

# The Friends' Quarterly

## A Newsletter from The Museum at Lower Shaker Village

Volume III/ No. 1

Fall 1989

### The Bridge to Enfield

by Frances K. Childs

For 90 years the old Shaker bridge provided a convenient, time-saving crossing over Lake Mascoma. The unique bridge was only a few feet above the water and had the appearance of a causeway. Frequently it had to be repaired because of the ravages of water and weather. Sometimes the bridge listed, sometimes it was awash, sometimes swimmers reported that it could not last, but the Shakers had built it to endure; and so it did until the vicious 1938 hurricane destroyed it.

The completion of the railroad in 1847 along the northeastern shore of Lake Mascoma provided the motivation for building the bridge. The Shakers wished to shorten the five-mile trip they needed to make around the lake in order to ship their products from the Enfield railroad depot. They secured the services of John "Boston" Clark to oversee the venture.

In the fall of 1848, before the lake froze, two rows of piles about 30 feet apart in both directions were driven to mark the location of the bridge and to keep the construction in place. Early in 1849, countless yokes of oxen and a team of horses hauled great 60 foot long hemlock and spruce logs over the ice to the construction site. These were laid side by side crosswise on the ice between the piles, forming a

platform that stretched nearly 2,000 feet from shore to shore. The platform was held together by more logs running lengthwise on the out-

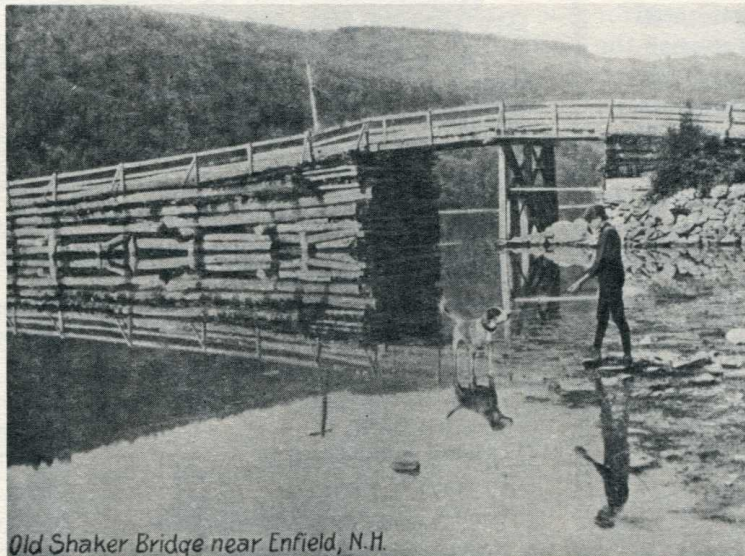
the top of the structure until it rose a sufficient distance above the ice, and then the whole was covered with a log floorway. Gravel was added to form a surfaced roadway.

Late in the summer of 1849 the Town of Enfield accepted the bridge and paid the Shakers \$5,000 for it, a small compensation. The Shakers agreed to keep the bridge in repair for the next ten years. In return they were excused from paying their highway taxes during that time.

In 1878, thirty years following the completion of the bridge, the town hired the Shakers to replace the eastern end of the

bridge with a drawbridge. This provided a passageway for steam boats to all points on the lake and make public transportation available to lakeside residents. In 1900 the town replaced the drawbridge with an arch.

As one year followed another the bridge witnessed many events: most were functional: many were pleasurable; a few were tragic; but in mid-September of 1938 a devastating hurricane brought the 90 year old creation of the Enfield Shaker community to an end. When daylight arrived the morning of September 22, all that could be seen of the Shaker bridge was a lone telephone pole near the western end.



Old Shaker Bridge near Enfield, N.H.

side of the piles. After these logs were bolted securely to the platform, additional logs were piled one upon another so as to form a series of open compartments, or cribs, that extended the entire distance of the platform. Stones and brush were used to fill the cribs.

