



The Clarion

Published by the Friends of the Shakers

Spring 2009

Upcoming SDL Happenings

Spring Work Day
May 16, 10 a.m.

Shaker Museum opens for season
May 22
10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Herb Garden Internships
June 2 - July 20
For more information, contact Betsy-Ann Golon at 207-787-2764

Maine Festival of American Music
June 24-27

Kindling Stone Concert at the Meetinghouse
July 25, 7p.m.
Reservations required

Maine Farm Day
July 26
12 Noon

Friends' Weekend
August 8-9

Shaker Museum closes for season
October 12

2009 Shaker Christmas Fair
December 5
10 a.m - 3 p.m.

*For more details, contact the SDL office at 207-926-4597 or visit the web site:
www.shaker.lib.me.us*

Spring Is In The Air

It has been a long, cold and snowy winter in Northern New England. The snowfall total was not quite as much as the prior winter, but the cold has exceeded last year. However, the sun is getting warmer and the snow is melting and all look forward with great anticipation for green grass and early blooming plants.

Both Brother Arnold and Sister June have had surgery. Brother Arnold went into the hospital for a few days in January and was back at his many tasks soon after his return to the community. He seems well now and remains a very busy person.

Sister June had a hip replacement in February and had to remain in nursing care longer than expected due to an infection. She returned to the village the last day of March after 49 days away and seems to be doing well as I write this (it is very early April).

Sister Frances tells everyone she is the healthiest member of the family. She is doing well and keeps a very active schedule. However, due to her daily visits to Sister, Sr. Frances was unable to prepare Home Notes for this edition of *The Clarion*, so I am filling in.

I am fortunate to live close enough to the Sabbathday Lake Shaker Community to be able to attend meeting on many Sundays and this keeps me in touch with them. It also enables me to receive spiritual support that emanates from Shaker meetings and to enjoy the love the family so freely shares with all.

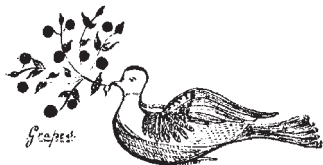
With the coming of spring, the family, the staff and the Friends of the Shakers begin to advance plans for the many activities that occur during the warmer weather. We all hope you will be able to take part in these events in the coming months.

Spring Work Day

The spring work day, as many of you know, occurs in May on a Saturday. Members of the Friends and others come together to help with the many tasks both indoors and out to assist the community to dust, clean, clear out the winter outdoor debris and get the buildings ready for public tours. It is a time of satisfying work, wonderful fellowship and the sharing of experiences for all who take part. This year the spring work day is scheduled for May 16 and, while the official start time is 10:00 a.m., there is always an opportunity to begin tasks earlier. There is much activity outside, but there are plenty of jobs inside too, so do not let inclement weather keep you away.



continued on page 2



Friends of the Shakers

Board of Directors

Nancy George, *President*

Bernice Anthony, *Vice President*

Susan Dupree, *Secretary*

Stephen Paterwic, *Treasurer*

Kyle Allen, *Clerk*

Sr. Frances Carr

Ellie Fish

Jim Gelbort

Br. Arnold Hadd

Robert King

Cherie Kline

Ray McCaskey

Donna Murphy

Munira Naqui

Elizabeth Gruppe Stover

Judy Travis



Spring 2009
Volume 34, No. 1

The Clarion

is published by
the Friends of the Shakers
for its members.

Please address
comments to:

The Friends of the Shakers
707 Shaker Road
New Gloucester, ME 04260

Editor: Kyle Allen
info@friendsoftheshakers.org

Spring Is In The Air, continued from page 1

Maine Festival of American Music

This year is the 4th annual Maine Festival of American Music: Its Roots and Traditions led by the Portland String Quartet. This extraordinary quartet has been together for 40 years and all are original members. The PSQ has had a close relationship with the Shakers of Sabbathday Lake for many, many years. They have performed benefit concerts for the Shaker Library over the years and played several years ago at the 30th anniversary of the Friends for the Saturday evening program at Friends' Weekend. I have heard them a number of times and find their music to be exceptional. The festival this year will be the evenings of June 24, 25 and 27.

