



Historic New Harmony

In Harmony Newsletter

AUGUST 2022 Edition

Interim Assistant Director's Update

As summer winds down, I can't help but look forward to my favorite season in New Harmony: fall. I'm ready for cooler temperatures, colorful leaves and Kunstfest. But before I get too ahead of myself, I thought I'd share what's been happening in utopia this summer. [Read more from Claire](#)

A Reflection on Labyrinths

Last month, Dr. Del Doughty began his tenure as Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at USI. His love of labyrinths quickly led him to New Harmony, where he walked the Harmonist Labyrinth. [Read his reflection](#)

NHGCA Update

The New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art recently completed the first stage of long-overdue facilities upgrades in the main gallery space! [Learn more about these upgrades and the first exhibition in the new space](#)

Natural Dyes in Harmonist Times

The Harmonists created, adapted and adopted the new technologies of their day giving them a competitive edge in the growing early American economy, particularly in textile manufacturing—wool, cotton and silk—and agricultural production. [Read more from *In Harmony* guest writer Peggy Taylor as she shares more on the history of natural dyeing](#)

Family Fun Month

Multiple organizations all over the country are promoting their sites and special features for the entire month including the National Endowment for the Arts and Blue Star Families. [Learn more about the Blue Star Museum program](#)

JULY 2022 Edition



Historic New Harmony

Assistant Director's Update

AUGUST 2022

Claire Eagle, Interim Assistant Director

As summer winds down, I can't help but look forward to my favorite season in New Harmony: fall. I'm ready for cooler temperatures, colorful leaves and Kunstfest. But before I get too ahead of myself, I thought I'd share what's been happening in utopia this summer.

- As you may have seen, the Visitor Center has temporarily moved to Murphy Auditorium. While we shared last month that operations would continue while the roof repairs were made, we ran into a bit of a hiccup. The intense heat the last month had been causing some issues with our A/C unit in the Atheneum. Unfortunately, a couple of weeks ago the unit completely stopped working. At first, temps briefly cooled down and the rainy weather allowed us to continue to operate in the Atheneum. However, as temps rose again it became unsafe for our staff and visitors to continue. So, we pivoted! All Visitor Center operations will continue as normal, just in a new temporary location. You can find Murphy Auditorium at 419 Tavern Street.
- While the moss-covered roof certainly added a bit of flair to the 1830 Owen House, work began this summer to replace the cedar shingles. Commissioned by Robert Dale and David Dale Owen, the house was built by carpenters John Bondaley and J.B. Johnson, and architects Swift and Barter. No Owens ever lived at this address, instead, the house was used as a rental property. Between 1830 and 1838, it was rented by more than 10 families. The new roof will ensure the integrity of the building, protecting the artifacts inside and allowing our daily historic tours to continue to visit the space.





- On September 13, Historic New Harmony will welcome the entire USI freshman class to New Harmony. Students will be assigned one of three experience visits, attending educational presentations in New Harmony before having some time to explore the town. At the end of their visit, students will travel back to campus where they will enjoy a meal. This pilot project is a great way to ensure all USI students have an experience in New Harmony, strengthening the connection between Historic New Harmony and the University. We're looking for volunteers for the day, so if you're interested reach out!
- With the start of the new fiscal year, we had also hoped to have our next strategic plan in place. Unfortunately, the final plan has been delayed due to the Lilly Religion and Cultural Institution Initiative grant. Goals, objectives and strategies have been identified and we plan to reconvene the full committee to review and finalize in September. The four goals are:
 - Provide engaging and impactful programming
 - Seek and steward funding for efficient and sustainable operations
 - Expand our reach and visibility to better tell the story of New Harmony
 - Facilitate a strengthened relationship between the University of Southern Indiana and the Town of New Harmony

It's safe to say it's been an interesting summer in utopia. And while I'm trying not to wish it completely away, I'm looking forward to more programming, finishing up our strategic plan, completing more maintenance projects and, most importantly, cooler temperatures this fall.

