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**Blacksmiths Converge on Hancock Shaker Village for
Age of Iron Weekend**
Opportunity to get the whole family involved in the art of blacksmithing

Pittsfield, Mass. – Blacksmiths from all over the northeast will converge on Hancock Shaker Village for the Age of Iron Weekend on Saturday, August 4 and Sunday, August 5, 2012. The two-day family event features demonstrations of blacksmithing and metal work. Forges and workshops will also be set up on the grounds throughout the historic Village with demonstrations, activities for the whole family, and opportunities for visitors to try their hand at being the Village “smithy.”

“Blacksmithing is an integral part of the Shaker history, especially here at Hancock Shaker Village. The Age of Iron Weekend is wonderfully fun and an excellent educational experience for families to enjoy together,” said Hancock Shaker Village President Linda Steigleder.

Blacksmiths, representing Berkshire, Connecticut, the Capital District, and New England Blacksmith Guilds will showcase their art and artisanship with both historical and contemporary demonstrations. Ironwork craftsmanship dating from the 17th to the 21st century, Japanese hardware, tool making, engraving, and Viking and Shaker forging are just a few of the techniques and styles that will be showcased. Beautiful hand-wrought items from the participating blacksmiths will also be available for purchase. Participants who make custom ironwork for the home will be available to discuss specific commissions. Some exhibitors will be dressed in period costume as they demonstrate using tools and equipment of the same time period.

Hancock Shaker Village ironwork will be highlighted with a special scavenger hunt for children, and interpretive talks pointing out Shaker metal work throughout the Village. Hancock Shaker Village's blacksmith shop, which is staffed by skilled volunteer blacksmiths, will be open for tours and demonstrations.

The Age of Iron Weekend is co-sponsored by the Berkshire Blacksmiths Association.

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. Visited by nearly 70,000 people annually, the Village brings the Shaker story to life, and preserves it for future generations. For more information, call 800.817.1137 or see www.hancockshakervillage.org.

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