

The Friends' Quarterly

A Newsletter from The Museum at Lower Shaker Village

Volume IX, No.2

Summer 1997

'Precious Gospel Kindred' Exhibit Opens June 28th

The voices of generations of Enfield Shakers will be heard again in the Stone Mill Building this summer, as a new exhibit tells the story of the Enfield Shaker Village through the lives and writings of 28 community members. Organized by Mary Ann Haagen, *Precious Gospel Kindred* is the result of a year of concentrated manuscript research, and a milestone in interpreting Enfield Shaker Village history.

Presented in the first person, the exhibit narrative covers five chronological periods from eighteenth century occurrences of Shaker preaching in the area to the closing of the village early in the twentieth century. In its first section, "Opening the Testimony," the exhibit describes the religious fervor from 1782-1793 that resulted in the formal organization of Enfield Shakers as the eighth Shaker village in America. Early communal life, or "Gathering Into Order,"

was a period of optimism and organization that extended through the 1830's. The height of the Shakers' influence and prosperity that followed forms the heart of the exhibit, spanning the years 1837 to 1863, and ends tragically with the murder of their great leader, Caleb Dyer.

Declining membership was a fact of life for all Shaker villages in the later nineteenth century, and at Enfield the Believers adapted by looking outward

to find sympathetic minds among spiritualists, dietary reformers, and medicinal healers in the world. This exhibit section, "Lowering Zion's Walls" ends with the 1882 judgement against the Shakers that finally settled the Conant case in 1882, and cost them \$20,000. "For Want of Believers" concludes the exhibit with the final

narrative. An audio tape will contain readings and anecdotes about the Enfield Shakers, taken from interviews with local sources. Charlie DuPuy developed the exhibit design for the Shaker-built Stone Mill Building, and, with help from many volunteers, has done all the major construction.

Former Museum director Carolyn Smith has edited an exhibit catalogue with biographies of the 28 Shakers whose stories are told through the exhibit. A limited edition booklet of the sayings of Rosetta Cummings will be produced and sold as well.

The Shaker Singers will perform a program of all-Enfield music at the opening, and during the season. They have learned several new marches from rare manuscript sources that included diagrams of the steps.

Precious Gospel Kindred is dedicated to Wendell and Viola Hess, long time Lake Mascoma residents and friends of the Shakers, who have

generously shared their stories and knowledge with Shaker researchers over the years. Funding for this exhibit has been provided by the New Hampshire Humanities Council, the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, and Mascoma Savings Bank Foundation. An accessibility grant from the New Hampshire Council on the Arts has made possible a new ramp at the entrance to the Stone Mill Building.



Volunteers at work in the Stone Mill Building in preparation for Precious Gospel Kindred exhibit opening June 28th. Non-Shaker wainscoting was removed and windows restored to provide a more authentic and comfortable exhibit gallery.

reorganization that ended with the sale of the property and the remaining Enfield Shakers moving to Canterbury in 1923.

Visitors to the exhibit will see a rich visual record as well as being able to read the words written by Shakers. Photographs of Believers were common in the later years, and many of these were borrowed for reproduction in the exhibit. Original paintings by Dona Meyer complement the **textual**

Sage Thoughts

by Happy Griffiths

MUSEUM'S NEW RAISED BED GARDEN

We've designed and built a new raised garden bed for handicapped visitors, constructed at wheelchair height. I was fortunate to have Margaret Terry from the Multiple Sclerosis Society and a friend of the Museum, advise me. We received funding from the Champions of New Hampshire Farms (thanks to Steve Taylor, NH Commissioner of Agriculture), and The Lebanon Riverside Rotary.

Gardening is the number one outdoor leisure time activity in America. While most gardens are at ground level, an increasing number of gardeners are discovering the advantages of planters, containers, and raised beds. These can be readily adapted to make gardening easier for elderly gardeners and the disabled.

To plan a raised garden it is necessary to understand the gardener's needs and abilities. Size is the primary consideration. Focusing attention on small easily managed gardens provides success and a feeling of achievement. The museum's new raised bed, designed for public display, is 2.5 feet high, 4 feet wide, and 16 feet long. Thus, a person can reach across to weed at a comfortable level.

