

The Friends' Quarterly

Newsletter of the Enfield Shaker Museum

Sharing history and hospitality.

Dolores Struckhoff, Executive Director



Winter 2016

Upcoming Events

For more details, visit our website at
www.shakermuseum.org

March 30	Preservation Wednesday
April 1	Season Opening
April 3	Planning and Planting an Herb Garden Workshop
April 13	Preservation Wednesday
April 22 - 24	Spring Shaker Forum
April 27	Preservation Wednesday
May 1	Spring Open House
May 2	Broom Making Workshop
May 11	Preservation Wednesday
May 15	Shaker Sing
May 22	Preparing Your Garden Workshop
May 24-June 3	Archeaological Dig Session 1
May 25	Preservation Wednesday
May 30	Memorial Day (Closed)
May/Early June	History Alive 4th and 5th Grade Field Trips
June 6-17	Archeaological Dig Session 2

Three Degrees of Separation

by Carolyn A. Smith

When visiting the Enfield Shaker Museum today, the Shakers who made and used the various tools, furniture, clothing and fancy goods on display there seem to be from a very distant past. It is hard for us to imagine what it must have been like to know and speak with the Shaker brethren and sisters who built and cared for the Enfield Shaker Village.

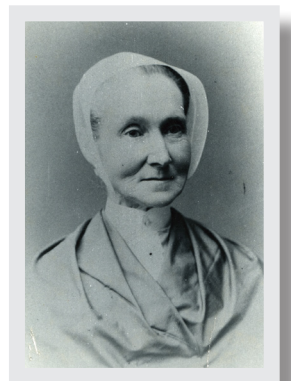
Fortunately for us, every now and then, we hear from the family of a former Enfield Shaker. Sometimes they are looking for information that we might have about a relative who lived and worked in Enfield. Other times they have photographs, letters, journals, and possessions of the relative that they want to share with the Museum. It is at these times that we realize how short the distance is between the lives of the Enfield Shakers and our lives today.

"Six degrees of separation" is the theory that anyone can be connected to any other person through a chain of acquaintances that has no more than five intermediaries. Here at the Enfield Shaker Museum we have recently experienced our own "degrees of separation" story. Let's start at the beginning of the story with Shaker Sister Zelinda Smith.

First Degree of Separation

In the early 1830's Zelinda Smith (1820-1899) and three of her siblings Elias (1810-1890), Philo (b. 1813), and Amanda (1818-1894) came to live with the Shakers in Enfield, New Hampshire.

Continued on page 2.



Sister Zelinda Smith

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Archaeology Field School – Snowshoe Festival
1854 Cow Barn – Festival Of Trees

Executive Director's Message

by Dolores C. Struckhoff

Dear Friends,

Spring has arrived and much like the rest of New England, mud arrives with it! Just last week I closed off the driveway to the Stone Mill, and with shovel in hand, I dug a trench to direct water away from the entry to the driveway to avoid further wash out. As I dug the trench, I looked across the grounds to assess the winter's damage. Not much for a site as large as we are.

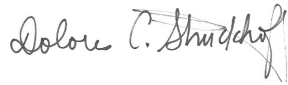
We have come a long way since I started four years ago and one phrase that keeps coming back to me is "team work." With all of us working together, continually improving our work processes, we are making a big difference in how the Museum is managed.

This past year, we decided to close the Museum for tours from January 1 through March 31. You will see from this issue of the Friends' Quarterly, the staff and our many volunteers have not been idle. On the contrary, we have been very busy Monday through Friday and some weekends with special programs and events and planning for the season opening in April.

As the winter comes to an end, we'll step away from a little of the solitude we enjoyed over the winter and once again experience the hustle and bustle of the visitors who venture through our doors to learn about the Enfield Shakers who lived and worked here for over 200 years.

I hope you will plan a visit too!

Sincerely,



Three Degrees of Separation *(continued from page 1)*

Their father Uriah Smith (1769-1855) had been a Baptist minister in Woodstock, VT. By 1835, he, his third wife Charlotte, and his youngest child Susan (1825-1899) had moved to the head of Mascoma Lake. Amanda and Philo left the Shakers as adults and moved away from Enfield, but Zelinda and Elias remained life long members of the Shaker Society.

Zelinda's sister Susan married James Willis Johnson in 1846. They lived in Enfield Center and Susan Johnson visited her siblings and introduced her children, grandchildren and other relatives to the Shakers.

