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## Preservation Announcement:

Shhhhh... it's a surprise!

We're working on a BIG surprise for Jonathan's birthday!

Jonathan might be reading this, so we really can't say much, but next month he turns the big FOUR-O (that's right - in just 10 more years

he could be on the National Register!) and we're working on a BIG surprise to celebrate!

Stay tuned....

(And don't say anything to spoil the surprise!)

## Preservation News:

Historic Restorations has a "new addition"!

We're debuting our **PRESERVATION PRIMER VOLUME #2: Planning Your Historic Building Project, Choosing a Contractor, and What Mediocre Contractors DON'T Want You To Know** at the Greater Philadelphia Historic Home Show!

In this edition of the series of primers we've developed to help guide homeowners in their restorations projects, you'll learn:

- Which questions to ask
- What you need to plan for
- How to evaluate a contractor
- The regulations and standards you need to reference
- What to do when things go bad

You can pick up your FREE copy at the show (see our insert for free tickets!) or by contacting Moira at:

[mkarahalis@historic-restorations.com](mailto:mkarahalis@historic-restorations.com)  
or 717.925.3185



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Happy New Year! Is it as hard for you as it is for me to believe that 2014 is gone already? It seems like the years keep going by more quickly...

January is usually the coldest month of the year so we decided to warm you up a bit with a fireplace theme this month in our newsletter. So make a mug of hot chocolate, grab your favorite blanket, and snuggle in. We have a whole section on the history of fireplaces you won't want to miss... did you know Benjamin Franklin thought chimneys were ridiculous?

In preparation for her column this month on chimney care, Penelope learned all about how to inspect and maintain a chimney from Grandpa Chuck. She loves to visit her grandparents and lay by the fire (I often wonder if I could fool her with a Yule log DVD, but I haven't tried it yet), and she was really excited to learn all about how that mysterious place works and share what she learned with you.

**But our truly BIG NEWS this month is...**

We're debuting our Preservation Primer Volume 2: Planning Your Historic Building Project, Choosing a Contractor, and What Mediocre Contractors Don't Want You to Know at the Greater Philadelphia Historic Home Show next month! And we're giving away FREE TICKETS to the show! See our insert this month to claim yours.

We always enjoy the GPHHS and I hope you'll join us. It's a great way for you to meet vendors selling everything you need, from windows to cabinetry to rugs to pottery and more, for your older home. (This is Penelope's first year and apparently her sisters have told her they throw wild parties with the dog sitter while we're gone. So she's all excited now and is going to be very disappointed when she finds out they were just playing another prank on her!)

As always, if you have any questions or need anything, let me know.

*Danielle*



## Preservation Education: Hearthside History

It probably goes without saying that fireplaces were a must in early America. They heated a home, cooked food, provided light, and served as a hub for a family to gather around.

In Colonial America fireplaces were usually wide, deep, "walk-ins" without much of a mantel. Fireplaces in the homes of Dutch settlers tended to be wider than they were tall, while fireplaces in the homes of English settlers were usually smaller and less spacious.

Chimneys were common features for fireplaces by the 1700's, though not everyone was convinced yet of their virtues. Benjamin Franklin wrote in 1745, "The upright heat flies directly up the Chimney. Thus Five Sixths at least of the Heat (and consequently of the Fewel) is wasted, and contributes nothing towards warming the Room."

Franklin thought that cold air leaking into a house from the outside and replacing the warm air that was being sucked up and out the chimney was causing illnesses in households with chimneys. "Women particularly from this Cause, (as they sit much in the House) get Colds in the Head," he wrote.

Franklin would develop multiple alternate fireplace designs, including the Franklin Stove (also called the Pennsylvanian Stove), but the fireplace and the chimney he so adamantly opposed would remain firmly rooted as the predominant method of heating an American home for quite some time.

In the the Mid-Atlantic and northern regions central chimneys fed fires in two or more rooms on several floors to maximize the amount of heat a house retained, while homes in the southern regions used fireplaces at the fars ends of houses to reduce heat buildup in a home.

Until the 1800's fireplaces were purely practical affairs but heading into the mid-1800's fireplaces became the centerpieces of the main living areas in homes and mantels and other decorative fireplace elements hit the scene.

In English homes, plain or bead-edged paneling usually surrounded fireplaces from the floor to the ceiling. If the home was Dutch, decorative curtains hung above fireplaces to hide projected flues. Some homes began using the blue and white Delftware tiles, or book-matched paneling on either side of the fireplace that sometimes ran along the entire wall. The Federal and Greek

Revival mantels are iconic historic mantels with their swags, star, and shell accents.