Location is the next consideration. Full sun or at least six hours of sun a day is recommended for raised planters and containers. Third, a source of water should be readily accessible since raised beds and container gardens always need more water than a standard garden. Finally, mulching is a must, as it slows the evaporation of water from the bed, helps keep the soil cool for the roots, and is an excellent weed deterrent.

For construction, we chose 2 X 10 hemlock boards rather than pressure-treated wood which contains chemicals we did not want next to the soil. We planted our new raised bed with herbs known for their qualities of touch, taste and smell—lavender, lemon thyme, sage, rosemary, lemon verbena, mint, basil, oregano, plus scented geraniums and roses. They are all labeled and will have Braille signs.

Written material on how others can build their own raised beds or container gardens will be available at the garden. We invite you to stop and take time to touch and breathe in all the wonderful aromas these scented plants have to offer—all at a comfortable level so that you won't even have to lean over!



Cutting the ribbon on the Museum's new handicap-accessible raised bed garden are Herbalist Happy Griffiths and Margaret Terry, Multiple Sclerosis Peer Counselor from Enfield, at the June 6th Garden Party Gala

From the Director

Dear Friends,

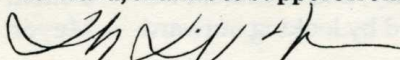
Partnerships with other Village neighbors are very important to all of us working to preserve the heritage of the Enfield Shaker community. As you will read elsewhere in this issue, the Museum has recently seen the fruits of several cooperative partnerships. We've been active in partnerships outside the Village as well, and I'd like to tell you about two of them.

This year marks the bicentennial of Dartmouth Medical School, and the Museum helped celebrate that anniversary with an exhibition at the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC) in Lebanon, NH.

For six weeks from May to June, our exhibit in the DHMC Rotunda gave the hospital's medical staff, students, patients, and visitors the opportunity to learn about the supportive relationship between the Shakers and the Dartmouth medical community, and about the herbal programs at the Museum today. We were very pleased by the enthusiasm with which DHMC greeted the exhibition. Exhibit curator Galen Beale summed up our feelings by concluding that "it was a terrific way to reach a new audience and share our knowledge of this very important aspect of Shaker life."

A second partnering effort will reach a different audience through a program called *School to Work*. This New Hampshire non-profit organization, devoted to giving elementary and secondary school teachers and students exposure to the "real world," has selected the Enfield Shaker Museum as a "host partner" for a teacher externship this summer, and Ann Dontonville, a teacher in the Enfield Village School, will spend two weeks with us. Like all our partnerships, *School to Work* has benefits for both parties. The Museum will develop a much needed in-school program, and Ann's experiences at the Museum will inform her classes next year and after. And *School to Work* itself will have worked with a fellow non-profit for the first time.

We are looking forward to an exciting summer season, enriched by our many partnerships. Of course, our "partnership" with our members is one of the most important. I hope you will visit us often this season to see *Precious Gospel Kindred*, stroll through the gardens, or tour the grounds. We're making great strides forward, thanks to support from you and others.


Sarah Saville Shaffer

The Mob at Enfield - Part 2 (continued from the Spring 1997, Friend's Quarterly)

by Elizabeth A. DeWolfe

The mob event at Enfield entered its second phase on Wednesday, 27 May, 1818, the third day after the start of the confrontation.

Towards the end of that day, Mary Dyer and several women travelled to the Shaker village, again to seek a visit with her children. Compared to Eunice Chapman, Dyer had the weaker claim, for unlike Chapman, Mary Dyer had neither legal custody nor a legislative divorce. Thus, local authorities hesitated to interfere in what was seen as a private marital dispute between the Dyers, so they did not accompany her. This day, the Shakers refused to let Mary enter the community. Stung by their rebuke, she threatened to expose the Shakers by verbal assaults on their moral character. Experienced with Dyer's threats, the Shakers were rattled. James Chapman, fearing a night attack by the mob, hid his children.

