

# The Friends' Quarterly

A Newsletter from the Enfield Shaker Museum

Vol. XIII, No. 2

Fall 2001

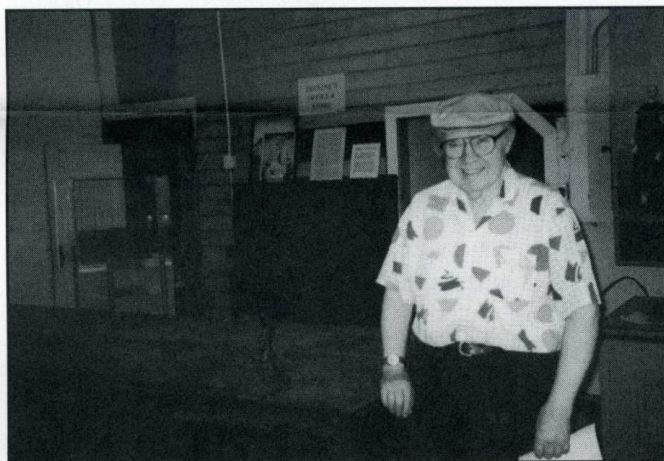
## Museum Celebrates Unprecedented Donations of Artifacts in 2001

This summer the Enfield Shaker Museum has received numerous important donations of furniture, textiles and paper items, many of which originally came from this community. In their choice of the Enfield Shaker Museum as a repository for these artifacts, our friends have given the Museum a strong endorsement, rewarding our hard work to improve our facilities, security and professionalism. These new objects will expand our knowledge of the Enfield Shakers and provide new study opportunities for scholars.

The most eye catching new piece of furniture, an Enfield Shaker tailoring counter, is the donation of Robert Leavitt, well known historian from Lebanon, New Hampshire. In recent years Mr. Leavitt has been generously donating many significant Enfield Shaker artifacts and in August, the Museum received the remaining artifacts in his collection.

This large tailoring counter was purchased by his grandfather, George Ulysses Lincoln Leavitt, from Enfield Shaker Elder Abraham Perkins. A large two piece counter, nine feet seven inches long, three feet wide and three feet tall, the piece is finished on all four sides with the top made of two tongue and grooved 18 inch boards. Attached to the top of the counter is a metal riveting press which Mr. Leavitt speculates was used to rivet the early fasteners on the Brother's clothes.

The items in Mr. Leavitt's collection come with an excellent provenance for they have been in Mr. Leavitt's



*Robert Leavitt standing next to his donation of the Shaker tailoring counter. Behind him to the left is the Trustee's Desk from the Church Family Office which Mr. Leavitt also recently donated to the Museum.*



*1922 photo of Robert Leavitt being held by his favorite Shaker, Sister Margaret Appleton.*

family since their purchase from the Shakers. Mr. Leavitt grew up in Lebanon, NH and spent his summers in Enfield with his grand parents and great grandmother at their lakeside home on Shaker Boulevard. His grandfather, George Ulysses Lincoln Leavitt, had bought four lots near the end of Shaker Boulevard from Col. Churchill and here he built "Camp Driftwood," where his extended family spent their summers. "Point Comfort," a spot enjoyed by the Enfield Shakers on Lake Mascoma, was then at the end of the road and a path led from

there to the town of Enfield.

George Ulysses Lincoln Leavitt, born in 1865, was the Deputy Sheriff in Lebanon for fifty years, and then was promoted to High Sheriff of Grafton County. He retired from this job at 70 years of age. In addition to his police work, George Leavitt ran an upholstery business in the old Odd Fellows Block, a trade that he passed on to his grandson, Robert.

