

7-1996

South Union Messenger (July 1996)

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The South Union Messenger

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE SHAKER MUSEUM AT SOUTH UNION
JULY 1996

MUSEUM RECEIVES GRANT FROM CARPENTER FOUNDATION

The Shaker Museum at South Union recently received a \$77,780.00 grant from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation for exterior work on the 1824 Centre Dwelling. Slated for repair is the brickwork on the Centre House chimneys and the mortar joints on the structure's limestone foundation. The grant will also fund the construction and installation of new wooden shutters for the Centre House and the relining of the original limestone gutters with new copper. Problems with flashing and failed chimney caps will also be repaired. All grant projects are designed to insure that moisture and sunlight do not threaten the interior architectural elements of the Centre House or its contents. The museum is indebted to the Carpenter Foundation for its continuing support of the preservation efforts at South Union.

THE KENTUCKY COLONELS LEND A HELPING HAND

The Centre House bake room has never been open to the public and is the only major room in the structure that is unrestored. For those of you who have attended the Shaker Festival over the past three years, visitors have been allowed to pass through the room in order to purchase the Shaker picnic lunch. Soon the peeling paint, failing plaster, and missing woodwork will all be restored to an 1840s appearance with assistance from the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels. A \$2,380.00 grant will fund the project, planned for completion by mid-October. By late fall, the bake room will be furnished and open to the public on a daily basis. Thanks to the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels for assisting with interior restoration projects.

SOUTHERN FURNITURE SYMPOSIUM PLANNED FOR OCTOBER 5

In 1994 the Shaker Museum hosted its first weekend symposium focusing on 19th century furniture-making traditions in Kentucky and Tennessee, and how those traditions related to Kentucky Shaker furniture style and form. On October 5, the museum will present a second Southern Furniture Symposium, featuring noted material culture authorities and an exhibit of forty pieces of antebellum Kentucky and Tennessee furniture. Speakers will include Ann McPherson, Tracey Parks, Larrie Curry, and key-note Susan Buck of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. Ms. Buck will present research on original painted surfaces found on Shaker furniture, while other presenters will focus on Tennessee furniture-making traditions and a comparative study of South Union and Pleasant Hill design. Invitations will be sent to members toward the end of August.

SHAKER MUSEUM WELCOMES NEW STAFF MEMBER

The museum's new staff position, Director of Development and Marketing, was recently filled by Pete Wilson, a speech communications graduate from Western Kentucky University and a Nashville, Tennessee native. Pete's role at the museum will include marketing and advertising, the coordination of a volunteer program, and duties relating to the developmental aspects of site image and growth. The Shaker Museum at South Union welcomes Pete and looks forward to the many benefits possible because of his extraordinary talents.

IN MEMORIAM

Long-time museum member and volunteer Virginia Hurst died May 11 after a brief illness. Visitors to the museum may remember "Miss Virginia" serving spiced grape juice in the Centre House kitchen during the Shaker Festival, or churning butter during Herbal Fair and Autumn Days. She was a faithful attendee of all Shaker Museum events, a familiar face at South Union for more than a decade. Virginia Hurst was the grandmother of museum director, Tommy Hines.

FOUR-LANE BYPASS AROUND SOUTH UNION OPENS

Visitors coming to the Shaker Museum will now enter the historic site from a new perspective. Highway 68, the road that has intersected the village since it was settled in 1807, is now used only by farm vehicles and local traffic. A new four-lane US 68 opened around the northern perimeter of the South Union historic district in June. The view of the South Union structures from the new road is magnificent, but watch closely for signs. The re-routed highway can be disconcerting even for local residents. We are now approximately one-half mile south of US 68, enjoying peace and quiet from the nearly deserted old road.

STEAM HOUSE RESTORATION NEARING COMPLETION

The last phase of a \$40,496.34 grant from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, awarded in 1994, has begun. The 1847 Steam House will be entirely repointed during August, bringing the exterior of the brick structure back to its original appearance. A standing seam metal roof has already been installed to replicate the original, and interior research has produced evidence of peg rail around the perimeter of the room. A concrete floor, poured in the 1930s, is being removed as this newsletter is printed. The Steam House will be open to the public for the 1997 museum season.

