

HISTORIC NEW HARMONY IN NEWSLETTER
HARMONY

Where the Past and the Future are Present

Fall • 2005

“SPIRITS IN HARMONIE” IS NOVEMBER 26

Historic New Harmony’s popular holiday tasting, “Spirits in Harmonie,” will be held from 5 to 9 p.m. Saturday, November 26. Why fight the crowd at the mall, when you can sample hand-crafted beers, ciders, and fine wines in a variety of historic buildings in New Harmony? Come early to shop for quaint, contemporary, and hard-to-find gifts and antiques, or visit one of the many art galleries. Tickets are available for \$22.50 in advance or \$25 at the door. For tickets or information, call 800.231.2168 or visit the Atheneum/Visitors Center.



HISTORIC
NEW HARMONY

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SCHNEE-RIBEYRE-ELLIOTT HOUSE RESTORATION UNDERWAY

With final restoration work well underway, the Schnee-Ribeyre-Elliott House is returning to life. When completed, the house, where President William H. Taft once had tea, will again welcome guests to New Harmony.

“The restoration will allow us to educate visitors about the history of historic preservation in New Harmony while also providing easier and safer access to Historic New Harmony offices,” noted Connie Weinzapfel, Historic New Harmony director. “What a thrill to be able to interpret the influence of three prominent New Harmony families in such a significant post-Civil War residence.”

This project was made possible by the gift of the home by former resident Helen Elliott and many private donors. It will provide the opportunity to fulfill several of Historic New Harmony’s long-term goals. (See related article on Helen Elliott on page 3.)

Since David Michaelis Schnee, a saddle and harness maker, built the home on the southwest corner of West and Tavern streets in 1867, the home has been a rich part of the town’s history. The home was



The finished restoration will retain an elevator added in the 1960s to provide access to both floors.



The house’s steamboat gothic porch is now a famous site in New Harmony.

sold to “Corn King” Captain Alfred Ribeyre in 1879, who later passed the home to his son Robert. Captain Ribeyre was one of the area’s most prominent farmers, and he built many of the commercial structures still in use downtown. It was during New Harmony’s Centennial in 1914 that former President Taft visited the home.

In 1925, the Ribeyre family sold the home to Elmer Elliott, who lived in the home until his death at age 100 in 1965. His daughter, Helen Elliott, then lived in the home until her death in 1982. She bequeathed the home to Historic New Harmony.

The home will include important architectural details removed in a previous restoration attempt. Reproduction period wall coverings, floor coverings, and window treatments are planned in the main floor public areas. Donors and supporters of Historic New Harmony have worked for years to bring this project to a successful conclusion, returning yet another historic building to productive use. For information on the home and ways you can support the restoration, please contact Scott Wylie at 812.682.4488 or rswylie@usi.edu.



DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

Connie Weinzapfel,
Director

Historic New Harmony has entered a new partnership with Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana (HLFI). While Historic New Harmony is primarily concerned with the preservation of our utopian legacy, HLFI is a national leader in preservation advocacy and education.

Beginning this fall, HLFI will provide preservation services to Historic New Harmony including an analysis of historic properties, preservation and restoration planning, technical assistance with grant-writing, and participation on the preservation committee of the Historic New Harmony Society. Stewart Sebree, director of HLFI's southwest field office, has been our partner in past New Harmony projects, and will add expertise to our plans.

Speaking of partnerships, Historic New Harmony has just renewed its agreement with the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Indiana to operate the Lenz House and Garden as a tour site. The Colonial Dames have owned the Lenz House since 1958, when it was donated to them by the Mumford family of Posey County. In 1959 it was opened as a tour site.

Though Robert Owen's Cooperative Movement wasn't fully realized in New Harmony, it still serves as an ideal to be pursued. Fostering partnerships is one way to make New Harmony's history relevant.



A TALE OF TWO UTOPIAS

"New Harmony: A Tale of Two Utopias," which premiered in April in Bloomington, Indiana, explores the two early 19th century Utopian communities of New Harmony with dramatic narrative and music. Voces Novae, a Bloomington-based chamber choir, will present the show at 2 p.m. Saturday, November 5, at Thrall's Opera House.

Actors will recite the words of George Rapp and Robert Owen, New Harmony's Utopian leaders. The program includes Shaker songs such as "Tis a Gift to be Simple" and "Spiritual Eden," and music by Leonard Bernstein, Aaron Copland, Josef Haydn, and Randall Thompson.

Connie Weinzapfel, director of Historic New Harmony, was one of over 200 people who attended the premiere. "It tells the New Harmony story in an interesting and captivating way," she said. "The chorus is wonderful. Some of the music is from the 19th century and some from the 20th, and actors recite quotes from Rapp and Owen."

