

says Peg Wallace, a realtor and longtime Eastport resident who lobbied for restrictions on development and has helped preserve local history.

The town's beginnings have been traced to 1665, when Robert Clarkson, a Quaker, was granted a tract called Horne Point. One of the earliest known farmhouses on the land belonged to Benjamin Ogle, Maryland governor from 1798 to 1801. In 1868 a group of Annapolis businessmen bought 102 acres that until then had been farmland, and divided it into lots they sold to tradesmen, immigrants, craftsmen, and blue-collar workers who helped build the Naval Academy. That year, a bridge was built to join Eastport and Annapolis.

In 1885 Eastport was home to the Annapolis Glass Works, where bottles were made for beverages and medicines, but boat building was the community's economic mainstay. From 1868 to 1936, Heller's Shipyard turned out skipjacks, bug-eyes, and Baltimore Clippers, and John Trumpy and Sons, Inc., operating near today's Chart House Restaurant, built elegant wooden motor yachts from 1947 to 1974.

"Eastport was a seafood Mecca," says Jeff Holland, director of the Annapolis Maritime Museum on Eastport's Back Creek. "The harbor was perfect for oyster boats and crab boats—the same harbor that today is perfect for recreational sailboats and powerboats. That's why we're America's sailing capital."

Tickets for the Eastport Home and Garden Tour, \$15 in advance, are available at several locations, including Hard Bean Coffee and BookSellers; Ahh, Coffee!; and Windwood Gardens. The day of the tour you can buy tickets for \$20 at Mears Marina in Eastport. For more information, contact Shelley Row (srow@ite.org or 410-268-2689) or Ross Arnett (Rosses34@aol.com or 410-295-7531).

—Vicki Meade

Maryland Historical Society Features Annapolis Silversmith

Sometimes it takes a trip to a faraway place to appreciate something in your own backyard. A visit to the Mount Vernon neighborhood of Baltimore will only take you approximately 45 minutes. When you step inside the Maryland Historical Society Museum to see the exhibit devoted to William Faris, you'll develop a deeper appreciation for the work of this 18th century silversmith and his life in the state's capital.

On January 1, 1792, William Faris began a diary that today offers incredible insight into 18th century Maryland. A colonial craftsman, tinkerer, gardener, family man, and active community member, Faris wrote an exceptionally detailed



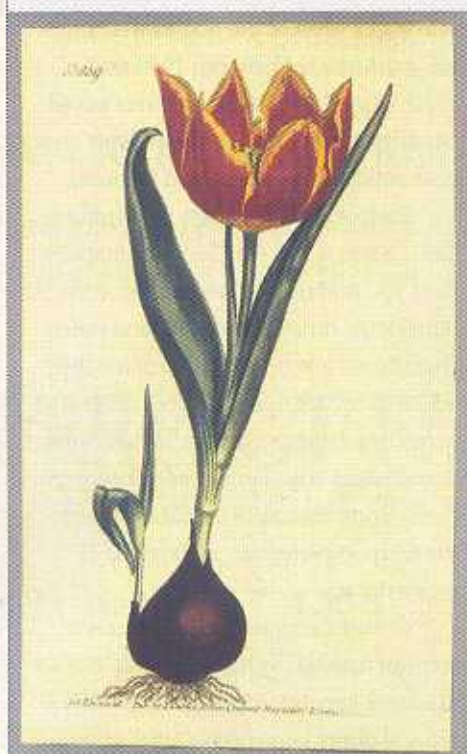
The Chalmers Cann is an example of the fine 18th century silver on display.

account of his life in Annapolis, which is revealed in the new exhibit *A Gardener's Tale: The 18th Century World of Annapolis Silversmith William Faris*.

Faris, born in 1728 in London, England, was the son of a Quaker. When his father died in prison for his religious beliefs, Faris and his mother immigrated to Philadelphia. Sometime in the 1750s, Faris moved to Annapolis, where he set up shop as a clockmaker.

