



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Images available upon request.

Hancock Shaker Village to present “Preservation in Practice” Round Table on May 4th

Museum staff will be partnering this Saturday with faculty from the UMass Amherst Master of Science in Design and Historic Preservation program to present a round table discussion focusing on the Laundry & Machine Shop at Hancock Shaker Village. Built in the 1780s, the core of this building is likely one of the earliest structures at the village. The Laundry & Machine Shop contains a restored water turbine and woodworking equipment as well as laundry and ironing rooms.

Presenters will include seasoned and emerging professionals in the historic preservation. Michael Devonshire, Director of Conservation for JHPA Architects and instructor in the masters program, will speak about the master plan for the building, historic structures reports, and the building envelope. James Duggan, UMass professor, along UMass students, will discuss their work on the building’s interior, including paint sampling and analysis and future preservation plans.

The collaboration between UMass Amherst and Hancock Shaker Village to offer a Master of Science in Design with a concentration in Historic Preservation, offers an opportunity for field work and hands-on research just steps from their classrooms and lab on the HSV property in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Students completing the two-year program this Spring are the second class to graduate from the program, now in its third year of operation.

“The analysis that the graduate students perform is of great service to our museum. The Shaker buildings, themselves precious artifacts and an important part of the Shaker legacy, will be better

understood and cared for because of the reporting done by these students,” said Hancock Shaker Village President & CEO Linda Steigleder. Historic Structure Reports are performed by the students as part of their second-year coursework, and interns from the program are creating Historic Structure Reports on a number of buildings in the city of Pittsfield.

HSV staff members will speak about how the new research on the Laundry & Machine Shop will guide interpretation of the building from a visitor’s standpoint. “This building speaks volumes about the division of labor between women and men in a Shaker community,” said HSV Curator of Collections Lesley Herzberg. “While the tasks of Shaker Sisters and Brethren were separate, the Shakers maintained that they held equal importance. The Laundry and Machine shop is an important example because, while we understand that Brethren and Sisters labored separately, we see a situation in which they worked under one roof to afford each sex the benefit of the power generated by the water turbine.”

This event is made possible by a grant from the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund for Historic Interiors, a division of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The presentation is free and open to the public, and is scheduled to begin at 2pm on Saturday, May 4th, in the Leander Community Hall of HSV’s Visitor Center.

ABOUT THE LAUNDRY AND MACHINE SHOP

The first two floors of the west side of the Laundry and Machine Shop are believed to be the oldest remaining structure at HSV. The Shakers may have used the family farmhouse of Nathan Goodrich as the core of this building, originally built in the 1780’s. The Goodrich family joined with the early Hancock Shakers. Over the course of the Shakers’ residence at Hancock, the building was expanded outward and upward to accommodate the needs of the growing community of Believers.

In 1817, an underground aqueduct was laid to bring water from a reservoir on the north hillside. Originally, the water turned a twenty foot in diameter overshot water wheel which powered the machines in the shop and served the laundry. In 1829, the building was moved approximately 175 feet east of its original location to accommodate the construction of the Brick Dwelling House. The aqueduct was realigned and new pipes were laid. A decade later, an addition was built onto the machine shop creating the building envelope that we see today. The Shakers were fastidious in their research and inquiry about new technology. The Shakers own journals and records give a detailed account of the process of considering the turbine design and the decision to install it.

ABOUT HANCOCK SHAKER VILLAGE

An outdoor history museum and educational resource situated on a picturesque expanse of farm, field, and woodland in Pittsfield, Mass., Hancock Shaker Village affords visitors authentic experiences in 20 historic buildings, heirloom medicinal and vegetable gardens, and with 22,000 examples of Shaker furniture, crafts, tools, and more. This National Historic Landmark depicts daily life at the Shakers' City of Peace through its 220 years. Partake of guided tours, craft and cooking demonstrations, lectures, workshops, hikes on interpreted trails, and a Discovery Room with hand-on activities for children. Stop by for lunch at the Village Harvest Café and find gifts and souvenirs in the Village Store. An interactive Village audio tour is available in English, French, Italian, and German. Additionally, HSV offers an executive every-other weekend Master of Science in Design & Historic Preservation program in collaboration with UMASS Amherst; see www.umass.edu/preservation for more information about degree and elective coursework and opportunities.

HOURS, ADMISSION, AND DIRECTIONS

Hancock Shaker Village is open daily for self-guided visits from April 13 through October 27. April 13 through June 30, the Village is open 10:00am to 4:00pm daily and July 1 through October 27, hours are 10:00am to 5:00pm daily.

Hancock Shaker Village members are admitted free of charge. Children 12 and under are admitted free of charge courtesy of Berkshire Bank. Admission for adults is \$17 (\$18 as of May 25th) and youth visitors aged 13 to 17 are \$8.

Hancock Shaker Village is located on Route 20 in Pittsfield, Mass., 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 1/2 mile further west on Rt. 20 to the parking lot.

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