

Winter 2017

South Union Messenger (Winter 2017)

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SOUTH UNION MESSENGER

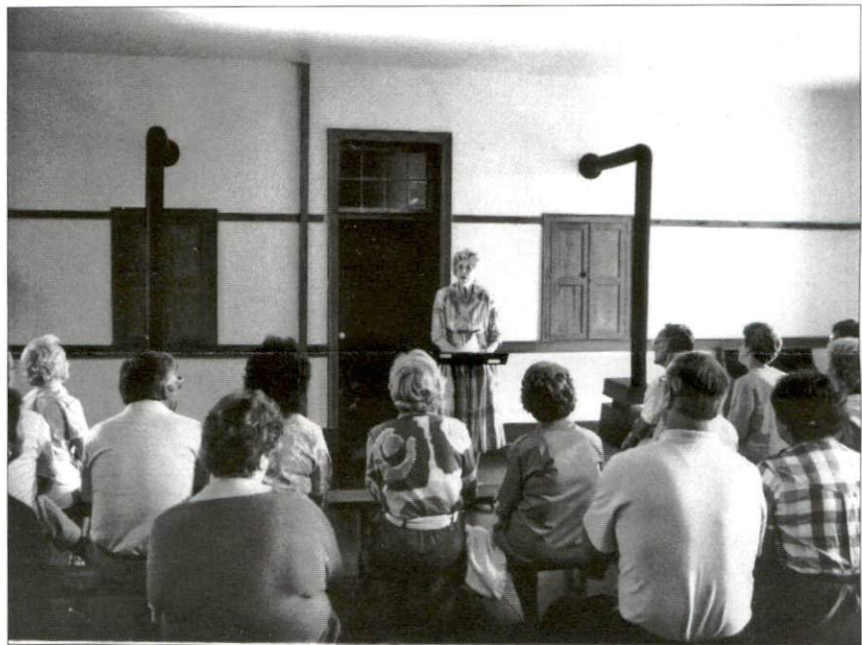
Vol. XLVI, No.1, 2017

South Union Shaker Village, Kentucky

SOUTH UNION SEMINAR CELEBRATES 30 YEARS

On April 21st and 22nd the South Union Shaker Village will host its 30th annual South Union Seminar. It all began in 1988 as a one-day event, with 22 participants who paid \$12 each for an in-depth tour of the Centre House, a hands-on restoration project in the kitchen, a luncheon provided by volunteers, and a presentation by none other than Julia Neal, preeminent South Union historian and author. Each year the seminar grew in scope and in number of attendees.

Over the years we have hosted many speakers who were leaders in the field of Shaker scholarship and Southern history, including Dianne Watkins, Kit Cress, Rose Mary Lawson, Fran Kramer, Dale Covington, June Sprigg, Jonathan Jeffrey, Donna Parker, Jean Burks, Dr. Sally Ann Strickler, Sharon Koomler, Julia Morgan, Dr. Michael Ann Williams, Dr. Daniel Patterson, Vicki Bell, Randy Folger, Cathie Winans, Richard Spence, Dawn Bakken, Jim Thomas, Sheldon Baugh, Stephen Paterwic, Jerry Grant, Elaine Disch, Nancy Hillenburg, C. Tracey Parks, Christian Goodwillie, Mark Brown, Sam Terry, James Hooper, George Kohrman, Matthew Cook, Nancy Baird, John Kleber, Hugh Ridenour, Susan Hughes, Martha Boice, Jane Scott, Carol Medlicott, Glendyne Wergland, Timothy Mullin, Aaron Genton, Erika Sanchez Goodwillie, Hugh Howard, Frank House, Beth Hester and Scott Gilbert. We must not fail to mention our esteemed presenters in 1994 and again in 1997: Sister Frances Carr and Brother Arnold Hadd of the Shaker Society, Sabbathday Lake, Maine.



Julia Neal presented on the history of the village and its unique architecture at the first South Union Seminar in 1988. There are several who can be identified in the audience, including Virginia Hurst, Sheldon and Brenda Baugh, Margaret McQueen, Deedy Hall, Pat and Mary Allen, Larry and Ruth Owrey and Jeanne Weaver.

