

Summer 2010

South Union Messenger (Summer 2010)

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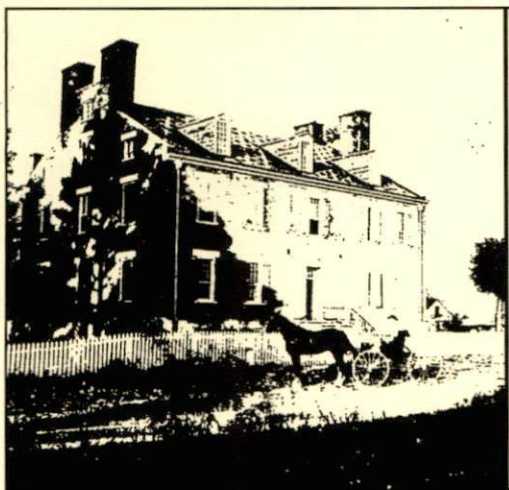


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SOUTH UNION MESSENGER

Summer 2010 Edition
Shaker Museum South Union, Kentucky

'MUSIC IN THE BARN!'

It may be hot now, but imagine how nice it will be to feel the cool fall breezes wafting through the 1875 Grain Barn, while listening to live music and enjoying afternoon dessert! Make your reservations now for 'Music in the Barn,' scheduled for Saturday, September 25, from 2:00 pm until 5:00 pm. Music will be provided by the JMS Jazz Quartet from Western Kentucky University and the Skip Cleavinger Band. Kick back in a relaxed family atmosphere and partake in some traditional Southern delicacies, ranging from fried peach pies to fresh apple cake, wooden barrels filled with peanuts and apple cider slushes for the kids. We will also unveil a new home-made ice cream flavor, made expressively by Chaney's Dairy Barn with Shakertown in mind.



The 1875 Grain Barn's ground level space will set stage for family fun at this fall's "Music in the Barn!" Each level of the barn represents over 3,000 square feet of space.

Reservations are available by calling the Shaker Museum (1-800-811-8379) or by emailing: shakmus@logantele.com. Tickets are \$15 per person or \$25 per couple, with reservations. Children ages 6-12 will be admitted for \$5, and children under age 6 are free. Walk-ins will be welcome if space is available. Don't miss the fun in September! Mark your calendars and join us for a great afternoon in one of Kentucky's finest 19th century barns.

We gratefully acknowledge that 'Music in the Barn' is sponsored by BB&T and Col. & Mrs. Robert E. Spiller. The Shaker Museum wishes to thank them for their loyal support.

Music in the Barn

... at the South Union Shaker Village

Saturday, September 25 2:00 until 5:00 pm

Call for reservations: 1-800-811-8379

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Stone Table, ca. 1850, used for outdoor kitchen preparation like washing vegetables, canning and preserving. This example was discovered in nearby Bowling Green with possible connections to South Union. The South Union Shakers used such tables, as did the Shakers at Pleasant Hill.

.....Purchased with Acquisition Endowment Funds

Side Chair, ca. 1850, maple with ash stretchers, attributed to South Union.

.....Donated by David P. Taylor

Rocking Chair, ca. 1870, maple with ash stretchers, belonged to Sister Alice Bass, one of the last nine Shakers at South Union.

.....Donated by Ken Hatcher

Report of the Commissioner of Patents for the Year 1850, published in Washington, 1851, including a letter from South Union Trustee Urban Johns regarding the community's sheep production.

.....Donated by Christian Goodwillie

Stone Walk, ca. 1870, twelve pieces of limestone walk attributed to South Union. Purchased in nearby Auburn, these stones will be used to reconstruct the walk that originally led from the Centre House to the 1849 Sisters' Privy.

.....Purchased with Acquisition Endowment Funds

1867 SOUTH UNION BLANKET REPRODUCED

After the difficult days of the Civil War, the South Union Shakers fought valiantly to recoup their significant losses and to become viable once again in the commercial market. One of the improvements they made was the installation of a water powered "modern factory" for the woolen industry. The Shakers had maintained a herd of sheep since the early days of the community and had always purchased the latest equipment for the production of wool cloth. By 1865, new technology was available and the Shakers invested in a 240-spindle spinning jack, modern carding machines and looms, a turbine cast iron water wheel, and a steam engine for power. Operation began in the fall of 1866.

