

The Friends' Quarterly

A Newsletter from the Enfield Shaker Museum

Volume XV/No. 3

Summer 2005

A Grand Edifice.

"The evening brings us to the centre Shaker village in Enfield, thirteen miles south-easterly from Hanover, where is always to be seen something new and interesting to the farmer, the mechanic and the moralist.

This family of Shakers (there are two other considerable families along the same road adjacent in Enfield) consists of one hundred and forty people. Some twenty children, under perhaps ten years of age, male and female, have been recently added. Of these smart, likely boys and girls, who are carefully instructed in reading, spelling, arithmetic, English grammar and writing, many are taken from poor and destitute families in various parts of the country: others go there from choice of their parents, who prefer their system of education, which embraces the various kinds of useful manual labor, as well as what is generally taught in schools. The farm on the west side of Mascomy pond belonging to this family consists of about five hundred acres, running from the shore over the high hill at the west.

The buildings of the Shakers at this village are all neat, convenient, constructed in the best manner of wood, and seem to be sufficient for all their purposes. The houses and shops where their work is done are ingeniously contrived and beautifully arranged. Of these we would select the establishment where the washing and ironing of the whole family are performed: machinery is introduced which does

the business of much hard labor in ordinary families; and the work commenced at the basement is carried up through successive stories until the whole is completed.

The dairy house, where the milk of thirty noble cows is disposed of, is as neat as it is convenient and secure. The spinning of wool and worsted, carried on in another separate building by females, is performed with equal ease and facility, one hand drawing out at the same time many threads. The different buildings for securing the varieties of garden seeds and other garden products are all well arranged. Every tool and implement has its house and place under cover.

A grand edifice.

The best dwelling house in the State is now erecting on their premises. It is built with a beautiful light grey granite straightened to an edge but rough on the exterior, brought from their premises over the water from Canaan. It is one hundred feet long by fifty-eight in width, and the roof covered with beautiful Welch slate, and is surmounted with a bell of one thousand pounds which calls the family to rest in the evenings, to rise with the lark at five in the morning, and to the regular meals of the day: it is four stories high, above the basement; and the basement itself is a cellar abundantly secure from frost; a portion of it, light and airy as the upper rooms, is intended
Continued on page 4.



Bringing it Home

The Enfield Shaker Museum Board of Trustees announced on June 17 that the Museum will move into the Great Stone Dwelling this summer, and has dubbed its 2005 season, *Bringing It Home* to commemorate the change.

"This is an exciting and significant step in the Museum's history, and we're inviting the Upper Valley community to come celebrate with us," said Board president Karen Hambleton.

Bringing It Home is the anchor of a restructured business plan to further the Museum's mission as a not-for-profit historical preservation and educational institution. The Museum had leased the Great Stone Dwelling to a the

variety of Inn/Restaurant operators since buying the building in 1997. The latest tenant departed this past winter, closing the Inn and Restaurant and leaving the Museum without critical rental income. The Board of Trustees had a number of ideas on new uses for the Great Stone Dwelling, and appointed an advisory committee of Museum's most senior and knowledgeable supporters — including current and former Trustees, and the founding executive director — to help reexamine its approach to running the Museum.

"We struggled at first," said Keith Oppeneer, who was
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Bringing it Home (Continued from page 1.)

Board president through the process. "We were mired under the question, 'What do we do about the Inn?' Then we hit it," he continued; "the important question is 'What should we do for the Museum?' Having an Inn tenant in the building had taken our focus away from our purpose, which is the Museum's non-profit mission; we're delighted to be bringing it home."

Karen Hambleton agreed: "We had a lot of ideas, but none fit our mission as well as moving the Museum into the building that is arguably our most precious artifact."

The Enfield Shaker Museum was founded in 1986, and its exhibits and store have been located in the Laundry/Dairy building on the Shaker Village site since 1989 — the organization purchased that building in 1991. While the Laundry/Dairy building has been a good home to the Museum functions it has always been our desire to house the Museum in the majestic stone dwelling that is readily visible from the street.



