

Vol. XI

The Friends' Quarterly



A Newsletter from the Enfield Shaker Museum

Shaker Observances of Christmas

By Todd Burdick, Director of Interpretation & Public Programs, Hancock Shaker Village

Section IV.

The Order of Christmas, Thanksgiving and Fast Days

As the signal by which all true followers of Christ are known, is unfeigned and unalloyed love to each other, the order of God requires that on Christmas day Believers should make perfect reconciliation, one with an other; and leave all grudges, hard feelings, and disaffection one towards an other, externally behind on this day; and to forgive, as we would be forgiven; and nothing which is this day settled, or which has been settled previous to this, may hereafter be brought forward against an other.

2. *It is order to attend one general meeting, and one union meeting on this day.*

3. *It is the order to remember the poor of this world on this day, and to carry to the place of deposit, at the Trustees Office, such garments and goods, as are designed for them.*

4. *This day must be kept sacredly, and no work, except such necessary chores as are allowable on the Sabbath, may be done on this day, or until sunset.*

5. *Days appointed by the Government, for Thanksgiving and Fast, are also required to be kept and regarded, -- and Believers should attend one meeting, and devote the remainder of such days in cleaning, and putting things and apartments in order.*

The above excerpt is from: *Millennial Laws, or Gospel Statutes and Ordinances adapted to the Day of Christ's Second Appearing. Given and established in the Church for the protection thereof by Father Joseph Meacham and Mother Lucy Wright The presiding Ministry, and by their Successors The Ministry and Elders. Recorded at New Lebanon Augst. 7th 1821. Revised and re-established by the Ministry and Elders Oct. 1845.*

Visitors to Hancock Shaker Village in Pittsfield, Massachusetts during the Christmas season at the turn of the twentieth century would have found the 1830 Brick Dwelling festooned with holiday greens and red ribbons. On candle stands in the Believer's Dining Room stood small Christmas trees decorated by the children cared for by the celibate Society. Red and green paper chains draped from the ceiling above the long dining tables. Tinsel, and cutout paper birds and bells, added touches of whimsy at odds with the solid, enduring simplicity of Shaker architecture and furniture design. From the basement kitchen, the aroma of gingerbread cookies and



Sisters Olive Hayden, Bessie Dietrich, and Gladys Smith in the music room of the Hancock Shakers' Brick Dwelling, 1915. Note the festive fireplace made of cardboard and paper and painted to look like brick. (Photo courtesy of Hancock Shaker Village)

spiced cider, special holiday treats, wafted through the large six-story Dwelling. The voices of Brethren and Sisters singing songs written for the Christmas season sounded up and down the long halls of the building, once the residence of nearly a hundred Shakers at their peak a half century earlier.

While these signs of holiday merriment may at first seem incongruous with the image of the simple Shakers, they are authentic, as early twentieth century photographs and descriptions of Christmas in the Hancock community illustrate.

Christmas decorations and frivolity were far from the minds of the first Shakers during the late eighteenth century, however. Like the early Puritans and the later New England Protestant contemporaries of the Shakers, the Believers at first deemphasized the celebration of Christmas. Due to the common association of Christmas celebrations with the ancient pre-Christian or pagan rituals of the winter solstice, the Shakers' observance of Christmas was purely religious – a time of spiritual cleansing through fasting and repentance.

The Shaker Order of Christmas as practiced at Hancock and other communities during the growth and peak decades of the sect originated in 1776, at the first Shaker settlement in Watervliet, New York. According to Shaker lore, one of the Sisters was afflicted with a shaking of her limbs as she unsuccessfully tried to put on her shoes Christmas morning. Mother Ann Lee, the Shaker leader, interpreted this as a spiritual sign, reminded of God's words to Moses on Mount Horeb: *Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.* Christmas thus was to be more sacred than other days of the year for the Shakers.

