



19th Century Curran Homestead Village at Fields Pond & Newfield, Maine

372 Fields Pond Road, P.O. Box 107, Orrington, ME
70 Elm Street, P.O. Box 28, Newfield, ME
207-205-4849 • 207-745-4426
thecurranhomestead@gmail.com
www.curranhomestead.org

Spring 2018

Member of the Greater Bangor Chamber of Commerce & Sebago Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce

Earle Shettleworth Headlines Annual Membership Dinner

Reservations are required

Our annual Newfield membership recognition dinner will be held on Saturday, June 23, 2018 from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. in the restaurant at Dr. Isaac Trafton's House, 72 Elm Street, Newfield, Maine. This year's dinner will be extra special with our guest speaker, Earle Shettleworth, Jr., Maine State Historian.

Mr. Shettleworth's talk is from 4:30 to 5:15 p.m. It includes images of Maine's Centennial Celebration in 1920. This is in anticipation of the forthcoming bicentennial of Maine statehood. Selections of stereoscope images from the Maine State Archives of Limerick in the 1890s will be shared.

Dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m. and includes homemade pork loin, sides, salads, bread, and dessert. Wine and beer are available at \$3 and \$5 per glass. A silent auction will have many items to bid on.

This fundraising dinner is free to members and is \$20 per person for non-members. Children under 12 are just \$10. Please see the membership cost and benefits on page 7. Reservations are required for members and non-members. Please call



Earle Shettleworth, Jr., Maine State Historian

207-745-4426 or 207-205-4849 to reserve your seat at this important dinner.

2018 admission prices at Newfield are \$12 for adults; \$10 for seniors (62 and over) and active military (with ID); children (up to 18) are free. And everyone gets a free carousel ride with admission!

Orrington Old Home Week

July 13-22, 2018

*Celebrating Orrington's 230th
Birthday at the Curran Homestead!*

Friday, July 13

- Silent Movies-on-the-Lawn,
7-9 p.m. (weather dependent)

Saturday, July 14

- See us in the Big Parade!
- Jitterbug, Doodlebug and
Antique Engines Show
- Walk-In Metal Casting Class
- Blacksmith Round-Up

Sunday, July 15

- Pickling in the Curran Kitchen.
- Learn to make Kimchi (spicy
Korean pickles), sauerkraut, as
well as some American
cucumber favorites. Walk away
with some Mason jars of pickles.
Fee.

Friday-Sunday, July 20-22

- Giant Yard Sale. 10a.m.-3 p.m.

Saturday-Sunday, July 21-22

- Weekend Family Traditional Arts
Workshops for ages 5-Adult.
9 a.m.-3 p.m. Fee.

Sunday, July 22

- Maine Open Farm Day.
10 a.m.-3 p.m.



WE NEED YOUR HELP.
Please make a charitable tax donation
to our CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND.
See page 7. Thank you!

School Field Trips 2018

New Learning Stations Delight Students

On May 18, our first group of the season, Wells Elementary, visited us. We anticipate more than 1,500 school visitors this season. We have some additions to our program. Our newest is a learning station devoted to 19th century lighting. It includes a presentation of knob and tube electric wiring and early light bulbs.

There are examples of oil lamps and a variety of candle holders. Batteries will eventually be added. Like much of our programming, there is both tactile and kinesthetic learning experiences. This station includes candle dipping, too. Students will circulate between two rooms where heated pots of wax await for dipping a wick to form a candle.

For a group of Windham seventh graders, a new learning station focusing on

water power was unveiled. The mill adjacent to the museum in Newfield once produced shingles and shooks (box boards) as well as chicken crates. The mill was equipped with a tub wheel and a flume that brought water to it to power a line shaft pulley system.

Students worked with a series of tub wheel models and water to simulate the mill's former performance. Students also experienced a grist mill on site powered and tethered to a flat belt, albeit to an early gas engine. This mill, containing granite grist stones, cracked shelled seed corn.

Many thanks to board member **Bill Wilkins** who provided a load of dried corn on the cob---a difficult thing to find these days---for our hand crank corn shelling machine!



