

# The Friends' Quarterly

## *Newsletter of the Enfield Shaker Museum*

Sharing history and hospitality



Vol. XXXIII No. 1  
Fall 2023

### UPCOMING EVENTS

For more details, visit our website at  
[shakermuseum.org](http://shakermuseum.org)

- Dec 2     **Holiday Gift Extravaganza**
- Dec 6     **Moravian Star Making Workshop**
- Dec 13    **Community Moravian Star Making**
- Dec 14    **Christmas Cookie Workshop**
- Dec 15    **Upper Valley Ringers Holiday Concert**
- Dec 21    **Shaker-Inspired Winter Solstice Dinner**
- Dec 23    **Candy Cane Christmas Bread Workshop**
- Dec 23    **Community Carol Sing**
- Apr 19 -21 **Spring Shaker Forum**

We are adding programs and events to our website calendar weekly. Check often for details.

A publication of Enfield Shaker Museum  
Enfield, NH 03748  
603-632-4346  
[shakermuseum.org](http://shakermuseum.org)  
[info@shakermuseum.org](mailto:info@shakermuseum.org)

## Together Again

### Enfield Shaker Museum Purchases North Family September 29, 2023



*From the left, North Family, Church Family, South Family. Real Photo Postcard. Photographer George Fellows. c. 1900.*

### Thank You!

Enfield Shaker Museum's Board, Staff, and Campaign Committee celebrates **YOU**, the 425 individuals and families who did your part to save the La Salette property from indifferent development. With Enfield, New Hampshire residents setting the pace, friends from 28 states and the District of Columbia, joined in providing the needed funds to purchase the land and historic buildings where, for 234 years, the Shakers, and then the Missionaries of La Salette lived, worked, and worshipped. We thank each of you.

In supporting the "Together Again" campaign you have affirmed Chosen Vale's value as a beautiful, historically significant place. And you have honored the thousands of lives that have been touched, even changed, by their experiences here. Because of your generosity, it remains a place of openness and possibility.

With gratitude for all that has been accomplished, we move, now, into the second phase of the "Together Again" campaign. The not-quite-one-million-dollars still needed to reach our 3 million dollar campaign goal, will address deferred maintenance on these historic buildings, and upgrade facilities to meet current safety and accessibility standards.

Thank you for engaging with us in this breathtaking, important work. We look forward to sharing new spaces, new programming and new collaborations with you.

Gratefully,  
*Mary Ann Haagen*  
Capital Campaign Chair

## “A Place to Gather To” - The Enfield Shakers’ North Family (Part 1)

By Mary Ann Haagen

Speeding south on New Hampshire’s Route 4A, the first complex of Shaker buildings to catch the eye were once part of that community’s North Family. Here potential converts were “gathered in” to live and work as they considered embracing a Shaker life.

Before 1812 persons not yet able to make a full commitment to Shakerism, lived in what were referred to as “out families.”

*At the commencement of the gathering of the church, there were many of the believers who were not in a condition to become members but were desirous of maintaining their relation to the church, and also of sharing in some measure, the benefits of a united interest. For the accommodation of such, and for the better convenience of all, as too large a family could not be so well convened, out families were established. By 1810 these small satellite groups of Believers had all been absorbed into either the Church or Second family. So, a new means of providing for spiritual seekers was needed. Fortunately, Enfield could look to the Canterbury Society for a model, as it had organized a gathering order in 1801.<sup>1</sup>*

Creating a novitiate family required two years of preparation. In 1810 its leaders were appointed. They were Elders Edmund Lougee and John Lyon, Eldresses Molly Mills and Lucy Lyon. James Jewett Sr. and Moses Jewett were charged with establishing trades and businesses. In 1811 a two-story dwelling house was built. In 1812 the leaders moved in and prepared for the arrival of the first group of converts.<sup>2</sup> The leaders for this Novitiate family were well chosen. Back in 1792, when Canterbury was “gathered into order,” Edmund Lougee came from New Lebanon to serve as associate to Father Job Bishop, the spiritual head of the Societies at Canterbury and Enfield. During those formative years the Ministry aspired to divide their time equally between the two New Hampshire societies. But at times, only Edmund Lougee made the ministerial trips to Enfield to direct its spiritual life.<sup>3</sup> So when called to establish a gathering order at Enfield, he was already a well-known, beloved and respected leader. His assistant or second Elder was John Lyon, a young man who had come to Enfield with his parents and siblings in the 1780s. As a teenager, John was already being groomed for the leadership burdens he would shoulder for his long life. According to Elder Henry Blinn,

*John Lyon of Enfield was moved to Canterbury in 1807 and was appointed to live in the order of Elders at the gathering family. Timothy Jones was at this time the directing Elder and he accepted John as a pupil, expecting him to return to Enfield when the Novitiate order should be established in that place.<sup>4</sup>*

John did indeed return to Enfield, and served for 50 years, first as associate, and then as First Elder of the North Family. Primarily self-taught, he was recognized as Enfield’s most distinguished and widely respected missionary and theologian.

