

Trips

Chatham Shaker Museum *old*

Curator--H. B. Clauson--Chatham 5226 *old* } ~~5226~~

Owner--John S. Williams--Chatham 5271 } *old*

Tel. Old Chatham

Arrangements are to be made with Mr. Clauson

Travel Directions--Route 20 through Brainard swinging left into Route 66. As you approach the bridge ^{at Malvern} take the right hand dirt road at the fork ~~before crossing~~ the bridge. Several miles down this road, you will find a big red barn on the left. This is Mr. William's place.

Do not

is a sign reading "Early Industrial Museum." There

1951 Sat + weekday

*10 - to 12³⁰
2 to 4³⁰*

*Sun
10³⁰ to 12³⁰
2 to 4³⁰*

SHAKER MUSEUM AT O. CHATHAM

4,000 Items Depicting Life Of Group To Be Displayed

Invitations have been issued by John S. Williams of Old Chatham, for the opening of Good Hope, a Shaker museum, on his property Saturday, July 22, from 10 a. m. to 5 p. m.

The collections at Good Hope were acquired over a period of years, and now comprise some 4000 items covering most phases of Shaker life. Housed in three buildings the major effort has been to preserve machinery, tools, and household articles with which the Shakers lived and worked.

The majority of the collection comes from Mt. Lebanon, but there are also items from Watervliet, Hancock, and Canterbury. From Mt. Lebanon are the complete blacksmith shop of the Church Family including foundry patterns; the carpentry shop of the Church Family, and the medicine manufacturing and bottling room; from the North family furnishings of the kitchen and laundry.

Also included among the displays are manufacturing devices covering basket-work, boxes, mops, brooms, cut palm and poplar shoes and powdered sage. One building is devoted to material closely associated with the late Sister Emma J. Neale, whose unflinching interest made the project possible. There will be also two typical bedrooms, and a representative collection of furniture of Shaker manufacture. Printing is covered by a group of volumes of Shaker manufacture, and there is also a small collection of Shaker manuscripts.

The cataloging, arrangement, and care of the collection has in recent years been under the direction of Phelps Clawson, Honorary Curator of Ethnology of the Buffalo Museum of Science.

July 26, 1949

Mr. H. B. Clauson
Chatham
New York

Dear Mr. Clauson:

I appreciate very much your courtesy in letting our group visit the Shaker collection this coming Saturday, and I am enclosing one of our folders so that you will know why we are particularly interested in coming.

There will be several dozen young people along with four or five staff members.

Thank you again.

Sincerely yours,

Jerome Count

JC:mj
Enclosure

will show the true growth of the village.

Shaker Museum at Old Chatham House Work Of Dwindling Sect

July 1950

When a few years ago the last of the Mount Lebanon Shakers departed from Columbia County, they left behind them the heritage of more than a century of unique, gallant, and also useful living; a heritage which, since the Shakers are fast becoming an extinct set, might soon have been forgotten, were it not for the efforts of a Columbia County man, who, since 1935, has been working to gather together the symbols and implements of Shaker culture.

Fifteen years ago, John S. Williams of Old Chatham, realized that the death knell had already sounded for the Shaker families on Mount Lebanon. Although they carried on with incredible gallantry, following a pattern of life established in the eighteenth century by Mother Ann Lee, foundress of the sect, their numbers were few and the members old. Mr. Williams had a sincere admiration for the Shakers whom he regarded as people of extreme faith and as artisans whose work had an extraordinary esthetic quality. It distressed him to see them gradually disposing of their goods, many of them museum pieces, to people who didn't know the history of the objects they bought, cared less, and would in a few years probably throw them away.

A collection of Shaker relics he felt, should be made and kept in Columbia County, not as the property of a private individual but as a public trust, a memorial to a strange group of people who came to this valley and in their own quiet and unobtrusive way made it a better place in which to live.

He began this collection and in the ensuing years he worked at it unceasingly until today it numbers close to four thousand pieces which represent the whole scope of Shaker life and includes everything from a needle to a four-ton trip hammer.