Eunice Chapman returned the next afternoon. She demanded to see her former husband but was told James could not be found. Declining the Shakers' invitation to wait for his return, Eunice made good on threats of her own, and stood in the road loudly proclaiming how the Shakers had mistreated her. Her public harangue continued until six in the evening. News of the ruckus travelled back to town and by evening Squire Merrill and about a dozen men arrived at the Shaker village and demanded to see James Chapman. Merrill took control of the growing crowd and made a long speech, trying to calm the mounting tension and reasoning with the crowd to remain focused on the resolution of the issues at hand.

Merrill began with a claim that the group did not come for a riot, nor for the Dyer children. They only wanted a meeting with James Chapman and the lawful return of his kidnapped children. Merrill stated loudly that James Chapman had escaped the laws of New York by fleeing to New Hampshire. James's escape from justice, and the Shakers' refusal to help Eunice, had "stirred up" people's minds. Merrill declared that the treatment of Eunice, and by

extension Mary, was "contrary to the laws of God and man." He asserted that the group would not leave until "satisfaction was given."

As darkness fell, more townspeople gathered at the Shaker community. One Shaker estimated that more than one hundred people surrounded the village. Some patrolled on horses and others hid under fences. Still others fired guns to keep the Shakers on edge. Again the Shakers pleaded with Merrill to disperse the crowd, but again Merrill refused.

After dark, James Chapman finally appeared and met with Eunice in the North House shop. Eunice insisted that she wanted the girls, but that James could keep George. The Chapmans argued for hours but could not reach an agreement on the children, so Eunice returned to the crowd, where Merrill threatened to bring 500 people to the village the following day.

At 11:00 p.m. town officials produced a warrant for the arrest of James Chapman. At this evidence of a legal resolution, some of the gathered crowd returned to their homes, for they saw James's arrest as the last obstacle to the release of the children. But when Eunice announced she would not leave until she had her children, the remaining crowd took matters into its own hands and wildly searched the village. Around 1:00 a.m. Enfield resident Moses Johnson discovered George hidden in a barn. The rest of the mob broke up. Although she had hoped to retrieve her daughters as well, Eunice immediately fled New Hampshire with the unwilling George, and returned to New York state.

The following morning, Friday, 29 May, the Shakers lodged a formal complaint against the mob's actions with Judge Blaisdell of nearby Canaan. Blaisdell called together the principal participants including Joseph Merrill, the Shakers, and Mary Dyer. He rebuked the group for such a disorderly proceeding and especially castigated Merrill for permitting the unlawful search of the Shaker village.

At a public meeting the next day, Judge Blaisdell's admonition to the participants in the mob offered an effective resolution to the event. The Shakers had forced the town to adhere to legal measures to resolve disputes. Random violence would not be condoned.

Despite this measure of success, the Shakers were guilty of holding the Chapman children illegally. The following spring, Eunice returned to Enfield with a writ of habeas corpus and the Shakers dutifully released her daughters.

Mary Dyer was not as successful. Four of the five Dyer children would remain Shakers until their deaths. The middle son, Jerrub, would secede but not until 1852. (Her diatribes against the Shakers would last 40 years, and include several damaging publications...)

For all the frenzy the mob entailed, it received little notice in the local papers. The *Dartmouth Gazette* carried the news of George's retrieval. Eunice Chapman took it upon herself to publicize the event as her personal triumph over Shakerism, as did Mary Dyer though she never triumphed, and who cited this mob event in her writings and speeches as evidence of the continued cruelty of the Shakers. Although the mob at Enfield reestablished a more or less peaceful relationship between the Shakers and the town of Enfield, tension still remained. Ever fearful that the town would be forced to support non-believing wives of Shaker men, Enfield residents placed four petitions before the New Hampshire Legislature over the following decade. Each time, the requests for assistance were denied.