It was also around this time that the size and shape of fireplaces changed with the emergence of the "Rumford Fireplace". At the end of the 1700's, Sir Benjamin Thompson - aka Count Rumford - decided to try different designs for the firebox of a fireplace and eventually discovered that a smaller, shallower fireplace that was taller than it was wide, with sharply angled sides that slope into a narrow chimney threw more heat back into a room, exhausted the smoke more efficiently, and eliminated backdrafts.

Not long after, industrialization hit and more and more fireplace grates would hold coal than wood and fireplace surround fashion turned to cast iron in an arched shape with decorative embellishments (something easily produced in the industrialized casting process).

The decorative elements of fireplaces would continue to become more and more ornate with the addition of overmantels and columns and glazed tiles. Until the early 1900's... when the design aesthetics turned back to simpler times as the "back-to-nature" movement inspired by Teddy Roosevelt and others fueled the Arts & Crafts movement.

With these movements, fireplaces became more rustic and natural in style, and common brick and fieldstone would start to decorate fireplaces like never before.

Since then, fireplace designs and conventions have continued to evolve - some wild, some traditional, some contemporary, some artful or whimsical, some natural and seamless with its surroundings, some that push limits, some that walk the straight-and-narrow.

But the fireplace still remains at the sentimental hub of the American home.

## Penelope's Preservation Pointers: Chimney Care

I hope everyone is keeping warm! I hear everybody complaining about how cold it is and I don't understand it. Mommy is trying to get me to understand that not everybody is lucky like me with a fur coat perfect for this cold weather, but I don't understand why they don't just grow one.

But since I have one, I've been busy outside learning about chimney care with Grandpa Chuck. He's been teaching me that chimneys are an important feature on historic buildings and that there are a few things that are important to know about.



### #1: Hearth Support

This was number one on his list. Grandpa Chuck pointed out that the hearth is the foundation of a fireplace, and if a fireplace isn't supported correctly - how well a chimney is cared for doesn't really matter. He's pretty smart isn't he? So he says it's really important to have someone make sure the hearth is properly supported, and that support is maintained or restored in historic buildings. (He didn't teach me yet how to do that, so you'll have to talk to him if you need yours checked. You can sometimes reach him at the office, but they take messages for him too when he's out on the jobsite.)

### #2: Chimney Safety

Grandpa Chuck also taught me that historic buildings were built before we knew as much as we do today about safety, so chimneys often don't have all the safety features they should. That scared me so much I had to hide behind him for awhile! He coaxed me out and reassured me that with the proper retrofits (my new vocabulary word!) a historic chimney can be very safe. And Grandpa Chuck knows what he's talking about when it comes to safety so I trust him. He says to make sure your historic chimney:

- vents properly
- has a flue liner
- and is swept regularly to prevent creosote build-up

**(If you want me to come check your chimney, just call my Mommy at 717.925.3185)**

### #3: Chimney Caps

Then Grandpa Chuck pointed out that chimneys can leak a lot of energy out of a house, particularly heat. I didn't see the big deal in this, but he reminded me not everybody is as furry as I am. So he says historic chimneys should have chimney caps, which can also prevent water getting into the chimney and damaging the masonry. (He was very proud of me when I remembered that water and masonry don't mix!) When I got all excited and distracted by a squirrel running up the chimney we were looking at, Grandpa Chuck used it as a good teaching moment after he got me calmed down and convinced me not to chase it and pointed out that chimney caps work to keep wildlife from nesting in chimneys. (I thought that was a good idea, because then they might nest in places I actually have a chance at chasing them since I can't chase them in chimneys. But Grandpa Chuck says that would be mean.)

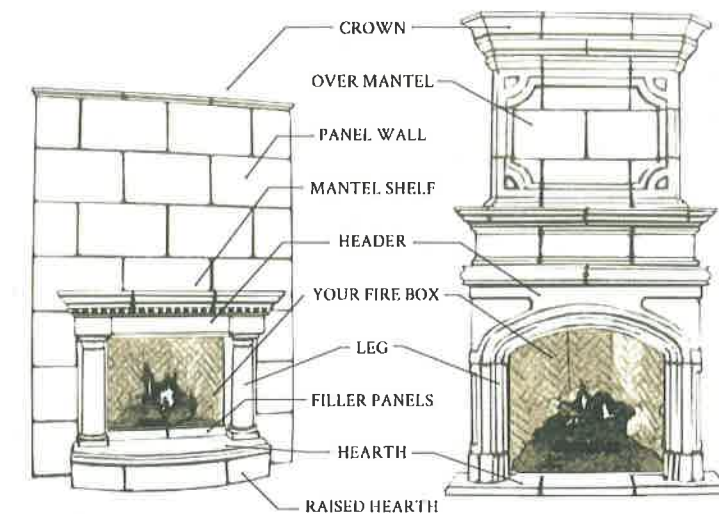
So I did some research and checked into good chimney cap options and found a good one that Grandpa Chuck likes and made sure we featured it in our Preservation Spotlight this month.

