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

FIELD SCHOOL SERVING 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), **American College of the Building Arts** (ACBA), and **University of Florida College of Design, Construction and Planning** (UFCDCP), has launched a second season of a model field school dedicated to traditional building and historic preservation at the North Family Site of Mount Lebanon Shaker Village, NY. Located in rural Columbia County, the Shaker Village is a National Historic Landmark that was placed on both the 2004 and 2006 World Monuments Watch Lists of 100 Most Endangered Sites. The field school is a major component of WMF's larger initiative to address the loss of educational and training opportunities in the traditional building arts, and will serve as a model to be replicated at other WMF sites in the United States.

The eight-week field school, which began on June 14, 2007, has brought together apprentices from educational institutions throughout the United States, including the American College of the Building Arts (ACBA) in Charleston, SC, to work with graduate-level architecture and building construction students from the University of Florida's College of Design, Construction and Planning. The students at last year's field school helped document and restore the timber frame of the Village's North Family Shaker Granary (c. 1838); **this summer's project is focused on documenting and restoring the rubble stone walls of the North Family Stone Barn** (1859), which, while the largest of its kind in North America, has stood as a ruin since it burned in 1972.

"A testament to Shaker craftsmanship and technology, Mount Lebanon Shaker Village is 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 **Bonnie Burnham, president of the World Monuments Fund**. "The students here will work closely with master craftsmen, learning age-old techniques through interdisciplinary, hands-on training, while helping to preserve the Shaker Village's historic architecture. We are thrilled to be running this field school

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for a second summer—one of the most exciting aspects of the program is that we are using it as a model as we work with our partners to adapt and replicate it at other WMF sites across the globe.”

“We are so pleased to host the field school at Mount Lebanon again this summer. It has been particularly exciting to watch students work alongside such skilled craftspeople in the restoration work being done on our buildings. This summer’s program is particularly significant for us as they begin the important work on the Stone Barn,” said **Sharon Duane Koomler, Director of the Museum**. “The Museum’s Mount Lebanon Project has benefited enormously from our relationships with the partners in the Field School. We continue to learn more about our buildings and the Shakers’ construction practices through the eyes of these talented students while our buildings receive the restoration so critical to their survival.”

Model Field School Program

Over the years, WMF has noted that, in both the United States and around the world, there is a growing need for craftspeople who are not only experienced in traditional building techniques but also know preservation philosophies and conservation science. In effect, a new generation of craftspeople needs to be trained. In 2004, advocating for more training opportunities that integrate traditional building trades and preservation, WMF launched its Traditional Building Arts Training Initiative. 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 2007, nine participants—four masonry apprentices and five graduate- and PhD-level students from institutions across the United States, including the University of Florida, are working together to survey and document the Stone Barn and to implement a pilot project that will test the methodologies and techniques proposed for comprehensively stabilizing and conserving the building’s rubble stone walls. The project is led by faculty from the American College of the Building Arts, including Simeon Warren, the College’s dean and a master stone carver, and John Beaty, an experienced mason and PhD candidate in Building Construction at the University of Florida.

The students will also hear lectures given by a range of experts from Europe and the United States; they include John Stewart, Building Conservation & Research Team, English Heritage, United Kingdom; Erika Johansson, Architectural Conservator and PhD Candidate, Chalmers University and NMK Enterprising Research School, Sweden; Robert Silman, Principal, Robert Silman Associates Structural Engineers, United States; and Jimmy Price, President & CEO, Virginia Limeworks, United States.

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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 social order and cultural system 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 Shaker's 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 1976. 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 Stone Barn

The North Family Stone Barn was constructed in 1859 at the height of the success of the Mount Lebanon Shakers. It housed the North Family's dairy industry. As the largest stone barn in North America, it attested to the Shaker's prowess in agricultural and physically demonstrated the economic stability of the Society. The significance of the Mount Lebanon Stone Barn was perhaps best captured by Sister Jennie Wells of the North Family Shakers in the famous article, "A Family of Seven," that appeared in *The New Yorker* in August 1947:

I don't want to sound vainglorious, but it's the biggest barn in the whole United States. It's fifty feet wide and it's one hundred feet long...it was built in the 1850s, and it's as sturdy now as the day it was finished...The Shakers always built for permanence. We say that Shakerism can't be told; it must be lived. Still you can learn a lot about it just from that barn.

The North Family Stone Barn burned in 1972 and has stood in partial ruin since.

Support

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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 helped save historic structures at more than 450 sites in over 90 countries. WMF's work spans a wide range of sites, including the vast temple complexes at Angkor, Cambodia; the historic center of Mexico City; 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)

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 elders and eldersses personally aided this effort, and the Museum's collection includes items from several Shaker communities, 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)

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)

The American College of the Building Arts educates and trains artisans in the traditional building arts to foster exceptional craftsmanship and encourage the preservation, enrichment, and appreciation of our architectural heritage. Students who complete the College's baccalaureate program will be able to undertake projects requiring high levels of craft skills. They can expect to work alongside a master artisan for a number of years after graduation to gain

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additional experience and skill in the workplace. Graduates will have the ability in future years to take on and manage important projects of their own. The College began in 1998 when a small team, led by John Paul Huguley, created the School of the Building Arts (SoBA) in Charleston, South Carolina. SoBA was established to solve a growing problem in building preservation that became evident in 1989 when Hurricane Hugo swept through Charleston and severely damaged many of the city's historic structures. It was discovered that, in spite of Charleston's commitment to restore the structures, there were only a few local craftsmen trained and qualified for the task. After the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education licensed the School to begin recruiting on July 8, 2004, the name of the institution was changed to the American College of the Building Arts. (www.buildingartscollege.us)

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*, the *Preservation Institute: Caribbean*, and the *Preservation Institute: Miami*. (www.dcp.ufl.edu)

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