

AUTHENTICITY AND QUALITY SINCE 1936

A newsletter published by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation for its Licensed Manufacturers and Williamsburg Shops

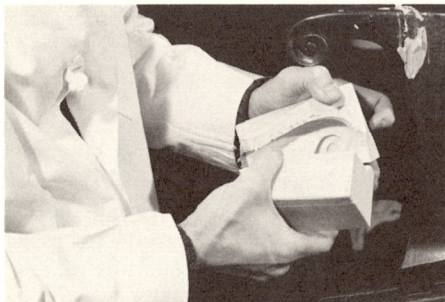
## Baker Furniture Update...



**W**illiamsburg Shops will have two opportunities to see the exciting new collaboration between Colonial Williamsburg and Baker: at the April market in High Point and at the May meeting in Williamsburg.

Group product manager Kris Fischer reports, "At this time, plans are proceeding on schedule. All of the drawings have been approved, and Baker is preparing the prototypes which will be shipped to Williamsburg for comparison with the antiques by the Products Review Committee."

To ensure authenticity and remain faithful to the antique, the product development process demands that special attention be given to all details, especially unusual contours or carved sections. Colonial Williamsburg conservators make a silicone rubber mold from these special features of the antique, and Baker in turn makes a plaster of paris casting. The casting provides Baker craftsmen with an excellent reference on the nuances and signature design features of the original craftsmen over two

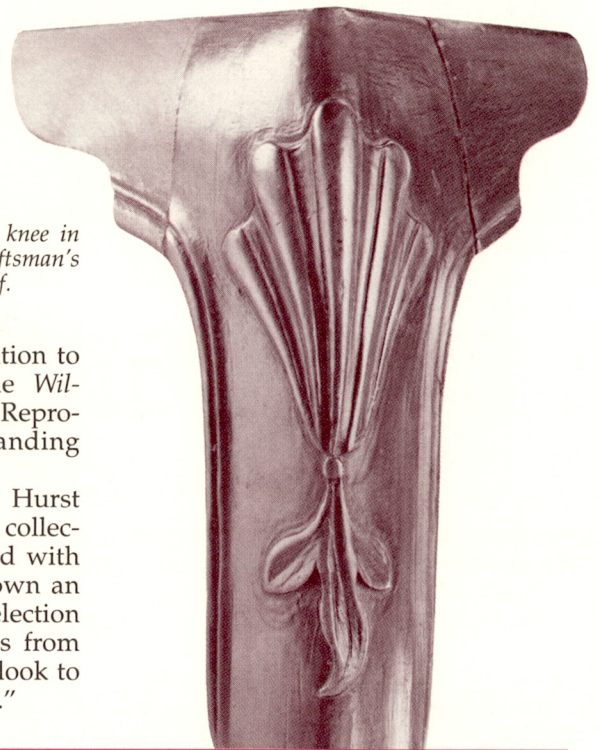


A silicone mold is made from the tight scroll of a chair's arm.

*Special attention will be given this knee in order to capture the original craftsman's carving of the elongated shell and leaf.*

hundred years ago. This attention to detail is what has made the Williamsburg Furniture line of the Reproductions Program so outstanding since its inception.

Curator of furniture Ron Hurst had this to say about the new collection overall: "I've been pleased with the objects that Baker has shown an interest in producing. Their selection of venerated and inlaid objects from our collection will add a new look to the Williamsburg Furniture line."



## Solomon Joins Kirk Stieff

James E. Solomon, a former marketing executive in the athletic shoe industry, is the new president of Kirk Stieff, a manufacturer and marketer of silver and pewter tableware and gifts. The company was acquired by Lenox, Inc. in March 1990.

Commenting on Solomon's appointment, Richard Stearns, president of the Lenox Products Group, said the athletic shoe industry was a good recruiting ground because it has distinguished itself for creative marketing. Stearns said Solomon, who has worked for Avia and New Balance, had personally shown "an extraordinary creative flair for marketing and product. We're delighted to have him on board."

## Jess Behringer on Gift Show Panel

Jess Behringer, director of the Williamsburg Shops Program, participated in a panel discussion at the 83rd Washington Gift Show in January. "Regional Retailing: Promoting Profits with Regional Pride" examined the use of local history and culture as a sales tool. Behringer and other panel members discussed strategies for cross-merchandising, displaying, and promoting regional giftware.

