

The Friends' Quarterly

A Newsletter from The Museum at Lower Shaker Village

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The Enfield Shakers' Gift Of Song

by Mary Ann Haagen

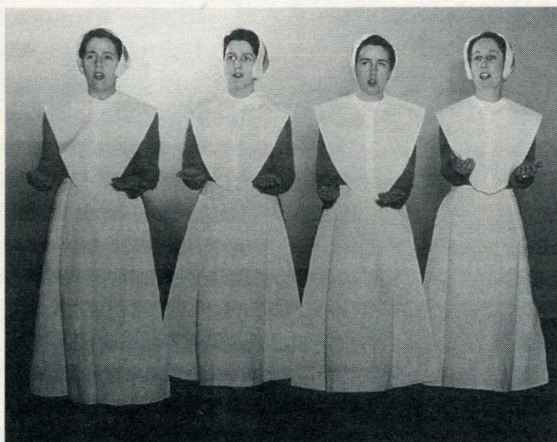
Ann Lee, founder of the Shakers, understood the power of song. She used music to express the inward sense of life and love that the Shaker way offered her followers. Years after her death, Believers who had known her testified to the impact of her singing.

"As I passed through a room where Mother was, I saw her sitting in a chair, and singing very melodiously, with her hands in motion; and her whole soul and body seemed to be in exercise. I felt, as it were, a stream of divine power and love flow into my soul, and was convinced at once that it came from Heaven, the source and fountain of all good."¹

The Shaker community at Enfield, New Hampshire, participated fully in the Shaker gift of song. Hundreds of pieces that were received or composed here have come down to us. We also have written accounts of the importance of music in the daily life of Believers. Several individuals stand out as particularly gifted composers and musicians in this Society. Abraham Perkins, James Russell, and Timothy Randlett taught music theory, invented musical instruments, and have the greatest number of songs attributed to them. But many other Enfield Believers shared in the gift of creating or receiving songs. They considered them not to be evidence of their own creative genius, but as gifts of the Holy Spirit. Abraham Perkins, who came to the Shakers with no training or experience in music, spoke on the sub-

ject with wonder.

"I have been the favored and happy recipient of many beautiful, heavenly gifts. Songs innumerable have been put into my mouth and their sentiments engraven in my soul, for which I claim no credit. How I received them or where they came from I am unable to tell. The words and the music of the pieces were generally combined, accompa-



Ruth Dennis, Phyllis Goodwin, Marjorie Hayes and Ann Tarney of the Enfield Shaker Singers.
Photo courtesy Ann Tarney.

nied in their ministration with a spirited, pathetic sensation. Sometimes when one piece was finished, another would follow, until six or seven would be produced, all different in key and character.

As a medium for the spirit, the gift to me has been more impressional than in any other form; and therefore, has taken hold of my senses and reached my soul as it could in no other manner; and for several years my physical organs were used for singing, speaking and writing, as the spirit moved and I

was dictated. I well remember as I entered the gospel field of labor and learning that the various pieces of music, hymns, anthems etc. sung in the Society were original inspirational or composed by its members, how anxious I felt to become an instrument for so beautiful a gift."²

When we at the museum think about our charge to preserve the Enfield Shaker heritage, we recognize the importance of celebrating this aspect of Shaker life. Fortunately, Enfield has a long history of interest in the musical heritage left by the Shakers. Perhaps Enfield's most important champion of Shaker music was Mrs. Clarice Carr. She came to Enfield as a public school teacher in 1937. She became aware of the Shaker community that had once thrived here, but whose last living members were then residing at Canterbury Shaker Village. Aided by the memories of townspeople who had known the Shakers, she began studying the history and music of the Enfield Shakers.

In 1945 Mrs. Carr was approached by the organizers of the first New Hampshire Folk Festival. They had learned of her interest in Shaker music. She was asked to present this important but little known folk tradition at the festival. Thus the Enfield Shaker Singers came into being. From 1946 to 1961 the quartet performed not only at the New Hampshire Folk Festival, but at local historical societies and churches, and

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Sage Thoughts

by Happy Griffiths

Herbal Gift Ideas - By now the gardens have been 'put to bed' and the summer's herbal harvest has been gathered, dried and put into jars or tins. Now is a good time to try making some herbal gifts for the holidays.

A thoughtful hostess gift is a seasoning blend made from your own dried herbs. A nice mixture to sprinkle on stir-fries or cooked vegetables is: 1 1/2 TB onion powder, 1 1/2 TB toasted sesame seeds, 1 TB dried chives, 1 TB dried tarragon, 1 TB dried parsley, 2 tsp dill seed, 1 tsp black pepper. To this basic recipe you can add 1 tsp dry mustard, 1 tsp garlic powder, or 1 tsp paprika. There are many more herbs to add—let your taste guide your imagination. Put the mixture into a glass jar with directions for use, and add an attractive label and a ribbon or raffia.

