

Fall 2013

South Union Messenger (Fall 2013)

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SOUTH UNION MESSENGER

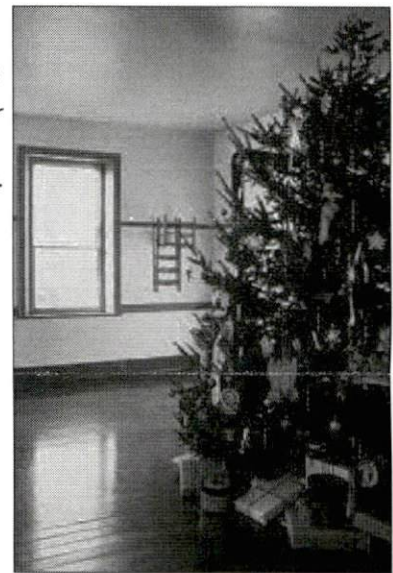
Vol. XLII, No.4, 2013

South Union Shaker Village, Kentucky

Christmas at Shaketown HOLIDAY MARKET . . . DECEMBER 7

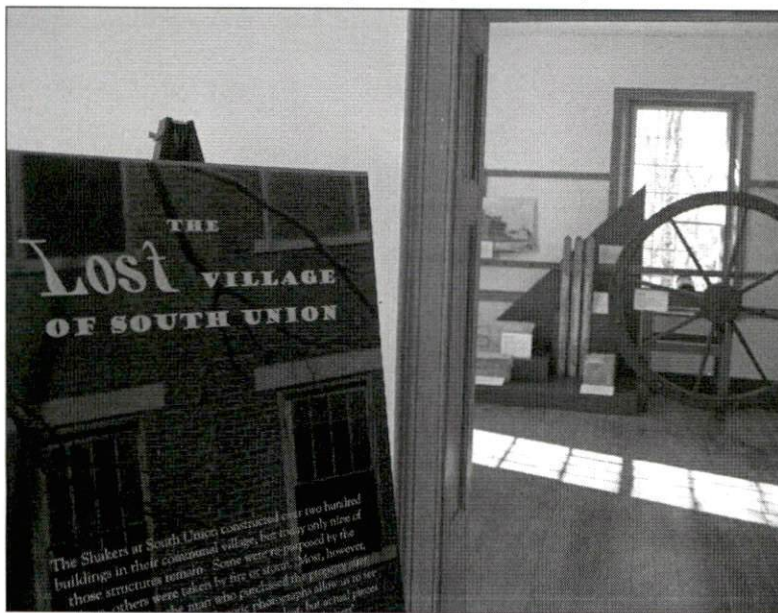
The South Union Shaker Village's most popular annual event, our Holiday Market, is again scheduled for the first weekend in December. On Saturday, December 7, the first and second floors of the Centre House will be filled with antiques and fine hand-made crafts, just in time for your Christmas shopping. The historic environment provides a perfect setting for this event, guaranteed to put you in the Christmas spirit. The Saturday open house is free to the public, but a canned food item or donation is suggested for admission. The food and money are distributed before Christmas to those needful in our outlying community.

On Friday night, December 6, we host a **Preview Party** for those who want a "first chance" option to make purchases. Reservations are suggested for this event and can be made by calling the SUSV at 270-542-4167. Tickets are \$10 per person. Coffee, cider and desserts will be served to guests.



NEW EXHIBIT OPENS AT SUSV

The story of architectural loss at South Union is one that is often told. Visitors who come to the village leave with the knowledge that only 9 buildings remain of the 225 constructed by the Shakers. What most visitors have not been able to see until now are archival photographs of many of those buildings, photographs taken in



prosperous times and during times of decay and demolition. Also exhibited are objects from some of South Union's former structures. Stored for many years, these artifacts include dated and signed bricks, cupboard doors in original paint, remnants of 19th century fencing, iron and stone elements that were once part of village buildings, and even a large poplar wheel, on loan from the Kentucky Museum, that was once part of the laundry mechanism in the Wash House.