The Washington Gift Show is a trade show featuring more than 575 exhibitors of general gifts, decorative and personal accessories, crafts, jewelry, china, glass, and collectibles. Over 12,000 buyers for retail stores attended.

## Mail Order Tests New Format for Spring



Special mail order customers of Colonial Williamsburg are extended exceptional savings through this spring's test.

This spring, Colonial Williamsburg Mail Order is mailing customers something new. Instead of the 24-page spring mail order catalog that was mailed last spring, four tri-fold mailers printed on a heavy paper stock will be sent to a select in-house list of 50,000.

Best-sellers in the jewelry, home furnishings, dinnerware, and pewter gift categories are featured in larger photographs and targeted to loyal customers, especially those who have shown a strong interest in a particular product category. The focus is more promotional with special values and gifts with purchase.

Tammy Kersey, mail order marketing manager, explained the timing for the test. "The fact that spring is traditionally the slowest season in the gift mail order industry makes it the perfect time to be bold, to be innovative. Our ability to target special purchase customers coupled with a richer, more luxurious format design gives us the opportunity to broaden an already established customer base."

## "Good Morning America" Appearance by Richard Schreiber

Richard Schreiber, vice president and chief business officer, was interviewed about the *Williamsburg Reproductions Program* on ABC-TV's "Good Morning America" during the program's broadcast on Christmas Eve morning.

Schreiber discussed the origins and reproduction of antiques used in the Reproductions Program and the importance of the program to the Foundation's educational mission.

Schreiber was interviewed amid Christmas decorations provided for the New York studio set of the program by the Products Division and the Floral Services Department of Colonial Williamsburg. This is the fourth consecutive year the floral services staff has decorated the set of the nationally televised morning news and entertainment program.

"Good Morning America" claims more than five million viewers, the largest audience for morning news and information programming on the three major commercial networks.

## Summitville Tour

Charles Driscoll and Sara Flanary of the product management office and curator of ceramics John Austin traveled to Ohio where they were given a tour of Summitville Tiles this past fall. Vice chairman and director of sales and marketing Pete Johnson, Jr., walked the group through each step from raw materials processing to the packing of tiles.

Although a large portion of Sum-

mitville's business is producing industrial tiles, the company is expanding its decorative tile business. The Colonial Williamsburg group was impressed by the number of hand processes used along the decorative tile production line.

Austin is pleased with the work of Summitville's director of design Don Schreckengost. "He comes from the old school, and certainly has the feel for period objects," Austin said. "I'm very excited about the tiles that will be copied from tiles in our collection."

The group was updated on the progress of the new tiles and treated to a lunch at the nearby Spread Eagle Tavern. Summitville owners, the Johnson family, restored the 1830s tavern and have used early runs of the new *Williamsburg* tiles around fireplaces in the dining room.

## Kerman "Vase" Carpet: A New Look

The most recent addition to the line of Karastan's *Williamsburg* Carpets adds an entirely new design and color palette to the product group. The new Kerman "Vase" design is more intricate, and Karastan developed fifteen new colors in order to capture the subtleties of the original carpet. The wide variety of rich luxurious tones—berry, blues, turquoise, and gold—will enable the carpet to blend with many color schemes and work well with the new Traditional Collection of *Williamsburg* Wallpapers and Fabrics.

Adapted from a late seventeenth-century carpet made in Kerman (southwest Persia), the Kerman "Vase" carpet takes its name from the flower-filled vases that are almost inconspicuous amid a complex ground pattern.

Wayne Alcorn, manager of Karastan's design department, is enthusiastic about the new carpet. "The design



*The late seventeenth-century antique is in the collection of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.*

reminds me of a panel Kerman rug that has been in our Karastan line for over fifty years, and it has been one of the three top sellers for quite some time."

Alcorn discussed the production process. "We're often able to select tones from within our color library, but after close inspection of the antique, we decided to develop new colors and instead of producing one or

two sample weavings, as we usually do, we produced four. We are very pleased with the results and expect that in two to three years the carpet will be the top seller of Karastan's *Williamsburg* line."