JULY 2022

Claire Eagle, Interim Assistant Director



Historic New Harmony

Historic New Harmony News

AUGUST 2022

A Reflection on Labyrinths

Del Doughty, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts

Back when I lived in Huntington, Indiana, I used to ride my bike past the cornfields and up the hill to Our Lady of Victory convent to walk its labyrinth. It was an 11-circuit, brick-lined path laid into the grass, and at the center was a massive, ancient oak. If you looked into a nook on one of the lower branches, you would find a pair of plain, golden rings. Every time I visited, they were there. You might think that someone would take them after a while, but I think that visitors respected that space as sacred and, beyond that, were probably intrigued by the story lurking behind those rings. Would someone someday return there, walk the labyrinth, find the rings they had left long ago and then re-unite with a loved one? I kind of hoped so.

That labyrinth in Huntington remains a favorite. There are others. I loved the labyrinth at Land's End in San Francisco—I use the past tense here because I was devastated to learn it was vandalized so often during the pandemic that it was dismantled. (I guess not everyone respects a sacred space.) The Land's End labyrinth was made of loosely set stones on a cliff above the Bay, and it afforded an unforgettable view of the Golden Gate Bridge. It was set so close against the cliff's edge that should your attention have wandered on the outer circuits, you might have slipped and fallen to your death. As the poets sometimes remind us, beauty and death are often closely linked.

My worst experience in labyrinth-walking came in Washington, D.C. I was visiting town for a conference, and I read that the American Psychological Association had a labyrinth on the rooftop of its headquarters. You had to call ahead to reserve permission, so I did, but then when I arrived at the APA at the appointed time the next day, I approached the security guards in the lobby and asked if I could proceed to the labyrinth. They denied me permission. I had to make a few phone calls to clear up the matter, and eventually I did, but not before I got frustrated with the APA. I guess I didn't cite my sources correctly! Since then, I've reaffirmed my commitment to MLA style.

As you can probably tell, I'm pretty keen on labyrinths and have been for some time. I'm fascinated by those at New Harmony, and in particular, the hedge maze. I made a point of getting out there and walking it the first week I was in town. It was a cool, rainy Saturday, and no one was around, so I had it all to myself. I felt, as I sometimes do when walking the circuits, something like a low-level anxiety or agitation of nerves on the way in. I think that my imagination was excited by

trying to take in all of New Harmony's history and beauty on my first visit, and it was just too much. Standing at the center, I took a few breaths and looked around. There will be time, there will be time, I recalled from a line by T.S. Eliot. With that simple truth in mind, I started back on the way out. Although I'm as eager as ever to learn about this wonderful place, I intend to take it slow, to savor every part of it.



Family Fun Month

Paul Goodman, Experience Coordinator



August is National Family Fun Month! Multiple organizations all over the country are promoting their sites and special features for the entire month including the National Endowment for the Arts and Blue Star Families. Did you know Historic New Harmony is a Blue Star Museum? As a Blue Star Museum, we offer free tours to active military and military families who visit our historic site. Blue Star Museums is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in collaboration with Blue Star Families, the Department of Defense and more than 2,000 museums nationwide. The free admission program is available for those currently serving in the United States Military—Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard as well as members of the Reserves, National Guard, U.S. Public Health Commissioned Corps, NOAA Commissioned Corps and up to five family members. Qualified members must show a Geneva Convention common access card (CAC), DD Form 1173 ID card (dependent ID) or a DD Form 1173-1 ID card to get a free spot on one of our tours! So, come and join a tour! To all active service members and veterans, thank you for your service to this country. Your bravery, sacrifice and strength do not go unnoticed, and we will always be indebted to you and your family for all that you have given and continue to give to this country.



Historic New Harmony

New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art Update

AUGUST 2022

Iris Williamson

The New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art recently completed the first stage of long-overdue facilities upgrades in the main gallery space. This includes new LED track lighting through ESL-Spectrum, ceiling painting, facade painting, black-out window shades and new signage. We are thankful to the Efroymsen Family Fund for their generous support of the gallery and this important project.

Our current exhibition *Utopia Land* by Modou Dieng Yacine features large, abstract paintings and mixed media works and really looks amazing in our bright, updated space. The show is up through August 27 and builds upon architectural imagery from New Orleans, Louisiana, and his hometown of Saint-Louis, Senegal, to imagine an ideal place.

Next up, Chicago-based artist Cass Davis mines their rural Illinois roots in a solo exhibition *Revelations*, opening September 10 (September's New Harmony Second Saturday).

