

Notes from the Farms

THE JOURNAL OF THE STICKLEY MUSEUM AT CRAFTSMAN FARMS



From the Director's Chair

-Vonda K. Givens

"Alright, Mr. DeMille, I'm ready for my close-up."

I'm sure we declared Norma Desmond's famous line from Sunset Boulevard at least once on November 2, 2018 when an episode of the docu-series "On Demand with Rob Lowe" was filmed at Craftsman Farms.

Focused on the New Jersey Historic Trust and its 52-year commitment to saving New Jersey history through historic preservation, this 6-minute, short-form documentary was shot at Craftsman Farms on a gorgeous fall day in 2018 with the trees at peak color.

The episode premiered at Craftsman Farms at a special event on Saturday, May 4, and now it may be viewed in several ways: on PBS stations nationwide; in a 1-minute commercial format on New York and Philadelphia cable stations, including TLC, HGTV, Bravo and the History Channel, and via the website for the Trust. (NJHT. org/News)

While it's not unusual for the museum to field requests for filming at Craftsman Farms, the expansive distribution of the "On Demand" episode is noteworthy and offers a significant opportunity to present the museum to a large nationwide audi-

Continued on page 2



THE STICKLEY MUSEUM AT CRAFTSMAN FARMS

THE
AMERICAN
ARTS AND
CRAFTS
CHAIR:
"A Message of
Honesty and Joy"

Saturday, June 1, 2019 to Sunday, January 5, 2020

The museum's new exhibition will open on Saturday, June 1, 2019 and run through Sunday, January 5, 2020. Guest curated by David Cathers, the exhibition will be installed in the Log House dining room. It will examine the American Arts and Crafts chair through thirteen featured side chairs, from early-20th-century handicraft-oriented manufacturers, among them Gustav Stickley's Craftsman Workshops, the L. & J. G. Stickley Company and the Charles P. Limbert Company, and small craft-oriented workshops, including Charles Rohlfs, the Roycroft Shops, Byrdcliffe Arts Colony and Rose Valley Association.

"I wanted to focus this exhibition on Arts and Crafts side chairs," writes David Cathers, "because a chair can reveal so much: decorative motifs, the colors and textures of materials, construction methods, even design philosophy, all in a compact and readily comprehensible form. My hope is that the museum's display of thirteen exemplary side chairs will be beautiful, and also enlightening."

The museum's educational mission has been a key part of the exhibition's development. As Executive Director Vonda Givens notes, "For a large portion of our audience,

Continued on page 2



Director's Chair continued from page 1

ence. And for much of this audience, both the property and Stickley himself will be new.

This opportunity reminds me of a conversation I had with David Cathers and members of the museum's curatorial committee when we began developing the exhibition *The American Arts and Crafts Chair*. While our "core" audience has sweeping knowledge of Arts and Crafts and Stickley, for a much larger percentage, both online and onsite, their paths to understanding are just beginning. For them, the name Stickley is often known but the breadth and depth of his Craftsman aesthetic, and of Arts and Crafts ideology as a whole, is often quite new.

Our exhibition was developed with this audience in mind. While we hope long-time Stickley fans will relish this opportunity to commune with "old friends"—from Limbert to McHugh to Rohlfs—for new Stickley fans, it will offer a chance to study and make observations and learn from the expertise of David Cathers and from the distinguished contributors to the Visitor's Guide, including Kevin Tucker, Timothy Hansen, Michael McCracken, Jill Thomas-Clark and Jonathan Clancy.

Much of the museum's current mission is centered on our responsibility to inspire both new and dedicated enthusiasts. Our new Education Center, now under construction (see pg. 10), and our travel program were both designed for these purposes. Whether we are touring the Bay Area, as we did last year, or visiting the Catskill Mountains for a retreat at the Mohonk Mountain House, coming up on July 9-12 (see page 6), our focus is on the same complex ideas that captivated Stickley—beauty, harmony, simplicity, honesty—and seeking personal meaning in them.

