

THE EASTFIELD RECORD



VOL. I No. 2

SUMMER 2019

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

EASTFIELD'S 2019 WORKSHOPS OFFER EDUCATIONAL VARIETY

What do professional restorationists, police officers, veterinarians, teachers, museum directors, doctors, and working tradespeople have in common? They are just some of the professions represented by the people who have registered for Historic Eastfield Foundation workshops and seminars this summer. Attendees from all walks of life take these HEF classes for fun, education, and to learn or enhance skills. Some of our workshops are full, but you can still register for most of the sessions and add your profession to the list of people excited for an educational and fun Eastfield experience. The thumbnail descriptions of our classes below illustrate their variety, and to read full descriptions of the workshops and their instructors, and to register, visit historiceastfield.org.



LEFT: HEF VICE PRESIDENT NIEL DE MARINO TEACHES THE GEORGIAN DINNER TABLE CLASS. RIGHT: A HANDSOME PRESS READY FOR THE PRINTING WORKSHOP.

1. FROM SAILING SHIPS TO PRIVY PITS: THE WORLD OF CERAMICS IN EARLY AMERICA
*June 21-23 Fee: \$300.00
No Class Size Limit*

This year's "Dish Camp" turns its attention to the extensive networks of the Atlantic World. Drawing from archival, archaeological and experimental breakthroughs, eight different scholars will explore the influences that drove ceramic production abroad and locally.

2. INTRODUCTION TO MOLDING HANDPLANES
*June 26-28 (3 days) Fee \$375.00
Limit: 8 students*

Students will become familiar with complex molding planes and learn how their intricate blade shapes changed over the 18th and early 19th centuries.

3. BLACKSMITHING
*June 28-30 (3 days) Fee: \$375.00
Limit 6 students*

This course is designed to familiarize the student with the basic tools and processes of blacksmithing, such as welding, brazing, and the heat treating of carbon steel for edged tools.

4. EARLY AMERICAN CURRENCY
*July 22-23 (2 days) Fee \$300.00
No Class Size Limit*

Covering the period of 1502 to the early 19th century, students will have the opportunity to examine actual coins and paper money used in early America, and to understand their values. A highlight of the program will be a hands-on demonstration of a reproduction coin press, and participants will get to make their own reproduction coins.

5. TRADITIONAL PLASTERING
*July 29-31 (3 days) Fee \$375.00
Limit 8 students*

Students will mix and apply the traditional three-coat plaster method for wood lath interior and masonry exterior walls.

6. ADVANCED BLACKSMITHING: MAKE A THUMB LATCH
*August 5-7 (3 days) Fee \$375.00
Limit 5 students*

This intermediate to advanced blacksmithing course is designed to teach students the traditional methods for making an 18th-century-style knocker latch and an 18th-century Suffolk-style thumb latch.

7. WEARING TEXTILES IN AMERICA: 1770-1870
*August 9-10 (2 days) Fee: \$300.00
No Class Size Limit*

Five different scholars will discuss the characteristics and popularity of various textiles used for clothing worn during the United States' first 100 years during this two-day workshop. A field trip to the Albany Institute of History and Art provides a behind the scenes tour of the new exhibition "The Schuyler Sisters and Their Circle."

8. TIN I: BEGINNING TINSMITHING
*August 12-16 (5 days) Fee \$460.00
Limit 8 students*

This class provides a basic working knowledge of late 18th and early 19th century tinning tools, construction techniques and pattern layout, and students construct nine reproduction items based on traditional designs, using period tools & methods.

Continued on page 2



A FIERY LESSON

As I watched the news footage of the horrible conflagration consuming the massive roof of Notre Dame Cathedral, my heart cried out as that impressive example of the medieval timber framers' art turned into charred wood and ashes. That roof was some 800 years old and an entire forest of white oak, numbering perhaps over 1,300 trees, had been processed into making its supporting frame. And the wood from those trees was even older, given that most of them

probably sprouted during the reign of Charlemagne.

Now as the French ponder how to replace the cathedral's roof, the thought of doing a new frame out of wood seems pretty remote. There are no longer any great mature forests of white oak, and while the timber framing craft is alive and well in France, would it be

possible to raise an army of skilled timber framers to do the construction? Indeed many early trades have vanished or are vanishing. The British website, "The HCA Red List of Endangered Crafts" chronicles the precarious state of the ancient skills that we at Eastfield almost take for granted.

