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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HARMONIEFEST

Annual New Harmony celebration will focus on the "Great Schism" and descendants of the Harmonie Society

NEW HARMONY, IN (January 12, 2009) - Historic New Harmony and Harmonie Associates will co-sponsor the annual *Harmoniefest* celebration on Friday, February 13, 2009 at Thrall's Opera House. *Harmoniefest* is free to attend and will begin with a pitch-in dinner at 6:30 p.m. followed by a lecture at 7:30 p.m.

This year's celebration will feature guest speaker, Dr. Eileen Aiken English, professor emeritus of education at California University of Pennsylvania. A native of Monaca (formerly Phillipsburg), PA, she has researched and written about the founders of the New Philadelphia Society whose members had seceded from George Rapp's Harmonie Society at Economy, PA. Also, on the program will be Dr. Donald E. Pitzer, professor emeritus of history from the University of Southern Indiana and Jan Kahle, education coordinator for Historic New Harmony. The program will relate to the "Great Schism" of 1832 and the reunion in June 2008, of the descendants of the seceders that left the Harmonie Society during that time.

"I am looking forward to learning more about the Harmonists who left the society. I've always wondered what happened to the Harmonist families who may have stayed in this area when George Rapp and his followers returned to Pennsylvania," said Martha Raske, Harmonie Associates President.

Harmoniefest celebrates the official founding of the Harmonie Society in 1805 and the date each year new members were invited to join the group. Members of the Society, led by George Rapp, founded what would become New Harmony in 1814.

Thrall's Opera House is located at 612 Church Street in New Harmony. More information about *Harmoniefest* is available at www.newharmony.org or by calling 812.682.4488.

About Historic New Harmony:

The mission of Historic New Harmony is to preserve New Harmony's utopian legacy by inspiring renewal and fellowship between people and communities through its programs and collections. Historic New Harmony is a unified program of the University of Southern Indiana and the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites. For more information on Historic New Harmony, please visit www.newharmony.org.

About Harmonie Associates:

Harmonie Associates is a community organization founded in 1964 to preserve and promote the history of New Harmony.

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