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South Union Messenger (May 1995)

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The South Union Messenger

The Newsletter of the Friends of the Shaker Museum at South Union
MAY 1995

Summer Shaker Festival Set For June 16-18

The 34th annual Summer Shaker Festival is just around the corner and promises to be one of the best yet. Besides the usual craft sales throughout the museum grounds and performances by the South Union Shaker Quartet, this year's festival will provide regional bluegrass music. Also, brief presentations will be given about South Union's rich history on topics such as architecture, the Civil War at South Union, herbal remedies, furniture tradition, and the Black Shakers at South Union. A picnic lunch based on Shaker recipes will be available as well as fried apple pies. The event is free of charge to members. Special thanks to event chairperson Sally Ann Strickler for her assistance and to Southern Deposit Bank for underwriting the festival.

"An Evening in Shakertown" Scheduled for June 3

This year's "An Evening in Shakertown" gala fund-raiser is just a few days away. With a committee of nearly one hundred people, chairperson Susan Minton, Bowling Green, Kentucky and co-chairperson Belinda Ray, Russellville, Kentucky, have been hard at work preparing for the event. "Rhapsody in Bloom" is the theme of this year's gala with the festivities once again taking place in a large tent on the west lawn. Featured during the celebrity auction will be the artwork of Laurin Notheisen and Ivan Schieferdecker, depicting a beautiful South Union basket arrangement. The very best in southern cuisine and hospitality will again be the emphasis for "An Evening in Shakertown."

Proceeds from the fund-raiser will go toward educational programming and development. Trans Financial Bank and Commonwealth Health Corporation are graciously underwriting the gala again this year. The museum would also like to thank Susan Minton, Belinda Ray, Jay Joines, Carol Dyche, Charlie Ray, and the many others participating, for giving of their time and talents to this very special event. All members of the Friends of Shakertown at South Union should have received an invitation to "An Evening in Shakertown" by the time this newsletter is printed. For additional invitations please contact the museum.

Last year's proceeds totaled in excess of \$22,000.00, assisting museum restoration and education projects. Our sincere thanks to those who volunteer, those who attend, and to Trans Financial Bank and Commonwealth Health Corporation for contributions to the single most important income producing event hosted by the museum.

Do You Have Historic Photos?

Recently Mr. Carroll Browning, South Union, Kentucky, donated five historic photographs of South Union. One pictured a carnival believed to have been at the village while the other four were "new" pictures of the 1922 auction. One photograph in particular gave the first clear view of the 1852 Wood House located in the Centre House door yard east of the dwelling. Also, Mrs. Tempie Nole, Auburn, Kentucky, gave the museum a picture taken of her with a friend in front of the steps of the Centre House in the 1920's. The museum would like to give a special thank you to Mr. Browning and Mrs. Nole for their donations.

While there were over 200 buildings at South Union ranging from chicken coups and tool sheds to Dwelling Houses and workshops, less than 30 can be positively identified from historic photographs. Incidentally there are no photographs to the museum staff's knowledge of the ca. 1834 North House and its many auxiliary structures and almost nothing survives showing the mill site. If you should happen to have or know some one who does have historic photos (pre-1950) of South Union, and would like to share them with the museum, please contact the museum office and we can make copies from your originals.



View of the 1922 auction at South Union with the 1824 Centre House and the 1852 Wood House in the background. Donation of Carroll Browning.

"The Dancers of Canaan"

Horse Cave Theater presents "The Dancers of Canaan," July 7 through September 9. A Gothic romance set in Pleasant Hill shortly before the Civil War, the story involves young Rebecca Westcott taking refuge among the Shakers from a life of tragedy, and falling in love with Peter Scroggins. Peter wishes to leave the Gospel Order with Rebecca as his bride. Their struggles over human and spiritual values are played out against a backdrop of Shaker tradition and mountain legend. The performance includes interpretative Shaker dance and authentic Shaker music to make the play a truly unique experience. For more information and ticket prices contact:

Horse Cave Theatre
P.O. Box 215
Horse Cave, Kentucky
1-800-342-2177 or (502) 786-2177

Archeological Report

During the SU Shaker Seminar archeologist Kurt Fiegel began a limited investigation of the well located in the west yard of the Centre House. Kurt found evidence that the site may have had a larger well house than once believed. Apparently unrelated to the well but nearby, the dig produced the corner of a brick foundation. Kurt will be continuing his dig on the site during the Festival and throughout the summer.