While summering on the lake, the Leavitt family came to know the Enfield Shakers. George frequently visited with Elder Abraham Perkins and, like many of his neighbors at the time, when the Shakers no longer needed furniture or even buildings, he had an opportunity to buy a piece of Shaker furniture. In this manner George Leavitt was able to purchase a tailoring counter from

Elder Abraham Perkins. Perkins, when younger, had been the Brothers' tailor and recalled to George Leavitt how he had followed the old world custom of sitting cross legged

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## President's Letter

Dear Friends,

The many discussions that have grown out of the tragedies of September 11th have reaffirmed for me the importance of our work at the Enfield Shaker Museum. This site on the western shore of Mascoma Lake has been occupied for over 200 years by men and women who strove to live productive, peaceful lives in a communal setting. The Shakers have left us a lasting legacy of progressive social thinking including tolerance, equality and justice as they worked here to create a "heaven on earth", and more recently, the Missionaries of La Salette have taught by example as they lived and worked here in Christian community. Insights gained by visiting the museum and studying the histories of these two groups can broaden our thinking about equality, justice and community.

Mother Ann was aware of the uncertainty of life when she spoke the words, "Do all your work as though you had a thousand years to live, and as if you knew you must die tomorrow". In the midst of seeming chaos, Shaker brothers and sisters created an orderly society based on a desire for peace and justice. Those wishes extended past their boundaries to the larger community, as illustrated by their willingness to include the town's poor in their ranks and to harbor the mentally ill. In November, the Museum is planning an exhibit in the Great Stone Dwelling entitled, *In Their Own Words* that will coincide with the Christmas season and the lighting of the La Salette Shrine and Mary Keane Chapel. Quoting from original sources, this exhibit will reflect on the Shaker values of community, charity, character and faith, topics we are all concerned with today.

Much has happened since our last newsletter, we are proud of our very successful summer, but saddened by the departure of our Director, William Moore.. As many of you know, Will and his family, Charlotte and Gideon, have moved to North Carolina. Will has taken a position on the faculty of the University of North Carolina, Wilmington and will be teaching history. We already miss them a lot; Gideon and his endless drawings on our bulletin board, Charlotte for her quick wit and wonderful expertise in Folk Art, and Will for his guiding light, introducing us all to new approaches, new ideas and new friends.

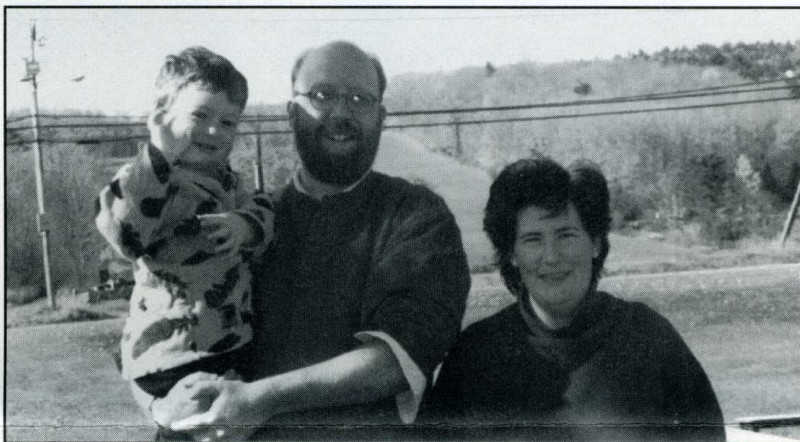
The Search Committee has been hard at work interviewing prospective candidates and we hope to report to you soon with our choice to fill Will's shoes.

Happily, many friends have generously entrusted their Shaker artifacts to our safe-keeping. Some of the larger pieces are currently on view at the Museum, but there are many more pieces that Cynthia Barton, a volunteer on our Collections Committee is currently inventorying and which we hope to put on view next summer. Cynthia has undertaken the large job of sorting and cataloguing numerous boxes of Shaker items, recently donated by Robert Leavitt. We cannot adequately express our gratitude to Mr. Leavitt for his care of these objects all these years, and his foresight and commitment to their preservation.