The Lost Village of South Union offers visitors a perspective on the scope of the community in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Hopefully it will instill in those who see it the importance of historic preservation in our country today.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Collection of Early Lighting Devices

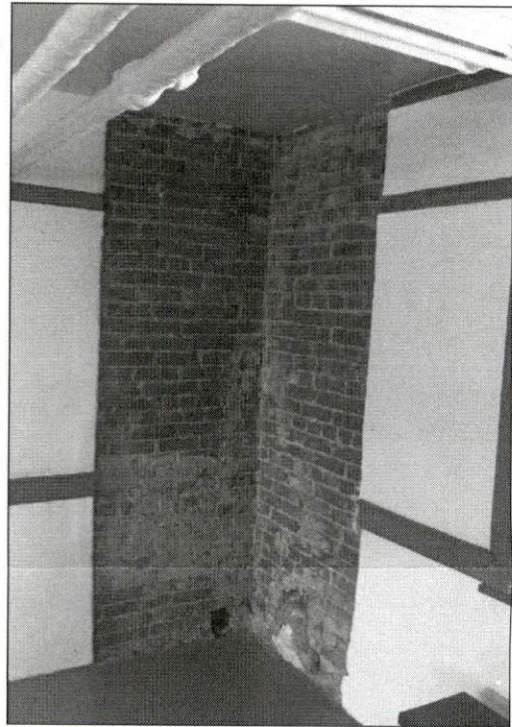
Period lighting with no direct association to South Union, but accepted for use in exhibits and educational programming. Collection includes very fine early 19th century lamps and stands, mid-century candlesticks and lanterns, and early 20th century kerosene lamp, attributed to southern Kentucky

Donated by Roger and Margaret Futrell, Frankfort, Kentucky

CORNER CUPBOARD UPDATE

As reported in our last newsletter, we are hoping to raise the funds necessary to re-build the missing corner cupboard in the Centre House dining room. We have received contributions from Donna Hill, Charles Hungate and Kenneth Hatcher and are most appreciative of their quick response to our request. We still need \$3,350.00 to complete the project.

After the article appeared in the newsletter, we received word of another kind donation. Erica Sanchez Goodwillie, an historic paint specialist whose distinguished work includes projects at Mt. Vernon and Montpelier, has offered to formulate a restoration paint and apply it to the new cupboard when it is complete. Careful analysis of both the interior and exterior of one of the extant cupboards in the room, performed by conservator and paint analyst Susan L. Buck, revealed fascinating results. The outside was originally coated with a thinly applied orange-red, oil-bound paint. The original application was such that the walnut grain would have been visible. Analysis of the interior produced evidence of a red-brown, oil-bound finish. When the new corner cupboard project is complete it should look much like it did when the Shakers moved into the Centre House in 1833.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION

- John and Linda Tanner . . . \$600.00 for Centre House period lighting
Donna Hill . . . \$100.00 for corner cupboard restoration project
Charles Hungate . . . \$100.00 for corner cupboard restoration project
Ken Hatcher . . . \$200.00 for corner cupboard restoration project
Ernest and Elaine Ezell . . . \$1,000.00 for restoration of 1835 Milk House brick floor
Don Hansen . . . \$500.00 for collections acquisition
Col. Robert and Cora Jane Spiller . . . \$2,500.00 for underwriting "Music in the Barn" event
BB&T . . . \$2,500.00 for underwriting "Music in the Barn" event

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Van and Laura Cohron, Bowling Green, Kentucky
Erica Greil, Nashville, Tennessee

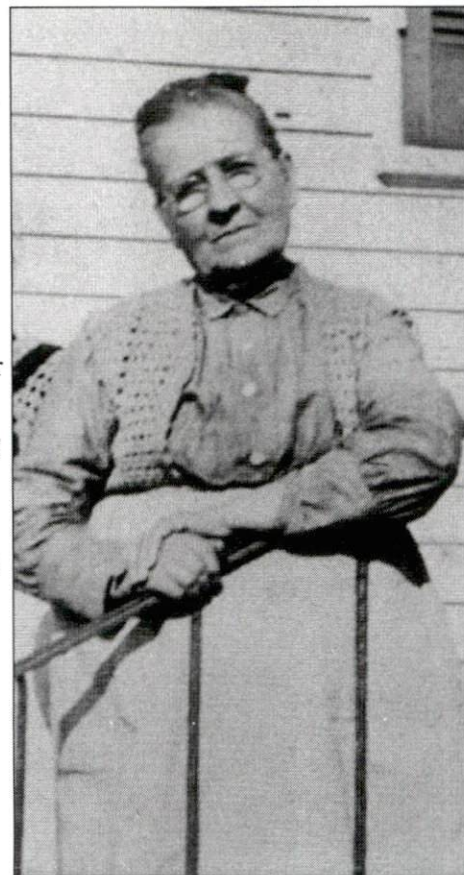
SOUTH UNION PROFILE: SISTER MARY B. WANN

Born in Virginia on October 5, 1846, Mary Bently Wann and her brothers, Henry and John, were admitted to South Union in 1855. All three were under the age of ten, and the circumstances of their being left with the Shakers were not recorded. Henry died at South Union while in his early 20s, John left the Shakers in 1869 for Gallatin, Tennessee, but Mary made the choice to stay, at least for the time being.

