

# SOUTH UNION MESSENGER

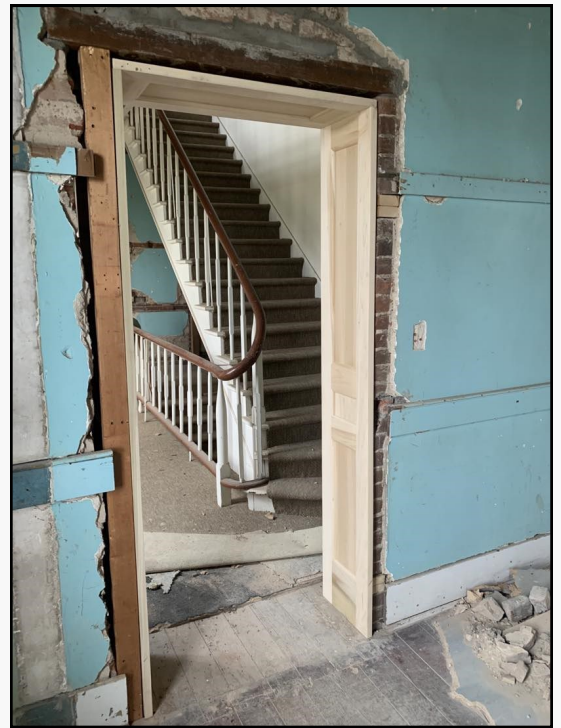
Vol. LIII, No. 2, 2024  
South Union Shaker Village, Kentucky

## RESTORATION IN PROGRESS!

South Union has experienced an amazing amount of restoration in 2024 and there is more to come! One of our biggest projects is taking place in the 1854 Wash House. Thanks to a gift from Brian Lankford, we are working on restoring the main level of the building. Reproduction floating panel jambs are currently being installed (right), which will be followed by replacement trim. Interior doors have also been replicated by Vintage Millworks of Fairview, Tennessee, and they will soon be put in place.

Since the last newsletter we have also:

- Completed in-depth restoration projects on two additional rooms in the 1824 Centre House, including plasterwork, replicating missing trim, painting walls and ceilings, cleaning and waxing work surfaces
- Painted the exterior woodwork on the 1917 Shaker Store, using a paint color discovered through microscopic analysis
- Began the restoration of windows on the façade of the 1869 South Union Hotel, thanks to funding from Wayne & Dottie Metcalf
- Continued to restore 1824 Centre House windows
- Replicated three missing windows for the 1854 Wash House, two cellar level and one large window in the building's "boiler room," thanks to funding from Ernie & Elaine Ezell
- Painted several spaces within the 1824 Centre House in colors discovered through microscopic analysis, revealing a vivid yellow-gold and red-orange color palette from the early 1830s. Project was funded by Ernie & Elaine Ezell
- Laid a partial walk to the 1869 Sisters' Privy with limestone slabs donated by John Ridley. Project funded by Kay Bender
- Completed a major electrical project that included an upgrade of service in the 1824 Centre House, the addition of a dedicated heat source for the gift shop, hot water in the Centre House restrooms, concealed outlets in closets, and the capacity for expanding the electrical system in the Centre House. Project funded by Bill and Julie Kratts



Thank you to our donors and to our craftspeople!

## VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Each year, South Union Shaker Village honors someone who exemplifies the volunteer spirit of our museum founder, Deedy Hall. The 2024 Volunteer of the Year was Jobi Givens, White House, Tennessee. Jobi works in the gift shop every Wednesday and has a great rapport with shoppers. She also accomplishes a long list of tasks when not busy with customers, including painting museum platforms, polishing silver and performing various cleaning projects. Jobi has also led children's tours when called upon! She is also a fine photographer and supplies images that we sell in the gift shop as postcards. We are most appreciative of our volunteers and wish to thank Jobi Givens for all the many good things she brings to South Union.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

