



# *The White Water Record*

*The newsletter of the Friends of White Water Shaker Village, Inc.*

December 2023 • Volume 10, Number 2

## **Celebrating 200 Years of White Water Shaker Village, 1823-2023**

*by Jennifer Bornemann*

Mother Ann Lee predicted that the next wave of converted Believers would be in the “West”. This year White Water marks the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the last society formed at the end of rapid Shaker expansion in the West. White Water was unlike other Shaker West communities as these converts were prosperous yeomen farmers who owned land and some were prominent citizens who held township offices before joining the Shaker society.

### **Founding of White Water Shaker Village**

According to Brother Richard Pelham’s memoir in the Library of Congress, Miriam Agnew traveled to Union Village near Lebanon, Ohio in early spring 1823. Union Village was the parent settlement for the Western Shaker settlements including West Union in Indiana; Pleasant Hill and South Union in Kentucky; and North Union, Watervliet, Darby Plains and White Water in Ohio.

This solo journey for Miriam was a long one from home with the last 18 miles from Hamilton on foot. She came to learn about the Shakers. After a few days, she confessed her sins and became the first member of what would be called White Water Shaker Village. The community of White Water is located about 25 miles northwest of Cincinnati, Ohio.

Richard Pelham and George Blackleach were sent by the Union Village ministry in early May 1823 to preach to neighbors and relatives of Miriam and her husband Joseph Agnew. As word spread

*Celebrating 200 Years continued on page 11*

## **It’s 2024 Membership Time**

Memberships are vital in supporting the daily operations and basic needs of the village (such as propane for winter heating, electric, water, ongoing maintenance, and the phone line for the security system). Members enjoy free or reduced admission to special events (such as the Annual Gathering and the Anniversary Celebration) and issues of our newsletter, *The White Water Record*.

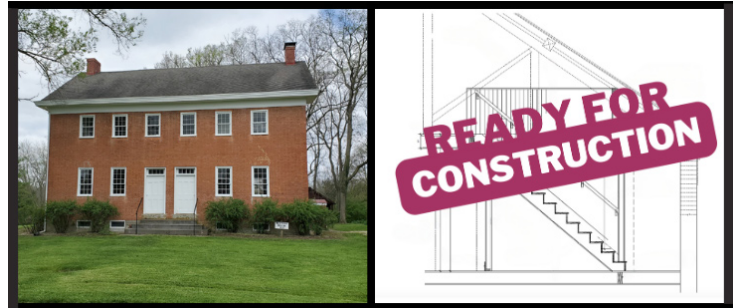
Yearly memberships coincide with the calendar year. Any membership activated or renewed from October on are applied to the following year. If at any time you are unsure of your membership status, you are welcome to email Linda Poynter at <lindap@whitewatervillage.org> and she will check on your membership status for you.

We thank you for your past support and look forward to your continued membership.

## **Annual Appeal** **Restoring Special Shaker Spaces**

The Friends of White Water Shaker Village is on a mission to restore the 196 year old Meeting House and we need your help to replace the removed walls and an attic staircase that the Shakers had built on the second floor. Your generosity can make a real difference in preserving this historic Shaker treasure for future generations.

We hope to apply for permits to begin this stage of the restoration in 2024.



We would also like to accomplish Phase 2 of the Milk House restoration in 2024. This includes replacing sashes on two of the window frames, tuck-pointing the milk trough in the cellar, pouring a thin concrete floor, hanging gypsum board to the interior walls and hanging beadboard to the ceiling of the porch, cellar and first floor. This phase is estimated at approximately \$18,000 if all projects are completed by professionals.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation’s theme this year was “People Saving Places”. The Friends of White Water Shaker Village is pleased to be able to do our part in “Saving Places”. Thank you to all our donors and members that have supported past and current restoration projects at White Water. Please consider donating to the Meeting House Restoration Fund and/or the Milk House Restoration Fund. It’s the perfect way to give back and help leave a lasting legacy.

## **Special Double Issue**

***We have lots of news to share with you!***

*2023 has been a very busy year. Most of us have been volunteering many hours at the village on various large projects as well as preparing for events, open houses and small group tours which limited our time available to write newsletter articles this summer.*

*So we hope you enjoy this extra large issue that will catch you up-to-date with all that’s going on.*

# The Friends of White Water Shaker Village, Inc.

A 501(c)(3) corporation

Our website address is  
<www.whitewatershakervillage.org>

Our telephone number is  
513-738-5928  
Messages are not monitored daily.

Our mailing address is  
Friends of White Water Shaker Village  
11813 Oxford Road  
Harrison OH 45030

Our email address is  
<friendsofwwsv@gmail.com>

Look for us on Facebook. Search  
for White Water Shaker Village.