By the time Sister Mary Wann reached the age of 21, she had already been assigned the role of assistant to North Family Eldress Jane Cowan and later assistant to Centre Family Eldress Nancy Moore. In 1873 Sister Mary Wann was entrusted with the care and education of the Centre Family girls. Then, South Union's journal keeper recorded the following inexplicable event on Monday, April 22, 1878:

TURNING AWAY—Agnes Delany & Mary Wann left the North Family for the world—They go to New York City—the Centre of Babylon.

Mary Wann returned to South Union, but the date of her re-admittance was not recorded. She was there, however, in 1922 when the Mt. Lebanon, New York, ministry decided that South Union should close. She, along with seven others, received a check for \$10,000.00 from the sale of the property.



After leaving South Union, Mary Wann moved three miles west of the village to Auburn, boarding with Mr. and Mrs. Fee Wilson. When she left Auburn for Florida several months later, many of her personal possessions remained with the Wilsons. Mary Wann died in Pinellas County, Florida, near Clearwater, in 1924. In 1962 the Wilson family donated to the Shaker Museum those things Mary Wann had left behind, including several wooden bonnet molds and two large ca. 1840 portraits of her parents. The portrait of Sister Mary's father is currently displayed in the Centre House as part of the exhibition, *Something Regarding Myself: The South Union Shakers and the Objects That Tell Their Stories*.

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Tommy Hines

I hope that each of you will make an effort to attend our annual Holiday Market on Saturday, December 7 or, better yet, make reservations for the Preview Party the evening before. The Shaker Quartet is "back in business" and will perform at the Friday night event. You won't want to miss the opportunity for unique gifts and I can promise you that there is nothing quite as nice as the Centre House at Christmastime.

The SUSV Board of Directors is made up of a gifted and enthusiastic group of people. We just returned from a weekend retreat, held at the Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, and came back refreshed and inspired. Many thanks to Advisory Committee members Margy Thomas and Edie Bingham for challenging and energizing each of us, and to Board members Skip Cleavinger and Scott Greene for leading thought-provoking sessions. We look forward to implementing new ways to introduce the public to one of Kentucky's finest historic sites, not that I'm partial.

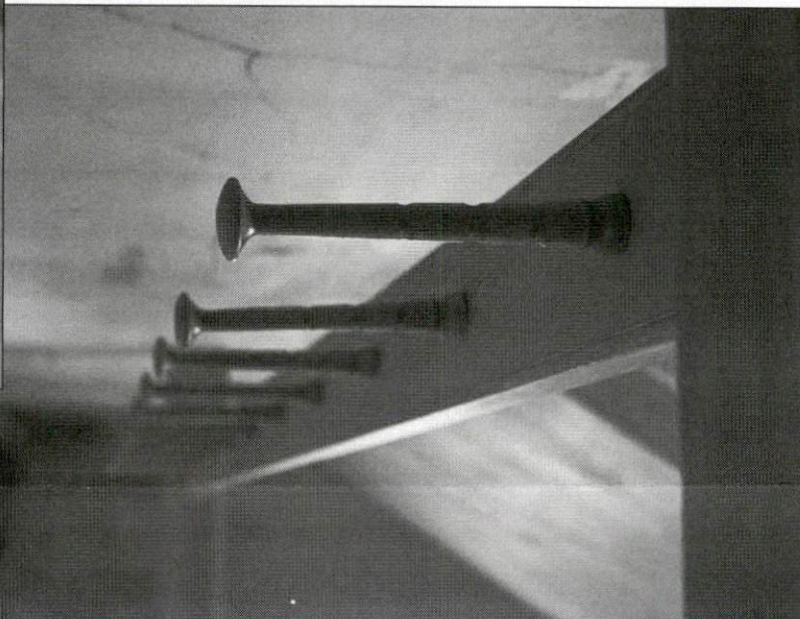
As always, thank you for continuing to support the South Union Shaker Village with your membership contributions. We couldn't do it without you!

