

Winter 2019

South Union Messenger (Winter 2019)

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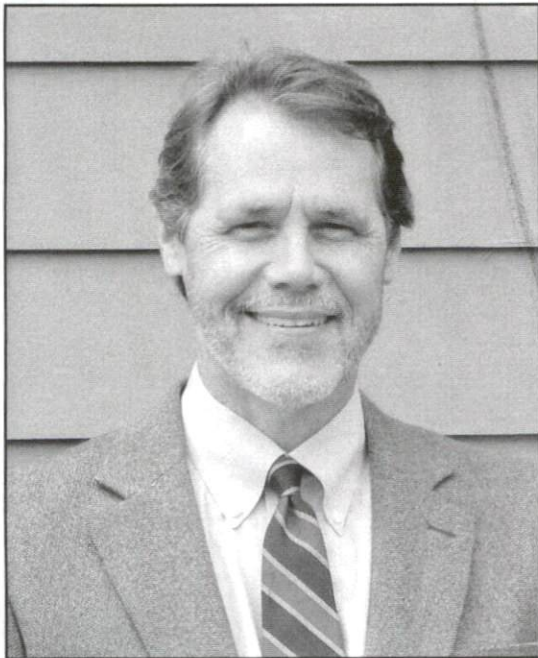
SOUTH UNION MESSENGER

Vol. XLVIII, No.1, 2019
South Union Shaker Village, Kentucky

“CHOOSING WHAT TO SAVE: THE STATE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION” A SOUTH UNION SEMINAR

The South Union Seminar is a 32-year tradition, presented this season with a new look and a new focus. The very important issue of historic preservation will be examined, highlighting projects in areas of the South that are nationally known for long-standing restoration standards, as well as smaller, grass-roots efforts that are making a difference in preserving America's past. The seminar's theme, while not a total focus on Shaker scholarship as in years past, does include presentations on restoration efforts going on at both South Union and Pleasant Hill.

On Saturday, May 18th, you will have the opportunity to explore the current field of historic preservation with experts in the discipline, both public and private sector. Speakers include keynote Daniel Carey, President & CEO of Historic Savannah Foundation, as well as others who have had led or are currently leading successful restoration projects. Private sector preservationist Jonathan Schwer will present on current restoration at the 1921 Pushins Building on Fountain Square in Bowling Green and Stephen Morgenthauer will chronicle the transformation of one of the city's finest Victorian residences, the 1880s Potter's Castle. Dan Brown with the Tennessee Historical Commission will present about Middle Tennessee's restoration of Rosenwald Schools, and William Updike, Vice President of Cultural and Natural Resources, Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, will focus on the recent major restoration projects on the site's Centre Family Dwelling and Meeting House. The afternoon will conclude with an in-depth tour of the ongoing restoration of SUSV's 1854 Wash House at South Union.



Keynote speaker, Daniel Carey is President and CEO of Historic Savannah Foundation.

As always, the South Union Seminar registration price includes both breakfast and lunch and free admission to the historic buildings on site. If you would like to register you may do so by mailing a check with the enclosed form. You may also register online by May 10th (southunionshakervillage.com). Make plans to join us on May 18th!

Special thanks to Marion Jackson and Jeffrey Clark
for sponsoring the 2019 South Union Seminar

ARCHITECTURAL RESEARCH IN THE CENTRE HOUSE

Restoration in the 1824 Centre House began in 1972 soon after the building was purchased by Shakertown Revisited, Inc. It was apparent that alterations had been made since the Shakers left in 1922, primarily by the property's second owner, Oscar Bond, who installed 18 bathrooms and upgraded the electrical system in 1935. While his attempts to turn the Centre House into a hotel never came to fruition, the upgrades were a bonus to the next occupants, St. Maur's Monastery, who purchased the building and three other structures in 1949. The building, which housed seminary students until 1972, suffered even more changes, including the replacement of original windows, removal of 19th century shutters, the pouring of concrete on a portion of the cellar floor, and the addition of more wiring and plumbing. Much of this was addressed in the early 1970s and again in the 1990s when major restoration projects took place.

In January of this year we began a room-by-room assessment of the Centre House, a plan to examine and evaluate all surfaces, including painted plaster, flooring, mantels, and wooden trim. The individual room reports will also include documenting restoration from the past, elements that have been replaced, and those that are missing and have not yet been replaced.