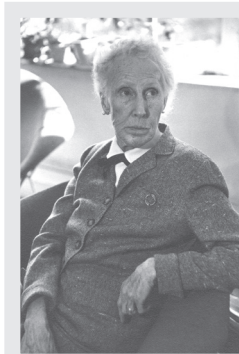
Second Degree of Separation

One of Susan's relatives wrote this undated and unsigned reminiscence of a visit to the Enfield Shakers.

How well I remember the face, but have forgotten the name of the lovely gracious woman who had charge of the office, her cheeks were like red roses. When we came she would send word to the dining room that we would be over in a little while and after we went over Aunt Zelinda Smith would come in and curtsy and then leave, too busy to stop. She certainly exemplified the saying of "straight as a ramrod." I always wondered why she didn't crack when she stooped over.

After eating and going back to the office her brother, Uncle Elias, would be called and always seemed to enjoy having us come. He was as jolly as Zelinda was stiff. He played a fife, which was permitted.

In 1941 Susan's granddaughter Marguerite Fellows Melcher (1879-1969) wrote one of the first important histories of the

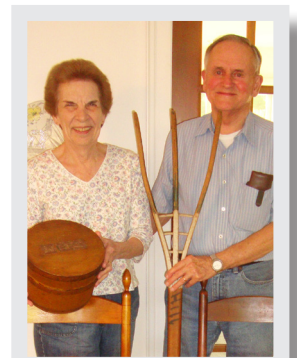


Marguerite Fellows Melcher

Shakers, *The Shaker Adventure*. She stated: "Memories of these respected people and the familiar sight of Shaker articles in my grandmother's home in Enfield, NH where I spent my childhood summers made me feel a kinship with the sect, gave me a deep and abiding interest in their lives and beliefs."

Third Degree of Separation

In October of 2015, Marguerite Melcher's great-nephew Richie Williams and his wife Mary Ellen contacted us with the news that they wanted to donate Marguerite's collection of Shaker artifacts to the Enfield Shaker Museum where they began their journey, and where visitors can enjoy and learn about the Shakers by seeing them. For more information about this wonderful collection of artifacts see "Melcher Collection Comes Home" on page 3 of this newsletter.



Mary Ellen and Richie Williams

Photos courtesy of Mary Ellen and Richie Williams, Falmouth, MA. Historical facts courtesy of Mary Ann Haagen, Enfield, NH.

1854 Shaker Cow Barn Update

by Dolores Struckhoff, Executive Director

We are pleased to report that on January 11, 2016, true to our commitment, we made the last mortgage payment on the 1854 Shaker Cow Barn. It is truly amazing, how in such a short time, a project of this magnitude was accomplished.

Saving this barn means a great deal to the Museum, the Shaker Community, and the Town of Enfield. This important structure will take its place in history along with the Barn at Hancock Shaker Village. As Carolyn Smith, our President and a former Executive Director, shared in last year's Winter Newsletter, "Enfield's 1854 Shaker Cow Barn is important for two reasons – first, it is the only remaining Shaker great barn in the state of New Hampshire and second, along with the Round Stone Barn at Hancock Shaker Village, it is one of only two multi-story Shaker barns remaining in the United States. Fortunately, it is also in excellent condition."

Special thanks to the donors listed below who generously contributed to this effort to preserve and protect the last of the remaining Shaker buildings on the site of the Enfield Shakers.

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Philip and Beverly Vermeer

Andrew and Deborah Williams

Sybil Williamson



Michael O'Connor, ESM Curator leads a special behind the scenes 1854 Cow Barn tour during last fall's Barn Benefit.

We also want to thank Simon Pearce for the donation of a beautiful lamp for the 1854 Cow Barn raffle, the many people who purchased raffle tickets, and to everyone who purchased a ticket to the Barn Benefit: An afternoon of history and story telling with Willem Lange last October. Proceeds from the raffle and benefit went toward retiring the mortgage.

The winner of the raffle was our own Gift Shop Associate, Kate Mortimer. Kate purchased 28 of the 429 tickets sold. She was one of the top three raffle ticket purchasers.

Finally, a very special thank you goes out to Carolyn Smith and Dick Dabrowski who negotiated the purchase of this magnificent addition to the Museum and to Mary Ann Haagen who spearheaded the fundraising. Without these long-time Enfield Shaker Museum Friends, the Museum would not be where we are today.

The 1854 Cow Barn is open to visitors from May to November, if you haven't toured the barn plan a trip, to see this wonderful structure!

Melcher Collection Comes Home

by Michael O'Conner, Curator

On Friday, October 9, 2015 I received a call that began like many others. "We have some items inherited through my husband's family that we would like to donate." Intrigued, I listened as she described the location of the family's house. I was picturing the wrong area when she said, "No, not there, down Route 4A, just beyond the stream crossing in Enfield Center. His great aunt wrote a book."