Not only are we commemorating 30 years, but the South Union Seminar in April will also celebrate the acquisition of the 1854 Wash House. Presentations will focus on the textile industry and women's roles in the 19th century. Also scheduled is a very special interview with Jo Thornton Havener, whose family lived in the "laundry building" and worked for Oscar Bond. Those who attend the seminar will also be privileged to be a part of the first-ever tour of the newly-acquired Wash House, a pre-restoration look at one of South Union's finest buildings. Join us for this very special weekend!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION

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IN MEMORY

We were very sad to learn of the passing of Sister Frances Carr of Sabbathday Lake, Maine. Sister Frances came to live with the Shakers in the late 1930s as a child of ten, signing the Covenant at the age of twenty-one. She lived a long life, providing leadership at Sabbathday Lake and serving others in the tradition of the Shakers.

Sister Frances visited South Union in 1994 and again in 1997, both times to speak at the South Union Seminar. The photo at right, with Brother Arnold Hadd (center) and an unidentified guest, was taken during her 1994 visit.

The Shakers continue to inspire us at South Union, living out daily the very principles and tenets that we strive to interpret here.



SOUTH UNION PROFILE: LORENZO MARTIN

Photographs of the South Union Shakers are rare. Identified photographs are even more difficult to locate. In order to continue publishing short biographies of the people who lived as Shakers in the South Union community, the articles in this and upcoming newsletters may not include an image of the subject. Such is the case of Lorenzo Martin.

William and Patience Martin were early converts to the Shaker faith at South Union. Their son, Lorenzo, is first mentioned in community records on April 6, 1812, when he was "brot to school" by his father. In the spring of 1814, a devastating epidemic known as the "Cold Plague" struck southern Kentucky, killing hundreds. Both Lorenzo's parents were stricken with this mysterious disease that contemporary accounts described as "freezing to death." Patience Martin survived but William died on July 14th.

As a young boy Lorenzo lived within the Centre Family, his residence is listed as the 1815 Centre Brick (pictured below), in both the 1822 and 1827 census. Manuscript records characterize him as a gifted and capable young man. Throughout the 1820s Lorenzo was involved with the construction of buildings in the community, including shingle-making, the hewing of timber, and joiner work on the new Centre House. He also worked in the village's fulling mill and operated the printing press that labeled seed packets. He could be found wielding a cradle scythe in the rye fields during harvest time. His hard work on the farm took a toll one season when, as the journal writer noted, he was "not able to endure the labors with the other Brethren, fainted in the field and had to be carried or hauled home in a Dearborn [wagon]. His will was good however."

In October of 1829, Lorenzo Martin traveled to Clarksville, Tennessee with a group of South Union carpenters for the purpose of building a flat boat. This annual ritual began in 1824 and had become the Shakers most lucrative commercial venture during the early 19th century. When completed, the flatboat was "loaded with cattle, garden seed, brooms, carpeting, etc. for the Southern market." While Lorenzo and the other carpenters had to return to South Union once the boat was put in the water, he was given the opportunity to make the annual flatboat trip to New Orleans in 1835. Departing from Clarksville on October 29, Lorenzo and three others made the long journey selling Shaker products at ports along the Mississippi River. Once they reached their destination the flatboat was disassembled and sold, and the men traveled back to Kentucky with \$4,000.00 in profits. The men arrived home at South Union on February 11, 1836.

In the mid-1830s Lorenzo Martin was assigned the role of Elder of the North Family. In June of 1837 he was "released" from that position, once more becoming what the journal keeper terms a "private member." One month later on July 19th, the following post was made in the journal: "Lorenzo Martin . . . today makes choice of the ways of the world, to where he is gone! O Tempora! O Mores! [translated "Alas the times and manners"]. Enamored by the charm presented him by Ruth Edie he seems inclined to tie hard the hymeneal [marriage] knot!!!!" Sister Ruth Edie, his intended, had departed South Union two days before, prompting the journal keeper to note, "O Cupid, thou still art blind."

Lorenzo Martin returned to South Union a week later, asking for help from the Shakers. He was given a mare, a gun, and some money and never again mentioned in the records. Lorenzo's mother, Patience, remained at South Union for the rest of her life, passing away at the age of 88 on April 10, 1859.