South Union Shaker Village has a terrific corps of volunteers who are consistently onsite on a weekly basis. We are very appreciative of Susan Lyons Hughes, Julie Kratts, Nancy McAvoy, and Bill Kratts. There are also many others who help with events and other projects. If you'd like to volunteer at South Union Shaker Village, we will find a place for you! Contact Sally Rogers to find out more at [info@southunionshakervillage.com](mailto:info@southunionshakervillage.com)

## IN MEMORY

South Union Shaker Village lost two long-time friends this year, both of whom made a significant difference at the museum. Jeanne Weaver (right) was an antique dealer from Morgantown, Indiana, who visited the museum for the first time back in the late 1980s. She noticed while here that we were using white cotton sheets on the beds in period rooms and suggested that we use linen, which she brought to us on her next visit. Jeanne came back to South Union many times over the years, always bringing something for us to make our exhibits better. Jeanne made the last 460 mile round trip to South Union in 2015, after which she felt she could no longer make the journey. Jeanne Weaver passed away in May, just six weeks prior to her 100th birthday. She was a great friend to all of us at South Union Shaker Village.



Tom Moody (left) served as president of the SUSV Board of Directors from 2008-2011 and was on the board for eight years. He was a church musician, a former teacher, and an avid historian and genealogist. Tom's insatiable interest in and knowledge of local history was an asset to South Union and to his hometown of Franklin, Kentucky, where he worked with the Simpson County Historical Society. Tom's home in Franklin was filled with objects, art, printed material, and manuscripts related to his family history and to the history of the region. You will note in our list of recent acquisitions on page 4 that Tom left a fine collection of South Union Shaker objects to the museum, all acquired in the 1920s by his family. Tom Moody passed away in February and is missed by the countless people who knew and loved him.



Tommy Hines presents Jobi Givens with the 2024 Deedy Hall Volunteer of the Year Award at the annual Shaker Breakfast in November.

# A SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL APPEAL

Many, many thanks to those who contributed to our 2024 annual appeal, which was launched in April. Our goal was \$35,600.00 and we received donations in the amount of \$35,765.00! This year's theme, "Celebrating 250 Years of Shakers in America," commemorated a momentous anniversary, one where we acknowledged the ongoing work of the Shakers at Sabbathday Lake, Maine, and the long history of the sect's southernmost community at South Union, Kentucky. Your donation helps continue those preservation efforts.

## To \$99

Nicole Marrero  
Dennis and Lori Gentz  
David and Sandra Kinser  
Patrick Lee Lucas  
Diane Heise  
Rick and Carol DuBose  
Jo Helen Havener  
Catherine Nash  
Mike and Mary Nash  
Renee and Patrick Kilgore  
Jean and Mark Reynolds  
Scott and Bonnie Eilers  
Janet Schwarzkopf  
Sandra Barrow  
Mary Miller Boyd in memory of Carl B. Boyd Jr.  
Sue Brooks  
Roger and Margaret Futrell  
Larry Myers  
Patty Clendennen  
David Coleman  
Richard Schachtsiek  
Tommy Hines Sr.  
Melanie E. Champniss

## 100.00-249.00

Pat and Mary Allen  
Bob and Linda Pulsinelli  
Drs. James Beattie and Marie Michelson  
Tommy Hines Jr.  
Richard H. C. Clay  
Martha and Jim Sawyer  
Matthew Collin Bailey  
Sandra Oberhausen  
Dale and Beth Clark  
J. Macklin and Sharon Cox  
Jan and Jim Bohannon  
William Ridley Wills II  
Steven and Marilyn Thore  
Pamela L. Lewis  
Donna Hill  
Dick and Betty Crabtree

## 250.00-499.99

Scott Gilbert and Beth Hester  
David and Laura Harper Lee  
Mike and Leigh Harper  
Kenneth Hatcher  
Vicki Fitch  
Mike Robbins  
Glenn and Marianne Rogers  
Robert and Patricia Burton  
Kay Bender  
William and Tracey Johnson