IT'S ALL IN THE DETAILS

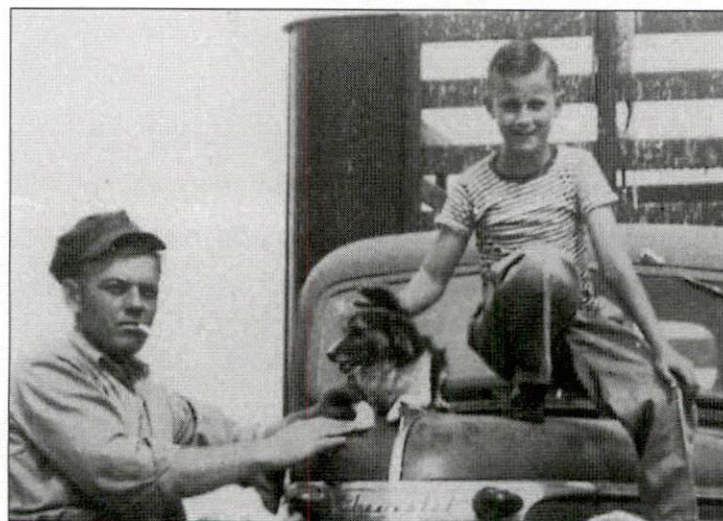
When restoration on the Centre House began in 1972, workmen discovered wooden doorstops had originally been mounted to the chair rail behind the double doors on the third floor. Only one of those doorstops was left, so it was removed and put away for safe keeping. While the Ministry Shop has wooden stops mounted in the baseboard, this is the only example of doorstops installed at chair rail height. Craftsman Roger Ryan recently replicated two of these finely turned stops, one of which is pictured at left, and they were installed once



again in the holes drilled for the originals over 175 years ago. Make sure and take a look behind these doors next time you are in the Centre House.

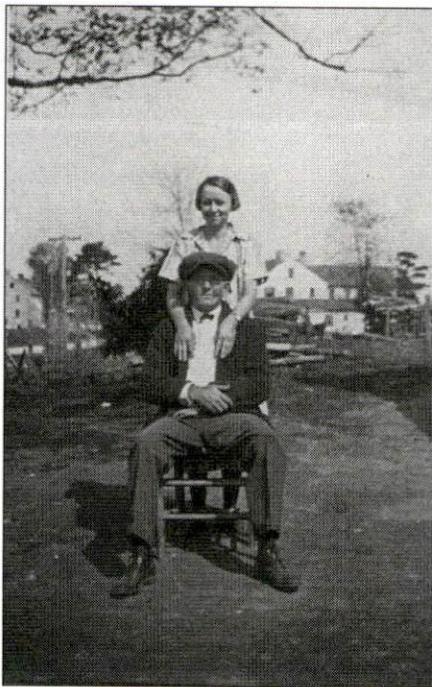


A similar "detail" restoration took place on 4th floor of the Centre House. Only two of nearly 60 pegs that the Shakers designed for the clothing storage rooms had survived. These extra long pegs were crafted with grooves to accommodate four Shaker hangers. Many years ago Dale Spencer made reproductions of these pegs, but all were eventually stolen. Today the clothing storage rooms can no longer be entered, but are visible from behind a rope. Even at a secure distance, the rows of pegs definitely make a visual impact. These small but significant details were also turned by Roger Ryan.



OUR APOLOGIES

When documenting the past, you want to make sure your facts are correct. We are sorry to say that in the last newsletter we featured this photo and incorrectly identified the canine subject as Mrs. Oscar Bond's dog, Woofie. Come to find out, the dog pictured with Raymond White (left) and Lewis Havener is not Woofie at all! Unfortunately, the name of the dog in the 1944 image is lost to history.



CLUES . . .

Photographs taken at South Union during the years just after 1922 provide great documentary information. These images, part of a collection donated by Jo Helen Havener, picture some of the families who worked for Oscar Bond after he purchased the village. More importantly, the photos help us to identify which buildings were still standing in the 1920s. The photo on the left was probably taken at the east side entrance to the 1818 Meeting House. The image on the right includes (L to R) the 1810 Dwelling, 1824 Center House, 1841 Trustees Office, and the 1842 Post Office.