While he was making the collection, Mr. Williams had the feeling of racing against time. So much had already been lost and within a few years unless it were quickly gathered up, everything else would be gone. The task of gathering grew more and more feverish.

AIDED BY SHAKERS

It was made easier, however, by the Shakers themselves. Realizing that the collection would be their monument in the years to come, they gave the utmost cooperation, especially the late Sister Emma Neale without whose faith and help Mr. Williams says, the job would have bogged down and perhaps been abandoned.

Of course many of the things collected were old, had not been used in many years, and were not in top condition. Someone had to be found to do this all-important work, and the very person turned up in the person of Phelps Clawson, also of Old Chatham.

Mr. Clawson, who is honorary Curator of Ethnology of the Buffalo Museum, is a trained Egyptologist, used to picking tiny pieces of this and that from the sands of the Sahara desert and working with them until the residue of tens of thousands of years was removed and they were restored to a near approximation of their original state and use. The job, then, of taking old and dirty Shaker machines apart, cleaning and repairing them, quarter inch by quarter inch, did not try his patience as it would another person's and the job of preparing and cataloging the collection became his. He also joined in the hunting down of pieces and turned up many valuable objects.

Of course, as the collection grew larger, housing it became a problem. Mr. Williams then decided to convert the huge barns on his property into a museum and in the past year or more that has been done and the collection has been brought there and arranged by Mr. Clawson.

The final steps are now being taken to make the collection a public trust and the museum is being formally opened this Saturday, July 22.

OLD FIRE ENGINE

Besides the big barn the collection takes up two other smaller buildings, one devoted to Sister Emma Neale. The complete forge shop of the Church family, Mount Lebanon Shakers, a medicine shop, typical Shaker men and women's bedrooms, a tool shop, a basket making shop, and several top examples of Shaker inventiveness, including a fire engine which was built at Canterbury, N. H. in 1822 by the Shakers there. It is said to be able to throw a one-inch stream of water 90 feet in the air and is operated by 24 men; a four ton trip hammer; and a washing machine which is believed to be one of the first, if not the first ever invented, are included in the collection.

Most of the objects have been obtained from the Mount Lebanon Shakers, but various parts have also been given by the Shaker families at Watervliet (Nisayuna); Hancock Mass.; and Canturbury, N. H.

After Saturday the museum will be open each day during certain hours. Application has been made to the Regents of the State of New York for a charter and its granting is expected within the near future.

Green River

Miss Mary Louise Grant attended the races in Saratoga Saturday evening.

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Trustees

CHESTER A. BRAMAN
ALBERT S. CALLAN
JAMES E. LEATH
ALFRED OGDEN
JOHN S. WILLIAMS
MARY L. WILLIAMS

THE SHAKER MUSEUM

JOHN S. WILLIAMS
Collection
The Shaker Museum Foundation
OLD CHATHAM, NEW YORK

Curator
H. PHELPS CLAWSON

Telephone
OLD CHATHAM 5226

Jan. 5, 1951.

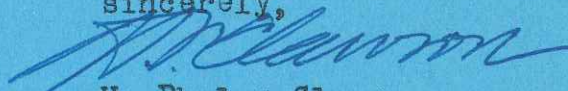
Dear Mr. Count:-

They say it is better late than never and this is very nearly 'never! The very interesting photo which you sent of our old Chair Shop or Chair Store sign with Eldress Collins in front of same was received by Mr. Williams last September, was placed carefully in his brief case where it got overlooked. He is indeed sorry.

I recently went to Canterbury, N.H. and returned with a huge truck load of Shaker material. A huge windlass, a "tongue & groove" machine, a Shaker invention of 1828, baskets which we did not have, a pressing table, very large woodbox from printing office, bonnets, a small press, etc. I am busy getting them in some order and with no heat in the Museum the work progresses slowly.

If wars do not upset the world we shall be open May 1st and I shall be looking forward to seeing you at that time.

sincerely,


H. Phelps Clawson,
Curator.

Thank you again for the photo will be a valuable addition to our collection.

