

Spring 2007

South Union Messenger (Spring 2007)

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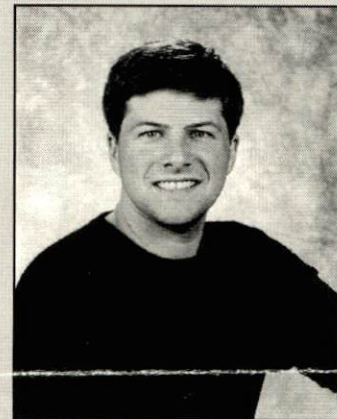
SOUTH UNION MESSENGER

S H A K E R M U S E U M A T S O U T H U N I O N

SOUTH UNION SEMINAR – IN LOVE AND UNION: CELEBRATING 200 YEARS OF SHAKER MUSIC AT SOUTH UNION

Shaker music has stirred souls and feet at South Union for 200 years. so join us for a tribute to the village's unique musical contribution at this year's South Union Seminar. On April 20-21, scholars and history enthusiasts will gather for a weekend that includes a concert by the South Union Quartet, mouth-watering Southern cooking at the Shaker Tavern Bed & Breakfast, and talks given by authorities in the field.

Christian Goodwillie, Curator of Collections at Hancock Shaker Village, Massachusetts, will discuss Elder Harvey Eads' fascinating musical trip to the northeast Shaker villages prior to the Civil War. Matthew Cook, Western Kentucky University graduate student in the Department of Folk Studies and Anthropology, will bring us up to date on "Restoration at South Union: The 1835 Dairy and the 1875 Grain Barn." Long-time Shaker researcher Rose Mary Lawson, from Sevierville, Tennessee, will examine how Shaker lyrics written in Kentucky and Ohio reflected their daily experience. The preservation of Shaker music, with a particular emphasis on the long-lived summer pageant presented by the museum (1960-1989), will be discussed by museum director, Tommy Hines. To make a reservation please call the museum at 1-800-811-8379.



Christian Goodwillie, Curator of Collections, Hancock Shaker Village, Massachusetts

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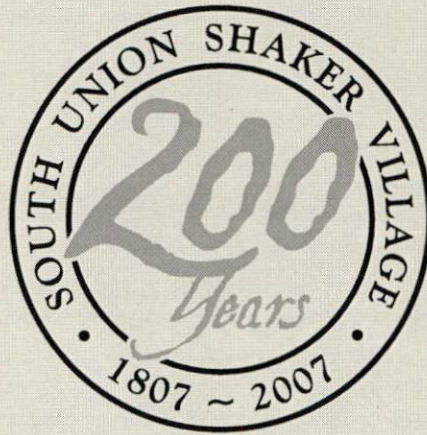
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HANCOCK SHAKER VILLAGE BRINGS "SHAKER SEMINAR 2007" TO KENTUCKY

Hancock Shaker Village will be bringing **Shaker Seminar 2007** to the bluegrass of Kentucky this summer. From July 25-28, seminar participants will enjoy excellent lectures, tour historic sites, and partake of BBQ and bourbon (for those who indulge). The seminar will be jointly hosted by South Union and Pleasant Hill for four days of talks and tours. A roster of speakers and events is available on the Hancock Shaker Village website, www.hancockshakervillage.org.

Highlights of this year's Seminar will be talks from Dr. Paul Pearson, noted Thomas Merton scholar and Director of the Thomas Merton Center, as well as a lecture from Dr. Diane Sasson. This year's Seminar will be the first documented by published proceedings highlighting selected papers.

For more information about the **Shaker Seminar 2007**, please contact **Hancock Shaker Village** at 800-817-1137. For registration questions contact Laura Marks at extension 213. For program questions, contact Christian Goodwillie, extension 244.



CELEBRATING THE SOUTH UNION SHAKER VILLAGE BICENTENNIAL IN 2007

Around the year 1800 the Great Kentucky Revival, or the Second Great Awakening began. Spiritual manifestations took place among the thousands of participants who attended camp meetings on the Kentucky frontier. The revivals would eventually increase the presence of religion in Kentucky and the surrounding states and impact the region for years to come.