For an unusual hors d'oeuvres, try herbed olives. These can be made several weeks in advance and last a long time in the refrigerator. Use one pound of Greek olives (Kalamata or Gaeta). In a container with a tight fitting lid combine the following ingredients: 3 TB olive oil, 1 1/2 TB each minced fresh rosemary and thyme (or 1 1/2 tsp dried), 1 TB fresh lemon peel, 1/2 tsp crushed fennel seed, 1/4 tsp dried hot red pepper flakes, and 2 whole garlic cloves. Add olives to container and stir to coat well with oil mixture. Refrigerate at least 3 days, then remove garlic. Serve at room temperature.

To make a simmering potpourri, mix cinnamon, cloves, allspice, and some dried orange or lemon peel. Place about 1/4 cup of this mixture in a pan of cider or water and simmer slowly to fill your home with a wonderful fragrance during the holidays.

Balsam needles make a good base for a woody smelling potpourri. Mix about 1 quart of balsam needles with 1/4 cup mixture of allspice, cloves and cinnamon. Add some orange peels, small hemlock cones and a few rose petals. Place in a favorite bowl and enjoy the smell of Christmas even after it's gone.

To top off your holiday dinner or as a special gift, try making a simple herb liqueur. Put 1 1/2 cups sugar and 1/4 cup water in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Stir until sugar is completely dissolved. Cool syrup to lukewarm and put into a large glass jar. Add 2 firmly packed cups of herbs (try lemon balm, lemon verbena, tarragon or mint), then add 1 liter 80 to 100 proof vodka. Cap and store in a cool, dark place at least one month, shaking occasionally. Strain and decant into bottles and allow to mature for a few more weeks. You can now decant the liqueur into special bottles—new or antique—and add an attractive label and ribbon. Delicious as an aperitif or a sauce for fruit.

From the Director

Dear Friends,

We had a busy summer at the Museum at Lower Shaker Village on many fronts.

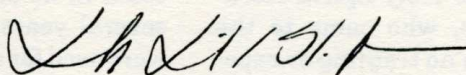
- In the *Shaker Gardens*, we had a record-breaking number of Village Gardeners (24!) The Village Gardeners volunteer several hours of work each week; in return, Herbalist Happy Griffiths teaches a workshop specially tailored to their interests every other week. The Gardeners have just "put the Gardens to bed," harvesting the last produce of the season, tying herbs and flowers into bundles for drying in the Laundry Building attic, and getting ready to spend the winter preparing our stock of herbal mixes and teas.

- In the *collections*, we have accessioned several exciting new artifacts, including a Shaker oval box. This lovely box still has much of its original pumpkin-colored painted finish. We are not sure where it was made, but family history hints at an Enfield, CT, provenance.

- We introduced new *educational programs* this summer. Our first annual Herb Symposium (Sister Frances Carr, leader of the Sabbathday Lake Shaker community, was keynote speaker) and Enfield Day brought many new visitors to the Museum. The exhibition, inspired by images of Shaker and Amish daily life, of Constantine Kermes' paintings explored the similarities and differences between the lives of these two religious communal societies. We also premiered our new introductory video, "The Shakers of Enfield."

- On the *preservation front*, we conducted badly needed repairs to the chimney flashings and roofs of the Laundry/Dairy Building. During the course of those repairs, we found the original **wooden** roof in the Laundry Building, still there under the present slate roof. It will be a focus of future research.

So, what's coming up at the Museum? Saturday, April 12, 1997, is the date of the Museum's first decorative arts symposium, which will focus on Shaker craftsmanship in the New Hampshire and Maine colonies. Mark your calendars now for that event and for our annual Garden Party Gala on Friday, June 6, and the Herb Symposium on June 7th. Our summer exhibition will feature biographical vignettes of more than two dozen Enfield Shakers. This exhibition, dedicated to Wendell and Viola Hess, will open in the Stone Mill Building in June. Best wishes for the holidays!



Sarah Saville Shaffer

New Faces, New Research At 1996 Annual Meeting

The Museum's 1996 Annual Meeting was held in the Stone Mill Building on November 17. Mary Ann Haagen was elected President of the Board of Trustees; Janet Milne was re-elected Vice President. Three new Trustees were elected:

- Galen Beale, a Shaker scholar and co-author of *The Earth Shall Blossom*, has been a Museum Interpreter since we opened in 1986.

- Monty Clinton has been a supporter of the Museum since he and his wife moved to the Upper Valley several years ago. Monty is an administrator with Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center.

- John Crilley is Pastor of Community Lutheran Church in Enfield and served on the Museum's Enfield Day Committee.

We are delighted that Galen, Monty, and John have added their talents to our Board of Trustees.

After the business meeting, Mary Ann Haagen presented a paper explaining aspects of her research during the past year. Her goal has been to develop a fuller picture of the Enfield community, setting the individuals who lived here in the context of their connection with the Shakers who had gone before, in the context of the

community of believers that each was a part of, and in the context of the hopes that they nurtured for the Shakers' impact on the world outside the walls of Zion.

