

## National Magazine Honors Area Craftsperson

June 2015 – Pete Baxter Shaker Craftsman of Seymour, IN won the highest award as a traditional artisan in this year’s Director of Traditional American Crafts, and his work is showcased in the 2015 August issue of *Early American Life* magazine. He ranks top in his field, according to a panel of national experts convened by the magazine. The experts – curators from such prestigious institutions as the American Folk Art Museum, Frontier Culture Museum, George Washington’s Mount Vernon, Hancock Shaker Village and Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, Museums of Colonial Williamsburg, Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, the National Trust, Old Sturbridge Village, Southern Highland Craft Guild, Strawberry Banke Museum, and Winterthur Museum as well as antiques dealers, independent scholars, and professional instructors – selected the top craftspeople working with traditional tools and techniques for the magazine’s 30<sup>th</sup> annual Directory of Traditional American Crafts. Baxter’s handcraft showed mastery of the art form, heritage techniques, and workmanship, according to the judges.

The Directory of Traditional American Crafts is a special listing that appears in the August 2015 issue of *Early American Life*, a national magazine focusing on architecture, decorative arts, period style, and social history from colonial times through mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century. The Directory has been used for three decades by curators at living history museums, owners of traditional homes, and motion picture producers to find artisans to make period-appropriate furnishings and accessories for display, collections, and use.

“The judges look for authentic design and workmanship, whether the piece is a faithful reproduction or the artisan’s interpretation of period style,” said Tess Rosch, publisher of *Early American Life*. Scholarship, as well as use of period tools and techniques, is particularly valued in this competition.”

One goal of the Directory is to help preserve traditional handcrafts, part our culture that is rapidly being lost in the digital age. Many of these skills were passed down from master to apprentice for hundreds of years, but now few new people choose to learn and master them. “If our traditional arts are lost, we have forgotten a part of who we are as Americans,” Rosch said.

The August 2015 issue of *Early American Life*, on newsstands June 19, lists all artisans selected for the Directory as well as contact information for those wanting to own their work. The Directory layout features lush color photos of many of these artworks photographed at Winterthur Museum in Wilmington, DE.

“The Directory is a source for collectors and historic museums eager to own fine, handcrafted period-accurate objects and also a means of supporting those who perpetuate the art forms that are such an important part of our nations’ heritage,” Rosch said. To learn more about *Early American Life*, for subscription information, or to purchase a copy, visit [www.ealonline.com](http://www.ealonline.com).

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*Early American Life* is a bimonthly magazine with a circulation of 90,000. The magazine was founded in 1970 and is owned by Firelands Media Group LLC, Shaker Heights, Ohio. Copies of the 2015 Directory of Traditional American Crafts are available by contacting the editor.