On September 2, 1868, the Shakers awoke to "a brilliant light," and it was soon discovered that the woolen and grist mills were in flames. The blame went to racist incendiaries who had previously set fire to several of South Union's barns. The loss was estimated at \$60,000.00, and the fire signified the end of Shakers' technological growth at South Union.

Between late 1866 and September 1868, the new machinery produced a number of woolen blankets for use in the community and for sale as well. Two of those blankets are in the museum collection today, one of which is cross-stitched with a room number "1" and the numbers "67," which probably denotes the date of production. The blankets are un-dyed wool, with indigo and cochineal red stripes on the border.

Reproductions of these blankets are now available, the first reproduction of a South Union textile that the museum has made available. Orders can be made by calling 270-542-4167 or 1-800-811-8379.

MEMORIALIZING THE SHAKERS

The South Union Cemetery, hidden for more than 85 years by modern barns and cultivated fields, has finally been identified by archaeologists from the University of Kentucky. In a project funded by the James Graham Brown Foundation, the cemetery is now protected by a four-plank wooden fence with double picket gates. The six-acre plot was much larger than originally anticipated by researchers. Because of the size of the cemetery, a substantial grave marker or memorial stone is necessary for the center of the acreage. While we cannot identify individual graves, the Shakers did keep a list of 450 or more people buried in the cemetery.

Two members of our museum's Friends organization, Elaine Disch of Evanston, Illinois, and Curt DeBaun of Terre Haute, Indiana, have undertaken the task of raising funds to purchase a suitable marker. A survey of the single markers at other Shaker village sites has been made and we hope to replicate, as nearly as possible, the stone at Sabbathday Lake, Maine. The only inscription on the monument will be the word "SHAKERS," and the dates of the first and last burials.

As a member of our Friends, you will soon receive a letter asking for help. The total cost for the stone grave marker will be \$18,000.00. To date, we have already received \$2,000.00 toward our goal. We sincerely hope that you will want to help with this worthwhile project.



The South Union Cemetery

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

Elaine Disch—\$1,000.00 toward cemetery marker project
Margy and Preston Thomas—\$1,000.00 for general support
Stuart Family Foundation—\$2,000.00 for general support
BB&T—\$2,500.00 for event sponsorship
Meredith Johnson—Computer System for Office

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Lauren Reshae Jennings, Bowling Green, Kentucky
Myles Oliverio, Bowling Green, Kentucky

ANTIQUE AND GARDEN MARKET A SUCCESS

Beautiful weather, fine antiques, creative garden ornaments, educational presentations, and good food. Who could ask for a better day? The Shaker Museum's first *Shakertown Antique and Garden Market* was held on May 22 and received enthusiastically. The 1875 Grain Barn and its environs provided the perfect venue for the Market, which is slated to become an annual event. Antique vendors filled the first level of the barn with a variety of first rate regional furniture and smalls while garden vendors occupied tents in the yard. Food was provided by Chaney's Dairy Barn, Countryside Bake Shop, and the Brickyard Café.

One of the most popular aspects of the day was a series of presentations given by local experts on garden topics. This year's presenters included:

Eslie Pelly of the Garden Patch on Main—*How to Grow Herbs*

Gerry Sawyer of the Wild Bird and Nature Store—*Cooking With Herbs*

Tom Price, Floral Designer at Deemer's Florist—*Floral Arrangements with Herbs and Fresh Flowers*

Tim Minor, Faux Finish Artist and Decorator—*Outdoor Decorative Pots*

Lee Blythe, Federal Grove Bed and Breakfast—*The Shaker Seed Industry*



Special thanks to event chair and Board member, Geri Smith, for job a well done. We also wish to thank the volunteers and staff who worked diligently to make the *Shakertown Antique and Garden Market* a success. Next year's event is scheduled for Saturday, May 21, from 9:00 until 3:00 pm. Mark your calendars!

