

The Friends' Quarterly

A publication of the Enfield Shaker Museum

Robert Leavitt and His Enfield Shaker Friends

By Cynthia Barton

Mascoma Lake in Enfield feeds the Mascoma River, which flows through the city of Lebanon. These waters connect not only the two towns but also the historical path of Robert Leavitt. He and two generations before him passed their summers on the lake, where they became friends with the Shakers.

Robert was born in 1922 and was the third generation of his family to live in Lebanon, at 40 Mascoma Street. The Enfield Shaker Museum's archives has a photograph of Sister Margaret Appleton standing in the driveway, holding the infant Robert. The Leavitt family's relationship with Sister Margaret began with Robert's grandfather, George Ulysses Lincoln Leavitt.

As a historian, Robert had an insatiable quest for knowledge. His passion for history was nourished by this grandfather, whose name alone might have stimulated such an interest.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, summer residents, many from Lebanon, began building camps on the lake's eastern shore. They soon began to cross the lake by bridge or boat to purchase milk, butter, and fresh vegetables.

Friendships ensued. A photograph called "Summer Gathering" currently hangs in the meeting room of the Great Stone Dwelling. Taken in 1898 by Frank Churchill, a summer neighbor of the Leavitts, it depicts camp residents enjoying the outdoors with their Shaker friends. One of the most gregarious of the Shakers was Brother Franklin Young, carpenter of the community and the last of the male brothers at Enfield. George Leavitt and Brother Franklin became good friends. George frequently visited him in the carpentry shop, which was also his dwelling place. Brother Franklin had made himself a rather heavily ornamented bed of birds eye



Sister Margaret Appleton and infant Robert Leavitt. Photo taken in 1922. (ESM, Leavitt Collection)

maple and black walnut. When George queried him about the lack of simplicity, Brother Franklin replied, "The sisters can't come into my bedroom, so I can ornament my bed if I want." When the Enfield community closed in 1923 and Franklin moved to Canterbury, he gave the bed to George.

Robert inherited many Shaker objects from his father. In 2001 he gave the collection to the Museum in anticipation of going to a nursing facility. Along with the bed, two other large pieces from the collection are on display in the Museum – a tailoring bench used by Elder Abraham Perkins and the desk used by the Church Family Trustees. George, who was an upholsterer by trade, bought both items and used them in his shop. Robert graduated from Lebanon High in 1940, was a defense worker during World War II, and after the war took over his grandfather's business.

After the Enfield community closed the Leavitts kept in special touch with Sister Margaret Appleton. Robert loved to tell of the time, while a teenager, he and his family

visited her. She wanted to show him something at the old meetinghouse, which was up a hill and approached by steps with flagstones between them.

"As I did with my grandmother without ever thinking, I put my hand under her elbow just to steady her. And when we got up onto the flagging there she turned a little and smiled at me. She says, 'Mr. Leavitt, the Sisters can't see us out of the window, but when they can see, you mustn't touch me.'" He had completely forgotten that no man was to touch a Shaker Sister, but he knew by her smile that she had not been offended.

Sister Margaret died in 1944, living long enough to return to Enfield for the dedication of the new Shaker bridge in August, 1940. (The one built by the Shakers in 1849 was destroyed by the 1938 hurricane.) The governor escorted Sister Margaret to the middle of the bridge where she cut the ribbon to mark its formal opening. This occasion became one of many topics Robert wrote and lectured about. His personal collection of photographs included pictures of the old bridge taken by Frank Churchill in 1889 and his grandfather in 1894.

It was largely due to Robert's efforts that the Lebanon Historical Society came into being. In 1958 the Churchill collection of historical photographs and artifacts was offered to Lebanon, but there was no historical society to care for it. Robert helped to found one and became its longtime curator. He became Town Historian in 1973 and helped update the town history to 1994. Robert helped save the Dana House, the oldest house in town and photographed historic buildings he knew were to be demolished.

Perhaps his most valuable contribution to Lebanon's history was his two volume *Lebanon, New Hampshire in Pictures*, published in 1997. (continued on page 3.)

