

Spring 2015

South Union Messenger (Spring 2015)

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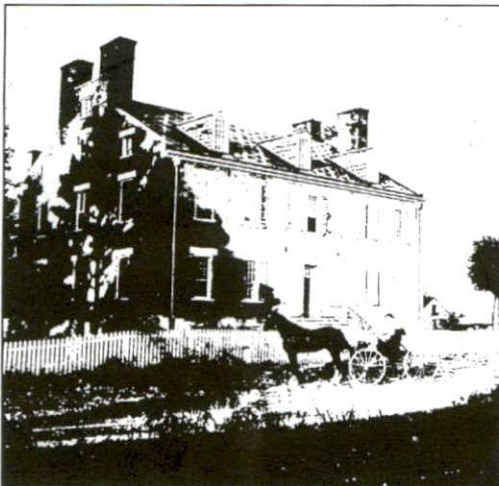


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SOUTH UNION MESSENGER

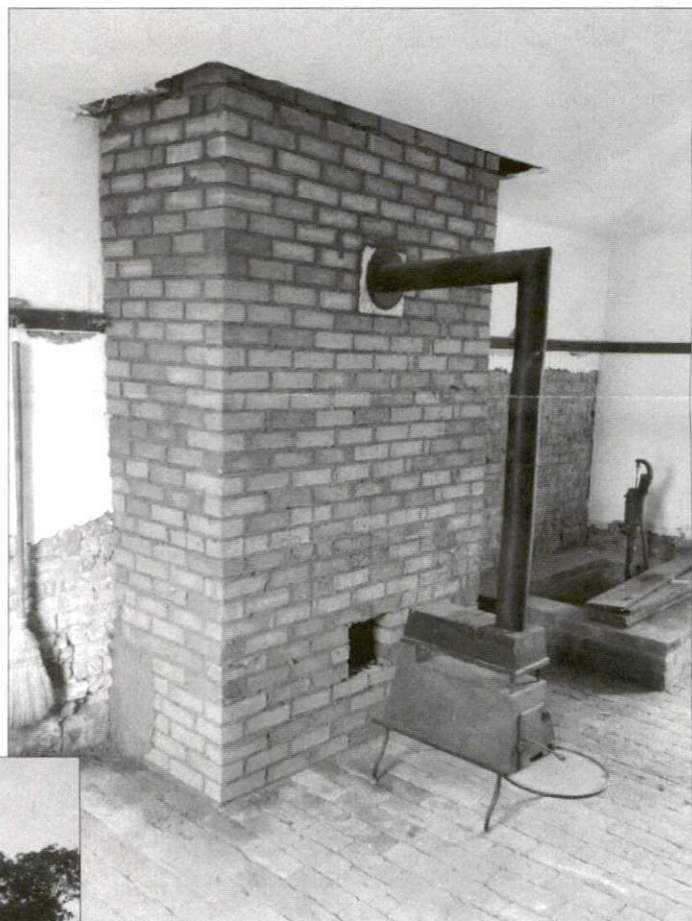
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South Union Shaker Village, Kentucky

RESTORATION CONTINUES AT SOUTH UNION

Thanks to two grants, one from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation and another from an anonymous Kentucky foundation, restoration continues this summer at South Union. While there are many projects slated for completion, one of the most significant is the restoration of important details in the 1835 Milk House. The project, which should be finished by September 15, includes the reconstruction of the chimney and the replication of missing wooden elements, including baseboards, built-in shelving for milk pans, and a beautiful floating panel door for the ash pit behind the stove. The photo at right was taken after the masonry work had been completed and before the addition of plaster and wood trim. Original limestone "thimbles," rescued many years ago from Shaker buildings that were being demolished, have been re-used in the chimneys on both levels of the building. Thimbles are mortared into chimneys to allow access for stovepipes.

Other projects that are currently taking place include meticulous restoration of window sashes at the 1869 Shaker



Tavern and of the original exterior door on the 1835 Smoke House. Work on the 1827 Well Shed, the 1847 Steam House, and the 1824 Centre House is also scheduled to be completed before winter.

Besides restoration, many routine maintenance projects have also taken place this summer. The picket fences have been repaired and painted (left), a new roof was installed on the maintenance building, and the Visitor Center required a replacement HVAC unit, a project that was not planned!

