

# The Friends' Quarterly

A Newsletter from the Enfield Shaker Museum

Volume XVII/No.1

Winter 2007

## Sister Flora Appleton

by Darryl Thompson

I was only five years old when she died in 1962, but my family and I have never forgotten her. Her name was Sister Flora Appleton and she was the very last survivor of the Shaker community at Enfield, New Hampshire. Flora was born in 1881. At the age of 4 she and her older sister Margaret came to live at Enfield. They were joining their sister Abigail, who had become a Shaker the year before. Flora was a member of the Enfield Shaker Community until November 7, 1918, when the prospect of the eventual closing of the Enfield village (which would not be fully completed for a few more years) prompted the removal of the most aged sisters. Flora, a comparatively young woman, went to Canterbury with her elderly sisters to help care for them. In her late years she lived at the Infirmary and was cared for by Sister Marguerite Frost.

When my father came to work for the Canterbury Shakers in the late 1950s and brought our family to live among the surviving sisters there, Flora was a wonderful presence in our lives. She deeply desired to do her share to support her community, and Flora's hands were constantly in motion. My father affectionately called her "The Beaver" because she worked so hard. On her tiny loom she wove yard after yard of the woven poplar that her fellow Shaker sisters would make into their famed boxes. She made potholders for the gift store, and whenever my father came down the stone lined path she would

stand in the doorway of the Infirmary, greet him with a cheery "How are you doing today?" and then proudly announce how many potholders she had produced over the preceding hours.



Sister Fannie Fallon and Sister Flora Appleton (right) of the Enfield Shaker Community.

She was a woman of sweet, simple innocence. When my father was facing a serious operation, she told him "I'm praying for you." The gentle caring and concern evidenced in that statement so deeply touched his heart that he has never forgotten it.

Whenever I visit the Great Stone Dwelling at Enfield Shaker Village, I imagine Flora as a young woman bustling about the rooms, and I am reminded again why it is so vital to preserve that magnificent structure. Much has been written about the architectural significance of the building; the fact that it is the largest communal dwelling ever erected by Shakers; its status as the tallest domestic building north of Boston at the time of its construction; its importance as one of New England's splendid and early examples of granite masonry. But, for me, the reasons for preserving the Great Stone Dwelling are rooted in more humanistic values. To me, the walls radiate the spiritual energy that they absorbed from such beautiful souls

as Flora. The building is a storehouse of stories of lives like hers, and it needs to go on whispering those tales to generations yet unborn. (Darryl Thompson is a historian who has lived at Canterbury Shaker Village off and on for the last 30 years.)

## "Great hope for the Museum's future..."

(The following is a condensed version of Mary Boswell's first Executive Director's Report to the Membership delivered at the 2006 Annual Meeting.)

It is a pleasure to be among so many talented and dedicated people gathered together with one united purpose. The exhibit *An Ever Widening Circle of Friends* is an inspiring way to mark the first 20 years of the Museum's history. In the words of Canterbury Trustee and Deacon Francis Winkley, Oct. 2, 1842: "We have finished our harvesting which is very abundant ... The blessing of God seems to rest upon our labors and Heaven to smile upon the resolu-

tions manifested by us to do our own work ... What a happy sensation that it was all done among ourselves ... we have been blessed in our basket and in our store, for all of which, thanks are due to our heavenly Father."

The cause for his exuberance is that the hard work is paying off, everyone is taking part, and there is great hope for the future. Today, we also have cause for celebration, because your hard work is paying off, you are all taking part, and there is great hope for the Museum's future. (Continued on page 2.)



### Museum's future... (Continued from page 1.)

My first encounter with the Museum dates back to 1986, when I worked at Canterbury Shaker Village. I have collaborated with many of you over the years. It is a great pleasure to further my connection with the Museum as your next executive director. I am passionate about what museums can do for communities. Across the U.S., attendance is declining. My colleagues blame rising gas prices, our changing society, and 9/11. In these days and times, attendance should be soaring. Museums can and should be places where people feel connected with their past. Museums can and should engage people by encouraging them to see the world in a new way. Museums can be stimulating and memorable centers of learning.

The Belknap Mill, where I am executive director, has reached a peak attendance of 60,000. Residents and property owners see the Mill as a community leader. They are proud of their cultural center. The Mill cultivates partnerships with schools, involving thousands of students and families. Programs and exhibits attract seasonal audiences and encourage repeat visits. The Mill collaborates with local, state and national organizations to increase and enhance its visibility and capabilities.

