

HISTORIC NEW HARMONY IN NEWSLETTER HARMONY

Historic New Harmony is a unified program of the University of Southern Indiana and the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites

Fall • 2010

NEW HARMONY LOSES CHAMPION—JANE BLAFFER OWEN

Jane Blaffer Owen CBE (1915–2010) was born in Houston, Texas, the daughter of Robert Lee Blaffer and Sarah Campbell Blaffer. She grew up traveling the world, and in 1933, graduated from the Ethel Walker School in Connecticut. She studied at Bryn Mawr, the Washington School of Diplomacy, and the Union Theological Seminary in New York.

In 1941, she married Kenneth Dale Owen, a geologist and descendant of Robert Owen, the founder of the 1825 Owen/Maclure Community in New Harmony. Early in their marriage, Kenneth Owen introduced his bride to the town of his birth. Falling in love again, Jane Owen adopted this little town on the Wabash as her home, and thus was born a palette for her intelligence and unfettered generosity. Channeling her philanthropic efforts, she established the Robert Lee Blaffer Foundation to preserve and promote the town's historical and educational attributes. Among numerous other New Harmony initiatives, she commissioned Philip Johnson to design the Roofless Church; orchestrated the building of the visitors' center, architect Richard Meier's Atheneum; envisioned a spiritual retreat center and created the Macleod Barn Abbey; inspired and supported the restoration of the



Jane Owen in a joyous moment with Andy Warhol's Silver Clouds which she sponsored at New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art in 2007.

Rapp-Owen Granary; and encouraged spiritual awakening through the Cathedral Labyrinth, built for meditation and prayer.

During her life, Jane Owen was the recipient of numerous awards and recognition. Most notably, she was named Commander of the British Empire, an honor bestowed by her majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. She received the prestigious Louise DuPont Crowninshield Award, presented by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Sachem Award, presented by Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels to recognize a lifetime of excellence and virtue that brought credit and honor to the state.

Aside from all she accomplished in life, Jane Owen's true legacy may be found in the faith she

demonstrated, the friendships she forged, the beauty she created, the enthusiasm she espoused, and the simple way in which she lived.

Karen Walker, Director
USI/New Harmony Foundation



HISTORIC
NEW HARMONY

"By preserving its utopian legacy, Historic New Harmony will inspire renewal and fellowship between people and communities through its programs and collections."

—Historic New Harmony Mission Statement



Jane Owen presenting Judith and Darwin Barnes with the Jane B. Owen Award for Preservation Excellence in Fall, 2009.



DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

Connie Weinzapfel,
Director

"This issue of *In Harmonie* is dedicated to my friend and mentor, Jane Blaffer Owen. Every story here reflects her influence on Historic New Harmony and my direction of it. Jane believed in the power of education for everyone. She believed that the past truly is prologue...it's not enough to just restore a building—she had recently begun to say that we are trying to restore people now.

A few years ago, Historic New Harmony began a new direction in which we would intentionally focus our programs on spiritual renewal, community building, and the diffusion of knowledge. You will find this thread in New Harmony Gallery's labyrinth artist project and in our first interfaith dialogue retreat next March. These are not new ideas; these are a continuation of Jane's ideas about the power of people to progress.

Allow me to say thank you one last time to the person who truly brought people together in ways unlike anyone else I have ever known or ever will know. Jane, your spirit is forever etched on this place called New Harmony and on me."



CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Gen-er-os-i-ty (1) the quality of being generous: a) nobility of mind, magnanimity b) willingness to give or share; unselfishness. Jane Blaffer Owen was the example of Webster's definition!



Most everyone who reads the newspaper is aware of Mrs. Owen's generosity in investing millions for historic preservation, restoration, and economic development in New Harmony. She also is well-known for her support of the arts—local artists as well as internationally recognized artists.

Anyone who personally knew Mrs. Owen recognized her love and acceptance of people. She demonstrated it with her many acts of kindness of which the general public may or may not have been aware. She provided housing on many occasions and was instrumental in the building of a Habitat home. She provided college tuition for some families. She arranged and brought flowers to friends and guests. She hosted events for underprivileged children and culturally diverse groups. She would embrace and value each of them. She took time to meet and greet visitors, as well as the residents of New Harmony. So much of Mrs. Owen's generosity had nothing to do with money but rather the giving of herself to others.

New Harmony had the privilege of enjoying Mrs. Owen for 69 years. My hope is that Jane's spirit of generosity continues to work and grow in each of us.