Shaker Records
Trustees

CHESTER A. BRAMAN
ALBERT S. CALLAN
DR. CARL E. GUTHE
JAMES E. LEATH
ALFRED OGDEN
ROGER WILLIAMS
JOHN S. WILLIAMS
MARY L. WILLIAMS

THE SHAKER MUSEUM

The Shaker Museum Foundation
OLD CHATHAM, NEW YORK

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
Telephone
OLD CHATHAM 5271

Director
H. PHELPS CLAWSON
Telephone
OLD CHATHAM 5486

July 21, 1951.

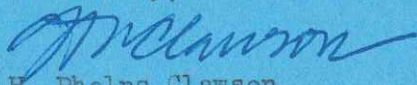
Dear Mr. Count:-

I wish to thank you on behalf of the Trustees in becoming a patron member of the Museum. Our membership list is growing and it is a great help to us in trying build up our collections which as you know is not easy to do.

I personally want to thank you and to tell you it is a little like heaping coals of fire, etc. because I felt last Sunday that I did not do as hospitable a job as I should have done. You know Brother Ricardo was over and he is a mine of information on so many things about which I am a depp well of ignorance. I hope no one felt I was rude, as I did not intend to be.

I do hope you will find time to come over yourself and see the new additions, not only to the display area, but to the collections.

Thanking you again for your generosity,

sincerely,

H. Phelps Clawson
Director.

JOHN S. WILLIAMS

Old Chatham, N. Y.

Subheads

March 28th.

Dear Jerome:

Enclosed please find proofs of pamphlet. I would appreciate your criticism. I believe the museum can provide you with copies at low cost. I hesitate to say how low, but on a large order I hope between six and seven cents apiece. It would be my idea that the museum would sell them for twenty-five cents. If you can give me an idea as to how many you may want it would be helpful as to cost. Would appreciate hearing from you as soon as possible.

Truly

John

April 29, 1953

Dear Mr. Williams:

I am sending you under separate cover a facsimile of a railroad poster which I unearthed, which I think will be of interest to the Museum. It is dated in 1852 and tells of special trains being run to Hudson for people who want to visit the Shakers at Mt. Lebanon. It provides a quaint bit of atmosphere and shows to what extent visitors travelled to the Shakers' settlement in those days. I am happy to present it and hope you will find it of interest.

Sincerely yours,

Jerome Count

Trustees

CHESTER A. BRAMAN
MRS. ROGER BRUNSWIG
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THE SHAKER MUSEUM

The Shaker Museum Foundation
OLD CHATHAM, NEW YORK

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Telephone

OLD CHATHAM 5271

Director

H. PHELPS CLAWSON

Telephone

OLD CHATHAM 5486

May 29, 1953

Mr. Jerome Count
285 Madison Avenue
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Count:

We received your letter and also the facsimile
which is unquestionably of very great interest.
I hardly need tell you how much we appreciate
your continued kind thoughts and interest con-
cerning the Museum.

Very sincerely yours,

John S. Williams

John S. Williams

JSW:ef

Trustees

CHESTER A. BRAMAN
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THE SHAKER MUSEUM

The Shaker Museum Foundation
OLD CHATHAM, NEW YORK

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Telephone

OLD CHATHAM 5271

Director

H. PHELPS CLAWSON

Telephone

OLD CHATHAM 5293

July 13, 1955.

Mr. Jerome Count,
Work Education Foundation,
P.O. Box,
Pittsfield, Mass.

Dear Mr. Count:-

It gives me great pleasure to advise you that you were elected a Trustee of the Shaker Museum Foundation, Inc., at a special meeting held on Saturday, July 9th. I sincerely hope that you will feel free to accept, and I believe that you will not find the duties too burdensome.

Looking forward with the greatest of pleasure to seeing you on the Board,

Sincerely yours,

John Williams
President.

JSW:F

July 18, 1955

Mr. J. S. Williams
The Shaker Museum
Old Chatham, New York

Dear Mr. Williams:

I am honored to accept my election to the Board of Trustees in your worthy project. I hope I can make some constructive contribution to the Board.