## 500.00-999.00

John C. Perkins, Jr.  
Susan Taylor and Andy Loving  
C. Tracey and Kim Parks  
George and Darlene Kohrman  
Currie and Judy Milliken  
Thomas Bouldin  
Rex and Suzy Payne  
John W. Ridley  
Dick and Carol Switzer  
Reed Law Group  
Wayne and Dottie Metcalf  
Donald and Lillian Riley  
Lois Madden

## 1000.000 - \$2,499.00

Anonymous  
Alan and Adrienne Dieball  
Mary Lucy Franklin  
Sam and Sheila Flener  
Reginal J. Widick  
Jeff Clark and Marion Jackson  
Tom and Emily Perkins Sharp

## 4,000.00

Ridely Wills III

## 5,000.00

Susannah Scott-Barnes  
Brian Lankford

# RECENT ACQUISITIONS

## Manuscript Letter, 1875

From SU Shaker Jackson McGown to E. D. Hicks, Nashville, concerning business related to cattle. McGown used South Union letterhead that includes a lithograph of the patented sash balance the Shakers were marketing during the period.

- ◆ Purchased with acquisition endowment funds

## Shaker Theology, 1879 (right)

First edition, by South Union Elder Harvey Eads, inscribed by the author to Mary Witcher, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1889, Canterbury, New Hampshire. Book also includes a paper label "Sunday Library, No. 7, Shaker Village, N.H."

- ◆ Purchased with acquisition endowment funds

## The Kentucky Revival, 1808

First edition, by Richard McNemar, Union Village, Ohio

## Child's Chair, ca. 1860

Kentucky origin, with features similar to South Union craftsmanship

- ◆ Donated by Alan and Misha Glendening

## Rocking Chair, ca. 1840

Maple and ash, classic SU chair form, rare barrel-shaped finials, replaced seat, room number stamped into the front posts, purchased by family at 1922 South Union auction

## Side Table, ca. 1850

Cherry and poplar, one-drawer, classic SU leg turnings from mid-19th century, purchased by family at 1922 SU auction

## Bureau, ca. 1850 (right)

Cherry and poplar, four drawer chest with typical SU construction and design but the first in the collection with a larger top drawer, indicating a transition in style due to period, purchased by family in Logan County

## Plates (3), ca. 1870

Blue Willow pattern, purchased by family at 1922 South Union auction

## Manuscript, 1877

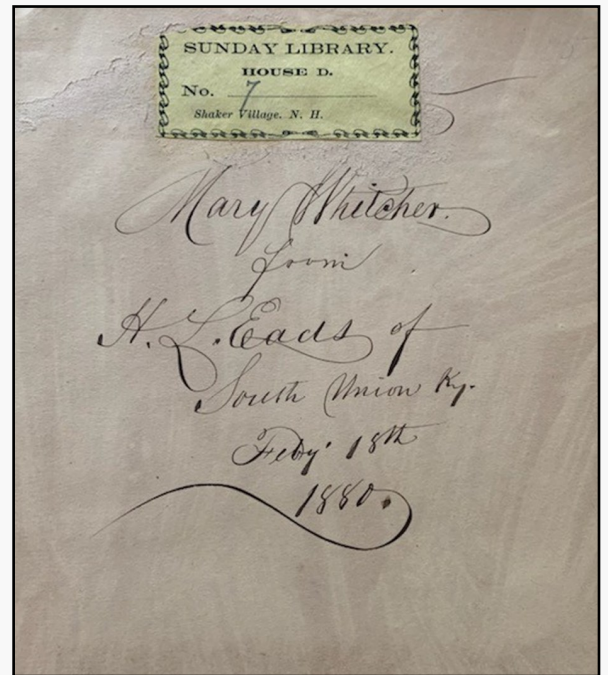
Postcard from South Union Trustee Urban Johns to George C. Harris (great-grandfather of donor), Franklin, Kentucky, declining Harris' offer to sell grapes to the Shakers

- ◆ Estate of Thomas L. Moody, Franklin, Kentucky

## Whale Oil Lamps, ca. 1840

Four whale oil lamps purchased for period rooms that are interpreted to the late 1840s and early 1850s. Part of an on-going effort to provide authenticity to our period spaces with the use of primary sources and archaeology.