The Mill has been recognized nationally as a best practices model. The Museum can adopt this model and achieve similar success. While the Mill is a cultural, community center with an emphasis on industrial knitting, the Museum is a cultural, educational and community center with an emphasis on religious history. A broad mission such as this can sustain the Museum in good economies and bad. It can result in more balanced support from public, private, earned and investment funding sources. It encourages the organization to address a broader constituency. Should the Museum need help in the future, more people are likely to respond.

You have paved the way with the preservation of buildings representing the highest achievements of the Shakers, and with diverse and high quality programs, concerts and exhibits. You are following the course of the Shakers who have adapted their production as the World around them changed.



*Tom Boswell, Museum Properties Manager and Mary Boswell, Executive Director, at the 2006 ESM Annual Meeting.*

This is probably the most important year in the Museum's history. The achievements we celebrate today are all steps forward. But as we move ahead, we must know where we are going. We must know in advance how we want to get there. As Executive Director, I will be the navigator. We will define our destination and create a map to chart our course. Our vision for the future will be our destination. Our strategic plan will be our map. We will participate in this process together because the Museum needs your knowledge and commitment. The process is as important as the plan. It allows us to practice working together, it guarantees we are all in agreement as to how to proceed, and it moves the Museum out of the crisis phase into the strategic phase.

As your executive director, I will improve the lines of communication and ensure that we keep up the momentum. We are poised to move forward. The Museum has virtually no debt and the guarantee of an executive director and properties manager for the next three years. Few organizations have such an opportunity. We can now address the larger issues. And we must demonstrate that we are up to the task.

Once we develop our strategic plan, I will work on expanding and increasing income sources to ensure that our goals and objectives are met. Together, we will cultivate partnerships with schools, universities, local chambers of commerce, EVA, and other organizations to increase the Museum's services. We will adopt a marketing plan to enhance the Museum's image. The Properties Manager will develop a cyclical maintenance plan for the buildings and landscape. The Museum will gain a reputation as a professionally run museum with year-round activities supported by a vibrant, diversified audience from around the world. Varied programs and financial resources will enable the Museum to withstand the ever-changing fluctuations of our economy.

Keep your dedication and your passion. Be prepared to work as hard as ever. Support each other in our common goals. I invite all stakeholders to join us as we begin this process. Together, we will demonstrate to the world that we have the support of our ever widening circle of friends.

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## David H. Watters to Speak at Spring Shaker Forum

David H. Watters, Director of the Center for New England Culture, will be the Keynote Speaker for the Museum's Spring Forum, May 18-20. Professor of English at the University of New Hampshire, Watters will place the Shakers in the greater context of New England's history. The so-called decline or failure of the Shakers can then be seen in the context of the fall of New England's distinctive regional culture. The Shaker persistence in the 21st century,

and the transformation of their villages into museums, take its place in a similar reinvention of the regional New England image.

Watters is the coeditor of *The Encyclopedia of New England* and author of books and articles on New England literature, culture, and history.

For more information about the Forum, please contact Executive Director Mary Boswell at (603) 632-4346.



## Upcoming Programs and Events

### **They Sang a New Song: The New Hampshire Shakers Their History and Their Music**

Mondays, March 19 - April 23, 9:30 AM  
Dartmouth College, Institute for Lifelong Education

Museum scholar, volunteer and former Trustee Mary Ann Haagen will lead this 6 week course. Haagen directs the a capella vocal ensemble The Enfield Shaker Singers. For details call 603-653-0154.

### **Sugaring Off Dinner**

Saturday, March 24th, 6:30 PM  
Great Stone Dwelling, Enfield Shaker Museum

The Shakers often held dinners for the "World's People" to promote their food products. Museum Executive Chef Betsy Oppenneer carries on this tradition with a festive feast to celebrate spring! Enjoy onion and apple cider soup with smoked Cheddar cheese; carrot slaw with maple dressing; herbed rice pilaf; Shaker baked beans; roast chicken with tarragon butter; raised squash biscuits with maple butter; Sister Lottie's maple pie. \$30/member; \$35/non-member. Includes a complimentary glass of wine. Reserve by Wednesday, March 21.

