

Winter 2011

## South Union Messenger (Winter 2011)

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# SOUTH UNION MESSENGER

Winter 2011 Edition  
South Union Shaker Village, Kentucky

## COMING SOON . . . THE SOUTH UNION SEMINAR

Make your reservations to attend the South Union Shaker Village's 24th annual South Union Seminar, "O the Zeal and Energy:" *Life in the Western Shaker Meeting House*. The two-day event will focus on the architecture and folk-life associated with the church buildings, or meeting houses, in the western Shaker villages. Performances by both the Pleasant Hill Singers and the South Union Shaker Quartet, a special tour of the newly-restored 1818 Meeting House foundation, an unveiling of the recently erected memorial stone at the South Union cemetery, and hearty southern meals served by the Shaker Tavern highlight the weekend. Presentations by Susan Hughes and Rich Spence will explore the rich history of the two remaining western Shaker meeting houses located at Pleasant Hill, Kentucky, and White Water, Ohio. Register to attend today, either by mail, using the enclosed form, or by calling the village at 1-800-811-8379 or 1-270-542-4167.

## VILLAGE STAFF TRIP TO PLEASANT HILL



On a cold Monday, January 24th, fourteen South Union Shaker Village staff members boarded a van for a day trip to the Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill. Several of the group had visited the site many times but this was a first trip for most. Hosted by Larrie Curry, Curator, and Susan Hughes, Manager of Museum Programs and Special Events, the South Union staff spent time in the Centre Dwelling and Meeting House, then had lunch at the winter kitchen in the West House. After lunch the group was given a tour of the museum collections storage, then paid a visit to the crafts demonstration area of the village.

The goal of the trip was to broaden the staff's understanding of the Kentucky Shakers, beyond their knowledge of South Union. It was also an opportunity for the group to learn more about hospitality at another historic site. Thanks for an entertaining and informative day, Pleasant Hill staff!

## RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Side Chair, classic South Union Type A, ca. 1840, found in Owensboro area, maple with ash stretchers, traces of yellow ochre paint

.....Purchased with acquisition endowment funds

Side Chair, classic South Union Type B, ca. 1830, purchased at 1922 Shaker auction by a Bowling Green family, room number "12," maple with ash stretchers, traces of ochre and orange paint

.....Purchased with acquisition endowment funds

Bureau, South Union, ca. 1840, purchased at 1922 Shaker auction by a Bowling Green family, walnut and poplar, four-drawer, refinished

.....Purchased with acquisition endowment funds

Bed, classic South Union Empire style, ca. 1850, purchased at 1922 Shaker auction by a Bowling Green family, original dark walnut finish

.....Purchased with acquisition endowment funds

"Summary View of the Millennial Church," 1848 edition, inscribed "Presented by Josephine Thrall, South Union, Ky." Thrall was one of the last nine South Union Shakers, leaving when the village closed in 1922.

.....Purchased with acquisition endowment funds

Oval Carriers (2), cherry, with handles and lids, attributed to eastern Shaker villages, one lined with pink silk and the other with a blue silk-lined lid

.....Donated by Donna Riley, Russellville, Kentucky

Photographs of South Union (4), ca. 1923, from an album owned by William Irvin and Ruth Wells Hardison, who lived at South Union and worked for Oscar Bond after the Shakers left in 1922.

.....Donated by Mark Hardison, Woodburn, Kentucky, in memory of his grandparents, William Irvin and Minnie Ruth Wells Hardison

## EXHIBITS OPENING AT SOUTH UNION IN 2011

### "The Last Days of South Union"

Artifacts, Historic Photos, and Original Documents Detail the  
Sale, Auction and Destruction of South Union Between 1921 and 1930

OPENING IN APRIL

### "Gospel Ingenuity: Textile Production at South Union"

A Collection of Original Textiles Produced by the South Union Shakers  
from the 1830s through the Early 20th Century

OPENING IN AUGUST

## A REMARKABLE FIND!

A photograph documenting the 1923 destruction of the 1847 East House was recently discovered in a family home by Mark Hardison, Woodburn, Kentucky. Mark, who is a former member of South Union's Board of Directors, graciously contributed several pages from a ca. 1923 album once owned by his grandparents, William Irvin and Minnie Ruth Wells Hardison. The Hardisons came to work for Oscar Bond soon after he took possession of the former Shaker village of South Union in 1922. In the album were several photo-



graphs of the Centre House, but the picture that proved to be the most valuable was one of the East House in the midst of being torn down. A tornado struck the building on March 11, 1923, not only heavily damaging the structure but ripping away most of its roof. Soon after, Oscar Bond directed his hired men to take the building down. Finished in 1847, the East House was South Union's largest communal dwelling. Several photographs of the building's exterior have been published, but images that provided information about the interior had never surfaced, until now. Photographed looking north, workers have obviously begun to tear away the building's "ell" first. From this vantage point the image reveals a large arch on the second floor and a smaller arch on the third, an arrangement identical to the interior of the Centre House. These arches opened into cross halls with doors on the second floor and windows on the third that opened east and west for light, access and ventilation. Evidence of baseboard, chair rail and peg rail are visible in the photo, as is the plaster that was applied directly to the brick walls. It is likely that the meeting room was on the second floor and that retiring rooms occupied space on the third, similar to what is found in the Centre House. The door on the fourth floor undoubtedly led into the East House attic. Unlike the Centre House, the front section of the fourth floor housed an additional level of retiring rooms, not low-ceilinged garret rooms.

