

From the Queen

Dear Docents,

Our February meeting was outstanding. The hostesses did a superb job of coordinating the foods with the speaker's presentation. Valerie came dressed for the event. The notices and photograph set a somber mood. Several guests shared information from their perspectives. I want to thank the hostesses, the speaker, and Wanda, program chairman, for a great morning.

I look forward to seeing all of you at our March/April meeting. Please invite a neighbor or friend to attend with you. We will welcome them as guests, but we hope they may want to join us. There will be a training class offered in late summer for those who would like to become MHA docents. We want to expand our service and expand our ranks this year. There are numerous interesting projects on the calendar. Every docent's effort is needed. Come and learn. Then join us as we share with the community what we have learned.

Best regards,

Barbara

Program Information

Dr. Tom Hanchett



Wanda Hubicki

Refreshments 9:30 am — Program 10:00 am — Meeting 11:00 am

March - Charlotte: Growth of a New South City

On Tuesday, March 1, Dr. Tom Hanchett, historian of the Levine Museum of the New South, will speak to us about the development of Charlotte from a sleepy backcountry settlement to the national banking center it is today. Dr. Hanchett is author of the book *Sorting Out the New South City: Race, Class, and Urban Development in Charlotte, 1875-1975*. Please note that Dr. Hanchett will speak at 10:00 AM. Our business meeting will follow.

Turning the House Upside Down

Spring Cleaning at Historic Rosedale Plantation

Each spring and fall in antebellum America, the house was turned upside down in the name of cleanliness. Visit the plantation during this time of renewal when chimneys were swept, windows washed, wallpaper dusted, paint cleaned, walls whitewashed, closets organized, carpets removed, draperies beat and floors scoured.

April 17, 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm

Adults — \$5.00

Seniors and Students — \$4.00

Under 8 — Free when accompanied by parent or guardian

Groups of 12 or more — \$4.00 (Group reservations required)



Summer Institute on Early Southern History and Decorative Arts

The MESDA/UNCG Summer Institute on Early Southern History & Decorative Arts is a seminar for graduate students and museum professionals held yearly at the museum in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Held in conjunction with the Public History Program of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, the course is designed for students seeking graduate credit in history or interior design, and museum personnel and other professionals interested in American history and material culture.

The Institute's purpose is to give students the opportunity to study the decorative arts of the early South within an historical context. Enrollment is limited. The Institute will be centered at MESDA, in Winston-Salem, N.C.



The curriculum for the Institute includes lectures, discussions, workshops, museum studies, research projects, and field trips. Faculty includes staff members from MESDA, Old Salem, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and several guest lecturers. Three hours of graduate credit in history or interior design are awarded.

Graduate students in fields such as American history, material culture, American art, museum studies or related fields, and professionals in the museum, education or related fields are encouraged to apply. Details on tuition costs and housing are also available.

The 2004 Institute will be held from June 20 through July 16. Each summer, the program focuses on one region of the early south. This year the focus is on The Chesapeake Region.

Tuition for four weeks is \$950, excluding room and board. This figure is subject to change. A limited number of tuition fellowships will be available.

For more information and application forms, contact Sally Gant, Summer Institute, MESDA, PO Box 10310, Winston-Salem NC 27108, phone 336-721-7360, or e-mail sgant@oldsalem.org.

Button, Button, Who's Got the Button?

Valerie Jones

Actually, we aren't looking as much for buttons as for all the things that the docents have purchased over the years. Because we do not have a permanent storage home, some of our things have been residing with various members of the Docent Committee. The Docent Board at the annual planning retreat in January decided that we need to have an inventory of all our things and the information from that inventory stored in one place. I have volunteered to be that repository, but I need for all of you with docent supplies and/or belongings to make a list of what you are currently storing for us and get those lists to me. We realize that it may take a while to compile this information, so we are asking that you get it to us (me) by the end of August. This will give you the summer to work on this, when we docents generally have time off from most tours and other activities associated with the docent "business."

If you have any questions, please give me a call or e-mail me and I will try to help you in whatever way I can.