On New Year's morning of 1805 three Shaker missionaries left the Shaker community at New Lebanon, New York to spread the gospel into "the west," hoping to take advantage of the increasing religious activity in Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana. On Saturday October 17, 1807 the Shaker missionaries arrived in Logan County, Kentucky at the home of John Rankin. Rankin became one of their first converts and an eventual leader in the faith.

The Shakers called their new village Gasper because of its proximity to the Clear Fork of the Gasper River. It became the Shakers' most southern outpost and was therefore renamed South Union in 1813. Considered a holy place, the site was apparently anointed several years before it was established as a Shaker community. Isaac Newton Youngs on a visit to South Union in 1834, relates in a letter back to his home society in New Lebanon that "passing on from the dam we went up to the head of the pond and there was the wonderful Jasper spring which issues out among a rough group of rocks . . . Near this place just on the banks it was that one George Walls, just before the opening of the gospel [circa 1803], in presence of a large assembly took up a clear stone and referring to the Spring said 'This shall no longer be called Gasper - but Jasper for here the Lord shall build the new Jerusalem.'"

When South Union was given its "spiritual name" several years later, Jasper Valley was the choice. The anointing had not been forgotten. Today the name Jasper Valley has been long forgotten by most and the Shakers themselves have been gone from South Union for eighty-five years, but the rich history of the village and its inhabitants is commemorated today by the work going on at the Shaker Museum at South Union.

Matthew Cook, Graduate Assistant

Western Kentucky University
Department of Folk Studies & Anthropology

SOUTH UNION ACQUISITIONS

Manuscript, "Pedigree of Balco," detailing the bloodline of one of South Union's prized bulls, in the form of a miniature 19th century deed. "Calv'd. July 19, 1867."

- Purchased with acquisition endowment funds

Plat Map, "Bond Farm," ca. 1937, pencil drawn map of the former Shaker village of South Union divided into tracts purchased by Oscar Bond from 1922 through 1937. Signed H. S. F.

- Donated by Don and Sue Brooks, South Union, Kentucky

Side Chair, South Union, maple and ash, ca. 1830, refinished with replacement seat, finial uncommon but found on two other chairs in South Union's collection and one in Pleasant Hill's.

- Purchased with acquisition endowment funds

Spinning Wheel, or "great wheel" of North Carolina origin, belonged to the donor's grandmother, Bettie Daniel (1873-1939) and made by Daniel's father or grandfather. Non-Shaker, for exhibit purposes as the museum has no examples of a South Union great wheel.

- Donated by Lorna Thigpen, North Carolina

Oval Box, five-fingers, chrome yellow paint, found in southern Kentucky, attributed to South Union. It is uncertain if the South Union Shakers made oval boxes but nearly a dozen with South Union provenance have surfaced over the past decade.

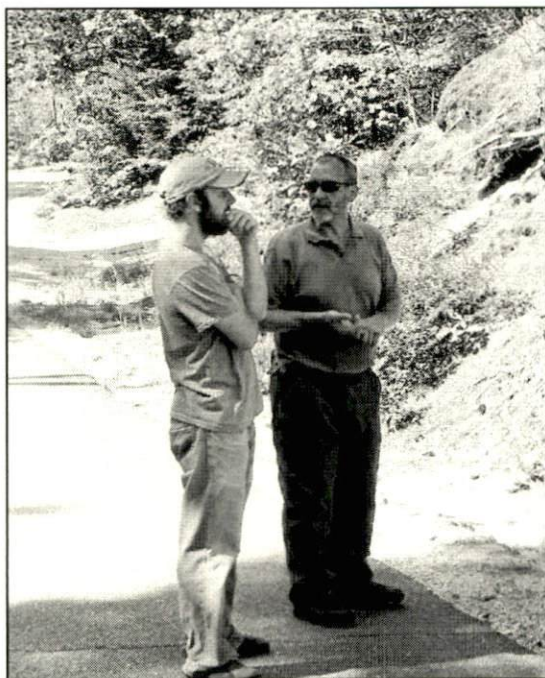
- Purchased with acquisition endowment funds

Reproduction Shaker Towels, woven Mary Elva Erf and students, beautifully crafted reproductions of examples from a variety of Shaker collections, 16 pieces.