Susan Swaney, Voces Novae's music director, has a connection to New Harmony. Her father-in-law, architect Evans Woollen, designed the New Harmony Inn, and her brother-in-law was married at New Harmony's Cathedral Labyrinth and Sacred Garden.

Swaney researched Rapp and Owen and wrote the script. "I started with the two personalities and tried to find the germ of what made them compelling. With George Rapp, it was clear that he was very smart and knew how to do everything, it seemed. The success of the Harmonist community was his unbelievable competence."

She also found a lot to admire in Robert Owen. "So many of Robert Owen's ideas have come into their own so much later," she said. "There's a wonderful quote of his, as an old man, saying he was just ahead of his time, and I think that's true. He was a visionary. He didn't do things by half at all, and that kind of wild dreamer aspect of him is very appealing."

For information about the music of New Harmony, Swaney relied on the work of Claude Sluder, a Bloomington man who wrote a dissertation on the subject.

"All the music in the program is either music that was performed or used at New Harmony, or it's music that is 20th century American music in a nostalgic vein. The music is interwoven in a way that it's part of the storytelling, so it all moves very quickly and seamlessly, and is essentially part of the story," Swaney said.

Voces Novae was founded nine years ago. Among its members are a doctor, a nurse, several educators, a costume designer, an equestrian, a biologist, two computer technologists, a financial administrator, a folklorist, and more, over half of whom hold music degrees.

Swaney has been music director since 1998. She also teaches choral conducting and conducts the International Vocal Ensemble at Indiana University, conducts a church choir in Bloomington, and sings professionally.

Tickets are \$10 for general admission and \$5 for seniors and students. For more information or to purchase tickets, call Historic New Harmony at 800.231.2168.

NEW WEB SITE ON THE HORIZON

In the coming months, Historic New Harmony will unveil its new and improved Web site. "The site will feature a number of new, interactive applications," noted Scott Wylie, manager of Development and Public Relations for Historic New Harmony. Supporters will be able to donate online. Shoppers will be able to select items from the Museum Shop. Visitors and tourists will be able to purchase tour tickets and learn about special events from the comfort of their home computers. Be sure to visit

www.newharmony.org



HELEN ELLIOTT—HELPING TO PRESERVE AND TELL THE STORY OF NEW HARMONY

Personal friend, special teacher, historian, role model, perfect lady, beloved aunt, benefactor, grande dame of New Harmony—Helen Elliott is remembered in many ways by the people who knew her.

Elliott gave her family's historic Steamboat Gothic home, the 1867 Schnee-Ribeyre-Elliott House at 603 West Street, to be enjoyed by the New Harmony community for many years to come. (See related cover article.)

Ralph Baumheckel of Indianapolis knew Elliott from his years at Arsenal Technical High School, a 5,000-student school in Indianapolis that he attended in the mid-1940s. Baumheckel, who went on to a career in engineering, was a student in an American history class taught by Elliott. "I was only nominally interested in history, and she moved me up several notches," he said. "She had a lot of very close contact with her students. She served as a counselor if you were looking for advice relative to going on to university. She motivated students to go who otherwise might not have gone. She had an outstanding, warm, and friendly personality. Every student that she touched felt she was a special friend."

Baumheckel kept in touch with Elliott through the years and recalls visiting her home in New Harmony with his wife and their three children in the late '50s. "She invited us to have lunch with her and her father," Baumheckel said. "We sat around that huge dining room table and shared a wonderful meal. Wherever Miss Elliott was, there was interesting conversation going on."

Elliott personally escorted the Baumheckel family around New Harmony, explaining the buildings and other sites.

USI's 2005 Commencement speaker, Charles Huppert, also was a student of Elliott at Arsenal Technical High School, which had about 8,500 students in pre-war years.

Huppert hitchhiked his way to Indianapolis from Dale, Indiana, when he was 14, two years after his father died. The young Huppert lodged at the YMCA and worked as a fry cook there. After a successful

summer of earning money, he decided to stay in Indianapolis, arranging to attend classes from 8 a.m. until noon so he could continue working. Elliott was his American history teacher.



Ann Scarafia, USI/HNH Foundation board member, said Elliott "was an example of a perfect lady."

"She had an interest in getting all of the students to learn history. If a teacher is really enthusiastic, it rubs off on the students," Huppert said.

"Every morning in her class, you took your book and put it in the left-hand corner of the desk — closed," he said. "Then she handed out sheets with 15 to 25 questions that you could answer with one or two words or a phrase. It told her whether you had studied or not, and that grade went on your record every day," he said.

Huppert believes that Elliott took a special interest in him because he was from Dale. She knew his former high-school principal at Dale, "a man by the name of Mr.