## Our Mission Statement

*"To preserve, restore, and open the Shaker buildings and adjacent grounds known as the North Family of White Water Shaker Village; to collect and exhibit artifacts related to the site for the cultural enrichment of the public; to educate the public about this unique part of our nation's heritage."*

## Officers

**President** - Richard Spence  
**Vice President** - Bruce Poynter  
**Recording Secretary** - Karen Kilgo  
**Corresponding Secretary** - Linda Poynter  
**Treasurer** - Patricia Kluener  
**Newsletter** - Mardi & John Wells

## Board of Directors

Patrick Allen  
Jennifer Bornemann  
Christy Connelly  
Scott Hoover  
David Kilgo  
Karen Kilgo  
Patricia Kluener  
Bruce Poynter  
Linda Poynter  
Richard Spence

## Advisory Board

Lois Madden  
Carol Medlicott

# New Members Since March 2023

Maureen Baker	Individual
Lynn McMakin Bird	Individual
Shannon Brower	Individual
Mary & Alan Bruns	Patron
Rebecca Cochran	Family
Elise Cowie	Individual
Gail & William Curtis	Patron
Dean Forster & Ben Kerckmar	Family
Jonathan Garrison	Sponsor
Carolyn Gutjahr	Individual
Richard Hershner	Family
Olivia Hill	Student
Merrel Jones & Mary Lou Baker Jones	Family

Bess Winter Kosinec	Individual
Kenneth Kramer	Family
Rebecca Longardner	Individual
Joanna Ludwig	Individual
Todd Powers	Individual
Susan & David Lee Smith	Sponsor
Marcie Smith	Family
Lisanne Thompson	Individual
Diane Weber-Hampson	Sponsor

# Renewing Members

## Since March 2023

Pat & Mary Allen	Sponsor
Paula & Jim Arter	Family
Hanlin Bavelly	Individual
Gerald Branditz	Individual
David Budd Family	Sponsor
Dave Coleman	Individual
Michael & Christy Connelly	Sponsor
Doug & Dawn Currie	Family
Nancy & Dan Deal	Sponsor
Roxann Dieffenbach	Individual
David Fiora	Student
Jackie & Steve Fiora	Family
Richard Fisher	Individual
Joe Grittani	Individual
Deborah Hall & Michael Domino	Family
John & Pat Landen	Family
Marnie Leist	Individual
Irene Light	Sponsor
Fred Lutt	Individual
Robert Martin & Rick Corbin	Family
Harold & Kay McCollum	Family
Bruce Metzger	Family
Bill Mooney	Individual
Steven Neal	Individual
Paul & Marjo Prinzing	Family
Paul Ruffing	Sponsor

Mark Sandefur	Family
David Savage	Family
Deborah Schakel	Sponsor
Patricia Scharf	Individual
Denny & Patty Schultz	Family
Linda & Tom Shevlin	Family
Marvin Shrimplin	Family
Rick Spencer & Amy Roberts	Family
Douglas Tilghman	Individual
Antonio Torres	Individual
David & Joan Van Winkle	Sponsor
Wayne & Paula Wauligman	Family
George & Peggy West	Family
Paul & Nancy Wheeler	Family

# Milk House Restoration Fund

## Contributions to \$25

Anonymous  
David Fiora  
Bill Mooney

## Contributions to \$50

Jackie & Steve Fiora  
Anne Jantzen  
Robert Martin & Rick Corbin  
Paul & Marjo Prinzing  
Deborah Schakel  
Rick Spencer & Amy Roberts  
Paul & Nancy Wheeler  
Victoria & Elizabeth Yuko

## \$100

Anonymous  
David Budd Family  
James Innis  
Denny & Patty Schultz  
David & Joan Van Winkle

## \$150

Bob and Pat Wagner

## \$200

Diane Weber-Hampson

## \$500

Hanlin Bavelly

# Meeting House Restoration Fund

## Contributions to \$50

Anonymous  
Michael & Christy Connelly  
Bill Mooney  
Paul & Marjo Prinzing



Deborah Schakel  
Paul & Nancy Wheeler

\$100

Anonymous  
Lynn McMakin Bird  
David Budd Family  
Anne Jantzen  
Gary & Peggy Kelm  
David & Joan Van Winkle

\$200

Diane Weber-Hampson

\$700

Janet Lockwood

## Donors Unrestricted

### Contributions to \$99

Roxann Dieffenbach  
John & Pat Landen  
Bill Mooney  
Regeana & Al Morgan  
Steven Neal  
Larry Orcutt  
Elizabeth Pack  
Paul & Marjo Prinzing  
Deborah Schakel  
Linda & Tom Shevlin  
Susan & David Lee Smith  
Douglas Tilghman  
George & Peggy West

\$100

Deborah Schakel

\$500

Paul Ruffing  
David Savage

## Memorial Donations

Paul & Nancy Wheeler  
*In memory of Elaine Disch*

### Our mailing address

As of November 30, 2021 is  
Friends of White Water Shaker Village  
11813 Oxford Road  
Harrison OH 45030

This is the same as the location of the  
North Family Dwelling.