Eldress Molly Mills and Lucy Lyon were the other half of the leadership team, responsible for organizing the daily life of the family, while providing counsel and guidance to those new in the faith. Sister Elmira Allard memorialized her first mother in the gospel, saying,

*In looking over the many years that are past I call to mind our angel sister, Molly Mills. She was one of the North Family Elders in gathering the new believers - a true follower of Mother Ann. She was a godly woman of grave countenance, demanding respect from youth and children. Her interest for the good of all never abated while in her earth life.<sup>5</sup>*



North Family Laundry & Dairy (1831), Dwelling House (1811), Cow Barn (1816), Office Barn (1846), Trustee’s Office (1853).

*Photograph. Photographer Clifton Johnson. c. 1934. (Johnson, Clifton. “The Passing of the Shakers”, Old Time New England, Boston, MA. (1934))*

When the first converts arrived from Coos County, New Hampshire in 1812, the group included two strong personalities, Joseph and Mary Dyer. The couple had been introduced to Shakerism by their Free Will Baptist minister, who shared with them a copy of the 1810 Shaker publication *The Testimony of Christ’s Second Appearing*. For two years the couple alternated between episodes of intense



North Family Sisters’ Shop (1818), Laundry & Dairy (1831), Wood House (1844), Dwelling House (1811).

*Real Photo Postcard. Photographer George Fellows. c. 1900. (Rauner Special Collections Library, Hanover, NH)*

commitment to Shakerism, and periods of doubt and back sliding. A visit to the Enfield Shakers rekindled their zeal, and on their return home they talked enthusiastically with family and friends about this new religion. Seeing the Dyers as promising converts, Shaker leaders James Jewett Sr. and John Lyon traveled 130 miles to their home to encourage their faith. Soon after, Mary and Joseph came to Enfield to stay, bringing their children, Manser, Caleb, Betsey Orville, Jerub, and Joseph, Jr., hired man, Daniel Taylor, and his family, and hired girl, Sarah Curtis, and some of her family. A document they signed in July 1814 reads in part, *We feel a desire to enter into Covenant with each other in the Order and relation of a family, and to subject ourselves in Union under oversight and government of Edmund Lougee and John Lyon, whom we acknowledge to be our Elder Brethren and ruling members in our family.<sup>6</sup>*

Many of this first class of converts, including most of the Dyer family became lifelong members, and important leaders of the Enfield Shaker Society. For a few, Shakerism was not what they had imagined, and they vehemently rejected their experience of it. Mary Dyer, in particular, left the Society intent on destroying it. Benjamin Green, another apostate, wrote a damning account of his brush with the Shakers. "*A true believer's vademecum, or Shakerism exposed.*"<sup>7</sup> So from the beginning, the leadership of the gathering order had its hands full. To accommodate a continuous influx of converts, several buildings were added to the North Family campus between 1815 and 1826: a brethren's shop, cow barn, sisters shop, mill, and back store. In 1831 the laundry/dairy was built, being the first granite building erected at Enfield. In 1844 the long wood house was constructed, then the office barn in 1847 and the brick office in 1853. Of the five Shaker buildings extant at the North Family, the oldest is the cow barn, built in 1816. The North Family was physically close to the Church



From the left, Enfield Shaker North Family, Enfield Shaker Church Family.

*Photograph. Photographer unknown. c. 1935. (Private Collection)*

family; one might say it was in the shadow of the Church. Hervey Elkins wrote in his book, *Fifteen Years in the senior order of Shakers*,  
*I recollect well, when situated at the Novitiate, how I wished to be admitted to the Senior Order, whose members, as they passed, sometimes bent to notice me with a smile. I will describe those scenes which I beheld but a quarter of a mile distant, and which increased my desire to go thither, and dwell nearer to the highest sphere of the celestial hierarchy.*<sup>8</sup>

Not only was the Church family within sight of new Believers, its closeness was symbolic of its parental role. Most leadership positions at the North Family were filled by Church Family members, and it continuously supplemented the finances of this smaller family. But to the fullest extent possible, persons living in the gathering order were expected to put their "Hands to Work and Hearts to God. "The family maintained its own farm, wood lots, livestock and dairy; it had skilled woodworkers and mechanics, and the Sisters did a brisk business in the manufacture of woolens. Although not required to commit their personal wealth to the community's coffers, residents were to contribute to the family's wellbeing through their labor. And should they choose to leave the Society, they were not entitled to wages for work done. Over the years several apostates challenged this rule in the courts but were never successful in claiming compensation.

