

## Boston Society of Landscape Architects support *Good Neighbors: Landscape Design & Community Building*

This fall, through generous funding secured by BSLA through the ASLA Chapter Initiatives Program, Olmsted National Historic Site was able to complete the “Tools of the Trade” component of Good Neighbors, which introduces students to tools used in the early 20th century design process and prepares them for the Fairsted design office experience. The centerpiece of “Tools of the Trade” is a finely crafted wooden box filled with reproduction design tools waiting to be handled!

Last winter, after months of research, planning and consultation with Boston woodworkers, the park set in motion a plan to produce 15 wooden boxes inspired by a c. 1910 stadia box in Olmsted Museum Collection. Student Conservation Association interns

Adrienne Sharigian and Sam Valentine identified tools in the collection to reproduce for the activity and drew up drawings and specifications. With BSLA funding, the park purchased domestic walnut to make the boxes. Through a woodworkers blog, Adrienne located a high school class to construct ten boxes. Students toured the Fairsted design office, studied the original stadia box, and learned how the box fit into the Good Neighbors experience. The project took off and in early June students presented the park with ten beautiful boxes. A National Park Service wood-working team constructed the five remaining boxes and handled finish work for all boxes.

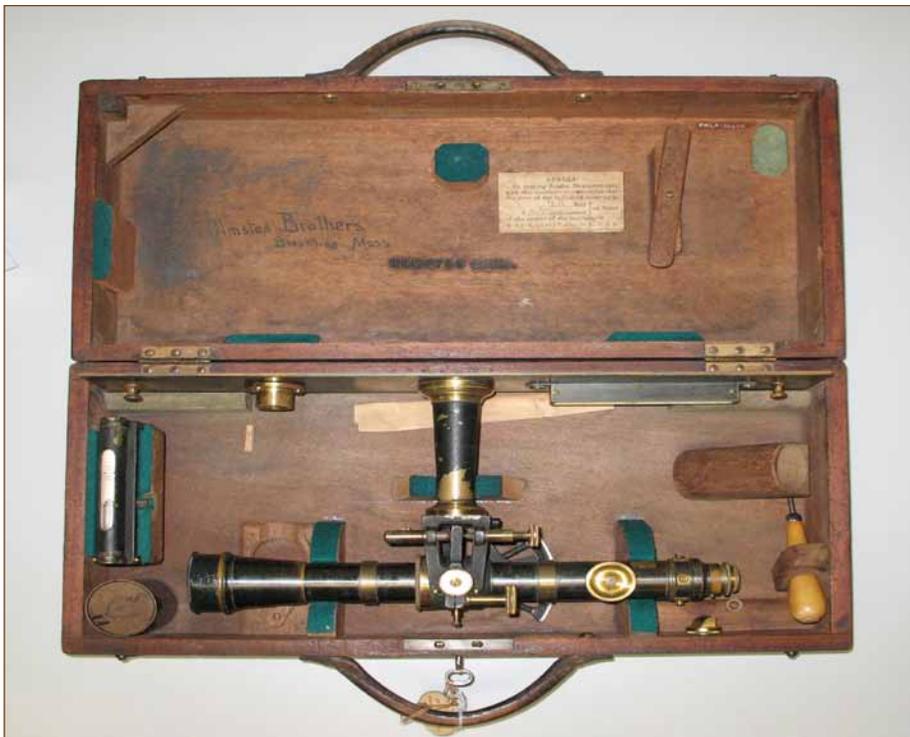
The boxes are now outfitted with an assortment of tools, including plumb bobs,



eraser shields, plant hardiness index cards, pencil pointers, and canteens. This spring boxes will arrive in 3rd grade classrooms with lab sheets, measuring tapes, and a guiding question: What is this tool and how do you think it fits into the c. 1900 design process? Students will develop their hypotheses, but will have to wait until they come to Fairsted to see the authentic tools in context and find out if their hypotheses were right!

