

# The Friends' Quarterly

A Newsletter from The Museum at Lower Shaker Village

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## Enfield Shakers Welcomed the Railroad

by Wendell Hess

In the early 1840s there was in New England, as well as elsewhere all over the country, a tremendous burst of railroad building. Rail lines had already been built from Boston to Concord, N.H.

Other lines were being built or projected from White River Junction, Vt., to the west and north into Canada, thus opening up great new areas for trade, travel and transportation.

A link from Concord to White River Junction was surveyed over three possible routes to connect Boston to points in the north and west. The shortest route, with the lowest hills to negotiate, was planned to follow the route of the existing 4th New Hampshire Turnpike which went down the west side of Mascoma Lake and on to White River Junction.

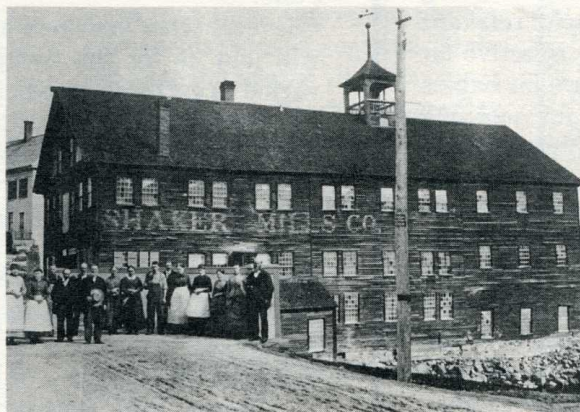
The Shaker village was located on a narrow plain between the lake and the mountain range running parallel; and so, the rail line would have to cut right through the very center of the homes and farmland of these cloistered people.

Trustee Caleb Dyer, who was the greatest leader in the material aspects of the Enfield Shakers, upon hearing of these plans, made many trips to Concord to meet with and to try to dissuade the railroad folks from running their line through the village.

What actual "deals" Caleb made with them is not exactly known. However, the net results of his efforts are history.

First, the railroad was rerouted over a more northerly way through North Enfield. It was some nine miles further than the more direct route. Many cuts through solid granite hills had to be made.

Second, the Shakers donated to the railroad the land they owned along the northern side of Mascoma Lake on which the line was to run and with no strings attached.



*Shaker Mills Co., taken about 1880*

Photo Courtesy Viola Hess

Also, as an inducement for them to run the road over the longer route, the Shakers gave money, reputed to have been \$500 toward the purchase of a locomotive which was called "Shaker."

The Boston and Maine Railroad locomotive roster gives the following data on the Northern Railroad No. 6 locomotive.

**Built in Nov. 1847 by Hinckley and Druary. Builder's # 127. Wheel arrangement — 4-4-0. Cylinders 15' x 20'. Drivers 50".**

\* \* \*

**Transferred to B. & M. in 1884. Their # 279. Re-built by B.**

**& M. — 0-4-0. Cylinders 15' x 22'. Drivers 50". Sold to Odell Paper Co., Groveton, N.H. in 1899, their # 3. Scrapped in 1904.**

From the above, it would appear that the "Shaker" had a long and useful career.

It was also known that the Enfield Shakers bought some 50-60 shares of Northern R.R. stock. The railroad issued lifetime passes to the elders and trustees.

Furthermore, it was reported in the "deal" that Caleb made with the Northern R.R. that all passenger trains would stop at Enfield. That they did was a fact; even the through express trains stopped, whether or not passengers got on or off. This was done until the 1930s by which time Shakers had long departed.

A corollary to the above story is also of interest, insofar as it related to the Enfield Shakers. The population center of Enfield at the time the railroad

was completed was some three miles east of the Shaker village and North Enfield was sparsely populated with mostly farms.

At this period in the existence of the Shakers, they were at their greatest strength in numbers and also affluence. Under the aegis of the talented Caleb Dyer, the Shakers became a major factor in the growth and prosperity of North Enfield, until it finally became the actual center of town.

The "Shaker Mills Co." was built by the Shakers in 1841 and leased

*Railroad - continued on page 4*



## Sage Thoughts

by Happy Griffiths

### **Chamomile** - *Matricaria recutita* & *Chamaemelum nobile*

Known as the "Plant's Physician," chamomile has been used for centuries as a natural healer. All chamomiles are members of the composite family. They have tiny daisy-like flowers, feathery leaves and a fresh, fruity apple scent. In appearance, the plant is easily confused with feverfew, a remedy for migraines. *Chamaemelum nobile*, also known as Roman, is a perennial. *Matricaria recutita*, known as German, is the annual form, but once it is established, it will self sow. Chamomile likes lots of sun but will also grow in partial shade. As a companion plant it is said to aid the health of any ailing herb, flower or vegetable and enhance growth in cucumbers and onions.