As the weighted cribs increased in height and weight, the ice broke, or was cut. As logs were added to the compartments the structure gradually sank to the lake bottom, settling in the mud that extended some 30 feet beneath the 40 feet of water. Although water flowed through the log construction, at various places some sections were left open and were referred to as water passes. Logs were added to



## Sage Thoughts

by Happy Griffiths, Museum Herbalist

One of the joys of walking through the herb garden is the fragrance of the scented geraniums. Brushing against the leaves of this old fashioned species brings forth a heady aroma. Although everyone calls them geraniums, they are really Pelargoniums—derived from the Greek word Pelargos, which means stork. Early botanists said the seed case resembled a stork's bill. Originally brought to Europe from South Africa in 1632 by trading ships, they soon were the most popular of houseplants. Later, the colonists who settled in the New World always had a pot or two of the 'sweet geraniums' growing on the windowsills.

Scented geraniums are not noted for their flowers, but gardeners cherish the fragrant leaves which can be used fresh or dried. Potpourris and sachets can be created by drying the leaves and adding colorful flowers, a few spices and Orris Root (from Iris Florentina) to hold the scent. The Shakers placed rose geranium leaves (which impart a delightful fragrance) on the bottom of the pan when baking pound cake. Apple jelly can be jazzed up by adding a few leaves to the boiling syrup before it is poured into jars.

In the winter, scented geraniums can be easily grown in pots set in a cool sunny spot in the house, or under lights. They like well drained soil, need to be watered thoroughly when soil is dry to the touch and should be fed a balanced fertilizer once a month. They are not demanding, but are quick to signal their needs. If the lower leaves turn yellow, you are over watering the plant. If the leaves drop without yellowing, the plant is too dry. Purple tinged leaves indicate a lack of phosphorus. Most of the varieties are not prone to white fly but there are a few which seem to attract this insect. Safers Insecticidal Soap will usually take care of this problem. Keep pinching the new growth in the early winter months to produce a bushy plant and to encourage late winter and early spring blooming.

If you are not already a fan of scented geraniums, you can quickly become one. Try some in your garden next summer and make room on your windowsill for them next fall. You will find you have many uses for these mimics of the plant world.

## Laundry/Dairy News

Our move into the Laundry/Dairy building is going forward. As noted in the last issue of the newsletter the Shaker Store moved into the building on Sept. 26 and is continuing to attract large crowds of eager shoppers. A large wooden sign on the outside of the building and directional signs leading visitors around the property are helpful in getting people where they want to be.

Before Thanksgiving, the Museum collection was carefully packed into boxes and all pictures and hanging items were removed from the walls. The collection was then moved from its former home in the Great Stone Dwelling to the Laundry/Dairy building. As we have promised to have the Museum open after the first of the year, Education Coordinator Elaine Loft will spend the next several weeks arranging the collection in the room beyond the Shaker Store. From January until June Elaine will conduct research on the different objects found in the collection, so that new labels and displays can be in place by the time the Museum opens for the summer season.

Negotiations with First Leader Corporation, the owners of the property, are also progressing. In the meantime, the Museum is continuing to resolve such issues as how to heat and light the spaces where the collection and offices will be housed. Towards that end, each of our members has been sent an appeal letter, soliciting funds to help us complete our move to the Laundry/Dairy building. The Museum has received generous contributions from many of our Friends (see below) and we hope that others will support this effort in the future.

### Many Thanks To...

Jessie M. Auger

Elizabeth Andrews

Lowell Bishop & Lois Hernandez

Louis and Elaine Demetroulakos

Charles DePuy

Charles S. Faulkner II

Cynthia W. Hayes

Lenore Howe and Brian Braskie

Roger and Marjorie Gibbs

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Robert C. Sanborn, Jr.

George and Sara Seiler

Brownie Smith

Mr. and Mrs. Frans E. Strandberg

W.K. Tate, Jr.

Nick and Bea Wadleigh

Bob and Pat Wagner

## Hands to Work

by Susan Connery

The Shaker Store is now offering a line of sweaters made by the members of the CADAGREN HANDKNITS cooperative including reproductions of a Shaker sweater. The cooperative, in existence since Oct 1988, chose the name Cadagren to include the four small NH towns from which the founding members came: Canaan, Danbury, Grafton and Enfield. The cooperative was formed to enhance people's lives by providing needed income while allowing them to work at home. With expert advice from master teacher Hyun Hee Kim, the quality of the sweaters—especially the Shaker sweaters—is truly remarkable.