Darla J. Olberding, Chair
USI/New Harmony Foundation

INTERFAITH RETREAT PLANNED FOR 2011

Historic New Harmony's first interfaith retreat in March 2011 will bring together a theologian, a Jewish rabbi, and an Islamic teacher to discuss with participants the topic of interfaith dialogue. The retreat will be based on Abrahamic traditions.

International scholar and author John Philip Newell will lead the spiritual retreat called *A New Harmony for Peace*. The retreat will take place at the Barn Abbey in New Harmony, Indiana, from Tuesday, March 15, to Sunday, March 20, 2011.

Newell is companion theologian for the American Spirituality Centre of Casa del Sol in the high desert of New Mexico. He is acclaimed for his work in the field of Celtic spirituality, a spiritual practice earth-centered and inclusive. He is described as a Church of Scotland minister with a passion for peace in the world and a fresh vision for harmony between the great spiritual traditions of humanity. He plays a leading role in the re-birthing of a creation spirituality. His best-known titles are *Listening for the Heartbeat of God*, *Christ of the Celts*, and a poetic book of prayer *Sounds of the Eternal*, which he dedicated to Jane Blaffer Owen for her vision of a new harmony.



Connie Weinzapfel and Jan Kahle talking to the group of Iraqi students who visited University of Southern Indiana in July and August, 2010.

Rabbi Nahum Ward-Lev, active in Rabbis without Borders, also will participate. As one of 22 rabbis in Rabbis without Borders, he works to make Jewish wisdom more accessible to the wider American public.

The third retreat leader is Myeda Hussain, an Islamic teacher who serves as director of the Congregations Acting for Justice and Empowerment, an interdenominational coalition of Evansville houses of worship to achieve a greater degree of justice in Evansville.

"We are very pleased to present this retreat, as it carries on decades of work

...continued on page 5



A labyrinth raked into the leaves at the Harmonist Cemetery.

NEW HARMONY GALLERY TO SPONSOR ARTIST DURING LABYRINTH SOCIETY GATHERING

Scottish artist Jim Buchanan will be artist-in-residence with the New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art from November 1–21, 2010, during which he will create an on-site labyrinth installation in New Harmony and an exhibition at the gallery in connection with The Labyrinth Society’s annual gathering to be held November 12–14. For more information on this event, visit www.labyrinthociety.org/annualgathering.

Buchanan has installed over 50 different commissioned artworks throughout Europe and in South America. The majority of Buchanan’s work focuses on the mythology, spirituality, and history of the labyrinth. Buchanan has created walking labyrinths out of light projections, concrete, stone, earth, plastic cutlery, sand, candles, cloth, bamboo, and numerous other materials.

Unlike the drawn labyrinth that can be traced back to ancient civilizations, the earliest walking labyrinths have been identified in Southern Sweden, (circa 0–500 BCE). In the 13th century and onwards, labyrinths were built to protect fishermen while at sea and constructed in the walks of churches and cathedrals. Turf labyrinths started to be constructed in the 16th century as popular garden features for socializing and entertaining. Unlike the interrupted path of a maze, the single path of the walking labyrinth is considered by many as a meditative experience.

The Harmonie Society created a labyrinth in each of their three communities. The Blaffer Foundation created the Cathedral Labyrinth in New Harmony in 1998 which inspired the University of Southern Indiana to create one in the center of the campus.

Watch the gallery’s website for labyrinth updates at www.usi.edu/nhgallery

Erika Myers-Bromwell, Director
New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art

CURATOR'S NOTEBOOK

Amanda Bryden,
Collections Manager



State Farm’s slogan, “Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there” describes Jane Owen to a tee. She was a good neighbor, loyal friend, and generous patron to New Harmony. Mrs. Owen understood the importance of sharing New Harmony’s unique and important legacy, and fortunately she chose Historic New Harmony as a vehicle to do so.

Several artifacts donated by Mrs. Owen are among the jewels of Historic New Harmony’s collection. They include two beautiful Harmonist silk scarves made in Economy, Pennsylvania in the 1830s-1840s. The Harmonists were well-known for producing high-quality silk, and silk manufacturing became one of their most successful industries. These striking and colorful scarves are rare and excellent examples of the Harmonie Society’s prize-winning silk. They strengthen the breadth and depth of our collection, especially since few Harmonist-related objects remain in New Harmony today.

Mrs. Owen’s gifts include five putty relief maps made by Richard Owen, son of Robert Owen and ancestor of Mrs. Owen’s husband, the late Kenneth Dale Owen.

