The virtual sessions of the 2024 ALHFAM Annual Meeting and Conference feature speakers from around the world who are dedicated to protecting cultural traditions and skills. Your participation will expose you to a range of tools, methods, ideas and experiences that can strengthen the preservation of intangible culture within the field of living history.

Sonrisa Crespin
Conference Chair

Registration Information
If you registered for the in-person conference you are automatically registered for the virtual sessions; no additional fees apply.

Registration for the virtual portion of the conference opens June 3 and closes August 23, 2024.

Virtual-Only Registration Fee:
- Members - $90
- Non Members - $130 (Includes 1 year ALHFAM Individual Membership)
Virtual Conference at a Glance

**Monday, September 9**

10 a.m. EST  Opening Remarks

10:30 a.m.  Keynote Address: Claus Kropp

11:05 a.m.–12:10 p.m.  Morning Sessions

11:05 a.m.  Creating an Apprenticeship
11:40 a.m.  Creating a Work Culture that Prioritizes Preservation

12:15–1:15 p.m.  Lunch and Lunch Meetings

12:40 p.m.  Arts and Culture Professional Interest Group (PIG) Meeting

1:15–5:15 p.m.  Afternoon Sessions

1:15 p.m.  Living History Institute *(Panel Session)*
2:25 p.m.  Partnering with Tourism
3:00 p.m.  Preserving the Receipts for Preserves, Pancakes & Picnics
3:35 p.m.  Volunteer Management and Learning
4:20 p.m.  Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility (IDEA Committee led *Panel Session*)

5:20–5:30 p.m.  Closing Remarks

**Tuesday, September 10**

10 a.m. EST  Opening Remarks

10:20 a.m.–12:30 p.m.  Morning Sessions

10:20 a.m.  Living History at the Museum of the American Revolution *(Panel Session)*
11:25 a.m.  Succession Planning Resources
12:00 p.m.  Transfer of Practice

12:30–1:30 p.m.  Lunch and Lunch Meetings

1:30–4 p.m.  Afternoon Sessions

1:30 p.m.  Researching the Environment, Heat and Ventilation in Homes
2:05 p.m.  The Preservation Trades Challenge
2:40 p.m.  Customizable "Skills Experience" and "Traveling Teacher" Programs
3:15 p.m.  "In My Previous Life" *(Panel Session)*

4–5 p.m.  ALHFAM Skill & Knowledgebase (A.S.K.) Presentation and Closing Discussion
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Monday, September 9

Opening Remarks & Keynote Address (10–11 a.m. EST)

Keynote Speaker, Claus Kropp

After graduating from Heidelberg University (GER), Claus Kropp worked at the University’s Department of History for three years, most recently as an assistant at the chair for medieval history. In 2013 Claus’ professional path led him to the Lauresham Laboratory for Experimental Archaeology, which he continues to manage. The site is both an archaeological open-air museum focusing on the Early Middle Ages as well as a research facility. One of Claus’ main research interests is the study of medieval agriculture and its relation to the present. Both professionally and personally Claus is a passionate ox driver and operates a small scale farm with his family.

Keynote Address:
Gone but not Forgotten—Strategies on How to Implement Long-Term Skill Training, Preservation and Curation on Your Site (10:30–11a.m.)

Claus Kropp, Director, Lauresham Open-Air Laboratory for Experimental Archaeology

Museum sites on a regular basis face the challenge that long-acquired skills may get lost with retirement of staff members. This can create existential problems when it comes to the preservation of these skills as they are needed to meet the quality standards we lay out for our sites, e.g. authenticity, mastering traditional crafts etc. By using a recent case study, this paper seeks to present ways on how to install a holistic system of both skill training, preservation and curation on a site, while focusing on questions that are central to the conference theme: How do we teach skills? How do we document them for long term preservation? How can we create a database of background information and stories as we do with other collection items?

Morning Sessions (11:10 a.m.—12:15 p.m.)