19th Century Curran Homestead Village at Fields Pond & Newfield

Museum Director
Robert Schmick, PhD

CORPORATE OFFICERS

President
Irv Marsters

Vice President
Ron Suci

Secretary
Richard A. Stockford

Treasurer
Brian Ames, PE

Board Members
Richard B. Hanson
Fred Hartstone
Madge Nickerson
William Wilkins

Honorary Board
Robert Croce
James H. Leighton, Jr.
John Mugnai
Helen Tupper Southard
Stan White

Historian Emeritus
Brian Higgins

Clerk of the Corporation
Nathan Dane III, Esq.

Fields Pond Campus
P.O. Box 107
372 Fields Pond Road
Orrington, Maine 04474

Newfield Campus
P.O. Box 28
70 Elm Street
Newfield, Maine 04065

207-205-4849 • 207-745-4426

thecurranhomestead@gmail.com
www.curranhomestead.org



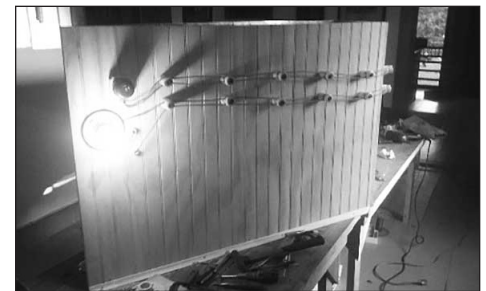
Kids from Wells Elementary had a good time with mustaches and top hats.



Water power station.



Wells was our first school group this season.



Knob and tube electric lighting.



One of two candle dipping stations.

Newfield Campus Additions and Updates

Among the additions to the Newfield campus this season is a collection of original painted panels to the **Herschell-Armitage Steam Riding Gallery**. These panels have likely been stored in the Trafton house attic since the early 1970s when the carousel was brought to the museum campus from Saco where its entirety had been stored in a hay mow for more than 50 years.

Today, the center section of the carousel has masterfully rendered versions of these original panels done by **Wayne Tays** sometime in the 1980s. The original panels have been framed and mounted on the walls surrounding the carousel. They are surprisingly amateurish for such an elaborately decorated piece of fine machinery. The painted panels include patent information and scenes from around the world.

One panel includes information not included on the replica panels. The panel includes the caption, "Booth in Hamlet" below a portrait of **Edwin Booth** in costume. As the other panels depict romanticized images of places like Florence, Arabia, China, the guess is this depicts England, the home of Shakespeare.

It may seem odd that an American, Edwin Booth, would serve as representative



Original carousel panels on exhibit in the carousel building including this "Booth in Hamlet" panel.

of England, but Booth and his family were popular for their Shakespearean roles and made the work of the English bard accessible to great numbers in 19th century America. Booth founded the Booth Theatre in 1869.

Son of famous actor Junius Brutus Booth, he was also the older brother of Abraham Lincoln's assassin John Wilkes

Booth, a fact that evidences, when we consider this portrait, how popular Booth was even in the wake of such a damaging familial association. Booth died in 1893, and the carousel is from 1894 identifying this portrait panel as not only a representation of England's most honored literature but a memorial to a respected American actor who kindled new appreciation for Shakespeare's



work in Victorian America.

Our new ice house in **Newfield** will soon be completed. It will allow us to store our ice crop from our annual ice harvest each February. Construction was made possible through a Narragansett Number One Foundation grant.

Hands-on Classes at Newfield Gain in Popularity

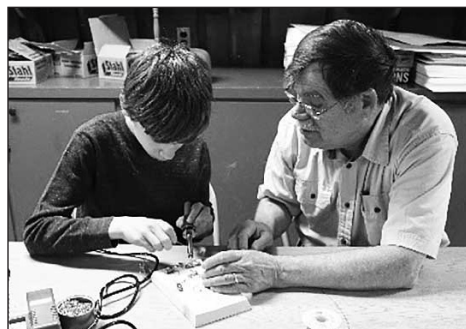
At Newfield, recent classes have included **bookbinding, letterpress printing, Japanese metal casting, knife making, propane forge making, crystal radio set building, and old school electric lamp making** since January.

Classes initiated with past summer offerings and several grant-developed hands-on exhibits at **Willowbrook** have gained in popularity with the large **Waterboro-based homeschooler group TEACH**.

A recent class in making a **crystal radio set** involved building an AM radio transmitter so that the nine participants could tune into 1940s music on their newly created radios at our "AM reception unfriendly" campus in Newfield. This transmitter will be paired with radios this season for ongoing broadcasts from history!