Though many converts added significantly to the family's viability, some individuals came with neither the interest nor the skill to contribute positively to its economy or reputation. In an 1846 letter from a North Family associate elder, to Deacon Nathan Freeman of Alfred, Maine, Samuel Elkins lamented,

*You have had hats, I believe, from our family before and such too I presume as have done little credit to us as hatters. For eight years we have been troubled by a hatter who was too ignorant and lazy to make a good wool hat and more over too old and conceited to learn. But we have been recently blest in that he has withdrawn from us; and this gives us a better opportunity to do right with our hats. We have at present a good hatter, and for the present, at least, we can furnish you with wool hats corresponding with this specimen sent.*<sup>9</sup>

Samuel's repeated use of the words "at present" reminds us of the fluidity of the North Family census. Generally, children stayed only briefly in the gathering order. It was considered best practice to integrate them immediately into the children's order, either at the Church or Second family. And individuals who showed great promise as Believers were quickly moved into the Church where they would be surrounded by committed Believers who were reliable mentors and role models.

*To be continued in the next issue of the Friends' Quarterly.*

#### Footnotes:

1. "A Historical Narrative of the Rise and Progress of the United Society of Shakers, Enfield, NH." 1858, pp. 63-64, New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH.
2. Ibid, pp. 66-67.
3. See "A Brief History or Record of the Commencement & Progress of the United Society Of Believers at Canterbury" by John Whitcher, for a record of Ministry trips from Canterbury to Enfield, NH. # 21, Canterbury Shaker Village Archive.
4. "A Historical Record of the Society of Believers in Canterbury, NH." Henry Blinn, #763, p. 142. Canterbury Shaker Village Archive, Canterbury, NH.
5. Autobiography of Elmira Allard." 1885, pp 66-67. #12743, Shaker Museum and Library, Old Chatham, NY.
6. "1814 North Family Covenant, Enfield, NH." #13614 Shaker Museum and Library, Old Chatham, NY.
7. For a detailed account of the Dyer family's Shaker story, and the apostate activity of Mary Dyer, see Elizabeth De Wolfe, "Shaking the Faith: Women, Family and Mary Marshall Dyer's Anti-Shaker Campaign, 1815-1867." Mary Dyer's publications (1818, 1822, 1847) are available on line at Google Books. "A True Believer's Vademecum, or Shakerism Exposed." Benjamin Green, Dartmouth College Library, Hanover, NH. Reprinted in "Writings of Shaker Apostates and Anti-Shakers, 1782-1850, vol. 1" Christian Goodwillie, ed.
8. "Fifteen Years in the Senior Order of Shakers." P. 38. Hervey Elkins. Dartmouth Press, Hanover, NH, 1853 Reprinted by AMS Press, NY.
9. "Samuel L. Elkins, Enfield, NH to Nathan Freeman, Alfred, Maine, April 27, 1846." BX97886 E7.E43 F85, Shaker Library, United Society of Shakers, Gloucester, ME.

## Great Stone Dwelling Belfry Repaired

*“When the trees were covered with verdure, I had beheld the graceful symmetry of the cupola towering high above every other object of the plain, whose majestic crown was a large sphere, with a segment deduced and resting upon a chapter of splendid mouldings, and this resting upon eight columns, whose foundation, rising from the roof, was a plinth of ten feet square.”*

Enfield Shaker Hervey Elkins included this description of the Great Stone Dwelling cupola, or belfry, in his 1853 book *Fifteen Years in the Senior Order of Shakers*. In this passage he was recollecting his time at the North Family, the Novitiate Order, and his desire to live at the Church Family. He could hear the “choir of musicians” singing in worship, but the trees of summer blocked his view of the Dwelling House, except for the cupola towering above.

And tower it does, even in photos from the Second Family, a mile south on the Fourth New Hampshire Turnpike, the building seems to loom and distort the distance. Hervey states “the great mansion lifts itself up, two entire lofts, roofs, and cupola above every other structure of the village.” In his historical notes, Elder Abraham Perkins states “As our members increased, it was found more dwelling room was requisite for the accommodation of members; and in 1837 the Granite Dwelling House was erected, and in 1838, a large bell was placed in the tower to call the people to their meals and for other purposes, which was a substitute for the blowing of a horn formerly used.”

That bell was a considerable improvement over the horn, but it soon cracked and was replaced by a new bell cast in 1848 by Col. George H. Holbrook in Medway, Massachusetts. The cupola and the bell it housed were an audible and visible presence for miles around for the next 175 years, but it’s exposed position and the New Hampshire weather took its toll. This spring it was determined that the posts supporting the roof of the cupola had deteriorated to the point that replacement was the only alternative.

