



**Jeffrey S. Evans** & Associates

2177 Green Valley Lane • Mt. Crawford, VA 22841 • USA

TEL: 540.434.3939 FAX: 540.434.3399 EMAIL: [info@jeffreysesevans.com](mailto:info@jeffreysesevans.com)

## Virginia Decorative Arts Seminars

### 2013: A Safe Place: Punched-tin Paneled Furniture of the Valley of Virginia

Our third annual one-day colloquium, *A Safe Place: Punched-tin Paneled Furniture of the Valley of Virginia* was held at our facility on Saturday, June 15, 2013.

Lecturers were Jeffrey S. Evans, Roddy Moore and Kurt Russ.



#### Program Agenda

9:30 AM	Greetings / Introductions
9:45 AM	<b>Kurt Russ:</b> <i>"SAFE" IN-THE-HOUSE: Regionality in Punched-tin Paneled Furniture from the Southern Shenandoah Valley</i>
10:45 AM	~~~ BREAK ~~~
11:00 AM	<b>Jeff Evans:</b> <i>"An Examination of Punched-tin Paneled Furniture from Rockingham to Frederick County"</i>
12:00 PM	~~~ LUNCH ~~~
1:00 PM	<b>Roddy Moore:</b> <i>"A Survey of Wythe County and Other Safes of Southwestern Virginia"</i>
2:00 PM	~~~ BREAK ~~~
2:15 PM	<b>Jeff Evans:</b> <i>"The End of a Tradition: Phil Baker and the Brocks Gap School of Safes (1880-1935)"</i>
3:15 PM	Open Floor Discussion / Announcements / Show & Tell
3:45 PM	Closing Comments
4:00 PM	End of Program



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### **Speaker Bios**

#### **Jeffrey S. Evans**

President of Jeffrey S. Evans & Associates, Inc. (2009 to present) and former president of Green Valley Auctions, Inc. (1979-2008), Jeff Evans is a respected expert and collector of early American glass and Shenandoah Valley decorative arts who 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 MESDA and has served as guest curator on several museum exhibits. 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, still the world record auction price for a piece of American folk art painted furniture.

Museum exhibits for which Jeff has served as guest curator include a collaboration with Dr. Scott Suter on Rockingham County, Virginia folk pottery (2004; HRHS), a display of 18th to 20th century Shenandoah Valley vernacular chairs that was the culmination of thirty years of personal research (2010; Museum of the Shenandoah Valley/MSV) and a partnership with wife Beverley on Shenandoah Valley counterpanes and white work textiles (2012; Virginia Quilt Museum/VQM). The related catalogues that Jeff authored (Valley chairs, textiles) and co-wrote (folk pottery) include analytic essays and are considered authoritative references on the respective subjects. Currently in the works for Jeff is a 2010-2014 research project for which he has teamed with Kurt Russ to document Shenandoah Valley punched tin pie/food safes; their findings will culminate in a 2014 MSV exhibition and accompanying treatise.

#### **J. Roderick Moore**

J. Roderick "Roddy" Moore was born in Roanoke, Virginia and grew up in McDowell County, West Virginia. Roddy is the director of the Blue Ridge Institute and Museum at Ferrum College, where he oversees its living history farm museum, archival materials, gallery exhibits and educational programs.

A noted historian, collector, folklorist, author and guest curator for numerous museum exhibits, Roddy is also the founder of two long-running Virginia festivals that are both held annually in October. The Home Craft Days Festival in Big Stone Gap, Virginia and The Blue Ridge Folklife Festival in Ferrum, Virginia were both established in the early 1970s and continue today, four decades later. More than 10,000 people attended the 2011 BRFF, described by the New York Times as "thoroughly authentic."

Roddy is a frequent contributor to *The Magazine Antiques*, both as author and subject. He and his Great Road Pottery collection were featured in a September 1983 article (as well as a 1999 episode of PBS' *Antiques Roadshow*) and a May 2010 article written by renowned antiques dealer Sumpter Priddy focused on Roddy and Sally Moore's stellar collection of regional Southern material, which includes Virginia inlaid long-rifles, early southern face jugs, Shenandoah Valley Germanic frakturs, baskets, textiles, and earthenware. In 2007 Roddy collaborated with preeminent Virginia collector, scholar and dealer H. Marshall Goodman on an article for *The Magazine Antiques* that focused on Shenandoah County, Virginia painted boxes and miniature chests. Over the years Roddy has authored several other articles for the same periodical with many being the first-ever treatments of the subject matter. Some of the topics covered include Wythe Co. pierced tin safes and decorated blanket chests, decorated grave markers and Santo Domingo Depression jewelry.



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### **Kurt C. Russ**

A former director of Washington and Lee University's Laboratory of Anthropology and independent scholar from Lexington, Virginia, Kurt Russ 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.

Kurt has contributed articles to *The Magazine Antiques* and the annual journal *Ceramics in America* and also served with fellow ceramics experts Rob Hunter and H. Marshall Goodman as guest curators on the Virginia Historical Society's 2004-2005 exhibit, "*Stoneware Pottery of Eastern Virginia (1720-1865)*." Although Kurt's ceramic-related research and publications have mainly focused on the Shenandoah Valley, he recently teamed with Rob Hunter and Marshall Goodman to further study and document the work of early 19th century Richmond area potter, John P. Schermerhorn, one of Kurt's primary areas of focus over the past several years.

He is currently partnered with Jeff Evans on *The Virginia Safe Project*, a 2010-2014 research study committed to photographing and documenting Virginia punched-tin paneled furniture in the Shenandoah Valley and beyond, with concentration chiefly directed at the ubiquitous pie/food safe. The multi-year team effort will ultimately result in a 2014 exhibition at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley and an accompanying publication. Kurt brings to the project not only his many years of collecting and study of Virginia safes, but a keen eye, unflagging enthusiasm and expertise in nineteenth-century material culture.

### **Suggested Reading**

Crawford, Barbara and Royster Lyle, Jr. *Rockbridge County Artists and Artisans*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995.

Evans, Jeffrey S. and Kurt C. Russ. "The Kahle-Henson School of Punched-Tin Paneled Furniture" in *American Furniture 2012*. Luke Beckerdite, editor. Milwaukee, The Chipstone Foundation (2013) 57-83.

Moore, J. Roderick. "Wythe County, Virginia, Punched Tin: Its Influence and Imitators." *The Magazine Antiques* p. 601 (September 1984).

White, Betsy K. *Great Road Style: The Decorative Arts Legacy of Southwest Virginia & Northeast Tennessee*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2006.