

## Media Inquiries

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## WORLD MONUMENTS FUND LAUNCHES TRADITIONAL BUILDING AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION FIELD SCHOOL AT MOUNT LEBANON SHAKER VILLAGE, NEW YORK

### WMF COLLABORATES WITH SHAKER MUSEUM AND LIBRARY, PRESERVATION TRADES NETWORK, AND UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA COLLEGE OF DESIGN CONSTRUCTION AND PLANNING ON DEVELOPING FIELD SCHOOL, WHICH WILL SERVE AS A MODEL FOR REPLICATION AT OTHER WMF SITES

The World Monuments Fund (WMF), in partnership with the Shaker Museum and Library (SM&L), Preservation Trades Network (PTN) and University of Florida College of Design Construction and Planning (UFCDPCP), has launched a model field school dedicated to traditional building and historic preservation at the North Family Site of Mount Lebanon Shaker Village, NY, a National Historic Landmark that was placed on both the 2004 and 2006 World Monuments Watch lists of *100 Most Endangered Sites*. A major component of WMF's larger initiative to address the loss of educational and training opportunities in the traditional building arts, this pilot field school will serve as a model for adaptation and replication at other WMF sites in the United States.

The nine-week field school, which began in June 2006, has brought together apprentices from the **American College of the Building Arts (ACBA) in Charleston, SC**, and the **Association Ouvrière des Compagnons du Devoir et Tour de France (Compagnons)** from across France, to work with graduate-level architecture and building construction students from the **University of Florida's College of Design Construction and Planning** and high school students from the **Preservation Arts & Technology Program at the Brooklyn High School of the Arts, New York City**, to document and restore the timber frame of the North Family Shaker Granary (1838) at Mount Lebanon Shaker Village. One of the oldest structures on the site, the Shaker granary is the only one in the world that still survives.

"A testament to Shaker craftsmanship and technology, Mount Lebanon Shaker Village is as an ideal venue for a field school that teaches the techniques of traditional building arts combined with the philosophy and science of historic preservation," said **Morris Hylton III, WMF's Initiatives Manager**. "The *Mount Lebanon Shaker Village Traditional Building and Historic Preservation Field School* will serve as a model as WMF works with its partners to adapt and replicate the program at other WMF sites."

"The Field School is a terrific opportunity for the Shaker Museum and Library. It serves our mission of educating the public about the Shakers, their architecture, and the importance of preserving their buildings," said **Sharon Koomler, Director of the Shaker Museum and Library**. "The field school also builds partnerships with individuals and groups who are essential advisors to our efforts at Mount Lebanon. It gives the Museum's work at the North Family Site at Mount Lebanon Shaker Village national and international exposure. At the

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same time, some very important Shaker buildings are getting excellent documentation and the preservation treatment they deserve.”

“Opportunities for trades people and students to work together on significant historic structures are far too few,” said **Rudy Christian, leader of the field school team, a master timber framer, and PTN’s Project Development Director**. “Not only does the timber frame granary provide such an opportunity, but the structure itself is a prime example of the quality workmanship done by early American carpenters with roots in the Dutch and German traditions. This allows for teaching both traditional methods and today’s best practices in conservation.” Christian’s Burbank, Ohio-based company, Christian & Son, Inc., is recognized as a leader in preserving and constructing traditional timber frame structures throughout the United States.

“It is a very rare opportunity,” said **Roy Eugene Graham, FAIA, Director of the College of Design, Construction and Planning Historic Preservation Programs at the University of Florida**, “for these graduate students in historic preservation to experience hands-on building crafts and to combine it with their academic activities. No other program mixes the richness of this essential combination of techniques and philosophy.”

### **Model Field School Program**

In the United States and around the world, there is a growing need for craftspeople experienced in traditional building crafts that also possess knowledge of preservation philosophies and conservation science. Seeking to advocate for more training opportunities in the traditional building trades and preservation and to educate a new generation of craftspeople, WMF launched the *Traditional Building Arts Training Initiative* in 2004. As part of the Initiative, WMF assembled a coalition of partners to work with the Shaker Museum and Library to develop an interdisciplinary, project-based school as part of the restoration of the North Family Shaker Site. For summer 2006, one first-year student from the American College of the Building Arts, four advanced apprentices from the *Association Ouvrière des Compagnons du Devoir et Tour de France*, two graduate students from University of Florida College of Design, Construction and Planning, and two rising seniors from Brooklyn High School of the Arts’ Preservation Arts & Technology Program have been working with experienced and skilled timber frame craftspeople to document, repair, and restore the Shaker granary. Supervised by master timber framer Rudy Christian and University of Florida Building Construction PhD candidate John Beaty, the apprentices and students are learning, through hands-on experiences, traditional building materials and tools and preservation theory and practice as they restore the timber frame of the granary. The scope of work has been designed by lead-instructor Rudy Christian working with the Shaker Museum and Library’s preservation architect Richard Pieper, a Principal at Jan Hird Pokorny Associates in consultation with the field school partners; all participants are housed at the Shaker Village and participate in special, joint enrichment programs and field trips.

The goals of the model field school program include:

- Offering interdisciplinary, hands-on training in traditional building and historic preservation at different learning levels;
- Fostering interaction between craftspeople and professionals involved in the preservation of architectural heritage;

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- Recruiting and training a new generation of traditional building artisans and historic preservation specialists;
- Encouraging the participation of the local community and promoting the development of traditional building and preservation education within the region;
- Preserving the historic architecture and built environment of the North Family Site of Mount Lebanon Shaker Village; and
- Serving as a model that can be adapted and replicated at other World Monuments Watch sites in the United States.