June 24th, 7:00 p.m.

Ragtime: American Music

The Portland String Quartet and Virginia Eskin, piano soloist

June 25th, 7:00 p.m.

In the Shaker Tradition, Shaker folk art and Shaker music

The Portland String Quartet, with commentary by Brother Arnold.

June 27th, 7:00 p.m.

Celebrating Chadwick, (composer George Chadwick)

The Portland String Quartet and Virginia Eskin, piano soloist, and Steven Ledbetter, who will talk about the work of George Chadwick.

Tickets for adults are \$25.00, senior tickets are \$20.00, and those under 21 may attend free of charge.

I urge you to try to attend at least one of these concerts.

Workshops and Crafts Demonstrations at Shaker Village

There will be many learning workshops at the village this year. A catalog listing the craft workshops, demonstrations of crafts, special tours and other events is available free of charge. Contact museum director Lenny Brooks for your copy or find it on the web at www.shaker.lib.me.us. A number of the Friends are workshop instructors – Dan and Betsy Grecoe, Naomi Northrop, Betsey-Ann Golon, Pat Libby, Dolores Broberg and Chris Becksvort.

The Museum

The Sabbathday Laker Shaker Museum will open for the 2009 season on May 22. As you may remember, guided tours of the village are free to members of the Friends. It is always a rewarding and a good learning experience to take one of the tours every so often. This is the second and final year for the wonderful exhibit "The Human and the Eternal: Shaker Art in its Many Forms." I believe this, too, is well worth going through several times. We will include tours of this special exhibit on our program during Friends' Weekend.

Friends' Weekend 2009

Planning is underway for this year's Friends' Weekend, and detailed information will be sent to you in the next *Clarion*. Do mark your calendars for August 8 and 9, 2009. We look forward to seeing you at the Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village for what is always a special time. I know the Shaker family will welcome you with open arms as they share this time for learning and spiritual renewal. We are truly fortunate to be a part of the Shaker life and experience.

— Nancy George, *President*

In Memory of Ruth E. Von Euw, Founding Member of the Friends of the Shakers

Organizations rise and fall by the quality of the ordinary people who belong to them. This is certainly true of Ruth Von Euw, whether it be in reference to her life as a loving family member, as an inspired teacher, as a devoted member of the Congregational Church, as a Shaker scholar, or as a true friend. Ruth was all of these things and so much more.

As many of us know, it is complete folly to think that the Shaker Testimony is something in the past. The real links of friendship formed when we encounter people in our Shaker quests are more than abundant proof that Mother's beautiful song still has the power to move hearts. No better evidence of this can be found than in my 35 years of friendship with Ruth.

In the fall of 1973, when I was seeking the answer to a question I had about the Shakers of Enfield, CT, Brother Ted gave me Ruth's name and address and suggested that I contact her. He considered her the expert on that society — and Brother Ted never called anyone an expert if he did not truly believe it. I was a senior at Iona College in New Rochelle, NY, and I wrote to her. The result was a flurry of letters and cards that never ceased for three decades. I have kept every one of them because they reveal a deeply Christian soul who tried every day to live by her principles. A brief account of her life may be of interest since so few really knew her, though she attended almost every Shaker event that she could.

Ruth was born in Rockville, CT, the youngest of the two children of Stephen and Ruth Von Euw. Ruth always loved school and wanted to be a teacher from her earliest years. After graduating from Rockville High she worked for a year at the local library before enrolling at what is now Framingham State College in MA. She received her bachelor's degree in elementary education and began a 35-year teaching career, first in Norwalk and the remainder in her beloved town of Rockville. In fact she taught the fifth grade in the same room at Northeast School for over 30 years! Her reputation was legendary and grew as generations from the same families passed through her room. Principals came to use her as an example for others to emulate.