- Donated by Mary Elva Erf, Glastonbury, CT

Newspaper, "Paulson's American Daily Advertiser," April 17, 1832, Philadelphia, including a short article, "Domestic Silk," about the silk industry at South Union (see photo below right). Article is probably an advertisement purchased by the Shakers. Paper also includes an advertisement for a full line of Shaker products being sold at Neil's Panacea in Philadelphia.

- Purchased with acquisition endowment funds



WKU Folk Studies intern, Matthew Cook (left), visiting with Brother Arnold Hadd at Sabbath Day Lake, Maine in 2006. (Please see article on previous page.)

DOMESTIC SILKS.—A friend at South Union, a Shaker village in Logan county, (Ky.) has sent us a skein of sewing and a patch of silk cloth, cut from a web of fifty odd yards—samples of articles manufactured at that village, from cocoons raised there chiefly last summer. The sewing silk is of a bright brown, fine, strong, smooth and even; and decidedly superior to what is commonly imported. The other sample is a white twilled fabric, very pretty for some purposes, though it wants the firmness and gloss of European manufactures. Viewed as one of the first experiments in that line, it is certainly a successful one. This country must be well adapted to the production of silk. The demand for sewing silk, and some other articles, may very soon, with a little care and attention, be supplied without going abroad for them. Raw silk may become an important article of export. And the people who have given the demonstration of the fact now before us, are entitled to credit for their industry and enterprise. They have shown, at the same time, that, whatever may be the errors of their religious observances, they have qualities which should not only exempt them from persecution, but entitle them to the kind consideration of the rest of the community.

—*Kent. Com.*

SAVE THE DATE!

South Union Seminar

In Love & Union: Celebrating 200 Years of Shaker Music at South Union
April 20—21 (Fri. 6 pm— Sat. 3 pm)
1824 Centre House

Hancock Shaker Village's Shaker Seminar 2007—July 25th-28th

South Union and Pleasant Hill
For Reservations please contact Hancock Shaker Village: 1-413-443-0188 x 213 or www.hancockshakervillage.org

Hoedown at Shakertown

September 1 (7:30 pm)
South Union
Bowling Green Chamber Orchestra with Grammy winner Curtis Burch & Friends
For Tickets please contact Bowling Green Chamber Orchestra at www.BGCO.com or 270-846-BGCO (2426).

Shaker Farm Day

October 6 (10 am—4 pm)
South Union

A Shaker Breakfast

November 3 & 10 (8:30 & 10:30)
1869 Shaker Tavern

Christmas at Shakertown Preview Party

November 30 (7—9 pm)
1824 Centre House

Christmas at Shakertown Holiday Market

December 1 (9 am— 4 pm)
1824 Centre House

Drawing Shaker Architectural Features with Charles Brindley

December 8 (9 am—5 pm)
1824 Centre House

WANT TO LEARN MORE? PLEASE CONTACT US!

(270) 542-4167 • (800) 811-8379

shakmus@logantele.com • www.shakermuseum.com

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

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SPECIAL THANKS

Contributions

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In Honor of Dale Spencer

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Renewals

(July 2006—January 2007)

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Christine Ammeian

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Sponsorships

Just Piddlin' Farm for Shaker Farm Day 2006

First Southern National Bank for Shaker Farm Day 2006

Logan Telephone Cooperative for Shaker Farm Day and Christmas at Shakertown

Smith & Scarbrough for Christmas at Shakertown

Starbucks for Christmas at Shakertown

Kentucky Historical Society for Shaker Farm Day 2007

*Thank you for
your generous
support!*

1875 GRAIN BARN BEING RESTORED

South Union's only surviving 19th century frame structure is finally being restored, thanks to Federal TEA-21 funds in the amount of \$400,000.00. The allotment required an additional \$100,000.00 in private contributions, much of which was contributed by the Helm Foundation of Upper Montclair, New Jersey. Work began on the barn in late 2006 and is well underway with significant progress at this writing.