(Quotes are from Shaker Records A and B)

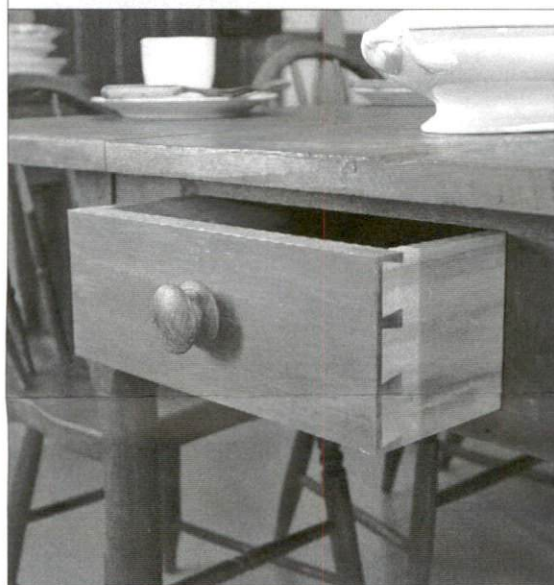
While living in the 1815 Centre Brick (right), Lorenzo Martin had the advantage of watching the construction of the new Centre House, just across the street, from start to finish. SUSV Visitor Center is on this site today.



DETAILS, DETAILS!

South Union's restoration has been a slow, methodical one, and one that has focused on details. This philosophy applies not only to the historic structures but to the collection as well. Meticulous restoration requires a meticulous craftsman, and we have that in SUSV's resident artist, Roger Ryan.

Recently Roger took on the task of building two drawers for a South Union Shaker table that has been "drawerless" since it came into the collection more than forty years ago. The drawers were constructed with walnut fronts,



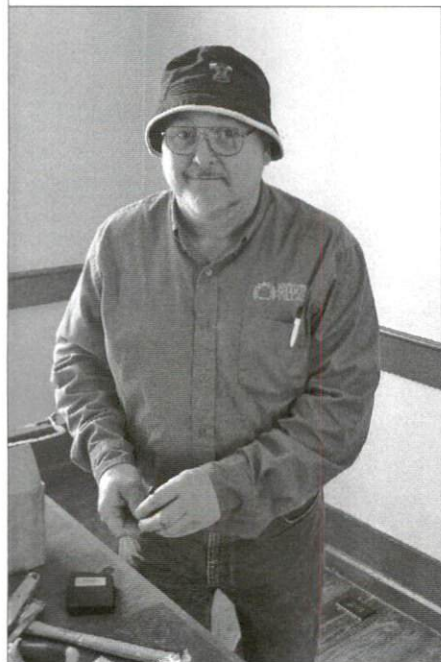
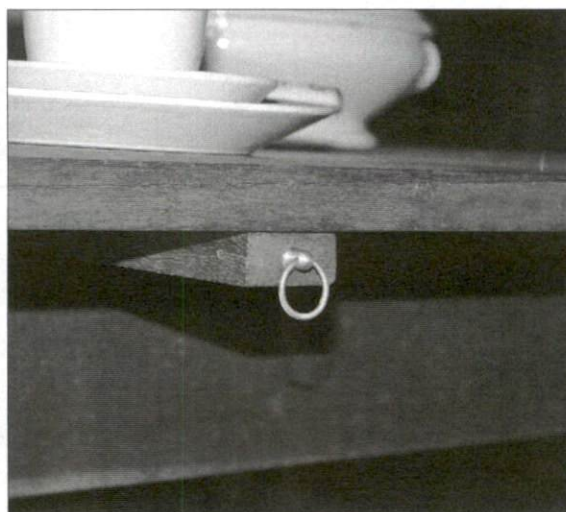
dovetailed to poplar sides, backs, and bottoms. Pulls were reproduced using an example from a well-documented South Union bureau as a template.

The table, ca. 1850, is the only example of the "falling leaf" form in the museum collection. The leaves are held in place by two long, narrow boards that slide into pockets built into the frame of the table. Brass rings were originally installed on the

ends of both boards so that they could be pulled easily from the pockets. Only a portion of one of the rings survived. Roger Ryan reproduced two new ones (right) and the table once again functions as it should. The

remnant of the original brass pull

was preserved and is now also part of the collection. Many thanks to Roger Ryan for sharing his craftsmanship with the South Union Shaker Village.