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Todd Burdick holds a BA in History from Vassar College and an MA in Public History from the State University of NY - Albany. He has presented programs on Shaker culture, music, dance, crafts and trades, and other topics including museum education, interpretation and administration. His media appearances include those produced for PBS, NPR, A&E, The History Channel, Food Network, The Travel Channel and The Discovery Channel.

Invest in the Museum's Future

Become a member of a distinguished group of exceptional individuals who ensure the future of the Enfield Shaker Museum.

Wills and Bequests

Your will is a written testimony of your concern for your family and favorite charities. Contact your attorney to discuss what form of bequest fits your estate plan. You can name the Enfield Shaker Museum the direct beneficiary of specific assets, or a portion of your estate, or of your residual estate after payment of other bequests.

Charitable Gift Annuity

In exchange for cash or securities of \$5,000 or more, you can establish a Charitable Gift Annuity and receive an income tax deduction and partially tax free income payments for the rest of your life. After your lifetime, the Enfield Shaker Museum receives the annuity assets.

Remembering the Museum in your estate plan or with a gift annuity are two of many ways you can invest in the future of the Museum.

The *Friends' Quarterly* is a publication of

The Enfield Shaker Museum

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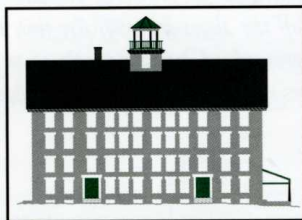
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Museum's Wish List

One way to help the Museum is by giving items to support our daily operations. Gift Cards to Staples and Home Depot are especially appreciated. Other needed items are: letter-sized paper, glue sticks, tape refills, pens, pencils, other office supplies, a truck, leaf blower and power broom. We are also seeking 6' rectangular plastic tables - those that fold in half are especially welcome. For more details, contact Office Manager Patricia Loven at (603) 632-4346 and info@shakermuseum.org.



Join Our Team of Volunteers!

Volunteers are the Museum's foundation. More than 100 volunteers contribute their unique skills, experience and talent to carry out the Museum's programs, services and preservation projects. Join this unique group of talented and caring individuals! Volunteers are needed in the following areas:

- Tours
- Museum Store
- Research and Cataloging
- Photography
- Special Events
- Educational Programs
- Administration
- Preservation and Maintenance
- Light Office Work
- Gardening and Groundskeeping

Fall Programs and Events

Sunday, September 18, 4 p.m.: Granite State Ringers Concert



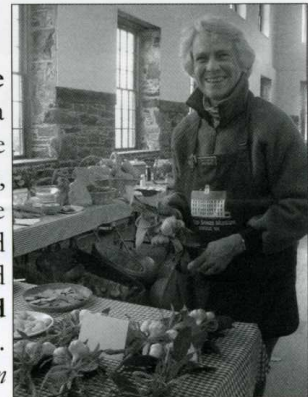
The Granite State Ringers, New Hampshire's only community bronze handbell choir, will perform a concert in the Mary Keane Chapel. Choir director Joan Fossum has been involved with handbells for more than 25 years. A member of the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers, the Granite State Ringers represents many NH communities. The choir uses five octaves of Malmark Handbells and five octaves of Malmark Handchimes. Three selections will be with organists Jeremy Cooper and Donna Butler at the renowned 1930 Casavant organ. Suggested donation \$10.

Friday-Sunday, September 23-25: Shaker Crafts Weekend

Learn a Shaker craft over the weekend and take your item home! Select from rug hooking, basketry, rug braiding and Shaker pincushions. Experienced craftspeople will guide you. Dinner Friday night will feature a program on *Poplarware: a Unique Shaker Craft*, by Dick Dabrowski, President of Shaker Workshops. At dinner Saturday night, archeologist David Starbuck, Ph.D. will present *Shaker Life as seen in Archeology*. To stay overnight, our weekend package @ \$249/person includes lectures, workshops, supplies, two overnight stays and meals. For local guests, our package @ \$149/person includes everything but the overnight stay.