## Recent Donations

- A Shaker bench, 60 x 13" with initials "A B" on the underside. Skirt on one side, indicating it was designed to be placed against a wall. Reddish orange paint or wash, indicating possibly White Water or Union Village. Formerly owned by Bob Taylor of Arcanum, Ohio. *Gift of George and Darlene Kohrman*
- A real or weasel, attributed to Watervliet NY. Purchased near Watervliet as Shaker. See *Gathering Up the Pieces*, text and photographs, page 318. *Gift of George and Darlene Kohrman*
- Six reproductions of seedboxes from Mt. Lebanon, all different, by Marty Travis and Shaker Workshops. *Gift of Darlene and George Kohrman*
- A reproduction of Mt. Lebanon vegetable can or tin and a framed cross stitch of the East Family Dwelling at Pleasant Hill. *Gift of Darlene and George Kohrman*
- A variety of nineteenth century woodworking and farm tools, including a maul, scribes, molding planes and saws collected by Ralph Lockwood. *Gift of David Lockwood*
- A drawstring silk bag, attached to a basket tray base with a tag reading "Shaker Work Bag". Made at the Alfred, Maine Shaker community. *Gift of Martha Boice*
- A sewing basket, with a round emery bag, needlecase and pin cushion from Alfred, Maine. *Gift of Martha Boice*
- A number of books on the Shakers, the majority of which were published between 1970 and 1990. *Gift of Martha Boice*
- A large collection of Shaker reproductions and related items purchased at Shaker Seminars including framed drawings by Sr. Karly Cauley, a book shelf by David T. Smith, reproduction fancy baskets, oval boxes and an oval carrier, polar ware trays, Sabbathday Lake herb tins, and many more. *Gift of Martha Boice*
- A wagon jack. *Gift of Janet Lockwood*



Alfred Sewing Basket



Kohrman Shaker bench



Above, real or weasel attributed to Watervliet NY. Donated by George and Darlene Kohrman



Left, David Lockwood tools



# Pegs, Plaster and Paint — An Update

by Linda Poynter

What a transformation! From wallpaper on ceilings, missing peg rail and chair rail on 12 walls, holes in ceilings and walls... to smooth, bright white ceilings and walls with peg rails and chair rails! Many volunteers and many, many hours have been devoted to bringing the interior spaces of the dwelling back to their original appearance.

In February, we started removing the concrete infill that the Hodapps had placed in the peg rail channels after they removed the peg rails and some chair rails in order to hang wallpaper. Removing the concrete proved to be quite the challenge, with the density of the concrete increasing in each room. But by the end of February, all the concrete was removed and the peg rail replaced. We were lucky enough to be able to use Shaker-made peg rail in approximately half of the replacements, as Warren County Historical Society had gifted us some peg rail that was in their possession several years ago.

In March, we started scraping and sanding, sanding and sanding – walls, woodwork, door frames and doors. Loose plaster was removed from walls, wallpaper remnants scraped away, and pegs primed and painted for the newly replaced peg rails. Members and new volunteers donated over 227 hours during just the first three weekends.

Following a break for Easter and the Annual Gathering, more work days were completed in May. We realized we were getting to a point that in order to complete the project well, it would be best to hire professionals to repair the walls and ceilings – repairing large holes and skim coating all of the surfaces. In June, we contacted three companies for project bids.

Allen, Rick, Rick Jr. and Chris worked some very hot and humid days in August and September! They had several jobs to juggle and the humidity increased the plaster drying time. They had to scrape wallpaper off of several ceilings. The Shaker plaster proved difficult to work with at times, requiring some extra steps to successfully apply the skim coats. We are amazed at the transformation and appreciate all their hard work and expertise.

An amazing amount of plaster dust was created during this process, which needs to be removed prior to painting, of course. We also need to scrape/prepare all the edges of the peg rail, chair rail, baseboards, window and door frames so we can caulk where all those edges meet the plaster prior to painting. Over eight days in October and November, volunteers have devoted over 170 hours sweeping, vacuuming, dusting, scraping, washing walls and woodwork – very carefully – to prep for painting on just the second floor, in the attic and the first floor steps. The three retiring rooms on the second floor have a primer coat and one coat of paint on their ceilings.