Donation to Museum Helps Curatorial Department



Last fall, Linda and Larry Martinez came to the Enfield Shaker Museum from Kent, Washington, thinking they'd learn more about Shaker furniture. What they didn't count on was how much their stay would mean to the Museum.

The Martinezes participated in the Hulbert Outdoor Center's Service Elderhostel at the Museum with 19 other individuals from across the United States. Elderhostel coordinator Deb Williams organized a week of projects along with tours, classes, hikes and performances.

Larry used his woodworking skills to make needed repairs, while Linda drew upon her 40 years as a librarian to help in the archives.

Linda and Larry's first encounter with the Shakers was through a book on Shaker furniture. They had visited two other Shaker sites before coming to Enfield. One museum would not allow Linda to use their library, so her work in our archives was a very meaningful experience for her.

On her last day at the Enfield Shaker Museum, Linda presented Executive Director Mary Boswell a check for \$1,720.00. She had seen the curatorial department's wish list for computer hardware and software upgrades, and this covered precisely what was needed.

Galen Beale, former president of the Museum's board of trustees and now chair of the Museum Curatorial and Exhibitions Committee, wasted no time in purchasing new equipment and software. The software, recommended by two professional museum associations, will help upgrade our collections cataloging.

"We are so grateful to the Martinezes for their generosity to the Museum. Giving us the ability to move from paper to computerized records is a gift beyond measure," said Galen Beale.

Enfield Shaker Museum Welcomes New Trustees

At the Annual Meeting on November 4, Enfield Shaker Museum members elected the new board of trustees. The following individuals are new to the board:

Mardy High was born and raised in New Jersey and spent half a year in Indonesia as an exchange student. She received her Bachelors degree from Smith College, her Masters Degree from Brown University, and her Ph.D. from Durham University in England. After teaching in England for 14 years, she directed Alumni Continuing Education at Dartmouth College. She was a museum interpreter at Plimoth Plantation, where she did research for her Master's Thesis on the relations between the Native Americans and the Pilgrims. Mardy retired in 2001 to help her aging mother. She is very involved in the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Upper Valley in Norwich, as Music Director for 15 years and currently Board President. She also sings with the Handel Society at Dartmouth. Mardy and Colin High live in Enfield, where they built an energy-efficient, sustainable house on Spectacle Pond. They are leaders in the "Green Movement" in the Upper Valley.

Paul Mirski received a Bachelors in Architecture from the University of Detroit and has been a resident of Enfield since 1969. He is known nationally for his accomplishments in the field of historic preservation and is regarded as a leading figure in preservation efforts here in New Hampshire. In 1984 Barbara Bush, wife of then Vice President George Bush, presented him with an award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation for his pioneering design in preserving an industrial structure. In 1973 he was the originator of the Shaker Mountain Conservation District proposal intended to preserve 5,000 acres along and below the crest of Shaker Mountain. He is a founder of the NH Preservation Alliance, and a former trustee of the NH Humanities Council. He was a member of the NH House of Representatives.

Chuck Stone holds a Bachelors and a Masters degree from Keene State College and a Masters degree in School Administration from Plymouth State University. He began his teaching career at the Enfield Village School in 1974 and was principal there, 1985-2004. He became somewhat of a legend with parents and students alike as "the perfect principal" and was voted New Hampshire Elementary School Principal of the year in 1994. He represented New Hampshire at the National Elementary School Convention and received commendation from the Secretary of Education. Chuck served as Clerk of the Works for the Enfield Village School expansion, a project that was cited as one of the deciding factors in Enfield's selection as a New Hampshire Main Street town. Chuck currently is a part-time substitute teacher and a clerk in the retail business. He considers himself "semi-retired" and is awaiting new challenges.

Barbara Woods holds certificates in Landscape Design in Chichester, England and at George Washington University. She also served as the director of the landscape design program at George Washington University. She has worked for H&R Block as a senior tax advisor and was the Recreation and Park Planner for the Massachusetts Department of Natural Resources in Boston and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. She has also served as the Budget Planner for the United States Office of Education. She is now self-employed as a long-term care financial planner and is the co-coordinator for the Vermont Earth Institute, an educational organization with an environmental focus, located in the Brattleboro area. She also works for the Vermont Country Store in Rockingham.