Valerie Jones
704-567-0599
jvkjones@bellsouth.net



They fled their homeland, driven out by a terrible famine that had already claimed tens of thousands of lives. They crossed the sea to find a new home in what they believed would be a land of opportunity. No, not the Irish in North America. But the Scottish settlers who flooded into Ulster in the 1690s to escape from a terrible famine in their own land.

There is an American connection to their story, too. For this was just one of the many waves of population movement between Scotland and Ulster of a people who were later to cross the Atlantic in the tens of thousands to settle in, and help build, the United States.

A spate of publications in the US in recent months, notably James Webb's best-selling book, *Born Fighting*, has focused attention on the contribution of those early Ulster-Scots settlers who are known in America as the Scots-Irish. It's estimated that more than 20 million Americans can trace their roots back to the mainly Presbyterian families who moved to the New World in the 18th century.

It's against this backdrop that, later this year, *On Eagle's Wing*, John Anderson's epic musical about the Ulster Scots journey, is again set to travel to America. This time there's a tour of major American cities on the cards. Last time it was, of course, a very different story. The musical, with a cast of hundreds, was due to have its premiere in Atlanta in May 2004 before moving on to a number of other US cities. That tour fell through due to financial problems, and the show returned to premiere instead, later in the year, in Belfast's Odyssey Arena.

Despite those initial problems, though, the show was a success. Now it's set for a second assault on the US. And its singing star, Peter Corry, is convinced that this is a project whose time has definitely come. "The show has themes like patriotism, history and religion that will touch a deep chord with American audiences. This is very much a show that will work in America."

Corry was first approached by his old friend, John Anderson, about the *Eagle's Wing* project. "He outlined what the show was about and said he'd love it if I would come on board. It was something that I was very interested in — something that would go on stage and would show us in Northern Ireland in a good light." He admits that he did weigh up the possibility that some people might see the *On Eagle's Wing* project as political. "Anybody who knows me will know that's not what I'm about at all. But I'd have been naive not to consider that aspect when I took the role on. The fact is that this isn't something that should be regarded as divisive in any way. It celebrates a time in history and a particular group of people — but not to the detriment of others."

As well as the American dates lined up for the autumn, the show is also due to return to the Odyssey in August this year. But first local television viewers will get a chance to see not only a recording of last year's Odyssey production, but a documentary, *On Eagle's Wing: The Documentary*, a 50-minute programme that charts the Scots-Irish history on which the musical is based and includes music and songs from the stage show. Filmed in Scotland, Ireland and America, it follows the Ulster Scots from their move from Scotland to Ulster and on to Pennsylvania, the Shenandoah Valley, the Carolinas, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama and the lands beyond the Mississippi. The mark they left in their new homeland is reflected not least in local place names. The Rev Thomas McKinnon, from Donegal Presbyterian Church in Pennsylvania, points out that in the same region there's a Raphoe, an Antrim, a Letterkenny, a Derry and a Londonderry.

The documentary will be shown on US cable television coast to coast in late August.

Ian S. Kennedy, executive producer, says. "The show's universal themes speak to dispossessed peoples all over the world. Its tone is inclusive, its purpose is to reach out a hand of friendship and understanding."

Passport to History



Rachel Abernathy

The Docent's *Passport to History* is available now at most local historic sites. This small document is intended to bring families to historic sites to learn together. It is designed to be fun for adults and children, and offers as a reward a specially designed "patch" featuring our name, a covered wagon and a jet plane. A visit to five local historic sites and "stamped" by them qualifies the purchaser of the Passport for a patch. Janet Dyer gets credit for the idea, the designing, and the implementation of the Passport Project. Too many Docents to mention here have lent support and labor to the Passport Committee. Look for the Passport when you visit a site and feel proud. If you don't see them for sale, let me know, or call Millie Hodge or Hazel White.

The Mysterious Death of William Richardson

Kinship, Female Vulnerability, and the Myth of Supernaturalism in the Southern Backcountry

by Peter N. Moore, *The North Carolina Historical Review*

Article Review by Rachel Abernathy

William Richardson and his wife, Agnes, lived in the Waxhaws, a few miles south of Charlotte. William was a popular Presbyterian minister; Agnes was the daughter of Alexander Craighead, minister at nearby Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church. They had been married for twelve years, but had no children at the time of William's death. On the morning of July 20, 1771, Agnes left her home to attend a quilting that lasted until late in the day. Archibald Davie, William's brother-in-law, visited him during the day. When Agnes returned in the evening, she found William Boyd, a church member from nearby, also arriving to visit. William was apparently "at his devotions". He did not appear when expected, so Agnes and Boyd entered his upstairs study. They found William dead, kneeling against a chair, as was his habit when praying, but with a bridle around his neck. Neighbors were summoned and it was agreed to cover up what they believed to be suicide for the good of the church and "religion."