As this newsletter goes to press, we are ready to prime

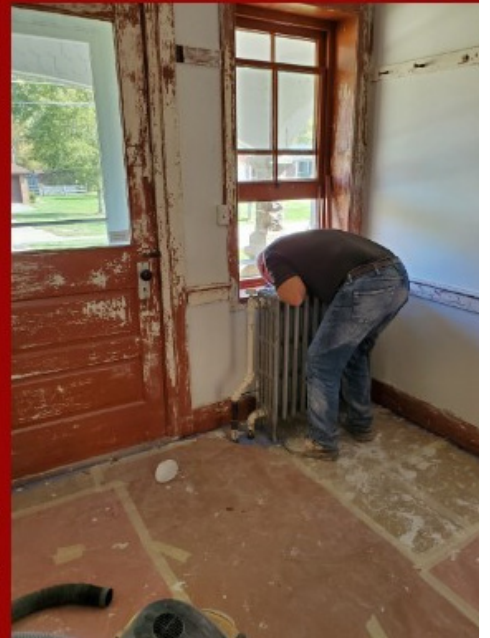


*Second floor hall east before restoration work*



*Work in progress*





and paint the rooms and hallway on the second floor. We will be focusing on the new plaster. Then on to the first floor. Woodwork

painting will follow in 2024. If you would like to help paint, just let us know by emailing Linda at <lindap@whitewatervillage.org>.



Chair room before painting and repair work



Chair room after work



# The White Water Shakers and the Garden Seed Industry

by Rich Spence

The Shakers, although self-sufficient in many respects, needed sources of income to offset their expenses. The first industries begun by the White Water Shakers in 1826 were the manufacture and sale of brooms and the raising, packaging and distribution of vegetable seeds on a retail, not wholesale, business. By 1832 their grist mills and saw mill were in operation on the Dry Fork, offering a valuable service to the community. The garden seed business existed at most if not all Shaker communities, the nearest being the large Shaker community of Union Village, five miles west of Lebanon, Ohio. The White Water Shakers could call upon Shakers at Union Village for advice and help in beginning both businesses.



*A View of White Water, by Isaac Newton Youngs, 1834.*  
Library of Congress

This industry involved the effort of both brothers and sisters; the sisters were responsible for the large gardens needed to raise the vegetables and the harvesting, processing and packaging of the seeds. By the 1850s, 50 acres had been set aside for growing vegetables to produce the seeds (Sakmyster & Innis, p 194). Two gardens are shown on Isaac Newton Youngs 1834 "View of White Water", one facing the dwelling on Shaker Road, the other to the west of the sister's shop, where the seeds would have been sorted and packaged.

The seeds were packaged in plain brown envelopes that were cut and glued by hand.

They were stamped with the seed's variety, White Water's name, and possibly planting instructions. Seed packets and the printed sheet of the box's contents from White Water have not survived, but we can gain an idea of the varieties grown and included from a catalog of White Water garden seeds in the collection of the Western Reserve Historical Society. Over 60 varieties are listed, surely a task for the sisters to grow, keep track of, sort and package.

Wood for the seed boxes was sawn by the brothers at the sawmill on the Dry Fork, and likely assembled in the brethren's shop. These were simple boxes with dividers for the seed varieties, assembled with iron nails (no dovetailing here) and snipe hinges with a wire hook to fasten the lid shut. In the early years the boxes did not have printed labels. "Shaker Garden Seeds" is found stenciled on the front panel of a Union Village seed box, which also has the names of varieties stenciled on the interior dividers. Two early boxes thought to be from White Water were stenciled "GARDEN SEEDS" with initials and a number on the end, possibly to identify the merchant with whom the box was to be placed. In later years, the boxes were larger and flatter, and had a colored printed label on the front panel as well as a list of the varieties on the inside of the lid.

In March of each year the brothers would pack a wagon full of seed boxes and distribute them to merchants on established routes. They were enterprising and traveled as far away as the Ohio River to Indiana and Illinois, the Missouri River, 500 miles from the village, and up the Great Miami to northern Ohio. They would return to the same establishments in the fall, dividing the sales with the merchant, and collecting as many seed boxes as they could.