Changes in the Landscape

Thanks to a grant from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, the 1830s fencing project has been completed. Based on a map drawn by Benjamin S. Youngs and improved upon by Lorenzo Martin in 1836, the fence encompasses the Centre Family grounds with divisions for a nursery and medicinal garden, calf lot, and the Centre Family door yard. The completion of the historic fence project has opened doors for new interpretation of the grounds. The "New" Garden, found on the former site of the pavilion, will be at the location of the Shakers' Nursery and Medicinal Garden as indicated by the 1836 map. Crops such as broom corn, flax, cotton and other row crops grown historically by the Shakers will be cultivated along with medicinal herbs.

Additionally, the Carpenter grant has allowed the museum to put back original stone side walk. According to historic photographs taken at the 1922 sale, a side walk ran north to south from the Sisters' Privy to the walk perpendicular to the 1834 Smoke and Milk House and 1880 Mound Cistern. Thanks to a donation by David Hall, Auburn, Kentucky, eleven original Shaker side walk stones have been used to begin replacing the privy walk. Additional misplaced stones were taken from the museum site and correctly placed in front of the Sister's Privy. While digging a bed for these stones, another side walk stone was discovered buried underneath the gate leading to the privy.

New Exhibits Open in Museum

Spring has seen the opening of three new exhibits at the museum. On March 1st, an exhibit pertaining to the craftsmanship of South Union baskets opened. South Union is fortunate that a number of Shaker white-oak baskets representing a definite basketmaking tradition have survived. Seven baskets from the museum collection are currently on display. On March 12 the "Black Shakers in America" exhibit opened with a reception, a lecture presentation by Sharon Koomler, Director of Education, and a musical performance of Shaker music by the Cross family of Russellville, Kentucky. The exhibit focuses on the struggles and contributions of not only South Union's black members but also of those African-Americans in the other societies. The exhibit can be seen in the meeting room through the end of the museum's season. "The Long Road to Preservation: Shakertown at South Union Between 1922 and 1971" opened April 23 with a reception and a presentation by the museums studies class from Western Kentucky University. The exhibit chronicles the history of the Shaker property from its sale in 1922 to Louisville businessman O.S. Bond, through its ownership by the Catholic order of St. Mark's in 1949, and its eventual purchase by Shakertown Revisited, Inc. in 1971.

Shakers on the Mississippi

A special Shaker Seminar will be offered aboard the magnificent Mississippi Queen paddle-wheel steamboat November 27 - December 1, 1995. The seminar, moderated by Fran Kramer, includes the following guest speakers and lecture topics:

- * Tommy Hines, "Kentucky Shakers and the Southern Market"
- * June Sprigg, "The Twain Shall Meet: Eastern and Western Shakers"
- * Jean Burks, "Shaker Furniture, Regional Differences."

The Mississippi Queen will cruise round-trip from New Orleans through the nostalgic Deep South region, with stops at historic Natchez, Mississippi and Baton Rouge, Louisiana. For more information on this exciting opportunity contact:

Fran Kramer
145 Rue de Ville
Rochester, NY 14618
(716) 442-8900

or

Shaker Museum
P.O. Box 30
South Union, KY 42283
(502) 542-4167

Want List

Cassette Tape Player for Gift Shop
Wireless Microphone for Seminar Speakers
Large Projector Screen
Christmas Cards (used or unused)