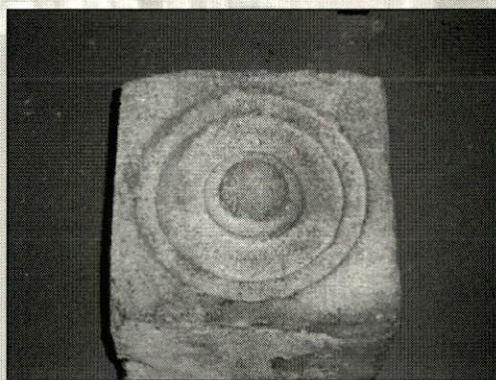
Constructed in 1875 by contractors Baine and McCarta, with additional work done by the Shakers, the building took four months to complete and cost nearly \$2,500.00. The structure originally had a slate roof and shuttered window openings, and was painted with "white lead." The barn was principally used for the storage and threshing of grain.

In the 1930s, new owner Oscar Bond converted the building into a mule barn, eventually doubling its size with an addition on the west end and shed additions on both the north and south sides. The old structure was protected from the external elements but suffered a great amount of deterioration due to its use being changed from grain storage to livestock inhabitation. By the late 1990s it became critical that restoration begin in order to save the building.

The restoration process has been a fascinating adventure into the village's agricultural history. The building is being slowly stripped of its 1930s additions and first-floor structural elements, once removed to allow more open space for livestock, are being replaced. Weatherboarding is being milled to match the original, shutters are being made to replicate those few that survived, and flooring removed from the first level many years ago will soon be put back in place.

The removal of the 1930s portions of the barn has been the source of useful information about South Union's destruction by Oscar Bond. Great stone gate posts were broken up to make repairs to the barn's original piers. Thick poplar floor joists from one of South Union's buildings were used by Bond to make a sturdy floor for the barn's center aisle. Original pickets from the Shaker fences were nailed up to close gaps in the barn's interior walls. Limestone features that had once been a part of the 1818 Meeting House, including decorative chimney caps and a parapet wall "rosette," were found supporting portions of the building.

There are still many unanswered questions, including the discovery of what was thought to be a brick foundation under the middle of the barn. Research now leads us to believe that the foundation was a brick pit to house wagon scales. Matthew Cook, WKU Folk Studies graduate assistant, is the principle researcher for the project, documenting each piece of information produced by the restoration. Eugene Hall, who has done exemplary work at South Union before, is the restoration contractor. Mr. Hall is not only passionate about the project but he uses sound judgment and many years of experience to accomplish some of the best restoration we have seen at South Union.



Meeting House "rosette"

Those who attend this year's South Union Seminar, April 20-21, will be the first to tour the restoration.

**Tommy Hines, Director
Shaker Museum at South Union**

SOUTH UNION'S HISTORIC LANDSCAPE COMES TO LIFE

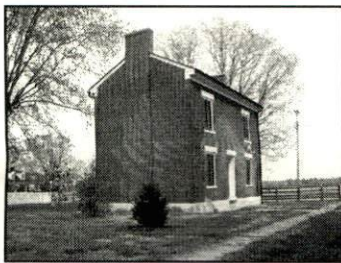


Sugar Maples line Old Highway 68, circa 1922.

The Shaker Museum at South Union has recently been the recipient of a most wonderful and generous gift from long-time supporter, Mrs. W.L. Lyons Brown. One of the nation's foremost conservationists and proponents of landscape preservation and restoration, Mrs. Brown funded the planting of forty-seven historically accurate trees at the South Union site. Thanks to the meticulous manuscript records kept by the Shakers, coupled with evidence of trees from archaeological research and historic photographs, each tree planted is well-documented.

