# **Minutes of the Center for Communal Studies Advisory Board Meeting**

**October 24, 2012**

## USI Campus – University Suite, University Center

**Members Present:** Dr. Casey Harison, Dean Michael Aakhus, Ms. Wendy Bredhold, Mr. Matthew Graham, Ms. Jennifer Greene, Dr. Jason Hardgrave, Dr. Don Pitzer, Dr. Silvia Rode, Ms. Connie Weinzapfel, and Ms. Rachel Wright-Summerton

**Guests Present:** Ms. Dawn Bakken and Ms. Franzi Bechtel

**Administrative Assistant:** Ms. Marilyn Thielman

Following the lunch buffet, Director Casey Harison welcomed Center Board members, especially thanking those who had to travel a distance into our area. He also welcomed guests Dawn Bakken, today’s presenter at the lecture to follow in Kleymeyer Hall, and Franzi Bechtel, visiting researcher from Frankfurt, Germany, and History Chair Dr. Jason Hardgrave, who is replacing Dr. Tamara Hunt on the Center’s Board. Harison then conveyed the regrets of Board members Dr. Don Janzen, Dr. Jane Johansen, and Dr. Susan Matarese, who were unable to attend because of other commitments. He said that we will try to schedule the Spring 2013 Board meeting so that these members can also attend.

Harison called members’ attention to the extensive minutes from the last Center Board meeting on May 8, 2012. He asked for any additions or corrections.

***There being none, Jennifer Greene moved that the May 8, 2012 minutes be accepted. The motion was seconded by Wendy Bredhold, and all were in favor.***

**Don Pitzer Report on CSA Meeting in Oneida, NY**

Dr. Don Pitzer reported on the 39th annual meeting of the Communal Studies Association (CSA) held at the Oneida Community Mansion House in Oneida, NY from October 3 through 5. Pitzer said that a number of the Harmonist descendants were there including Gertrude Rapp (George’s granddaughter) as well as many from other intentional communities. He distributed several photos and specifically mentioned some presenters including Larry Foster and Robert Fogarty along with the Center’s own Dr. Silvia Rode and Harison. These other points were mentioned by Pitzer:

* CSA President Peter Hoehnle was only 8 years old when Pitzer went to Amana in 1974.
* CSA’s auction raised over $2,000, which resulted in some $100,000 currently in their treasury.
* Pitzer circulated his “Outstanding Book of the Year” wooden award that was produced in the Amana factory, which was presented to Pitzer in Oneida for his latest book entitled *New Harmony Then & Now*.
* Torang Asadi, a rising star and Tim Miller’s graduate student from the University of Kansas, was given the “Gina Walker Outstanding Project” award.
* Arthur Bestor’s *Backwoods Utopias: The Sectarian Origins and the Owenite*

*Phase of Communitarian Socialism in America, 1663-1829, 2nd Edition* is priced at $30 using Pitzer’s discount. Bestor was given an Honorary Degree earlier from USI. His work transformed a whole field of study according to Pitzer.

* CSA’s 2013 Annual Conference concerning “Transitions in Leadership” will be held from October 3 through 5 at Old Economy, PA.
* Pitzer mentioned these books that may be of interest to Center Board members:

\* Yaacov Oved’s *Globalization of Communalism* through Transaction Press.

Oved was one of the founders of the International CSA in 1985 and served

as its president until 2004. He is a member of Kibbutz Palmachim and also

Professor Emeritus of Tel Aviv University’s Department of History in Tel

Aviv, Israel. Pitzer wrote something for the cover of this latest book.

\* *The Communal Idea in the 21st Century* through Brill Press. Kibbutz

members and authors include not only Oved, but also Eliezer Ben-Rafael

and Menachem Topel. In addition, Pitzer has written a chapter, and other

chapters are written by Tim Miller and Lyman Tower Sargent.

\* *Alternative Organization* through Routledge Press. Pitzer wrote a chapter.

Case studies are also included about Padanaram by Center Board member

Rachel Wright-Summerton and New Harmony resident Docey Lewis.

**Jennifer Greene Report on Collections**

Ms. Jennifer Greene reported concerning researchers in the Archives (and the Center), donations being given, and projects undertaken.