Presenter Eslie Pelly of Smith's Grove, Kentucky, demonstrates the proper way to grow herbs to an attentive audience as part of the day's events.

Antique dealers filled the ground level of the barn and garden vendors sold their wares outside.



LO AND BEHOLD!

Historic photographs of South Union are rare. The earliest and finest images date from around 1885 and were taken by an anonymous professional photographer. The museum collection also owns several portraits of South Union members, taken in various studios in Bowling Green, Kentucky during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. There are also a handful of early 20th century snapshots, most of which were captured by visitors to the community.

The last pictures of South Union before the community was sold were made in April 1922 for use in the auction catalog. The catalog includes twelve images of Shaker land and buildings, with accompanying text. The museum collection has original double-weight prints of five of those images, but the rest are only visible in the document itself. Because these images were printed using a newspaper press, the quality is poor.

Since the 1875 Grain Barn restoration began in 2006, we have always assumed there were no historic images of the structure. Many photographs made on the south side of the farm seem to "just miss" the Grain Barn . . . until now! Recently while studying the pictures in the auction catalog, we discovered the only known historic image of the 1875 Grain Barn, one that had been there all along! The photograph, taken from the meadow southeast of the Centre Family, clearly includes the barn on the left and the Centre House near the middle of the picture. While the photograph does not provide great detail, it does give a glimpse of the structure on the landscape and, lo and behold, it looks just like it does now.



Pictured on page 6 of the September 1922 auction catalog is this photograph of the 1875 Grain Barn (left) and the 1824 Centre House (center). The original caption beneath it reads:
'Tuck Me to Sleep In My Old 'Tucky Home.' This land is rich as cream - all just like this.

MEETING HOUSE PROJECT PROGRESSES

South Union's 1818 Meeting House is beginning to take shape, at least from the ground level point of view. Destroyed in the 1920s, the original "dressed" foundation stones, which stood approximated three feet above the soil, were re-used in the construction of a 1926 Dutch Colonial home. When the Shaker Museum acquired this site several years ago, the 1926 building was torn down and the foundation stones were retained. Because of a grant from the James Graham Brown Foundation and the E. Rhodes and Eloise B. Carpenter Foundation, those stones are being re-laid in the original footprint of the 1818 building. Other valuable artifacts have been discovered in the process, including two sets of stone steps (the building originally had four sets), an underground stone drain leading to a cistern built in 1822, an early iron shutter dog, a brass button, and a limestone splash block. At this printing, three of four layers of cut stone has been laid and mortared. Positioning the remaining portions of the original decorative cut stone cap will complete the foundation project.

GET READY FOR FALL!

School children are in for a treat at South Union this fall. Beginning in August and running through the end of September, the museum will offer *The Shaker School House*, a program that will employ active teaching and listening in a setting similar to where Shaker children learned over a hundred years ago. From December 6-17, school groups can experience *Christmas in the Kitchen—1910*, where children see, smell and even taste what it was like to prepare a meal in the Shaker kitchen in 1910. This hands-on program is a holiday tradition at South Union.

School groups should inquire about our Bus Fund, from which the museum reimburses schools for transportation costs. Many thanks to Edie Bingham for initiating this opportunity at the Shaker Museum.



The new concrete footer, poured over the original below grade foundation stones. The above ground stones were stacked and mortared on top of this footer.

VISITOR CENTER COMING ALONG

Federal TEA-21 funds are providing the Shaker Museum with a new Visitor Center. The building, constructed ca. 1946 by Oscar Bond for use by one of his farm managers, is the only non-Shaker dwelling remaining at the South Union historic site. Adapted for use as a Visitor Center, the new facility will provide ticket sales and orientation for guests, staff offices, a kitchen area, restrooms, a research library and textile storage. A full basement will give maintenance staff a space for storage and access to utilities. A new parking lot is currently being constructed to the east of the Visitor Center and the old parking lot will eventually be removed. The project will probably be complete by the end of the summer.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS!