Rex Harper, a Limerick-based creator

of electronic educational kits for kids, has been integral to developing the radio set program with the latest class as well as a soon to follow exhibit with visitor opportunities to experience early radio. Thanks to board member **Madge Nickerson, Carol Dadura, and Dot Quinn** for their assistance as well.



Xander works with Rex Harper at soldering wires on his crystal radio.



Zoe attaches wires to her light fixture in our recent **Make an Electric Lamp** class.



The satisfaction of accomplishment. The lamp Celia just built works!

Wish List

- Lend, or volunteer your service in driving, or receive compensation for driving, your enclosed trailer(s) to transport donated antique cars to the museum on **June 18 and 19**.
- **Silent auction items** for our upcoming **Membership Recognition Dinner at Newfield**, such as gift certificates, antiques, goods, etc.
- **Vintage photographs** of rural Maine activity.
- Antique (1890s-1920s) electric: light bulbs, fixtures, wiring, knife switches, batteries, generators, etc.
- **WWI ephemera posters, documents, letters home and objects; Maine and New England-related**
- Antique candle molds
- Antique crystal and tube radios
- Early medical/ dentistry ephemera and objects, quack medicine items, early scientific devices and equipment. Also veterinarian ephemera & objects.
- Bookbinding, papermaking, letterpress printing ephemera and equipment.



Volunteer Bob Greenleaf is steadily putting a new coat of paint on the Newfield campus. Much thanks to the Bangor Home Depot for their help with the paint.



Interior framing and a new staircase in the Fields House are some of the projects completed by Job Corps.

More Construction in Orrington

At Orrington, renovation of the **Peter Fields House** has progressed with assistance from twelve **Penobscot Job Corp** trainees and instructor **Luke LaChance**. We also greatly appreciate the generosity of **Home Depot's** assistance with materials. Trainees are between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four and receive both vocational and academic training through this government program.

There are many teachable moments in renovating the **Fields House** during this collaboration that has gone beyond the original six weeks planned. This collaboration will likely last throughout the summer and beyond, as the site affords real-life situations for the purposes of the students' training. The site has also served

repeatedly as a classroom for **Eastern Maine Community College** electrician and plumbing trainees, so this is a perfect situation in which the museum's hands-on educational mission is married with its need for improved infrastructure.

In addition to classroom space, an office, and an archive, three public bathrooms to give the museum greater year-round access are included in the **Fields House** project, which began with lifting the entire structure with a crane to a new foundation. It is hoped that the building's interior will near completion soon. The project was initially and partially funded by a **2016 Davis Family Foundation grant**, fund raising, and volunteer contributions.

Register Now for 6 Weeks of Beginning Blacksmithing Classes

Tuesdays and Thursday Evenings starting Tuesday, June 26, 6:00-9:00 p.m.

The class covers all the basics of coal fired forging including safety first, tools and materials, heating, bending, piercing, and forming steel objects. Students will start off with a small project and build on their knowledge with a variety of tools that they will subsequently use in the class and after, hooks, a nail, spoon, and more. Students will be introduced to forge welding. Time permitting, students may forge a knife blade, if desired. This class also includes Saturday morning studio by arrangement. You can practice and get more forge time in. Cost: \$395, tools and materials provided. Students required to supply their own 2lb. hammer.

Jitterbugs and Doodlebugs are Classic Fun!

In recent weeks, Curran Homestead Village friend and contributor **Lloyd Holland** has been busy downsizing with a Memorial Day Weekend tag sale of his lifetime collection of antique tractors, early gas and steam engines, and doodlebugs/jitterbugs that he either built himself or purchased.

The museum first connected with Lloyd nine years ago at the **Farmington Fairgrounds** where he and current board member **Bill Wilkins** were participating in a **Maine Antique Tractor Association** jitterbug pulling competition. The museum was interested in starting a collection of these homemade tractors used for all types of work on the farm and in the forest.

