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Hancock Shaker Village Launches Fundraising Campaign for WPA Photography Exhibition

PITTSFIELD, Mass. – Hancock Shaker Village will open a major new exhibition titled “A Promising Venture: Shaker Photographs from the WPA” on May 26, 2012. The Village invites members of the community to sponsor frames for the exhibition, which will help present this important work to visitors and enable the exhibition to travel after the autumn of 2013. Sponsorships are \$250 per frame. Donors will receive a framed print of their choice from the exhibition images, along with a gallery label acknowledging their contribution.

“A Promising Venture” features the work of photographer Noel Vicentini, who was hired as part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) Federal Art Project in 1936 to document the Shaker villages in upstate New York and western Massachusetts for the newly-formed Index of American Design. The result was over 200 black-and-white photographs showcasing Shaker craft, architecture, and culture. Vicentini’s work was originally displayed in libraries and department stores throughout the country; it helped to endear the Shaker aesthetic to the mind’s eye of American citizens. His archives are housed at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. This upcoming exhibition at

Hancock Shaker Village marks the first time that his Shaker photographs will be shown in their entirety.

To sponsor a frame, please see www.hancockshakervillage.org or contact Elissa Haskins-Vaughan, manager of organizational advancement, at 413.443.0188 ext 275 or ehaskinsvaughan@ Hancockshakervillage.org.

About Hancock Shaker Village

Situated on a picturesque expanse of farm, field, and woodland in Pittsfield, Mass., Hancock Shaker Village is an outdoor living history museum and center for the study of principled living in the 21st century. The fully restored Village includes 18 historic buildings, heirloom medicinal and vegetable gardens, 22,000 examples of Shaker furniture, crafts, tools, and clothes that depict daily life at the Shakers' City of Peace through its 220 years, as well as heritage breed farm animals and spectacular hiking trails. There are daily tours, craft and cooking demonstrations, lectures and workshops, and a variety of activities for children and families, as well as a Museum Store and Shaker-inspired cuisine at the Village Harvest Café. The Discovery Room offers hands-on opportunities for kids of all ages to try their hand at chair seat weaving, working at a loom, trying on Shaker-style clothing, or milking a life-sized replica of a cow. An interactive audio tour (free with admission) is available in English, French, Italian, and German. For more information, visit www.hancockshakervillage.org.

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