



**The Museum of Early Trades & Crafts**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Museum of Early Trades & Crafts Announces Major Education Expansion and Future Collections Storage Facility**

**Madison, NJ** – For 50 years **The Museum of Early Trades & Crafts (METC)** has been a cornerstone of Madison's historical, cultural, and educational community. Over this half century we have served nearly half a million people through our school programs, lectures, workshops, tours and exhibits. Today, the museum's board of trustees is pleased to announce that after nearly five years of planning and consideration, the museum will be expanding operations and relocating all education and community focused programs in a second location at the James Building across the street from the museum at **23 Main Street**. The new **Education Annex** will consolidate all education programming including school field trips, workshops, lectures and special events to free up much needed space in the museum for exhibitions and collections. At the same time, the museum is in the final planning stages of creating a new, state of the art, viewable storage facility at their main site.

"It came down to making a decision about the long term growth and goals of METC," said Deborah Farrar Starker, the museum's executive director. "We could have continued with the limited space we occupy, but this would not have allowed our programs to expand. Instead, we decided to look to create a sustainable future for this unique history museum." The museum's current location, the historic James Library will continue to be the main hub for all exhibits, collections, administration, museum store and Madison's visitor center. The new Education Annex will be able to accommodate larger school groups, provide workshop and lecture space and will be better able to serve the museum's growing constituency. METC will also regain additional exhibition space to showcase much more of its extraordinary collection. This expansion is possible, in part, thanks to the private gift of one individual, Fred. W Breuhne, whose generous bequest in 2015 was always meant for the long term sustainability of the museum. The upcoming renovation of the collections space will be financed by private, corporate, and foundation gifts as well as grants from National Endowment for the Humanities and the NJ Historic Trust.

"We are very fortunate that the historic James Building (which was built just one year before the museum's home in the James Library) was available," noted Starker, " and we are excited to move our educational activities just a short way across Green Village Road. The connection between the two buildings makes this the perfect solution to the museum's growing need for space." Built by D. Willis James, The James Building opened in 1899 and was Madison's first town hall, and first commercial building. Using the income from that building, Mr. James built the James Library which housed the Madison Public Library from 1900 until 1969, and in 1970 became the home of the Museum of Early

Trades & Crafts. As long standing stewards, METC has secured over \$1.3million in grants and capital funds to preserve and conserve the historic James Library, which continues to be owned by the borough of Madison, and is listed on both the state and national registers of historic buildings. Tom Judd, the Chairman of the museum's Board of Trustees said, "This is an exciting opportunity! It gives us much needed space to expand our programming, and the connection between the buildings was certainly the intent of D. Willis James who built them. We look forward to working with [James Building owner] John Solu and his family who understand the historical importance of that connection."

Starker also commented that, "...as we were creating our strategic plan, we looked around and observed that many other museums were undergoing expansion and renovation, including two New Jersey institutions, The Morven Museum and The Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms, as well as larger museums, specifically MOMA and the Newark Museum of Art; and the moment felt right for METC to take the next step in securing the future for us and for the community. METC's expansion will add to the vibrancy and historical significance of our town and the museum will be better equipped to fulfill its mission, become more accessible, and become a larger presence in the cultural community."

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#### **About The Museum of Early Trades & Crafts**

Explore American history with a focus on the life and stories of 18th- and 19th- century craftsmen and artisans. Drawing on its rich collection, METC is connecting the lives of people and their stories, while providing a bridge from the past to the future. Housed in a stunning Richardsonian Romanesque Revival building donated by D. Willis James to the people of Madison, NJ in 1900, METC offers something for visitors of all ages. Regular METC admission is \$5.00 for adults, \$3.00 for seniors, students & children 6 and older, and free for members and children under 6. Family maximum admission \$15.00. METC is open Tuesday – Saturday 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. and Sunday Noon to 5 P.M. Closed Monday & Major Holidays.

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