



News from the Village



(Photo courtesy of Abby Guelpa)

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Hancock Shaker Village celebrates spring with new life

Baby Animals on the Shaker Farm opens the Village season on April 11.

Newborn barnyard animals greet visitors as the historic Village re-opens. Farm tours showcase the agricultural legacy of the Shakers and offer lessons in sustainability.

(Pittsfield, Ma.) — Hancock Shaker Village re-opens for the season on Saturday, April 11, with **Baby Animals on the Shaker Farm**, running daily, 10 am to 4 pm, through Sunday, May 3.

At the heart of this annual celebration of farm life is a lively gathering of newborn lambs, piglets, calves, goats, chicks and ducklings in the Round Stone Barn and adjacent farm buildings. A rare and inspiring

example of American architecture, the Round Stone Barn, built in 1826 (and later restored) originally stabled 52 milk cows. Over the decades, millions of visitors have been attracted to the barn for its architectural significance. During the three-week run of Baby Animals, the barn becomes the hub of activity in the historic Village.

Visitors can meet and greet the newborn livestock, participate in farm chores at the barns, and explore the historic Village, too. Eighteen of the Village's 20 historic buildings also open for the season on April 11, and will be staffed with interpreters who demonstrate crafts and share Shaker history. HSV farm interpreters showcase the historic Village as an actual working farm, with garden beds, composting stations, beehives and greenhouses taking center stage. Baby Animals features heritage-breed animals raised by Hancock Shaker Village, as well as "guest" livestock from local farms and 4H clubs.

"What better way to welcome spring than with Baby Animals," says Hancock Shaker Village President Linda Steigleder. "Especially after such a difficult winter, we're delighted to see the new babies.

"Baby Animals is a joyous tradition for families with small children, but grown-ups of every age love it, too. We are so proud to be a living example of non-factory farming and sustainable food production. We want our visitors to see how the Shakers lived and farmed because so many of their practices are deeply relevant today."

Admission to Hancock Shaker Village is free for children ages 12 and on family visits. Adult admission is \$20; many discounts apply. School groups, seniors, church groups and scout troops are all welcome at a special rate. Greylock Federal Credit Union and Greylock Insurance Agency are the chief sponsors of Baby Animals. On weekends during Baby Animals, Party Time Ponies will offer pony rides for kids between 12 noon and 4 pm, for \$5.

Free activities during Baby Animals

- Family folk music concerts with David Grover, 11 am, and 1 pm, Saturday, April 18
- Sheep-shearing, 10 am to 4 pm, April 25 and 26 Watch as Merino sheep get rid of their winter coats. Special hands-on textile demonstrations will be conducted by volunteers from local spinning and weaving guilds.
- Art exhibit in the Poultry House Gallery, April 11 through May 24. *EAT! Barnyard animals at feeding time* features new paintings by artist Susan Merrill, on view every day during regular hours.

- Reception for artist Susan Merrill, 4 pm to 6 pm, Sunday, April 12, in the Poultry House Gallery. The event is free but an Rsvp is required; call 413-443-0188 x 0.
- Story hour for children, Poultry House Gallery, 11 am, Saturday, May 2. Susan Merrill shares fun stories with youngsters about the animals she paints. Children must be accompanied by an adult.
- Artist talk with Susan Merrill, 4 pm, Saturday, May 2. The artist shares stories and insight about animals as the subject of her art. Free with admission, but an Rsvp is required; call 413-443-0188 x 0.
- Discovery Barn, open daily for kids to try their hand at Shaker-themed crafts like basket weaving, loom-weaving, and making and decorating seed packets – just as the Shakers did.

Special Tour

Jump aboard a hay wagon to experience the historic Village in a new way. Hancock Shaker Village will offer its popular Behind-the-Scenes Farm Tours daily at 1 pm, and on weekends at 11 am and 1 pm. Farm and garden interpreters share information about sustainable farming as they guide visitors along the Farm & Forest Trail, past orchards, pastureland, compost stations, greenhouses, and beehives. This introduction to farm life is great fun for all ages, and culminates in meeting the baby animals in a private space with the chance to hold, pet and bottle-feed them. Advance registration is required; call 413-443-0188 x 0 to register, or purchase online at www.hancockshakervillage.org.

Campus-wide freshening

The Village looks better than it has in years, thanks to a generous grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund (a joint project of MassDevelopment and the Mass Cultural Council) which provided the capital to repair and restore ten buildings in the historic Village in 2014. Campus-wide “sprucing” will continue in 2015 as the remaining historic structures get needed repairs and new paint, new way-finding and interpretive signs are installed, and an additional handicapped-accessible restroom is constructed at the far-end of the Village. Outside the historic Village, the main administration building has gotten a new roof and interior repairs, and visitor access has been improved.

About Hancock Shaker Village

Home to several hundred Shakers for more than 220 years, the Village is now an outdoor history museum dedicated to preserving the Shaker legacy. Situated on 750 acres of picturesque farm, field, and woodland in the bucolic Berkshires of Massachusetts, Hancock Shaker Village provides visitors with an authentic Shaker experience. This National Historic Landmark is an active museum housing a premier

collection of 22,000 authentic Shaker artifacts (furniture, crafts, tools, and others). The historic Village consists of 20 historic buildings, and a working farm and garden (heirloom medicinal, herbal, flower and vegetable gardens). The campus also includes a modern museum and visitor center, store and cafe. Hancock Shaker Village offers a variety of programs, tours and workshops for visitors.

Hours, Admission, and Directions

Hancock Shaker Village is open daily from April 11 through November 1, 2015. Admission is free for Hancock Shaker Village members and for all children 12 and under (accompanied by an adult), courtesy of Berkshire Bank. Regular adult admission is \$20 (many discounts apply). Youth rate for ages 13 to 17 is \$8. Field-trip visits are \$5 per student for self-guided tours, and \$8 per student for guided tours.

The entrance to Hancock Shaker Village is located on Route 20 in Pittsfield, Ma, just west of the junction of Routes 20 and 41. For GPS purposes, the Village is located at 34 Lebanon Mountain Rd., Hancock, Mass. 01237. Or, enter 1843 W. Housatonic St., Pittsfield, Mass, 01201, then proceed a half mile west on Route 20 to the entrance. Visit hancockshakervillage.org for more.