The timelessness and universal appeal of Arts and Crafts ideals helps to make the mission of the museum, now in its 30th year, ever new. Stickley sought to manifest those ideals in his vision for Craftsman Farms, and we are committed to that legacy today. It's what makes Craftsman Farms special for the first-time visitor or the longtime fan. It's what makes the property camera-ready on a spring morning in April or a sunny afternoon in November. Thanks to Mr. Stickley, we're always ready for our close-up.



a museum tour provides foundational knowledge, on Stickley and Arts and Crafts, on which they can build. We will be able to demonstrate an historical context for Stickley in an immediate and gratifying way."

Givens continues, "Beyond its educational goals, I am delighted by the exhibition's exuberant title and by its assertion that a chair serves as both a functional object and an embodiment of ideas." Regarding this title and the concept of the exhibition, Cathers writes:

The architect Will Price wrote that a well-designed, well-made chair "is something more than a good chair. It is also a message of honesty and joy to the possessor, and a cause of growth and joy to the worker." He stressed that a good chair brought joy to its owner because it was comfortable, functional, and durable, and that it also brought joy because of the "honesty" of its visible joinery, clearly defined form, and respectful use of natural materials. It was a joy to the worker because it offered the cabinetmaker the satisfaction of using craft skills to create a worthwhile object. This Arts and Crafts formulation is not hard to understand: owning a nice thing is a pleasure, and making that object can be a pleasure, too.

Will Price had a talent for articulating Arts and Crafts thoughts, and the quote from him used in our exhibition's title expresses some of the movement's highest ideals. I think all the chair makers included in this exhibition worked in the same spirit, producing work that expressed honesty and joy..."

The exhibition will be accompanied by a free in-depth Visitor's Guide, presented by Toomey & Co. Auctioneers, with an essay by Cathers and commentaries by distinguished writers. It may be viewed on all regular tours of the Log House, which run in the afternoon each week from Thursday to Sunday. On weekends only, the exhibition will be open for self-guided tours (see page 6).

Exhibition Opening Reception, Saturday, June 1 at 5 p.m. Free with RSVP to info@stickleymuseum.org or call 973-540-0311.

See "The American Arts and Crafts Chair," beginning June 1, 2019. Admission is free to Members. For Non Members, the following fees apply:

Log House Tours, Thursday to Sunday, hourly 12:15 to 3:15 p.m.

\$10 adults; \$7 seniors; \$4 children Visitor's Guide, presented by Toomey & Co. Auctioneers, included with all admissions.

Exhibition Only, Self-Guided: 12:00 to last entry 3:30 p.m. \$7 adults and seniors; \$4 children Visitor's Guide, presented by Toomey & Co. Auctioneers, included with all admissions.

No reservations required.



RARE FURNITURE FINDS A NEW HOME

Today, few visitors who tour Stickley's Log House would imagine that 30 years ago, when the Township of Parsippany-Troy Hills took ownership, it was empty. Preservation and interpretation of the site was entrusted by the Township to The Craftsman Farms Foundation—today the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms—and since that time, as the museum has grown so have its collections.

A significant portion of the museum's collections furnish the Log House and include furniture, textiles, metals and pottery. The museum also collects books, periodicals, photographs and ephemera (paper collections will soon have a new home in the Education Center (see pages 10-11).

While the growth of the museum's collections has been imperative from the beginning, it has been important for this growth to be in quality as well as quantity. In preparing to serve future generations of visitors and scholars, our collections should express both breadth and depth. Recent important and rare gifts to our furniture collections



Photo Credits: Jonathan Clancy

Craftsman Workshops, hall seat (no. 224), ca. 1909-16

demonstrate both and will be a key resource for learning and study for years to come.

Through the generosity of John and Neville Bryan, shortly before Mr. Bryan's passing last year, the museum acquired a Craftsman Workshops dining table (no. 633), which retains its original ebonized finish, two scrap baskets (no. 94) and a hall seat (see above, no. 224). The small, beautifully proportioned hall seat has been placed next to the dining room hearth, where Stickley originally placed a larger seat of similar design.

From Gregg and Monique Seibert, an extraordinary collection of rare green ash furniture was gifted to the museum in recent months. About this collection, David Cathers wrote in a 2007 article for *American Bungalow* (Issue 54), "Rare' takes on a whole new meaning with the discovery of a group of Stickley furniture that has somehow miraculously stayed together....Though a century old at the time of its discovery, this furniture was so perfectly preserved that it seemed fresh from the factory floor..."