The Shaker Museum collection that exists today was born in the Auburn, Kentucky, home of Mrs. Curry Hall. Because of an interest in the preservation of Shaker heritage in Kentucky, Mrs. Hall began to collect Shaker furniture around 1956, until her collection became so large that she decided to open a museum in an abandoned church building near the Hall residence. Mrs. Hall recounted, "I asked my husband if we could have just one little corner of a building he was using for storage. We kept adding more and more things and eventually just moved him out."

In 1960, the doors of the first Shaker Museum were opened to the public. Deedy Hall served as volunteer director for twenty years, and was joined by well-known Shaker history scholar Julia Neal as co-director in the 1970s. Both women were natives of Auburn, Kentucky. The collection continued to grow as local people, many of whom had attended one of the Shaker auctions, donated items to the museum.

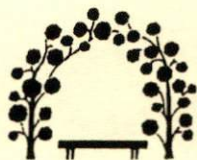
Because of tremendous support from the people in the outlying region, a non-profit organization known as "Shakertown Revisited, Inc." was formed in 1965 to insure the future of the Shaker Museum. The group hosted a summer Shaker Festival and an outdoor drama (from 1962 until 1991) to promote the development of the museum, eventually raising the funds necessary to purchase two original Shaker buildings at the South Union historic site. The museum moved to its present location, the historic site of the South Union Shaker Village, and opened for business in 1972. Volunteers continued to operate the museum until 1986 when a full-time paid museum director was hired. In the years since, full-time staff positions have been created for an operations manager, a guest services manager, museum shop manager and a maintenance supervisor.

Progress at South Union has been deliberate, but gradual, dependent upon gifts and grants from individuals, organizations and foundations. Today Shakertown Revisited, Inc. owns and has restored seven of the remaining nine original village structures and occupies nearly five hundred acres of land. Those buildings are:

1824 Centre Family Dwelling House
1835 Smoke and Milk House
1846 Ministry Shop
1847 Steam House
1869 Shaker Tavern
1875 Grain Barn
1917 Shaker Store

Community involvement and volunteer efforts have been the key to preservation at South Union. Support continues today, not only from south central Kentucky, but also from across the United States. As the Shaker Museum looks back over its 50 year history, it acknowledges gratefully the hundreds who have made contributions and who have given of their time and expertise to make the South Union historic site what it is today.

The Shaker Museum strives to stay true to its mission statement by constantly creating new ways to portray the history of the Shakers in southern Kentucky. Strict standards of restoration and preservation have helped garner awards for the historic site over the years, and its publications, exhibits, and educational programming have also been recognized. But the future holds great potential for growth and development in these areas. The Shaker Museum has long range plans that include exciting possibilities for new ways of interpreting the history of the Shakers and of the southern Kentucky region. The Shaker Museum celebrates its past, but it also looks with great hope to its future.



SHAKER MUSEUM

AT SOUTH UNION

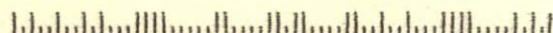
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UPCOMING EVENTS

MUSIC IN THE BARN

September 25

Enjoy this family event with live music and dessert in the 1875 Grain Barn. 2:00 until 5:00 pm, \$15 per person or \$25 per couple. Call for reservations.

A SHAKER BREAKFAST

November 6

A Civil War-era Shaker breakfast that promises to please and to astonish. Seatings at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. \$22 museum members, \$25 non-members. Call for reservations.

CIVIL WAR LIVING HISTORY

November 6

A living history event at the Centre House, including infantry, cavalry, and civilian demonstrations. 9:00 until 4:00 pm. Included with museum admission or Shaker Breakfast reservation.

CHRISTMAS AT SHAKERTOWN HOLIDAY MARKET

December 4

One of Kentucky's finest antique and craft markets, just in time for Christmas! Features over 30 regional antique vendors and artists. Event is free to the public with a canned food item or monetary donation that will be distributed to those needful in the community. 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Preview Party, Friday night, December 3, 7:00 until 9:00 pm, \$10 per person. Call for reservations.

For reservations or more details call:
1-800-811-8379 or 542-4167

Or visit:
shakermuseum.com

The Shaker Museum is located 10 miles west of Bowling Green or 3 miles east of Auburn, just off US 68-80