Three sizes of the Kerman "Vase" carpet will be available, and a runner will be developed in the future.

## Hard Times: What *Williamsburg* Shops Are Doing

Times are difficult. When asked how they're weathering a depressed economy, these Shops aim to keep building their customer base and target that market segment not overly affected by the recession. As opposed to "cutting back" in inventory, advertising, and/or promotion, the word most frequently used was "maintain" with plans to continue special promotions.

Attention is being paid to building their mailing lists with quality names. Names of *Williamsburg* visitors referred by Shops management are appreciated and are being cultivated as potential customers.

■ **Wendy Steward, accessory buyer, Toms Price (Wheaton, IL):** The winter sale is generating good traffic and sales; advertising is working. Theme promotions will continue—a garden promotion in the spring or summer, a tavern promotion in the fall.

■ **Cathy Billington, advertising director, Valley Furniture Shop (Watchung, NJ):** After a successful "Williamsburg Christmas" promotion, names gathered for the door prizes were added to the shop's growing mailing list. A follow-up "Merry Christmas" card invited the recipient to visit the store again for a free gift—a tavern tea towel tied with a ribbon.

■ **Peter Barter, owner, Peter D. Barter, Inc. (Salem, MA):** Advertising dollars are channeled toward radio, quality monthly area magazines, and ads in special event programs. He

combined his "Williamsburg Christmas" open house with the dessert table promotion (suggested at last year's May meeting), and the event's success continued to boost sales throughout the Christmas season. *Williamsburg* gift sales increased about 15 to 18 percent.

Crystal and Potpourri dinnerware have been selling extremely well. During the Christmas season, lower ticket items of high quality were popular gift items and provided good volume in sales. Products specifically mentioned were from Stevens Linens, Pimpernel, and C.R. Gibson.

*continued on next page*

## Hard Times: What Craft House Is Doing

■ Calvin Heikkila, manager, Craft House at Merchants Square: Pre-wrapped items such as the silverplated letter opener, brass bell, pewter strawberry dish, dressing spoon, and *The Williamsburg Cookbook* stimulated Christmas sales. The burgundy Williamsburg paper added a signature touch, and customers liked the convenience and appearance of packages stacked in an inviting display. Consider pre-wrapping for other seasons besides Christmas.

Heikkila advises that if you feel a need to decrease your inventory, make certain to have sufficient stock of those items on your "A" list—those items you have identified as sure sellers.

The lack of furniture inventory has

created an opportunity to focus more on accessories. Displays have become even more creative. For example, one of the windows has a montage of accessories amid an ivory Carter's Grove carpet hung as a striking backdrop. A waist-high, interwoven stack of Williamsburg Reproductions catalogs is one of the first things customers see when they enter the store.

■ Patti Pierce, manager, Craft House at the Williamsburg Inn: To clear the store for Baker furniture, letters have been written to clients informing them of the change in manufacturers and announcing that select Kittinger pieces are on sale.

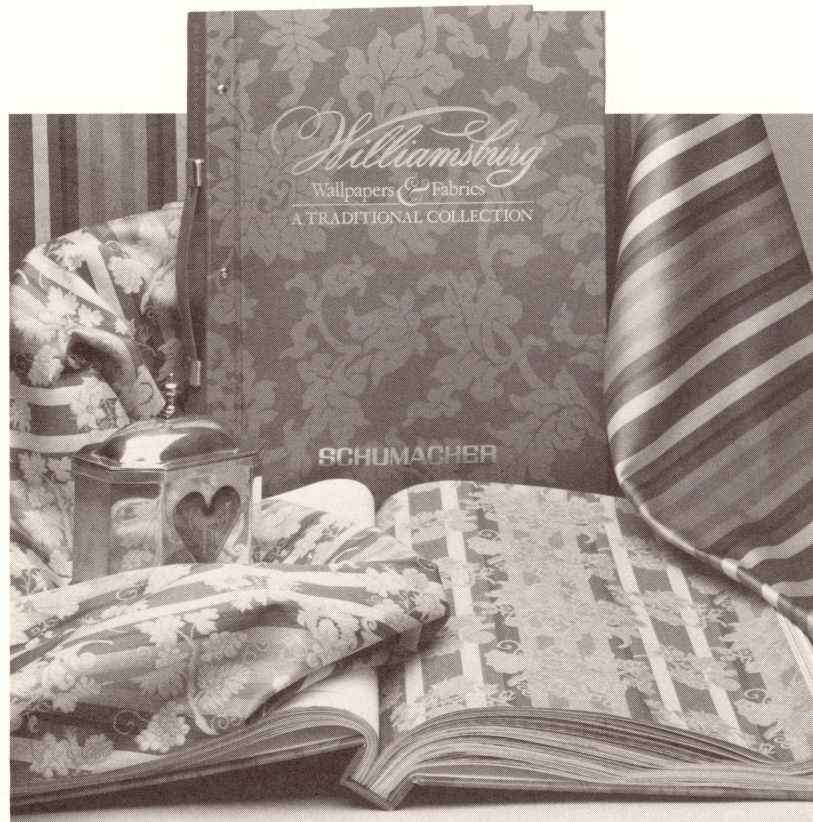
Emphasis on the services of the design studio has increased with a push