The maps were made for a competition sponsored by the King of Belgium in 1887 to popularize geography and portray the terrain of different areas of the world. These three-dimensional maps are significant because they were constructed by a New Harmony scientist and are wonderful examples of the hands-on approach to education that was advocated in the Owen and Maclure schools.

Mrs. Owen’s most recent donation consists of four pennants from New Harmony’s 1914 centennial. They depict the Harmonist school, Harmonist brick church, the “fort” (granary), and Murphy Auditorium. Amazingly, the pennants look brand new, and should help create a festive atmosphere when New Harmony celebrates its bicentennial in 2014.

Historic New Harmony is blessed to have had a wonderful friend in Mrs. Owen.





UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA/NEW HARMONY FOUNDATION WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS

William A. Browne, Jr.

President of Ratio Architects, Inc, in Indianapolis, Bill will bring his skills as an architect and preservationist to assist Historic New Harmony.

Richard M. Diemer

Retired dean, Washington University Dental School and executive director of Washington University Lifelong Learning Institute for Seniors, Rich will bring his knowledge of lifelong learning to Historic New Harmony.

Jon E. Halwes

Son of former board member Doris Halwes, Jon is the assistant director of Quality Control and Planning with the Missouri State Auditor's Office. He will be an asset on the Audit Committee.

M. Edward Jones

Senior advisor to the president on Outreach and Engagement at the University of Southern Indiana, Ed will assist with program planning and development between Historic New Harmony and USI.

Donald E. Pitzer

Professor emeritus of History at University of Southern Indiana and director emeritus of the Center for Communal Studies, Don will bring his knowledge of history and community to assist with scholarly endeavors.

Bushra M. Saqib

Involved with the Islamic Center of Evansville and Women in Faith, Bushra will bring her expertise to assist with interfaith programming for Historic New Harmony.

Alice Weathers

Executive director of the Community Action Program of Evansville and Vanderburgh County, Inc., Alice will bring her knowledge of nonprofits and community development to Historic New Harmony.

Peggy M. Rapp

Involved with the New Harmony Garden Club, the Hoosier Salon, New Harmony, instrumental in starting the Summer Hat Luncheon, Peggy has a long-term interest in New Harmony and will bring her organizational skills to assist with special event planning and fundraising to the USI/New Harmony Foundation.

Jane Grizzell

A life-long interest in New Harmony has made Jane Grizzell a supporter to Historic New Harmony, and her spirit of giving will carry on through the USI/New Harmony Foundation's development efforts.

My very much beloved, and beautiful friend,

How good you were to us all. How good you were to me! How happy I felt at your home in Houston last April seeing you younger than ever, full of life and vitality like that late spring. This is how I shall remember you. Always!

I will never forget that day when we were racing through the streets of New Harmony on two golf carts to see who would be the first to jump into the bubble bath of the swimming pool. Of course, I thought I could easily win from a woman of over 90! But you were the winner, for you immediately gave the key of your cart to my 10-year-old daughter so she would drive! Nothing



could scare you, certainly not driving with kids, and the victory was all yours!

How we enjoyed spending Halloween with you, and dressing up like witches and Harmonists. Those are happy memories, Jane, but you know there are sad ones

too—like most recently, when Josephine Elliott's daughter Claudia died. It broke your heart, as your passing away breaks mine.

You were the heart of New Harmony; you pumped the blood in its utopian veins. And by doing so, the town became a living entity, attracting people from all over the world. For New Harmony's *Renaissance* we thank you and your generous spirit, your spiritual brightness and noble cause. You have set an example for us all to follow. You have done your part, now we must do ours, and I must do mine. Thank you for everything. I love you so much.

Ritsert Rinsma
New Harmony scholar and author
LeHavre, France

NEW HARMONY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT FELLOWSHIPS

Thanks to the support of Historic New Harmony/University of Southern Indiana's retiring vice provost for Outreach, Dr. M. Edward Jones, a new fund to encourage collaboration between USI faculty, students, and the town of New Harmony has been established. Funded projects will respond to New Harmony

Comprehensive Plan community focus areas which include: economic development; character, identity, and beautification; public services and facilities; transportation and infrastructure; and land use and natural systems. Details about the program can be found at www.newharmony.org.



Interfaith Retreat continued...

by Jane Owen," said Connie Weinzapfel, director of Historic New Harmony. "She introduced the idea of interfaith dialogue to New Harmony, and in many ways, to the region. Gaining an understanding of other cultures and faiths engenders a greater global perspective for people. Participants at this retreat will have an intimate experience with other traditions."