Moving Day at the Enfield Shaker Museum

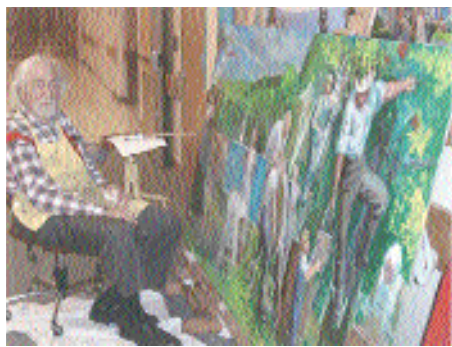
The Great Stone Dwelling at Enfield Shaker Village is the largest Shaker dwelling ever built. At six stories totaling 30,000 square feet, it effectively dwarfs the other Shaker buildings on the site. The Museum purchased the building with contributions from its members, the local community and Shaker enthusiasts around the country.

"More than just a move, this is a celebration of our community's collective efforts over the last 18 years," said Interim Director Michael O'Connor, who

has served the organization in several capacities since 1991. O'Connor was a driving force behind the decision to move the Museum into the Great Stone Dwelling claiming, "the Enfield Shaker Museum belongs in this building."

Volunteers have worked tirelessly to prepare the Great Stone Dwelling, and move the exhibits and collections from the Laundry/Dairy Building. The move is substantially complete with on-going work on the exhibits, the Museum and Museum Store have continued to be open during their regular hours.

"Shaker Life" An Exhibition of Murals by Sol Levenson Opens at Museum



Friday, July 22, 2005 marked the opening exhibition of Sol Levenson's six panel mural "Shaker Life." Museum members were cordially invited to meet the artist and view this just completed

work from 5 to 7pm on the 22nd. A video entitled "An Artist's Truth: the Shaker Murals of Sol Levenson" by David Millstone will also be premiered.

The exhibition has been made possible through the generosity of the artist and Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center Department of Radiology, which commissioned the work. In October the murals will be permanently installed in the new radiology wing at the hospital.

Sol Levenson lives in White River Junction, Vermont and has been painting murals at Dartmouth Hitchcock for fifteen years. During the same period he has also been honored with three Fulbright fellowships, including a Ful-

bright Senior Specialist award to Mexico and Columbia. Richard Pettit, Senior Program Officer for the Fulbright Scholar Program wrote of Sol, "He is an outstanding artist and a self-taught scholar of art history. He was born in 1910, and was an enterprising, very productive muralist in the WPA during the 1930s. He has remained active in the art world as an illustrator, graphic designer, painter and more recently as an internationally active lecturer on art history. Sol's Fulbright hosts in Latin America have invited him back repeatedly to lecture and paint murals, and he remains in close collaborative contact with them."

This exhibition is part of a season long celebration of the museum's new home. The Shaker murals will be on display in the 2nd floor meeting room of the Great Stone Dwelling until the first week of October.

Holiday Cookie Fair
Sunday, December 11
1 - 3 P.M.

Delicious cookies by the pound.

Farewell Michael O'Connor



On Saturday, June 25 friends, family, Museum volunteers and staff gathered in the Great Stone Dwelling to thank Michael O'Connor for his years of tireless service to the Museum and bid him a fond farewell.

Following an extended trip to the west coast, Michael will be back in the Upper Valley and involved with the Museum on a volunteer basis.

During his tenure at the Museum, Michael has served as a demonstrating craftsman (he is an accomplished coop-

er), exhibition docent, tour guide, administrative assistant, and interim director.

His ready smile, willingness to help, extensive knowledge of the Enfield Shakers and the Enfield Shaker Museum will be missed but Michael assures us he will continue to be an integral part of this Museum.



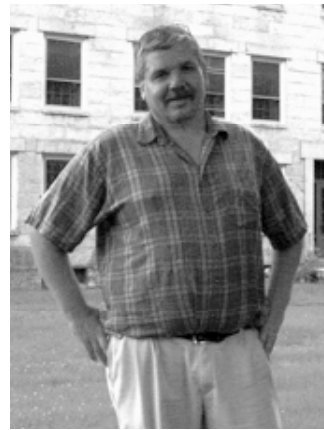
Michael O'Connor and friends at Farewell Gathering

Organ Music in the Chapel Once More

George and Donna Butler opened our July calendar on the 4th in the Mary Keane Chapel, with a Patriotic Sing-Along featuring special guest soloist Ken Munsey. This was a rousing treat for the many members and friends who attended, most of whom wandered over to the Great Stone Dwelling for cool refreshment from our herb garden and the opportunity to see the Museum in its new location.

