

# The Cupola House

## NEWSLETTER

Fall 2022



### Easels in the Gardens 2022 was a resounding success!!!

Marshall Creighton

Approximately 600 tickets were sold and, while that may not sound like a lot in comparison to Candlelight Tour, Easels is much newer and this number rather significantly exceeds ticket sales from previous years; additionally, the ticket price was \$5 higher this year than previously.

Art sales were fantastic with approximately 80 pieces being sold at total cost in excess of \$20,000; these figures would most certainly have been even higher if we had not had to shut down a little early due to an electrical storm. With 30 percent of the purchase price going to the Cupola House Association, art sales greatly enhance Easels' money-raising total.



Art in Bloom at the Chowan Arts Council was a terrific addition to the Easels weekend, and visitors were impressed with the creativity of talented local floral designers' interpretations of various pieces on display at the CAC.

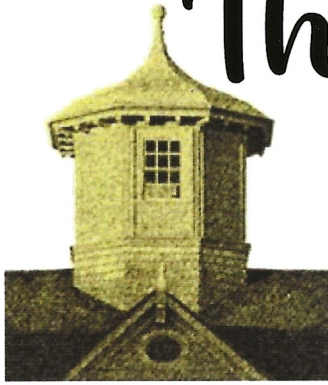
The Garden Party was well attended and lively, with teenaged servers passing tasty party food on silver trays, and Wayne James providing live jazz music in the background. All in all, it was the perfect conclusion to a wonderful weekend.

It should be mentioned that sponsorships were extremely generous this year, and the Easels committee is most appreciative of all monetary contributions! An army of volunteers was also essential to making this event a success, and we are thankful for the dozens who volunteered hours of their time to make it so.

Feedback on the weekend in general was upbeat and positive! It is exceptionally gratifying to meet so many visitors to Edenton who are charmed by our small town and its friendly and talented (gardeners, artists, and floral designers) residents.







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### Francis Corbin's Colors

Robert Leath

Edentonians have a unique opportunity that hasn't existed in over two hundred years: to stand in front of the Cupola House and behold the very colors selected by Francis Corbin himself in 1758. After scientific studies by one of the nation's leading paint analysts, Susan Buck, in 2018, we have a better understanding of the house's original appearance and the role of bright colors chosen by Corbin that demonstrated his wealth and status.

The creamy white now on the siding and trim was identified through a small paint sample taken from one of the exterior brackets on the first floor. Mounted in resin, cut in cross section, and examined under high magnification, it revealed twenty-one coats of paint applied over the centuries, and closest to the wood was the creamy white color. Samples taken from the original shutters uncovered the shade of green that stood in bright contrast to the cream-colored siding.

For Corbin's eighteenth-century visitors, this was the gateway to an even more colorful interior. The fully paneled dining room was a brilliant Prussian blue. The parlor opposite appears to have been a shade of white, suggesting the possibility of a brightly colored, patterned wallpaper. The upstairs passage was painted medium gray, while the bedchambers were each a different color: blue-gray, tan, and a bright green similar to the exterior shutters. The baseboards in each room were chocolate brown, and the doors were grain-painted in imitation of expensive imported mahogany.

Corbin's color choices represented the height of mid eighteenth-century fashion. In the period – if one could afford it, no two rooms were expected to be the same color. Each room had its own fireplace for heat, and its own door for privacy, so each room could be its own unique space.

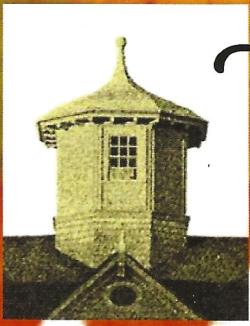
Corbin's palette compares to George Washington's at Mount Vernon. In 1757 and 1758 – when the Cupola House was under construction – Washington ordered house painting supplies and color pigments for mixing shades of red, yellow, white, pearl gray, and bright green. Paint analysis at Mount Vernon, similar to Buck's work at the Cupola House, identified how these materials were used to create dramatic color changes as one moved through the different rooms of the house.

Restoring Corbin's original colors, both interior and exterior, is but the first step of a larger plan. In the coming years, the Cupola House Association aspires to recreate the widow's walk that surrounded the cupola, where the Corbins, the Dickensons and their Edenton friends could drink tea with a bird's eye view overlooking the Bay, and to restore the rusticated siding that originally ornamented the front façade. But those may be stories for another time.

### **Join or Renew Today!**

If you have not joined The Cupola House Association for 2022-2023, please do so today! You can join online at [www.cupolahouse.org](http://www.cupolahouse.org) or send an email to [cupolahousemembership@gmail.com](mailto:cupolahousemembership@gmail.com) and we will send you a membership card. Don't miss out on all the opportunities and events at the Cupola House!





# The Cupola House NEWSLETTER

Fall 2022

*Hear Ye, Hear Ye, Come One, Come all to the  
CUPOLA HOUSE AND GARDEN COLONIAL MARKET*

Travel back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century...*without a time machine!*

On Saturday, October 8, step through the Cupola House garden gates and find yourself in the midst of a Colonial Market.

Colonial vendors will greet you with such fine wares and fripperies as Old North Pewter, created by one of three remaining pewter smiths in America living and working in Edenton! Teas, honey, tote bags with icons of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, clever flag blocks for your picket fences. Fill your garden with rare seeds and seedlings from the Cupola gardens.

Children and grandchildren alike will make their own colonial hat, decorate a gourd lantern or birdhouse, and listen to the story lady reading *The Cupola House Mouse!*

Join us by the fire pit for molasses cookies, ham biscuits, hot cider and more.

Music, raffles, selfies with colonial folk --the magic of 18<sup>th</sup> century Edenton comes alive on Saturday Oct 8, 10 to 2 at the Cupola House and Gardens.

Gay Chatham, Cupola House and Gardens Events Chair



*Hear Ye, Hear Ye  
Come one,  
Come all to the*



## Cupola House and Gardens Colonial Market

October 8, 2022

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Free to the community!

### Visit our Colonial vendors:

- Heritage seeds
- Handmade soaps
- Old North Pewter and more!

### Children's activities include

a storyteller, hat maker, art project and musician.

☞

Hot cider and other goodies.

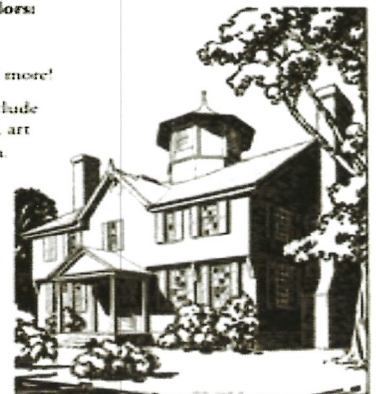
☞

Take a selfie with a colonial character.

☞

Travel back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century...

without a time machine!







Cupola House Association  
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