Soon after, in 1760, he hired a silversmith to begin repairing silver for wealthy Annapolitans. Though his mark was stamped on most pieces produced in his shop, Faris did not make silver himself. Silversmiths at the time marked silver with the shop master's initials to indicate its origin and quality; a sort of early branding.

Faris' diary covered his daily activities extensively, including everything from weather to events in his personal life. As a prominent businessman in Annapolis, Faris came in contact with many impor-

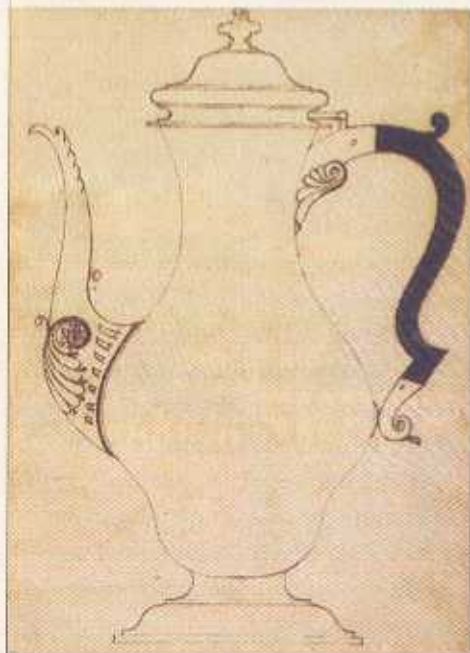


One of the period botanical drawings on display in A Gardener's Tale.

tant members of the Maryland community, including signers of the Declaration of Independence, whose interactions with him are described in detail.

Guest curator Mark Letzer co-edited the diary, which was published by the Maryland Historical Society Press as *The Diary of William Faris: The Daily Life of an Annapolis Silversmith*. He was the main force in creating this exhibit, which features more than eighty pieces of Annapolis silver, the largest amount ever assembled for a single show.

As you enter the exhibit room, you begin with Faris's first shop and goods in Annapolis. Then you are taken chronologically through his life, closely following the diary. "Most labels will have entries from his diary to have his voice follow the tour," says Letzer.



One of the only original 18th century silversmith shop drawings known to be in existence, on display in *A Gardener's Tale*.

Along the walls are portraits of dignitaries, customers, and other famous Marylanders Faris met on a daily basis at his shop and residence, the present-day block between West Street and Cathedral Street. At the time, European silver was a

status symbol and a conspicuous sign of wealth. Silversmiths on this side of the Atlantic usually only repaired foreign silver and rarely produced pieces themselves.

The Revolutionary War was an exception, when an embargo on British goods became a boon for local silversmiths. Faris was one of the American smiths who worked to fill newly created demand. Also presented are a number of his shop's rare original pieces produced during the war, including ones commissioned by Charles Carroll.

As his success grew, Faris created a large, elaborate garden on his grounds. He recorded all his daily seed and flower transactions in his diary. Many period horticulture drawings and original pressed tulips belonging to Faris are shown. "He was passionate about his tulips," says Letzer, "at one point had nearly 4000 growing in his garden."

In addition to his shop's silver, Faris' tools, original books, clocks, and personal effects are on display, as are his experiments with various gadgets, including a silk reel for his silkworms, a silhouette maker, and an electrostatic machine he built to treat his family's ailments.

Three years in the making, the exhibit is the result of hard work and thorough research by Letzer and the Maryland Historical Society. We are lucky to have a complete original account of Annapolis at the beginning of the nation, and even luckier to have it embodied in such a beautiful collection of relevant silver pieces and artifacts.

A Gardener's Tale: The 18th Century World of Annapolis Silversmith William Faris is open until October 22, at the Maryland Historical Society Museum, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore. For more information, call (410) 685-3750 or visit www.mdhs.org.

—Conal Darcy



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