Scholars and the materials they researched include:

* Morgan Shipley (University of Michigan) – The Farm and other hippie movement communes.
* Chuck Samp (University of Arizona graduate student) – Shiloh Community in Oregon and Stelle materials.
* Franzi Bechtel (Frankfurt, Germany) – New Harmony materials and Arndt Collection for her dissertation.
* Magdalena Modrzejewska (Institute for American Studies, Jagiellonian University, Cracow, Poland) – Josiah Warren (New Harmony resident). *Note*: Harison reported that Magdalena will be back in the spring and may do a presentation for the spring 2013 Center Board of Advisors meeting.
* Peter Hoehnle (Amana) – Arndt and Harmonists materials.

Donations to the Archives include:

* Stelle Group – Community is still sending items, tapes of lessons (including tape

player), and photographs.

* Skyview Acres – Greene has been working with Brian Kates for a future donation of archival materials documenting this community’s founding in Pomona,

Rockland County, NY, and its continuing development over more than 65 years.

* Potential donation from an *unnamed* intentional community in New York City

area through one of its Board members, Mr. William Cerf. “Donation of funds and collection” from this community that is “still in existence and thriving nicely” (per Cerf) is still in the proposal stage.

Projects undertaken by Greene include:

* Having received an Endeavor award of $1,687.75 for a student worker’s assistance with the Harmonist Papers in the Archives, Greene has been busy developing guidelines and procedures for processing the collection.
* Dr. Silvia Rode who is working a book project on *The Destiny of Man* by George Rapp told about her recent trip to Stuttgart, Germany, researching at the state church archives of Wurttemburg and at the archives at the University of Tubingen, Germany. She thanked Dean Michael Aakhus for his support of this project and for approving the purchase of invaluable hand scanners for copying certain documents there.
* Green and Rode will also look at the German printing of Johann Gottfried von Herder’s collected works. The books are now in questionable condition, but Greene said they can be repaired. Pitzer commented that when restored, this work could be sold or directly given to the Archives.
* Greene has also been working with Dr. Leigh Anne Howard, Communications Associate Professor, regarding USI’s upcoming New Harmony – New Lanark Field School in Scotland, scheduled for spring of 2013. Study will include utopia and communalism.

**Jennifer Greene Report on Don Janzen’s Work with Shiloh Community, Sulphur Springs, AR**

Greene reported that Board member Dr. Don Janzen is still forging ahead on his Shiloh project.

**Dawn Bakken Prelude to Her Talk**

Following the Board meeting, Dr. Dawn Bakken will give a presentation entitled “*Monroe County’s Own New Harmony?: An Owenite Experiment in 1826 Bloomington*” at 2 p.m. in Kleymeyer Hall in the Liberal Arts Building. She provided Board members with background information concerning her public power point presentation:

* Bakken found very little documentation for the relatively small and short-lived intentional community in Monroe County, Indiana, which appeared to be patterned after Robert Owen’s New Harmony community. It has become for her an interesting experience in how much can be done with relatively few sources. She had only found, for example:

\* A deed signed by original members.

\* A census.

\* One mention in January, 1837 in *The Harmony Gazette* that read,

“Everything is going well.”

\* The best records were from the 1930s – from grandchildren and from

farmers who owned the land. Bakken determined that the facts found in

land research are acceptable as history. She guessed that just about

every signer was a member of the community.

* Bakken determined that her presentation could be considered about one-half research and one-half speculation.

Harison invited all members to stay to enjoy Bakken’s open presentation in Kleymeyer after the Board meeting concludes.

**Franzi Bechtel Report on Her New Harmony Paper**

Harison introduced Ms. Franzi Bechtel, winner of Center’s 2011 Research Travel Grant, and resident of Frankfurt, Germany. She began her dissertation a year and a half ago and spent four weeks in our area last fall. She has spent six weeks here this year, and she will spend another two weeks in Bloomington before returning to Germany. In January, Bechtel received a full-term scholarship from the German government.

Bechtel explained that her intent is to write a history of New Harmony from the post-Owenite period to the 1940s. She has chosen a comprehensive approach to her work and is grateful for all of the Town Hall records, Historic New Harmony resources, and materials available at Rice Library. Bechtel cited Le Roy Ladurie’s *Montaillou* as a model for her work.