Rechord," who was from New Harmony. After returning to Indianapolis from a trip to southwestern Indiana, Elliott often would bring Huppert greetings from Mr. Rechord and a message that he was proud of Huppert's accomplishments at Arsenal Tech.

Elliott encouraged Huppert to do his best and monitored his academic progress, not just in history. When report cards were distributed, she had him bring his grade report to her at noon after all teachers had entered grades.

Huppert, who made straight A-pluses at the school, had enough credits to graduate after one year but stayed another year to take advanced science and math courses and an English composition course that was eligible for college credit. He graduated in 1936, taking a job as a linesman with Western Union. After several months, he had saved enough money (\$25) to hitchhike to California, where he got a job as an electronics technician in the movie industry.

Later, Huppert made his own impact on American history. As a prisoner of war, he helped engineer "The Great Escape" from a Nazi POW camp in Sagan, Germany (now Zagan, Poland). The 1963 movie "The Great Escape," starring Steve McQueen, featured the plan. In 2003, Huppert returned to Zagan as a consultant with the crew of the PBS series, "NOVA," on a show about the escape plan. He lives in Evansville.

Jane Grizzell of Evansville said that her aunt Helen Elliott was educated at Oxford College for Women, which later became Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. Elliott taught a year in her native Posey County before joining the faculty at Arsenal. She earned a master's degree from Indiana University, taking courses as her teaching schedule allowed. Grizzell's daughter, Betsy Hopkins, recalled Easter egg hunts in the front-yard garden of irises and many other wonderful times with her great-aunt at the historic home. Hopkins said that Elliott's Christmas gifts to her always included books inscribed with the date. Hopkins has cherished those books—classics such as books of poetry and the



Laura Ingalls Wilder series—through the years and has read them to her children.

Another individual who fondly remembers Elliott is Ann Scarafia, a member of the board of the University of Southern Indiana/New Harmony Foundation, which is raising money to restore the home.

“Helen Elliott was my role model as I grew up in New Harmony,” Scarafia said. “To me, she was an example of a perfect lady, always kind and considerate of others and willing to share her expertise. Living right across from the school, she was always available and willing to help struggling high-school students with any problems or questions we might have had.”

Dr. Donald E. Pitzer, professor of history and director of USI’s Center for Communal Studies, said, “Helen was a dear person who influenced many people for good both in her native New Harmony and as a public school teacher in Indianapolis. She studied the history of her town thoroughly and, I believe, may have written her master’s thesis on the Harmonist and Owenite communal settlements there.”

Pitzer was introduced to Elliott by Dr. David Rice, then president of the University and now president emeritus. Rice and his wife Betty, who is chair of the USI/New Harmony Foundation, live now in New Harmony in the house on Main Street where Elliott was born. Pitzer said that Elliott generously assisted his and others’ scholarship and projects. “Because of Helen Elliott I became a young pioneer visiting Harmonist origins in Iptingen, Germany, and Owenite sites and archives in New Lanark, Scotland, and Manchester and London, England,” Pitzer said.

“Helen Elliott became the grand dame of her native New Harmony where utopian dreams are welcomed and practical solutions for making the world better are sought.” Pitzer said. “Helen motivated many to dream such dreams and to seek such solutions. In person and in spirit she has been, and continues to be, a moving force to awaken the best in her community and the world.”

Helen Elliott died in April 1982 at age 88.



The first story will be used in interpret the history of the three families who occupied the house since 1867. The second floor will be used to provide accessible office space for Historic New Harmony administrative staff.



SCOTT WYLIE JOINS STAFF



Carmi, Illinois, native Scott Wylie has joined the staff of Historic New Harmony as manager of Development and Public Relations. Wylie has extensive experience in fund development and public relations. He was an associate dean at Whittier College School of Law, where he also served as acting director of the Center for Children's Rights, and clinic and externship program director. He was an adjunct professor at California State University at Fullerton; served as a

member of the board of advisors and adjunct professor of law at Chapman University School of Law; and was adjunct professor of law and served on the career services advisory board at Western State University College of Law. He is a member of the State Bar of California, Orange County Bar Association, and American Bar Association. He was recipient of the Orange County Human Relations Commission 2003 Human Relations Award; the State Bar of California President's Pro Bono Service Award at the 2002 State Bar Annual Meeting, at which he also received a distinguished service citation from the California State Assembly; the 1999 Jurisprudence Award from the Anti-Defamation League of Orange County and Long Beach; and the 1999 Attorney of the Year award from Orange County Women Lawyers. He has a Juris Doctor degree and a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from the University of Illinois at Champagne/Urbana. He is the son of Bob and Linda Wylie of Carmi.