The process will also include the installation of reproduction pegs, or "pins," that match the documented originals and the removal of 1970s replacements that do not. We have already discovered that the Shaker carpenters who worked on the Centre House in the early 1830s stamped



The first room to be examined and restored, was one of two retiring rooms on the 4th level of the Centre House. During the 19th century this space was used during the winter months as living space for children.



In the north "clothes room," suspended rails for pegs have been replicated using existing examples as patterns. These pegrails have been missing since 1935 when a bathroom was installed in this space.

Roman numerals on the edge of each interior door, corresponding to a number of the door frame. In searching for numbers we have found that some of the doors are not hanging where they were originally intended, possibly the result of mistakes made in the 1930s or 1970s.

Work began on the fourth level of the building in one of the two retiring rooms (above), followed by the two large "clothes rooms" on either side of it. Woodwork that was stripped to reveal vestiges of original color in the 1970s was cleaned and waxed, 1930s quarter-round molding was removed from the baseboards, reproduction pegs were installed where missing, and walls and ceilings were resurfaced with flat white paint, applied with brushes, to mimic whitewash.

Other rooms will follow in this long-term project as funds become available. We are excited at the prospect of discovery as we carefully examine the excellent work of the 19th century Shakers. Many thanks to **Jack and Betty Kesler** for a contribution that is making the early stages of this important project a possibility.

HOPING TO LEARN MORETHE 1841 TRUSTEES OFFICE



When South Union closed its doors in 1922, one of the buildings was being made ready to house the remaining Shakers. The 81-year-old structure had once been the seat of commerce in the village, not only offering Shaker products for sale but serving as a restaurant and hotel for travelers. Always meticulously maintained, the 1841 Trustees Office had also, by 1922, been outfitted with telephone service, hot and cold running water and a steam boiler for heat.

For reasons undocumented, the Shakers at Mt. Lebanon decided not to retain the Trustees Office as a “retirement home” for the last South Union members and the building was sold with the rest of the property. The new owner used the building as living space for his employees until December 1930 when the Trustees Office burned.

This semester Erik Geiman (right), WKU undergraduate student of Architectural Services and German, began a meticulous research project focused on discovering information about the 1841 Trustees Office. As an intern from Western Kentucky University, Erik devotes hours weekly to examining journal records, letters, travelers’ accounts, newspapers, historic photographs, and other resources to compile a better picture of how the Trustees Office functioned and what the structure was like from an architectural standpoint. Future projects include probing to identify the perimeter of the stone foundation and exploring the possibility of a future archaeological dig.



Erik does exemplary research and South Union Shaker Village is fortunate to benefit from his work. He is originally from Ft. Thomas, Kentucky and his future plans include a career in adaptive re-use of historic structures.

Here's How You Can Help!

A great way that you can help SUSV to achieve its educational and preservation goals is by sponsoring events! We have a list of corporate sponsorship levels AND you can help underwrite events at a Patron level for individuals or families at only \$100.00. For more information email Tommy Hines at director@southunionshakervillage.com

AMAZING PERFORMANCE BY THE WINTERBIRDS

One generation after the next continues to discover and be inspired by the Shaker legacy. On March 28th SUSV played host to an extraordinary group of young musicians for a two-part special program *Rejoice! Roots of Shaker Musical Expression*. The Centre House rang with the sound of voices, clapping hands, and stomping feet as members of the Winterbirds performed a selection of Shaker hymns and dances. Participants delighted as Winterbirds' bassist, Emily Damrel, an elementary school music teacher by day, led everyone in a collective performance of "Like a Little Busy Bee," a sweet, playful hymn written at South Union. Others were moved to hear the hymn "Come Love," composed by African-American Shaker Eunice Freehart, also of South Union.

As the afternoon turned into evening the program's second component began with the Winterbirds performing an intimate set of Shaker poetry set to original melodies and arrangements by Nick Rich, Winterbirds' lead guitarist and composer. The South Union Hotel dining room served as the perfect backdrop for this magical performance. Noting the unique characteristics of the hotel, which celebrates its 150 anniversary this year, Nick observed, "The acoustics in this building are amazing. Even our mistakes sound good!"



Many thanks to SUSV members! Your yearly support is directly responsible for bringing such artistry in programming to South Union. To hear a sampling or to purchase the Winterbirds new album "Shaker Songs" visit: <https://winterbirdsband.bandcamp.com/album/shaker-songs>.