Through performance, video, installation and sculpture, Cass Davis' work examines their own Midwestern Evangelical upbringing. Davis is interested in understanding relationships between redemption, resurrection, embodied trauma and the failure of the American dream. Concurrently, we will have an exhibition with USI alum, woodworker Ally Hinton in our student gallery, BG Projects. We hope to see you at the New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art in the near future!



JUNE 2022

Iris Williamson



Historic New Harmony

History Lesson

AUGUST 2022

Natural Dyes in Harmonist Times

Peggy Taylor, Heritage Artisan and New Harmony Resident

The Harmonists created, adapted and adopted the new technologies of their day giving them a competitive edge in the growing early American economy, particularly in textile manufacturing—wool, cotton and silk—and agricultural production. By 1825 they had constructed textile factories powered and heated by steam engines. They built shops for blacksmiths, tanners, hatters, wagon makers, cabinetmakers and wood-turners, linen weavers, potters and tin smiths, as well as developing a centralized steam laundry and a centralized dairy for the community. Later, they perfected the technology of silk manufacturing, from worm to fabric, for which they received gold medals during exhibition competitions in Boston, New York and Philadelphia.

Gertrude Rapp (1808-1889) was the granddaughter of George Rapp, founder and leader of the Harmony Society. Gertrude was a member of the Harmony Society and a pioneer in the American silk industry as foreperson of the Silk Mill at Economy, Pennsylvania. Miss Rapp supervised the production of silk goods equal or superior to those imported from Europe.

Dyes available to the Harmonists were plants from the area: walnut hulls for brown, a variety of yellows and golds from dyers chamomile, marigold, tansy and coreopsis; rust and gold from onion skins or from the wood of the Osage orange tree; red and orange from madder root. Other dyes commonly used during the early 19th century here in Indiana and at Kentucky's Shaker Village were imported from more tropical climates: indigo from fermented indigo plants for blue, woad leaves also for blue, cochineal from shells of the cochineal beetle for reds, logwood and brazilwood for reds and purples, and fustic for strong yellows.

To weave their woolen, cotton and silk fabrics, the threads would have first been spun and then dyed. Mordants (chemical substances like alum, cream of tartar, vinegar, tin, iron and copperas) were used to prepare the threads to take the dyes. New Harmony's location on the banks of the Wabash River was ideal for both the dyeing process and for the mills that would have produced the cloth of excellent quality that the Harmonists produced, used and sold.





The dye process involved soaking the dye material (for example, marigold flowers or crushed walnut hulls) in water, heating it to simmer while the color is extracted, then straining the dye liquid. After this the wet wool, linen, cotton or silk yarns, tied loosely in skeins, were immersed in the dye liquid and gently heated. When the desired color of yarn was achieved, the skeins were removed, rinsed and allowed to air dry. For Harmonist looms, a very great quantity of dyed yarns would have been required—a mill could use up several hundred pounds of yarn for a month's worth of weaving.

If this process piques your interest, Historic New Harmony is offering a Natural Dye workshop on Saturday, September 10, at the cabins on West Street. An outdoor dye station will be used, and several plants grown in the nearby David Lenz house dye garden will be prepared and used to dye sample skeins of wool yarn. Each participant will get to dye four skeins of yarn to take home, with a resource sheet about the natural dye process, and a list of the Lenz house dye plants that are being cultivated here. You are invited to learn more about the fascinating world of plant dyes as used by the Harmonists, dyes that are still important to today's weavers and fiber artists. Nature provides a wide array of color to brighten our lives if we just know where to look; come and try natural dyeing for yourself—and feel a kinship with nature and with the Harmonists who lived here before us.

JUNE 2022

The Harmonist Brick Church and the "Door of Promise"

Claire Eagle, Interim Assistant Director

There is no clear reason why the Harmonists decided to build a second church. The first church, a white wooden framed building, was built only a few years earlier in 1815. Three stories tall with a steeple and bell, this building was exactly what you picture when you hear the word "church."

The Harmonist Brick Church was much different. Built in the shape of a Maltese cross, each arm was equal length and had an entrance. Travelers were often amazed at the beauty of the architecture and would document what they saw. William Hebert in his writings stated, "I could scarcely imagine myself to be in the woods of Indiana, on the borders of the Wabash, while pacing the long resounding aisles, and surveying the stately colonnades of this church."