Putting two and two together, I thought Enfield Center plus a Shaker book, "are you talking about Marguerite Fellows Melcher?" "Yes, that's her." Thus went my introduction to Mary Ellen and Richie Williams.

The Johnson-Fellows-Melcher family is very well known to students of Shaker history as well as Enfield's local history. In fact, in 2011 Mary Ann Haagen created an exhibit entitled "Ties That Bind" to celebrate Enfield's 250th anniversary that examined the relationship between the Enfield Shakers and the town of Enfield. Part of the installation focused on James Willis Johnson, Shakers Zelinda and Elias Smith, and Marguerite Fellows Melcher, all members of Richie's family.

As I got to know Richie and Mary Ellen, I came to respect and admire them for their hospitality, humor, generosity, intellectual curiosity, interest in their family's unique role in history,

and their desire to see that history is preserved and accessible to the public. In addition to being items of intrinsic beauty, the artifacts we exhibit serve to illustrate history, and personally identifiable artifacts create an even greater sense of connection to those who came before us. As the lead article illustrates, we are not separated from the Shakers by a great gulf, but rather we are linked to those who came before us in an existential and tangible way represented by these artifacts.



Lidded bucket with initials.



Stamp on bottom of bucket.



Paper initials on bucket lid.

Part of the collection was exhibited at the 2015 Annual Meeting. Currently the collection is being cataloged, and some items have gone for conservation. If you missed the Annual Meeting, the collection will be featured next at the Spring Forum in April, before being incorporated into exhibits later this year.

The donation includes four Enfield chairs (three side chairs and a rocker), a hay fork, a Canterbury poplarware sewing kit, an inscribed 1882-3 volume of the Shaker Manifesto, a wooden hanger with initials, small woodenware items, a mortar and pestle, photos and ephemera, and a yellow lidded Canterbury bucket with initials.

Time and space prohibit a description of each item, but I will introduce a couple of notable items. First the yellow bucket. It is a Canterbury lidded bucket with iron bail and wooden handle. Stenciled on the bottom and top of the lid are the initials "OF," possibly indicating use in the Office. Stamped on the bottom and the under-

side of the lid is the number "11." On the top of the lid, partially obscuring the "OF" stencil are the initials "ZES" applied in paper. They stand for Sister Zelinda Smith, Richie's great-great-great aunt.

Adding to the interest is that one of the side chairs, a beautiful Enfield chair with caned seat and tilters, is stamped with the number "11" on the top of each front post. The initials and the number stamps potentially link Zelinda to both artifacts, but which building are the room numbers referring to? Like a call about Shaker artifacts to be donated, this is the kind of thing that makes museum employees happy to go to work in the morning.

Enfield Shaker Museum ♦ 447 NH Route 4A ♦ Enfield, NH 03748

Executive Director

Dolores C. Struckhoff

Enfield Shaker Museum is a 501(c)3 non-profit educational institution whose mission is to protect, enhance, and utilize its historical structures, landscape and Shaker cultural heritage.

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Second Annual Tabletop Festival of Trees

By Anna Guenther, Event Coordinator

The Enfield Shaker Museum's Festival of Trees celebrated its second year of displaying 'table top' Christmas trees this December, with local individuals, companies and organizations creatively decorating the trees each with its own unique theme. This year's trees included the Shaker inspired *Hands to Work, Hearts to God* quote by **Rebecca Harrington** to the *Mascoma Music Malters* by **Friends of Mascoma Foun-**



Creatively decorated tabletop trees at the Festival of Trees

dation. Other popular tree themes included *A Hand Sewn Christmas* by **Bernard Dauphinais**, *A Modern Tannenbaum* by **Cyndi Weiger**, and *Candy Tree* by **Lexi Harrison Reynolds**.

Thanks to all these unique trees and to our two Gift Card trees, we sold all 2,000 of our raffle tickets! If you did not have a chance to attend, more than 40 table top Christmas trees and two trees loaded with more than \$500 worth of Gift Cards from local businesses were displayed in the Dining Room of the Great Stone Dwelling, and raffle tickets were sold for visitors to 'vote' on (and possibly win!) their favorite tree or trees.

Special thanks to our corporate sponsors and **Shirley Green** for her effort soliciting more than \$500 in gift cards and gift certificates for our gift card trees.

We also owe the event's success to the artists who donated handcrafted trees or sculptures for a silent auction: this

year we saw a beautiful handmade felted nativity scene created by **Meredith Smith**, a charming 'bird tree' sculpture created by **Nan Munsey** and a hand-carved 'Partridge in a Pear Tree' created by **Barbara McAlister**.