After learning all that, I was pretty tuckered out and needed to rest, because I am expecting lots of phone calls this month from people who need me to come make sure their chimneys are in good shape.

Let me know if you need me to check yours!



*PS: On the ride home I drew a picture of what Grandpa Chuck taught me about the parts of a fireplace. Daddy thought it was so good he gave me a treat!*



## Preservation Spotlight:

### All Season Control Cover, A Historically Compatible Chimney Solution

Rare is the historic homeowner who isn't concerned with energy loss and energy efficiency in their beloved historic home. Especially at this time of year when fireplaces are fired up, gathered around, and meant to be keeping a home warm instead of warming up the air outside.

It's a valid concern - most chimneys on historic buildings can experience significant energy loss. (Which would almost make one wonder why anyone ever began using chimneys, until you contemplate the conditions people lived in with fireplaces in their homes before using chimneys.)

In fact, the statistics can be rather alarming... up to 14% of a home's energy leaves through a fireplace and chimney with brand new in-throat damper and up to 40% if the dampers are old, rusted or broken.

The potential impact on your home's energy efficiency doesn't need to stop you from enjoying the warmth and comfort of your fireplace. There is a simple and effective solution for wood-burning masonry fireplaces that is compatible with the historic architecture of your home.

The All Season Control Cover chimney top fireplace damper.

We like this product because it is durable. Made from rolled steel, it can be left primed, painted, or have a powder-coated enamel finish. Installation is easy and non-invasive of your home and space. And the damper is fully adjustable, giving you control over how far you need to open it, or not open it, to maximize your energy efficiency.

But it isn't just your energy the All Season Control Cover protects. It protects your chimney and fireplace too. From the elements. From pests, rodents, and birds that might think your chimney would make a good home. (Because they usually do.) From debris. Chimneys and fireplaces are major architectural features on historic homes - features we should protect as much as any others.

**For more information about the All Season Control Cover, visit: [bit.ly/16taSy2](http://bit.ly/16taSy2). If you would like to talk to us about using an All Season Control Cover on your chimney, give us a call at 717.925.3185.**



# Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

Be our VIP Guest and get 2 FREE tickets to the Greater Philadelphia Historic Home Show!

A \$24 value! Tickets valid for Saturday & Sunday! DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: **1/30/2015**

## Greater Philadelphia Historic Home Show

Friday, February 6th through Sunday, February 8th at the  
Valley Forge Casino Resort  
1160 1st Ave., King of Prussia, PA 19406

## DESIGNER CRAFTSMEN

&

## HISTORIC HOME SHOW

The Greater Philadelphia Historic Home Show is for anyone who wants to learn about how to restore, renovate, decorate, or care for old houses and preserve our architectural history. This show is an invaluable tool for both professionals and homeowners!

Also featured is the Designer Craftsmen Show celebrating the most time honored American craftsmen in the nation, featuring the highest quality in fine art, traditional crafts, contemporary folk art, museum quality replicas, original artworks and fine furniture reproductions.

NEW This Year: Old House University

Come hear Old House Journal editor Patricia Poore present topics including House Styles and Period Interiors, Concepts for Additions, Basics of DIY Ownership, and Planning a New Kitchen.

For more information visit: [www.historichomeshow.com](http://www.historichomeshow.com)

### TO GET YOUR FREE TICKETS, SIMPLY SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING SURVEY TO US!

Our VIP guests will have reserved copies of our Preservation Primer #2.

Name

Address

Email

Phone Number

Age of Your Home

Have you been to the Greater Philadelphia Historic Home Show before?

Yes  No

Projects I am considering (check all that apply):

- Exterior Restoration
- Interior Restoration
- Compatible Addition
- Window Restoration
- Maintenance or Repairs
- Masonry Restoration
- Millwork Projects
- Whole House Restoration
- Kitchen Cabinetry
- Door/Entryway Restoration
- Roof Replacement
- Barn Restoration/Stabilization
- Barn Conversion
- Other:

Timeframe for your project:

- Now
- 3-6 months
- 6+ months
- 2016

Biggest challenges and questions I have (check all that apply):

