

More Information: Dave Fooks, 610-683-1537; e-mail [fooks@kutztown.edu](mailto:fooks@kutztown.edu)

## **Folk Art and Crafts At 2005 Kutztown Festival Reflect 200 Year Old Traditions**

Unique and colorful Pennsylvania Dutch and Early American traditional folk art and crafts will be a highlight of the 2004 Kutztown Festival, July 2 to July 10 in Kutztown, PA.

Every day during the Festival, there will be demonstrations of traditional crafts by 200 of America's most respected folk artists and craftsmen – chosen through a juried process from more than 800 persons who applied to participate in this year's festival.

“Starting in the late 1700's and continuing through the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Pennsylvania Germans created a variety of wares that were functional, distinctive, and in many instances truly exquisite. Follow the folk art back far enough and often you find their origins in those parts of Germany and Switzerland from which the immigrants came in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Craftsmen in the festival faithfully recreate the essence of this art. As a result, their works have become collectors items,” Festival Executive Director Dave Fooks said.

Pennsylvania Dutch folk art has its own unique qualities, with subjects as diverse as family life, religion, popular myths, and the rural landscape. As visitors to the Festival will see, folk art themes often were incorporated into the wares produced by early craftsmen.

Folk art and crafts demonstrations at the Festival range from pottery making, metal, and wood carving to fine furniture, dower chests and Bible boxes. The myriad of Pennsylvania Dutch and Early American crafts includes clothing, weavings, brooms, scherenschnitte (cut paper art), fraktur, folk instruments, hex signs, sundials, stained glass, pewter, beeswax candles, wood bending and much more.

Among the craftsmen returning to the 2005 Festival are Ivan Hoyt, Johnny and Eric Claypoole, and Bill Schuster – America's last remaining hex sign

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painters – who will demonstrate the art form that is seen on countless barns in the Kutztown area. Johnny Claypoole was featured in Charles Kuralt’s famous “On The Road” book and television series.

Also at the Festival will be world-renowned redware artists Ned Foltz and Lester Breininger who share with visitors the techniques and mastery of their Pennsylvania German redware.

About half of the craftsmen are from Pennsylvania, including several from the Oley Valley, an area near Kutztown settled by Germans and Swiss in the early 1700’s and now designated as a National Register Historic Site. Other Early American craftsmen at the festival are from as far away as California and Texas.

Visitors at the nationally-recognized Kutztown Festival will enjoy a full Pennsylvania Dutch celebration filled with pageantry that also includes the display and sale of nearly 2,500 locally hand-made quilts, living history presentations, antiques and collectibles, entertainment, kids’ activities and, of course, lots of mouth-watering Pennsylvania Dutch food.

The 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration at the Festival includes a parade around the Festival grounds – a tradition in Kutztown for more than a half-century, a band concert and the Independence Day oration by Dr. Theodore Yensch.

The Festival is held at the fairgrounds in Kutztown, PA. Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.. Admission prices are adults, \$10; seniors, \$9; children 12 and under, free. Admission includes free parking in the Festival parking lots and free shuttle service to the Festival grounds

For additional information on the 2005 Festival, visit the Festival website at [www.kutztownfestival.com](http://www.kutztownfestival.com)

For a free brochure, please call 1-888-674-6136 or 610-683-1597.