WALK INTO THE PAST AND VISIT NEW HARMONY'S "DEARLY DEPARTED"

Historic New Harmony will introduce visitors to the history of New Harmony in a season-appropriate manner with "A Walk into the Past" on October 29.

Guests will tour the Harmonist Cemetery, the Fautleroy House, Maple Hill Cemetery, and other sites throughout town. During the tour, interpreters will portray Robert Owen, who purchased the town from the Harmonists in 1825, and Jane Dale Owen Fautleroy, his only daughter to come to America from Scotland. Tours will start at the Atheneum beginning at 3:30 p.m. and sites will remain open until 7 p.m. A reception will be held immediately following, also at the Atheneum.

Join this fun way to celebrate the season and learn about the history of many of New Harmony's dearly departed. Tickets (which include the reception) are \$15 for adults, \$12.50 for seniors/AAA, and \$7 for students. Children under seven are admitted free. For information, call 800.231.2168.

COLLECTIONS CORNER

Daniel Goodman, Collections Manager

A recent addition to the full-time Indiana State Museum staff in New Harmony, Amanda Bryden is the assistant collections manager. Amanda received her undergraduate degree in history from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville and her graduate degree in historical administration from Eastern Illinois University. Amanda is a great addition to the staff and we are happy to have her in New Harmony.

Periodically I like to highlight objects from the Historic New Harmony collection. This month I want to focus on silhouettes. A silhouette is a drawing consisting of the outline of something, especially a human profile, filled in with a solid color. The name originates from Etienne de Silhouette, a French minister of finance in 1759, who made such portraits on the walls of his apartment as a diversion. Before photography was invented, silhouettes were the common form of inexpensive portraiture. While limited to profiles, the variety of poses were limitless and artists offered a wide variety of options, from busts on a white background to a full-body likeness pasted over a watercolor scene. Artists were both itinerant and studio-based and were of various skill levels.



The Historic New Harmony collection has a variety of high quality silhouettes including two done in silk of Owen/Maclure community members Thomas and Lucy Say by Titian Peale of the famous Philadelphia Peales. The Historic New Harmony collection also boasts silhouettes of William Maclure, Robert Owen, Charles-Alexandre Lesueur, and Marie Fretageot.

John Chappelsmith, an accomplished artist in his own right, spent some time in New Harmony during the Owen experiment, producing silhouettes of various community members which survive today in the Historic New Harmony collection.

The image above is an excellent example of a silhouette Historic New Harmony is seeking to acquire. The silhouette is entitled "The Founders," and it was created in 1827 by John Chappelsmith. The piece includes the silhouettes of five New Harmony founders—Robert Owen, William Maclure, Thomas Say, Charles-Alexandre Lesueur, and Madame Marie Louise Duclos Fretageot—framed against a watercolor background of New Harmony. The banner expresses one of Owen's precepts, "Man Makes His Own Existence."

This particular silhouette portrays the collaborative effort of various intellectuals working together for a common good in New Harmony.

To learn more about how you can help Historic New Harmony in the acquisition of "The Founders" please call me at 812.682.4488.



JOIN TODAY!

Join the Historic New Harmony Society today. As a donor, you receive advance information on coming events, exhibits, and openings in New Harmony. Become a part of the Historic New Harmony family today!

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In Harmony is published twice yearly by Historic New Harmony. Letters and comments may be sent to: In Harmony, P.O. Box 579, New Harmony, Indiana 47631.

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Historic New Harmony is a unified program of the University of Southern Indiana and the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites. Information is available at www.newharmony.org.

PHS-5123

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

THROUGH DECEMBER

Historic New Harmony Tours
Athenaeum/Visitors Center 9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

OCTOBER 8–NOVEMBER 13
"Lucas"

New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art

OCTOBER 9–14
Elderhostel

OCTOBER 14–16
Dulcimer Chautauqua on the Wabash
Music Festival

OCTOBER 29
"A Walk into the Past" (See Related Article pg. 5.)
Athenaeum/Visitors Center 3:30–7:30 p.m.

OCTOBER 30–DECEMBER 31
Art exhibit by Carolyn Roth, Women's
Institute and Gallery

NOVEMBER 5
"Two Utopias" A choral telling of New
Harmony's story (See Related Article pg. 2.)
Thrall's Opera House at 2 p.m.

NOVEMBER 19
Fall Gallery Stroll 4–7 p.m.

NOVEMBER 19–DECEMBER 24
"Wild Women" New Harmony Gallery of
Contemporary Art

NOVEMBER 26
"Spirits in Harmonie" wine- and beer-tasting
event (See Related Article pg. 1.)
Athenaeum/Visitors Center

DECEMBER 2–4
Christmas in New Harmony

MARCH 15, 2006
Historic New Harmony Tours open for season
Athenaeum/Visitors Center 9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

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