The museum is honored to be entrusted with this remarkable grouping of 19 pieces of United Crafts furniture which includes a lamp table (below, no. 411) and two footstools (below, no. 726). Though not currently on display, plans are in the works for their exhibition. Perhaps the best insight into the meaning of this important gift comes from the donor himself, Gregg Seibert:

"Monique and I have collected Stickley furniture for more than two decades. When we were fortunate enough to acquire this intact group of Stickley ash furniture from a cottage by the Finger Lakes in upstate New York, we always knew that we were just taking care of it until it found its true home.

It is particularly important to us that this extraordinary group of furniture remain together. For us, it was an easy decision to ask Craftsman Farms to adopt our cottage furniture. We have been involved with Craftsman Farms for many years and it is a dedicated and passionate community.

We know that this group of furniture will be appreciated and its history will be preserved in its new home at Craftsman Farms."



United Crafts, lamp table (no. 411), ca. 1901



United Crafts, stool (no. 726), ca. 1901



United Crafts, sewing rocker (no. 2627), ca. 1901



STICKLEY UNDERGROUND: ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES AT

Archaeology? At Craftsman Farms? What could be the point of that? Excellent questions, because at first glance there would seem to be little that archaeology can contribute to the study, preservation and interpretation of the Stickley Museum. We have the buildings and the landscape, plus many records, photographs and publications. Don't they tell us everything we need to know?

Well, actually, no! Surprisingly, many questions remain about the creation, the early years, and the detailed appearance of Gustav Stickley's community. What sort of landscape did Stickley find when he arrived? How did he change that landscape? How much of what we see today was created by Stickley, and how much is the result of the loving care taken of the property by the Farnys from 1917 to 1973?

In 2009 the Museum commissioned a *Cultural Landscape Report* (B.W. Bosenberg and Company Inc. 2009) and an *Archaeological Survey Report* (Hunter Research Inc. 2009). Both of these drew attention to the potential of archaeology to assist in the interpretation of the site. The updating of the cultural landscape plan in the last couple of years has provided an opportunity to test and implement some of the proposals in these documents.

We have learned a lot.

December 2017 – January 2018: Exploring the Log House Landscape

The area behind the Log House and the Annex seemed like a good place to take a first look below ground. Several pathways, walls and stone settings can be seen in this area, and there are also some tantalizing photographs of social events taking place here in the (post-Stickley) Farny period. The museum therefore commissioned archaeologists from Hunter Research, Inc., under the direction of Dr. Ian Burrow, to excavate here to explore the relationships between these features and to see what, if anything, lay below them. **Figure 1** shows the location of the two excavations, called EU1 and EU2.



Figure 1. Excavations in progress by the Log House in December 2017. Excavation Unit 1 is in the right foreground and Excavation Unit 2 is below the door in the west gable wall of the Log House. Archaeologist Ian Burrow is pictured with Josh Butchko of Hunter Research, Inc. and Krista Saypol of Bosenberg and Co.

An important objective of these, the first archaeological excavations to take place at Craftsman Farms, was to document and to understand the sequence of soils and sediments, collectively known as the *stratigraphy*. This is helpful not just for this part of the site, but also provides an indication of what may be expected on the site as a whole.



Figure 2.

Figure 2 is a photograph of the soils and sediments exposed in the side of EU1. They tell an interesting story! The earliest material identified is the natural subsoil or B-horizon. This had been cut away to create a trench or pit feature which was afterwards filled up with soil. In this soil we found a piece of red

earthenware tile with green glaze: one of the Ludowici tiles we know were installed on the Log house roof in 1913! This was a very helpful discovery, because it indicates that this soil got into the trench or pit in or after 1913. So whatever this feature is, it is almost certainly of the Stickley era. The current hypothesis is that it was a quarry pit for clay used during the construction of the Stick-

ley-era community.

After the trench/pit was filled up, a humic soil containing many artifacts developed over the top. This soil had more pieces of Ludowici tile and a coin of 1910. It is probably a well-used yard or lawn surface of the Stickley era.