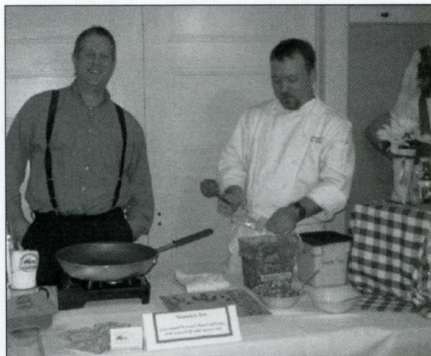
Saturday, October 1, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.: Harvest Festival

Celebrate the harvest season with activities for the whole family! **Experience local history** watching sheep herding, riding in a horse-drawn wagon or on a pony, and meeting local farm animals and their owners. Interact with craftspeople demonstrating Shaker and traditional crafts - weaving, spinning, rug hooking, quilting, and more. **Have fun** making and tasting apple cider and apple cider ice cream. Churn butter, dip candles and make seed packages as Shaker children did 100 years ago! Take a guided hike on the trails, look for pennies in a haystack and experience creative seasonal activities for children of all ages! **Eat lunch and shop** for harvest items and Christmas gifts from our gardens and Museum store. *Sponsored by Couch Family Foundation, Clark-Mortenson Agency, Inc., NH State Council on the Arts, Family Pharmacy, Cantlin Associates Realtors and Charter Trust Co.*



Saturday, October 22, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.: Chair Taping Workshop

Artisan Barbara Brady will teach you how to tape a chair with Shaker reproduction fabric tape. Your chair must be in good condition and finished. Tape is available in the Museum Store. Registration is limited. Admission: \$35/member; \$40/non-member.



Friday, November 4, 6:30 p.m.: Taste of the Upper Valley

Our popular dinner will feature a smorgasbord of "signature dishes" including appetizers, soups, salads, entrées and desserts. Last year's participating restaurants and caterers included Delicata Catering, Duck Soup Catering, Jewel of India, Mt. Cardigan Caterers, Mickey's Roadside Café, Sweet Fire BBQ, Stone Wall Catering, A to Z Cakes, Cupcake Queen, Stone Arch Bakery and Umpleby's Bakery & Café. A Live Auction, with the popular Leigh Webb, will also entertain you! \$50pp.

Sunday, November 13, 2:00 p.m.: Annual Meeting

Members are invited to review the Museum's past achievements and share the board's vision for the future. Members have the benefit of voting on the Museum's governance. Free admission.

(Continued on p. 4.)

Holiday Programs and Events



December 1-31: Festival of Trees

As seen in Todd Burdick's article in this newsletter, the Shakers observed many Christmas traditions over time. In the 20th century, Shakers at Hancock placed small Christmas trees on candlestands; at Canterbury, the Shakers decorated one large tree. In the Great Stone Dwelling, you will see a tree in every dwelling room! Individuals and nonprofit organizations are participated in this annual event by decorating more than 20 trees! Vote for your favorite, and the winner will receive a \$100 prize! This event is included in general admission. Members, children and Enfield residents have free admission.

Saturday, December 3, 12 - 5 p.m.: Holiday Open House

Join us for this annual celebration! The Great Stone Dwelling will be decorated for the holidays. Our Museum Store will feature local handcrafted items with sales for the holidays! Enjoy hot cocoa, mulled cider, music and more! Free admission to all.

Saturday, December 3, 6 p.m.: Candlelight Dinner

Enjoy a traditional holiday dinner in the original 1841 dining room of the Great Stone Dwelling. Start your meal with a social reception featuring hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. For dinner, choose either baked haddock or black diamond steak, with rice, butternut squash, salad, rolls and brownie ala mode! Our dinner will be catered by Mickey's Roadside Café, for only \$30/member and \$35/non-member. Please register by Thursday, December 1.



