



## **HISTORIC HOUSE INTERPRETIVE INFORMATION**

### **The People of Carriage Hill**

- The Arnold family was German Baptist Brethren and their religion greatly influenced their lifestyle
- They were somewhat affluent, not merely subsistence farmers
- They were above average craftsmen
- They were progressive in their farming practices and mechanical interests

### **Construction of the House**

- The brick farmhouse is called the D. A. house because it was built by Daniel and Catharine Arnold. They lived in the Log house from 1830 until the brick home was completed in 1836
- The brick home was originally a “center hall house” common in Virginia, with 2 rooms down and 2-3 up
- The woodwork throughout the house is walnut. The woodwork was painted in the 1950s but has been stripped and restored by staff and volunteers.
- The wall separating the front parlor and the bedroom is made of poplar with a chair rail of walnut. This wall had been removed during a 20th century renovating and was reconstructed to match the original wall immediately above it on the second floor.
- All the floors in the house are made of ash and are original
- The doorway leading from the parlor to the porch is newer (between 1898 and 1906). It replaced a window, which was moved to the west wall in the downstairs bedroom.
- The windowsills are wide due to the thickness of the outer walls.

- The window glass in the front section of the house appears wavier than that in the newer section due to technological improvements. The early windowpanes contain glass which was made by blowing a sphere and spinning it to form a flat sheet, thus creating waves and bubbles and was limited in size. Improvements in technology in the 1850s and 1860s allowed the creation of smoother and larger panes of glass.

### **Furnishing the House**

- The house is furnished in a very plain and simple fashion, based on the recollections of Henry H. Arnold's grandchildren who lived in the house in the 1890s.
- The family being German Baptist affected their furniture selection. We have no evidence that there was ever a sofa in the house, only many rockers and straight back chairs

### **Parlor**

- Two of the arrow-back chairs were built by Henry H. Arnold.
- The parlor was reserved for company, and diary entries cite its use for the first meeting of the Old German Baptist Church.
- An album containing family photos is located on the table in the front parlor.
- Fireplaces and wood stoves were the sources of heat for the home.

### **Bedroom**

- The downstairs bedroom was always the master bedroom.
- The bed and bureau are plain in comparison with the ornate Victorian furnishings common to the period.
- The bed has both straw and feather ticks (mattresses) which are held up by tautly stretched rope. The wooden "key" on the bed is used to tighten the ropes. Note: Although you may have heard that the phrase "sleep tight" refers to tighten the ropes on a bed, please do not mention this in your house tours. Our research has shown that the word "tight" in the 18th and 19th centuries meant to do something well or completely. The phrase simply meant sleep well. We have found no documentation from the 19<sup>th</sup> century that traces the phrase to rope beds, and a leading university word specialist has reached the same conclusion. We need to be careful about repeating what we hear at other sites – they may not have it right!
- The chamber pot under the bed would have been used when it was dark and a trip to the outhouse was necessary.
- In fall, pumpkins were stored under the bed, because the bedroom stayed drier than the basement.
- The barrel in the corner would have been used to store sweet potatoes.
- The trunks were used to store blankets and clothing.
- The pitcher and bowl set would have been used for face-washing in the morning and a daily sponge-bath.
- Samuel Arnold, a young adult when the room was plastered, wrote his name above the mantle. It was left uncovered in order to share this bit of family history with the public.

- The walnut cradle is a reproduction of the one built by Henry Arnold for his children.
- The family chart on the wall did belong to the family. Aside from this piece, the church frowned upon decorating with pictures.

### **Dining room/family sitting room**

- The dining room was used for big family dinners and threshing dinners. It was often used in the same way that we use our family rooms today. The family would gather there to sew, read, or talk.
- A wall pocket is located to the right of the medicine chest. This is one of the few family pieces that reflect the Victorian style. It was used to hold newspapers and magazines.
- The period clock is similar to one owned by the family.

### **Kitchen**

- The fireplace was used for heat, and perhaps for heating water. Very few people were cooking on a hearth when this 1878 addition was built. Bathing was probably done here.
- The table is a reproduction of the one used by the family in the 1880s and the chairs copied from those brought from Virginia when the Arnolds came in 1830.
- Two panes of glass in the window by the table have "MINA" scratched on them. Mina's brother Lawrence did this in a childhood prank at some point in the 1890s.
- The pie-safe cabinet has pierced tin panels which permit air to circulate while food from flies and mice.
- The pitcher-pump in the pantry originally brought cistern water into the house, but is now attached to a drinkable water supply.