- Choosing a Contractor
- Choosing Appropriate Treatments
- Navigating Regulations & Codes
- Evaluating Substitute Materials
- Winterizing & Seasonal Care
- Maintenance
- Energy Efficiency
- Wood Windows vs. Replacement Windows
- Historic Masonry Care
- Preserving Architectural Character
- Preserving Plaster, Cast Iron, or Tile
- Care and Maintenance of Porches
- Interior Painting
- Preservation of Log Buildings
- Adding Modern Conveniences - mechanical systems
- Other:

I am interested in the following (check all that apply):

- Education
- Products
- Services
- Events
- Training

Topics I'd like to see in the newsletter:

Training or events I would be interested in:

**To receive your free tickets email survey to Moira at [mkarahalis@historic-restorations.com](mailto:mkarahalis@historic-restorations.com) or fax to 717-291-5811**

## Preservation Education:

### Repointing Historic Brick Chimneys and Fireplaces

The masonry on historic chimneys and fireplaces is very different from the masonry on modern chimneys and fireplaces. Historic bricks were fired at lower temperatures and are much softer and more permeable than modern bricks and chimneys and fireplaces constructed with these softer bricks were designed to absorb moisture and then release it. A key component of this design was the lime mortar historically used in masonry applications, a mortar that was also soft and readily allowed moisture to pass through.

In the late 1800's, a new mortar debuted in the U.S. at the height of the Second Industrial Revolution (also known as the Technological Revolution). Favored for all the qualities a mass-production revolution could ask for (fast-curing, inexpensive, and less work for masons), Portland quickly gained popularity with masons and by the early 1900's most buildings had some Portland mortar in their masonry surfaces – usually as an additive to traditional lime mortar. By the mid-1900's Portland was no longer used as an additive and became the predominant ingredient in mortar mixes. Historic buildings were not immune to the new technology and masonry repairs on historic buildings in the 1900's were predominantly made with Portland mortar.

If your historic chimney or fireplace has been repointed in the last sixty years (and it most likely has, as it should have been), it very likely was re-pointed with a Portland cement mortar mix.

A common mistake, Portland mortar applied to historic chimneys and fireplaces doesn't just erode the historic fabric of the chimney or fireplace, it causes physical damage that is often permanent.



Traditional mortars worked with the softer historic masonry materials to expand and contract together as temperatures and moisture

levels changed, creating a wall and masonry surface that “breathed” to expel excess moisture. Applying a Portland mortar mix to a historic masonry surface disrupts that relationship and traps moisture in the wall and historic bricks.

Moisture trapped within walls will not easily pass through Portland cement mortar and will be forced through the soft brick instead, a path of much less resistance. When the water evaporates, salt deposits are left behind that crystallize that destroys the protective shell of the bricks. Once this outer surface is damaged, the softer insides of historic bricks rapidly disintegrate.

And the moisture issues caused by Portland mortar on a historic chimney or fireplace can begin to destroy historic bricks within just a few years.

If you want to make sure your historic bricks aren't permanently damaged by and lost to unnecessary moisture damage, make sure you have a qualified professional evaluate the mortar to determine whether or not Portland mortar is present and decide on an appropriate remedy if it is.

## Upcoming Events

### Winter History Class

*Thursdays, January 26th - March 19th, 9am to 12pm, Ephrata Cloister*

Explore the history of the Historic Ephrata Cloister and the wider PA German world, local and early PA history! Includes a day long field trip at an additional cost in the end of March. Topics include PA German Kitchen Gardens, Revolutionary War Prisoners in Lancaster, Ephrata Post Cards, Ephrata's Sisters' and Other Communal Buildings, Ephrata's Wallcharts.

**For more information visit:** [bit.ly/1wj6bQQ](http://bit.ly/1wj6bQQ)

### Beginning Woodcarving

*Saturday, February 7th, 9am to 4pm, Landis Valley Museum*

Participants will be given step-by-step instruction on carving one or more wood cut-outs, how to sharpen knives and other tools, and finishing techniques for their carvings. There is a materials fee of \$10.

**For more information visit:** [bit.ly/1A6hj4S](http://bit.ly/1A6hj4S)

### Broom Making

*Saturday, February 7th, 9am to 4pm, Landis Valley Museum*

Learn the basics of broom making and get “swept away” while you make two brooms in this beginner session on broom making skills. Students should bring a sharp pair of scissors.

**For more information visit:** [bit.ly/1A6hj4S](http://bit.ly/1A6hj4S)

## Historic Home Show

*February 6th - 8th, Valley Forge Casino Resort  
1160 1st Ave., King of Prussia, PA 19406*

This event is for anyone who wants to learn about how to restore, renovate, decorate, or care for old houses and preserve our architectural history.

**Don't forget to hunt us down!**

**We'll be in booths H145-H147,  
debuting our Preservation Primer #2.**

**Oh, and we'll be available to answer  
all of your old house questions!**