"AN EVENING IN SHAKERTOWN" DAZZLES GUESTS

The seventh annual gala fundraiser, "An Evening in Shakertown," was again a great success, due to the tireless efforts of nearly one hundred committee members guided by the able hands of event chairperson Belinda Ray, and co-chairperson Alice Rockhold. To commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of the Shaker Museum at South Union, nearly three hundred guests were treated to table settings of black, white, and silver, highlighted by center topiaries that canopied each table. A forest of twenty-foot trees covered in miniature lights sparkled under a vast white tent. Dinner was followed by a benefit auction and then dancing, which continued past midnight. Special thanks to all those who had a part in the planning and preparation for this event, and to Trans Financial and Commonwealth Health Corporation, underwriters of the gala.

THE 1996 SHAKER FESTIVAL

Once again the Shaker Museum at South Union experienced a successful and well-attended Summer Shaker Festival. This year's event featured twenty-five craftspeople from Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Virginia, and Ohio, demonstrating 19th century traditional crafts. There were also Shaker music performances in the meeting room by the **South Union Shaker Quartet**. Bluegrass music on the lawn was provided by local talent, **Buck Creek**. Shaker foods served on the back porch proved to be popular again this year as well as the many Shaker presentations given by staff members during the three day event.

SHAKER MUSEUM GOES COUNTRY!!

On July 16th, the Shaker Museum was visited by a group of a different kind. A production company from Nashville chose the museum as the location for portions of the new Patty Loveless video. A crew of about twenty-five people, along with big lights, cameras, and a lot of other equipment, made the Centre House their studio for twelve hours. The museum was chosen for its simple architectural style and historic setting, not for its Shaker connection. Patty Loveless earned the award for 1995 Album of the Year for *When Fallen Angels Fly*, and also received the Academy of Country Music's Female Vocalist of the Year award for 1996. The video, "Lonely Too Long," will be released on Country Music Television nationwide in approximately four weeks.

EDUCATION NOTES

The Shaker Museum is fortunate to have developed a relationship with several departments from Western Kentucky University, who have provided invaluable assistance in the form of graduate student workers. Karen Heege, a WKU graduate student, continued this spring assisting the staff with research, interpretation, and a variety of administrative tasks. This season also brought a new educational connection with the Historic Preservation Program at Middle Tennessee State University. Lena Sweeten, an MTSU graduate student, worked with the furniture collection, beginning the daunting task of inventorying and documenting each category. She completed six furniture types, more than one hundred fifty pieces. We thank Lena for her hard work, and hope to continue hosting students from MTSU.

"A Shaker Sheep to Shawl" was a great success, due in large part to the generosity of Teddy and David Emmerich of Solace Farm in Smith's Grove, and Emerson Electric in Russellville. The Emmerichs supplied the sheep that grazed in the middle lot this spring. Emerson Electric contributed to the underwriting of this event. It is always a treat for us to see animals back at South Union.

The work of graduate students from WKU continues to be evident in the museum. A new exhibit, "Shaker Foodways: Thanks to the Good Giver," was researched and mounted by the Museum Studies class under the guidance of professor Michael Ann Williams. Students working on the project were LuAnn Johnson, Lisa Phillips, and Ashish Mishra. This exhibit, located in the Centre House dining room, examines food production, preservation, and preparation as practiced by South Union's Shakers.

Summer Day Camp 1996 was another success. Almost fifty area children spent mornings at the museum during June and July, learning about the history of the South Union Shakers and how museums interpret history. They played Victorian games, made 19th century crafts, and learned Shaker songs and dances. Several senior Girl Scouts from Franklin assisted with the camp, completing hours of public

service required for advancement. Scholarship support for the 1996 day camp season was provided by Fruit of the Loom, Inc., Southern Deposit Bank, and Trent Spurlock. We thank you for your support. A great time was had by all!

We are also pleased to announce the re-opening of the exhibit, "Black Shakers in America." New research has been added to the exhibit, focusing on an interesting facet of Shaker history that has previously been understudied. It is now located on the third floor in its own exhibit space. Underwriting for this project was generously provided by Martin Automotive Group, Bowling Green.

School tours will be underway again before you know it! Sharon would love to have volunteers to help guide school groups in the museum, *or* to assist with hands-on activities, *or* to help assemble materials for programs. It is a beautiful thing to watch children make a connection between the past and their present. If you can give one or more hours to assist with these programs, call Sharon at the museum.