A Union Village diary in the Library of Congress Shaker collection informs us that "the first specific mention of such activity (White Water seed business) can be traced to April 1841, when Ezra Sherman and Nathaniel Frost sailed down the Ohio River in a small boat "loaded with brooms and garden seeds". They visited various port cities on the Ohio, and traveled up the Missouri River as far as St Louis and Quincy Illinois". (Tom Sakmyster and Jim Innis, *The Shakers of White Water*, Ohio 1823-1913, page 194)



*Seed box attributed to White Water, circa 1840, donated by Marvin Shrimplin. Reddish paint, iron nails and wire hinges.*

In a letter from Ebenezer Rice to Elder Freegift Wells in 1862, Ebenezer writes: "Our principal business to defray expenses is raising and binding garden seeds, berry fruit, Soga molasses and brooms. The yearly income from garden seeds after deducting expenses is some \$3,000.00, for brooms this season count \$4,000.00, \$6.00 per Dz (WRHS, IV A-86, Reel 26.)

Joseph Agnew later wrote to his son in 1863: "I expect to be sent out on a seed trip to the Wabash above Logansport in about 10 days, and will [be] gone perhaps four weeks" (Letter, Joseph Agnew to Dan Agnew, Sept 26, 1863. FWWSV Archives)

Although we do not have a list of the seeds that would have been packed in the seed boxes, a catalog has survived that lists 64 varieties for sale. The multiple varieties of the same vegetable would have required the sisters to keep careful and orderly gardens to keep the varieties straight. The same would go for sorting and packing.

J. P. McLean in his history of White Water writes: "It was in 1847 that the Whitewater brethren started on a successful career of raising garden seeds for the markets. Trips for selling the seeds were made in different parts of the country. One trip was called the Northern, another the Missouri River, another the Western Land, another the Kentucky, etc. The greatest amount received for one year – if I correctly notice – was in 1857, when \$5,704.00 was realized, with a total traveling expense of \$416.00.

This enterprise came to an end in 1873, because many firms began to put out garden and flower seeds in fancy colored papers and boxes, also in different size packages. "That our seeds did not take, as they were put up in a brown colored paper and a plain stained box. It was conclusive we must keep up with the times or step down and out, which we did." (JP McLean, page 431)

In his visit to the Shaker Settlement of Whitewater village, Ohio, Benn Pitman writes "the brethren's labors are farming, gardening (their revenue from the sales of seed also amounts to about \$1,500.00 dollars yearly), building, broom making...





White Water seed box, circa 1870, donated by Stephen Miller



White Water seed box, circa 1870, donated by Stephen Miller. Label reads:

SHAKER  
GARDEN SEEDS

*Raised by the Shakers at Whitewater Village, Hamilton County, Ohio*



Union Village seedbox, circa 1850 – collection of Scott Hoover  
SHAKER GARDEN SEEDS stenciled on the front panel with seed names stenciled on dividers. Constructed with square nails and stenciled labels inside. The types of seeds are spinach, parsnip, carrot, cucumber, pepper, squash, beet, cabbage, melon, peas, beans, turnip, radish, salsif and onion.



Dividers on the Union Village seed box labeled Carrot, Parsnip, and Spinach.

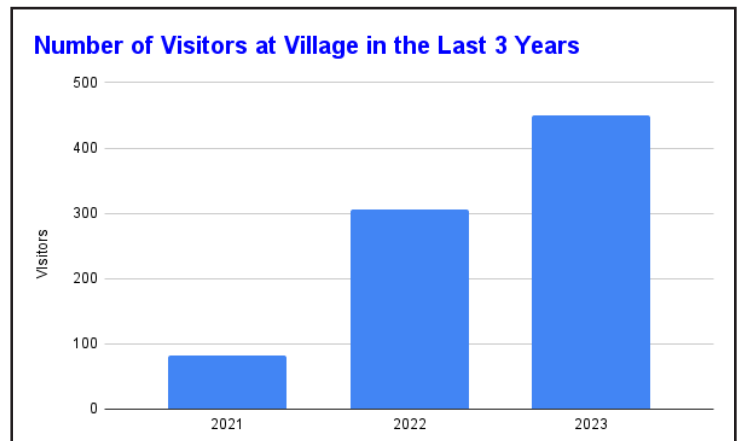
(*American Communal Societies Quarterly*, Vol. 4 No. 1, Jan. 2010)

Another account of the end of the seed business can be found in a Cincinnati German publication, *Westliche Blatter*, in 1877 that stated the decision to discontinue the profitable sale of seed packets was because of White Water's inability to compete with newly formed national seed companies. (Thomas Sakmyster, ACSQ page 52)

# Open Houses

by Jennifer Bornemann

Three open houses brought 450 visitors to the village – an increase of 48% over last year. A great success! To celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the village's founding, we invited political leaders to share a proclamation in honor of this anniversary.