The wonderful Butlers did it again later in the month, hosting and participating in a concert by the Upper Valley Music Center String Ensemble at the Mary Keane Chapel.

Meet Our New Site Manager George Smith



Please join us in welcoming our new site manager, George Smith to the Enfield Shaker Museum. George is responsible for the daily operation of the museum and its rental properties. George comes to us after spending 4 years as Director of Operations for the Rivendell School District. He was involved in all facets of Rivendell's District operations, including custodial

services and facility maintenance. He also has experience in the field of real estate as a broker, investor and landlord. George has two children; a 14 year old son and a 20 year old daughter, and spends his leisure time exploring with his metal detector and reading "just about anything."

George is enthusiastic about the opportunities presented by the exciting changes underway at the Museum, and he has many ideas for helping us settle in to the Great Stone Dwelling, further our mission of preserving our site's Shaker and LaSalette history, and continue to grow the organization. We are pleased to have him on our team and encourage you to introduce yourself to him the next time you're on the site!

Save the Dates

Support the Museum and enjoy a delicious meal. The Museum is hosting a series of Shaker Dinners prepared by Guest Chef Betsy Oppeneer. Reservations are required and can be made by calling the Enfield Shaker Museum at (603) 632-4346.

August 13 Hors d'ouvres in the Museum Herb Garden followed by a concert by the Enfield Shaker Singers and a boxed gourmet supper.

September 10 Five Course Candlelight Dinner in the dining room of the Great Stone dwelling followed by a Silent Auction.

October 9 Sunday Brunch with a Foliage Walk on Mount Assurance. Bring your camera, the views from the hillside are spectacular.

December 10 Five Course Candlelight Dinner served in the dining room of the Great Stone Dwelling followed by a program on "The Shaker Order of Christmas".

The meal and program are \$35.00 per person/Museum Member price \$30.00. Plan now to attend and invite a friend to come with you.

A Grand Edifice. (Continued from page 1.)

ed for cooking and kitchen work—another portion for the preservation of vegetables and other articles that might be injured if kept elsewhere. The building, for one so large is admirably planned, and is intended for comfortable residences, male and female, of the entire family, separated into classes of convenient numbers: the different sexes meeting in one hall at eating time, and all meeting on occasions for social worship.

This building has been carried on for two or three years with reasonable economy, and will not be finished probably under two years from this time. The work is the most perfect of its kind. In its whole extent there is no a shake in the plastering which is a smooth putty coat: the floors of each story are as substantial and solid as permanent rock. The partings between the various halls and rooms are all fortified with double bracing petitions. Thus far in the finishing of beautiful rich pine there is not a knot or blemish to be seen; nor in the flooring is there the impress of a nail in sight. Every thing is done by "the square, level and plumb;" and in the halls extending the whole length or width of the building there is no variation from the centre to either extreme of one eighth of an inch.

Such a building, so perfect in construction, so faultless in execution, of such excellent materials, could not be erected in one of our towns or cities short of an expense of fifty or seventy-five thousand dollars. The money paid out by the Shakers, although their carpenters and principal masons are hired, will not probably exceed twenty thousand dollars. The cash expense has been lessened by their ability to furnish excellent lumber and granite and bricks from their own premises by their own hands: their planing machine, preparing finishing materials of almost any pattern, has saved much: their ample previous preparation of every necessary article economizes the time of their hired mechanics. Was it not a striking characteristic of this people, that they never commence any undertaking until they have measured their strength, we would suppose this community, which makes no gains by any forced specula-

tion, and which lays up only the proceeds of its own honest industry, would be unable to carry through such an undertaking as the erection of this elegant building: they will, nevertheless, do it without feeling any pinching inconvenience."

Excerpts from *The Farmer's Monthly Visitor*, Conducted by Isaac Hill, Published by William P. Foster, Concord, N.H., October 20, 1839, "Enterprise of the Shakers." Vol. 1 No. 10, Page 141 - 142

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

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