Two general observations emerged as she tracked down correspondence, journals, and community records.

First, Enfield's relationship with other Shaker Villages provides a remarkable source to document what happened in Enfield. Although this community's records have been scattered, correspondence with other Shaker villages, particularly with Canterbury, the communities in Maine, the Lead Ministry at Mount Lebanon, and the New York communities at Groveland and Harvard, reveals a great deal about Enfield's business dealings, musical traditions, spiritual leadership, and personal relationships.

Second, the importance of biological families to the stability of this village became apparent. Biologically related families were the source of land holdings, of early economic viability, and of the spiritual health of the Enfield Shakers. Enfield Shaker Village grew as long as biological families who supported and sustained each others'

choice for a Shaker life were predominant in the makeup of the village. Loss of young believers was of great concern before the Civil War began; perhaps in response to those losses, Enfield and virtually all Shaker communities in the east began to accept into their care children whose parents remained in the World. The overwhelming majority of those children who had a parent or interested close relative in the World left the Shakers, each departure weakening the community.

The fruits of Mary Ann's research will inform the biographical exhibition to be installed in the Great Stone Dwelling during the summer of 1997.

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

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Children in front of the Stone Mill Building make candles at the 1996 Harvest Festival. Each time they circled the can of hot wax they dipped the candle to build up the layers of wax.

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numerous other festivals. Under Mrs. Carr's direction, the quartet performed Shaker music with a sensitive and sympathetic regard for the people whose story and music was being shared. Each concert also included a lecture by Mrs. Carr on Shaker lore.

In 1952 Mrs. Carr had an opportunity to make an exciting purchase. It was the hymnal of former Enfield Shaker Hiram Clifford. She wrote enthusiastically to her colleague and fellow Shaker scholar Marguerite Melcher:

"I must tell you of my good fortune a few weeks ago - the luck to acquire a manuscript hymnal from Chosen Vale, 1844-46. The fly leaf says: 'Enfield 2nd Family. Hiram Clifford's Book.' The handwriting, if I judge correctly, is his thruout the book.I've a long and fascinating task ahead to study these hymns, and now have an unlimited store of true Enfield, N.H. hymns to draw on."³

Although Hiram Clifford left the Shakers after a twelve-year association, the hymnal he left behind is a lasting testimony. Clarice Carr's group learned many songs from this important collection.

In addition to the Shaker Singers pictured in the photograph, Dorothy Sanborn, Sally Reid, Bettina Spiller, Julia Jordan and Janet

Fabiochi also participated. When Mrs. Carr died in 1965, the Enfield Shaker Singers disbanded.⁴

In 1986, with the establishment of this museum, Shaker melodies began to ring again from the hillside, the gardens and the Meeting Room at Lower Shaker Village. Under my direction, a chorus of 40 men, women and children learn and perform this treasured repertoire of Shaker music. As research libraries throughout the country put their holdings on computer and microfilm, we have more ready access to the wealth of Shaker music. Shaker music scholars like Daniel Patterson and Roger Hall have brought many songs to our attention through their publications and lectures. The Shakers were so prolific in their creation of songs, marches, anthems and hymns that material is constantly being rediscovered, transcribed into standard musical notation, and reintroduced through live performances and recordings. At Enfield we are actively engaged in both research and performance of Shaker music. An exciting recent gift to the museum is a North Family manuscript containing several hymns composed to commemorate the lives of particular Enfield Believers. The Singers at Lower Shaker Village look forward to learning that music.

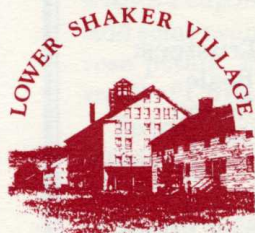
Perhaps our most valued resource, however, is the Sabbath-day Lake, Maine, Shaker community. For almost half of the 19th century, the New Hampshire Shakers had responsibility for, and therefore very close ties with, the Shaker Societies in Maine. One of the fruits of that association was a rich exchange of songs. Some of the most interesting Enfield gift songs are still known and sung because they were sent to Maine Believers, who treasured and preserved them. The Singers of Lower Shaker Village have not only learned songs from the Maine manuscripts that record them, but are grateful for the association with the Sabbath-day Lake Shakers. They have taught us firsthand our most important lessons about this still powerful musical tradition.

¹ Seth Y. Wells, Ed. *Testimonies Concerning the Character and Ministry of Mother Ann Lee and the First Witnesses of the Gospel* (Albany, 1827), p. 101.

² Memoir of Abraham Perkins, Enfield, N.H. March 1880, pp 36-38. Western Reserve Historical Society Shaker Manuscript Collection. VI A-3.

³ Papers of Marguerite Fellows Melcher, New York Public Library, Manuscript Division.

⁴ Information about the Enfield Shaker Singers generously provided by Ann Tarney, Shaker Singer and Friend of the Museum.



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