CHANGES AT SOUTH UNION

Change is not always easy and 2015 has brought several significant ones to the South Union Shaker Village. In April, Jo Ann Moody, Shaker Tavern innkeeper, retired after 17 years of service. Jo Ann was the first staff person hired to manage the Shaker Tavern, maintaining a bed & breakfast business on a year 'round basis and providing group meals by reservation. Her love of people was a major asset for the SUSV, as was her talent to produce wonderful southern-style meals.

Operations Manager Kaelin Vernon resigned in June after seven years of dedication to the South Union Shaker Village. Kaelin's farming enterprise has grown to the extent that it requires his full-time attention. We definitely miss his knowledge of 19th century history and his engaging way of interpreting that history for our school groups. JoAnn and Kaelin were tremendous assets to the South Union Shaker Village and both made lasting impressions on our visiting public. We wish them the very best in their new endeavors.

We would like to welcome Mary Odenthal as our Administrative Assistant. Mary will take charge of the operation of the office, will work with tour groups, wedding and event customers, and will manage the care of our membership. We are also happy to welcome Laura Haury, who has agreed to operate the bed & breakfast business at the Shaker Tavern, initially on a weekends-only basis. The SUSV is currently in negotiations with someone to fill a newly created position, a Curator of Community Engagement. More news to follow!



JoAnn Moody, Shaker Tavern Innkeeper



Kaelin Vernon, SUSV Operations Manager

A MESSAGE FROM KAELIN

Dear friends, our family farm has grown over the years and is at a point where my full attention is needed. We are grateful. I want to say thank you for making my time at SUSV a wonderful and very memorable experience. I have very fond memories with many of you. You have given to the mission of preserving one of our nation's treasures, as well as to those who keep the light burning here. My wish and hope is for each of you to tell more people about this wonderful site.

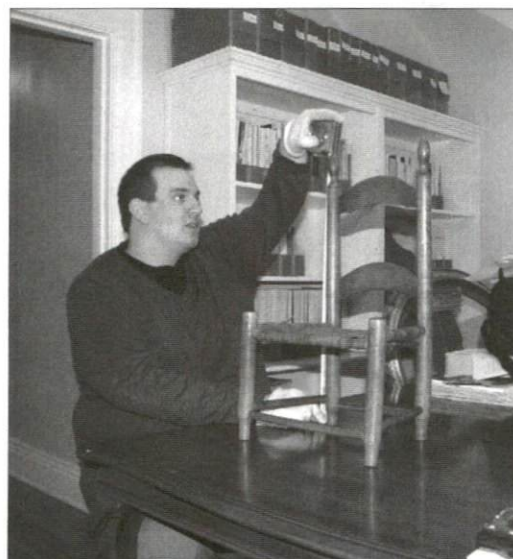
I will miss working with my mentor and friend, Tommy Hines, someone who knows the mix of patience, preservation, and perseverance. I will also miss our small, hard working staff. If anyone ever complimented SUSV, I would be quick to remind them our success is the result of our staff. Each one has provided unique southern hospitality on a daily basis. SUSV is blessed to have each of you!

To the Shakers past and present, I am extremely grateful. Outside of the obvious, providing me with a wonderful work environment, you have given me a classroom of learning each and every day. There isn't enough time on this earth to learn all there is to know about your way of life or about those who continue to live it. Thank you for creating a harmonious and very real presence on this earth. I will remain a student of the "Believers."

COLLECTIONS PROJECTS

South Union's chair collection was recently studied, measured, documented and inventoried by Western Kentucky University graduate intern Anton Banchy (right). The year-long project, completed in June, also included photographing each chair from a variety of angles. There are currently 197 chairs in the collection.

The SUSV collection policy stresses that a focus on objects both produced by and used by the Shakers at South Union. This was not the case between 1960 and 1998. Still, approximately 85% of the chairs can be traced back to South Union. The collection also includes examples from other Shaker villages (Union Village, Ohio; Canterbury, NH; Enfield, NH; Mt. Lebanon, NY) and a few chairs by regional makers, retained for comparative study.



Sally Givens (left), a recent graduate of Tennessee Technical University, spent summer 2014 at South Union as an intern and was hired summer 2015 to continue her work with the collection. Sally's most final project was to create a hard-copy file for each of the 368 pieces of furniture in the collection. The files included copies of accession cards, deeds of gift, original receipts, appraisals, documentary information and related correspondence. Many of the documents were from the early days of the Shaker Museum when it was located in Auburn between 1960 and 1972. Sally, originally from White House, Tennessee, will be pursuing her graduate degree in public history at Central Connecticut State University this fall.

