



2022  
*impact report*





**F**or the calendar year 2022, Hancock Shaker Village continued to see a return to normalcy. The Village welcomed approximately 50,000 visitors with expanded programming supporting a rekindled appetite among the community and the tourist population, ready to venture out and experience all the Village has to offer, outdoors and indoors.

During the regular season, running April – October, the Village presented three special exhibitions, reinstalled six period rooms in the historic Brick Dwelling, held fifteen workshops, welcomed seven summer interns, held four outdoor concerts, and celebrated its signature special events including the Baby Animals Festival, Fall Country Fair and the Big Chill. Additionally, the Village was again able to extend its regular season on a limited basis during the month of November with Halloween at Hancock and in December with the highly successful Hancock Holiday Nights, introduced in 2021.

All Village programming embraces the mission and core values adopted by the Board of Trustees, revisited and ratified anew in 2022, emphasizing community, stewardship and relevance.

The combination of earned (\$1.3M) and contributed (\$1.3M) revenue continued to sustain the Village operations meeting the 2022 operating budget of \$2.4M. The need for contributed revenue as a percent of overall annual operating revenue has continued to grow. Fundraising has evolved substantially since the pandemic with both unrestricted and restricted contributions integral to the Village's expanded programming.



2022



*Shaker Society*  
AT HANCOCK SHAKER VILLAGE

In 2022, the Village established Shaker Society, a sustained, annual leadership-giving program to provide unrestricted operating support. Consisting of the Village's most generous and dedicated supporters, Shaker Society members are patrons of the Village and recognized annually by giving circle, ranging from the \$1,000 Shaker Circle to the \$50,000 Founder's Circle. Shaker Society patrons are recognized on a plaque prominently displayed in the ticket lobby that will be updated at the beginning of every season, preview the Village's seasonal programs, and will receive invitations to private events, receptions, and travel opportunities.



## *Education*

In the 2022 season, the Education department provided daily programming of talks and demonstrations for visitors, with an average of ten per day. These introduce visitors of all ages and backgrounds to the history, values, and legacy of the Shakers; crafts (especially woodworking and blacksmithing); farming and gardening practices of the Shakers and of the farm today; and Shaker music and dance.

Additionally, we offered fifteen fee-based workshops, including opportunities to learn basket making, oval box construction, timber framing, and broom making. This extended to the farm with the perennially popular, three week-long Summer on the Farm, a youth-focused day program that puts the Village at children's disposal for the week, teaching historic crafts, essential farm chores, and outdoors fun. A record number of children participated in this program in 2022.





Throughout the year, the Education department welcomed over 70 school groups – more than 2,700 students in all – for guided and self-guided visits to the Village. School groups came primarily from the public schools in Pittsfield and elsewhere in Berkshire County, as well as in neighboring New York counties. For many youth, especially those from urban disadvantaged backgrounds in Pittsfield, the Village farm represents their first and often only exposure to the rural farming community and offers a haven outside of the city.

The Village’s summer internship program again placed seven college students in various departments throughout the Village for a ten-week, intensive career prep experience. Students lived on site, worked full-time under the supervision of curatorial, education, development, communications, or the farm staff, and contributed significantly to the Village’s 2022 season.

The Village once again collaborated with Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area to offer free guided hikes for the Berkshire community. One hike made its way to Shaker Mountain, while the other hike offered an inter-village walk focusing on Shaker architecture.





# Farm

The Village celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the Baby Animals Festival, a Hancock Shaker Village signature program, with more than 10,000 visitors to open the 2022 regular season. The Baby Animals Festival introduces visitors to the farm with a three-week immersion in the life cycle of the livestock, recognized locally and across the region. For the first time since the pandemic, school groups returned to the Baby Animals Festival.

The immensely popular Goat Yoga was hosted once again at the Village along with the assistance of many docile farm friends. Eight sold-out sessions drew a devoted group of participants many of whom have become dedicated supporters of the Village since the program's inception.

Finally, and in addition to regular access to the Round Stone Barn and pastures where visitors can interact with the animals, our livestock manager held monthly Barn Talks focusing on farm management and best practices.



