



SCHOOL PROGRAMS

SHAKER HERITAGE SOCIETY

The Shakers' Utopian society was founded on core beliefs of gender and racial equality and communal living, which date to the late 1700s.

What appears today to be a scenic, agricultural oasis in the middle of modern development was once the site of a revolutionary community whose innovative outlook resulted in significant agricultural and industrial activity and a varied economy.

In 1776, twelve people from Manchester, England established a settlement just north of Albany where they could worship freely and build a new community that would be a "heaven on earth." These were the Shakers, led by Mother Ann Lee, whose religious beliefs created a framework for a revolutionary lifestyle.



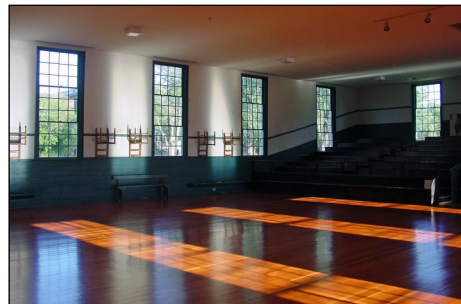
During their 162 years in Albany, the Shakers' egalitarian community treated men and women and all ethnic groups as equals. Brethren and Sisters shared

authority as religious elders, business trustees, and deacons and deaconesses running the everyday affairs of the community. They were distinct in their communal social structure, innovation, craftsmanship, spiritual devotion, pacifism, and compassion.



Their economy depended on collaboration and fostered innovation and invention. In

the 1790s, the Watervliet Shaker community developed the process of packing and selling seeds in small envelopes and began an industry making brooms. In 1827 they started a successful herbal medicine industry. Products were shipped across the US and to European markets.



America's first Shaker settlement eventually grew to four villages within a mile and a network of 22 communities in the US. Today the only remaining Shaker

community is in Sabbathday Lake, Maine.



The Shaker Heritage Society is a nonprofit organization devoted to the preservation of the Shakers' contributions to American history.

Programs at the site are suitable for all grades and ability levels and are available Tuesday-Friday, March through mid-October or by special arrangement. In-school programs are available throughout the school year.

Buildings are handicapped accessible, and groups can eat lunch on site. To schedule a program or for more information, contact the Education Coordinator at educator@shakerheritage.org or 518.456.7890, x 3. Shaker Heritage is located between the Albany Airport and the Ann Lee Pond Historic and Nature Preserve. Teachers may consider a natural history exploration at the pond.

Continued



Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College

Pre- and post-visit materials include photos such as this c. 1868-70 image of Watervliet Shaker Brothers and Sisters by Troy photographer James Irving. **Among the online materials available** is a profile of the lives of two children, one of whom is Sister Samantha Bowie, 4th from right.

FIRST SHAKER SETTLEMENT

Grades 1-12 Meets *NYS English Language Arts; Math, Science and Technology; the Arts; and Social Studies standards.*

Students explore the site of America's first Shaker settlement while learning about life in a 19th century community that was both agricultural and industrial. Topics include the history of the Shakers, innovation and invention, agriculture, architecture, and industry. The tour includes the 1848 Meeting House, the herb garden with 150 plants labeled according to their historic uses, and the 1915 Heritage Barn. The visit can be extended to the Ann Lee Pond, Shaker Orchard, and Shaker Cemetery.

Hands-on activities and interdisciplinary programs featuring nature studies can be included. Programs are adapted at an appropriate level for each student group.

Scheduled as requested, from 1 to 3 ½ hours

MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL TOURS can focus on a variety of topics and curricular standards, including architecture, history, invention and innovation, and primary research. SHS can also arrange a community service project or program component.

UTOPIA/DYSTOPIA: SHAKERS AND *THE GIVER*

Grades 7-9 Meets *NYS English Language Arts; Science and Technology; the Arts; and Social Studies standards.*

The Shakers worked to create a community that would be "heaven on earth." A set of rules known as the Millennial Laws proscribed every aspect of a Shaker's daily life, and communities were administered by Elders, Eldresses, Deacons and Deaconesses. Through comparative discussion of themes in Lois Lowry's *The Giver* and a collaborative activity using primary and secondary resources, students examine Shaker life and consider the characteristics of a utopian and a dystopian community. The program includes a tour of the site and an introduction to the history of the local Shakers and the Shaker movement. This program can be expanded to include a visit to Ann Lee Pond and the Shaker Cemetery. Scheduled as requested, usually 2-3 ½ hours

FIELD TRIP FEES: \$5-10 per student

1 Chaperone per 10 students attends free of charge

SHS IN THE CLASSROOM -OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Grades 3-12 Meets *NYS English Language Arts; Math, Science and Technology; the Arts; and Social Studies standards.*

Programs present the Shakers and their impact on local and national history while teaching them about daily life in a community that was both agricultural and industrial. Students learn to weave on a loom and other hands-on activities are possible.

Time: 45 Minutes

Fee: \$120.00 per class; 2 or more classes, \$100.00 each (four classes may be scheduled in one day). Mileage is charged for schools more than 25 miles from SHS offices.



New York State Museum Collection

SHS PROGRAMS ADDRESS NYS KEY CONCEPTS **History:** Belief systems; Change; Conflict; Choice; Culture, Diversity, Identity, Interdependence, Movement of People and Goods | **Geography:** Human Systems, Environment and Society | **Economics:** Factors of Production, Science and Technology | **Civics, Citizenship, and Government:** Justice, Citizenship, Decision Making, Human Rights | *More details available upon request*