The South Union Shaker Village is fortunate to have college interns working with either the collections or in education nearly every semester. These students help accomplish projects that would never be possible with the Village's small staff.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION

E. Rhodes & Leona B. Carpenter Foundation—\$30,000.00

Anonymous Foundation—\$15,000.00

Col. Robert E. and Cora Jane Spiller—\$3,000.00

US Bank—\$1,500.00

Martha Boice—\$1,000.00

Jim and Dianne Stuart—\$1,000.00

John & Linda Tanner—\$1,000.00

Logan Aluminum—\$500.00

Michael & Shannon Vitale—\$500.00

Hilliard Lyons—\$500.00

Elaine Disch—Contribution in Honor of Ray and Judy McCaskey's 50th Anniversary

SOUTH UNION PROFILE: ELDRRESS LUCILLA BOOKER

According to South Union census records Lucilla Stanley Booker was born in Mississippi on May 7, 1836. Her parents were Mercer M. Booker and Ann Elizabeth Summerville Booker and available resources do not indicate why Lucilla was left with the Shakers. Census records do reveal that Lucilla's mother may have died before 1840, prompting Mercer M. Booker to bring his daughter to live at South Union. The 1860 census lists Mr. Booker, living with a young wife and four children in Mississippi.

The first time Lucille Booker is mentioned in South Union's manuscript records is at age nine, when she moved from the Gathering Order to the First Order in February of 1845. When in her mid-20s, Lucilla was given the task of assisting with the care of the young girls in the Centre Family. In March of 1865 she was appointed, along with Sister Jane Cowan, to the office of Deaconess for that family, helping to provide for the "temporal" or material needs of the members.

When Lucilla Booker was 42 years old, she became first Eldress of the Centre House, an office she would hold for eleven years, with the exception of three years when she was demoted to second in command. Lucilla held the position of Office Deaconess from 1889 until July 1902, when she returned to the Centre House as first Eldress once more. Manuscript records reveal that she and Sister Sabrina Whitmore lived in the "front Sister's room," traditionally the designated quarters for Centre Family Eldresses.

Little is known about Lucilla Booker's personal life as only a few brief episodes of it are recorded. In August 1873 she was one of a small group that attended a camp meeting in Cedar Hill, Tennessee. She was one of three women who selected and purchased "spring goods" for the Centre Family Sisters in April 1900. On October 28, 1902 Lucilla and five others attended a "splendid" political speech by Republican John Yerkes in Bowling Green.

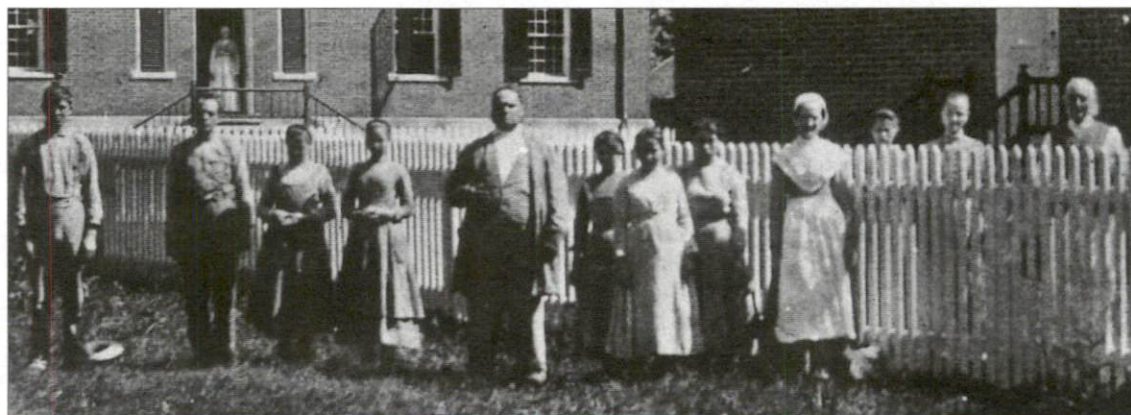
Lucilla Booker died on July 12, 1918 of heart disease, at the age of 82. Since record keeping by the Shakers had become scarce by the 1910s, there is no information about her sickness and death, and no words of remembrance. She was buried at the South Union cemetery after nearly 75 years as a faithful member of the community.