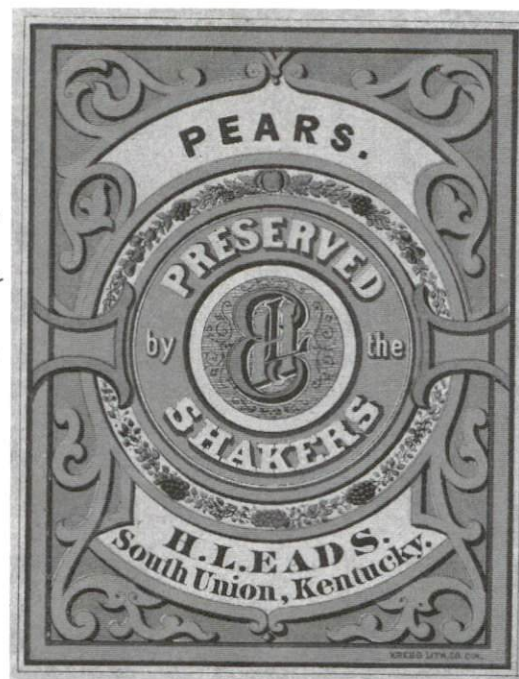


WELCOME NEW STAFF MEMBER

We would like to welcome Johnny Miller to the SUSV staff as Director of Maintenance and Restoration. Johnny, along with his brother Danny, has been involved with SUSV for over twenty years, working on a variety of grant-funded restoration projects. Some of the notable restorations that benefitted significantly from Johnny's skill and drive are the dry-laid brick floors in the 1835 Smoke & Milk House and the 1847 Steam House. He also is responsible for the restoration of the 1818 Meeting House foundation, where he used the archeological footprint and existing water table stones to reconstruct the lower portion of the building. Much of the original Shaker sidewalk, moved in the 1920s, was put back in place by Johnny and his brother, using historic photos and manuscript records as a guide. SUSV is fortunate to have Johnny on staff and looks forward to benefitting from his many talents.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Preserved Fruit Labels (2), ca. 1870, un-used, dark bittersweet orange and gold with reflective gold border, "Pears," emblazoned with Elder Harvey Eads' name at the base of the label and his initials forming a center logo, printed for the South Union Shakers by the Krebs Lithographing Company, Cincinnati, Ohio. The Shakers produced preserved fruit in over a dozen varieties and shipped thousands of aqua-colored jars from the village, however these recently discovered labels are the only known examples. Two previous labels, still attached to jars and in deteriorated condition, have surfaced. The Shakers also used embossed jars that did not require labels.



.....donated by David Newell

Baskets, ash, made by Nathan Taylor on Shaker wooden molds, including an apple basket, carrier, #1 fruit basket, set of three nesting "kittenhead" baskets, knife basket, teaspoon basket, small chevron knife basket, miniature laundry basket, and miniature carrier (below). The Shakers at South Union also made baskets on wooden molds, but used white oak.

.....donated by Nathan Taylor



Collection of Secondary Material, one hundred eighty-eight (188) books and other printed material relating to America decorative arts, formerly the library of Kentucky scholar Marianne Ramsey. SUSV has designated this significant gift **The Marianne Ramsey Collection: Decorative Arts, Architecture and Culture in America.**

.....donated by Marianne Ramsey

Cupboard, poplar, two-door, on tapered feet, remnants of early paint, purchased at the 1922 South Union auction, and owned for many years by Mr. and Mrs. Guy Morris, grandparents of donor, Woodburn, KY

.....donated by Brent Harris

Book, *History of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad* by Maury Klein, 1972

.....donated by Wayne Metcalf

Books, *Shaker Baskets* by Martha Wetherbee and Nathan Taylor, 3rd edition, 2003, and *Legend of the Bushwhacker Basket* by Martha Wetherbee and Nathan Taylor, 1986.

.....donated by Nathan Taylor



A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Let me begin by saying "thank you" once again for the incredible out-pouring of generosity that you exhibited throughout the Wash House Campaign. We plan to take possession of the building in mid-March, just in time for the first-ever public tour that will take place during the South Union Seminar in April. There is still much work to be done, beginning with the design and architectural aspects of planning, followed by grant-writing and fundraising, and completing the project through restoration and adaptive re-use. It is going to be a lengthy but rewarding process and we look forward to the journey. The finished product will be a very valuable addition to our historic site.

I want to take this opportunity to offer many thanks to SUSV's incredible staff. They each go above and beyond to make things happen here. These are tough days for historic sites and museums, but everyone has pitched in to make sure we continue to offer the same quality educational experience on a daily basis. Our small but gifted and loyal staff is one of our greatest resources.

Please take advantage of SUSV's exciting event schedule for 2017. Several of the upcoming events are listed on the back page of this newsletter, but the entire calendar can be found on our website: SouthUnionShakerVillage.com. You will find the time-honored South Union Seminar, Shaker Farm Day, and Christmas at Shakertown still on the schedule, but we have added some new opportunities as well.

If you were ever a member of the cast, a volunteer, or even a fan of "Shakertown Revisited," you won't want to miss the cast reunion on July 1. We gather at 11:00 a.m. and lunch will be served in the 1875 Grain Barn at noon. Reservations are required if you would like to have lunch! The cast reunion will coincide with performances of "Shakertown Revisited," by Russellville Arts Council at the deGraffenried Auditorium in Russellville on June 29, June 30 and July 1. This will be the first production of the pageant in 27 years.

