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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Silver Anniversary of Heritage Artisans Week April 20-24

Historic New Harmony Celebrates 25 Years of Heritage Education

NEW HARMONY, IN (April, 2010) – Historic New Harmony’s annual Heritage Artisans Week is a five-day celebration of 19th century arts, crafts and industry. This year it’s also the celebration of an entire generation of tri-state students – nearly 100,000 of them – learning history in an unforgettable way.

Thousands of area school-age children will visit New Harmony next week to meet craft and trade demonstrators who make the past come alive. There are twenty five high-quality craft artisans this year; favorites like the bee keepers, felt hat makers and the book binder are joined by a shepherd with his sheep and working dogs, and a silver smith in honor of the event’s anniversary. Tom Wintczak with his handcrafted redware pottery will return, and the oxen teams are back too.

Teachers say that among the education community, Heritage Artisans Week is considered the best field trip of the year. Mary Rowe with Daniel Wertz Elementary School estimates she has brought 750 students to the event. For her students, churning butter and making rope at Heritage Artisans Week has become a tradition.

Historic New Harmony partner, West Side Nut Club, has generously supported the program for many years through transportation grants for schools. Club President Dan Lewis referenced his group’s motto, ‘From small acorns, large oaks grow,’ and said the Club sponsors Heritage Artisans Week “because the event is about planting seeds.”

In 1985, University of Southern Indiana presented Historic New Harmony Director Jim Sanders with a threefold challenge: to increase visitor traffic in town, utilize the historic buildings and provide educational programming for children. Sanders’ innovative response to that call was well received and Heritage Week was launched.

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The exact number of students who patronized the first Heritage Artisans Week is not known, but first-year volunteers share at least one common memory: the overwhelming job of trying to take photographs of the student groups as they came off the buses.

“There were so many children,” a staff member recollected, “and they just kept coming.”

It was a great surprise to event volunteers when hundreds of students spilled off school buses that lined up as far as they could see. Twenty-five years later, they still keep coming, with as many as 5,000 students attending annually.

Rain or shine, the event will take place Tuesday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tickets may be purchased during the event at the Atheneum/Visitors Center, located at N. Arthur and North Streets in New Harmony . Prices are \$10 for adults, \$9 for seniors/AAA, \$5 for children 7-17 years of age, and children under 6 are free of charge. For additional details during the event, call 800.231.2168.

Historic New Harmony is a unified program of University of Southern Indiana and Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites. Visit www.newharmony.org <<http://www.newharmony.org/>> or call 812.682.4488 or 800.231.2168.

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