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| SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicat | te and Known) Centre | House 1822; Pr | eservatory 1835 (|
| AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Ch | eck One or More as Approp | riate) | • |
| Abor iginal | 📑 Education | Political | 📄 Urban Planning |
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Mother Ann Lee led the Believers in Christ's Second Appearing - more commonly known as "Shakers" - to New York from England in 1774. In 1807 a Shaker society was organized in South Union, Kentucky. Fifteen years later, the members began their "Great House," designed as a dwelling house for the Church or covenant family. Known as the Centre House, the four-story building of 42 rooms was the most important of the many South Union buildings.

Begun in 1822 and completed in May, 1833, Centre House, a large building with a hand-hewn limestone foundation and handmade brick walls, was a remarkable structure to have been built in Western Kentucky in the early 1800's. Authorities on Shaker architecture consider the South Union Centre House to be one of the finest Shaker buildings in existence. James Thomas, vice-president of Shakertown at Pleasant Hill, Kentucky, has spoken of the "unusual refinement" of the doors and mantels. Professor Ray Pearson, School of Design, Illinois Institute of Technology, believes that Center House is possibly the best constructed Shaker building standing today. Colin Richmond, designer and photographer, Oneida, New York, found Centre House, with its many arches, "aesthetically pleasing."

The Preservatory, located directly behind Centre House, was one of the many buildings where the family members did their work. In the Preservatory the women canned and preserved fruits of all kinds for family use. The surplus was sold throughout the area. After the coming of the railroad, South Union Shaker preserves were shipped to Birmingham and New Orleans, Nashville, Louisville and other cities.

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| Form 10-300a (July 1969) | UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE | state Kentucky | |
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The Preservatory is a two-story brick structure located behind the Centre House. It was built circa 1835. The exterior of the Preservatory remains unchanged, however, its interior has been altered. On the second floor partitions or temporary walls were added. The original structure can be easily restored.

The Centre House and Preservatory formed the core of the Shaker settlement at South Union. Other Shaker buildings that were located on the former 6000 acre tract are still standing. St. Mark's, a Benedictine Monastary, owns the Wash House and Warming House. Other buildings, such as the Ministry Shop and a tavern for guests, are private property. Three other buildings have been torn down.



Form 10-300a (July 1969) UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE Kentucky COUNTY Logan FOR NPS USE ONLY ENTRY NUMBER DATE JUN 2 8 1974

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NATIONAL REGISTER

(Continuation Sheet) # 1

(Number all entries)

8. SIGNIFICANCE

The Shakers believed in pacifism, charity to all in need, cleanliness, industry, honesty in all dealings, celibacy for all members, community of goods, and the belief that Christ had appeared the second time in the form of Mother Ann Lee. Shaker women shared the leadership in both spirtual and temporal matters with the men.

The Shakers became widely known for reasons other than being a peculiar religious sect. They were the leading agriculturists and the manufacturers of the new western country, practicing scientific farming and rotation of crops before these methods had been heard of on the Kentucky frontier, and introducing purebred registered cattle to the region. The Shakers were the first to offer for sale packages of quality garden seeds. Among their other endeavors were sugar processing, hat, and broom factories, a tailor shop and bakery. They had a stone quarry, whiskey distillery, and flour mill. The South Union Shaker sisters were successful in raising silk worms. They processed the silk and wove it into silk kerchiefs for themselves and sisters in other Shaker societies. All articles made by the Scoiety were of excellent craftsmanship.

By 1826 the South Union Shaker Colony had acquired over 6,000 In the following year its membership reached a acres of land. peak with 349 members. Famous visitors to the Shaker Colony included President James Monroe, General Andrew Jackson, Henry Clay and Sam Houston. During the Civil War the Shakers maintained a strict neutrality but were victimized by soldiers of both the North and South. Depending upon new recruits to keep the colony going, the community began its decline soon after the War Between the States. By 1911 there were only seventeen members left in the colony. When the South Union Colony closed in 1922 it was the last of the six Western societies to dis-The land and buildings were sold and the remaining nine band. members were given a choice of \$10,000 or a home for life in 91110 the New Lebanon Colony in New York.