Sunday, December 11, 1:00 p.m.: Cookie Fair

Select from 100 different varieties of homemade cookies, all festively arranged for the season! Sold by the pound. Cookies sell fast, so arrive early!



Do Your Holiday Shopping at the Museum Store

The Museum Store is a great place to do your holiday shopping. You will find many high quality items, including locally made hats, mittens, oval boxes and furniture. Check out our herbal soaps, baskets, wooden bowls, gold and silver jewelry, and more! The Museum Store is open Monday-Saturday at 10 a.m., and Sunday at noon. For details call (603) 632-4346 or e-mail shakermuseum.giftshop@gmail.com. To make your shopping easier, check out our website www.shakermuseum.org, and see what we offer online! If you are interested in Shaker Workshop catalog items, let us make the order for you.

Exhibitions and Related Programs

The Ties that Bind Exhibit Expands at the Museum

In honor of the Town of Enfield's 250th Anniversary, the Museum's Collections and Exhibits Committee prepared three exhibits entitled, *The Ties that Bind*. One exhibit opened in the Great Stone Dwelling in May, and explores the Shakers' industrialization and the individuals who were inspired by their story. Two others opened in Enfield Center and North Enfield in July. The committee is now moving the former exhibit to the Great Stone Dwelling. This exhibit is based on an 1854 diary of an Enfield Center farmer and 20th century correspondence. Committee member Mary Ann Haagen has revealed new information about the shift from occasional interaction between neighbors to "interpretation" of the Shakers by people whose families had known them. *Sponsored by John P. Carr and Marjorie A. Carr and Reginald and Brenda Jones.*

Shaker Dance Performances at the Hopkins Center and the Museum

Hopkins Center for the Performing Arts will present a world premier co-commission *Angel Reapers*, Oct. 7-8. Inspired by the life of Mother Ann Lee, *Angel Reapers* explores her ministry in America (1780-84), characterized by loosely structured worship, Pentecostal spiritual gifts, ecstatic movement and powerful testimony. The premier is by director/choreographer/Pilobolus co-founder Martha Clarke and Pulitzer-, Tony-, and Oscar-winning writer Alfred Uhry (*Driving Miss Daisy*). Tickets @ \$28-\$53 may be purchased at the Hop at (603) 646-2422. As part of the program, the Museum and Hopkins Center will co-host a concert by the Enfield Shaker Singers in the Great Stone Dwelling, Sun., Oct. 2, 3 pm. Directed by Mary Ann Haagen, it will be based in the formal dance, gesturing and marching traditions of 19th century Shakers and the song repertoire and testimony of a spiritual revival. Tours of the Great Stone Dwelling will be held at 2 p.m. Program attendees may also hike up to the Feast Ground on one of the most beautiful autumn days of the year.

Exhibit on Energy Efficiency Opens in the Great Stone Dwelling

A grant of \$51,354 from the NH Public Utilities' Greenhouse Gas Emission Fund has saved the Museum \$7,400 in utility expenses in the Great Stone Dwelling. The project is now a best practices model for historic preservation and energy efficiency. The grant funded insulation, energy-efficient lights and appliances, an alternate heating system and an exhibit. Colin High, a member of the Museum's Preservation Planning Committee, designed the project and the exhibit, which was installed by Nicole Ford and Richard Burley, former Museum employees. Despite increases in activities, the use of heating oil was reduced by 25% and electricity was reduced by more than 10%. Colin believes the benefits will perhaps even increase in 2012. "Achieving a balance between energy efficiency and historic preservation is particularly difficult with our complicated building. Other historic sites will be very interested in our success," said Executive Director Mary Boswell.



In August NH Public Utilities Commission staff reviewed the results of their grant. Left to right: Museum Board President Mardy High; Museum Property Manager Tom Boswell, who oversaw the project; volunteer Colin High who designed the project; NHPUC Sustainable Energy Analyst Barbara Bernstein; NHPUC Director of the Sustainability Division Jack Ruderman and Museum Executive Director Mary Boswell, who managed the grant.