Thanks for continuing to support the South Union Shaker Village.



Recently discovered in a local family album was this photograph of young people visiting the South Union Shaker village, ca. 1915. The subjects are seated on a large iron tank that was later submerged into the ground for the purpose of water storage. This tank was discovered when SUSV was removing old water lines near the Centre Family well house in 1998. The 1854 Wash House is visible in the background.

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You Are Cordially Invited to the 30th Annual

SOUTH UNION SEMINAR

“Better Walls are Not to Be Found”: The Reemergence of the 1854 Wash House

Friday, April 21, from 6:00pm – 8:00pm and Saturday, April 22, from 8:00am – 3:00pm

Guest Speakers Include:

Donna Parker, Associate Professor, Exhibits Curator, Kentucky Museum, WKU
Jonathon Jeffrey, Professor, Department Head, Kentucky Library, WKU
Jo Havener, in an oral history interview on growing up in the “laundry building”

Name _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

Address _____

Special Needs (vegetarian meals, etc.) _____

_____ \$85 per member, Friday and Saturday

_____ \$100 per non-member, Friday and Saturday

_____ \$35 student, Friday and Saturday

_____ \$65 per member, Saturday only

_____ \$75 per non-member, Saturday only

_____ Check Enclosed _____ Credit Card # _____ Exp. _____ CVV

Special thanks to our sponsors: Shannon & Michael Vitale and HILLIARD LYONS

A detailed schedule of events and confirmation will be mailed to you when you register. Registration deadline is Friday, April 14.
Please mail to: South Union Shaker Village, PO Box 177, Auburn, KY 42206

SOUTH UNION SHAKER VILLAGE

P.O. Box 177, Auburn, KY 42206

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUSV APPRAISAL DAY

Saturday, March 11

Accredited appraisers from Case Antiques Inc., Auctions & Appraisals of Knoxville and Nashville, Tennessee, including Sarah Campbell Drury, will provide verbal auction estimates. Drury is a member of the International Society of Appraisers. Items which may be considered for evaluation include paintings, sculpture, silver, pottery and porcelain, documents, maps and books, Asian antiques, Civil War items, and other decorative and historic items. Furniture items and other large items may be evaluated using photographs if their size prohibits them from being brought in. Items believed to be Shaker in origin are especially welcome. For more information, contact Case's Nashville office at (615) 812-6096 or info@caseantiques.com.

Cost: \$10.00 per item appraised, benefitting the SUSV.

Time: 10:00am–12:00pm, 12:30pm–4:00pm

SOUTH UNION SEMINAR

Friday and Saturday, April 21-22

"Better Walls are Not to Be Found":

The Reemergence of the 1854 Wash House

This year's event will celebrate the recent acquisition of the 1854 Wash House, including the first behind-the-scenes, pre-restoration tour of the structure.

Reservations: \$85 members, \$100 non-members, \$35 students

Time: Friday 6:00pm – 8:00pm, Saturday 8:00am – 3:00pm

L&N RAILROAD LUNCHEON

Saturday, May 13

Enjoy a hearty 1880s menu typical of what would have been served at South Union's famous railroad hotel. The historic menu includes roast turkey and cranberries, baked macaroni and cheese, fried corn, baked sweet potatoes, breaded tomatoes, yeast rolls, and walnut cake with whipped cream.

Reservations: \$22 members, \$25 non-members / Time: 12:00 noon

"SHAKE, RIDE & ROLL" BIKE EVENT

Saturday, June 3

In cooperation with the Bowling Green League of Bicyclists (BGLOB), the South Union Shaker Village will host a bike ride through the beautiful countryside, much of what was originally the Shaker's 6,000 acre farm. Special premiums and options for the day's event will be offered upon registration. To register contact: www.meetup.com

"SHAKERTOWN REVISITED" CAST REUNION

Saturday, July 1

Former cast members and volunteers, you are invited to a "Shakertown Revisited" reunion to be held at SUSV! This year the reunion coincides with a Russellville Arts Council production of "Shakertown Revisited" to be performed at the deGraffenried Auditorium in Russellville on June 29, June 30 and July 1.

Reservations: \$15, includes lunch

Time: 11:00am–2:00pm, lunch will be served at noon

SOUTH UNION SHAKER VILLAGE

PO Box 177, Auburn, Kentucky 42206

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