The retreat will be limited to 50 participants. It will include a week of prayer and meditation and morning teaching sessions followed by a time of silence and then shared reflections. Evening sessions will be more experiential with song, dance, movement, and discussion.

The Sisters of St. Benedict in Ferdinand, Indiana will serve as co-sponsors of the retreat. Sister Kathryn Huber, OSB, a trained spiritual director who has served her community in leadership roles for many years, said, "Benedictine women and men have been involved for years in dialogue that engages conversation with other people searching for God, including searchers in other Christian denominations as well as in other faith traditions."

"In this retreat the focus will be on the spiritual richness that God has poured out upon the human race. The *New Harmony for Peace* retreat will focus on the spiritual richness that unites the traditions of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity."

Public panel discussion on March 16

A panel of the retreat teachers will be held the evening of Wednesday, March 16, to explore the common ground of the three faith traditions. The panel is free-of-charge and open to the public. It will be held at the Atheneum/Visitor Center in New Harmony at 7 p.m.

The retreat is presented by Historic New Harmony, a unified program of the University of Southern Indiana and the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites and sponsored by the Robert Lee Blaffer Foundation and the Sisters of St. Benedict in Ferdinand, Indiana. Deadline to register is February 15, 2011.

JANET S. KAHLE TO RETIRE IN DECEMBER

At the millennium, on November 27, 2000, to be precise, Jan Kahle rejoined Historic New Harmony's staff as the new education coordinator. During her final 10 years with Historic New Harmony, Jan has streamlined many complex events such as Heritage Artisans Week and Road Scholars (formerly Elderhostel) into smoothly run programs. Always proud to tell the story of her hometown, Jan has shared our incredible history with scholars, students, and tourists alike, always with excitement and aplomb. Jan will be honored with the title education coordinator emerita when she ends her employment with USI at the end of December. Her friends at Historic New Harmony will not say goodbye—we fully expect that she will continue to work with us to give very special tours of utopia.



WHAT'S YOUR VISION OF UTOPIA?

SMALL MINDS TALK ABOUT PEOPLE
AVERAGE MINDS TALK ABOUT EVENTS
GREAT MINDS TALK ABOUT IDEAS

WELCOME
TO NEW
HARMONY

Jane

*And the people gathered 'round about
Lighting candles in the dark
Laying flowers at the shrine
Joy and grief their final mark*

*And the planets and the stars came out
Offering up their very best
Mars and Saturn looking down
Venus setting in the west*

*And the Dipper tilted o'er the rose
Pouring waters on the scene
Anointing all with blessings
Both the seen and the unseen*

*And the fireflies lit their humble lights
As silence held the night
Then sounds of music rose on high
And sacred prayers took flight*

*And Jane was there to greet us all
As ever she has done
"May spirit blend with Spirit
'Til peace shall make us one"*

Don and Connie Pitzer
Jane Blaffer Owen Vigil
Roofless Church
New Harmony, Indiana
June 25, 2010



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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. Programming details are available at www.newharmony.org.

P10-5050



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER

- 17–22 Road Scholars (Elderhostel Program)
- 28 Dr. Eric McCloud Lecture, Art of Science

NOVEMBER

- 1–30 Atheneum/Visitor Center Open 9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.; Walking Tours at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Weekends
- 9 Curt Schmitt Lecture, Working Men's Institute
- 11–13 International Labyrinth Conference
- 20 Fall Art/Gallery Stroll
- 20 USI/New Harmony Foundation Board Meeting
- 25 Thanksgiving Day; Atheneum Visitor Center Closed

DECEMBER

- 1–30 Atheneum/Visitor Center Open 9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.; Walking Tours at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Weekends
- 4–5 Christmas in New Harmony

- 11 Holiday Ball, Thrall's Opera House
- 24–25 Christmas Eve & Christmas Day; Atheneum/Visitor Center Closed

JANUARY

- 2–31 Atheneum/Visitor Center Open 9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

FEBRUARY

- 1–28 Atheneum/Visitor Center Open 9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.
- 3 USI/New Harmony Foundation Board Meeting
- 18 Harmoniefest

MARCH

- 1–14 Atheneum/Visitor Center Open 9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.
- 15 Walking Tours Offered at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. through December
- 15–20 Spiritual Retreat—"A New Harmony for Peace"

For information regarding these and many other events, visit www.newharmony.org.