Donations to the Enfield Shaker Museum in Memory of Cora L. Munsey

Linda H. Beaton
Dorothy Bowen
Enfield Shaker Singers
Dave and Marilyn Johnson

Richard K. Stuart and Margaret H. Metastasio

Suzanne Langley
Donald T. Munsey, Jr. and Family
Kendric R. and Nan Munsey
Mr. and Mrs. Arden Niswander

Winter 2008 Programs

The Shakers in New Hampshire

Thursdays, January 10 – February 14

9:30 am - 11:30 am

Learn about the New Hampshire Shakers' history through lectures, trips and activities. Museum Executive Director Mary Boswell will lead this course through the Institute for Lifelong Education at Dartmouth College. She and guest lecturers Mary Ann Haagen, David Starbuck and Galen Beale will cover several topics, including music, current archeological evidence, Shaker industries and diet. This program provides wonderful community outreach with a prestigious organization.

Robert Leavitt (continued from page 1)

He dedicated the work to his grandfather. "[George] inspired my study of local history ... and impressed me with the importance of its preservation for future generations."

George Leavitt died in 1953, aware of Robert's love of Lebanon and things Shaker but too soon to know of the historical work accomplished by his grandson. In 2004 the city of Lebanon, NH proclaimed February 21 "Robert Leavitt Day" in appreciation of his many contributions. The Robert Leavitt Room at the Shaker Museum is dedicated to his memory and to the display of many of the important artifacts he donated.

(With thanks to Mary Ann Haagen for transcriptions of her interviews with Robert Leavitt and to Olive MacGregor for information on his contributions to the town of Lebanon.)

School Vacation Week

February 18 – 22, 10am – Noon

The Museum will offer a wide variety of crafts, music, cooking, games and other supervised activities during School Vacation Week. The activities are designed for children aged 5-11. The fee is \$5 for adult and child; \$2.50 for each additional child; and will include a nutritional snack. Guided tours will also be available.



Family Sledding Day

Saturday, February 23, 10 am – 4 pm

Join us for a day of traditional outdoor winter family fun! Hot chocolate and coffee will be served with admission to the Museum. A variety of sledding hills available, from gentle beginners slopes to steeper slopes for the more adventurous. Bring your own sled. An overnight stay is also optional. Call the Museum for details.



Robert H. Leavitt (1922 - 2007)

Robert Hayes Leavitt died Tuesday, November 27, 2007 in Lebanon, New Hampshire. He was born on April 14, 1922, the son of Raymond C. Leavitt and Flora Hayes Leavitt. His family had resided at the same home in Lebanon for over 100 years.

A long time collector of Shaker artifacts, glass plate negatives and other photographic images of the Enfield Shaker Village, Robert generously donated his collection to the Enfield Shaker Museum in 2001.

He will long be remembered as a friend of the Shakers and the Enfield Shaker Museum. This kind and generous man will be greatly missed by all of us who witnessed first hand the wealth of his knowledge and memories of the Enfield Shakers and their home on the shores of Mascoma Lake.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Enfield Shaker Museum is to protect, enhance and utilize its historical structures, landscape and Shaker cultural heritage. Success factors:

- Educate our audiences about the history of this multifaceted site
- Deepen our audiences' ties with the Museum through hands-on participation
- Preserve and expand the spiritual legacy of the site
- Incorporate the Shaker ideals of order, organization, frugality, simplicity and community into our operations
- Meet changing community and organizational needs by supporting activities that foster improved quality of life
- Collaborate with other Shaker historic sites and nonprofit organizations to ensure best practices