A dry-laid stone wall, which still defines the western side of the stone path and steps that lead up to the patio in front of the Log House, was built on top of this yard/lawn surface. Soil was piled against the western side of this wall, covering

the yard/lawn to a depth of almost two feet to create the present-day topography.

So from these small excavations we have learned the following:

1. The present configuration of the landscape here is not original.



CRAFTSMAN FARMS 2017–2019 — IAN BURROW

- 2. The surface that Stickley walked on is about two feet below the present one.
- 3. The ground below the Stickley lawn/ yard had been extensively disturbed, probably during the early stages of construction from 1908 onwards, but these disturbances had been filled in at the time when fragments of Ludowici tile were plentiful on the site: very likely no later than 1913.

July 2018: Monitoring the New Lighting Installation

The installation of the new exterior lampposts provided two opportunities. One was to implement the "Archaeological Protocol" which the Museum has developed. This document is designed to ensure that procedures for archaeological documentation are included in all projects involving

disturbance of the ground at Craftsman Farms. This requires engineers, architects and contractors to work closely with archaeologists in the design and implementation of such projects. The archaeologists need to be on site when the ground is being disturbed. This ensures that important archaeological information is documented without impeding the progress of projects which are essential for the Museum.

It worked very well. Joe Venito and his team from Online Contracting of Boonton did the excavations for the electric lines and were very helpful in enabling Ian Burrow to examine the trenches and backdirt piles. Krista Saypol of Bosenberg and Co. managed and coordinated the whole operation. The archaeological recording was undertaken on July 27 and 29-31, with no impact to the project schedule, and important information was recovered.

This is what we learned:

1. The original Ruberoid roof of the Log House that, predated the Ludovici tiles, was probably red.

- 2. The slope east of the Log House is largely artificial and was put in place in 1911. It has eroded since that time, especially adjacent to the house.
- 3. The original landscape of other areas on the property were considerably modified by Stickley.

Trenching for installation of the lighting on the sloping landform between the Log House and the Stickley-era rose garden produced conclusive evidence that the current configuration of this area was created by Stickley during the construction of the Log House. The soil profile was chiefly composed of a loose dry clay loam fill with some mortar inclusions, including one large piece. This contrasts with the heavy clay and stones seen in most of the trenches.



Figure 3.

The most interesting find is shown in **Figure 3**. It is a steel enameled handled pot about 9 inches in diameter at the rim with an 8-inch-long handle attached to the bowl with three rivets and with a hanging loop at the end. The enamel is stained with a red residue material. It was found at a depth of 30 inches.

Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms' Trustee Peter Mars has the following observations relating to this item (Email Mars to Burrow 8-2-18):

"The November 1911 Craftsman article

about the Log House shows a 3/4 view of the house with grading in place (p. 197), but with no plantings. The grade was higher than it is now and the garden bed against the foundation wall was nearly level, indicating significant erosion over the last century. According to daughter Mildred's diary, some or all of the photos for this article were shot on September 1st of that year. This helps establish that Stickley finished this part of the landscape in summer 1911.

In previous excavations around the Log House, a rusted can retaining much of its paper label was found (and is now in the museum's collection). It was a can of red Ruberoid roofing cement. Ruberoid rolled roofing sheets came in several colors (green, brown, red and at least one other color). Until this can was discovered, it

wasn't known which color Ruberoid was on the house (it was assumed to be green since the roof tiles installed later in 1913 were green). The three cottages had already been built with red slate roofs, so it appears the red Ruberoid was chosen to relate to the roofs of those structures.

Being lined in red residue, the pot you found was likely filled with the red Ruberoid roofing cement used by Stickley's roofing crew, and the chunks of mortar in the soil nearby are likely consistent with the construction of the front porch stone wall before the slope was raised and regraded with infill."

More archaeological contributions to the history of Craftsman Farms can be expected in the future.

About the Author:

Ian Burrow, RPA, BurrowIntoHistory, LLC has more than 30 years of experience directing cultural resource management projects in the United States and the United Kingdom.



VISIT WITH YOUR GROUP OR CLUB!

Plan a visit to the museum with your group for a memorable experience that everyone will love! Travel groups, clubs, family reunions, school groups, church groups, youth groups, meetups, day camps—whatever brings you together—a guided group tour of Stickley's Log House can be tailored to your group's particular areas of interest, and might then uncover some new paths along the way.