### **Mount Lebanon Shaker Village**

Once the spiritual and physical center of the Christian sect known as the Shakers, the Mount Lebanon Shaker Village was at its height in 1860, home to some 600 believers who lived in more than 120 buildings spread over more than 6,000 acres. At Mount Lebanon, the Shakers' religious beliefs and organizing tenets helped create a unique theology and social order based upon a range of ideals, including celibate communal living, new theories about the hierarchy and composition of the traditional family, and the rethinking of both industrial and agricultural production and distribution. The Shakers' aesthetic principles that defined the group's distinct material culture—including objects, furnishings, architecture, and entire villages—were developed and first used at Mount Lebanon.

The last Shakers were relocated from Mount Lebanon to nearby Hancock Shaker Village in 1947. Seventy-two acres and approximately 40 original Shaker buildings were declared a National Historic Landmark District in . The Shaker Museum and Library, whose preeminent collection is currently housed on a non-Shaker site nearby, purchased the North Family Site of Mount Lebanon in 2004 and has completed a master plan for relocating to the landmark property, thus repatriating many of the Shaker objects and artifacts back to the place where they were created.

### **North Family Granary**

The 3,700-square-foot, four-story Granary—the only surviving Shaker granary—was built in 1838 to store and mix grains. The exposed timber post and beam construction and grain storage system give the interior a very distinctive character. The renovation of the Granary—both as a cabinetmaker's shop in the 1980s and as a museum reception center, gallery, and gift shop—retained much of the original fabric. However, the building's roof, including original birch bark damp proofing and wood shakes covered with slate shingles, had at one time been compromised along its south side, allowing water to penetrate the building and deteriorate the hemlock timber frame, spruce tongue and groove sheathing and white pine lapped siding.

### **Support**

Support for the Mount Lebanon Shaker Village Traditional Building and Historic Preservation Field School has been provided by The Brown Foundation, Inc., The Florence Gould Foundation, the Friends of Heritage Preservation and the Hickory Foundation. Donated hemlock and white pine logs were harvested from Lori and David Squier's woodlot in New Lebanon.

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## Partners

The **World Monuments Fund (WMF)** is the foremost private, nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of endangered architectural and cultural sites around the world. Since 1965, WMF has worked tirelessly to stem the loss of historic structures at more than 400 sites in over 80 countries. WMF’s work spans a wide range of sites, including the vast temple complexes at Angkor, Cambodia; the historic center of Mexico City; Nicholas Hawksmoor’s London masterpiece, St. George’s, Bloomsbury; the iconic modernist A. Conger Goodyear house in Old Westbury, New York; and the extraordinary 18th-century Qianlong Garden complex in Beijing’s Forbidden City. From its headquarters in New York City—and offices and affiliates in Paris, London, Madrid, and Lisbon—WMF works with local partners and communities to identify and save important heritage through innovative programs of project planning, fieldwork, advocacy, grant-making, education, and on-site training. Every two years, WMF issues its World Monuments Watch list of 100 Most Endangered Sites, a global call to action on behalf of sites in need of immediate intervention. ([www.wmf.org](http://www.wmf.org))

The **Shaker Museum and Library** in Old Chatham, New York, founded in 1950 by John S. Williams, Sr., was originally developed as a privately owned museum dedicated to preserving “life, work, art, and religion” of the Shakers, the largest communal religious sect in America during its peak in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Shaker leaders personally aided this effort, and the Museum’s collection includes materials from nearly every Shaker community and from all Shaker time periods, most notably from the principal Shaker community at nearby Mount Lebanon, New York. The collection includes over 38,000 objects and artifacts, including original furniture, textiles, tools, and manufactured goods produced by the Shakers, as well as Shaker manuscripts and printed works, photographs, and artwork. The American Association of Museums has accredited the Museum and Library since 1972. In 2002, the Shaker Museum and Library launched the Mount Lebanon Project to restore the North Family Site of Mount Lebanon Shaker Village as the institution’s new home. ([www.shakermuseumandlibrary.org](http://www.shakermuseumandlibrary.org))

**Preservation Trades Network (PTN)** is a non-profit membership organization committed to representing and strengthening the role of the traditional trades in the preservation process through education, networking, and outreach. PTN is an umbrella organization that unites a variety of trades involved in building and preservation including: timber framing, carpentry, masonry, plaster and decorative arts, historic roofing, and metallurgy. PTN has an annual conference based on demonstrations and education and collaboration with other organizations and non-profits to expand educational opportunities and to build a network of trades resources. This networking process, which is fundamental to the PTN efforts, has established a strong foundation for collaboration and exchange with programs in the United States and abroad. PTN is working to sustain the success of existing trades education programs, recognizing the contributions of the masters of the trades and creating opportunities for future generations of trades people. In 2003, PTN created the International Trades Education Initiative (ITES) to address the needs impacting trades education. ([www.ptn.org](http://www.ptn.org))

**The University of Florida, College of Design, Construction and Planning’s Historic Preservation Program** is one of the oldest and most respected of its kind in the United States. For half a century, the University of Florida has led the nation with courses in historic preservation and urban conservation. The new, graduate-level (Master and Ph.D.) Interdisciplinary Concentration and Certificate in Historic Preservation at the University of Florida is unique in the country, as no other program offers this kind of concentration in the components of architecture, landscape architecture, urban and neighborhood planning, building construction, and museum studies. In 2004, the University of Florida was chosen by the UNESCO World Heritage Center in Paris to partner for an international Symposium on Modern Architecture in Miami because of its leadership role in the field. The University is an institutional member of US/ICOMOS and a founding member of the National Council for Preservation Education. The College’s field schools have been a model for the country, including the *Preservation Institute: Nantucket* and the *Preservation Institute: Caribbean*. ([www.dcp.ufl.edu/hp](http://www.dcp.ufl.edu/hp))