Information on the mob at Enfield was drawn from several sources including a Shaker manuscript in a private collection; "Affidavit of John Lyon," in Henry Blinn, "Historical Notes Having Reference to the Believers at Enfield," mss. in the collection of Canterbury Shaker Village; Mary M. Dyer, *A Portraiture of Shakerism* (Haverhill, N.H.: 1822); and Abram Van Vleet, *Account of the Conduct of the Shakers* (Lebanon, Ohio: Van Vleet and Camron, 1818).

**An Evening with the Shaker Ensemble
Friday, August 1, at 7:30PM**

The Shaker Ensemble - Debra Spencer, voice; Lars Johannesson, wooden flute; and Shelley Phillips, harp - perform in concert in the Stone Mill Building. This evening of Shaker song and music by the California-based Ensemble will make the room ring with the joyous sounds of Shaker songs of life and worship.

**Tickets are \$12.00; \$10.00 for Museum members.
Call the Enfield Shaker Museum (603/632-4346)
for reservations.**

The Shaker Ensemble visits the Enfield Shaker Museum as part of the "Shaker Project" sponsored by the Community Music School of Santa Cruz, California. Led by Barry and Shelley Phillips, among the foremost interpreters of Shaker music, the "Shaker Project" is making a new recording this summer. Visiting four Shaker museums in New England - Enfield, NH; Canterbury, NH; Hancock, MA; and Watervliet, NY - the musicians of the Shaker Ensemble will record hymns, anthems, and marches composed in each of those four villages. In Enfield, music will be recorded in the Great Stone Dwelling's Meeting Room.

The album will include a photographic essay and history of each of the four villages as well as extensive notes on the music. All proceeds from the sale of this new album will be devoted to maintenance of the four Shaker villages.

IMPORTANT GREAT STONE DWELLING UPDATE

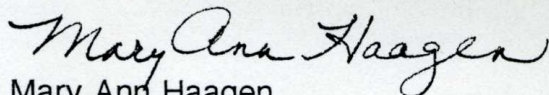
July 12, 1997

Dear Members and Friends of the Enfield Shaker Museum,

As many of you know, the Reverend Keith Marsh, representing Grace Children's Village, has decided not to exercise his right to purchase the historic core of Lower Shaker Village. We were informed on June 27th that critical financial support had been withdrawn from the project, making it impossible to close on the property. Since that time the museum has been actively negotiating with Winter Hill Bank to be the new owners and permanent stewards of the Great Stone Dwelling, the West and East Brethren's shops, the Shaker gardens, Shaker cemetery and the Mary Keane Chapel.

We have delayed sending this publication in hopes that we would have an agreement to announce to you. Unfortunately that has not yet happened. However we want you to know that we are working diligently to acquire it, and will be reporting to you as soon as an agreement is reached. When we have successfully negotiated a purchase and sales agreement, we will be appealing to our membership and to the larger community of supporters for immediate help in saving the historic core of Enfield Shaker Village.

With great hope for the future of this precious Shaker site,



Mary Ann Haagen
Chair, Board of Trustees
Enfield Shaker Museum

Shaker Property is Sold at Auction; Museum-Owned buildings Not Part of Sale

In a surprise bid, a minister from neighboring Lebanon, New Hampshire, paid \$525,000 for the Great Stone Dwelling and 3 other buildings in the heart of the Shaker Village. At a bank foreclosure auction held at the village on May 13, Rev. Keith Marsh, pastor of Grace Outreach Church, said he was directed by God to buy the property. He plans to create a home for up to 40 children, aged 4-12, from broken homes. He and his wife will move into Bethany House and begin their project with several adopted children of their own.

Marsh's purchase did not include any of the Museum's buildings. The Enfield Shaker Museum owns the Laundry/Dairy Building, and the Stone Mill building and West Family Barn across Route 4A. Sarah Saville Shaffer, Museum Director, clarified the Museum's

status in a letter to the editor of the Valley News that appeared two days after the auction. "Our summer program of exhibitions, workshops, concerts and classes will take place as scheduled in the museum buildings. We want everyone to know that the Museum is very much an active, thriving institution."