## KITCHEN INTERPRETIVE INFORMATION

Our primary function in the kitchens at Carriage Hill is to interpret farm life as it relates to kitchen activities. It is an opportunity to integrate information about the gardens, food storage methods, the availability of food stuffs in urban situations, women's work on the farm, and seasonal changes. Our goal is to share our knowledge and talents with the visiting public and help them experience daily farm life a century ago. Remember that a smile and enthusiasm are as important as your talents and knowledge.

Carriage Hill Farm has both summer and winter kitchens, as well as an outdoor bake oven.



**The winter kitchen is in the main house and includes the cook stove, water pump and pantry.**

- It is part of the house addition built in 1878 by Henry H. Arnold.
- The fireplace in the kitchen was possibly used for cooking, until the cook stove was purchased sometime before 1891, although fireplace cooking was becoming obsolete in this area by the latter part of the 19th century. A more probable explanation is that the fireplace was used during cool spring and fall days when the stove was out of the main house.

**The original summer kitchen/wash house, with its large fireplace, was built in 1851.**

- Built away from the main house, its major purpose was to keep the extreme heat from cooking away from the house during warm weather.
- Each spring the family would move its kettles, utensils, dishes, and food to the summer kitchen. In the fall everything would be moved back into the main house.
- After the cook stove was purchased, it was also moved back and forth seasonally and was located in the room next to the brick building.
- The dinner bell on the roof was used to call the men to dinner.

- The screened portion of the building was used as a wash house year-round.

### **Kitchen Furnishings**

- A large work/eating table, chairs, a dry sink, a pie safe and cook stove were usually the only major furnishings.
- The dry sink allowed the storage of water containers, towels, and soap and provided a place for washing hands and dishes.
- The pie safe with its pierced tins, permitted air to circulate throughout the cabinet. Non-perishables were placed in the cabinet to keep flies and mice out of the food supplies.

### **Cook stoves**

- The winter kitchen cook stove firebox is on the left-hand side. Shake down the ashes and lay the fire. Be sure to have the lever on the front next to the oven door pushed in.
- After a hot fire is burning it can be regulated by closing the drafts part way.
- If you are planning to use the oven, pull the lever near the oven door out. It is necessary to have a hot fire going well before the lever is pulled in order to prevent the escape of smoke through the stove lids.
- The summer kitchen cook stove operates in a similar manner. The firebox and oven open on the left-hand side of the stove.

### **Bake Oven**

- The bake oven was probably not used regularly after the cook stove was purchased. We do know that it was repaired and used for a large quantity of baked goods for a church meeting. It was easier to use a cook-stove oven for the weekly baking. Carriage Hill's bake oven is a reconstruction on its original foundation site.
- To use the bake oven, open the draft in the front door and build a large fire in the oven. Keep a large fire going for an hour or so, stoke it again and let it burn down for another hour. Scrape the wood and ashes into a metal container in front of the oven and put your pans inside the oven. It is the heat in the bricks that will bake the bread. Close the door draft to keep the heat in.



## **Fires**

- Many interpretive demonstrations include building fires. Fires in the bake oven, parlor stove and cook stoves are all built in a similar fashion using paper, kindling (corncobs, twigs, or shavings) and wood. Do not put other things into the fires as it may ruin the ashes that are used for making lye.
- Newspapers can be found in the barrel in the pantry.
- Kindling is next to the wood box.
- Wood is in the wood-boxes in the kitchen and on the side porch.
- Know where the fire extinguishers are. Extinguishers are located behind the door in the wash house, on the door frame inside the pantry, and in the summer kitchen, and in the basement stairwell.
- Be cautious with long dresses, as it is very easy to scorch them.
- Lastly, always be aware of where visitors are when standing near a wood stove.

## **Flies**

- Flies were a fact of life to the 19th century homemaker. Interpret them by keeping towels over food, lids on pots, using the fly screen, and the flycatchers.

## **Freezer**

- The refrigerator freezer can be used for storing items that need to be frozen. The upright freezer is for long term storage and must be closed securely.