Many others friends, upon looking over family treasures have made the same decision to donate their items to the Museum. They have recognized that our Museum can ensure the long term care and preservation of these objects, preserve their accompanying family stories, and interpret these objects to the public in a broader context.

I hope many of you were able to get to our Contra Dance Series this summer. The dances were terrific, with musicians and dancers alike complimenting the 1849 Stone Mill as a great venue for a contra dance.. Participants from all over the region attended, as well as many people who are part of the local dance community. Because it was so successful we plan to continue it again next year, so if you missed it this year....

And I hardly need to say anything about the hugely successful Yankee Brass Band concert, held on the lawn in front of the Mary Keane Chapel. They are dedicated group and are preserving a great musical tradition, and we hope to have them back another year.



*We all wish Gideon, Will and Charlotte Moore good luck in North Carolina.*



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The Mary Keane Chapel Concert Series, organized by George and Donna Butler also had another successful year. This year, Museum Trustee, Sam Colbeck, took over much of the responsibility for this Museum program. He created a concert series newsletter with articles relating to the architecture of the building, represented the Museum at the concerts, and together with George and Donna, Happy Griffith and Kitty Scherer, provided an added bonus – receptions in the Herb Garden with the organist.

Funded by the Vernacular Architecture Forum, Tania Martin a scholar who researches spaces and built forms associated with Catholic institutions, visited the Museum to consult about developing a new interpretive plan which encompasses both the Shaker and the La Salette histories at Enfield. From her report, the museum will be better able to respond to our visitor's increased desire for a fuller understanding of the complex history of the site.

Another grant from the New Hampshire Council on the Arts, allowed the Museum to run a series of well-received "Traditional Arts Workshops". Martha Wetherbee did a weekend Ash Basket Workshop; Barbara Brady gave a Chair Taping Workshop; Marge Gibbs and Galen Beale taught a Poplarware Workshop and Happy Griffith instructed an Herbal Wreath class. We are very fortunate to have so many skilled craftspeople at the Museum – they add so much to our day and to the visitors' experience. Roger Gibbs, our Tinsmith has a new exhibit above his workbench on the process of reproducing Shaker tinware. We would also like to thank Jan Lacey for coordinating all the craftsmen throughout the summer.

The Mascoma Bank Foundation generously contributed to the hiring of an Heirloom Vegetable gardener this year. Dick Clapp has toiled all summer in this rambunctious garden which has produced corns, squashes, pumpkins, kale, flax and sunflowers.

There is more yet to come: on November 17 we will again have our Holiday Gift Extravaganza in the Great Stone Dwelling. We hope you will come and shop for your holiday gifts. The Inn will be full of craftspeople with a wide range of handcrafted items for sale.

Our Annual Meeting is on November 11 at 2:00 pm in the Meeting Room of the Great Stone Dwelling. This year we are fortunate to have Dr. David Switzer of Plymouth State College speak on his discoveries while doing the underwater

archeology on the Shaker Bridge as a consultant for the State Department of Transportation.

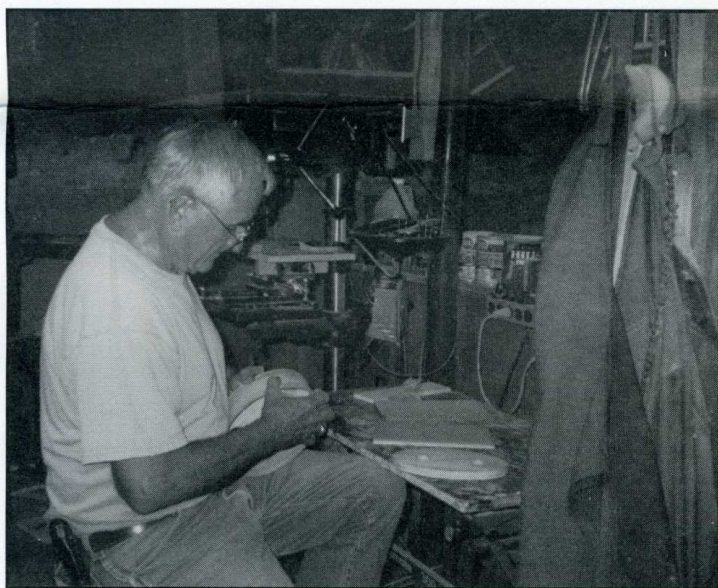
We value your support, and I look forward to seeing many of you at these upcoming events. Together, we make up a community of friends tied together by our respect, admiration and desire to learn from both the Shakers and the La Salettes.