In this article, Peter N. Moore discusses what happened following Rev. William Richardson's death. The most startling is that the body was exhumed after a year. Was this because of genuine suspicions of murder or because of superstition? Writing almost a hundred years after the fact, one of Peter Moore's sources relates that "...the body of Mr. Richardson was exhumed and exposed to view, and Mrs. Richardson was subjected to the shocking ordeal of touching the corpse, on the absurd idea which at that time prevailed, that blood would flow if the murderer should touch the corpse of his victim."

Moore also discusses Agnes' situation as a widow in a "closed" society. Having inherited a large portion of William's wealth and property, she was in a vulnerable position in regard to members of the Richardson family. This article is very interesting reading and educational. I recommend it to all Docents. It was copied from the *The North Carolina Historical Review*, Volume LXXX, Number 3, July 2003. Thanks to Carolyn Dilda who made it available to the Docent's Book Club. Look for a copy in the Docent's Library at Rosedale, or see me for loan of my copy.

Fashion Committee

Sharon Van Kuren

Just a reminder that this Fashion Committee is available to aid our sites in meeting their fashion needs. If we can get patterns and share them or find specific fabric, please let us know. I have an 18th century mens' shirt pattern that I can trace for any MHA docent who would need it.

Don't forget that we are participating on May 20th, 2005, for the "Meck Dec" celebration. Look at your clothing and see if you need pattern sources. Any questions? Please call me at 704-846-6187.



Relive North Carolina as it was in the 1860's during the tragic American war when brother fought brother. Historic Latta Plantation presents the Battle of Sample Farm, the recreation of one of thousands of engagements during the Civil War, on April 23rd and 24th from 10am-4pm. Experience the soldiers' camps, artillery, and cavalry, along with period sutlers and food vendors. The Battles will be at 2pm with other demonstrations throughout the day. Join us for this and many other exciting events this spring!

Our winter events were very successful. In January we held a Winter Encampment with the 30th and 4th North Carolina Troops, in which they displayed tents set up for winter weather, and worked on one of the new log cabins being built for soldier quarters. We also held an event called *Ladies of the House* in which the public was introduced to the responsibilities of the Plantation Mistress and her house staff. The Art of History was scheduled for January, but cancelled due to weather. This event would have featured both a Civil War sketch artist and Period Photographer, and will be rescheduled at a future date. Over 200 visitors attended "Voices Yet to be Heard" on a sunny day in February. "Voices from the Past" and African American Reenactment, along with BeeJay Caldwell from Latta, presented slave life in the first person. They were in and around the main house, including the carriage barn, kitchen, and slave cabin. Seeing their presentations was almost like walking back in time. Mrs. Betty Pierce provided house tours throughout the day. Check our website at www.lattaplantation.org for event photos, schedules, and upcoming school program and camp information! Our spring schedule is as follows:



Karen Memmelo of the CFMPCA (Colonel Francis Marion Parker Civilian Alliance) (30th NC) in "Ladies of the House"

March 5 (10am-4pm) - 6 (1pm-4pm), 2005: Art of the Blacksmith – Demonstrations of techniques used by 19th century blacksmiths.

March 19 (10am-4pm) - 20 (1pm-4pm), 2005: Cavalry Weekend – Demonstrations of Civil War Cavalry equipment and tactics.

April 16 (10am-4pm) - 17 (1pm-4pm), 2005: Springtime Plowing and Planting/Antique Tools Demonstrations – See mules plowing the land while living historians plant cotton and corn in the fields, as well as period kitchen and slave gardens.

April 16, 2005 (12pm): 1st Annual Latta Plantation Open – Golf Tournament fund raiser at Sunset Hills Golf Course register to play or sponsor a hole!