(Continued from page 1.)

On Christmas Day in 1787, the Believers, having recently gathered into Gospel Order, sat down together for their first communal meal at New Lebanon, New York, by then established and growing in its role as the central Shaker community. For many years Christmas was a day for fasting, and for cleaning the Shaker Brethren's and Sisters' spiritual houses and garments. The day was also time for "opening the mind" (the Shaker term for confession of sin) to the Elders and Eldresses, the spiritual leaders, and for special worship services. All of the Shaker Christmas observances were intended to restore union and peace with God and among one another, reinforcing and emphasizing the spiritual bond and relationship they created and nurtured as members of The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing.

In the mid-nineteenth century, following an early rising on Christmas morning, heralded by the sacred songs of an Elder as he progressed along the halls of the Brick Dwelling, the Hancock Shakers gathered for a worship service in the Winter Meeting Room. Among the rituals were the singing of gift songs and the sharing of gifts of the spirit. Christmas Day was then spent quietly, often with a return to daily routines after sunset. "December 25, 1863 We commemorate the birth of our Savior and it is a comfort to me whenever I reflect upon his mission into the world, & we keep it as usual... We put up 30 buckets of applesauce after supper," recorded one Shaker Sister in her journal.

Charity played a part in Shaker life, especially at Christmas, from early times. It was customary for clothing and other goods to be collected from among the Brethren and Sisters for distribution to their needy neighbors in the "World." The Hancock Shakers continued this tradition well into the twentieth century, relying on the local chapter of The Salvation Army to identify deserving families when the Shakers themselves were no longer able to.

As the nineteenth century reached its final decades, late Victorian and Worldly tastes and customs began to find their way into Shaker communities. Although Christmas Day continued to be dominated by religious observances, with acts of repentance and atonement taking precedence over lighthearted merriment and celebrations, some Shaker communities, including Hancock, adopted more festive elements as well. The role of music in the day grew, with small groups of Sisters and Brethren secretly writing and rehearsing special songs with which they would surprise fellow Believers on Christmas morning, as they wandered their way through the Dwelling.

Customs adopted from the World at the turn of the twentieth century included Christmas trees, stockings hung on bedposts, special Christmas foods and meals, and the singing of popular Christmas carols. The Sisters at Hancock would gather pine from the woods to decorate the Dwelling and make festive garlands with which to trim the Dining Room and Winter Meeting Room. Simple presents and candy were left at the bedroom doors, to the delight of the Shaker children upon waking up Christmas morning.

In the early twentieth century, Christmas pageants were incorporated into the holiday festivities. Scripts, costumes and scenery were rented from a Sunday School supply company or created by the Sisters and the Shaker girls in their care. Readings and singing also formed part of this holiday entertainment. The Hancock Shakers even had a few fake fireplaces, made out of paper and cardboard and painted to look like brick, set up in various rooms throughout their Dwelling.

As the original "Holy Day" slowly emerged as a more secular and Worldly "Holiday," the religious aspect of Christmas and the emphasis on love and union remained dear to the Shakers. A former Hancock Sister reminisced about her early twentieth century childhood Christmases in a letter written in the 1980s: *...We young folks delighted in making others happy – Christmas meant joy in giving and showing our talents to all the older members who had done so much for us all throughout the years. When we were very young they gave us joy so when we became young Sisters we felt it was our turn to do for them, and we did it with our hearts filled with love.* ■

Museum Welcomes Kate Mortimer as Sales Assistant

Kate Mortimer was hired as the Museum's Sales Assistant on September 1. Kate was raised in Philadelphia but has lived in Thetford Center, VT, for 18 years. She is a retired art teacher with more than 10 years of retail experience, most recently as Assistant Manager at Clay's in Hanover and West Lebanon. She was attracted to the Museum's position because of the opportunity to work for a nonprofit. "I like what the Enfield Shaker Museum stands for, preserving a way of life," she said.