### **Herb and Flower Gardening Workshop**

Sunday, March 25th, 1:00 - 3:00 PM  
Great Stone Dwelling, Enfield Shaker Museum

Herbalist Happy Griffiths will help you plan your summer garden. Soil preparation, composting, companion planting, container gardening, cultural and harvesting methods and herb preservation will be discussed. Slides will show many herbs grown in the Museum's Herb and Flower Garden. Seed catalogs will be on display. This class is valuable for the beginner and the "seasoned" gardener. \$18/member; \$20/non-member includes instruction and take home data sheets.

### **Enfield Shaker Singers Concert**

Wednesday, April 25th, 7:15 PM  
Great Stone Dwelling, Enfield Shaker Museum

This a capella vocal ensemble, led by Shaker scholar, Museum volunteer and former Trustee Mary Ann Haagen, is dedicated to preserving the musical traditions of the Shakers. Dressed in authentic Shaker costume, the performers recreate traditional song and dance from the Shakers' long history. Free admission. Limited seating; please call for reservations.

### **May Basket Sale**

Sunday, April 29th - Tuesday, May 1

Surprise a loved one with a traditional May Basket! Each one will include a flowering plant, colorful bow and gift card. A limited number will be sold for \$10 each to benefit the Museum's renowned Herb and Flower Garden. Order yours now!



*Enfield Shaker Sisters standing in front of the veranda at the east end of the Great Stone Dwelling. Photo circa 1900.*

### **Spring Forum on the Shakers**

Friday, May 18th - Sunday, May 20th  
Great Stone Dwelling, Enfield Shaker Museum

Mark your calendar now for this two-day conference filled with programs and presentations on the Shakers! Registration begins at noon Friday, May 18, followed by a reception at 6:30 pm, and a dinner of authentic Shaker dishes. Keynote speaker UNH Professor David H. Watters, editor of the *Encyclopedia of New England*, will speak on *The Shakers and the Rise and Fall of New England*. More details to come.

### **Benefit Yard Sale**

Friday, May 25th - Saturday, May 26th, 8:00 am - 2:00 pm  
Stone Mill Building, Enfield Shaker Museum

This will be a HUGE sale offering books, furniture, household items and much more! The event will benefit the Museum's Herb and Flower Garden.

### **Shaker Herb Dinner**

Saturday, June 2nd, 6:30 pm  
Great Stone Dwelling, Enfield Shaker Museum

Celebrate summer with a festive Shaker-style dinner in the dining room of the Great Stone Dwelling. Museum Executive Chef Betsy Oppenneer will offer a Shaker-inspired menu including chilled minted strawberry yogurt soup; asparagus and orange salad with herb vinaigrette; spinach with rosemary; herbed pork roast; herb biscuits; herbed jellyroll with orange sauce. \$30/member; \$35/non-member. Please reserve by Wednesday, May 30.

### **Plant Sale**

Saturday, June 16th, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm  
Herb and Flower Garden, Enfield Shaker Museum

Potted plants, some from the Museum's gardens, will be on sale. All proceeds to go towards herbs and organic fertilizers for the Museum Garden.



## Save the Great Stone Dwelling

(Taken from an article written by Mary Ann Haagen, Co-Chair of the Enfield Shaker Museum Development Committee and published in the Valley News, October 29, 2006.)

The Great Stone Dwelling in Enfield, New Hampshire is one of the great cultural resources of the Upper Valley. It symbolizes the Shakers' determination to reflect the order and beauty of heaven in their daily lives.

I am privileged to live across the lake from this majestic building. My deep interest in Shaker history is closely connected to my love of their sacred music. It is a great privilege to sing and march to Shaker songs in the building where they were created and to share this unique American music with others.

The many architectural elements that reflect the Shakers' belief in gender- and racial equality inspire me every time I enter the building. The play of light through its spacious halls and rooms makes me feel welcome.

The rich history of the Great Stone Dwelling was recently recognized by the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance when it designated the building one of "Seven to Save" in 2007.

The Enfield Shakers built the Great Stone Dwelling between 1837 and 1841. Designed to meet the needs of a thriving community, its grandeur testifies to the economic prosperity that the Enfield Shaker Society enjoyed in the mid-19th century. The building was heralded as a marvel of construction and noted for its technological innovations and attention to comfort, order and creative use of natural light.

Indeed, the building is believed to be the largest Shaker dwelling ever built, and a most important example of Shaker architecture. When it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, the nomination claimed that "architecturally, it is the single most important building in Enfield, N.H., one of the most important buildings in the state and one of the finest examples of Shaker architecture in the country."