April 21, 2005 (10am-4pm): Home School Day – Living History Day set aside for home schoolers of all ages. Hands-on craft activities, demonstrations, tours, and more!

April 23 (10am-4pm) - 24 (10pm-4pm), 2005: Civil War Reenactment, Battle of Sample Farm – Battles each day, sutlers, soldier camps, food vendors and more!

April 30, 2005 (10am-4pm): Discover Latta Plantation – Girls Scouts come to learn about 19th century life through living history interpretation and hands-on activities.

May 7, 2005 (4:30-8:30pm): Latta Plantation Bluegrass and Barbecue – Call 704-875-2312 for tickets!

May 7 (10am-4pm) - 8 (1pm-4pm), 2005: Civil War Infantry Weekend – Civil War Infantry Soldiers on the grounds providing demonstrations.

May 28, 2005 (10am-4pm): Living History Day – Experience living history firsthand, and see living historians cooking over an open hearth, working with historic breeds or livestock, using 19th century woodworking techniques, tending to the cotton field, and kitchen and slave gardens. Children's activities will be available!

Drink Up! Liquid Refreshments in Early America, 1750 - 1850

Sponsored by the Fairfax County Park Authority and the History Department at George Mason University.

Friday, April 1, 2005, 9:30 am - 3:30 pm

Drink Up! explores the variety of liquid refreshments available in early American homes and taverns, who was drinking what, when and where, and how they were processed, procured, stored and served. Presentations examine the social, technological and economic history associated with beverages in early American homes and taverns in topics such as home and commercial production, foodways and consumption patterns, imported beverages and trade. Discussions also investigate the material culture of table wares and containers in which beverages were stored, prepared and consumed.

Speakers: Eleanor Breen (Mount Vernon), Frank Clark (Colonial Williamsburg), Ellen Denker (Independent Historian), David Hildebrand (Colonial Music Institute) and Justin Sarafin (Monticello.)

Cost: \$65.00. Advance registration is required and must be received by March 21, 2005.

Location: George Mason University Fairfax, Virginia, 704-631-1429

Contact: Susan Clark, 703-631-1429, susan.clark@fairfaxcounty.gov

Or for more information contact Carolyn Dilda at the Polk Memorial 704-889-7145

Fifteenth Conference on Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes

Unearthing the Past/Planting the Future: Issues and Challenges in Southern Landscape Restoration

The 2005 Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes Conference will be held at Old Salem in Winston-Salem, North Carolina on September 29th - October 1st, 2005.

The goal of the conference is to examine the state of landscape restoration in the South as it has evolved over the past twenty-five years, since Old Salem's Landscape Conference began, and to evaluate the future of the field in light of new and exciting avenues for researching, planning and maintaining the historic landscape.

The 2005 conference will address philosophical and practical issues that currently challenge and are being met by a variety of sites in the South. Through this, we hope to offer our audience both practical and theoretical tools for preserving the historic southern landscape for the next generation.

For program and registration information, contact:

Kay Bergey, Coordinator

Landscape Conference

c/o Old Salem

P.O. Box F

Salem Station, Winston-Salem NC 27108-0346

Phone: 336-721-7378

From "The Scotch Irish: A Social History"

by James G. Leyburn

"The Kirk ... instilled into the Scot a devotion to education...It wanted to wipe out illiteracy among the people, especially in order that there might be an educated clergy and that the people might for themselves 'search the Word.' And it wanted to transform the morals of the people."

Museum of the Waxhaws and Andrew Jackson Memorial

March 12, 2005, 10am–5pm – President Andrew Jackson Birthday Celebration and Living History Day. Free Admission! Come join us for a special day of Living History as we celebrate President Andrew Jackson's birthday! Reenactors and Living Historians will be on hand throughout the day demonstrating historic lifeways and traditions from various time periods of history. Basket weaving, quilting, campfire cooking, Catawba pottery, Civil War military drills, log house and herb garden tours and much, much more! Hot dogs and drinks will be for sale and there will be free birthday cake! This is our largest living history event of the year and the one day a year that it's FREE to visit the Museum! Bring your friends and family!