- ◆ Purchased with acquisition endowment funds



## RECENT ACQUISITIONS (CONTINUED)

### Collection of Shaker Primary and Secondary Source Material

Possibly the largest private collection of printed material, manuscripts, photographs, and recordings relating to the history of the Shakers, it arrived at South Union in February in nearly 200 boxes, weighing in excess of 8,000 pounds. The donor, Kenneth Hatcher, was a student of Shaker scholar and Auburn, Kentucky native Julie Neal when she taught at Florence State University in the 1960s. He credits Miss Neal with his interest in the Shakers, not only from a historical standpoint but a contemporary one as well. South Union Shaker Village is grateful for Julia Neal's devotion to the history of South Union and to the Kenneth Hatcher for entrusting us with his lifetime collection of Shaker materials.

◆ Donated by Kenneth Hatcher

### Wool Blanket, 1860s

Blanket made in South Union's woolen mill, probably during the 1860s. With the distinctive red and blue stripes on each end, the blanket includes the cross-stitched letters "OF," signifying its use by the small communal family that lived and worked in the Trustees Office. A rare, near perfect example.

◆ Donated by Currie and Judy Milliken



Wool blanket made at South Union, 1860s

## CENTRE HOUSE KITCHEN RANGE RETURNS

For many years it has been difficult to explain to visitors how the Shaker sisters cooked in the Centre House kitchen. After the 1840s the Shakers began purchasing the latest models of cast iron cookstoves and galvanized ovens. None of that equipment has survived, only the original open fireplace and beehive ovens that the Shakers eventually abandoned for more efficient methods of baking and cooking. The greatest mystery was a large brick arch that covered a cavity where obvious flues had once taken smoke into the chimney system. While there was little physical evidence of what was originally there, an oral history project done by a WKU student Colin Stephens in 1970 provided the clues.

When the Shakers were designing the original kitchen in the 1820s, there were only two methods of cooking: an open fireplace and a brick range. The fireplace was discovered behind a brick wall during restoration in the 1980s but, according to oral history, the brick range had been removed during WWII for scrap iron. Colin Stevens' 1970 interview with people who lived in the building in the 1930s included a description of a typical built-in range from the early 19th century. The range had a brick front with iron doors to fire three different chambers, with an iron top that supported a number of stove eyes or "burners" in the center flanked by an arch kettle on either side.

Thanks to a grant from Americana Corner, and to a talented blacksmith, tinsmith, brick mason, and iron fabricator, the Shakers' brick range is once again gracing a corner of the Centre House kitchen. The interpretation of the kitchen and the methods of cooking used by the Shakers will be much more affective now. Thank you, Americana Corner!



# SOUTH UNION PROFILE

BRO. WILLIAM JACKSON MCGOWN (b. 1833)

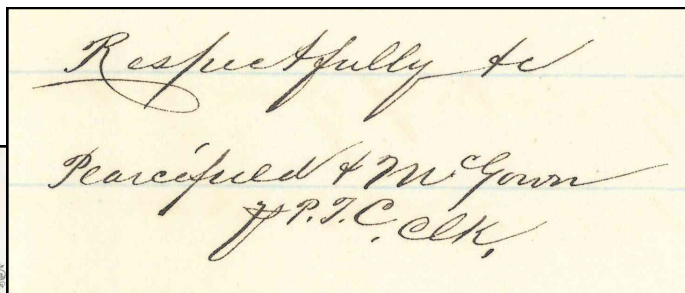
William Jackson McGown's brother and sister were already members of the South Union community when he joined the Shakers sometime in the early 1850s. Over the next decade he spent most of his time on peddling trips, busy with sales of chickens, cattle, and garden seeds. In 1860 McGown became assistant to Elder Jesse Rankin in the East Family. Two years later he would assume the same role at the North Family, all the while devoting his efforts primarily to business and sales outside the village.