When Hyun Hee Kim visited The Museum, she made an interesting discovery. The Shaker sweaters in the collection were exactly the same as the sweaters her mother and grandmother wore in Korea. Is it possible that Shaker sweaters could have made their way to the Far East?

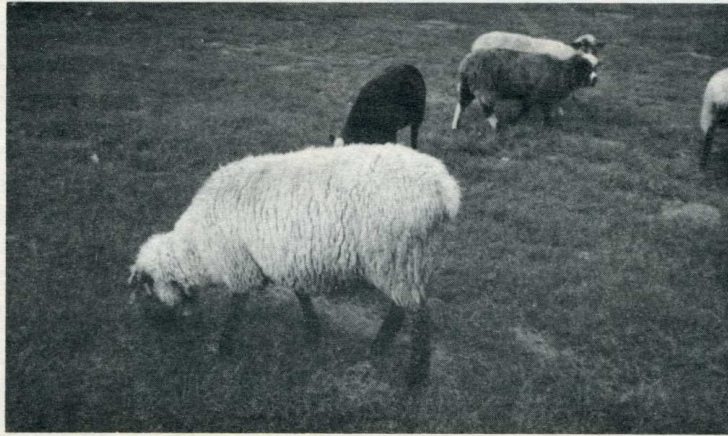
If you would like to order a custom made Shaker sweater, or would like further information about CADAGREN HANDKNITS, write to P.O. Box 125, Grafton, NH 03240.



## Celebrating the Harvest

Blue skies, perfect leaves and a snap of cold in the air lent the second annual Old Time Shaker Harvest Festival an appropriate feeling of fall. Lured by promises of hayrides and homemade apple pie, nearly 850 visitors spent the afternoon of October 7 at the Museum.

The Festival took place in and adjacent to the Shaker Laundry/Dairy building. Sheep herding and cider pressing as well as horse drawn hayrides and a farm stand converged on the fields behind the building. Inside, volunteers sold Shaker baked goods and harvest treats; children searched for pennies in a haystack and packaged seeds; and craftspeople showed how to make oval boxes, baskets, corn



husk dolls, quilts and dried floral wreaths. The Shaker Store, only recently moved to its new location, braved the onslaught of patrons.

Much of the success of the Harvest Festival can be attributed to the volunteers who contributed many hours of their time before, during and after the event. From making and baking thirty apple

pies, to hanging posters and hauling tables, chairs, pumpkins and hay—these volunteers did it all: Eva Daniels, Carolyn Freese, Andy Green, Happy Griffiths, Kitty Scherer, Sonia Swierczynski, Nancy Sycamore & Jean Watson. Other volunteers who helped on the day of the event include: Lynn Board-

man, Caryn Bosson, Linda Boucher, Andrea Day, Jim Loft, Laurie Lundquist, Becky Powell and John Taylor. Thanks must also be given to box makers Jay Davis, Betty Grondin and Eric Taylor, basket maker Rene Mastey, and cider pressers Jim and Debbie Griffiths.

## Advisory Council Formed

For some time now, the Board of Trustees has been discussing the idea of forming an Advisory Council. As originally conceived, the Advisory Council would meet with the Board on a quarterly basis to address the increasingly complex issues which the Museum must face as it continues to grow. Although the Museum's most pressing concern is finances, long range planning and Board development are other areas where outside advice would allow the Board to review new options.

Over the course of several months, Board members suggested names of potential candidates for the Advisory Council. Solicitation calls were then made by the Board and the first meeting was held on October 24. To date, the members of the Advisory Council are: Mary Chambers (minority leader, NH State Legislature), Closey Dickey (community leader), Whitney Dickey (retired president, 1st NH Bank), Robert Fields (trustee, Dart-

mouth College), Antoinette Iadarola (provost, Colby Sawyer College), William Maloy (president, Mascoma Savings Bank), Deborah Stanley (director, Ausbon Sargent Land Trust) and Robert Webber (president, 1st NH Bank).

At the October 24 meeting, Council members were brought up to date on Museum activities by Director Carolyn Smith, Board Chair Greg Schwarz, Treasurer Steve Powell and Secretary John Taylor. The main topic of discussion was the Museum's effort to secure the Laundry/Dairy building for its permanent home. Council members made a number of pertinent suggestions regarding financing, land ownership and raising the awareness of the community. At the conclusion of the meeting, plans were made to move forward on several proposals with the continuing help of the members of the Advisory Council. The next meeting of the Council will take place after the first of the year.