Capital Campaign Projects Continue

The Enfield Shaker Museum's \$1.1 million campaign is progressing, thanks to the able leadership of co-chairs Happy and Clark Griffiths and the Development Committee, led by Mary Ann Haagen, with Susan Brown, Sue Jukosky, Mariann Shaffer, Doug Smith, Dolores Struckhoff and Sybil Williamson. Income from the campaign is addressing mechanical and aesthetic needs of the Great Stone Dwelling. The kitchen was refurbished this summer to increase the Museum's services. A new, efficient heating system was installed in the fall. Future goals are to install new storm windows, restore the cupola, add new wiring, and upgrade the sprinkler and fire system. Put your dollars to good use with a donation to the Museum's Capital Campaign. If you have already made a pledge, consider increasing your pledge. If you haven't already supported this campaign, please sign up now:

Yes! I (We) wish to make a gift to the Enfield Shaker Museum to help preserve this magnificent and historic structure.

- ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250
☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000
☐ \$5,000 ☐ Other \$ _____
☐ Donation enclosed.

☐ Please consider this a pledge, to be paid in the following installments: _____

Credit Card No. _____

Expiration Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Signature _____

Sugaring Off Dinner

Saturday, March 15, 6:30 pm

Celebrate spring with a traditional meal featuring maple syrup from the trees at Enfield



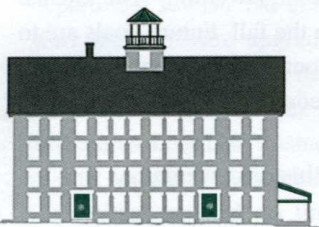
Shaker Museum! Our Executive Chef Betsy Oppeneer's menu will include Wild Rice and Broccoli Soup, Beet Salad with Maple Vinaigrette, Betsy's Apple Nut Rolls with Maple

Butter, Roast Pork with Cranberry Maple Sauce, Potato Pie, Steamed Green Beans and Maple Walnut Cream. Betsy studied at the Culinary Institute of America, Cornell University's Intensive Gourmet Cooking Program, the Yankee Kitchen Certificate Series, and the ATA School of Gourmet Cooking in Portafino, Italy.

An award-winning Certified Culinary Professional, she has clients throughout the U.S. Her television appearances include *Cookin' USA* (Nashville, TN) and *CBS This Morning* (NY, NY). The King Arthur Flour Baker's Catalog was originally compiled by Betsy. For more information or reservations please call the Museum at 603-632-4346.



Museum volunteers display and sell hundreds of home baked cookies at the 2007 Cookie Fair.



Enfield Shaker Museum

447 NH Rt 4A
Enfield, NH 03748
(603) 632-4346

Upton Foundation Contributes \$11,000 to Capital Campaign

On December 5, Sue Jukosky, a long-time member of the Museum, an Enfield Shaker Singer, and a member of the Museum's Development Committee, presented Clark and Happy Griffiths, Honorary Co-Chairs of the Capital Campaign, with a check for \$11,000 from the Upton Foundation.



Sue Jukosky presents Clark and Happy Griffiths with a check from the Upton Foundation.

"Eleanor Upton was a friend of my grandmother," Sue explained at the time of the presentation, "and my brother and father serve as two of the trustees of her foundation."

This donation is the second \$11,000 gift from the Upton Foundation. The gift comes at an excellent time, as we prepare for future projects related to the Great Stone Dwelling. With the heating system and kitchen renovations completed, this gift will go toward additional serious mechanical upgrades, weatherization and related improvements.

2007 Cookie Fair A Success

The 2007 Cookie Fair, had a good turnout despite the extreme weather, bringing in \$853 with no expenses. Congratulations to Museum Trustee, Barbara Brady for organizing this important event!

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The Enfield Shaker Museum

447 NH Rt 4A, Enfield, NH 03748

www.shakermuseum.org

chosenvale@shakermuseum.org

(603) 632-4346

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Tom Boswell, Property Manager

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Brett Mayfield, Head Gardener

Deb McTigue, Office Assistant

April Shadowens, Store Assistant

Museum Winter Hours

After a successful winter season last year, the Museum will remain open year-round in 2008. The Museum and Store are open 10 am - 4 pm, Monday through Saturday and noon - 4 pm on Sunday. For additional hours or special tours contact the Museum at 603-632-4346.

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