During the Civil War, peddling trips for the Kentucky Shakers became difficult. Being known Union sympathizers, the Shakers were often placed in dangerous situations when confronted by Confederate soldiers. When the Confederate army evacuated nearby Bowling Green in early 1862, tensions were somewhat eased but travel still posed a potential threat. The most adventurous trip took place in February 1864, when McGown and Elder Harvey Eades traveled from South Union to New Orleans, hoping for success in the sale of garden seed. Taking the train to Louisville, the men boarded a steamship on the Ohio River, and ventured south on the Mississippi. They came home two months later after having sold 30,000 seed packets, but incurring nearly \$400.00 in expenses, the equivalent of \$8,000.00 today.

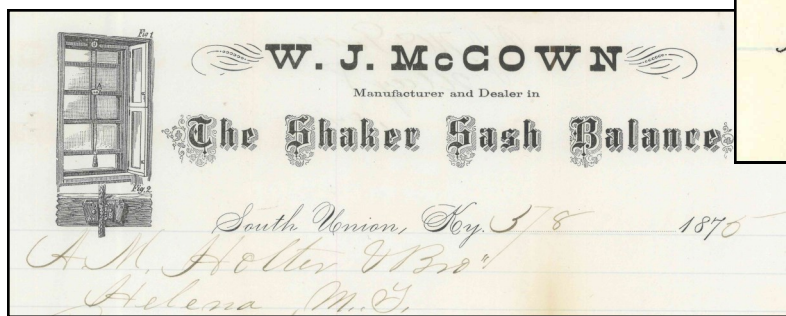
Returning with McGown and Eades was 11-year-old Mary Elizabeth Downs, whose father had been killed in an explosion during the siege of Vicksburg the previous year. One of several orphans brought to South Union during the war, Mary Elizabeth was placed in the Centre Family and remained in the community until she was at least 16 years of age. Her name is no longer mentioned in the records after 1869.

After the war, McGown continued to sell Shaker products throughout the South, traveling as far away as Texas. His notoriety as a business leader continued to grow, as evidenced in an 1871 article in Nashville, Tennessee's *Republican Banner*, which referred to him as "business manager of the Shakers." The writer also noted that McGown "had been at the Maxwell House [hotel] for a day or two on business. He left last night on the Chattanooga train en route for the South."

It was during this period that he entered into a business partnership with Bro. Lorenzo Pearcfield. Acting as agents for the community, Pearcfield & McGown (right) worked together



Respectfully to  
Pearcfield & McGown  
J.P.F.C. etc.



for nearly a decade. McGown also billed himself as "manufacturer and dealer" for a patented sash balance mechanism that was sold from South Union in the 1870s (left).

Pearcfield and McGown may have acquired a sense of independence because of the freedom they were given in their roles as businessmen. In 1876 the pair challenged the leadership at South Union in when they refused to move from the West Family to the Centre Family. The Shakers often moved members from one communal family to another when they felt it was necessary. Writing a letter of grievance to the Ministry in Union Village, Ohio, the men hoped to gain favor from the lead community in the Shaker west. The case was eventually taken all the way to Mt. Lebanon, New York, where the Ministry there demanded Pearcfield and McGown comply. Described as the first such act of "rebellion" at South Union, the matter was closed when the two men moved to the Centre Family on February 23, 1876.