SHAKER TAVERN NOW UNDER HOME RULE

For the first time since the Shaker Tavern opened in 1986, the business is being operated by the Shaker Museum at South Union instead of by an outside interest. Paula Robinson was hired as innkeeper in April, and the Bed & Breakfast trade is thriving in South Union. Daily restaurant service has been discontinued but overnight accommodations are available year round.

The Tavern was built by the Shakers in 1869 and was leased to "worldly" interests for use as a hotel until the 1920s. From 1922 until 1980 the Tavern was used as a private residence. In 1980 Shakertown Revisited, Inc. purchased the building and began to rent the building for the purpose of a restaurant in 1986. The Shaker Museum welcomes innkeeper Paula Robinson as its first Tavern staff person and wishes her the very best.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!!

The Shaker Museum could not offer the variety of programs on our calendar of events without the many hours of labor donated by volunteers. We are fortunate to have so many friends willing to share their time. The past few months have seen several new faces along with many "regulars!" If we missed your name, please accept our apologies.

Beth Buddle
Debbie Britt
Helen Shores
Mable Howlett
Mary Lucy Franklin
Mike & Sam Hossom
Reba Hamm
Sheldon & Brenda Baugh
Lena Sweeten
Marge Sterling
Jeremy Davis
Dale Spencer

Brandi Wheeler
Sally Ann Strickler
John Campbell
Carl & Betty King
Jacob Koomler
John & Linda Tanner
Ruth Allender
Trent Spurlock
Julia Morgan
Harold McKee
Charlie Ray
Skip Cleavinger

Cara Catlett
Karen Heege
Kelly Koomler
Mark Reynolds
Carol Dyche
Ray Clark
Gingie Hines
Wes & Amy Moore
Debi Bogle
Teddy & David Emmerich
John Minton

A SPECIAL THANKS . . .

. . . to John Campbell for going above and beyond to get the Shaker Museum on-line. The museum now has its own web page which can be accessed by any personal computer that has Internet service. The page includes pictures of information about the museum, membership, how to get to the museum, calendar of events, the tavern, and other local attractions. It is still under "construction," but you can view the page at: <http://www.logantele.com/~shakmus/>

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Tom Pinborough, Bowling Green, KY
Mr. & Mrs. William Kline, Williamstown, NY
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Worcester, Bowling Green, KY
Bill & Pat Waddington, Scottsville, KY
Mr. & Mrs. Ken Knowles, Auburn, KY
John Alexander, Baltimore, MD
Vicky Lee Cowell, Beaver Dam, KY

Theodore Grieshop, Bowling Green, KY
Carolyn Moreland, Franklin, KY
Shanna Paul, Bowling Green, KY
Mr. & Mrs. Jackson Kesler, Bowling Green, KY
Elizabeth Baker, Miami, FL
Terri & Mark Kroll, Bowling Green, KY
Drs. James Beattie, Jr. & Marie Michelson,
Bowling Green, KY

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION

In Memory of J.D. Joines:

Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Robbins, Bowling Green KY
Ken & Jane Robbins, Auburn, KY
Mr. & Mrs. Randy Fuqua, Russellville, KY
Mike Robbins, Tullahoma, TN

In Memory of Virginia Hurst:

Don & Sue Brooks, Rockfield, KY
Lillie Mae Hayes, Auburn, KY
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Owrey, Franklin, OH
Annie Metzger, Portland, OR
Dale & Mary Spencer, Franklin, KY
Jeanne Weaver, Morgantown, IN
Mr. & Mrs. Earl Spurlock, Russellville, KY
Trent Spurlock, Russellville, KY
Cora Jane Spillar, Oakland, KY
Mr. & Mrs. John Ridley, Bowling Green, KY
Mr. & Mrs. Rex Bennett, Greenfield, IN

In Memory of Julia Neal:

Paul & Diana Von Kolken, Holland, MI
Rose Mary & Fred Lawson, Sevierville, TN

In Memory of Deedy Hall:

Rose Mary & Fred Lawson, Sevierville, TN

In Memory of O.E. Freeman:

Alan Schoen, New York, NY

Roof Repair Project:

Ruth Allender, Bowling Green, KY
Millard & Elizabeth Johnson, Washington, DC
Martha Boice, Dayton, OH
Elaine Disch, Evanston, IL