Sincerely yours,

Jerome Count

jc;fg

JOHN S. WILLIAMS
President
OLD CHATHAM 9-2271

MUSEUM
OLD CHATHAM 9-2111

THE SHAKER MUSEUM

The Shaker Museum Foundation Inc.
OLD CHATHAM, NEW YORK

WILLIAM F. CHRISTIANA
Secretary
HUDSON, N. Y.

H. PHELPS CLAWSON
Director
OLD CHATHAM 9-2118

November 28, 1955.

Mr. Jerome Count,
Work Education Foundation, Inc.
PO Box Pittsfield, Mass.

Dear Jerome:-

I have been trying to find time to contact you and spend a little time with you, but so far this month it has proven impossible. We have finished ~~our~~ new building at the Museum and are in the throes of setting it up for exhibition purposes.

I would like to talk to you about the scholarship idea, and naturally, I still have the State collections on my mind. At the present moment, I am sure I will have a week clear starting about the 9th of December, and I hope then that we may be able to get together.

Thank you for the newspaper clippings, which I thought were excellent publicity. I am going to try to get some of the local papers to pick up and use this part of Mr. Colby's column.

Looking forward to our getting together,

Sincerely yours,

John Williams

JSW:F

JOHN S. WILLIAMS
President
OLD CHATHAM 9-2271

MUSEUM
OLD CHATHAM 9-2111

THE SHAKER MUSEUM

The Shaker Museum Foundation Inc.
OLD CHATHAM, NEW YORK

WILLIAM F. CHRISTIANA
Secretary
HUDSON, N. Y.
H. PHELPS CLAWSON
Director
OLD CHATHAM 9-2118

January 5, 1956.

Mr. Jerome Count,
Work Education Foundation, Inc.
PO Box,
Pittsfield, Mass.

Dear Jerome:-

I failed to get in touch with you sooner, as the weather was cold, and we had to pretty much limit our activities at the Museum. I did, however, talk to Dr. Corey in Albany, and learned from him that for the present at least, the State is going to retain its Shaker collection, and they plan to at least get it cleaned and organized. Just what the future will bring I do not know, but at least I am trying to keep everything on the friendliest of terms.

Mrs. Williams and I are taking a European trip for two months, starting next week, as it is the only time I can get away. I will then be in contact with you about the middle of March to lay the ground-work for our coming season. If it is not too late I would like to review the scholarship matter with you at that time.

Hoping you and Mrs. Count have a good winter,

Sincerely,

J. Williams

JSW:F

JOHN S. WILLIAMS
President
OLD CHATHAM 9-2271

MUSEUM
OLD CHATHAM 9-2111

THE SHAKER MUSEUM

The Shaker Museum Foundation Inc.
OLD CHATHAM, NEW YORK

WILLIAM F. CHRISTIANA
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HUDSON, N. Y.

H. PHELPS CLAWSON
Director
OLD CHATHAM 9-2118

July 25, 1956

Mr. Jerome Count
Shaker Village Work Camp
New Lebanon, New York

Dear Mr. Count;

I thought you would be interested in the enclosed clipping from the New York Herald Tribune. New York Times, last Sunday, also had a fabulous story three-quarters of a column long in which you are also mentioned, but I do not have an extra copy.

You have probably seen all the mentions in the local papers. I am just sending the New York Herald Tribune in case you did not see it.

I hope you will be able to come to the meeting *next Monday* when all plans will be finalized for the festival.

Yours very truly,

Eve Brown Schimpf

(Mrs. Eve Brown Schimpf)

EBS/pg

JOHN S. WILLIAMS
President
OLD CHATHAM 9-2271

MUSEUM
OLD CHATHAM 9-2111

THE SHAKER MUSEUM

The Shaker Museum Foundation Inc.
OLD CHATHAM, NEW YORK

WILLIAM F. CHRISTIANA
Secretary
HUDSON, N. Y.

H. PHELPS CLAWSON
Director
OLD CHATHAM 9-2118

August 16, 1956

Mr. Jerome Count
Shaker Village Work Camp
Lebanon Springs, N.Y.

Dear Jerome:

I can't thank you enough for your untiring efforts in behalf of the Museum Festival. That it was a tremendous success, you already know.