Recent Acquisitions

Bed, ca. 1880, cherry, South Union

Bed, cherry, reproduction

Basket, 19th century, Eastern Shaker

Side Chair, ca. 1840, maple and ash, original seat, Ohio Shaker

Rocker, ca. 1840-1870, attributed to South Union

Document Box, 19th century, attributed to Eastern Shaker

Blanket Chest, ca. 1830, pine, attributed to Eastern Shaker

... donated by Julia Neal, Bowling Green, Kentucky

Side Chair, ca. 1840, maple and ash, replaced seat, Union Village

... purchased with acquisition endowment funds

Side Chair, ca. 1830, maple and ash, replaced seat, Ohio Shaker

... purchased with acquisition endowment funds

Hogscraper candlestick, ironstone tureen, two crocks, 19th century, non-Shaker (for exhibit rooms)

... purchased with acquisition endowment funds

Manuscript, South Union, census of the members in the community in 1875

... purchased with acquisition endowment funds

Manuscript, South Union, letter from the South Union Ministry to the Ministry at Canterbury and Enfield, March 24, 1835

... purchased with acquisition endowment funds

Eleven Side Walk Stones, South Union, these stones were purchased at the 1922 Shaker Auction by Mr. Hall's grandfather

... donated by David Hall, Auburn, Kentucky

Child's Chair, ca. 1840, maple and ash, attributed to South Union

... anonymous donation

Two Chamber Pots, 19th century, non-Shaker (for exhibit rooms)

... donated by Ray and Judy McCaskey, Palatine, Illinois

Collection of secondary library materials

... anonymous donation

Photographs of the 1922 Shaker Auction and ca. 1920 Carnival at South Union

... donated by Carroll Browning, South Union, Kentucky

Photograph of the 1824 Centre House ca. 1920's

... donated by Mrs. Tempie Nole, Auburn, Kentucky

Welcome New Members

Peggy Bradley Boaz, Morgantown, KY
Steve & Laura Burks, Morgantown, KY
Kate Dougherty, Clarkson, GA
Team Environment, Bowling Green, KY
Larry Myers & Paula Erdelyi, Prospect, KY
Mr. & Mrs. Ward Francillon, Atlanta, GA
Russell & Chandler Jefferson, Bowling Green, KY
Mitchell Kinder, McDonald, TN
Mr. & Mrs. J. Kresovich, Melvindale, MI
Mr. & Mrs. David Lee, Bowling Green, KY
Michael McCrimmon, Toronto, Canada
Richard Rhea, Paducah, KY
F.W. & Kathleen Rogers, Auburn, KY
Andrew Smith, Nashville, TN
Duane Spurlock, Louisville, KY
Robin Swanson, Franklin, KY

Thank You For Your Donation

Margaret Sterling	Donation for Educational Programming
L. Michael Smith	Donation of Computer Accounting Program
Fruit of the Loom	Donation of Day Camp Scholarships
Trent Spurlock	Donation of Day Camp Scholarship
Mr. & Mrs. John Ridley	Donation of Day Camp Scholarship
Mr. & Mrs. Grover Corum	Donation of Day Camp Scholarship
Mr. & Mrs. K.M. Grafton-Gratton	Monetary Donation
Jane Zick	Monetary Donation
Hilliard Lyons	Underwriting for the South Union Seminar
Southern Deposit Bank	Underwriting for the Summer Shaker Festival
Trans Financial Bank	Underwriting for "An Evening in Shakertown"
Commonwealth Health Corporation	Underwriting for "An Evening in Shakertown"
Dr. Benjamin Caldwell, Jr.	Donation of Appraisals for Museum Collection
Dixon Yeates	Donation of Appraisals for Museum Collection
Karl Federer	Donation for Manuscript Acquisition
Dick and Betsy Reynolds	Donation of Expenses for Producing SU Journal
Barbara Gabbard	Donation of Irises for the "New" Garden
Dean Watkins	Donation of Broom Corn and Cotton Seed for the "New" Garden
Edie Bingham	Donation for an Additional Computer Terminal
Cracker Barrel	Donation for General Support
Jay Joines and Carol Dyche	Donation in Memory of Louise Owen

**Notes From Sharon Koomler
Education Director**

We are winding up a very busy spring tour schedule. Area school children have come to learn more about the experiences of African Americans at South Union in addition to other popular programs. The highlight of the spring schedule, however, was the 2nd annual "Shaker Sheep to Shawl" during late April and early May. More than 750 children visited the museum to interact with a spinner and weaver, and to feel the wool on and off the sheep's backs! Many were also able to watch sheep shearing take place. The sheep seemed to enjoy their stay in the newly fenced pasture. There was even an unexpected birth!

