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2011 Annual Virginia Decorative Arts Seminar

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Stoneware of the Old Dominion

Important New Research and Discoveries

Speaker Bios

Jeffrey S. Evans, H. Marshall Goodman, Robert Hunter, Kurt C. Russ, Scott H. Suter

Jeffrey S. Evans

Jeff Evans is a respected expert and collector of early American glass and Shenandoah Valley decorative arts, and has lectured and written extensively within the fields. He has acted as appraiser and consultant for multiple institutions and museums including the Corning Museum of Glass and the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA).

In 2004 Jeff shared curatorial duties with Dr. Scott Suter on a Rockingham County, Virginia folk pottery exhibition and related catalogue, and as guest curator for a 2010 museum exhibition that focused on Shenandoah Valley vernacular chairs. Jeff compiled data from more than thirty years of his own research. The catalogue for each exhibit is recognized as an essential reference within its respective field.

Jeff has been involved in the auction business since he was six years old when his parents founded Green Valley Auctions in Mt. Crawford, VA. Jeff grew up working in the family business and his first job as a licensed auctioneer was at age twelve, conducting a 4H benefit sale. He and his wife Beverley directed operations at Green Valley Auctions from 1979 through 2008. Their catalogued sales of quality early American glass and lighting and fine antiques and Americana have resulted in numerous record-breaking auction prices over the years. In November 2004 Jeff had the unique privilege of selling the now famous Johannes Spittler decorated hanging cupboard at public auction. An extraordinary example of Shenandoah Valley of Virginia folk art, the piece achieved \$962,500, a figure which still stands as the world record auction price for a piece of American folk art painted furniture.

At the end of 2008, Jeff and Beverley removed their catalogued auction division from Green Valley Auctions and reopened under their newly formed company, Jeffrey S. Evans & Associates. In addition to monthly catalogued specialty auctions, the redesigned firm offers appraisals, private brokering and expert consultations as well as educational opportunities focusing on American glass and Virginia decorative arts.

H. Marshall Goodman

One of Virginia's preeminent collectors, scholars and dealers, Marshall Goodman is also a published author, former curator and expert in Virginia stoneware and decorative arts.

In 2004 Mr. Goodman, Rob Hunter and Kurt Russ served together as curators of the exhibition *Stoneware Pottery of Eastern Virginia 1720-1865*, at the Virginia Historical Society. This overview of utilitarian salt-glazed stoneware included representative examples from Richmond, James River, Yorktown, Petersburg and Alexandria. Mr. Goodman co-authored the follow-up article published in the April 2005 issue of the *Magazine Antiques* as well as "The Destruction of the Benjamin DuVal Stoneware Manufactory, Richmond, Virginia" in the 2005 issue of *Ceramics in America*, working again with Rob Hunter.

Mr. Goodman collaborated with J. Roderick (Roddy) Moore, another preeminent Virginia collector, dealer and researcher, on a 2007 article published in the *Magazine Antiques* titled "Painted boxes and miniature chests from Shenandoah County, Virginia: The Stirewalt group."

He has operated his antiques business, Distinctive Consignments in Richmond for more than 30 years.

Robert Hunter

Rob Hunter has over 30 years of professional experience in prehistoric and historical archaeology. He has an M. A. in Anthropology from the College of William and Mary and additional coursework at the doctoral level in American Studies.

Mr. Hunter was the founding director of the Center for Archaeological Research at The College of William and Mary and also served as assistant curator of Ceramics and Glass in the Department of Collections at Colonial Williamsburg. He is a partner in the business PERIOD DESIGNS, an innovative firm specializing in the reproduction of 17th and 18th century decorative arts.

Since 2001, he has been editor of the annual journal, *Ceramics in America*, published by the Chipstone Foundation of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Mr. Hunter lectures widely and participates in the *New York Ceramics Fair* in January each year. He has written for a variety of publications including *The Catalogue of Antiques & Fine Art*, *New England Antiques Journal*, *Early American Life*, *Ceramic Review*, *Studio Potter*, *Ceramics: Art and Perception*, *Pottery Making Illustrated*, *Kerameiki Techni*, and *the Journal of Archaeological Science*.

He received the 2007 Award of Merit from the Society for Historical Archaeology and is an elected Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

Kurt C. Russ

Kurt Russ is a former director of Washington and Lee University's Laboratory of Anthropology and an independent scholar from Lexington, VA who has more than 25 years of experience in archeology, material culture/decorative arts research and historic preservation. He is a board member and Vice Director of the Southern Shenandoah Valley Branch of Preservation Virginia and principal with the Virginia Heritage Resources Group.

Last month, in recognition of 2011 Preservation Month in Virginia, Russ was invited to deliver two lectures, one on the pottery manufacturing industry in Botetourt County on May 14 in Buchanan, and the other on the Rockbridge County industry in Lexington on May 15th. The events entitled "*All Fired-Up*" (*in Botetourt and Rockbridge, respectively*): *19th Century Bricks and Pots* included presentations on early brickmaking by Mike Pulice of the Department of Historic Resources, and were free public educational events organized by the Botetourt County Historical Society and Historic Fincastle and by Historic Lexington Foundation and the Southern Shenandoah Valley Branch of Preservation Virginia. The presenters provided expert identification and evaluation of pottery and bricks furnished by event participants some of which will be featured in today's presentation!

While most of his past ceramic-related research and publications has focused on the Shenandoah Valley, he more recently became fascinated with the Richmond area potter, John Poole Schermerhorn and associates and, as an outgrowth of that work, he and Rob Hunter have just completed an overview of the James River Basin Potters and the remarkable assemblage of stoneware they produced.

Kurt is currently partnered with Jeff Evans on *The Virginia Safe Project*, a 2010-2013 research study committed to photographing and documenting Virginia punched-tin paneled furniture in the Shenandoah Valley. Primarily focused on the common nineteenth-century pie or food safe, the study will culminate in a 2013 museum exhibit and accompanying publication. Kurt Russ brings to the project not only his many years of collecting and study of Virginia safes, but a keen eye, unflagging interest and expertise in nineteenth-century material culture.

Scott H. Suter

Scott Hamilton Suter has dedicated his life to the study of Shenandoah Valley folklife and material culture. He received his Ph.D. in American Civilization from George Washington University in 1994. He also holds an M. A. in English from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a B. A. in English from James Madison University.

Dr. Suter has lectured widely and served as consultant to a number of museums including the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, and the Blue Ridge Institute. He is currently Associate Professor of English & American Studies and Chair of the English Department at Bridgewater College.

He has authored numerous publications on the traditions and culture of the Shenandoah Valley including *Tradition & Fashion-Cabinetmaking in the Shenandoah Valley* (1996), *Shenandoah Valley Folklife* (1999) and *Harrisonburg* (2003). In 2004 Scott Suter and Jeff Evans were co-curators for the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society's exhibition of Rockingham County, VA folk pottery titled *A Great Deal of Stone & Earthen Ware* as well as co-authors of the accompanying exhibit catalogue. Dr. Suter's essay, *The Valley Vernacular*, was included in Evans' 2010 book, *Come In and Have a Seat, Vernacular Chairs of the Shenandoah Valley*. He is currently putting the finishing touches on a book-length study of the pottery, career, and philosophy of Emanuel Suter.