*The Friends' Quarterly* is a publication of The Museum at Lower Shaker Village. It is mailed as a service to Museum Friends. For information on the Friends program write: Membership Coordinator, The Museum at Lower Shaker Village, Route 4A, Enfield, NH 03748, or call (603) 632-4838.

### Museum Staff:

Carolyn Smith, Director  
Elaine Loft, Education Co-or.  
Caryn Bosson, Develop. Co-or.  
Happy Griffiths, Herbalist

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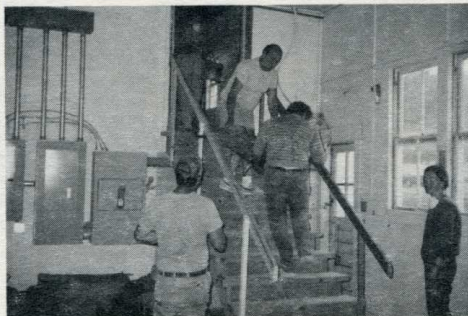
## A Clean Sweep

Billowing dust, grunts and groans, shouted directions and endless piles of "treasures" were the order of the day on Sept. 23 when thirty volunteers descended on the Laundry/Dairy building. The call to arms had been sent out earlier, flyers had announced a volunteer work party aimed at clearing out the odds and ends which had been accumulating in the 11,000 sq. ft. building for nearly sixty years. As the Museum is currently in the process of obtaining the Laundry/Dairy building for its permanent home, a major cleaning needed to take place before things could be moved into the historic structure.

By noon, all of the rooms in the Laundry building had been emptied of their contents. The once vacant wood shop (where Dana Robes' machines were housed) was completely filled with refuse.

Plumbing fixtures, engines, furniture, lighting supplies, and just plain garbage surrounded the perspiring workers.

After a well deserved break, volunteers picked up their ham-



mers and crowbars and set to work dismantling non-Shaker shelving which filled many of the rooms. Others donned dust masks to vacuum the now empty chambers. Windows and walls were washed in the rooms where the store and collection were to be housed. One

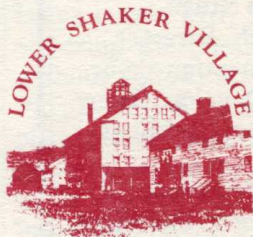
volunteer spent hours sanding the floor of the cheese curing room in the dairy. Others picked through piles of wood, hoping to salvage some of the original Shaker handiwork for future restoration efforts.

At 4:00 pm the job was complete—the building stood silent but clean. A tag sale and several trips to the dump cleared away the last of the junk. A heartfelt thanks to all of those who helped to clean the Laundry/Dairy building: Jean and Gene Beard, Charlie Bosson, Barbara and Earl Brady, Eva Daniels, Jay Davis, Jesse Davis, Charlie DePuy, Priscilla Geer, Gigi Graner, Andy Green, Marga and Ernie Griesbach, Sonja Hakala, John Hammond, Jim Loft, Dave McIntire, Steve Powell, Sue Richardson, Ken Robb, Irene Rogers, Kitty and Karl Scherer, Greg Schwarz, John Taylor, Joe Thompson, Pat Vlamynck, Suzi Wallis and Judy Zimicki.

## Thank You One and All

The second floor of the Great Stone Dwelling was decorated with corn stalks and pumpkins in keeping with the Halloween theme of the 1989 Volunteer Celebration. Rising to the occasion, many came in costume. Although some of the disguises had everyone stumped, all the mysteries were resolved when the guests shed their masks so they could enjoy the sumptuous pot luck dinner.

After every morsel had been consumed, the staff presented a slide show which paid homage to the 133 volunteers who had donated their time and expertise to the Museum during the 1989 season. Volunteer coordinator Elaine Loft characterized the Museum as the Tree of Life and explained that volunteers are the nutrients which help the Museum to grow. Without the tour guides, gardeners, craftspeople, committee members, administrative help, board members and special events help the Museum would certainly be lost. Following the presentation of a huge "thank you" cake, certificates were awarded to all. Each person's contributions were duly noted and a hearty round of applause brought the evening to a close.



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