The Shaker Summer Day Camp is fast approaching, and reservations are already coming in. We have some new activities planned this year to complement those from previous years. Children from kindergarten through junior high school are welcome to attend. For more information, call the museum.

The museum has been awarded a \$500.00 grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to develop a multi-disciplinary resource guide for teachers. Marge Sterling, a graduate student in folk studies at Western Kentucky University, is working with me on the development of this guide. Several area teachers have agreed to participate on this project. The final product will be a comprehensive guide to resources available at the museum including history, lesson plans, and activities. It will be available through the museum.

Thank You . . .

To volunteers Ann Boyd, Jane Robbins, Donna Riley, & Marcia Fuqua for helping in the gift shop and with educational materials.

To Lynn Reynolds and Heather Tessler, Western Kentucky University interns, for doing a much needed textile documentation project.

To Teddy and David Emmerich for allowing the museum to use their sheep for "A Shaker Sheep to Shawl."

To Elizabeth Buddle, Candise Clemmons, Andrew Lee, Julia Morgan, and Samantha Pillar, Western Kentucky University interns, for their hard work on the exhibit "The Long Road to Preservation: Shakertown at South Union Between 1922 and 1971."

To Dr. Michael Ann Williams, Department of Folk Studies, Western Kentucky University, for allowing students to volunteer time at the museum as interns each semester.

To Board Member Allison Fuqua for coordinating our volunteer program.

To Roger Dove for being the museum's official sheep shearer during "A Shaker Sheep to Shawl."

To Mike and Sam Hossom for volunteering their spinning and weaving talents during "A Shaker Sheep to Shawl."

Upcoming Events

- May 27 **SPRING HERBAL FAIR**
Herb talks in the garden, herbal remedy demonstrations, and lunch served on the porch with herbal teas and biscuits with herb butters.
- June 3 **"AN EVENING IN SHAKERTOWN"**
A gala fund-raising event to support the museum. Funded in part by Trans Financial Bank and Commonwealth Health Corporation.
- June 9 **LEXINGTON CHILDREN'S CHOIR**
Enjoy a performance of Shaker music by the 36 member Lexington Children's Choir in the meeting room of the 1824 Centre House. Begins at 7:00 p.m. Call the museum for tickets and reservations.
- June 16-18 **SUMMER SHAKER FESTIVAL**
A weekend of Shaker food, music, and craft in celebration of South Union Shaker folklife. Funded in part by Southern Deposit Bank.
- June-July **SUMMER DAY CAMP**
A week-long camp where children spend mornings at South Union, experiencing Shaker history in a way that is both fun and educational. Reservations required. Funded in part by Fruit of the Loom.
- August 25-26 **OVAL BOX/SHAKER BASKET WORKSHOP**
A workshop given by Larry and Ruth Owrey. Shaker lunch on Saturday. Fee \$70 for basket class, \$70 for box class.

A Word from the Director

The recently completed fencing project has made a visual impact on the South Union historic site. The style and scale of the new fence created quite a bit of attention initially because the change was so drastic. The new fencing system was, however, carefully researched by using journal references, maps, and historic photographs. The Centre House property is once again divided into three lots: the door yard, the medicinal garden and nursery, and the cow lot. No longer does the site portray the appearance of a park but that of a farm.

The South Union Seminar drew an enthusiastic crowd in April to enjoy presentations given by June Sprigg Tooley, Fran Kramer, Dr. Sally Ann Strickler, and Donna Parker. We appreciate these scholars agreeing to be a part of our 6th annual seminar. Everyone seemed to enjoy the weekend.

I hope each of you can attend the upcoming events, including the Spring Herbal Fair on May 27th, the Gala on June 3rd, the Lexington Children's Chorus on June 9th, and the Shaker Festival, June 16-18. It's a busy time but a fun part of our season and we want you to be a part of it.

Tommy Hines

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