Bechtel has been much impressed with Robert Owens’ theory of improving the lives of the lower class when they suffered from the effects of the Industrial Revolution and with the implementation of relief programs to get people back to work. There will no doubt be another trip to our area for her, Bechtel explained – perhaps next summer. When that happens, Harison has encouraged her to do a presentation sponsored by the Center.

**Rachel Wright-Summerton Update on Padanaram Community**

Ms. Rachel Wright-Summerton explained that the main concern facing members of Padanaram is transitioning from an historic to a living community. Since the passing in 2001 of her father Daniel Wright, Padanaram’s founder, the questions became: *Who will be in our community years from now? Will the people survive? What about the younger ones?*

Padanaram began as a logging community. Among the residents have been teachers, lawyers, doctors, nurses, and a microbiologist. Fifteen community members are now over the age of 60, forty children range from newborns up to age 18, and the group with ages in the 20s through 40s is quite large (including Wright-Summerton’s children). The looming question now is: *Are members going to reside in the community itself?* Most have chosen to live fairly close to the community and to return for celebrations, etc.

The community schools were closed in the late 1990s with the children then going to local schools. The school building was kept, and tutoring is done in a small area of it. Many in their 20s and 30s want their own school back, at least grades K-3. Wright-Summerton said that she expects it to return.

Another saw mill was started. But, with the changing economics, their business is now quite small, mainly cutting the lumber and repairing the buildings. A pre-school was established about four years ago. In the last month there have been a number of weddings; one young lawyer had a fairly traditional wedding with 350 people hosted. Two or three ladies are expecting babies. Wright-Summerton recently taught a class on “Children.” She feels that it is important to educate the youth about the community and how it has been of benefit to society.

Padanaram is alive and well per Wright-Summerton. Politicians have been trying to get their members’ votes. Pitzer has been there many times. Ms. Wendy Bredhold and her husband were there, and Bredhold had also visited there along with Pitzer years before. The basic core group is still in Padanaram, “holding the ship.” According to Wright-Summerton, change is inevitable; it takes some five to ten years to understand what is going to happen next. She said that they must accept that fact and work with the young people; they have to relearn everything.

Harison thanked Wright-Summerton for her report and indicated that it is very important to have her as a Center Board member. Ms. Connie Weinzapfel stated that Historic New Harmony has been working on reinterpreting the idea of “community.” They have worked with a design firm in New York that wants to know the names of scholars with whom they will work. Weinzapfel feels that Wright-Summerton would be an invaluable resource for them. There is a difference between being a scholar versus living there and being a scholar. They introduce a different factor into the community per Wright-Summerton. She said that the big question facing Padanaram is *“Do we change, or do we accommodate?”* It is really all the things that we talk about in religion, etc., she concluded.

Weinzapfel stated that one of the names they are considering in their planning for the 2014 New Harmony Bicentennial is “The Building Blocks of Community.” She said that it would encompass all of the things that require struggle in a community.

**Casey Harison Report on Endeavor Award**

Harison has been working with Greene since being notified of receiving The Endeavor! Award for $1,687.75 to fund a student’s wages for developing finding aides for the Harmonist Papers at Rice Library Communal Studies Collection. The student will also present a paper on the cholera epidemic of 1832.

**Discussion; Other Items**

Weinzapfel said that there is a lot of new faculty at USI this year. She has been working with Dr. Leigh Anne Howard on the USI New Harmony – New Lanark Field School slated for spring of 2013. Weinzapfel indicated that all of the deans at USI are being very supportive of this new offering. Students’ residencies would be in New Harmony as well as in New Lanark, Scotland.

Weinzapfel also reported on Historic New Harmony’s initial planning for New Harmony’s Bicentennial in 2014. She is working on some way – some kind of structure – to bring all of the people with whom they have associations back to New Harmony for that celebration. Weinzapfel said that Harison is working on the Center’s plans for a Conference in New Harmony in early November of 2014, and Rode will do a presentation there. Wright-Summerton suggested including a couple of people from The Farm. Pitzer said that he is hopeful Clifford Owen and other descendants will be able to attend.

There being no further discussion, Harison thanked Board members for their individual input and encouraged everyone to attend Bakken’s lecture in Kleymeyer at 2 p.m. The meeting adjourned around 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Thielman, Scribe