

Pride of Origin
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Our Festival, which is 14 years old this year, demonstrates again something that has become self-evident over the years. This is the great interest that almost everyone has in seeing many of the tools and objects stored in museum cases brought to life and *used*. The fact that people everywhere, but especially in the country, know how to make things with their hands and use simple, old-fashioned tools fascinates the young people of this technological age.

But there is more than that. We rediscover the extraordinary diversity of national strains that make up our society. Thus there will be a Caribbean Carnival with steel band and calypso competitions; Finnish-Americans from northern Minnesota demonstrating a traditional “whipsled” for children and such crafts as making Christmas tree ornaments from wood shavings; Southern carpenters building a traditional “dog trot” house; Southeast Asians demonstrating weaving, embroidery, stone carving, calligraphy; and so on.

Inevitably, all of this reminds us of our roots. For the discovery, however tenuous sometimes, of rootedness (we all came from somewhere originally) is a matter of need, one of the oldest. It is a tangible part of the fascination with history, our own or our country’s or that of some distant place.

This is a part of life that everyone should value, and so the Festival not only celebrates customs and ways of doing things, but evokes the pride of being someone from somewhere.