The results were highly rewarding, but more than that, the day itself was a triumph so far as the public was concerned. On all sides we heard comments of praise and admiration for the interesting and diversified program, with particular stress on the Shaker singing and dancing.

None of this would have been possible without your interest and cooperation. Words cannot fully express my appreciation---so I shall merely say, with all my heart, "thank you."

Sincerely,

John

John S. Williams

P.S. Just another well deserved "formal" thanks!

Shaker Museum

Wilburton Inn
Manchester, Vermont

Aug. 19th

Dear Jerome:

A somewhat belated letter to thank you and so many at the Shaker work camp for all that you did for the museum benefit. The singing and dancing were greatly appreciated, and I am sure drew many people. I want to state right now, however, that next year we must have a proper platform, and proper loud-speaking facilities ready for you. An effort like yours deserves more effort from us. My thanks also to Mrs. Teller and the weaving department, in fact again my personal thanks to all concerned. Hope to see you soon.

as ever
John

Hemphill, Noyes & Co.

MEMBERS NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE

15 BROAD STREET

NEW YORK 5, N. Y.

HANOVER 2-4120

April 16, 1957.

Mr. Jerome Count,
Shaker Village Work Camp,
PO Box Pittsfield, Mass.

Dear Jerome:-

I am enclosing the Museum's new pamphlet on Shaker inventions. I can say that the Courier Press has done an outstanding job, especially with the illustrations. We plan to sell this pamphlet for 50¢, which I believe is a reasonable price, as it contains 13 illustrations. Should you wish extra copies will you please advise Phelps.

Just a reminder, our new annual meeting will be held on the first Saturday in June, which is June 1st this year. Will advise you concerning this later.

Sincerely,

JH

JSW:f

Thanks for you recent letter. will buy you postcard.

COPY

COUNT & PICKET

282 MADISON AVENUE

NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

May 20, 1957

Dear John:

Included in some of the material at Hancock I found these two items that you might want to have: One is a memorandum of the meeting of Shakers in 1887 in reached the decision to discontinue the extensive seed and medicine business --certainly a fateful step in the descent of the Society. The other is a draft of a petition to the New Hampshire legislature concerning the laws of inheritance as it affected the believers.

Many thanks, again for all your help. Incidentally, you made the right decision concerning the clocks. The second one is definitely not Shaker, Ricardo said.

Sincerely yours,

Jerome Count

Hemphill, Noyes & Co.

MEMBERS NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE

15 BROAD STREET

NEW YORK 5. N. Y.

HANOVER 2-4120

May 10, 1957.

Mr. Jerome Count,
Shaker Road,
New Lebanon,
New York.

Dear Jerome:-

I have not written you further concerning your letter of early April until now, as I have been doing considerable work for the Museum at Hancock. This time the Shakers are in good hands, and all prices have been on the very high side; in fact, very often far too high for the Museum, and I am sure very much too high for you. I, naturally, did not attempt to acquire anything for you. I did get a few nice things for the Museum, but much of the best even slid through my hands.

Sorry I could not produce.

Sincerely yours,

John Williams
+

JSW:f

JOHN S. WILLIAMS
President
OLD CHATHAM 9-2271

MUSEUM
OLD CHATHAM 9-2111

THE SHAKER MUSEUM

The Shaker Museum Foundation Inc.
OLD CHATHAM, NEW YORK

WILLIAM F. CHRISTIANA
Secretary
HUDSON, N. Y.

H. PHELPS CLAWSON
Director
OLD CHATHAM 9-2118

August 6, 1957

Mr. Jerome Count
Lebanon Springs
New York

Dear *John*:

I just want to send you a word of appreciation for all the effort and time you spent on the Shaker Museum Festival.

You'll be glad to hear it was more successful than last year. In fact, if it gets any more successful I don't see how we can handle the crowds.

I am sure that much good was done for the museum and we will have a continuation of success for the rest of the summer.

Again many thanks.

Very sincerely,

John
John S. Williams
President

JSW:mc

THE COUNTS
Shaker Road
New Lebanon, N. Y.