Lucilla Booker (above) in a photograph made at the time she was serving as Eldress of the Centre Family, ca. 1886. The photo at left was taken in 1911 when she was 75 years old. On either side of Lucilla are John Perryman and Josie Thrall, fellow Shakers. The child is unidentified.



The image at right is a detail of much larger photograph made around 1885. While the young people are unidentified, the adults are (from left to right) Lorenzo Pearcefield, Eldress Lucilla Booker and Elder Harvey Eades.



RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Side Chair, South Union, ca. 1830, traces of original paint, early seat, given to Walter Brumm by Deedy Hall, ca. 1970.

Placed at SUSV by Hamilton College on loan as part of the Walter Brumm Shaker Collection

Collection of secondary printed materials on Shakers and Shaker history for the SUSV Julia Neal Library.

Donated by Edie Bingham

Collection of scanned historic photographs of Marion and Corinne Graham Wyatt family, who lived at Shakertown from the 1930s through the early 1940s.

Donated by Brenda Wyatt Barnard

Four reproduction Shaker stoves used at the Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill from the 1960s to the early 2000s, to be used at South Union in the 1835 Milk House and 1847 Steam House.

Donated by the Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill

Collection of reproduction objects once used at the Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill in the interpretation of 19th century laundry practices, including pails, dippers, laundry forks, etc.

Donated by the Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill

Work Table, ca. 1860, large, poplar, bottle-turned legs typical of both South Union and Pleasant Hill, collected in Kentucky, attributed to Kentucky Shaker village origin. Re-finished.

Purchased with Acquisition Endowment Funds

Work Table, ca. 1840, small, poplar, cylindrically tapered legs without South Union's typical "lamb's tongue" feature, but otherwise has strong stylistic ties to South Union craftsmanship and a long history in Logan County. Early finish.

Donated by Charlie Ray



South Union Shaker chair, type A, placed on loan from Hamilton College as part of the Walter Brumm Collection



Two important tables have been added to the SUSV collection recently. The table above was collected in Kentucky and has a common leg turning found in both Kentucky Shaker villages. The table at left was discovered in a Logan County barn by the donor many years ago. Although without provenance, this table has the distinct characteristics of well-documented tables in the collection. The small table was donated by Charlie Ray.

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Tommy Hines

It's been a whirlwind of a summer at South Union with all the changes we have faced. Things are finally beginning to function again, thanks to an extremely dedicated staff, all of whom have gone above and beyond to bring our operations to a point of stability and renewed enthusiasm. I want to personally thank Mary Odenthal, who has our office running like a fine timepiece, and Bonnie Eilers, Cheryl Odenthal, Mike Hossum, James Grinter and Katheryn Keith who have worked extra hours and completed tasks outside their job descriptions, and have accomplished it all with a smile on their faces. Don't know if I can say the same for myself, but I am extremely proud of our hard-working staff.

Speaking of change, we are also in the throes of significant restoration projects that affect five of our historic structures. Thanks to grants from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation and an anonymous Kentucky foundation, we are accomplishing a number of restoration goals. You will have to pay us a visit to see the transformation for yourself. As always, thank you for your support!



Our SUSV Board of Directors recently enjoyed their annual retreat at the Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill. Those who were able to attend included, from left to right, Laura Haurly, Christine Sowders, David Bell, Susan Gardner, Tommy Hines (Executive Director), Skip Cleavinger, Roiann Ridley, and Scott Greene. This weekend is always a very beneficial time of planning and dreaming for the future.



LOOKING BACK...

Thanks to the generosity of Brenda Barnard, we now have a few more glimpses into Shakertown's past. The photo at left is one of several images of Brenda's family when they worked for Oscar Bond in the from the 1930s through the early 1940s. Taken on the west side of the Centre House, this photo includes Bernard's mother, Corinne Wyatt, who is second from left.

FOR YOU PAYERS OF KENTUCKY TAX...

Make your mark for history! When you check the box designating a portion of your state income tax refund to Kentucky's Local History Fund, you will make a permanent mark on history. How? That donation—it can be any amount you choose, even \$1—will go a long way toward helping local history organizations—museums, cemetery preservation groups, educators, genealogical societies and more—share their community's role in Kentucky's development and the lasting impact they have made on our state and nation. Encourage your friends and neighbors to make their mark for history and check the box for the **Local History Fund** on their tax returns this year. For more information contact the Kentucky Historical Society (www.history.ky.gov).