- In May, State Representative Cindy Abrams, Ohio House of Representative for District 29, read House Resolution No. 155. (It is officially recorded in the record books.)
  - Hamilton County Commissioner Denise Driehaus came to present a proclamation that claimed May 28<sup>th</sup> as White Water Shaker Village Day in all of Hamilton County, Ohio.
  - In September, State Senator Bill Blessing, Ohio Senate for District 8, shared Senate Resolution No. 147.
  - In October, Mike from the office of Warren Davidson, US House of Representatives, Ohio's 8<sup>th</sup> District read a congratulatory letter and Randy from the office of JD Vance, US Senate, shared a letter of congratulations.
  - Finally, we received a letter of recognition from the office of Ohio's Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted.
- If you would like to read these proclamations and resolutions, they are on our website in the photo gallery.





# *Claire Viverito 1849 Milk House*

## **Milk House Stabilization**

by Linda Poynter



*Milk House before restoration*

In November 2022, a campaign to restore the 1849 Milk House began. Maggie Viverito's generous donation in memory of her mother Claire jump started this fund. To date, a total of \$30,038 has been donated by 67 donors to restore and preserve the White Water Milk House for generations to come.

The total restoration has been divided into three phases, from structural repairs to cosmetic work. Work will be completed by volunteers when possible.

Vital stabilization work began in late April, with the reconstruction of the brick wall along the cellar stairwell. Several sill plates and corner posts were replaced as rot and termites had destroyed them. The wall around where the rear door had been located was reconstructed, along with replacing the door (we used one that had been previously donated to FWWSV). The stone/brick foundation needed rebuilding and tuck pointing. New siding was added as needed, mainly on the south and west walls. This first phase cost just over \$27,000 and was completed by the end of May.

Around Labor Day, several volunteers



*Milk House work, SW view*

scraped the old paint off of the south, west and north siding that was saved during the restoration and primed and painted it, along with all the new siding. We wanted to make sure that the new wood was properly prepared for the winter elements. We still need to scrape and paint the east side (the front of the Milk House) which wasn't included in the Phase 1 work.



*Milk House work, south facade*





*Milk House after work, from SW*

Some of the Phase 2 restoration projects include replacing sashes on two of the window frames, tuck pointing the milk trough in the cellar, pouring a thin concrete floor, hanging gypsum board to the interior walls and hanging bead board to the ceiling of the porch, cellar and first floor. This Phase is estimated at approximately \$18,000 if all projects are completed by professionals.

If you wish to contribute to Phase 2 of this worthwhile project, please use the enclosed response card insert. If you would like to contribute via a charitable IRA rollover, please contact your financial institution as a direct transfer made to FWWSV can benefit both you and the Milk House. All donations are greatly appreciated.



*Milk House painted, from SW*

## *Spring Happenings*

*by Linda Poynter*

Spring was a very busy season for The Friends of White Water Shaker Village. Along with the restoration work in the Dwelling and on the Milk House, we hosted our Annual Gathering in April, held our first Open House of the year in May, and held our Annual Flea Market in June.

The 2023 Annual Gathering was well attended, as we gathered to celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of White Water at a new venue, Miami Whitewater United Methodist Church. Tommy Hines, the Executive Director of South Union Shaker Village in Auburn KY presented “Making Use of Ardent Spirits: Alcohol and the Kentucky Shakers”. The brewery at White Water was noted. After the luncheon, Brad Spurlock, Manager of the Smith Library of Regional History for the Lane Library in Butler County OH presented “The Butler County Shakers”, highlighting the founding persons and families of White Water Shaker Village. Following the silent auction and raffles, tours of the buildings at White Water commenced.

Over 225 people attended our Memorial Day weekend Open House on Sunday May 28. Visitors were able to print their own bookmarks commemorating White Water’s 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on a traveling printing press, courtesy of the Cincinnati Type & Print Museum. Shaker-printed ephemera from Scott Hoover’s personal collection was displayed. Local Ohio State Representative Cindy Abrams and Hamilton County Commissioner Denise Driehaus presented a resolution and a proclamation, respectively. It was a delightful spring day.

In June, a crew from Great Parks came several days to trim many of the large trees on the property. The large cedar in front of the Meeting House and the walnuts, elms, hackberries and box elders received attention. Support cables that had been placed in the trees in the early 2000s were inspected as well.

On Saturday June 10, we held our annual Flea Market at the wagon shed. A steady stream of customers came to support this fund raiser. Funds raised were directed to our current restoration projects. We thank those who donated their previously-owned goods for the Village’s benefit (and hopefully our donors are enjoying their newly-found space at home!)