Chamomile is regarded as one of the safest herbal medicinal remedies for a long list of disorders. It is a wonderful relaxant for the nervous system, very effective for insomnia at bed time, and safe for babies and children. It is famous for soothing stomach upsets, particularly those related to stress and tension. As a general pain reliever, chamomile can be taken for headaches, migraines, toothache, flu symptoms—the list goes on. Recent research suggests that chamomile acts as a natural antihistamine. Externally chamomile can be used for inflammatory skin conditions such as eczema, and is an excellent antiseptic healer for wounds, sores and burns. A used chamomile tea bag makes a good antiseptic eyewash when placed on sore inflamed eyes. It is also well known as a hair rinse to bring out the highlights in blonde hair.

To obtain the wonderful properties of this healing herb, collect the flowers after they have opened. If they are not going to be used right away, dry them for future use. To make a tea, pour boiling water over one tablespoon of fresh blossoms, cover the cup and let steep for about 6 minutes. Strain, and sweeten if desired. Peter Rabbit's mother was wise when she fixed Peter a cup of chamomile tea and sent him to bed. Not only did it have a calming effect on him, but it gave him a good night's sleep.

## From the Director

Dear Friends,

Ice fishers and snowmobilers were out on Lake Mascoma as we finalized plans for our 1996 Calendar of Events. You should have already received your copy of the Calendar, and you can see that we've spent the winter planning a number of new programs and workshops. Just a few highlights of the year:

- Happy Griffiths, Museum Herbalist, will host a very special "herbal tea party" in May; she will also teach all-new workshops on the uses and pleasures of lavender in July and on treating yourself to an herbal facial in November.

- We are very fortunate that artist Constantine Kermes has agreed to exhibit a selection of his works for two weeks in July. Friends will have an opportunity to meet Mr. Kermes at the exhibit opening on June 30.

- We are honored indeed to welcome Sister Frances Carr in June. Sister Frances will visit us from the Sabbathday Lake community to help us fête the arrival of summer at our Garden Party Gala on the 14th of June and to be one of the speakers at our Herb Symposium on the 15th of June.

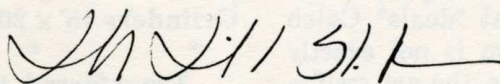
- Several other speakers and workshop teachers of note will join us for the Symposium, addressing topics as varied as gathering medicinal herbs in the wild, concocting herbal salves and tinctures, and different ways of using herbs in the kitchen.

- Old friends will return to the Chosen Vale this summer, too: the Barry Phillips Ensemble will perform in concert; sheep-herders, musicians, and a horse-drawn wagon will join us at the Harvest Festival; and Bruce Pyle will teach his always-popular two-day workshop on making Shaker oval boxes.

It will be a busy year ... and I hope you will visit us often!

Chosen Vale celebrated its 200th anniversary in 1993. Local artist Kate Emlen Chamberlin created a commemorative silkscreen to mark the occasion and pulled a series of 200 prints from it. We have incorporated one print in a plaque that thanks the 48 generous Friends who helped make the print possible. Unframed prints are still available and may be purchased in the Shaker Store or by calling the Museum.

We will mark another important anniversary this summer: the Museum at Lower Shaker Village will celebrate its tenth birthday this June. We'll toast our first decade and open our second at the Garden Party Gala on June 14. This festive party is for Friends of the Museum and their friends - mark your calendar now for this delightful evening.





## From Our Photo Files



*This wintry scene of the Church Family, looking north on what is now NH Route 4A, was probably photographed between 1902 and 1920.*

## Join The Village Gardeners

Winter's end is in sight, and that means a new start to the Village Gardeners program. Running from mid-May to mid-September, the program gives both new and experienced gardeners a chance to—literally—get their hands into the Lower Shaker Village herb gardens. In exchange for two hours of work per week, the gardeners get expert instruction and advice from Museum herbalist Happy Griffiths, and a workshop every other

week on a topic appropriate to the garden's seasons: it might be "Making Rose Potpourri" when the roses are in bloom, or "Herb Vinegars" as the herbs reach their peak. Several year's worth of Village Gardeners have enjoyed the satisfaction of helping the Museum gardens bloom, and bringing the experience home to benefit their own gardens. Cost of the program is \$35; call the Museum for information or to register.