General Support Donations:

Larry & Ruth Owrey Franklin, OH
H.C. Peart, Bowling Green, KY

Other Donations:

Hilda Hines, Christmas Cards
Marcia Fuqua, Christmas Cards
Maxine Marbury, Christmas Cards, Ribbon
Virginia Hurst, Dish Towels
John & Linda Tanner, Sheets & Craft Trays
Bowling Green Paper/Cathy King, Paper
Towels

THANK YOU FOR UNDERWRITING EVENTS AND EXHIBITS

Commonwealth Health Corporation for "An Evening in Shakertown"
Trans Financial for "An Evening in Shakertown"
Hilliard Lyons for the South Union Seminar
Hillview Garden Center for Spring Herbal Fair
Southern Deposit Bank for Summer Shaker Festival
Emerson Electric for "A Shaker Sheep to Shawl" and Southern Furniture Symposium
Trent Spurlock for 1996 Summer Day Camp
Fruit of the Loom for 1996 Summer Day Camp
Southern Deposit Bank for 1996 Summer Day Camp
Col. & Mrs. Robert Spiller for Southern Furniture Symposium
Irene's Gallery of Antiques for Southern Furniture Symposium
Martin Automotive Group for "Black Shakers in America" Exhibit

WISH LIST

Large Projector Screen
Thermos Coffee Decanter
VCR
Colored Pencils
Large Pine Cones

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Two Maple and Ash "Mule-Eared" Side Chairs, Room Numbers 5 and 8, Attributed to South Union
.....purchased with acquisition endowment funds

Three Photographs of South Union Shakers, Elvarine, Rhoda, and Charity Hilton, ca. 1880s
.....donated by Dixie Perez, great niece of the Hiltons

Microfilm Reels of South Union Manuscripts in the Collection of the Kentucky Library and Journals B and D in the South Union Collection
.....donated by the Kentucky Library, Western Kentucky University

Secondary Library Materials
.....donated by Maxine Marbury, Grover Corum, Dale Spencer, Karl Federer, and an anonymous donor

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

There have been so many volunteers involved with our activities this spring that it would be impossible to thank each of them sufficiently. Any success we have at South Union is due to the dedication and hard work of volunteers. One of the most important volunteer groups within our organization is the Advisory Committee. These five volunteers have been offering guidance and expertise to the museum and its programs since 1990. Current members include Edie Bingham of Glenview, Kentucky; Ann Early Sutherland of Bardstown, Kentucky; Bill Coke, Ridley Wills III, and Martin Brown of Nashville, Tennessee. I would like to welcome our newest Advisory Committee member, John Desmarais, CEO of Commonwealth Health Corporation, Bowling Green. Mr. Desmarais has been a supporter of the preservation efforts at South Union for several years and we all look forward to an even greater involvement through the Advisory Committee. Thanks to everyone who contributes in some way to the Shaker Museum.

UPCOMING CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sept. 13-14 Fall Candlelight Dinners

A sumptuous Shaker meal served in the Centre House dining room, followed by a living history tour of the building by candlelight. Fee: TBA. Time: 7:00 pm.

October 5 Southern Furniture Symposium

A day-long seminar focusing on antebellum furniture made in Kentucky and Tennessee with presentations by distinguished scholars. Keynote speaker Susan Buck, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, will present new scholarship on the early painted surfaces of Shaker furniture. Reservations are required. Fee: TBA. Time: TBA.

October 19 Shaker Harvest Festival

An annual event celebrating the harvest activities of the South Union Shakers. Shaker music and food are also available. No reservations required except for large groups. Open to the general public with paid museum admission. Time: 9:00 - 4:00. This event is funded in part by Logan Memorial Hospital.

August 23-24 Oval Box/Basket Workshop

Learn to make wooden oval boxes or a Shaker style basket in this two-day workshop. Includes lunch on Saturday. Reservations are required. Fee: \$70 for either workshop. Time: TBA

Nov. 2-3 Shaker Sampler Workshop

This class is designed for both beginning and advanced students who will complete a cross-stitch sampler based on the Shaker Mulberry Bower. Includes all materials and tools, and lunch on Saturday. Reservations required. Fee: TBA. Time: TBA

Shakertown



South Union

Shakertown at South Union, Kentucky 42283

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