Creating an Apprenticeship: How to Begin to Create a Learning Curriculum for Your Trade (11:05–11:35 a.m.)

Justin Chapman, Assistant Director of Historic Trades and Skills, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

Colonial Williamsburg has a long history of trades development. In this seminar we will examine how we structure learning for staff who are just beginning a trade and what we hope the end result will be. We will discuss length of apprenticeship, increments of advancement, basics vs. specialization, and various aspects of organizing learning and time management.

Creating a Work Culture that Prioritizes Preservation of Intangible Culture (11:40–12:10 p.m.)

Ellen Gasser, Professional Interpreter, Consultant, Writer and Storyteller

Large-scale loss of long-term seasonal staff due to the Pandemic has highlighted the challenges that living history sites face in preserving intangible cultural heritage. There are few mentors left to pass on the skills and passion for living history. Attracting new seasonals has also proven difficult. Good leaders are the key to success in creating the positive work cultures crucial for rebuilding dedicated seasonal staff teams necessary to strengthen the preservation of intangible culture. This session will focus on providing current and aspiring leaders with ideas and strategies for creating rewarding work cultures that result in enthusiastic, creative staff who are motivated to learn and continually add to their living history skills. Ways to communicate your vision, as a leader, to staff and inspire a passion for living history, a sense of belonging and shared purpose, that encourages them to return season after season to share intangible cultural heritage with the public, will also be discussed.

Lunch and Lunch Meetings (12:15–1:15 p.m.)

Arts & Culture Professional Interest Group (PIG) Meeting (12:40–1:10 p.m.)

Cecelia "Cece" Otto, Creator and Performer, An American Songline

Over the years I’ve had people come to me and express an interest in creating a PIG that encompasses those intangible aspects of living history, specifically those revolving around music, literature, arts, and other aspects of culture. I am facilitating this informal discussion to determine if there’s truly a need for this, and if so, take the next steps to create this PIG for the ALHFAM community-at-large.
Afternoon Sessions (1:15–5:15 p.m.)

Living History Institute: Review, Reflection, Next Steps (Panel Session) (1:15–2:15 p.m.)
Debra Reid, Curator, The Henry Ford
Nathan Schultz, School & Youth Program Coordinator, Fort Ticonderoga
Annelise Meck, Independent museum & DEI professional

Participants in the 2023 and 2024 Living History Institutes (LHI) are invited to this discussion and summative evaluation of the programs to date. LHI co-organizers Reid and Schultz, joined by Meck (2023), intended for this to follow the 2023 LHI, and are looking forward to a combined session after a second year. This discussion encourages continued dialogue about how participants in the 2023 and 2024 LHIs used the information from the institute; what they need to accomplish their living history goals; and what future LHIs need to include to further collective goals and strengthen living history practice moving forward. The outcome will be a plan for 2025 LHI training.

Partnering with Tourism Offices to Promote and Preserve Local Tangible and Intangible Culture (2:25–2:55 p.m.)
Heidi Schlag, President, Culture-Link Communications, LLC

Today's tourists want authentic, place-based experiences where they can immerse themselves in the local culture. To meet that demand, tourism offices are marketing their destinations' unique heritage and culture. Museums, as the keepers of the community's tangible and intangible histories, should be at the tourism table. This session will explore the collaborative opportunities between history organizations and local tourism offices to curate authentic experiences that resonate with both visitors and residents. By understanding the operational dynamics of tourism offices, we will examine the role museums can play as content creators, interpreters, and tourism product producers. Storytelling tours, folklife festivals, hands-on workshops, and other authentic products will highlight your area's tangible and intangible culture. These experiences are like gold to tourism offices, providing them a wealth of promotional opportunities, while your museum benefits from increased publicity, visitation, and interest in your mission. Presenter Heidi Schlag, who has worked with both history museums and tourism offices, will provide examples of partnerships that work.