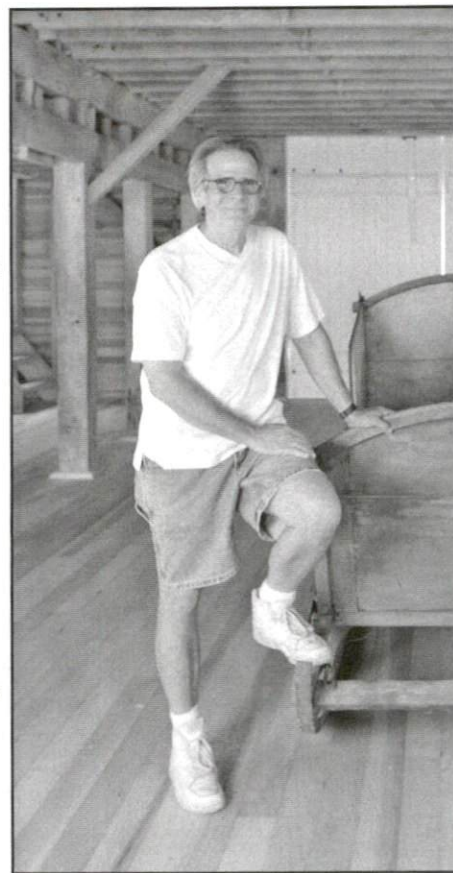
DID YOU KNOW?

- Furniture from South Union Shaker Village's collection is currently on exhibit at the Speed Art Museum in Louisville, as part of their on-going exhibit of Kentucky material culture. SUSV is also represented in the Speed's exhibit, "Making Time: The Art of the Tall Case Clock, 1790-1850," through June 16.
- Ten objects from South Union Shaker Village's collection are being exhibited at the James K. Polk Home in Columbia, Tennessee as part of "Crafted by Conscience: Material and Belief in Polk's America," through September 30.
- South Union's 2018 Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to Susannah Pyatt, a WKU intern who accomplished above and beyond in her scope and quality of work.

REMEMBERING EUGENE HALL

Everyone at South Union Shaker Village was saddened to hear of the passing of Eugene Hall (right), a restoration carpenter and contractor who worked on many significant projects in the village. Eugene first worked at South Union on the restoration of the 1847 Steam House, but also restored doors and windows in the Centre House, Smoke House, and Milk House. His monumental achievement at South Union was the restoration of the 1875 Grain Barn, a project that took nearly four years to complete and one that successfully preserved the last surviving Shaker barn here. Eugene's transformative work was featured in *Preservation*, the magazine published by the National Trust, in the November-December 2011 issue.

During his career, Eugene worked on scores of restoration projects in Kentucky and Middle Tennessee and in recent years focused his attention on many local projects, including the Logan County Archives building in Russellville, by whom he was recently honored. We are thankful for the work that Eugene Hall accomplished at South Union and offer our sincere condolences to his family.



SUSV RECOGNIZED

South Union Shaker Village was recently recognized by Preservation Kentucky for its educational efforts in the form of children's and adult programming, exhibitions, and events. SUSV staff members Tommy Hines, Sally Givens, and Rebekah Brummett attended PK's annual awards ceremony at the historic Undulata Farm in Shelby County, Kentucky. The honor of receiving the recognition was made all the more significant because the *Edith Bingham Excellence in Preservation Education* award is named for one of South Union's most treasured mentors and supporters. Mrs. Bingham serves on the Advisory Committee of our organization. Tommy Hines received the award on behalf of SUSV and is pictured on the second row, left. We are most grateful to Preservation Kentucky for this important recognition.



REGISTRATION FORM

Choosing What to Save: The State of Historic Preservation

A SOUTH UNION SEMINAR

Saturday, May 18, 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

Guest Speakers Include:

Daniel Carey, President and CEO, Historic Savannah Foundation

William Updike, Vice President of Cultural and Natural Resources, Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill

Dan Brown, Historic Sites Program Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

Stephen Morgenthaler and Jonathan Schwer, Private Sector Preservationists

Name _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

Address _____

Special Needs (vegetarian meals, etc.) _____

_____ \$45 member

_____ \$65 non-member

_____ \$20 student (scholarships available)

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

Special thanks to our sponsors: Marion Jackson and Jeffrey Clark

A detailed schedule of events and confirmation will be mailed to you when you register.
Registration deadline is Friday, May 10.