Dear Friend:

Did you know that the very first garden seed-packing industry in this country was started by the early-American people, called the "Shakers?" Or that in our early history, their garden herb products were sold all over the world and were known for their outstanding quality? As a gardener myself, I was surprised to learn about these things. I believe that you, too, may be interested to hear about the work that is being done to preserve the fascinating garden-lore left to us by these remarkable people.

Much of the Shaker's precious lore was in danger of being lost until recently when museum historians and students, working in all fields of our American culture, engaged in unearthing this important heritage. Interesting examples of these studies are the recent feature articles in the well-known magazine, "Antiques."

My husband and I are proud that we, too, are able to have a part in this significant work. Living at the original historic Shaker settlement on Mt. Lebanon for over ten years, we are engaged in restoring the historic buildings and putting the gardens back to productive use. We have been fortunate to have encouragement from the few remaining members of the Shaker Society. They have kindly shared with us original recipes of garden and culinary treasures used long ago at the former home of the Shakers here at Mt. Lebanon.

Now for the first time, we are fortunately able to share with American homemakers one of the most unusual garden products that has come from our study and work. Shaker Herb Tea, a unique beverage, is prepared from a subtle blend of finest tea with the elusive flavor that could only be imparted by a number of home-grown herbs.

JOHN S. WILLIAMS
President
OLD CHATHAM 9-2271

MUSEUM
OLD CHATHAM 9-2111

THE SHAKER MUSEUM

The Shaker Museum Foundation Inc.
OLD CHATHAM, NEW YORK

WILLIAM F. CHRISTIANA
Secretary
HUDSON, N. Y.
H. PHELPS CLAWSON
Director
OLD CHATHAM 9-2118

May 18, 1959

Mr. Jerome Count
Shaker Village Work Camp
New Lebanon, N.Y.

Dear Jerome:

After checking on the cost of our new booklets, I find we can let you have them at 25¢ a piece, which allows us a small profit and still allows you an adequate profit at your store.

I was happy to know you like my efforts.

We enclose the Museum bill for \$25.00 for the 100 booklets.

Sincerely yours,

JSW
John S. Williams

JSW:mc
enc.

JOHN S. WILLIAMS
President
OLD CHATHAM 9-2271
MUSEUM
OLD CHATHAM 9-2111

THE SHAKER MUSEUM

The Shaker Museum Foundation Inc.
OLD CHATHAM, NEW YORK

WILLIAM F. CHRISTIANA
Secretary
HUDSON, N. Y.
H. PHELPS CLAWSON
Director
OLD CHATHAM 9-2118

June 2, 1959

Mr. Jerome Count
New Lebanon
New York

Dear Jerome:

I'm writing to tell you, as I think you already know, that Charlotte Shaffer has agreed to act as chairman for the Museum Festival again this year. Due to her other activities, she will not be able to take hold until July 1st.

She will be here, however, on week ends and we thought it wise to have a preliminary meeting on Saturday, June 13 at 10:30 A.M. The meeting will be at the Museum office.

I sincerely hope, if you possibly can, you'll be present.

Sincerely yours,

Jsh
John S. Williams
President

JSW:mc

JOHN S. WILLIAMS
President
OLD CHATHAM 9-2271

MUSEUM
OLD CHATHAM 9-2111

THE SHAKER MUSEUM

The Shaker Museum-Foundation Inc.
OLD CHATHAM, NEW YORK

WILLIAM F. CHRISTIANA
Secretary
HUDSON, N. Y.
H. PHELPS CLAWSON
Director
OLD CHATHAM 9-2118

August 10, 1959

Mrs. Robert L. Wood
Shaker Village Work Group
P. O. Box 1149
Pittsfield, Mass.

Dear Mrs. Wood:

Thank you for your letter of July 21st and please forgive the delay in answering.

As you know, we were in the midst of preparing for the Shaker Festival. We are sorry we couldn't use your group, but our plans were already formulated when we received your letter.

If you wish, you may contact us again next spring at which time we will give some consideration to your group. Of course, we do have an exhibition of spinning and weaving at the Festival which has been very satisfactory.

Again, many thanks for thinking of us and get in touch with us again.

Sincerely yours,

Muriel Collins
Muriel Collins
Asst. Treas.

MC