"Kate's excellent customer service and retail experience, and her creativity, make her a welcome addition," said Mary Boswell, Executive Director.

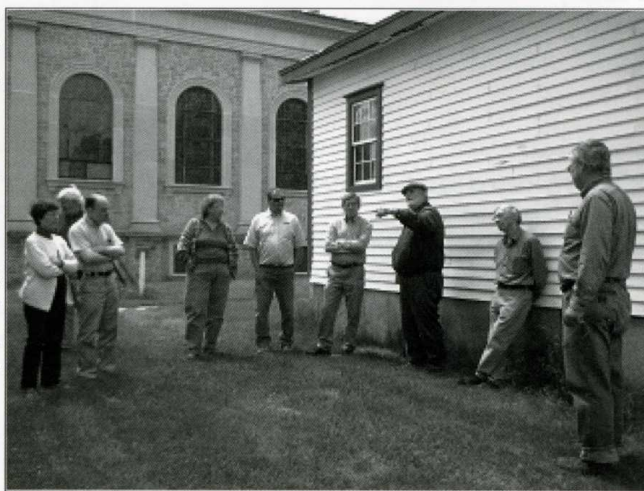
Hollyann Martin, who held the position as Store Manager and was hired in June 2010, moved to Virginia to pursue a Master's Degree. She promises to keep in touch!



Capital Projects Continue

Work on the Great Stone Dwelling's main roof, chimney, cornice and bell tower commenced in April and continued through the summer. The Building Committee worked with the staff to ensure that the programs, festivals, weddings and meetings would not be interrupted. The excitement was shared by members, visitors and overnight guests who were treated to once-in-a-lifetime tours of the progress. The restoration of the cupola will be completed in September. Thanks to a grant from the Mascoma Savings Bank Foundation, improvements to the plumbing are also planned. Executive Director Mary Boswell is applying for grants to support exterior lighting and fencing. Those who wish to help may "adopt a window" @ \$500 and select a window of their choice. Their names will be installed in permanent displays in the building. Individuals may also "adopt a drawer" @ \$250. Shaker Workshops has carefully reproduced and replaced 50 of the drawers that were missing from cabinets on the Sisters' side of the building. These donors will have an inscription made inside the drawer of their choice.

The Museum's eight buildings keep the Preservation Planning and Buildings Committees focused year-round. One of their projects is the East Brethren Shop, which the Shakers built in 1819 as a tailoring shop. In 1928 the Missionaries of La Salette converted it into a residence and made many alterations. The unique construction, faulty repairs and lack of attention over the years has damaged the building. Since there was no money to address serious needs, the two committees, after serious consideration, recommended removing the north porch simply to stop the destruction. At a planning session, volunteer curator Galen Beale convinced the board to save the porch, as it represented a significant chapter in the site's history. To protect the building from further damage, Executive Director Mary Boswell and Property Manager Tom Boswell approached the Butler Foundation to fund major repairs. The Foundation responded with a generous gift of \$51,000. The porch and some structural pieces proved to be unsalvageable, but thanks to the Butler Foundation, the porch and the major elements that supported the building were removed and reproduced. In June Hypertherm associates volunteered for a day to prime and paint the porch. Property Manager Tom Boswell will finish the work this fall. Many thanks to the donors and volunteers for achieving this success!



Members of the Preservation Planning Committee review an action plan for the East Brethren Shop/Bethany Building, with Mardy High, board president (far left). Left to right Historic Preservation Advisors Richard Candee and Jim Garvin, volunteer Sue Brown, contractor Mark Allard, Buildings Committee Chair and trustee Paul Waebler, Preservation Planning Committee co-chair and trustee Paul Mirski, volunteer Colin High and Property Manager Tom Boswell.



Enfield Shaker Museum

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Thank you!