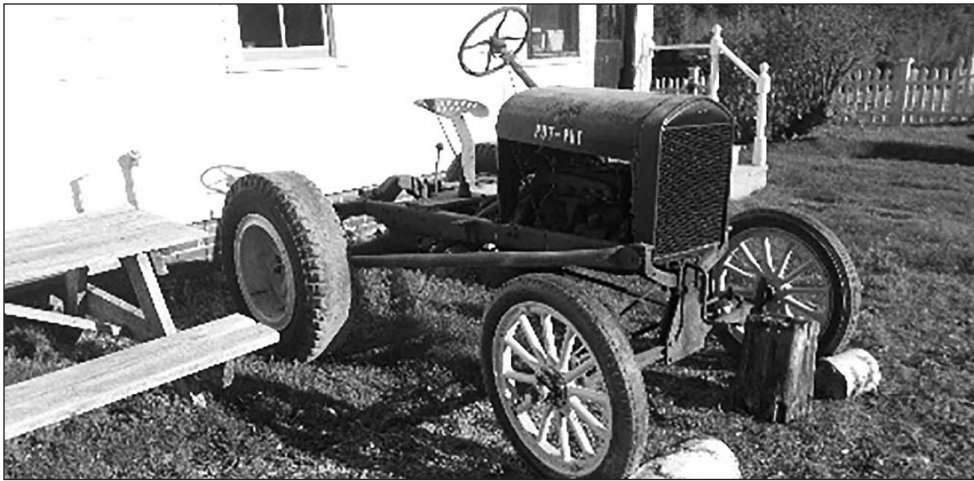
Through Bill's and Lloyd's assistance the Maine Antique Tractor Association has had an annual jitterbug/doodlebug competition at Orrington since 2011.

“ *These vehicles are homemade and are the true embodiment of Yankee ingenuity.* ”

What is especially interesting about these vehicles is that they are homemade and are the true embodiment of **Yankee ingenuity**. At that 2009 Farmington competition, Lloyd drove “Old Timer,” a re-purposed 1924 Buick. The chassis had been cut down and the sheet metal reduced to a radiator cover, part of a hood, a firewall, and the front section of the cab. This was bare bones, as jitterbugs characteristically are. Under the hood was an in-line four cylinder that had enough power to pull a stone sled filled with 6.5 tons of concrete forms across a line. That was its' limit--- that day.

The Buick was later cannibalized to make a better jitterbug but much of it remains. It will soon make its way to the Curran for the purposes of a future project. The Curran attended Lloyd's sale and secured many pieces through loan agreement and purchase. A Model T jitterbug is in Newfield where it demonstrated its charm up and down some hills on Elm Street before a recent group of Windham 7th graders.

The Curran purchased a **steam powered tractor** of Lloyd's creation through a **generous donation from board vice president Ron Sucus**. The steam tractor is built on an International Harvester F-12 tractor carcass and includes a vertically positioned boiler. This rig has always been barn stored so we're confident that we can resurrect the tractor seeking functionality and certification for the boiler in the future.



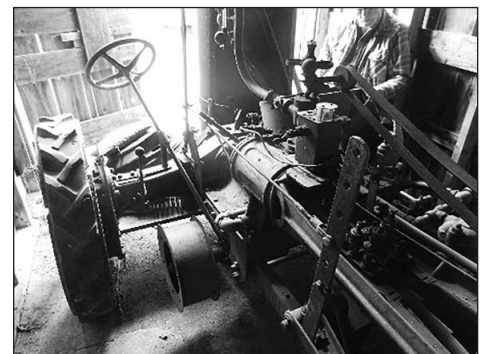
A Model T jitterbug tractor on loan to the Newfield campus. A Model A tractor conversion is currently on loan at Orrington.



Buick Jitterbug in 2009.



Steam Tractor purchased through a donation from board VP Ron Sucus.



Keeping a Place and Idea Alive for the Present and Future Seeking Ongoing Funding for Capital Improvements

A “hands-on” living history program initiated by 19th Century Curran Homestead Village at Fields Pond (Orrington/Holden) & Newfield is dedicated to the preservation and presentation of the values, customs and material culture of Maine and New England’s rural heritage in the 19th and early 20th century.

Where Funding Goes and Why It’s Essential

To perpetuate 19th Century Curran Homestead Village and its’ mission, creating a vibrant year-round facility at Orrington/ Holden is essential. Currently, we have two major constructions underway, **Fields House Education Center and the Timber Frame Workshop**. We plan on completing these in 2018. Once done we will move on to further development of an infrastructure that can serve large groups of students regularly from area schools and beyond as well as allow us to responsibly preserve our collection of working artifacts embodying American rural heritage and essential to the experiential learning we strive to offer.