TOURISM LONG-STANDING AT SU

During the early part of the 19th century the South Union Shaker Village drew visitors from all parts of the country, either to attend public worship services on Sundays or to spend the night and dine at the village's Trustees Office. After the Civil War and into the early 20th century the number of guests only increased, initiated by the construction of South Union Station at the railroad crossing and by a growing interest in the Shakers as history. Thanks to a recent donation of a 1929 newspaper article and accompanying photographs we have discovered that there was even interest in visiting the former village only a few years after its dissolution in 1922. Many thanks to Patricia Cauley Foster for sharing the documents.

According to the article, on October 8, 1929 fourteen members of the Russellville Chapter, N.S.D.A.R. held its meeting at "historic old Shakertown." The group made the trip in four automobiles on what the writer called the "fine Federal highway, No. 68" and then added that the "lovely Kentucky landscape, which bathed in the soft radiance of an absolutely perfect October afternoon, lent charm to the occasion." "No relics remain," the writer continued, "save the old brick houses and some lovely trees of various Species. Looking at the clean-cut, classic lines of the buildings, straight and true, even to this day, one is impelled to believe that a people who expressed their personality in such types of architecture must have been of a pure and lofty character."

The program for the day was a reading from Charles Edson Robinson's "The Shakers," [published in 1893], the excerpts from which were provided by the Extension Department of the University of Kentucky. This was followed by the reading of a letter sent to the chapter by Mrs. Alice Hines Walcutt of the Kentucky State Library. The article noted that Mrs. Walcutt's letter contained "personal reminiscences of the Shakers who, in her childhood, visited the home of her father, Judge Thomas Hines, of Bowling Green . . . attorney for the Shakers."

The writer ended the article by mentioning that a "delicious picnic" was served, then penned closing remarks in sentimental language characteristic of the time: "If, indeed, the gentle spirit of the departed brethren viewed the scene from the "Farther Shore," they perchance smiled happily remembering the October afternoons during their earth-life long years ago, when like picnic groups gathered on their hospitable grounds to wile away the sunny hours on an autumn day."



One of four "kodaks" made that day in October 1929. The subjects are unidentified although one may be Miss Nora O'Connell, Regent.

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SOUTH UNION SHAKER VILLAGE

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UPCOMING EVENTS

MUSIC ON THE FARM

Saturday, September 12

Imagine how nice it will be to feel the cool fall breezes wafting through the 1875 Grain Barn, listening to live music while strolling across the Shaker farm, and enjoying afternoon dessert! Kick back in a relaxed family atmosphere and partake in some traditional Southern delicacies, including fried peach pies, apple cider slushes, and homemade Shaker Sweet Potato Pie ice cream from Chaney's Dairy Barn.

Tickets: \$15 per person, \$25 per couple, \$5 children ages 6-12

Time: 2:00pm - 5:00pm

SHAKER FARM DAY

Saturday, October 10

The common farm chores of yesterday are practically lost arts today, but not at the South Union Shaker Village! Enjoy a day of interactive demonstrations where butter is made, corn is shelled, hams are smoked, laundry is boiled, apples are pressed into cider and much more. Lunch, catered by the Brickyard Franklin, will be available.

Tickets: \$10 per person, \$5 children ages 6-12

Time: 10:00am - 4:00pm

A SHAKER BREAKFAST

Saturday, November 7

A Civil War-era Shaker breakfast that promises to please and to astonish... featuring fried chicken, scrambles eggs, sweet potatoes, pork sausage, asparagus, apple pie, buttermilk biscuits and more! Served at South Union's famous railroad hotel, the Shaker Tavern.

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

Time: Seatings at 8:30am and 10:30am

"CHRISTMAS AT SHAKERTOWN" HOLIDAY MARKET

Saturday, December 5

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

Admission: A canned food item or donation

Time: 9:00am - 4:00pm

For a "first chance" opportunity to shop, make reservations for the "Christmas at Shakertown" Preview Party, Friday evening, December 4. Enjoy coffee, cider and desserts in the most festive of holiday atmospheres. Reservations required: \$10 per person / Time: 6:00pm - 9:00pm

The South Union Shaker Village is located 10 miles west of Bowling Green or 3 miles east of Auburn, just off US 68-80.
For more information: 270-542-4167