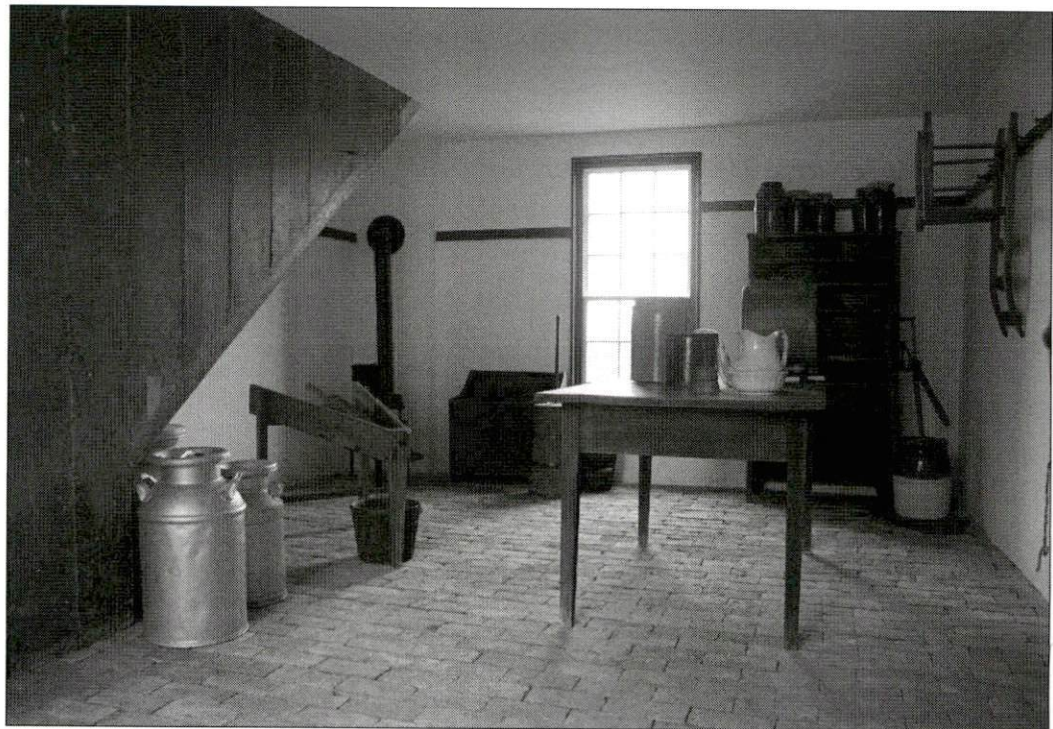
A PROJECT COMPLETED

The brick floor in the Milk House is finally complete, thanks to faithful contributions from Ernest and Elaine Ezell. The process involved removing 1920s concrete and 1980s brick pavers, then new pouring a new layer of concrete topped with a vapor barrier and a bed of sand. Once the sand was level, bricks were placed on top and more sand was swept in the spaces between the bricks. To add to the authenticity, salvaged Shaker-made bricks were used for the floor. Plaster and paint were also restored.

Thanks to a donation by Don Hansen, we submitted a sample from the interior wood trim for paint analysis. Conservator and paint analyst Susan L. Buck discovered a "medium blue, oil-bound paint" that appears to be consistent in throughout the Milk House. For this project we will use the color match recommended by Susan Buck, a modern Pittsburg Paint selection called "Vining Ivy."

Thank you to Johnny Miller, whose meticulous restoration of the brick floor takes the Milk House back to its 19th century appearance, and to Susan Buck, whose paint analysis achieves an even deeper level of correctness. To the donors who made this restoration possible, we are most grateful.

Pictured at right is the recently restored brick floor in the Milk House portion of the 1835 Smoke and Milk House. The first lever butchering room on the Smoke House side of the building awaits restoration.