Real photo postcard of the Great Stone Dwelling c. 1910

Over its long history, the building has suffered the abuses of neglect, wear and tear, temporary adaptations and modernization without regard to the building's architectural details. It is at a critical point in its history. Deferred maintenance by a series of owners and tenants has resulted in damage to the building's fabric. Its mechanical infrastructure needs to be upgraded or replaced.

The building must be renovated in order to maintain its structural integrity and to ensure the safety of those who work and visit inside. To this end, the board of trustees has launched a capital campaign for the Great Stone Dwelling, with a goal of \$1.1 million. Clark and Happy Griffiths of Lebanon, NH serve as honorary co-chairmen of the campaign.

So far, designated gifts totaling \$450,000 have retired the mortgages on all

museum buildings. The balance of the funds raised will be used to rehabilitate the Great Stone Dwelling – repairing the structure and mechanical systems inside and out, providing access for people with disabilities, and landscaping the grounds.

On September 30, Enfield celebrated the unveiling of the the first state historic marker honoring the Enfield Shaker Society and its many contributions to the state's history and economy. A successful capital campaign for the Society's most important building, the Great Stone Dwelling, will help preserve its past and ensure its future. Please become involved in this important preservation effort. The Great Stone Dwelling is a treasure in our midst.

Since the publication of this article in October 2006, the capital campaign has generated an additional \$160,000 toward its goal. A big thank you to everyone who has already sent a donation or pledge!!!

We need everyone's help to make our goal, please consider sending a donation or making a pledge toward this project today.

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: \_\_\_\_\_

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## New Board of Trustees Members

**Charlie DePuy**, a retired architect, has been a member of the Museum since 1987. He served as a trustee in the late 1990s and has been an active participant in the advisory committee that was assembled in 2005. Charlie is a member of the Long-Range Planning and Facilities committees. His particular interest is in the Museum's historic buildings and landscape, and has spent thousands of volunteer hours addressing their many needs over the last 15 years and has a "special relationship" with the Museum's aged furnace. He regularly coordinates the work projects of the Museum's service Elderhostels. Charlie also shares his vocal talents as a member of the Enfield Shaker Singers. He lives on Lake Mascoma with his wife, Mary Ann Haagen.

**John Hilberg** first lived on the campus of the Enfield Shaker Village when he was 7 years old ... and the LaSalettes ran a summer camp there for city boys. Since then he has taught at the University of Connecticut, and raised a son and daughter. Now a retired entrepreneur, in the fields of financial services and alternate energy, he moved to NH 30 years ago, and has been an inordinately ardent Patriots fan since the bad ol' days. John is proud of losing 9 out of 10 chess games to his son, Eric, when they get to play - because he taught the kid how, and thus wins all the time...vicariously. Daughter, Lisa, now a fundraiser at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, NY, was national collegiate equestrian champion in her class. Currently, he and Inge, his wife of almost 29 years, reside in Laconia and Sedona, Arizona.

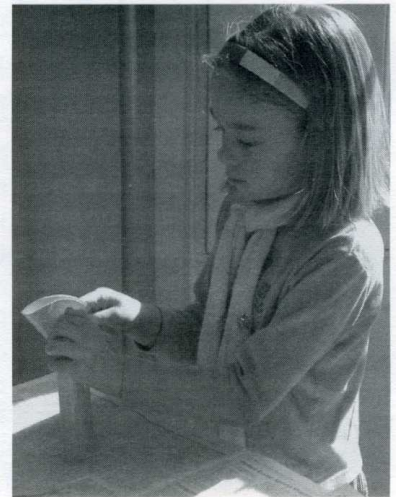
**Aaron Simpson** is an attorney with the firm Simpson & Mulligan, P.L.L.C. Following graduation from Vermont Law School in 1996, where he earned a law degree and a master's degree in environmental law, he clerked for the Alaska Court System. He is currently a member of the Sunapee Water and Sewer Commission, and one of two representatives for the Town of Sunapee to the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission. Previously he was involved with the Sunapee Conservation Commission and the Sunapee-Ragged-Kearsarge Greenway Coalition, being a founder and past Chairman of the Board of Directors. Mr. Simpson lives in Sunapee.