# Museum

The three special exhibitions presented in 2022 all explored Shaker influences on contemporary art, revealing the relevance of this community's iconic aesthetic today. The connections between past and present made through these exhibitions helped drive new audiences to the Village, expose them to the Shaker story, and consider how it continues to permeate contemporary culture in so many

## *James Turrell & Nicholas Mosse: Lapsed Quaker Ware*

Presented in the historic Brick Dwelling, this exhibition offered a new body of work by renowned artist James Turrell in collaboration with Irish potter Nicholas Mosse. The black basalt-ware ceramics manifested a fresh perspective on light through its absence. Light – both literal and metaphorical – was a driving force in Shaker architecture and an essential component of their spiritual practice. Their forms reflected Turrell's masterful understanding of human perception, at once drawing attention to the Shaker search for perfection in daily life and the spaces they occupied.



## *A Spirit of Gift, a Place of Sharing*

Hancock Shaker Village's first major exhibition on contemporary Asian art, *A Spirit of Gift* featured the works of three celebrated artists—Yusuke Asai, Kimsooja, and Pinaree Sanpitak. The exhibition explored the link between nineteenth century Shaker design and contemporary Asian art, specifically how the forms conceived by these two groups share an intense concentration of minds, handcrafted intimacy, and unique use of space that invites the audience's immersive experience and participation.





## *Swept: This Work I Will Do*

The season's final exhibition featured American artist Cate Richards who focused on the Shaker skill of broom-making. Through an exploration of the permanent collection and juxtapositions with her own work, Richards raised questions around the relevance of this craft today in terms of sustainability, anachronism, and historical romanticism.



## *Permanent Collection*

The Village reinstalled six period rooms in the Brick Dwelling, showcasing iconic but rarely seen objects from Hancock Shaker Villages' own collection and creating interpretive perspectives which foster new ways of understanding Shaker design, culture, and spirituality.

*The six rooms were as follows: The Textile Room, Chair Gallery, Eternal Life Room, Charles Sheeler Collections, The Andrews Collection and The Reflection Room.*

# Special Events



In addition to the department specific programming offered in 2022, the Village continued the successful *Back Porch Concert Series* that began during the pandemic when it afforded a rare opportunity for community gathering. Held during the peak summer months of July and August, the combination of young performing artists and after-hours Village setting brought new and familiar visitors to the site.

Similarly, the *Food for Thought Dinners* continued during the same summer months and into the fall beneath the Village's open timber frame entrance. These modest size sit-down meals afford guests an intimate experience at the Village with access to an artist, author, or specialist who shared his/her recent publication or project, stimulating conversation and encouraging participants to make connections between past and present.

*Hancock Holiday Nights* was conducted for its second season following the successful launch in 2021. Held during the month of December, it features a multi-sensory experience of light and sound conceived by artist Joe Wheaton with historic buildings "painted" by projection installations. At the center of the Village, the Round Stone Barn is highlighted both outside and inside and features farm animals representing the Nativity situated in their stalls. The artist-driven event presentation helped the Village extend its season and has quickly taken its place as the year-end signature event. Like the season opener Baby Animals Festival, Hancock Holiday Nights draws multi-generational families who experience the historic Shaker buildings in a new light – as inspiration for a contemporary artist – and celebrate the seasonal time of the year together, forging memories that last a lifetime.







2022 TRUSTEES

Diane Eshleman, *Chair*  
Joyce Bernstein, *Vice Chair*  
Mary Rentz, *Vice Chair*  
Robin Lazarow, *Clerk*  
Eric Prouty, *Treasurer*

Lisa Cushman  
Bruce Evenchik  
Christian Goodwillie  
Katherine Hand  
Carrie Holland  
Orion Howard  
Carina Liebeknecht  
Cheryl Murray  
Harlow Murray  
Bob Plotz  
Barbara Ernst Prey  
Andy Vadnais  
Bill Vogt  
Reggie Wilson

Jennifer Thompson, Director  
*January to September*

Nathaniel Silver, Director  
*October to December*