



TO: Cultural Education Committee

FROM: Jeffrey Cannell

SUBJECT: Exhibition on Shakers

DATE: November 10, 2014

AUTHORIZATION(S):



SUMMARY

Issue for Information

The State Museum has opened a new, major exhibition on the Shakers. The exhibit was developed in cooperation with three other institutions that collect and interpret Shaker materials.

Reason(s) for Consideration

For Information

Background Information

On Saturday November 15, the State Museum opened a new noteworthy exhibition exploring the history and culture of the Shaker community. For the first time, three Shaker sites in New York and western Massachusetts have collaborated with the Museum, State Archives and State Library to develop this significant exhibition, assembling the collections and images not seen together before.

The ***Shakers: America's Quiet Revolutionaries*** will feature over 150 historic images and nearly 200 Shaker artifacts, including artifacts from three Shaker historical sites: the Shaker Heritage Society, Hancock Shaker Village and the Shaker Museum | Mount Lebanon, State Archives and State Library.

Open through March 6, 2016, the 7,000 square foot exhibition explores the Shakers as one of the most significant and influential communal religious groups in American history. This major exhibition explores how the Shakers sought religious freedom in America and how their "revolutionary" culture, spiritual practices, and idea of gender equality set them apart from the rest of society. Artifacts from these preeminent Shaker collections are shown together for the first time ever.

Divided into six thematic areas, the exhibit details facets of the Shakers, their religion, and their daily lives. Visitors will discover the region's importance as the cradle of Shaker growth, and will learn about three of the Shakers' most important historical sites. The exhibit includes an educational space, online exhibitions, and brief film. The digital platforms and interactive exhibitions bring the educational content to a statewide audience.

The State Museum has the largest collection of Shaker artifacts, over 10,000 artifacts collected since the 1930s, from a number of Shaker sites in New York State and beyond.