April 16, 2005, 10am–2pm – Colonial Herb Day and Plant Sale. Our annual herb day and plant sale will take place at the Herb Garden by the Andrew Jackson Secret Log House. Come learn all about the Colonial uses of herbs, as well as the modern uses. We'll have knowledgeable helpers available to answer any questions you have on growing herbs and cooking with them, too. A large selection of herbs will be for sale, just in time for you to get your herb garden started for the season!

August 27th, 2005, 10am–5pm – 5th Annual Krazy Daze of Kudzu Festival. Everything will be coming up kudzu! This will be our 5th year and the festival continues to grow (just like kudzu!) We'll have kudzu everything – kudzu sno cones, kudzu princess halos, kudzu windsocks, kudzu magic wands, kudzu baskets, kudzu paper, kudzu snakes, fried kudzu leaves and more, more, more!!! Please come join us for a crazy, fun-filled day of kudzu! Free to attend the festival. Regular Museum admission will be charged if you wish to tour the Museum while you're here.

Boys Will Be Boys

Once upon a time there was an "incident" on one of Valerie Jones' school tours. The three culprits wrote Mrs. Jones the following notes of apology. The spelling is authentic. Unfortunately, the large circles dotting the letter "i" couldn't be recreated below!

Dear Ms. Jones,

I'm very sorry about the small fire that we had on Tuesday (11/14). I do think I.O. you a big apollage. I tried to put the lent on the candle. But it fell off. But that is no excush because I really shouldn't even been fooling with it. But your presentation was great. The butter was delious. I hope you can come back next year maybe. But if you need me to pitch in some money for the things that broke. I thought maybe you would like to know how the fire got started. First I threw the lent in there but when we got outside, people were putting pineneedles, sticks, and leaves in there to make the flame inlarge. But then they were spiting on the fire to put it out and puting water on the flames and making it inlarge because of the grease.

Sincerely,

Dustin Thompson

P.S. Sorry

Dear Mrs. Jones,

I'm sorry about what had happend the other day. You probably got that latern for a present and i bet it ment much to you. I request that me John and Dustine could pitch in money so you could by you another one. Once again I am really sorry

Derrick (*last name unreadable*)

Dear Mrs. Jones,

I am very sorry for the incident with the fire. How it started and how it ended were two things that really weren't meant to go this far. I just want you to know I'm sorry for what I did and it will never happen again.

Jonathan (*last name unreadable*)

Alexander Hamilton: The Man Who Made Modern America

From "The Writer's Almanac" by Garrison Keillor

Submitted by Wanda Hubicki[\(http://www.alexanderhamiltonexhibition.org/\)](http://www.alexanderhamiltonexhibition.org/)

It's the birthday of one of the founding fathers of our country, **Alexander Hamilton**, born in the British West Indies (January 11, 1755, some sources say 1757). He's the man on the \$10 bill.

He grew up on the tiny island of Nevis, where his father abandoned the family and his mother died when he was just a boy. He was taken in by a local merchant who gave him a job at a general store. He turned out to be quite good at accounting, so when he was thirteen, his boss took a trip to Europe and left young Alexander in charge of the store. He started writing on the side, and an article about a recent hurricane so impressed the adults around him that they all pitched in to pay for his passage to New York, where he could attend school.

He arrived in America just as rebellion against Great Britain was brewing, and he immediately began to write for New York newspapers in support of the colonies' rights. He impressed George Washington so much that he became Washington's right-hand man when he was barely twenty years old. After the revolution, when many American politicians believed that the colonies should remain mostly independent of each other, Hamilton was one of the earliest supporters of a strong central government.

In just three years, between 1787 and 1790, he served on the constitutional convention, wrote the majority of the Federalist Papers, (which helped garner support for the new constitution) became the first secretary of the treasury, and set up the U.S. National Bank.

While serving on Washington's cabinet, Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson became bitter enemies, and set out to undermine each other with gossip about each other's scandalous private lives. Hamilton was having an affair at the time, and there were rumors that Jefferson had had children with one of his slaves. But despite their bitter rivalry, Hamilton later spoke in favor of Jefferson as president over Aaron Burr, whom he considered a scoundrel.

Four years later, Burr challenged him to a duel. They met at sunrise in a wooded area of Weehawken, New Jersey, above the Hudson River. Hamilton showed up for the duel to prove his courage, but he purposely fired his gun straight up into the air. Burr aimed at him anyway, and Hamilton was mortally wounded and died the next day.