Stickley's own work was informed by the craft guilds of the Middle Ages; their efforts and skilled labor, and the fraternity that comes from sharing a common purpose. He also knew that cooperation gives your work, or mission, greater meaning. That "craftsmanship of the highest order is represented in [those] who are doing good work in one way or another for the betterment of their fellowmen,—for it is the craftsmanship of life itself." (*The Craftsman*, Oct. 1905.)

Groups of all ages and abilities are welcome. And we hope to see you soon! For more information about scheduling your group tour, call 973.540.0311 to speak with the Education Manager or email education@StickleyMuseum.org.

Note: Group tour reservations must be made at least two weeks in advance. Some dates are unavailable. A minimum of 8 people are required. Group tour fee is \$10 per person. Membership and other discounts do not apply.



New! Self-Guided Tours of the Chair Exhibition — Weekends Only

On weekends, from 12 to 4 p.m. while the new chair exhibition (see page 1) is installed, from June 1, 2019 to January 5, 2020, visitors will be able to stop in for self-guided tours. This new opportunity, although open to any visitor, was developed with museum members in mind.

Prior exhibitions have only been available to visitors on tours of the Log House. Now, on weekends, visitors will be able to choose between a self-guided tour of the chair exhibition and a full Log House tour, led by a docent, which will end at the new exhibition. As always, all tours are free to Members. The Non Member fee for the full tour is \$10 and \$7 for a self-guided tour of the exhibition.

EVENTS CALENDAR

Except where noted, all events take place at the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms and advance registration is required. Visit StickleyMuseum.org or call 973.540.0311.

June 1 at 5:00 p.m.

Opening Reception: *The American Arts and Crafts Chair* Free with RSVP, call 973.540.0311

Tuesday, July 9 to Friday, July 12 Farms Afield: Mohonk Mountain House Retreat Join us! Call us to learn more or reserve your spot: 973.540.0311.

Saturday, September 21, 12 to 4 p.m. Fall Family Day Registration not required.

Saturday and Sunday, October 12-13 THE STICKLEY WEEKEND

Saturday, October 12

9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. 9TH ANNUAL SCHOLARS SYMPOSIUM

featuring David Cathers, the 2019 Amy Stahl Memorial Lecturer

6 p.m. at the Mountain Lakes Club THE CRAFTSMAN GALA – Celebrating 30 Years of the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms Co-Chairs: Bruce and Leigh Ann Johnson

For info on supporting, sponsoring or attending the Gala, call 973.540.0311.

Sunday, October 13

12-4 p.m. OPEN HOUSE at the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms. Registration not required.

For early registration or to learn more about Stickley Weekend events, call 973.540.0311



A comprehensive Visitor's Guide, presented by Toomey & Co. Auctioneers, featuring an essay by David Cathers and brief commentaries on each chair by distinguished writers including Kevin W. Tucker of the High Museum of Art, Jill Thomas-Clark, and Jonathan Clancy, will be included with all admissions.

Saturday and Sunday, June 1, 2019 to January 5, 2020 Self-Guided Tours of *The American Arts and Crafts Chair:* "A Message of Honesty and Joy" 12:00 – last entry 3:30 p.m. Free to Members; \$7 Non Members No reservations necessary.



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January 1, 2019 – April 16, 2019

We extend a warm thank you to the following members who joined or renewed their membership during the past few months.

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We are extremely grateful to the members of the 2018 Craftsman Guild Donor Circle whose generous support had a significant impact on the operations of the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms. The name Craftsman Guild was chosen because Gustav Stickley deeply admired the medieval practice in which artisans worked cooperatively within a guild. Our Guild is an alliance of advocates working together to further the mission of the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms.

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Pete Mars and Mike Dawson W. Michael and Je McCracken Woodstock Byrdcliffe Guild



Join our Campaign to Complete the New Education Center!

As the framing for the 1st level of the Education Center goes up, the contours of the newly rehabilitated building, which will serve as a beautiful gateway to the property, are taking shape. The historic fabric of the original Stickley-era garage at the ground level will be preserved and become much needed multi-use program and meeting space. The building's upper levels, which were destroyed by fire around 1950, will provide state-of-the-art storage space for paper collections and more efficient administrative offices.