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## **Kroger Community Rewards**

### **An easy way to help FWWSV**

During the last twelve months, the 13 families selecting Friends of White Water Shaker Village as their charitable organization in the Kroger Community Rewards program donated \$141.00 – enough to pay the Village water bill for over six months. Free money!

How can you help at no cost to you? Just sign in to your digital Kroger account on your computer or your phone app to link your rewards card. In the Community Rewards section (or Rewards in the Menu on the phone app), enter EQ070 or Friends of White Water Shaker Village as the organization that you wish to support. Click Save. Once active, you will see a message on the bottom of your Kroger receipts stating “Kroger Community Rewards: On your behalf, we are contributing to Friends of White Water Shaker Village”.



# 10 years ago at White Water Shaker Village

## Meeting House Second Floor Wood Flooring Replacement

*by Joe Grittani and Scott Hoover*

In the late spring of 2013, two volunteer woodworkers, Dave Coleman and Joe Grittani, had finished replacing the wainscoting on the first floor of the Meeting House. They moved to the second floor to begin replacing the poplar floor boards that had been removed by one of the former owners.

The first floor of the Meeting House is white oak, probably because of the harder use it would withstand from dancing and the larger numbers of people. The upstairs poplar boards were intended for the elders' living quarters and would experience much lighter use. In order to match the existing boards with the newer wood, the boards had to butt into the original poplar boards. To match the boards they needed to order seven different widths of tongue and groove poplar boards.

The owners had removed flooring to be able to move a jacuzzi into a second floor area that was used as closets by the Shakers. The Elders' and Eldresses' staircases to the second floor were too narrow for the large jacuzzi to pass through, so a hole had been cut in the second floor so the jacuzzi could be lifted up through it. A nice railing had been constructed around the hole and you could look down into the first floor. Dave and Joe secured new floor joists and covered them with random width poplar flooring, using square nails. Additional repair work was needed where a later bathroom behind the original attic stairs had resulted in several holes for plumbing. There was also a lot of damage along the front wall where a hallway had been. Today, when you are on the first floor of the Meeting House, you can look at the ceiling and see the different color of the newer poplar boards.



*Dave and Joe check fit and look of the new flooring.*



*Above, Joe Grittani looking through a second floor hole.*



*Joe and Dave nailing down the flooring 10 years ago.*



# Spring Grants Received

by Linda Poynter

This spring, The Friends of White Water Shaker Village was awarded three grants that will support several different projects.

Butler Rural Electric Cooperative, the Village's electric provider, administers the Butler Rural Community Connection program which bestows grants to local non-profit organizations in the counties served by Butler Rural. Funds for the grant program come from cooperative members who volunteer to "round-up" their electric bills to the next dollar amount.

This spring, the Community Connection awarded us grants for two projects. The

first grant, valued at \$750.00, was used to purchase a Ryobi cordless battery self-propelled mower. This will be very useful in helping trim the yard and keep it neat. Previously, personal gas powered mowers had been transported to the village. Having this mower on site will make the work much easier for volunteers to complete.

The second grant, valued at \$260.00, was used to purchase 60 tension rods to support the window insulation boards utilized during the winter months. The rubber ends will help minimize wear on the painted window frames while keeping the boards in place during the blustery winters.

The W. E. Smith Family Charitable Trust awarded the Friends \$1,440.00 for providing a mobile phone audio tour for three years, enhancing a grant project

currently in progress. Last year, a grant was written and supported by the W. E. Smith Family Charitable Trust for QR code signs to be installed near buildings at the North Family site so that visitors could access videos on their cell phones to learn about the Village when docents/personal tours are not available.

Adding a mobile phone audio tour number to call printed on the same sign as the QR code will allow guests unable to access the video to hear the same information, educating the listener on White Water's history as well as learning about FWWSV and our ongoing restoration efforts.

We are most grateful to Butler Rural Electric Cooperative and the W. E. Smith Family Charitable Trust for their support.

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## Celebrating 200 Years of White Water, 1823-2023

Continued from page 1

that a Shaker would preach in Joseph Agnew's barn, the gathering drew such a large crowd that the service was moved outside. At the end of the service, Joseph and his brother Brant joined the Shakers. Within the next month, 30 locals had joined the faith.

The earliest use of the term White Water was when Pelham and Blackleach traveled back to Union Village stating in a journal they had returned from White Water. Union Village sent 78 members from Darby Plains (near Columbus, Ohio) to White Water when Darby Plains closed.