Marsh has told the Museum he wishes to be a good neighbor, graciously agreeing to the Museum's continued use of the land on which the herb garden is located, and offering to share the facilities and land whenever possible. He attended the Museum's Garden Party Gala on June 6th to demonstrate that commitment. In addition, he has stated that he will provide public access to the Great

Stone Dwelling, preserve the Shaker-made features there, and use other housing for children's residences. He is currently seeking a tenant to lease the Great Stone Dwelling and operate it as an inn and restaurant.

Museum Trustee and Board President Mary Ann Haagen admitted surprise at the auction results. "Our mission is to preserve the Shaker heritage on the site and make it available to the public. That has not changed. And there are some historic parallels between Marsh's plans and the Shaker religious perspective which we hope will be fully explored

Paint Fund Established!

We're excited to announce some long-awaited renovations to our Museum home. Dana and Martha Robes have given us \$5,000 to renovate the first floor of the Dairy Building to accommodate a handicapped-accessible restroom and theater. The newly public area will be reached by a ramp from the Museum store. The Robes have stipulated that we match this gift with an additional \$5,000 to paint the exterior of the Laundry/Dairy building. To buy a gallon (or more) of paint to help us make this match, please send your check (for \$25 per gallon) to the Museum right away, with a note indicating it's for the paint fund. We hope to accomplish both these projects this season.



Volunteers remove a non-Shaker alcove from the Stone Mill Building in last winter's snow.

The Friends' Quarterly is a publication of The Enfield Shaker Museum. It is mailed as a service to Museum Members. For information on Membership write: The Enfield Shaker Museum, #2 Lower Shaker Village, Enfield, NH 03748. Or call (603) 632-4346.

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Partnerships at Work in Shaker Village

As Rev. Keith Marsh and Grace Children's Village arrive as new occupants in the Shaker Village, another new partnership opportunity presents itself for the museum. Interpreting the site's Shaker heritage to the public, which is our mission, is complemented and facilitated by cooperating groups also involved on the site. The LaSalettes, original purchasers of the site from the Shakers in 1923, now own and occupy only the Shaker North Family buildings. They have been most generous to the Museum in making available their large meeting room in the Bingo Hall for classes and lectures sponsored by the Museum.

Dana Robes Woodworking, located just to the south of the Museum, offers public tours of their facility where they make Shaker reproduction furniture. Adjacent to their workshop is a replica of the original Enfield meetinghouse. Their craftsmen become faculty for the Museum's regular classes in woodworking, and furniture making.

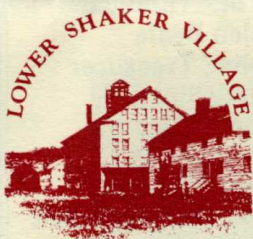
New Hampshire Fish & Game Department owns 11,000 acres of land adjacent to the Stone Mill Building (owned by the Museum and located across Route 4A.). This land includes the large open slopes of Mount Assurance and the Shakers outdoor worship area known as the Holy Hill. It is open to the public for recreational use and forever protected from development. A partnership has been forged here with the **NH Audubon Society**. Chris Howe, a Mascoma Chapter volunteer, has created a bluebird trail, complete with nesting boxes, along the open meadows favored by this once-plentiful species.

David and Sharon Carr operate a bed and breakfast at the **Mary Keane House**. Named for a benefactress of the LaSalettes, this historic structure is located beyond the Museum's home in the Laundry-Dairy Building. Many of the guests at this cheerful residence are attracted by its location within a former Shaker village, and the owners have accommodated the Museum's

speakers and other visiting guests very comfortably.

Along the shore of Lake Mascoma are private homes and condominiums built in the 1980's when Lower Shaker Village was developed as a residential community. The peacefulness of the Shaker site has attracted many of the occupants of these dwellings, and some of our best volunteers have come to us from this immediate location.

Finally, the Museum partners with local gardeners to offer **Community Gardens**, public garden plots available to members of the community for growing their own vegetables and flowers. These are separate from our own Shaker herb garden, and are located across Route 4A at the foot of Mount Assurance. The Community Gardens are unaffected by the recent sale of the Great Stone Dwelling and adjacent lands to Grace Children's Village.



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