The museum broke ground on this project in December 2018 through the generosity of individual donors and the strong support of the Township of Parsippany-Troy Hills and the Morris County



The new building will be a gateway greeting visitors.

Historic Preservation Trust. While it is expected that current funds will cover the hard costs of construction, additional funds—estimated at \$200,000—are needed to realize our full vision for the project. Full project needs include landscaping, furnishing, signage and maintenance of the building after completion.

We invite you to become a part of this exciting campaign. With your help we will meet this final \$200,000 goal and achieve our full project vision for the Education Center. With your help, during our 30th year, we will reinvigorate Stickley's beloved property and prepare this organization to serve the public for another thirty years.

Become part of the Education Center Capital Campaign!

YES, I WANT TO HELP BUILD THE FUTURE OF THE STICKLEY MUSEUM AT CRAFTSMAN FARMS								
☐ I have enclosed a check made payable to the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms for the Education Center Campaign in the								
amount of:	□ \$1,000	□ \$500	□ \$250	□ \$100	□ \$50	☐ Other		
☐ Please charge my tax-deductible donation of \$				to (circle one)	Visa	MC	AmEx	Disc
Card Number Exp			Expira	ation	Security Code		_Billing Zip _	
Signature					(required on credit card charges)			
☐ My company has a Matching Gifts Program; please send me information about making a matching gift.								
NAME(S):ADDRESS:								
CITY, STATE, ZIP: EMAIL: PHONE:								

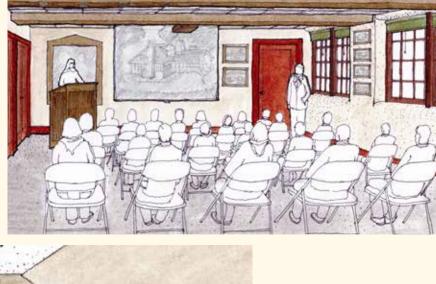


The earliest-known photo of the Stickley-era garage building.



The framing on the new building took shape in April.

The rehabilitated garage will serve as multi-use program space.



The upper level will include storage for paper collections, including magazines, photographs and other ephemera.

Drawings by Peter K. Mars



VISITING CRAFTSMAN FARMS

Craftsman Farms is located at 2352 Route 10 West Morris Plains, New Jersey 07950

The entrance is located on Route 10 West at Manor Lane, about 3 miles west of I-287 in Parsippany-Troy Hills, New Jersey (mailing address is Morris Plains). Driving directions are available at StickleyMuseum.org.

Free to members and children under 2 Adults: \$10; Seniors & Students \$7

Closed on Major Holidays.

Museum Tour Schedule Hours:

Thursday through Sunday, year-round Tours depart at 12:15, 1:15, 2:15 and 3:15 p.m.

Group Tours available by reservation. Call 973.540.0311

MUSEUM SHOP HOURS
Thursday through Sunday, Noon to 4 p.m.

CONTACT US Offices: 973.540.0311 Fax: 973.540.1167 info@StickleyMuseum.org StickleyMuseum.org



The Stickley
Museum at
Craftsman

Farms is committed to assuring that all individuals can participate in our programs. If you require the use of assistive listening devices or other special assistance please call at least two weeks in advance.

Craftsman Farms, the former home of noted designer Gustav Stickley, is owned by the Township of Parsippany-Troy Hills and is operated by The Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms, Inc., ("SMCF") (formerly known as The Craftsman Farms Foundation, Inc.). SMCF is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization incorporated in the State of New Jersey. Restoration of the National Historic Landmark, Craftsman Farms, is made possible, in part, by a Save America's Treasures Grant administered by the National Parks Service, Department of the Interior, and by support from Morris County Preservation Trust, The New Jersey Historic Trust, and individual members. SMCF received an operating grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission. SMCF gratefully acknowledges a grant from the New Jersey Cultural Trust. Educational programs are funded, in part, by grants from the Arts & Crafts Research Fund.







Farms Afield: Mohonk Mountain House Retreat July 9 to 12, 2019

The American Arts and Crafts Chair: A Message of Honesty and Joy June 1, 2019 to January 5, 2020

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