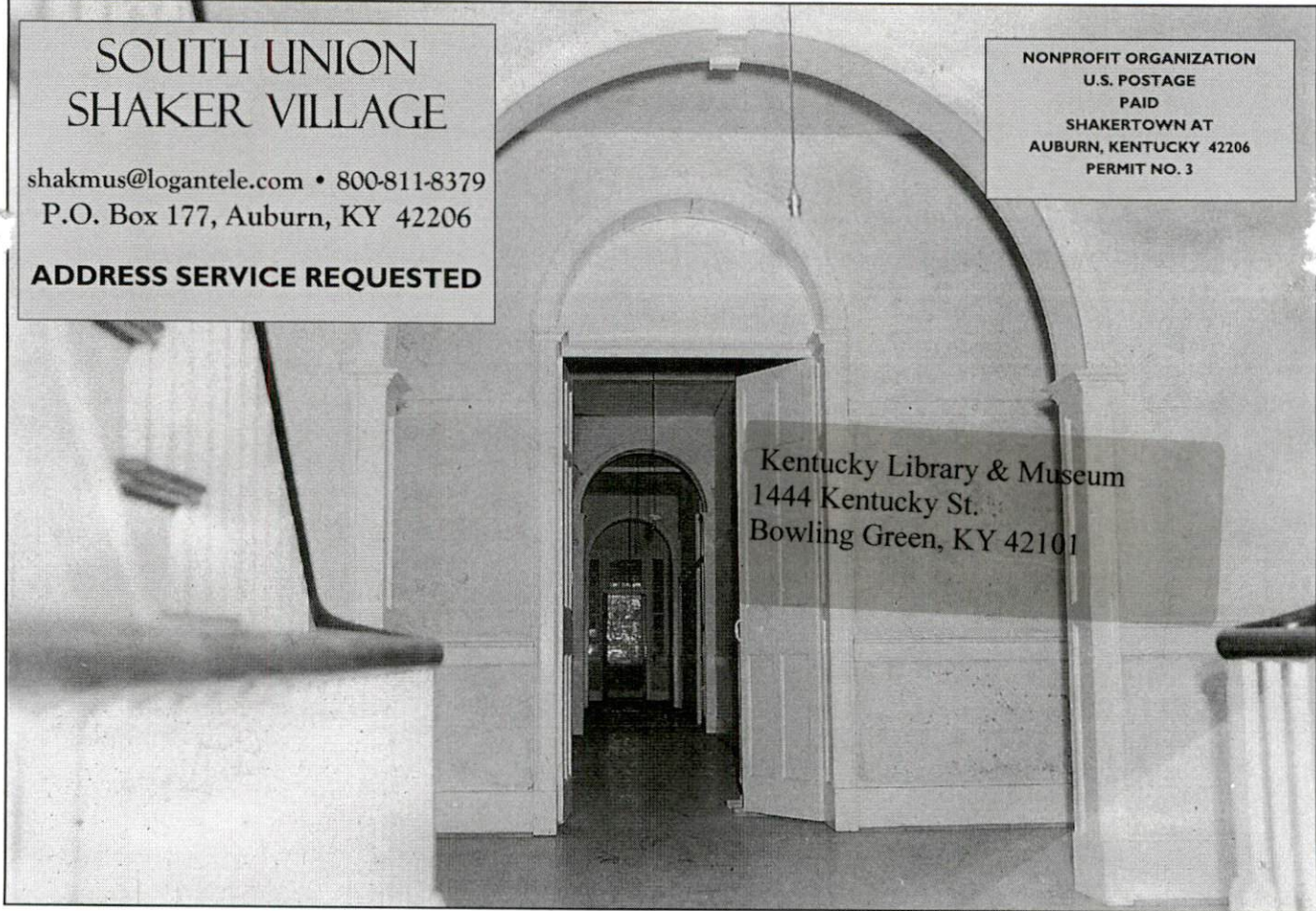


SOUTH UNION SHAKER VILLAGE

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UPCOMING EVENTS

◆ "CHRISTMAS AT SHAKERTOWN" HOLIDAY MARKET

Saturday, December 7

One of Kentucky's finest antique and craft markets, just in time for Christmas! Features over 30 antique vendors and artists, all nestled in the village's historic atmosphere.

Admission: a canned food item or donation that will be distributed to those in need

Time: 9:00 am–4:00pm

For a "first chance" opportunity to shop, make reservations for the Preview Party, Friday evening, Dec. 6.

Enjoy coffee, cider and desserts in the most festive of holiday atmospheres.

*Reservations required: \$10 per person
7:00 pm–9:00 pm*

◆ L&N RAILROAD LUNCHEON

Saturday, March 1, 2014

Enjoy a hearty late 19th century menu typical of what would have been served at South Union's famous railroad hotel, the Shaker Tavern.

Reservations required: \$22 members, \$25 non-members

Time: 12:00 noon

◆ SOUTH UNION SEMINAR

Friday and Saturday, April 11-12, 2014

Mark your calendars for our annual weekend of learning and community! This year's theme will focus on Shaker material culture and will feature keynote speaker, Jean M. Burks, co-author of *The Encyclopedia of Shaker Furniture*.

For information or reservations for events call:

1-800-811-8379 or 270-542-4167

shakermuseum.com

South Union Shaker Village is located ten miles west of Bowling Green or three miles east of Auburn, KY just off US 68-80