The Shaker Museum interprets its building exteriors and landscape to 1875, the date when the last of our nine surviving buildings was built. By 1875 amateur horticulturalist Elder Harvey Eads was in the process of planting a great number of trees around the village. Most of the trees planted at South Union prior to the Civil War had been fruit trees for the community's orchards. But Eads introduced all sorts of non-native varieties, many of which were placed in the yards simply for ornamental purposes. The yard surrounding the Ministry Shop received the most attention and probably looked more like a nursery than a lawn by the 1890s.

The trees that were recently planted include the following:



Norway Spruce, *Picea abies*, planted at the southwest corner of the 1846 Ministry Shop. The original tree on this spot was planted by Harvey Eads in April of 1867 and is still visible in photographs of the building made in 1922.

Magnolia, *Magnolia grandiflora*, planted at the southwest corner of the 1818 Meeting House foundation. The original tree was planted by Harvey Eads in the mid-1870s and is visible in an 1885 photograph. Eads had a great affection for magnolias and acquired the first one for South Union while on a trip to Memphis in 1864.

Eastern Red Cedar, *Juniperus virginiana*, planted near the foundations of the Sisters' Privy and the Meeting House Privy. These were planted originally for privacy, probably just prior to the Civil War. Not only were these six trees documented through manuscript records but by archaeological data as well.

White Pine, *Pinus strobus*, planted in the east door yard of the former 1841 Trustees Office. The original tree stood just beyond the picket fence that fronted the highway through the village and can be documented through a number of early 20th century photographs.

Sugar Maple, *Acer saccharum*, planted between the Wash House and the Centre House. While only one tree was planted, a row of sugar maples once stood parallel to the west side of the Centre House. Soldiers ate under these trees during the Civil War and the aging trees are also visible in photographs of the 1922 village auction. Thirty-seven sugar maples were planted at fifty foot intervals along old Hwy. 68, replacing trees that the Shakers had planted in 1844. Originally planted to shade the long walk from the Centre Family to the East Family, all but one of the old trees was heavily damaged during a 1923 tornado. That original tree now stands in a row of new trees that spans a third of a mile.



We are indebted to Mrs. W. L. Lyons Brown for funding this important restoration project and dedicate the new trees in her honor as a lasting tribute.



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FROM THE SOUTH UNION JOURNALS:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>20 April 1865 - <u>Pasture</u> - Cows put on the Clover pastures today.</p> <p><u>Sheep Shearing</u> - Commenced to day by young brethren & boys.</p> <p>21 April 1865 - <u>Finished</u> at Noon to day - 548 head in all.</p> <p>20 May 1865 - <u>Appalling Storm & Freshet - Extraordinary!!!</u>
When last year we received intelligence of a great flood at Groveland NY it was stated that 13 inches of water fell on one day. I thought the person making the statement had water-on-the-brain but the rain of last night & this morning has worked a complete conviction of the truth of their story ... we may conclude that 15 inches of water fell [here] in 8 hours!!!! ... The amount of damage is difficult to ascertain ... Our pecuniary loss is estimated at \$3,000!!</p> <p>21 April 1866 - <u>Five Bushels</u> [of] strawberries gathered this morning to make preserves - they fill about 80 jars of 1 qt.</p> | <p>26 April 1866 - <u>Sisters</u> - rather pressed with business - too many irons in the fire - Silkworm raising - preserve making - starch making - bonnet making - hat making.</p> <p><u>Preserves</u> - 300 jars made this week.</p> <p>4 June 1875 - <u>Building</u> The contractors Baine & McCarta began work at the New Barn to day.</p> <p>28 July 1875 - <u>Building</u> - Slaters began to put the slate roof on the New Barn.</p> <p>4 August 1875 - <u>Building</u> - The slaters finished putting the slate roof on the new barn at Centre Family.</p> <p>12 October 1875 - <u>Building</u> - The New Grain Barn about completed - contractor paid off - \$830.00 The whole cost of structure about \$2,500.00.</p> |
|---|--|

**Read more! Shaker
Journals are available
in the museum shop.**