He hasn't been as well remembered as Washington or Jefferson, but by setting up the national treasury, the national bank, the first budgetary and tax systems, and most of all by helping gather support for the U.S. constitution, he did more to design the system of government we now live under than almost any other man.

The columnist George F. Will said, "We honor Jefferson, but live in Hamilton's country."

Alexander Hamilton wrote, "The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records. They are written, as with a sunbeam, in the whole volume of human nature by the hand of the divinity itself and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power."

Seventh Conference on Women and the Civil War

A conference recognizing the efforts of women, 1861-1865, will be held June 3-5, 2005, at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia. The conference is jointly sponsored by the Society for Women and the Civil War and the Virginia Center for Civil War Studies. For further information please call SWCW at 540-381-4518 or e-mail athomeandinthefield@yahoo.com. Additional information is also available on the web at <http://www.conted.vt.edu/cwwomen/index.html> or <http://www.swcw.org>.

when bandogs howle & spirits walk

by Joyce and Richard Wolkomir

Excerpt from *Smithsonian Magazine*, January 2001Submitted by Valerie Jones

Roger Ekirch, a historian at Virginia Tech, has unearthed the complexities underlying a subject that has absorbed him for 16 years — the study of the preindustrial night. His purpose has been to elucidate the profundity of that human experience. In previous centuries, he explains, people called night a different “season.” Night was as separate from day as a northern winter is from summer.

To find out about that long-ago night (the period he studies extends from about 1500 into the 1830s), Ekirch has conducted an extraordinarily exhaustive campaign of historical sleuthing. His investigations have led him to a wide range of surprising insights. During those centuries when people relied on sources such as torches, hearth fires and candles for illumination, night assumed a different character in the human imagination. The hours of fear descended every night, when one could easily lose one’s life by falling into ditches, ponds or rivers, or being thrown by horses unfamiliar with dark paths. Demons, witches and night hags, it was widely believed, held sway in those hours. Ruffians and robbers could wreak their havoc. Yet this was, too, the appointed time for revelry.

“It used to be, when it got dark, people felt edgy. People talked about being ‘overtaken’ by the night, ‘shut in,’ ‘covered.’” He notes that for our ancestors, night meant fear of demons, witches and nighthags. An incubus or succubus might waft into your bed. “In one English parish, Lamplugh, out of 52 premature deaths from 1650 to 1663, four people were ‘frightened to death by fairies,’ seven were ‘bewitched,’ and one was ‘led into a horse pond by a will of the wisp.’”

Only the upper classes, for the most part, could afford candles, says Ekirch. At night laws blurred and rules shifted. Night’s darkness loomed so large in their consciousness that our ancestors evolved a vocabulary to describe its manifestations. “Sun suckers” were rays of the dying sun. A dark sky was said to be “lowry.” In Ireland, the hour when a person became indistinguishable from a bush was “day dapple.” Each phase of the night had its term: “candlelight,” the menacing “dead of night,” and “first cock crow.” And there were “night freaks” – licentious parties.

Moonlight was the “parish lantern,” for most night travelers relied on the moon. But to those who depended on darkness to rob passersby of shillings, or whose lanterns lured vessels onto coastal rocks for looting, the moon was the “tattler.” Such dark-loving criminals were “moon cursers.” Moonlit or torchlit, nights were dark, and accidents were extraordinarily common.

One strategy for traveling in the dark was to wear light-colored clothing. Another was riding a white horse. In southern England’s chalky landscape, people planning night trips piled mounds of light-colored soil to guide them in the moonlight. Another technique was stripping bark from trees to expose the white inner wood.

People began as children to memorize their local terrain ditches, fences, cistern, bogs. They also memorized the magical terrain, spots where ghosts and other nighttime frights lurked. “In some places, you never whistled at night, because that invited the devil. You might wear charms or amulets around your neck, and nail horseshoes to your home to fend off witches.”

Another reason preindustrial people feared the dark, besides the danger of witches and accidental drownings, was a belief that night actually did fall, with malignant air descending. To protect themselves, sleepers wore nightcaps. Bed curtains offered privacy, but also fended off miasmal drafts.