Preserving the Receipts for Preserves, Pancakes & Picnics (3:00–3:30 p.m.)
Carrie Midura, Coordinator of Historical Clothing & Households, Old Sturbridge Village

The skills related to historical domestic management are best learned through practice. Is it possible to take advantage of 21st-century digital tools to capture this institutional knowledge in real time and provide support to staff at various points on their own learning journeys? This session explores the methods used at Old Sturbridge Village over the past 12 months to make period receipts, menus, households-related interpretative notes, original research and training videos available and accessible in user-friendly formats. An honest look at the wins, losses and draws in our own progress will be shared along with the list of digital resources we used.

Cultures of Craftsmanship: Volunteer Management and Learning at The Historic Village at Allaire (3:35–4:05 p.m.)
Dr. Linnea Kuglitsch, Manager of Volunteers and Historical Programming, The Historic Village at Allaire

Museums rely on volunteer labor to produce a memorable and educational experience for their visitors. Living history museums are unique among their institutions: rather than supervising or assisting museum guests throughout their visits, most volunteer interpreters must learn and demonstrate practical techniques and crafts such as blacksmithing, cooking, and carpentry. This paper explores the process of building and sustaining a culture of craftsmanship among volunteer interpreters. How can we ensure that information, skills, and regulations are passed from one volunteer to the next? How can we support and expand these “communities of practice” safely and effectively? This paper digs into these questions through the lens of legitimate peripheral participation at a living history museum located in Monmouth County, New Jersey: The Historic Village at Allaire.

IDEA Committee Meeting (Panel Session) (4:20–5:15 p.m.)
Arlene Emmert, Committee Chair, ALHFAM
Jennifer Frazee, ALHFAM Board Member

The ALHFAM IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility) committee was formed to take the lead on researching and creating organization-wide IDEA-related projects and initiatives for ALHFAM. We meet monthly and work to focus on projects and goals that will help set guidelines and support for IDEA. In this session we will share the work the committee has done since its formation, from creating the ALHFAM IDEA statement to our current work of creating an inclusive language guide for ALHFAM projects and programs.

Closing Remarks (5:20–5:30 p.m.)
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Washington Crossing Park Association
Opening Remarks (10–10:15 a.m. EST)

Morning Sessions (10:20 a.m.–12:30 p.m.)

Living History at the Museum of the American Revolution
(Panel Session)
(10:20–11:20 a.m.)

Tyler Putnam, Museum of the American Revolution
Meg Bowersox, Manager of Gallery Interpretation
Mike Idriss, Manager of the African American Interpretive Program
Rebecca Franco, Manager of Family Programs

This panel will explore seven years of living history programming at the Museum of the American Revolution, which opened in 2017 in Philadelphia. What have we learned about integrating traditional and innovative living history - including third-person interpretation, theatrical programming, hands-on activities and outdoor events - into a gallery-based museum experience? Where are we headed as the 250th anniversary of independence approaches? The presenters will discuss the Museum’s interpretive philosophies and standards, how we work with volunteers and contractors, the African American and Native American Interpretive programs, theatrical and informal interpretation, and other aspects of our work.

Succession Planning Resources You Can Use Now
(11:25–11:55 a.m.)

Michelle Eisenberg, Executive Director, Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts
Tom Clareson, Senior Consultant, Digital & Preservation Services, Lyrasis

Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts and Lyrasis, under a Museum Leadership grant from IMLS, are finalizing a national research and resource development project addressing succession planning in cultural heritage institutions. Presenters will share the results of a series of listening sessions and a national survey, and orient attendees to a suite of tools and resources developed in response to this feedback from across many kinds of cultural institutions. The resources include templates, worksheets and guides that organizations can use to support succession planning and knowledge transfer.

Transfer of Practice
(12–12:30 p.m.)

Clarissa F. Dillon, Ph.D.

If you have authentication for an 18th century practice, can you “transfer” the practice to an undocumented 18th century source? For example, if you have documentation and authentication for grinding mustard seed with a cannonball, can you use it for grinding peppercorns? This paper deals with interpretation and the application of known practices. This is something that we as interpreters deal with all the time - alone, in groups, and with the public.

