln’s New Salem Historic Site in Petersburg, Illinois, asked for guidance in recreating the Lukins-Ferguson cobbler shop, which caused Dona, my wife who does historic knitting, weaving, spinning, and sock-making, and me to volunteer for 35-plus years interpreting and helping to train other volunteers. Those efforts involved training events at Old Sturbridge Village and Colonial Williamsburg, and participation in the Honourable Coordwainer’s Company, a historic shoe- and bootmakers Guild, which is a great source of information on historic footwear.

Interest in using historically accurate patterns, methods, and tools resulted in a collection of more than 100 documented pre-Civil War leather tools by makers such as W. Chase, J. English, DS English, AB Seymour, English & Huber Sheffield Works, Dodds, and others. As interests grew, so did a collection of Gomph saddle-and harness-making tools now approaching 100 years of age. Finding and trading tools remains a fun experience and I continue to look for period items.

Fascination with making historically accurate items using historic tools also led to a collection of patterns, books, recipes for leather dressings, and other materials. It is clearly a hobby that got out of hand but has brought significant interest not only to us but also to places where we demonstrate and help younger generations understand past tools and techniques.

Shoemaking tools and bench. These were largely made before the Civil War.

Shoemaking tools and bench. These were largely made before the Civil War.

Tools by Pre-Civil War makers.

Shoes and boots based on pre-Civil War patterns. In the background are modern Gomph tools (1866 to early 1920s).

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Megan Fitzpatrick, Cincinnati, Ohio

All my woodworking classes were canceled due to COVID-19, which as a freelance teacher and editor was pretty scary. Woodworking classes are about one-third of my income. To fill the time and to help cushion the financial blow, I built (and sold - thankfully!) a “fancy” English tool chest out of the usual sugar pine, but with birds-eye maple tills, tiger maple interior fittings and forged hardware (the custom chest lifts were supplied by the buyer, and were made by John Switzer/Black Bear Forge).

Patrick Leach, Ashby, Massachusetts

Here are two images of what my son and I have been working while the virus has panicked America.

It’s a 1920s-style gas station we’ve built onto our barn. We’ve finally had time to put in the flooring and the shelving as well as get our STANDARD sign upright. There’s lots more finish work ahead of us.
Gas, oil, and grease are in our blood—my great-great grandfather worked for Standard Oil of Indiana, and his son, my great-great uncle, had a Monarca gas station somewhere near Odell, Illinois. I’m still trying to pinpoint where it was, but it’s difficult as the Monarca brand was regional and only in business for about 25 years.

*Tom Elliott, Westbrook, Connecticut*

On August 4, Hurricane Isaias paid my farm a visit. It took a 24-inch diameter branch of a 48-inch maple and dropped it across my four-bay utility shed.

In 1984, I had deconstructed this post-and-beam three-sided shed, which was adjacent to an 18th-century general stone in the Merrimack River area between Massachusetts and New Hampshire, and re-erected it on my farm. The shed was originally used to house wagons for delivery of ice in the summer and coal in the winter.

The shed is of post-and-beam design with bents and purlins. The force of the impact drove one of the supporting 6×8 posts 12 inches into the ground and another 8 inches. The bents and side walls survived but were heavily damaged. I was able to work free my tractor and mower without damage.

During the last month I have been able to rebuild the frame and sheathing. (figure 3 and 4) The wood shingles will have to wait until next spring.

*I started this long chest and a companion tall chest for my daughter when she was a high school senior.*

I got embroiled in tool trading and she graduated from college before I finished the two chests! I finished them this year, before she became a senior citizen!

These are made of spalted maple and narra woods. All hand-cut dovetails, shaved curved edges, and hand-chopped mortises.

*John Davis, Manassas, Virginia*

*Bill Bilancio, Leesburg, Florida*

I have completed the Hammacher Schlemmer workbench. I was happy to see the unfinished project in the Summer Shavings and have finished the top lid and attached the tool-holding hardware. If you are a member of the Face Book group User-Built and Vintage Tool Chests, I posted many photos of the restoration process and completed bench. (See photo on front cover).
Dogan Basak, Istanbul, Turkey

I am a Turkish physician and a member of your society since 2006. I collect plumb bobs and plumb levels, and anything which contains them as a symbol and doing a kind of “research” on this thematic. These are some pictures from my office. Thank you for letting me share them.

Irwin Sitkin, Chatham, Massachusetts

Here are some permanent flowers I make using old outdoor water handles and copper tubing. The photo shows some handles, the tubing cut to length, a tube cutter, and a flaring tool, along with some of the finished flowers painted with primary colors from Rustoleum.
We Welcome New Members

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

Scott Bach, 7555 Walnut St, Kansas City, MO 64114
Doug Baltzer, 1878 Highway K-15, Lehigh, KS 67073
Michelle Bar-Evan, 501 Main St, Boulder, CO 80302
Mr. Brian C. Derby 22804 Gravel Hill Road, Georgetown, DE 19947
Jarrell Dowell, 1692 Timberwolf Trail, Stephenville, TX 76401
Daniel Ellsworth, 1424 Linden Lake Rd, Fort Collins, CO 80524
Kim Fleagle, 3013 Old Rte 22, Hamburg, PA, 19526
Mr. Rob Gorrell, 508 2nd Street, Marietta, OH 45750
Michael Hansen, 8063 Jonson Drive, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068
Tore Garder Larsen, Ellingstranda 4A, Saltnes
Michael McAllister, 124 Mount Sinai Coram Rd., Coram, NY 11727
Mr. William McAuley, PO Box 250, Francestown, NH 03043
Steve McCaughrean 414 S Madison St, Woodstock, IL 60098
Mark Neitenbach 3000 Pheasant Run, Berthoud, CO 80513
David Niescior 1046 Red Oak Dr, Cherry Hill NJ 08003
Greg Roughton, 30 West Ln, Winooski, VT 05404

Working Wood in the 18th Century Symposium

The EAIA will be a sponsor of the Working Wood in the 18th Century symposium being presented by Colonial Williamsburg for the third year. This online conference will take place January 14–17, 2021. The EAIA is sponsoring presentations by Christopher Schwartz.

Register early, as this is a popular and very interesting symposium. Learn more at https://www.colonialwilliamsburg.org/learn/on-site-opportunities/educational-conferences-forums-symposiums/working-wood-18th-century/

A rapt audience watches master cabinetmaker Bill Pavlak at the 2019 Working Wood in the 18th Century symposium. This year’s symposium will be held online—details are in the article to the left. Photo by John Verrill.

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Please submit articles, events, classified ads and display ads to:
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or
John Verrill (executivedirector@earlyamericanindustries.org)
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