Yet we do not take them for granted because we know how much practice and sweat goes into mastering these skills. When Don Carpentier started his first building back in the early 70's, there weren't many folks around who knew much about timber framing. Now because of programs like those at Eastfield and Boston's North Bennet Street School, the number of people learning and practicing the early trades is blossoming. While we may not be able to raise that army of timber framers to replace the Notre Dame roof, we certainly will continue to do our share in keeping early crafts like the art of timber framing alive.

Peter R. W. Schaaphok
President, Historic Eastfield Foundation



Class Schedules, continued from page 1

9. TIN II: ADVANCED TINSMITHING
August 12-16 (5 days) Fee: \$480.00
Limit 4 students

Designed for those who already have experience and a good basic knowledge of construction methods as well as the use of standard tin tools.

10. A FIRST COURSE IN HEARTHCOOKING
August 13-15 (3 days) Fee: \$350.00
Limit 8 students

Participants prepare ordinary meals from the late 18th and early 19th centuries on the wood-fired hearth. All ingredients are supplied.

11. EARLY AMERICAN PRINTING
August 13-15 (3 days) Fee: \$375.00
Limit 4 students

Participants will learn both broadside and simple book formats of the

printing process on Eastfield's original iron handpresses.

12. TIN III: 18TH-19TH CENTURY TINSMITHING
August 19-23 (5 days) Fee: \$480.00
Limit 4 students

Designed for those who would like to produce tinware items in the 18th-century manner both civilian and military, using only hand tools and methods.

13. AT THE GEORGIAN DINNER TABLE
October 18-20 (3 days) Fee: \$350.00
Limit 6 students

Students will utilize the hearth, brick wall oven and bake kettles to prepare various meat and vegetable dishes, both sweet and savory puddings and pies, soups, and various baked goods.

GETTING IT DONE

On Saturday, May 10, the Historic Eastfield Foundation hosted a very successful workday. With Billy McMillen as mastermind, six excellent teams worked with great efficiency to clean the village and perform repairs to get the buildings ready for the summer workshop season. Foundation board member Greg Joly shared the following report of the day's accomplishments:

- » Peter Forward and Mike Wilson paneled over openings in the upstairs ceiling of the Yellow Tavern after incorrect dormers were removed years ago.
- » Bob Zoni and Bob Roemer affixed the lead water table to both the north and south sills of the church. (See P. 3)
- » Sean and Grayson Sweeney, John and Liam McMillen, and Nick and Paul Lawler moved pine planks from the field's edge to the barn so the boards could be made ready for various upcoming projects.
- » Alice Roemer and Chris Buhinger scraped peeling paint from both front entries of the Briggs Tavern.
- » Brian Chappel wielded his chainsaw to clear undergrowth for a much better view of the picturesque pond from the Briggs Tavern back porch.
- » Brian, Paul, Nick, Ian Stewart and Sarah, and Jeremiah Rusconi hauled truckloads of brush to Eastfield's burn pile, heaping it in readiness for our November 2 Guy Fawkes' Day conflagration.
- » HEF board members Niel De Marino, Judy McMillen, and Ingrid Schaaphok cleansed the Briggs Tavern of its winter dishevelment.



Historic Eastfield Foundation Board

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The Magnificent Meeting House

When you pull in off of Mud Pond Road and park, the 50-feet-tall belfry of the 1836 First Universalist Church pokes above the trees just enough to entice visitors to walk back the lane, pass through the gap in the stone fence and enter the village. Eastfield Village founder Don Carpentier discovered the meetinghouse abandoned and rotting in Duanesburg, N.Y., about 38 miles west of Eastfield, and purchased it in 1982. Over the next few years, with the skilled help of HEF board member Billy McMillen, the building was disassembled and trucked in pieces to Eastfield, where it was rebuilt, timber by timber, peg by peg, and nail by nail on a slight rise of ground at the east end of the village.