Lunch/Meetings (12:30–1:30 p.m. EST)
Afternoon Sessions (1:30– 4:00 p.m.)

Researching the Environment, Heat and Ventilation in Homes of Early Modern England and Scotland: The Common Folk
(1:30–2:00 p.m.)
Ava Martin, Traditional Trades Advancement Program Intern, American Conservation Experience

In the twenty-first century, many builders design houses based on possible profits, lot size, maximum indoor space and sweeping views. However, for thousands of years prior, people built their houses using the materials at hand, common sense and familiarity with their local environment. Poorer residents used a variety of techniques to supplement each other for maximum efficiency and sustainability. During a time of increased climate change and resource scarcity, modern society would benefit from integrating historical, common-sense practices into housing. Using the Early Modern period (1500-1700) as an example, I will examine how heat, ventilation and the local environment all contributed to the way everyday people built and lived in their homes.

The Preservation Trades Challenge: Re-Discovering How to Install an Unusual Roof
(2:05–2:35 p.m.)
Rick Kriebel, Manager of Collections and Programs, Newtown History Center of the Stone House Foundation
Byron C. Smith, Executive Director & Curator, Newtown History Center of the Stone House Foundation

This is a case study in how administrative staff can join in STP. The core of the Stone House Foundation’s mission is to restore the Stone House to its 1830s appearance. Step one was installing a new roof. But we had no written record describing the roof, and when we learned what type it was we found out that it was a rare variety. Our staff had to find specialists who could create the shingles and install them, and then documented this process using photographs and video for future reference.

Introducing customizable "Skills Experience" and "Traveling Teacher" Programs
(2:40–3:10 p.m.)
Lauren Muney, Committee member, ALHFAM Skills Training and Preservation (STP) Committee

This session introduces two programs created by the ALHFAM STP which connect teachers and learners using ALHFAM’s proposed SkillBank. The first program is an informal on-site professional learning program: A practitioner (and/or site) and a learner make custom arrangements for the learner to be on site with the practitioner, directly gaining an overview of the skill or trade and learning its details, as well as the general site culture, customs, skills, movements, management, habits, time-schedule and processes. The second program is a traveling-teaching program whereby sites arrange for an instructor to travel to its own location to teach one or more subjects for the benefit of the site staff and volunteers (or museum) to learn. This model of “teachers come to the listeners” type of learning is inspired by the Lyceum Movement (started 1826), Mechanics Institutes (started 1821), the Chautauqua Movement (started 1873) and even the Farmer’s Institutes (started 1853). This type of instruction benefited the communities which were unable to travel to the teacher. Both programs are detailed yet allow for complete customization as needed.

"In My Previous Life": Incorporating Philosophies from Previous Experiences Into Museum Management
(3:15–4:15 p.m.)
Matthew Walls, Village Education Manager, Sauder Village
Leah Roggeman, Interpretation Manager, Conner Prairie

Starting a new career in museum management means learning a lot of new skills. Luckily, you have preserved skills from each experience you’ve had, and now it’s time to put them to use in your new role. Join Matthew Walls and Leah Roggeman, as they talk about how they’ve incorporated the lessons and philosophies from their “previous lives” as an actor and educator into their new roles as managers at Conner Prairie and Sauder Village, with little to no previous museum experience. Then the session will be open for discussion so that attendees may share similar experiences and hear from others about how they’ve blended elements of their “previous lives” into their current management position. This session will open participants up to new ideas they may not have previously considered and teach them how to look for inspiration outside of their field.

Closing Roundtable Discussion (4:30–5:30 p.m.)
The conference will conclude with the debut of ALHFAM’s updated Skill & Knowledgebase (A.S.K.) presented by members of Princeton University’s I.T. Department, who are giving it new capacities that allow for the storage and search of photographs, videos, audio recordings and other digital assets. All are invited to discuss the opportunities that lie ahead as we introduce new methods to curate living history and preserve skills and intangible culture.