Above: Third-grade students study a mystery tool during the Good Neighbors “Tools of the Trade” pre-visit activity. Photo by Matt Griffing. Courtesy of the NPS, Olmsted NHS.

Left: The inspiration for design and construction of the boxes that house design tools used in “Tools of the Trade” was a circa 1910 stadia box from the Olmsted Museum Collection. Photo by Sam Valentine. Courtesy of the NPS, Olmsted NHS.



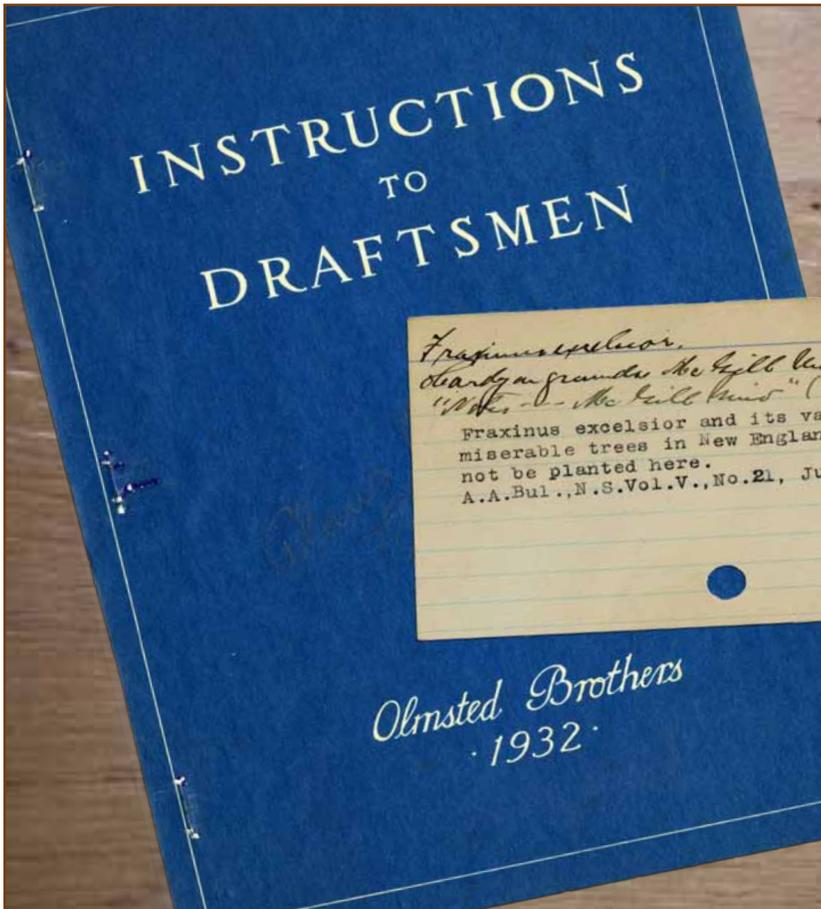


Left: Design history comes to life when 3rd graders open the "Tools of the Trade" mystery box filled with facsimile tools based on items in the Olmsted Museum Collection. Photo by Adrienne Sharigian. Courtesy of the NPS, Olmsted NHS.

Below: High School students from Woodstock Academy (CT) construct boxes (featured left) modeled after a c. 1910 stadia box in the Olmsted Museum Collection. Photo by Keith Landin.



Left: Two of fifteen items from the Olmsted Museum Collection featured in "Tools of the Trade."



*Fraxinus excelsior.*  
*Quercus grandis Mc Mill Vain Montreal.*  
 11/24/19 - Mc Mill Vain (Feb. 1915/14)  
 Fraxinus excelsior and its varieties are miserable trees in New England and should not be planted here.  
 A.A.Bul., N.S.Vol.V., No. 21, July 3, 1919

Olmsted Brothers  
 1932

For more information on *Good Neighbors*:  
[Liza\\_Stearns@nps.gov](mailto:Liza_Stearns@nps.gov)  
[www.nps.gov/frla](http://www.nps.gov/frla)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GgldDpx1yY>