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After 1922 Centre House was occupied by farm families. In 1949 it was purchased by the Catholic Order of St. Benedict for use as a monastery. In 1971 Centre House, the Preservatory, and three acres of land were purchased jointly by the Commonwealth of Kentucky and Shakertown Revisited, Inc. Since 1962 local residents have held an annual Shaker Festival and presented a regional drama entitled "Shakertown Revisited" which depicts scenes from the colony's history. Centre House serves as a Shaker museum and the building is presently being restored to its original condition. During the first summer that it was open (1972), 5,873 visitors registered, representing 42 states and 7 foreign countries.



| Form | 10-300a |
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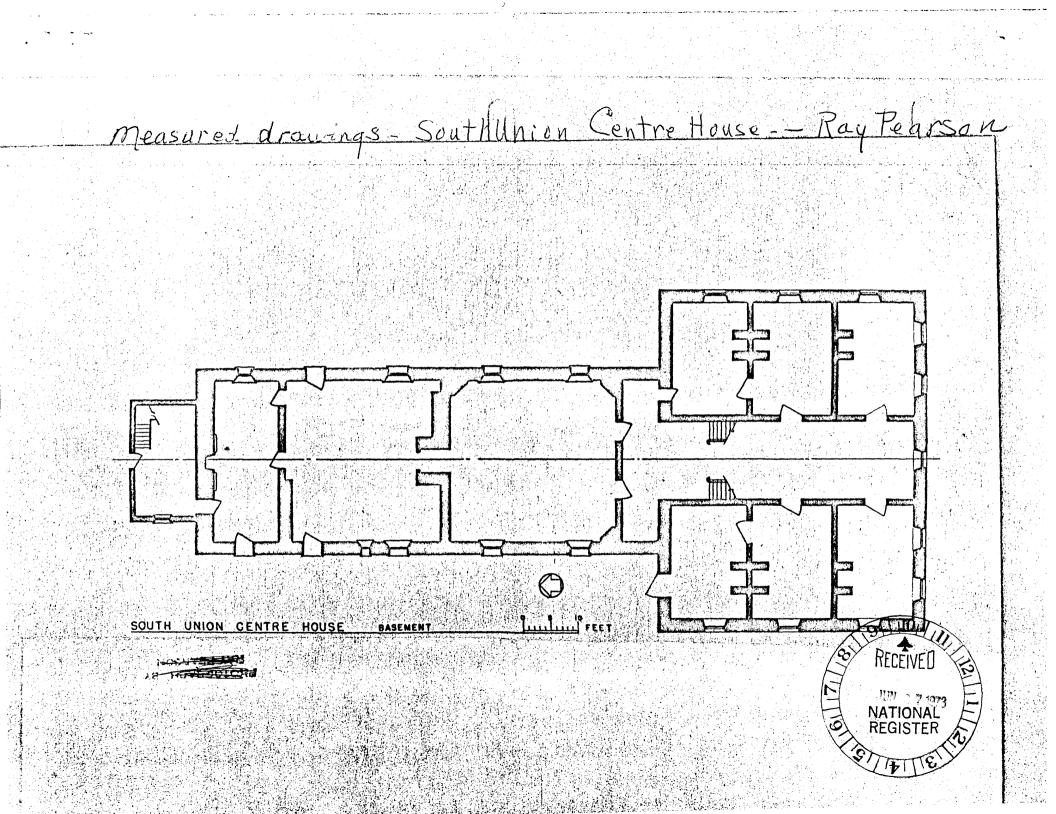
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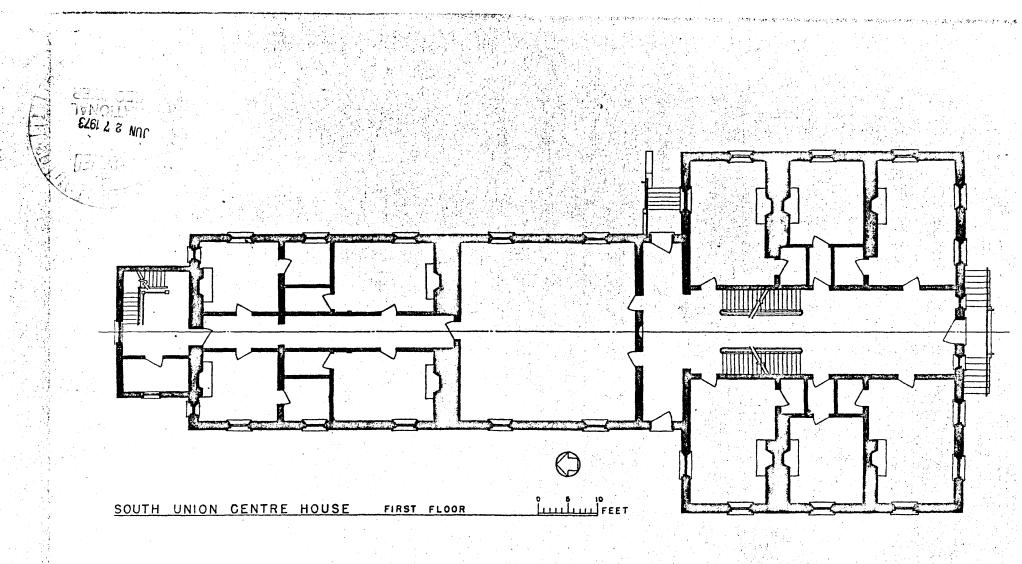
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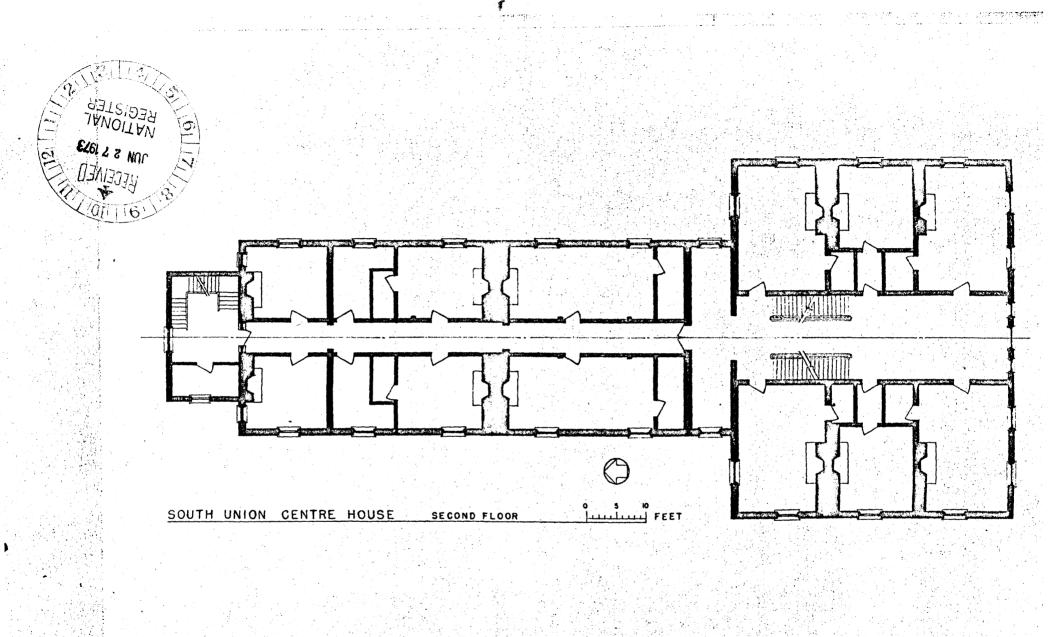
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