Our model for developing our campus in Orrington/ Holden is rooted in the current functionality of **our campus in Newfield where there are ongoing school field trips serving 1,500 and more students each year** and year-round classes in a wide variety of arts, crafts, technology, and science-based themes.

Winter, 2018 at Newfield has shown us the potential for a variety of ongoing year-round programming that can be shared at **Orrington/ Holden** with the necessary facilities serving all ages. We wish to fulfill our mission, fully utilizing our property and structures for the purpose of education, garner new revenues, and draw a greater number of visitors and participants to our offerings. These goals are essential to sustaining Curran Homestead Village; allowing the museum to remain idle for great lengths of time is an unsustainable model for perpetuating our mission and the existing infrastructure. Greater utilization,

renovation, and ongoing development is the only course towards sustainability.

Donations, grants (which are often project-based and capable of only partially funding development of facilities and programming) and earned revenues are our only means to fulfill our construction needs and afford essential staff in order to accomplish our educational mission. Volunteers alone cannot do this.

Our organization is in its infancy. Donations need to be directed to developing a vibrant, year-round, functional facility at Orrington/ Holden devoted to education. Our endowment is in its infancy. **The Rural Maine Heritage Endowment Fund** is managed by our volunteer Board of Directors and operates with advice from our full-time Museum Director. The fund, which was initiated in 2009 with a donation from **the Estate of Katherine Curran**, has grown through donations and investment earnings. And the idea is that it will eventually grow whereby earned interest can sustain the needs of the museum, but we have not reached a stage of development at the Orrington/ Holden site yet in order to justify directing all incoming donations to an endowment. The endowment currently cannot sustain the level of activity we are engaged in. Developing the museum towards the end of sustainability requires your assistance, your donation, and our hard work.

We need your donation to secure the Curran Homestead Village as an educational resource for the present and the future. It is resources like this that add to the quality of our lives in places like rural Maine and without private, public support like your own they cease to exist.

Where We Have Been, and Where We’re Going

The Curran Homestead was initially established as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation to preserve remnants of the Curran family farm in Orrington, Maine. Through the efforts of hard-working volunteers and generous supporters, seven buildings, thirty acres, and some original artifacts to the site were preserved. There has been continued collecting since that time, and the museum has been and continues to be gifted not only artifacts once belonging to the Curran farm but many other **family farms and households from the State of Maine**. These artifacts are particularly important to our working collection that serves the experiential, hands-on programming that we strive to offer. The museum has focused more recently on the science and technology available to rural Americans in the mid-19th to early 20th century with the objective of applying lessons from history to the challenges of today and the future.

The footprint of the Orrington/ Holden campus has grown in recent years with purchase of 43 adjoining acres. Most recently, the Curran Homestead was gifted the former museum, the **19th century Willowbrook Village** in Newfield, Maine. **The gift included property, buildings, and a comprehensive collection that characterizes rural life in Maine and New England from the 1850s-1920s.**

One of the highlights of the collection is an operating **1894 Herschell-Armitage horse carousel** with its original steam engine power source (converted to compressed air). In sum, the Curran Homestead now has two

Continued on back page >

Yes! I want to help the Curran Homestead Village!

Mission Statement

19th Century Curran Homestead Village at Fields Pond and Newfield is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that collects, preserves and utilizes historic artifacts and buildings for exhibition, living history, traditional arts programming and hands-on education. The villages serve as classrooms to not only raise awareness and appreciation of life in rural Maine and New England during the emerging Industrial Age of the 19th and early 20th centuries but to empower new generations through sharing the lessons of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics from that time to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Our goal is to help to nurture future inventors, scientists, mechanics and agriculturists through individual awareness and discovery.

2018 Membership Levels & Benefits

All members get free admission on open days and some events, and receive a membership card before opening weekend. Some members will receive free guest passes. For memberships \$100 or more, you get free admittance to our annual gathering and recognition dinner.