A fourth quarter report in *HFD* (December 24, 1990) warned against making drastic changes because fear of poor sales can be a self-fulfilling prophecy. Success depends on maintaining a business-as-usual attitude, providing a consistent product, controlling inventory and expenses better, and on the excitement of the merchandise.

on Williamsburg Wallpapers and Fabrics. Due to the economy, design has become more important as customers are beautifying their homes to make them more salable or livable.

A fall program alternating between the two Craft Houses will include educational, stylistic, and decorating presentations. The apple cone demonstration is one of the most popular programs and generates the most sales.

## New Wallpaper/Fabric Book: "A Traditional Collection"



Coordinating wallpapers, borders, and fabrics in the "Traditional Collection" extend interior design possibilities. Charlene Brocade is shown here with its two companion fabrics, Charlene Brocade and Charlene Stripe.

Large, elegant patterns, strong stripes, and classic tone-on-tone patterns are featured in "A Traditional Collection," the new Williamsburg Wallpapers and Fabrics book by Schumacher. New colorways have been created for such favorites as Carolina Toile and Chinese Peony, and there are entirely new and exciting patterns. Among the new introductions are Plume de Lyon with its unusual feather-fur boa design.

Most of the wallpapers in the collection are based on popular textile patterns of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. (Wallpaper manufacturers of that period also relied heavily on textile patterns for design inspiration.) Other papers in the collection have been interpreted from elements of eighteenth-century wallpapers and architectural details.

Of the collection's eighteen wallpaper patterns, thirteen are shown with matching fabrics. There are also four coordinating borders. Full, four-color photographs of room designs illustrate the use of papers, borders, and fabrics, and the historical background of each design is provided.

## Digging for Answers at Bruton Heights

Last October, the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation began an archaeological investigation on the property at Bruton Heights School to learn more about the area's seventeenth- and eighteenth-century inhabitants.

The City of Williamsburg gave Colonial Williamsburg permission to begin the excavations in advance of the Foundation acquiring the site for use as an educational facility.

Various historical maps indicate that there were structures in this area, so there is little question that substantial eighteenth-century buildings and associated landscapes once existed on or nearby the Bruton Heights property.

Remains of one of the mapped structures were encountered in the early 1940s during construction of a sewer line. At the time, several domestic artifacts including a wine bottle seal were found on the surface. Fragments of a type of seventeenth-century pottery indicated that the land may have been associated with Middle Plantation, the community that preceded Williamsburg.

The current archaeological investigation confirms this. David Muraca, staff archaeologist and project supervisor, discussed the Middle Plantation finding. "The Palisade of 1634, an elaborate fence with a ditch complex, stretched some three miles along the

western boundary of Middle Plantation, from Queens Creek to College Creek. It was designed to keep Indians on one side and the settlers' livestock on the other. The palisade has been found in other places, but in this location it is the best preserved so far. We've even been able to dig out a section of the palisade and learn more about its construction."

Remains from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on the Bruton Heights School parcel were expected to be in an excellent state of preservation except where they were disturbed by school and utility construction. Muraca discovered that "the area is in better shape than originally anticipated. In fact, the school landscaping actually put down layers of clay that helped preserve any artifacts and protected them from disturbances caused by school activities."