With visitors throughout December, from our kick off during the Enfield Village Association's Hometown Holidays to our final Festival of Trees Gala, our fundraising momentum with this event is great for the Museum! We welcomed two senior groups for afternoon teas this year and hope to expand and host more groups next year.

We had plenty of visitors ask if there were specific individuals assigned to decorate a tree – the answer is no: anyone can decorate a tree! We provide the table-top tree and you return it to us with your unique decorations. Give us a call or send us an email if you'd like to be on next year's decorator list!

Thanks to the donations, creativity and hard work of this community, we are able to provide this area with one of many local historical places to learn, to connect and to grow stronger. With further financial stability, offered by successful fundraisers such as this,



Visitors carefully select their favorite trees before "voting" with raffle tickets.

the Museum is able to offer dynamic programming conveying Shaker history and traditions. As we plan this year's calendar, we're already looking forward to 2016's Festival of Trees!

2016 Archaeology Field School

Enfield Shaker Museum and Plymouth State University have recently announced plans for a 2016 archaeological dig and field school which will focus on the Church Family Blacksmith Shop and other water-powered/industrial archaeology sites on the west side of Route 4A.

The dig will be supervised by **Dr. David Starbuck**, Professor of Anthropology at Plymouth State, and run from May 23 to June 17. Dr. Starbuck is well known for his archaeological digs at Revolutionary War sites in New York and Vermont.

The Blacksmith Shop was located directly in front of the Stone Mill Building, which will house the field school lab. In addition to housing the lab, the Stone Mill will be the site for daily lunchtime talks, open to the public and free of charge.



Site selected for the 2016 Archaeological Field School Dig.

The field school is open to volunteer diggers at no cost. The dig is divided into two-week sessions, May 23 to June 3 and June 6 to June 17. Participants must commit to at least one of the two week sessions. There is something for everyone. Diggers will be provided tools and training. For those not comfortable digging, there is lab work where artifacts are cleaned, identified and sorted.

To be part of the team that literally unearths Shaker history, please contact the Museum for more information or a registration form.

Fifth Annual Shaker Snowshoe Festival

On a sunny and mild winter day in January, the 2016 Snowshoe Festival drew over a hundred participants. Families with children of all ages, adult teams, a Boy Scout Troup and individuals from the Upper Valley, southern New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Connecticut enjoyed outdoor winter activities and indoor offerings. Dedicated Museum volunteers prepared and monitored the Shaker trails, fit snowshoes, kept the fire stoked, and prepared and sold chili and macaroni and cheese along with cookies and other sweets.

A snowshoeing instructor from L.L. Bean gave lessons on how to walk with snowshoes and offered tips about outdoor safety. He led several snowshoeing groups on the trails.

In addition to snowshoeing, the trails were just right for winter hiking. Children and adults enjoyed sledding

on the hill, giving treats to sled dogs and riding all bundled up in the horse-drawn wagon. Folks warmed up next to the fire while they roasted marshmallows and sipped hot chocolate.



A local Cub Scout Troop tries out snowshoeing.

On the way to the Great Stone Dwelling to get something to eat, attendees could participate in a sled relay managed by members of the Mascoma Valley Regional High School National Honor Society.

Once inside the Great Stone Dwelling many participants joined one of our interpreters for a tour of the Museum. Children filled their Great Stone Dwelling Shaker Quest booklets with snowflake stamps as they found the highlighted objects and building features.

Volunteers helped groups and individuals take their pictures at the Shaker

Snowshoe Festival Photo Booth in the Dining Room. Museum staff, and volunteers witnessed the joy of wonderful winter fun on the rosy cheeks of the children and adults. We had a wonderful time, if you were not able to join us, plan now to come next year.

THINK SNOW for 2017!

**Save the Date
for the Spring Shaker Forum
April 22 – 24, 2016**

Weekend Highlights

- Papers by Shaker Scholars
- Tour of Shaker Mountain Pond
- Update on preservation projects
- Networking with colleagues and friends
- Lodging and meals in the Great Stone Dwelling

Special Evening Presentations

Friday Evening's Program

*Digital Preservation of Cultural
Heirloom Materials*

Lacy Schutz

Executive Director

Shaker Museum/Mount Lebanon

Saturday Evening's Program

Exploring Smith Pond Shaker Forest
Upper Valley Land Trust



Roasting marshmallows at this year's Shaker Snowshoe Festival

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Enfield Shaker Museum



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