## New England Winters Never Change...

...as these entries from the diary of Seth Bradford show. The winter and early spring of 1843 at the Enfield Shaker community contained a little of everything, as background to the round of daily labors.

### JANUARY 1843

*5th. Began to thaw. Continues warm. Thawes [sic] the snow from 3 feet to 8 inches. Continues foggy and warm.*

*Feb. 1st Continues cold through February... Snow 4 feet deep.*

*March 22nd. Hauling stones for the foundation to the Mill. Very cold.*

*April 1st. Quite a snowey [sic] day. No signs of spring. Mercury fell 2° below zero at 4 o'clock.*

## Sister Frances Carr To Visit In June

Sister Frances Carr of the Sabbathday Lake, Maine, Shaker community, is the Museum's honored guest at our Garden Party Gala, from 5-8 p.m. on Friday, June 14, as well as featured speaker at the Herb Symposium on June 15. Her talk at the Symposium will be on The Shaker Use of Herbs in the Kitchen. Sister Frances went to live at Sabbathday Lake when she was 10 years old, in the late 1930s. At the age of 21 she signed the covenant, and she is now the leader of the Sabbathday Lake Shaker community. We hope you'll join us in June to welcome Sister Frances.

*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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## Development Committee Report

*Dominic C. Albanese, Chair*

The Board of Trustees and the Museum staff are enormously pleased that the 1995 Annual Appeal raised a grand total of \$26,345. These moneys sustain the Museum during the slower winter months and provide the seed money necessary to plan the spring and summer events season. Honorary Campaign Chairs Pat and Henry Brown kicked off the 1995 Appeal with a letter to Museum members, visitors and friends. Pat and Henry are special friends of the Museum and we are very grateful for their continued support of our work. The 1995 Appeal was special for a number of reasons: First, it raised \$4,000 more than ever before. Second, this campaign added thirty-nine new families to our rolls, and the gifts from those thirty-nine new donors generated a matching grant of \$1,745 from the Hardy Hill Fund of the Upper Valley Charitable Foundation. Third, the entire cost of printing and mailing the initial appeal was underwritten by three very special friends of the Museum. Fourth, 20% of the funds raised by the 1995 Appeal will be dedicated to restoration work. *Annual Appeal gifts continue to come into the Museum and it's not too late for you to join us by*

*mailing your tax-deductible check to the Museum today.*

The Development Committee will be very active this year: we will create both a grant application process and a corporate giving program. We will also help to plan the spring membership drive. Increasing the Museum's membership is the most important thing we can do to make our museum stronger for the future. *Won't you help by sending us the names and addresses of friends who might be interested in joining us?* We will mail them a membership letter and brochure later this spring.

I once read that fund raising was really "friend raising"—this could not be truer than at our Museum. The Development Committee and the Board welcome all kinds of support. If you have financial resources or Shaker artifacts you would like to donate, if you can volunteer time, or if you have ideas for new fund-raising events or feedback about events you've attended, please call me at 603-632-7389, or Museum Director Sarah Shaffer at 603-632-4346. The Museum belongs to, and is the responsibility of, all of us—let's work together to make our second decade a great one.

### **Railroad - from page 1**

out to private operators. It employed about 35 hands, both male and female.

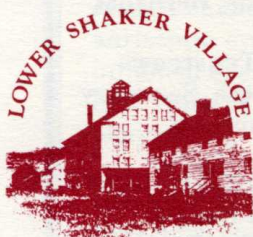
The mill gave the Shakers an outlet for the thousands of pounds of fine Merino sheep wool that they produced each year. (Shaker flannel became a very well known product.)

A "long" sawmill was erected for the cutting of the great timbers used by the burgeoning railroads to build the many bridges they needed in the area. The mill could cut timbers up to 60 feet in length.

Also in the 1850s the Shakers built a bed-stead factory for the manufacture of spool beds. In 1854 a very large three-story grist mill was built by them, next to the railroad where an all-weather siding ran into the mill for loading and unloading.

It should be noted that the Shakers never operated any of the mills they built. Eventually they were sold to the various people who operated them.

Today, a century and a half later, the Northern Railroad from Concord to White River Junction is all but abandoned, the ties rotted away and the rails heavy with rust—a victim of modern air and highway transportation.



**The Museum**  
Route 4A  
Enfield, NH 03748  
(603) 632-4346

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