Ruth received her master's degree from the University of Connecticut and followed their athletic triumphs with glee.

While convalescing from a brief illness in the early 1960s, she read a book on the Shakers, and like most of us, she was never the same again. She just had to learn more. When she started her lifetime of Shaker adven-



Stephen Paterwic and Ruth Von Euw at Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village in 2000.

tures, there were many Shaker sites still in the rough. She documented every former Shaker village by taking hundreds of slides. She also met many of the pioneers in Shaker life that are no longer with us. Of course, Sabbathday Lake drew her like a magnet. Brother Ted considered her one of the few people at the time who was doing serious research. One of her claims to fame was that she read everything there is on the Enfield, CT, Shakers. Later, after she retired, she read everything again — this time via microfilm. She wanted to make sure that she had not missed anything 20 years earlier!

In 1974, she was one of the few people asked by the Shakers to speak at their bicentennial conference. This was a highlight of her life. When this legendary conference was over, a group of enthusiasts decided to have

a meeting of the friends of the Shakers every year. She immediately joined as a lifetime, charter member.

Perhaps people reading this might ask, if she were so skilled as a researcher and had amassed such excellent slides and notes, how come she never became better known? In all things, especially her talents, she was totally self-effacing and shy. She supported rather than yearned for the spotlight. She was that silent attendee who followed everything lovingly in her heart. This introspection grew as her parents and brother died, and she was alone in her childhood home. Those of us who were her friends paid her regular visits, and these times are cherished memories. Friends member Naomi Northrop and I had the great privilege of being her friends while she was in good health as well as when her mental and physical health declined. Christmas Eve day was always spent with her, again, a wonderful gift that would not have been possible had we not known of the Shakers. This is an example of the "chords of union" spoken of in a Shaker hymn.

On September 6, 2008, Ruth was called into Eternity. Naomi and I spoke at her memorial service before the 150 people who packed Union Church in Rockville. Shaker songs were part of this beautiful tribute to her rare and special soul. Though we really miss our friend, she is now with God and happy with her family once again. Thankfully her entire collection of slides and notes are now part of the Ruth Von Euw Memorial Shaker Collection in the library at Sabbathday Lake. That the Shakers should have all that she accomplished in her decades of work was a great wish of hers.

Since she loved the Enfield Shakers so much, it is fitting to close this tribute with a quote from a song that Father James wrote at Enfield when he was dying in 1787. A passage from this song reads, "The winter's past and the spring appeareth, the turtle dove is in our land." Well Ruth, your life helped make the spring appear in our lives, and your gifts to us are that turtle dove which we will always remember and thank Mother for. — Stephen Paterwic

Christmas Fair Fun

Friends were in abundance as volunteers and as shoppers at the 2008 Shaker Christmas Fair. The December day was cold, bright and blustery, and made even brighter by the fair. The poor economy appeared to have an impact, for the influx of visitors, though steady, seemed lighter than most years. Nevertheless, fairgoers were lined up waiting to get inside the Shaker Store well before the 10 a.m. opening.

The White Elephant Room was a popular spot as shoppers looked for bargains and treasures, and as always, the proceeds from sales in this room went to provided Christmas presents for local families in need.

Freshly baked herb biscuits were as popular as ever, and this year the biscuit-makers were Brother Arnold, Rick Furlong and Diane O'Connor. Rick made many trips from the Dwelling House kitchen to the garage to deliver the tasty biscuits.

The winner of this year's Friends' raffle for a set of Sabbathday Lake



Dan and Betsy Grecoe are ready to greet customers in the Shaker Store at the 2008 Christmas Fair.

Shaker oval boxes was Anne Carley, of Atlanta, GA. The Friends raised more than \$1,200 via the raffle and the proceeds have been donated to

the Shaker family. Thank you to all who volunteered to sell tickets, and to those who purchased them, and to all who volunteered at the fair. 🍪



The Friends of the Shakers
707 Shaker Road
New Gloucester, ME 04260