Findings have been carefully documented through the use of Geobase 4D, a software system used by the Foundation for the last two years. "In the past," Muraca explained, "an archaeological site was destroyed as it was being discovered, and findings were difficult to re-examine. Now we re-create the site three-dimensionally on a computer, noting what we found: all the layers of earth and soil stains which signify archaeological events, such as diggings, the passage of time, and the precise location of the found artifacts. Fifty years from now, archaeologists will be able to reinterpret what we've discovered and apply new knowledge to our findings."

When asked about artifacts the staff has found thus far, Muraca said, "The surprising discovery of ceramics dating from the early eighteenth century means we may have to push the dates for the subdevelopment back to an earlier period."

Muraca also discovered something more about the Bruton Heights School land: "We found a *ton* of marbles." He smiled, then added, "Looks like the early twentieth-century type."



*Shovel testing revealed this to be the site of an eighteenth-century building. A small section is shown partially excavated. The map predicted site is filled with rubble—once part of the eighteenth-century building that stood there.*



*The entire tract was tested at ten-meter intervals with more concentrated shovel testing done in areas known to have a high potential for archaeological remains.*

### Who settled here?

Preliminary research by Colonial Williamsburg indicates that this part of late eighteenth-century Williamsburg was settled by craftsmen such as Alexander Craig, a saddler, and James Martin, a peruke- or wig-maker. The Foundation's research department will be pursuing these matters at a later date.

## Lillian Travis Retires

After being part of the fabric and wallpaper design industry for most of her life, Lillian Travis has retired from Schumacher & Co. Lillian was with Katzenbach and Warren before joining Schumacher three years ago when the company was appointed a licensee for *Williamsburg* Wallpaper in addition to fabric.

"Lillian was a strong supporter of the *Williamsburg* Reproductions Program and for the last decade was a major influence in the shaping of *Williamsburg* Wallpaper collections. She's a wonderful believer in Colonial *Williamsburg* and will certainly be missed," said Gail Burger, product manager. She added, "We were distressed to learn recently that Lillian has been ill, and we wish her a speedy recovery. She's a very special person."

Vivian Infante has been assigned the position of director of design for *Williamsburg* Wallpaper and Printed Fabrics. Her extensive background in wallpaper includes directing design efforts for Schumacher collections.

## Retiree John Austin Busy at Work

When the Colonial *Williamsburg* Foundation offered an early retirement program, curator of ceramics John Austin decided to take the Foundation up on its offer. Although he officially retired at the end of January, Austin is busy at work. He is completing the writing of a book, *British Delft at Williamsburg*.

Austin will include 727 entries of delft examples in the collection of the Colonial *Williamsburg* Foundation along with several hundred pieces of archaeologically excavated delft. He is proud of the Foundation's collection. "I'm hoping that we'll be able to take our collection of English delft on an exhibition tour," Austin said. "The collection is the best in the country and of the same caliber as the British Museum's collection."

John Austin joined the Colonial *Williamsburg* Foundation in 1959. Graham Hood, vice president and Carlisle Humelsin curator, said, "For twenty years, John has been a constant source of inspiration for new products in ceramics and glass—and tireless in the implementation process from antique to reproduction. His special knowledge and experience will be greatly missed."



We extend our deepest sympathies to the families of Fred Jernigan and Roy Klein. Prior to his death, Fred Jernigan and his wife, Stella, owned **Jernigan's Gallery**, a gift shop in Atlanta. Stella will continue operating the business. Roy Klein, owner of **Roy Klein Interiors** in Great Falls, Virginia, passed away in December. Pat Kuszyk, who has been with the shop since Klein purchased it six years ago, is the new owner.

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### We'd Like to Hear From You!

What are you interested in reading more about? Do you have any success stories you'd like to share? Write: Pam Simpson, Colonial *Williamsburg* Foundation, P. O. Box C, *Williamsburg*, Virginia 23187.

### Licensed Manufacturers . . .

If your sales representatives would benefit from receiving this quarterly newsletter, please send their names and addresses to Sally W. Barnes, Colonial *Williamsburg* Foundation, P. O. Box C, *Williamsburg*, VA 23187. Please also include the name of the person whom we may contact annually to update the list.

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