- **Children** (Ages 18 and under): **Free**
- **Individual:** \$50- 10% discount on workshops
- **Family** (2 Adults): \$75- 1 guest pass, 10% discount on workshops
- **Historian** (2 Adults): \$100- 2 guest passes, 10% discount on workshops, & special exclusive about our collections: curranhomesteadvillagehistorians.blogspot.com
- **Business:** \$200- Free admission for any employee's family of four on open days and some events with pass provided; business advertisement on website
- **Business Plus:** \$350- All the benefits of Business membership plus get a business advertisement in our frequent inprint newsletter.
- **Sustaining:** \$300- One additional membership, 4 free guest passes; 20% discount on workshops
- **Benefactor:** \$500- Two additional Individual memberships, 6 free guest passes, 20% discount on workshops
- **Homesteader:** \$1000; Four additional Individual memberships, annual contribution recognized as a co-sponsor of an event of your choice, 8 free guest passes, 20% discount on workshops.

Help Fund the Future

By contributing to the Endowment and/or Capital Funds, you will help prepare a new generation for the challenges of the 21st century with lessons from the past. The funds to insure Curran Homestead Villages immediate needs and long-term sustainability.

CUT OUT, FILL OUT & MAIL OUT

Please print legibly:

Name(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

City/Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Cell _____

Email _____

Your contact information is used only to inform you of upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, and membership offers. It is not released to others.

Please make checks payable to **"The Curran Homestead"**

VISA MC DISCOVER # _____

Name on Card _____ Exp. Date: _____ CVV _____

Signature: _____

*Please fill out forms and return with payment to:
Curran Homestead, P.O. Box 107, Orrington, ME 04474*

MY MEMBERSHIP CHOICE IS:

- ___ Individual: \$50
- ___ Family: \$75
- ___ Historian: \$100
- ___ Business: \$200
- ___ Business Plus: \$350
- ___ Sustaining: \$300
- ___ Benefactor: \$500
- ___ Homesteader: \$1000

I WOULD LIKE TO DONATE TO THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND

IN THE AMOUNT OF:

- ___ \$1000
- ___ \$500
- ___ \$250
- ___ \$100
- ___ \$50
- ___ Other \$ _____

19th Century Curran Homestead Village at Fields Pond & Newfield, Maine



P.O. Box 107
372 Fields Pond Road
Orrington, Maine 04474



P.O. Box 28
70 Elm Street
Newfield, Maine 04065

< Continued from page 6

campuses at opposite ends of the state, a new name, and a new mission. The goal is to run both campuses as efficiently as we can until we complete the construction of a museum village scenario at Orrington/Holden that will allow us to effectively utilize our assets for the purposes of our educational mission.

The Curran Homestead's mission has gradually shifted from preservation and restoration of the farmstead to a more comprehensive presentation of 19th and early 20th century rural life for the purposes of hands-on educational experiences; we are not only focused on the farm but village and town life as well. Seasonal events have been supplemented by field trip programming for public, private and home schools alike in addition to scouting activities throughout our history, but we are determined to continue to grow the numbers we affect.

The campus in Newfield has a long-established field trip program that transitioned in recent years from staff led tours of static exhibits to an interactive program consisting of visits to learning stations facilitated by costumed interpreters

who use a working collection to engage students in the technology of the past. This programming will be preserved, replicated, adapted, and further developed at both our campuses with the goal of ever increasing our student visitation.

Youth visitation and programming is not limited to the school year alone as we have already initiated weekend classes and summer programming, and we hope to grow this with your support and contributions. Our adult classes in traditional arts have included blacksmithing and metal casting at Fields Pond but we will offer many other themes, especially with the completion of our new workshop building and other classroom spaces.

Why should we care?

Our rural cultural heritage is rapidly fading into history, as far fewer choose traditional trades and crafts as well as farming as ways of life. That's unfortunate because the skills, values and work ethic of previous generations that have been so integral to the American experience are disappearing

with these one-time livelihoods. Our households no longer consist of multiple generations so that the intergenerational learning exchanges that also characterized the experience of every generation before us has become an exception rather than the norm. These circumstances have denied many **sustained opportunities for critical thinking, problem solving, and creative industry**. Many children do not learn to use traditional tools or master skills from the adults in their lives.

Even if we don't become carpenters, machinists or farmers, knowledge of and skill with the tools traditionally used by them and the experience of creating the things they created even on a basic level can serve as **building blocks today for developing more sophisticated tool usage and skills for greater opportunities and success**. We are in an age in which virtual experiences are increasingly supplanted by actual ones in the lives of our children. Our goal is to enable a new generation through actual experiences providing opportunities for individual awareness and discovery. ❖