In 1825, Union Village provided funds to purchase 100 acres. That same year, four elders/elderesses came to lead this newly expanded group. In 1826, White Water thrived with a good crop. A school house was built at the South Family. A report from the Union Village Ministry to the Central Ministry in the east stated that White Water was prosperous and could support themselves and bear burdens.

In August 1827, under the leadership of Elder Archibald Meacham who had recently arrived from the closed village at West Union, construction began on the two and one half story meeting house. This 35 x 44 foot structure was built with bricks that were hand-molded and fired on site. The first floor was for worship services. The second floor had four retiring rooms

for the elders and eldresses. This building has a unique architectural design in which the second floor and attic are suspended by a truss and hanger system in the attic. Therefore, no support columns are on the first floor leaving space for dancing without the obstruction of columns. Dark wooden pegs can be observed in the floor, thought to be dancing cues. The first church meeting was held on December 2, 1827, an amazing four months after work had begun. A brick dwelling, the same size and shape as the meeting house, was built in 1832 beside it.

Industry at White Water included many prosperous endeavors. Following additional land purchases, the grist mill (1828), sawmill (1829), and a brewery (1832) were built. Spirits, brooms and produce were sold to the world. The garden seed trade routes went as far west as Missouri. In the late 1850s, White Water earned more than \$5,000 from the seed business. On the second floor of the Sisters' Shop, they raised silkworms and created bonnets.

At its height before the Civil War, there were 180 Shakers living at the White Water Village. The turn of the century brought modern technology including a telephone at the Center Family and North Family, an automobile, and indoor plumbing. As the result of a devastating fire in 1907 and the decline in membership, the village closed in December 1916 after 93 years. The land was sold to three local farming families. In 1990, over 600 acres of the former Shaker Village was purchased by Great Parks of Hamilton County.

## Friends of W W Shaker Village

In 2007, an all-volunteer nonprofit, Friends of White Water Shaker Village, Inc. (FWWSV), leased eight acres and the 10 remaining historic structures at the North Family site of the village. Generous donations, membership dues, and volunteering have helped to complete many projects, including restoring all windows in the meeting house, building new modern restrooms, and installing a septic system. Current projects include restoration of the 1849 milk house and a volunteer painting initiative in the meeting house and dwelling.

There are many ways to support FWWSV. Give the gift of your network. Tell your family and friends about the village. Share our Facebook posts to your feed. Introduce us to a potential corporate sponsor. Invite your friends to come volunteer with you. There are a variety of volunteer opportunities available, both working from home and on site.

You can help FWWSV continue its work to preserve, restore, and open the Shaker buildings to the public by making a donation, learning if your employer offers a matching gift to your donation, giving a memorial (an honor gift to honor someone's legacy), contributing through a donor advised fund, provide a legacy gift through planned giving, making a bequest through a will, trust or life insurance, donating to our restoration fund through stock gifts and/or an IRA charitable rollover (Qualified Charitable Distribution).

The Friends of White Water  
Shaker Village, Inc.  
11813 Oxford Road  
Harrison OH 45030

First Class Mail



Garden seed box display in the Meeting House

# White Water Shaker Village

## For Your Calendar

Saturday, April 13, 2024      Annual Gathering      9:30 AM - 4:00 PM  
Sunday, May 26, 2024      Spring Open House  
Sunday, December 8, 2024      Meeting House Anniversary Celebration



## Thanks to Our Sponsors



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TRIPLECROWN  
WEALTH MANAGEMENT



# *2024 Membership, Annual Appeal, and Donor Response Card*

## **2024 FWWSV Membership**

☐ \$15 Student

☐ \$30 Individual

☐ \$50 Family

☐ \$100 Sponsor

☐ \$500 Patron

☐ \$1,000 White Water Society

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## **Donations for the 2024 Appeal (Milk House Restoration Fund)**

☐ \$50

☐ \$100

☐ \$ 250

☐ \$500

☐ \$1,000

☐ \$ Other \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## **Donations for the 2024 Appeal (Meeting House Restoration Fund)**

☐ \$50

☐ \$100

☐ \$250

☐ \$500

☐ \$1000

☐ \$ Other

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## **Donations**

☐ \$50

☐ \$100

☐ \$250

☐ \$500

☐ \$1000

☐ \$ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ To be used at the board's discretion, or to be used for \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would like my donation to remain anonymous.

**Total amount enclosed** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for choosing to support the efforts to conserve  
and restore White Water Shaker Village.  
Friends of White Water Shaker Village is a 501c3 non-profit organization.

Please mail to: FWWSV, 11813 Oxford Road, Harrison OH 45030

## **Acknowledgement for my donation/membership may be sent via**

☐ Email

☐ Mail

☐ Written acknowledgement not necessary