Born and raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, **Allen W. Smith** graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1961 with a Bachelor of Business Administration. Following graduation, Allen went to work for the U.S. Forest Service and served throughout the Western states at all levels of the organization. He was appointed Regional Director of Acquisitions Management for the Southwestern Region in Albuquerque, New Mexico and, in 1980, was selected as National Director, serving in that position until retirement in 1998. Allen co-owns and operates Shaker Hill Bed and Breakfast with his wife, Nancy, here in Enfield. He also works on a volunteer basis for the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office as a mediator in the Consumer Protection Bureau.

## February 2007 at the Museum

February was a busy month for the Museum, with a steady stream of visitors from Enfield, the Upper Valley, England and Germany. We thank Shaker Workshops for sponsoring the School Vacation Week Program Series, February 19 - 23. Daily workshops were held for children ages 8 - 11 and their parents.

Topics included Make a Shaker Peg Rail, Make a Potato Head Planter, Make Herbal Tea and Cookies and Make a Child's Journal. Thanks also to our generous volunteers and donors who gave their creative assistance to the program series and to the family Sledding Day on February 24: Lee Arend, Barbara Brady, Donna Butler, Happy Griffiths, Mary Ann Haagen, Judy Kmon, Kitty Scherer, Carolyn Smith, and Tracy Smith.



*Amy Labecque of Enfield, New Hampshire sands her Shaker peg rail in preparation for staining and final assembly.*



*Herbalist Happy Griffiths spoke to children as they prepared to make their own herbal teas as part of the Museum's School Vacation Week Program Series. Happy will also lead a workshop on "Planning Your Summer Garden" on Sunday, March 24, 1 - 3 pm.*

## Museum Plant Sale Scheduled for June

Calling all gardeners!! As you are cleaning up your garden this spring and are dividing perennial flowers, herbs, and shrubs, pot them up and bring them to the Museum for a Plant Sale to be held on Saturday, June 16th from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm.

If you need pots, there are extras in the front portion of the shed by the Museum Herb Garden. It is best to dig your plants a couple of weeks before the sale as this gives them a chance to become established and look healthy. The money raised from the sale will go towards the head gardener's salary and any herbs and organic fertilizers needed for the garden.





Happy Griffiths, Museum Herbalist, delights Elizabeth Lenihan with a colorful May Basket.

## Sale of May Baskets to Benefit Museum Gardens

May Day, celebrated on the first of May, heralds the return of sunlight and the new gardening year after the cold grey of winter. A delightful tradition of this celebration is the presentation of May Baskets to special friends

and neighbors. This year we will revive this tradition by making and selling May Baskets for \$10 each to benefit the Museum Gardens. Baskets will include a flowering plant, colorful bow and gift card. Reserve yours today by calling the Museum at 603-632-4346.

## Start Your Spring Cleaning Now!

The Museum's Program Committee is committed to raising money to support our nationally acclaimed Herb Garden, with a paid Head Gardener, equipment and supplies. One of the planned fundraisers is a Benefit Yard Sale, set for Friday, May 25 and Saturday, May 26, 8am-2pm.

To prepare for this sale, the committee is seeking good or high quality sports equipment, office equipment, furniture, household goods, toys, baby items, books, holiday items, art work, etc. No clothing, please, other than true vintage clothing.

Do your spring cleaning now and donate these items to the Museum! We are accepting donations now, so drop them off on weekdays, 9 am - 5 pm. For additional hours, contact the office at (603) 632-4346 or email us at [Chosen.Vale@valley.net](mailto:Chosen.Vale@valley.net). Plan now to come to the sale in May and pick up some real bargains!!!

## Museum Extends Winter Hours

With two additional full-time employees, the Museum will keep its doors open for tours and shopping through the winter. The Museum and Store are now open daily, 10 am - 4 pm, with guided tours Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday & Sunday, noon - 2 pm.

We will also try to accommodate your needs during weekends and evenings if you contact us in advance. Call the office at (603) 632-4346 or email us at [Chosen.Vale@valley.net](mailto:Chosen.Vale@valley.net). Think about the Museum when scheduling a family or business event, or when looking for a gift for a friend or relative. We are here to serve you.

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

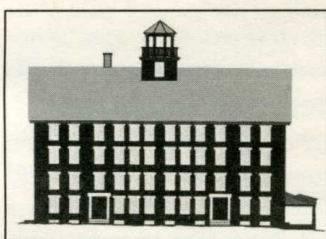
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### Museum Staff:

Mary Boswell, Executive Director  
Tom Boswell, Properties Manager  
Arthur Gagnon, Interpreter



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