## **Recipes**

- All recipes must be documented to a period cookbook. We have many recipes available both in the pantry and the library. Please contact the Education Coordinator for additional period recipes.
- Be sure you are using ingredients that were available at this time of year. Explain to the visitor where you would have gotten the ingredients – cellar, garden, purchased canned, brought in by the railroad etc.

**Staples**

- Most of the staples are provided. Staples will be stored in jars in the pantry or in jars on the shelf in the summer kitchen. Additional staples are stored in the plastic containers in the basement.
- If you plan to fix an item we normally do not keep on hand, please contact the Education Coordinator a few days ahead of time so that the item may be purchased for you. Also check ahead of time to make sure we have ice available if you plan to make ice cream.
- When needed, transfer ingredients to period correct containers keeping all modern items out of sight.

**Water**

- The pump in the pantry does have drinkable water. The pump may have to be primed by pouring a little water in the top while pumping.
- Remember that the sink has no drain so when members of the public pump water you must also have them take the pan out and dump it.
- Be sure to leave a full pitcher of water so the next person may prime the pump.

**Matches**

- Matches are kept in a tin in the pantry or on the kitchen mantle. Please be careful to keep them away from the public.

**Clean Up**

- Kitchen cleanup is an important part of a period cooking demonstration. Plan your kitchen cleanup so that you can be finished by closing time.

**Non-Cooking Demonstrations**

- You may choose to demonstrate other homemaking skills such as apple drying (we have drying racks), shelling peas, washing clothes in the summer kitchen, washing oil lamps, ironing clothes, ice cream making, butter churning, snapping beans, stringing beans to dry and cutting garden vegetables to give a few suggestions. Contact the Education Coordinator or Volunteer Coordinator for information.

**Samples**

- Our visitors enjoy sampling period cooking, but the demonstration is always the most important part. Please read and familiarize yourself with the Parks Food Safety Policy.
- Disposable cups, utensils, etc. are kept in plastic containers in the basement on the shelves by the water heater.

## KITCHEN GARDEN & TRUCK PATCH INTERPRETIVE INFORMATION

Selecting garden seeds, hotbeds and cold frames, and planting, maintaining, and harvesting garden produce were a very important part of 19th century life. Although foodstuffs were available in the stores most farmers relied on the success of their gardens for their year-round diet.

At Carriage Hill Farm, there is on-going research into what varieties were available to the ordinary farmer in the 1880s and what might have been planted in this area. References have been gleaned from period diaries, advertisements, books, papers, seed catalogs, and agricultural reports. Contemporary books addressing the problems of heirloom seeds, individuals who have preserved seeds, and information supplied by Seed Savers Exchange and the Association of Living Historical Farms and Agricultural Museums have been helpful.

Carriage Hill Farm has both a kitchen garden and a truck patch in their 19th century locations. The kitchen garden is a relatively small garden area close to the house. It was planted with those small quantities of vegetables that were most likely to be used fresh in the summer kitchen. The northern end of the garden was planted with herbs, so they would be convenient for summertime cooking. The size, location and appearance of the kitchen garden was described by the members of the Arnold family who were remembering the farm at the turn of the century.

The garden layout is typical of 19th century German gardens both in Europe and in America. They were made with small beds with walkways between them, and they were usually fenced.

The large quantities of vegetables needed for winter storage and for processing were grown in this garden. The pole beans, quantities of pumpkins and other vegetables that require a lot of space were typically grown in the larger garden.

The term “truck patch” or market garden usually refers to a larger plot used to grow heavier produce to take to market. Farms that were located near a larger city or town would often rely on growing various items to sell to bring in extra income. Crops like pumpkins, potatoes, turnips, beans, and melons were all grown in these large plots. In some cases, a farmer could produce his yearly income off of selling just heavy vegetables and crops. In the case of the Arnold family, they discuss in their diaries that they produced “two wagon loads of turnips to take to market”. This gives a better idea of the quantities that would be produced through market gardening. The term “truck” was used in several different ways during the 1880s. It could refer to heavy produce that would be taken to market to sell. It could also refer to a heavy wagon used to haul produce with. Lastly, it could be used as a verb in describing how something was hauled to town. Thus, the produce was “trucked” to town.