Please mail to: South Union Shaker Village, PO Box 177, Auburn, KY 42206
For more information call: 270-542-4167

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

"A Sacred Repository of Anthems & Hymns," 1852, inscribed to Eldress Nancy Moore during her 1854 trip to the northeastern villages.
.....Donated anonymously

Collection of stoneware (including an "I. Thomas" jug), candlesticks, bottles, baskets, coin spoons for exhibits, ironware. Desk, slant-top, cherry, ca. 1830, attributed to Todd County, a region near South Union, for study and exhibit.....Donated by Roger & Margaret Futrell

Cumberland Almanacs, Nashville, 1829 and 1830, one inscribed by SU Elder Benjamin Seth Youngs.....Donated by Scott DeWolfe

Photographs of St. Maur's Monastery, 1950s, who occupied several of the Shaker buildings prior to 1972.....Donated by Lori Goodale

Collection including feather baskets and chairs attributed to the Shakers, 1886 Shaker almanac, 1866 Cincinnati billhead with Shaker merchandise, and secondary published material.....Donated by Steve Cooper

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION

Event Sponsorship

- \$5,000.00—The Spiller Family for Children's Programming
- \$1,000.00—Marion Jackson and Jeffrey Clark for *South Union Seminar*
- \$500.00—First Southern National Bank for 2019 *Shaker Breakfast*
- \$500.00—Logan Telephone Cooperative for 2019 *Holiday Market*
- \$300.00—Sheila Flener for 2018 *Fall Farm to Table*
- \$250.00—Vickie C. Cole for 2019 *Shaker Breakfast*

General Support

- \$20,000.00—Atticus Trust
- \$10,000.00—Edith Bingham
- \$5,000.00—Susannah Scott-Barnes
- \$5,000.00—Jack and Betty Kesler (Restoration)
- \$5,000.00—Carolyn Smith and Richard Dabrowski (Restoration)
- \$1,000.00—Ernest and Elaine Ezell
- \$1,000.00—John and Linda Tanner (Collections)
- \$1,000.00—Ray and Judy McCaskey
- \$500.00—Anonymous
- \$500.00—Alan and Adrienne Dieball (Wash House Window)
- \$500.00—Kay Bender
- \$350.00—Skip Cleavinger
- \$350.00—Heather Brooks
- \$350.00—Sheila Flener
- \$300.00—John Campbell
- \$200.00—Judge William and Marcia Fuqua
- Mark and Laura Hardison (in memory of Eugene Hall)

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SUSV CALENDAR OF EVENTS

"CHOOSING WHAT TO SAVE: THE STATE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION"

Saturday, May 18

Explore the current field of historic preservation with experts in the discipline, both public and private sector. Presenters include Daniel Carey, President & CEO of Historic Savannah Foundation, as well as others who have had led successful restoration projects, both public and private sector. Fee includes breakfast and lunch.

Reservations required: \$45 members, \$65 non-members, \$20 students (scholarships available)

Time: Saturday 8:00am - 3:30pm

Sponsored by Marion Jackson and Jeffrey Clark

SHAKE, RIDE & ROLL

Saturday, June 1

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. To register contact: www.meetup.com

Sponsored by Logan Aluminum, Fruit of the Loom, and BGLOB

L&N LUNCHEON

Saturday, July 13

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. Served at the historic South Union Hotel.

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

Time: 12:00 noon

FARM TO TABLE IN THE GRAIN BARN

Saturday, September 7

Join us for an autumn meal created from local sources, served in the rustic atmosphere of the 1875 Grain Barn. Catered by River Cottage Farms. Wine by Carriage House Vineyards. Menu TBA

Reservations required: \$75 per person / Time: 6:30pm

"SPIRITS OF SOUTH UNION" CANDLELIGHT TOUR

Saturday, September 28

Hear the real stories of some of the people who lived at South Union Shaker Village in the 19th century, told in first person by candlelight, in the 1824 Centre House. This cooperative experience is made possible by the Fountain Square Players and the historic environment of South Union.

Reservations suggested: \$10 person / 6:30 p.m.

A SHAKER BREAKFAST

Saturday, November 2

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 the historic South Union Hotel.

Reservations required: \$24 members, \$27 non-members

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

Sponsored by First Southern National Bank, Vickie A. Cole

SOUTH UNION SHAKER VILLAGE
PO Box 177, Auburn, Kentucky 42206
270-542-4167 SouthUnionShakerVillage.com