(Continued on page 10)

For robbers, poachers, firewood thieves, the preelectric night, with its concealing darkness, was office hours. But not only criminals were out and about. For one thing, a surprising number of preindustrial people worked at night. Ekirch cites “night kings” and “goldfinders,” who emptied cesspools at night, when few were abroad to be offended. “Scowerers,” or garbage collectors, worked at night. So did bakers and dyers.

Rural folk in Italy, France, Germany, Ireland, northern England, and Scotland gathered for after-dark “spinning sessions.” At the room’s center burned a single lamp or candle. Women with spinning to do sat closest to the light. By sharing the costly lamp oil, neighbors economized. But the real centerpiece of these get-togethers was story-telling: transmitting folklore, local history, tales of the heroic and the supernatural, stories in which the poor triumphed over the mighty. Darkness and flickering lamplight added drama.

Sometimes economics demanded a 24-hour day, such as for iron forge and flour mill workers, servants who washed the household’s clothing which was disruptive during the day, and those who removed the bodies of plague victims. At night, when it was difficult to tell who was who, there were less elaborate social codes. It was also the time for roving gangs and robbers.

Many whose days were blighted by poverty or ill-treatment sought escape at night. Even slaves in the American South sneaked out at night to dances and parties, or to other plantations to visit their wives or children. Whites sometimes feared attacks by night-roaming slaves; there were horseback slave patrols. After the Civil War, former slave owners and other whites hid behind disguises and continued terrorizing freed-men to keep them indoors at night. Research suggests these patrols were forerunners of the Ku Klux Klan.

If our ancestors had one overriding nighttime fear, it was not witches or even cutthroats. It was fire. Blazes were common in congested cities: houses, with wood frames and thatched roofs ignited easily. Victims of nighttime street attacks often yelled not “Help!” or “Murder!” but “Fire!” That cry was most apt to bring out the neighborhood

One of Ekirch’s discoveries surprised him: in the preelectric centuries, people slept differently. We assume it is normal to slumber more or less continuously through the night. We think of wakefulness as a disorder insomnia. And common sense suggests that, without electric lights, our preindustrial ancestors must have slept from sunset to sunrise. But Ekirch has found that was not so. Preindustrial people’s sleep was segmented. They might lie an hour or more before falling asleep. About four hours later, they would awaken. For another hour or so, they would lie meditating on their dreams or praying. They would talk with bedmates. They might even visit neighbors, similarly awake. They might pilfer or poach. Then they would sleep another four hours or so. People, as a matter of course, routinely referred to their “first sleep” and their “second sleep.”

Without the stimulus of artificial light, people secrete more prolactin, a pituitary hormone that seems to promote a state of quiet restfulness. That hormone is best known, as Ekirch puts it, “for permitting chickens to brook contentedly atop eggs for long stretches of time.” Ekirch is convinced that most preindustrial people slept differently because they had less artificial light recalibrating their hormone production.

In previous centuries people slept differently in another way, too: bed sharing. It was especially common among the poor for whom the bed was the household’s most costly piece of furniture. Not just husbands and wives, but the entire family might sleep in one bed. A visiting relative might join them. Even a visiting stranger might share the family bed.

Starting about 1750, especially in urban areas, oil lamps began appearing on streets, then gas lamps. “The Industrial Revolution led to more night work in factories and that required artificial illumination. Thomas Edison hammered the last nail in the old night’s coffin.” Electricity really changed the night. Night was becoming what it is today — an artificially illuminated extension of the day.





*In Search of Origins: Needlework & Samplers
from the Old & New worlds, 1500-1850*

Historic Deerfield Needlework Symposium, September 8-11, 2005, Deerfield, Mass.

Submitted by Carolyn Dilda

Speakers

Key Note Speaker: **Mary Jaene Edmonds**, *The Deerfield Sampler & Needlework Collection* — Author and Scholar, Long Beach, CA

Mary Brooks, Conservator, "Observe the Directions Which are Given by Knowing Men." *Embroidery and the Feminine in late 17th century England* — University of Southampton, Winchester, England, UK

Edwina Ehrman, *Unravelling the Past: An Introduction to the Samplers Worked by Pupils of Judith Hayle, 1691-1705* — Curator of Dress & Decorative Art, Museum of London.