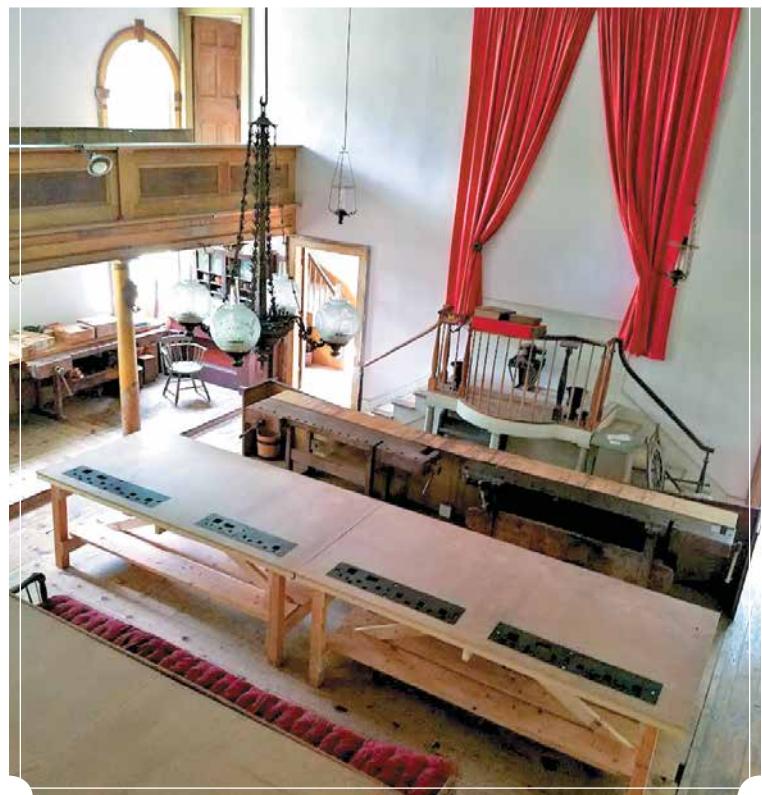
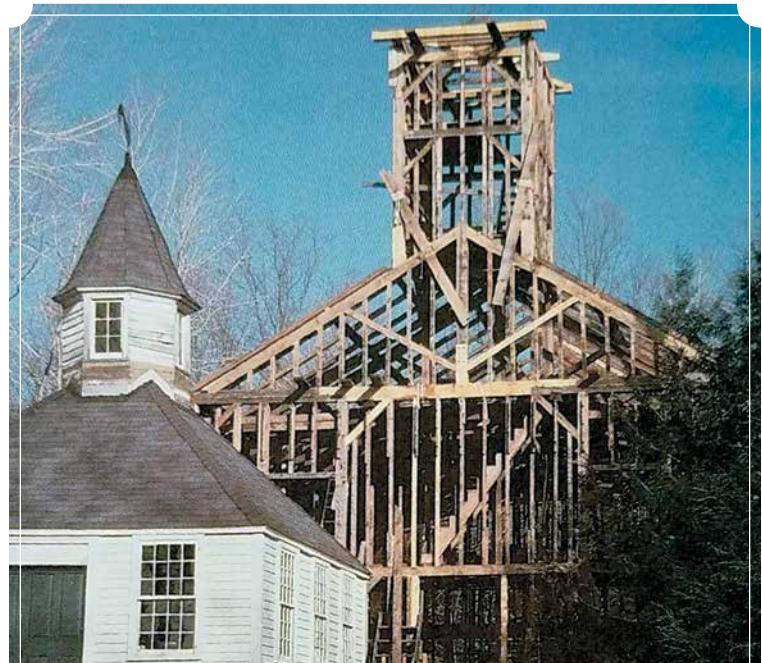
Tombstones in front of the church add solemnity to the building. The stones are from real people whose graves had been moved, and the old stones used for paving sidewalks. Carpentier salvaged them for Eastfield. There is a new stone for Foster Trainer, a restorationist and early friend of Eastfield who enjoyed watching the church's restoration. Trainer collected shoemaking tools, and donated his collection to Eastfield when he died. His wife had the hand-carved stone placed at the meetinghouse in his honor.

Since its reassembly, the welcoming white church with the towering windows has dominated Eastfield's skyline and drawn the admiring gaze of countless workshop attendees and visitors. And work has continued on the beloved building. Recently, trees were cleared from near the church, some clapboards were replaced, and lead sheathing was applied to the water table to help shed moisture away from the loose-laid stone foundation.