Sincerely,

Galen Beale  
President, Board of Trustees

### Upcoming events:

Sunday, November 11 - Annual Meeting  
Saturday, November 17 - Holiday Gift Extravaganza  
Sunday, December 16 - Christmas Cookie Fair  
Saturday, January 12, 2002 - Hand Dovetailing with Dana Robes Woods Craftsmen  
Saturday, February 2, 2002 - Ice Cutting Day  
Saturday, February 2, 2002 - Pegboard and Shelf with Dana Robes Wood Craftsmen  
Saturday, December 7, 2002 - Build a 3' Shaker Bench



*Earl Brady, hard at work in the Cellar Shop*

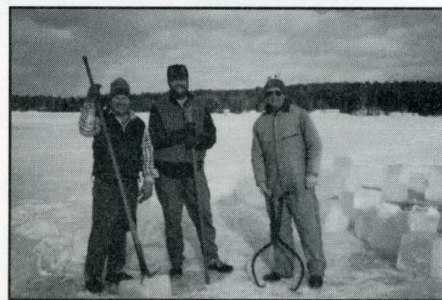
The *Friends' Quarterly* is a publication of the Enfield Shaker Museum.

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*Ice cutting on Lake Mascoma*



## Sage Thoughts

### Herbal Teas

When the hustle and bustle of the upcoming holidays becomes almost overwhelming, this is the time to slow down, relax and brew a cup of herbal tea. Since the ancient times, beverages made from the leaves, flowers, barks and roots of plants have been used both for medicine and pleasure. As a result of the Boston Tea Party in 1773 people began to brew tea from the local flora, including raspberry and blackberry leaf, goldenrod, Oswego tea (*Monarda didyma*), spice bush and the red-rooted New Jersey tea, and called it patriots tea. Medicinal herbs were recommended by the Shakers as well as the World's People. In 1813 Dr. Peter Smith, a local "Indian Doctor," was recommending drinking herbal teas to prevent illness.

Today at the market these alternative teas come in many different mixes and are labeled with advice for anything that ails you. Perhaps because of the continuing awareness of health and fitness or just the thought that herbal teas offer a refreshing change from the usual drinking options, people are once again discovering the pleasure of drinking herbal tea. There are many delicious brands on the market shelf but the best ones are those you blend and brew yourself. During the growing season when your herbs are producing, take your scissors and basket and gather the fragrant botanicals. The best time to do this is in the morning after the dew has dried.

Making a good herbal blend is easy and the enjoyment of working with the herbs can be relaxing in itself! Mixing what could become your personal blend is not difficult but it does involve a few guidelines and a certain amount of creativity. Using fresh herbs is the best but if you don't have them, use dry herbs. After the herbs are gathered and washed they should be hung or spread out in a warm, dark room or attic and allowed to dry until they are 'cornflake chip' dry. Next strip the leaves from their stems and store in clean glass jars with a tight fitting cover in a cupboard away from light and heat to ensure maximum freshness.

Most people are primarily concerned with taste when creating an herbal tea but several other criteria should be considered when making a blend. Aroma, texture and color should be combined to excite the senses, and the physiological effect of the blend should be taken into consideration. Will it relax you, will it help with cold symptoms, will it be stimulating? When choosing herbs for flavor, try using lemon verbena, lemon balm, spearmint, peppermint or orange mint. Don't forget your spices, cinnamon, ginger, and cloves, which add interest. And for tartness, rosehips, hibiscus, fennel and licorice can do much in enhancing a pot of tea. In preparing your herbal tea, start with an idea; know the flavor of the individual herbs you will be using and blend for flavor, aroma and beauty.