Edward Maeder, *Embroidered History, Stitched Lives: Samplers & Needlework from the Historic Deerfield Collection 1670-1850* (the exhibition) — Curator of Textiles, Historic Deerfield, Deerfield, MA

An Moonen, *Dutch Darning Samplers and Needlework from the Open-Air Museum 1600-1800* — Author, Scholar and former Curator, Open Air Museum, Arnhem, Holland

Gieneke Arnolli, *Letter by Letter, Samplers in the Education of Girls in Friesland* — Curator, Fries Museum, Leewarden, Holland.

Birgitt Borkopp-Restle, *German Needlework and Samplers 1500-1800?* — Director, Museum of Applied Art, Cologne, Germany

Kathy Staples, *Ornamental Gardening and Academic Art: Samplers from Norfolk, Virginia* — Author and Scholar, Greenville, South Carolina

David Deutsch, *Published Sources 1520-1800: For American Needlework* — Author and Scholar NY, NY

Tandy Hersch, *Pennsylvania German Samplers, 1730-1830* — Author and Scholar, Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Amelia Peck, *Always the Melting-Pot: Northern European Images and Influence on New York City Biblical Samplers* — Curator, Metropolitan Museum of Art, American Wing, New York, NY

Dilys Blum, *Not American Samplers at the Philadelphia Museum of Art 1650-1875* — Curator, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Jane C. Nylander, *Evidence of Accomplishment: Learning and Needlework at Susanna Rowson's Ladies' Academy, Boston, 1797-1822* — Independent Scholar and Author, Portsmouth, New Hampshire

Linda Eaton, *This Work in Hand: Philadelphia Needlework in the 18th Century* — Curator of Textiles, Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware

Paula Richter, *Ingenious Designs and Quaint Rhymes: The Origins and Significance of the Colonial Revival Sampler in Twentieth-Century American Art and Culture* — Curator of Textiles, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts

Workshops

- A. **Kathleen Staples:** Reversible Stitches on Samplers: From Islamic Egypt to the New World.
- B. **Eva Burnham:** Sampler Sleuthing: How to Approach the Care and Conservation of Your Historic Samplers.
- C. **An Moonen:** Dutch Sampler Stitches from 1600-1800 on Samplers, Household Linen and Costumes.
- D. **Edward Maeder:** Behind the Scenes, a Close-up Look at 17th and 18th Century Embroideries from the Historic Deerfield Collection.

For information: Edward Maeder at Maeder@historic-deerfield.org or phone 413-775-7201, fax 413-775-7224.



MHA Dues 2005

The Docent Board asks that all docents pay their dues through the docents committee, not directly to the MHA. The Docent Treasurer will remit one large check to the MHA Treasurer and their membership chairman, along with a detailed sheet listing who has paid dues and at what level. You should receive a dues notification from the MHA some time later this year. If you have not yet paid your dues through the docents, then regard that letter as a reminder that your dues still need to be turned in to us. Please do not send your dues directly to MHA as this makes it difficult to determine for our records if your dues have been paid.

Make checks payable to MHA Docents and give them to Valerie Jones, your Docent Treasurer. If you cannot be at the monthly meetings, please mail your check to Valerie at 4700 Coronado Drive, Charlotte 28212. And if you have any questions, call her at 704-567-0599.

Note: If you are not a docent, please send you dues payment directly to Allen Brooks, 2021 Euclid Ave, Charlotte, NC 28203.

Levels of MHA Membership

	<u>Single</u>	<u>Couple</u>
General	\$25.00	\$45.00
Senior (over 60)	\$12.50	\$20.00
Patron	\$50.00	\$90.00
Life (single payment)	\$300.00	\$500.00
Student	free	n/a

MHA Docents Board

Chairman	Barbara Jackson	Secretary	Violet Hartis
Vice Chairmen	Wanda Hubicki	Treasurer	Valerie Jones

Change of Information Notification

If you have had a change of address, phone number, e-mail address, or other pertinent information, please send to MHADandelion@yahoo.com or call Camille Smith at 704-334-2201.

Mecklenburg Historical Association: www.meckdec.org
 MHA Docents: www.meckdec.org/docents.html