The South Union Shaker Village is most grateful to Mark Hardison, who donated these photographs in memory of his grandparents, William Irvin Hardison ( 1895-1970) and Minnie Ruth Wells Hardison (1896-1987).

# FUND-RAISING QUILT GIVEN TO SOUTH UNION

One of our most dedicated and supportive members, Dorothy Jones, has recently donated a beautiful South Union-themed quilt for the purposes of fund-raising. The brightly colored quilt, which features designs from a number of T-shirts, postcards, photographs and festival programs from the last fifty years, is a one-of-kind work for someone who truly loves and admires South Union.

Tickets are on sale in the gift shop for \$5 each and will be available through the end of 2011. Make sure and buy your ticket and support the preservation efforts at the South Union Shaker Village.



## WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Gene Harris, Franklin, Kentucky

Skip Cleavinger, Bowling Green, Kentucky

Dr. James Spears, Franklin, Kentucky

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION

Henry & Mary Brockman - \$300.00 for general support

George and Darlene Kohrman - \$500.00 for acquisitions

Eddie Bingham - \$10,000.00 for general support

Atticus Trust - \$15,000.00 for general support

Eddie Bingham - \$1,000.00 for the Bus Fund

Ann Early Sutherland - \$100.00 in honor of Eddie Bingham and Tommy Hines

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Alecia Allen, Bowling Green, Kentucky

Bob and Linda Pulsinelli, Bowling Green, Kentucky

Larry, Kate and Molly Watkins, Franklin, Tennessee

Mary Montoya, Bowling Green, Kentucky

## CEMETERY STONE FUND DRIVE A SUCCESS!

Our goal of \$10,000.00 has been met and the South Union cemetery stone is in the process of being created. The unveiling is planned on Saturday, April 16, at 2:30 p.m. as part of our annual South Union Seminar. The culmination of a two-year project to identify, partially excavate, and fence the Shaker cemetery, the stone will read "SHAKERS," and will post the first and last burial dates at South Union, 1810-1921. The public is invited to attend the ceremony, even if they have not made reservations to attend the Seminar. We ask that people gather at the Centre House at 2:00 p.m.

The following have generously donated funds to make the cemetery stone a possibility. We are indebted to each person who has given, especially to the Central Trust who not only funded half the cost of the stone, but also contributed most of the money needed to construct the fence around the South Union cemetery. Special thanks to Friends members Elaine Disch and Curt DeBaun who co-chaired the fund drive.

### Contributions to \$499.00

Jackson and Betty Kesler *in memory of Lillie Mae Hayes*  
Ernest and Elaine Ezell *in memory of Evelyn Ezell*  
David and Jacqueline Bevil *in memory of Evelyn Ezell*  
Employees of the Auburn Post Office *in memory of Evelyn Ezell*  
Kevin Gorman *in memory of Evelyn Ezell*  
Paul and Marcia Heintschel *in memory of Evelyn Ezell*  
Joyce Chesnut  
Anonymous  
Dorothy Marshall  
Carol Rochford  
Edie Bingham  
Steve Cooper  
Jeff and Marion Jackson Clark  
Robert Campbell

### Contributions from \$500.00 to \$1,000.00

Dale Covington  
Margy Thomas  
Elaine Disch  
Curt DeBaun  
Ernest and Elaine Ezell  
Anonymous

