

Embrace the Simple Beauty and History

Fruitlands Shaker Gallery



Built in 1794, the **Harvard Shaker office** was how this peaceful, celibate, and industrious religious community connected with outside world. It served as the Trustees' office, and later home, where business was conducted involving the **selling of herbs, seeds, herb boxes, furniture and brooms.**

The Shaker doctrines of simplicity and utility resulted in designs with clean lines that please the eye and help reinforce the Shaker **sense of order and neatness.** Additionally, the Shaker sisters were renowned for the quality of their needlepoint, spinning and weaving.

Clara Endicott Sears became acquainted with the Harvard Shaker Sisters while researching her book on Bronson Alcott. After becoming friends, she began collecting Shaker records, books and journals before this community closed in 1918. After buying the Harvard office, she had it moved to Prospect Hill and opened **the first Shaker museum** in 1922.

HANDS TO WORK

Shakerism is among the most successful communal endeavors in America, existing from Maine to Florida and as far west as Indiana. Harvard was considered the spiritual center of the Shaker world. Shaker brethren and sisters lived by the saying “hands to work, heart to God,” and became famous for their exquisite but simple sense of design in architecture, furniture and handcrafted goods.



Unlike Fruitlands’ transcendentalist utopian experiment that only lasted seven months, the Shaker community thrived for more than 120 years.

SHAKER GALLERY

Today, the Shaker Gallery helps illustrate the work and words of the Harvard Shakers. This simple space shows the daily pursuits of the sisters and brethren, including the work of Shaker physicians and their use of medicinal herbs. Visitors can hear Shaker music, learn more about their successful mail order seed business and revel in the simple beauty of Shaker craftsmanship.

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