The next step is the actual brewing of your tea blend. Bring your water to a boil and pour over the loose herbs, which have been placed in a teapot. The usual amount to use is 1 teaspoon of dried herb or 2 Tablespoons of fresh herb to one cup of water. Cover and let steep for 10-15 minutes, then strain and pour into a cup, add a sweetener to taste and enjoy. Forget about the cares of the day, savor your herbal nectar and enjoy the holidays!

My favorite herbal tea recipe:

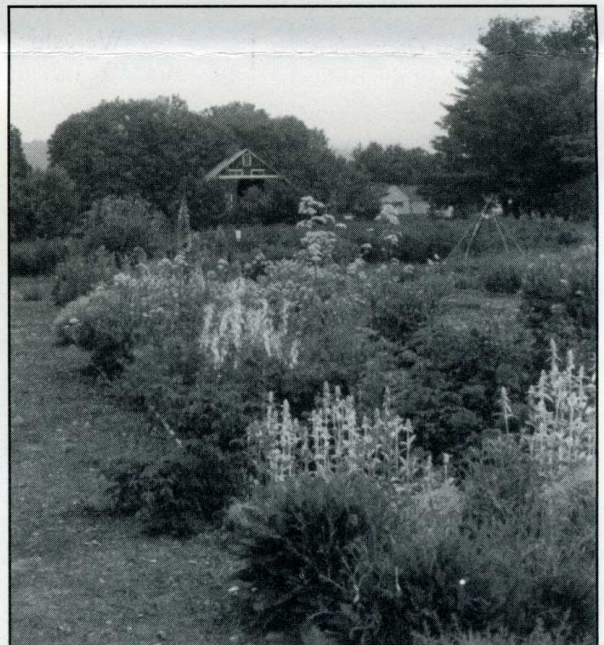
Mix 1 Tablespoon lemon balm, 1 Tablespoon spearmint or peppermint, 2 lemon verbena leaves, a couple of sage leaves and a 1/4 teaspoon of rosemary. I add calendula flowers for the color they add, but they are not necessary.

Happy Griffiths, Herbalist

#### Wish List

Do you have any of the following items, in usable condition, that you would be willing to donate to the Museum?

leaf rakes	TV and video player
hand clippers/pruners	cordless drill
shop vac	clean 5 gallon buckets
heavy duty extension cords	filing cabinets
folding tables	book cases
hand tools	metal shelving
Slide projector	desk lamps



*Enfield Shaker Museum herb garden*



### Continued from Page 1

on its top to make and mend the Brother's clothes. George Leavitt, in removing the counter from the Brother's workshop, now referred to as the East Brethren's Shop, found it was made in two pieces in order to fit through the small door. The tailoring counter was moved into the Leavitt's upholstery shop in the Odd Fellows Block where it remained until the building burned in 1932. The tailoring shop was in the cellar where the fire did not penetrate, and the only damage to the counter came from the six inches of ice that collected on its top from the fireman's water hoses. This water damage caused the top boards to warp slightly.

George and his grandson, Robert, then removed the counter and set up another upholstery shop in their home in Lebanon where the counter had remained until its return to the Enfield Shaker Museum this year.

Mr. Leavitt has made many very significant donations to the Museum over the years. Among them the trustee's desk which was also purchased by his grandfather at the time he bought the tailoring counter. The trustee's desk was removed from the Church Family's Trustee's Office which stood in front of the Great Stone Dwelling. This trustee's desk was also used by George U.L. Leavitt in his upholstering shop.