With no explanation, William Jackson McGown left the Shakers three months later. The journal writer noted, "Absconding—Jackson McGown went off to day by train." Nearly a decade later the *Nashville Tennessean* noted that McGown "has been visiting our town for two weeks [and] left his morning for New York where he goes in interest of a San Antonio, Tex land syndicate to sell stock." One detail that the newspaper mentioned and that the Shaker scribe did not was that McGown left the Shakers because he "became smitten with one of the Shakeresses, married her, and went to Texas, where he acquired his fortune." Whether that story of the Shakeress is true or not, that is the last written evidence of William Jackson McGown.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION

### General Fund

Susannah Scott-Barnes—\$6,000.00  
Margy Thomas—\$2,500.00  
Martin Brown, Jr.—\$2,000.00  
Adsmore House and Gardens - \$200.00  
Sharon Crawford - \$200.00  
John Campbell - \$150.00  
Diane Heise - \$50.00

### Restricted Funds

Wayne and Dottie Metcalf—\$8,000.00 (restoration projects)  
Ernest and Elaine Ezell—\$7,000.00 (restoration projects)  
Ridley Wills III—\$5,000.00 (operating endowment fund)  
Kay Bender—\$2,500.00 (restoration projects)  
Kenneth Hatcher—\$1,200.00 (collections project)  
Rex and Suzy Payne—\$1,000.00 (exhibits)  
George and Darlene Kohrman—\$500.00 (Wash House window)  
Ted and Arlene Miles—\$500.00 (Wash House window)  
Martha and Jim Sawyer—\$500.00 (Wash House window)  
John and Linda Tanner—\$337.50 (Centre House door restoration)  
Bill and Julie Kratts—Undisclosed amount (Centre House electrical project)

### Event Sponsors

Case Auctions—\$1,000.00 for educational video sponsorship  
JRA Architects - \$500.00 for Shaker Breakfast  
Pinnacle Financial Partners - \$500.00 for Shaker Breakfast  
Brent M. Stinnett, Attorney - \$500.00 for Shaker Breakfast  
First Southern National Bank - \$500.00 for Shaker Breakfast  
Atmos Energy - \$1,000.00 for Holiday Market  
Logan Aluminum - \$500.00 for Holiday Market  
US Bank—\$500.00 for Holiday Market  
Liberty Printing—In-kind contribution for Holiday Market

### Grants

Americana Corner—\$5,000.00  
Anonymous Foundation—\$5,000.00  
E. Rhodes & Leona B. Carpenter Foundation—\$82,000.00

### Special Contributions

John and Linda Tanner in memory of Gingie Hines  
Jennifer Butt and Jeanne Close in memory of Bill Coke  
Esther Coke in memory of Bill Coke  
Lisa Damico in memory of Pat Guthrie  
Cynthia Bunch in memory of Pat Guthrie

## WELCOME NEW BOARD AND ADVISORY MEMBERS

South Union Shaker Village would like to welcome our newest members of the Board of Directors. We look forward to serving with Leah Eckley and Dr. Dawn Hall of Bowling Green, Jackson Pryor of Auburn, and Lucas Wetton of Russellville. We also wish to announce the addition of two new members of the Advisory Committee: Richard H. C. Clay of Louisville and Ashley McNulty of Nashville, Tennessee. We are grateful to these important additions to our team and look forward to learning from each of them.

## SOUTH UNION SHAKER VILLAGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brent Stinnett, President  
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Emily Perkins Sharp, Secretary  
Mike Hughes, Treasurer  
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Rick DuBose  
Leah Eckley  
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Judy Milliken  
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Ashley McNulty  
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Sally G. Rogers  
*Curator Collections & Development*

Beth Ann Kistler  
*Operations Assistant*

Johnny Miller  
*Maintenance & Restoration*

Jobi Givens  
Susan Lyons Hughes  
Annie Knight  
Julie Kratts  
Nancy McAvoy  
*Docents*

**SOUTH UNION  
SHAKER VILLAGE**

P.O. Box 177, Auburn, KY 42206

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**CHECK THE WEBSITE SOON  
FOR 2025 EVENTS!**

**SOUTH UNION SHAKER VILLAGE**

PO Box 177, Auburn, Kentucky 42206

**Website:** [SouthUnionShakerVillage.com](http://SouthUnionShakerVillage.com) **Phone:** 270-542-4167 **Facebook:** South Union Shaker Village  
**Instagram:** southunionsv