Roofer Leon Shabott of RI began by raising the bell off the bell deck and securing it to the cupola posts, removing the railings, and stripping the roofing from the bell deck. The railing posts, rails and balusters were sent to Doug Hanson in Haverhill, NH to be repaired and painted. Museum timber framer Tim Baker then took measurements of the posts, and Joel Currier of Currier Farm in Danville, VT cut pine logs from his family farm and sawed them into 8-sided, tapered blanks. Next, Tim Baker, with the assistance of Mark Adams of Randolph, VT, prepared the posts and roof for removal.

July 17 was the day we had all been waiting for – crane day. Working from a 125 foot man lift, Tim and Mark rigged the cupola for a 140’ crane to lift it off the building. It was placed on scaffolding on the ground and the bell lifted off and stored away for the summer. One of the original posts and the octagonal blanks were taken to Steve Hanson of Hanson Woodturning in Cape Porpoise, Maine to be duplicated. Once the posts were turned, Tim Baker began to fit the new posts into the original belfry roof. The final step was the installation of copper roofing on the bell deck.

After a busy summer of activity, the bell and the belfry were reinstalled on November 28th. We are again able to stand at the Shaker’s North Family, as Hervey Elkins did so many years ago, and behold the Great Stone Dwelling’s majestic crown once again towering over all that surrounds it.



*The belfry and bell return to the roof of the Great Stone Dwelling.*

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

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. Gifts and donations are tax-deductible.

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# WE DID IT! AND IT IS ALL THANKS TO YOU.

## Together Again: By the Numbers

◆ Individuals, families, family foundations, companies, and friends from **28** states and the District of Columbia supported the campaign.

◆ To date we have received **425** contributions. The level of giving ranged from pennies collected in the Harvest Festival haystack to \$1,000,000.

◆ Our 2 year, \$3,000,000 campaign began July 25, 2023. To date we have raised **\$2,188,783**. (And 27 cents from the haystack.) We are grateful for every gift received. Thank You.

◆ **134** Enfield individuals, families, and businesses stepped up to make sure that this precious site would not be developed.

◆ The closing on the property took place on September 29, 2023. The purchase price was **\$1,500,000**. The closing costs were **\$18,835**. Thanks to you, there is no mortgage on the property and all the closing costs have been paid.

### Together Again Capital Campaign Committee

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The Capital Campaign committee wishes to extend its gratitude to all the Enfield Shaker Museum board members, volunteers, and staff who supported this effort.

*Enfield Shaker Museum extends its utmost gratitude, to those individuals and organizations who contributed to*  
Together Again

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*In memory of Viola & Wendell Hess.*  
 Stephen J. Paterwic  
*In memory of Fr. Robert Campbell.*  
 Gerry Phaneuf  
*In memory of Rafael & Martha Curtis.*  
 Charmian C. Proskauer  
*In honor of Bente Torjusen West.*  
 Rick & Linda Roesch  
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*In memory of Jack & Alice Sachleben.*  
 Sachleben Sullivan Family Fund  
*In memory of Mayo Sanders.*  
 Suzanne Sanders  
*In honor of Mary Ann Haagen.*  
 Doreen G. Schweizer  
*In memory of Joanne Bellavance.*  
 Barbara G. Smith  
*In honor of Harry & Helen Esler and*  
*John & Eileen Esler.*  
 Sharon & Larry Sullivan  
*In honor of the Enfield Shaker Singers.*  
 Peter Tenney  
*In honor of Becky Powell.*  
 John Vogel & Tina Wendon  
*In honor of Mary Ann Haagen.*  
 Barbara Woods



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

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## **Enfield Shaker North Family Selected by NH Preservation Alliance as one of the Seven to Save Properties for 2023**

Since 2006, the NH Preservation Alliance's Seven to Save program has helped attract attention and resources to irreplaceable landmarks around the state that are under-used or threatened by neglect, insufficient funds, or unsympathetic development.

To date, over one hundred significant places have been listed to Seven to Save, with more than half saved. Owners and advocates for the former listees have used the designation to help develop new solutions and secure new investments. Many places are in the process of rehabilitation while others continue to need significant help. A few have been lost. Criteria for selection include historical significance, the imminence of threat, and the potential impact of listing a site.

The program is designed as a tool to bring public attention to New Hampshire's endangered historic resources. The N.H. Preservation Alliance staff is available to help guide listees on their path towards success through a variety of methods including, but not limited to, assistance writing grant and funding applications, organizing volunteer work days, and assisting with workshops.

Seven to Save designation is not new to Enfield. In the Preservation Alliance's inaugural list in 2006, the Great Stone Dwelling was added when a capital campaign sought to make much needed repairs. Today's listing seeks to generate interest, donations, and ideas for the largest museum acquisition New Hampshire has seen in decades.

Visit the NH Preservation Alliance Seven to Save website to read more about the program and view a video about Enfield Shaker Museum and the purchase of the North Family/La Salette Shrine.

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