Both the tailoring counter and the trustee's desk are currently on display in the Museum's Laundry Dairy Building. The Museum is also working on cataloging the remaining collection of artifacts recently donated by Mr. Leavitt and we hope to begin to put them on display next summer. Found in this collection are glass plate negatives, photographs, ephemera, several spinning wheels also purchased from Elder Perkins, a collection of painted fancy buttons by Canterbury's Helena Sale, Franklin Young's bed, and many other exciting treasures.

The Museum has been the recipient of many gifts this year, but space does not allow a description of each one. Below is a partial list of the generous donors and a brief description of their gift to the Museum:

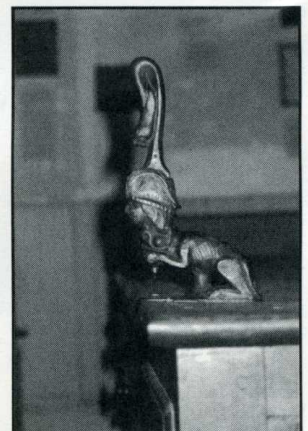
- Susan and Malcolm Barlow, Shaker secretary from Enfield, Connecticut.
- Alice Backer, Shaker cap with the embroidered initials "MB", a photograph of Sister Mary Diana Bradford, and a photocopy of a letter from Mary Bradford to her father, living in Enfield.
- George and Priscilla Brooks, knitting sheath.
- Ann Disco, reproduction Dorothy Cloak.
- Martha J. Harrison, framed print entitled Shakers Near Lebanon.
- Ray and Janet Kulig, Enfield great wheel stamped "N D", given in memory of her parents, Roger and Alice Neily.
- Dorothy Sears, Mount Lebanon Shaker chair and Enterprise Mfg. Co. chair.
- Ann Tarney, three scrapbooks of collected information about the Enfield Shakers.
- Barbara Brady, loan of an 8' wooden field seeder for display in the Laundry/Dairy Building.



*Recently donated tailoring counter on display in the Laundry/Dairy. The counter is built in 2 pieces allowing the work surface and top row of drawers to be lifted off the base which contains the lower 2 rows of drawers. If not for this feature, the piece would not have made it into the building.*



*Malcolm and Susan Barlow with their donation of an Enfield, Connecticut, Shaker writing desk. Rest assured we managed to get the desk upright when it was installed in the collection.*



*Detail of the riveting press on the right side of the counter.*



## West Meadow Barn to be Re-Roofed

Thanks to the generosity of many donors, the Enfield Shaker Museum has raised the monies necessary to fix the leaking roof on the West Meadow Barn. Nothing deteriorates a building faster than a leaky roof, and we are very pleased that we will be able to stabilize this barn before winter.

Built during the time of the Shaker's peak of prosperity, the West Meadow Barn is an historically important part of the Church Family complex. Our long range plan is to restore this barn to its original Shaker appearance and develop interpretive materials for its interior that will educate the public about Shaker agricultural practices and their uses of water power.

The Museum recently received a barn preservation grant from the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, allowing us to hire Fifield Building Restoration of Canterbury, NH to produce an assessment of the barn's current status and a proposal for its multi-year restoration. In the last five years the museum has spent \$5,662 on maintaining and assessing the West Meadow Barn.

I want to thank everyone who contributed to this Barn Fund; you have ensured that the building will remain standing for a long time. The Museum will continue applying for grants to state, federal and other local resources in order to ensure the continuing restoration of this handsome building.

One of the ancillary results of our focus on the West Meadow Barn this summer was that we made a new friend in Josh Burritt, who organized a thorough cleanup of the Barn as his Eagle Scout project. This was no easy task and required lots of planning, strong arms and two dumpsters! Thank you Josh, this was a project that we could not have done ourselves.

As you drive by the barn you will also notice that we have cut down the trees that have been encroaching on the Barn. Thanks to the hard work of volunteer Clinton Pitts, the barn not only looks better, but is preserved from the deteriorating effects of all the trees formerly crowding the structure.



*The West Meadow Barn shown in an historic view.*

*Photo: Enfield Shaker Museum*

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