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HANCOCK SHAKER VILLAGE COMPLETES MAJOR RESTORATION PROJECT ON THE TANNERY, A HISTORIC BUILDING CENTRAL TO THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Thanks in part to the generosity of **the Avangrid Foundation**, the philanthropic arm of Berkshire Gas' parent company Avangrid, the Tannery – the site of daily woodworking and blacksmithing demonstrations at the Village – is protected for the future and more accessible to visitors than ever before.

Extensive restoration work was conducted on the Tannery building's exterior including replacing the entire foundation sill plate and the construction of a new wooden access ramp and deck leading into the upper level entrance to the wood shop. Improvements on the ground floor, increasing accessibility to the blacksmith shop, include the construction of a new pedestrian platform that runs through the building from the East and West entrances as well as earthen ramps for entry and egress on the exterior. As part of the 2023 season, the Tannery features a new exhibition of Shaker woodworking exhibits on the upper level, and drawings by cabinetmaker Ejner Handberg on loan from his family's collection. "The Tannery is central to the experience at the Village and continues to serve many purposes even today. We are thankful for the support from Avangrid Foundation and Berkshire Gas, and individual donors as this project not only strengthens the foundation of the Tannery for the future but it also opens up access like never before", said Nathaniel Silver, Executive Director, Hancock Shaker Village.

Named for its use as a tan house in the mid-nineteenth century, this building first appears on a Village map in 1820 as a "Cider House." The Shakers maintained apple orchards for cider production in an era when water was not safe to drink. An impressive timber-frame structure, the Cider House was converted in 1835 for use as a tannery. The sturdy structure was able to support the apparatus required for lifting heavy, wet animal hides out of the tanning vats to the upper level for drying. When tanning operations ceased in 1875, the Hancock community moved their blacksmith shop into the cellar and resumed cider making. The Shakers eventually brought water power into this building (part of an extensive system throughout the settlement) to facilitate the operation of heavy equipment. In the twentieth century, the Shakers converted the upper level into a woodworking shop. The Village interprets this multidimensional history of the building.

"We're thrilled that the restoration project at the Tannery is now complete and that their wonderful demonstrations will now be accessible to all visitors," said Pablo Colón, Executive Director of the Avangrid Foundation and Director of Corporate Citizenship at Avangrid. "At the Avangrid Foundation, we

focus on creating lasting and positive impacts for our communities, and this project does just that. We were very happy to support the Hancock Shaker Village and we look forward to seeing visitors enjoy the upgraded Tannery for seasons to come!”

About Avangrid Foundation: The Avangrid Foundation is an independent, nonprofit organization that funds philanthropic investments that primarily impacts communities where AVANGRID, Inc. and its subsidiaries operate. Since 2001, the Avangrid Foundation and its predecessors have invested more than \$32 million in partnerships that focus on building sustainable, vital and healthy communities; preserving cultural and artistic heritage; advancing education; and improving people’s lives. The Avangrid Foundation is committed to advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in the United States. For more information, please visit www.avangridfoundation.org.