The continuing restoration is essential for a structure that is a core element of Eastfield's mission. Its spacious, open interior has been the location of hundreds of seminars and workshops over the years, as the pews in this versatile space can be covered with workbenches or left as seats for absorbing seminar lectures.

A portion of Eastfield's large architectural study collection is also housed in the church, and the balcony not only provides more seating, but it also holds a number of interesting fan lights that guests are encouraged to examine.

The preacher's sermons that resounded from the pulpit of the First Universalist Church have been replaced with the orations of world renowned tradespeople and scholars, and eager workshop attendees now fill the pews, another example of how Eastfield Village offers an unmatched experience for those who take its classes. You learn in a pristine setting like the church, with no ropes or glassed-off exhibits, spending quality time with people that share the same interests.



TOP TO BOTTOM: THE NEW LEAD SILL WILL PROTECT THE MEETINGHOUSE'S FOUNDATION; THE BUILDING UNDER RECONSTRUCTION, THE OTHER STRUCTURE IS LONG GONE; THE SPACIOUS INTERIOR SET UP FOR A TINSMITHING CLASS.



Save Thee Dates!

A Tribute to Eastfield's Beginning

FOUNDER'S DAY | SEPTEMBER 21, 2019

◀ Founder's Day, an important Historic Eastfield Foundation's fundraiser, is shaping up to be another memorable late-summer event at Eastfield. Various artisans have been invited and the beautiful voices of the Sacred Harp Shape Note Singers will once again waft through the village. Bob Olsen will be also there, prepared to enchant and entertain with his magic and hot air balloons.

The Briggs Tavern will provide a forum for tavernkeeper extraordinaire Phil Dunning (left) to dispense humor and 18th-century libations, HEF vice-president and 18th-century culinary expert Niel De Marino will once again draw large crowds to the tavern to enjoy his delicious food and non-alcoholic drink.

And this year, there may be a surprise or two you won't want to miss. Founder's Day is always a great time. If it rains, all the events can be held indoors, if the weather is more forgiving, it's wonderful to wander the grounds. In any type of weather, it's unforgettable.



A Mighty Bonfire!

GUY FAWKES DAY | NOVEMBER 2, 2019

◀ In 1605, Guy Fawkes got caught trying to blow up England's House of Lords, part of a larger plot to assassinate King James I. Fawkes' capture foiled the scheme against the King, and celebratory bonfires were lit throughout London. The tradition continued in the New World, and Don Carpentier and other Revolutionary War reenactors enjoyed the tale so much that event was celebrated at Eastfield, with some of the first bonfires being held inside the village.

Over time, the tradition waned, but more recently the Historic Eastfield Foundation has revived the combustible holiday, and Guy Fawkes day will be Eastfield's major fundraiser. Imagine all the fireplaces ablaze in the Briggs Tavern while you enjoy a hearty hearth-cooked tavern meal. Mark Turdo, curator at Philadelphia's Museum of the American Revolution will deliver a lecture about hard cider, a staple drink of early America. Samples will be offered!

After all that, guests will go out in the crisp November air to celebrate Fawkes' capture with a huge bonfire as you watch Eastfield's brush pile (left) go up in flames, along with an effigy of Guy Fawkes himself! Plan to be at Eastfield for this unique, inflammatory event.

THE MISSION OF THE HISTORIC EASTFIELD FOUNDATION



- 1. To Train Men and Women in a Range of Early American Trades and Historic Preservation Skills.**
- 2. To Encourage Craftpersons and Preservationists in Their Efforts to Save the Technology of the Past.**
- 3. To Produce Publications, Specifically a Periodical and Single-Subject Publications, and Prescriptive Audio-Video Materials, and Symposia for Both the General Public and a Professional Audience.**
- 4. To Develop a Collection and Library Appropriate to Early Arts and Trades and Historic Preservation.**
- 5. To Develop a Long-Term Plan for Continuing the Goals and Purposes of the Foundation.**
- 6. To Maintain Facilities Necessary to Further the Foundation's Educational Objectives.**

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Eastfield Village is private property and not open to the general public except during workshops, special events, or by appointment.