### \$5,000 Contribution

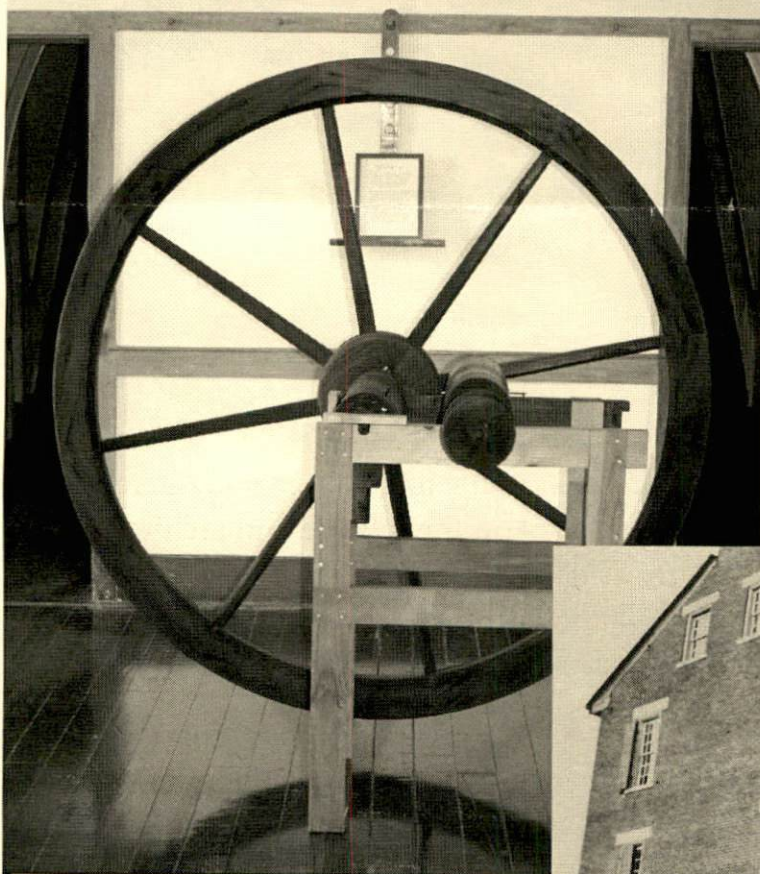
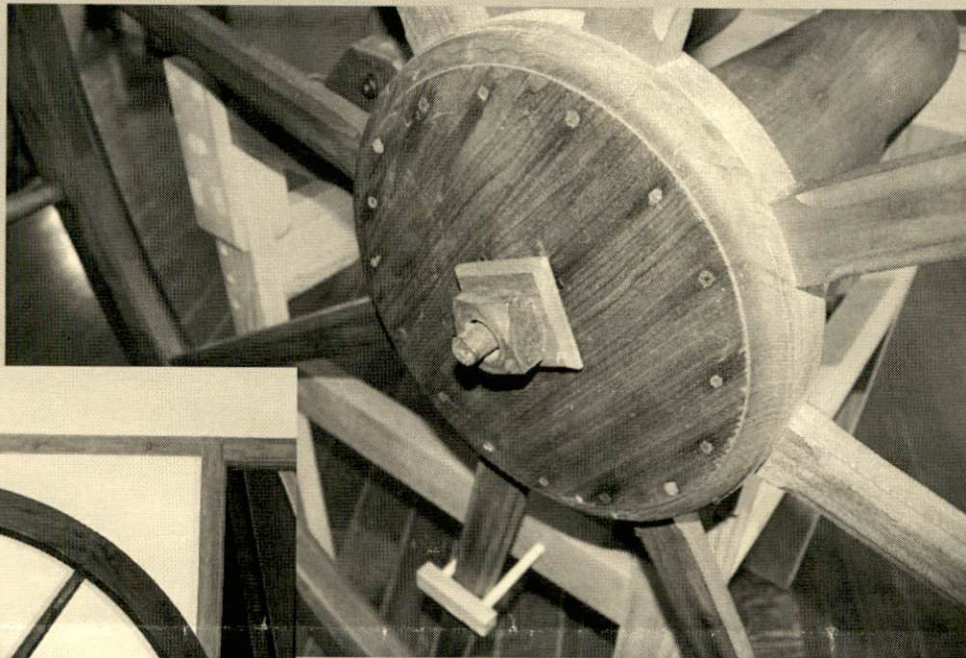
Central Trust

Recent photograph of the cemetery stone at Sabbathday Lake, Maine, after which the South Union cemetery stone is being patterned.  
Photographed by Dr. Kim McBride,  
Co-Director, Kentucky Archaeological  
Survey, University of Kentucky.

# 'THANK YOU' KENTUCKY MUSEUM

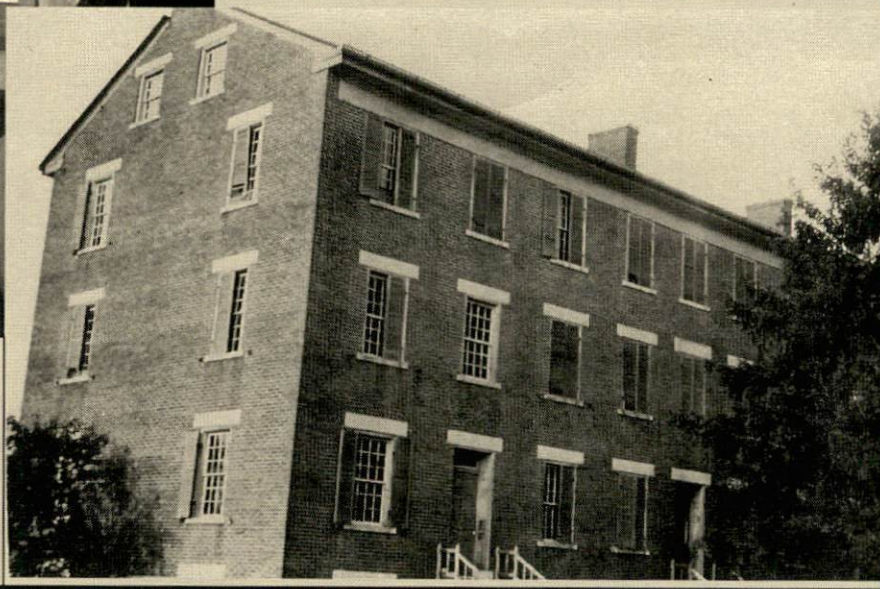
The Kentucky Museum and Library, located on the campus of Western Kentucky University, recently returned a piece of South Union history. Placed on long-term loan is this large wooden and pulley system that was removed from the 1854 Wash House in 1975 during renovation by St. Maur's Priory. The Wash House, which is owned by the Fathers of Mercy, was constructed at a time of great prosperity at South Union. The five-level brick building was the largest workshop constructed in the village, housing work space for the sisters of the Centre Family.

Large shop rooms inside were used for ironing, sewing and mending, and laundry. The wheel was probably part of an intricate pulley system that moved clothing



through the building. South Union's Wash House boasted modern laundry equipment, including gasoline-powered dryers by the early 20th century. The Wash House also housed retiring space for the sisters, an infirmary, and, during the 1870s, a music room complete with pianoforte.

The 1854 Wash House (right) in a ca. 1920 photograph. The building had three large workshops on three levels, plus a basement and an attic where clothes were hung to dry in the winter.



REGISTRATION for the  
**SOUTH UNION SEMINAR**

**“O, the Zeal and Energy:”  
Life in the Western Shaker Meeting House  
April 15-16, 2011**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Special Needs (vegetarian meals, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$80 per member \_\_\_\_\_ \$90 per non-member

\_\_\_\_\_ Check Enclosed

\_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp.

Register to participate in South Union's annual seminar, bringing together people interested in in-depth study of Shaker history. This year's event focuses on the folklife and architecture associated with the western Shaker meeting house. Enjoy special tours, an exhibit opening, presentations by Susan Hughes of Pleasant Hill and Rich Spence of White Water, performances by the Pleasant Hill Singers and the South Union Shaker Quartet. Meals are provided by the Shaker Tavern, including Friday evening dinner, continental breakfast and lunch on Saturday. The event begins on Friday evening at 6:00 pm and concludes Saturday at 3:00 pm.

A detailed schedule of events and confirmation will be mailed to you when you register.

Registration deadline is Friday, April 8. Please mail registration to:

South Union Shaker Village

P. O. Box 177

Auburn, Kentucky 42206

For more information call: 1-800-811-8379 or 1-270-542-4167

**This event is underwritten by Hilliard Lyons and Michael & Shannon Vitale**



# SOUTH UNION SHAKER VILLAGE

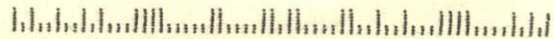
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Bowling Green, KY 42103

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### L&N RAILROAD LUNCHEON

**Saturday, March 5**

Enjoy a hearty Victorian noon meal, typical of what would have been served at South Union's famous railroad hotel, the Shaker Tavern. Reservations are required: \$22 members, \$25 non-members.

### SOUTH UNION SEMINAR

**Friday, April 15, and Saturday, April 16**

Explore the architecture and the folk life associated with the western Shaker meeting house, during a weekend of learning, entertainment, great food and great friends. Event begins on Friday evening with dinner at the Shaker Tavern, and convenes at the Centre House on Saturday from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm.

Reservations are required: \$80 members, \$90 for non-members. Meals, including Friday night dinner, Saturday breakfast and lunch, are provided by the Shaker Tavern, and are included in the price.

### SPRING ANTIQUE & GARDEN MARKET

**Saturday, May 21**

Shop booths of antiques, plants and flowers, and garden art in and around the 1875 Grain Barn and enjoy informative presentations throughout the day. Lunch will be served on site. Admission is \$5 per person and the market is open from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm.

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**For information or reservations for events call:**

1-800-811-8379 or 542-4167

**The South Union Seminar is underwritten by  
Hilliard Lyons and Michael & Shannon Vitale**

**Or visit:**

shakermuseum.com

The South Union Shaker Village is located 10 miles west of Bowling Green or 3 miles east of Auburn, just off US 68-80, in historic Logan County