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HANCOCK SHAKER VILLAGE OPENS FOR THE 2024 SEASON ON APRIL 13TH WITH A CELEBRATION OF BABY ANIMALS

(HANCOCK, MA – March 25, 2024) Hancock Shaker Village opens for the 2024 season on April 13 with the **Baby Animals Festival**, an annual signal of spring for many Berkshire residents. A family favorite for more than twenty years, visitors are invited to experience the ritual of renewal by welcoming this year’s baby animals and the newest arrivals – lambs, piglets, calves, chicks, and kids (goats, that is) – and enjoy a wide variety of events and activities throughout the Village.

“The arrival of all the baby animals is a very exciting time at the Village and we can’t wait to welcome everyone to share in this experience. **Baby Animals** kicks-off a very special year in the Shaker community as we commemorate the 250th anniversary of Mother Ann Lee and the Shakers’ arrival in America. Throughout the season, Hancock Shaker Village will celebrate this significant milestone with a robust program of new exhibits, installations, and events to honor the many contributions of Shaker leader Mother Ann Lee and her followers, and the many women who have brought the Shaker story to life since Hancock’s inception as a museum in 1961,” said Director and CEO, Carrie Holland.

Historical narratives are presented through images, writings, recordings, drawings, samplers, correspondences, music, and objects used and made in their day-to-day lives. Contemporary reflections on the contributions of the Shaker Sisters are inspired and featured in works by eighteen women artists exhibiting this year at the Village. In a stellar achievement, the class of 2024 is a community of artists from Massachusetts and New York who have felt the impact of the Shaker influence. The result is a diverse assemblage of work encapsulating Shaker tenets, form, creativity, and function. The work shown this year brings the Shaker Sisters’ story to life in a contemporary composition, ensuring their continued legacy.

Baby Animals returns for its 22st season, opening Saturday April 13th (through May 5th). Open daily from 11am to 4pm, enjoy daily talks from our farm team and explore the Village. Our popular **Behind-the-Scenes tour** returns this year as well. Starting at 10am, before the Village opens, these tours provide a hands-on experience with the animals and a wagon hayride around the Village (special tickets required; book online soon as they sell out quickly). And if

you enjoy a day out on the farm, then you'll love to see our flock get tidied up on **Sheep Shearing Weekend, April 20-21**. Celebrate the arrival of spring with our merino sheep as they get their annual haircuts. Follow the wool from sheep to cloak with demonstrations of sheep-shearing by champion shearer Fred DePaul. A woolly, wonderful weekend of family fun with all the baby animals.

Baby Animals is made possible with generous support from lead sponsor ROAM: an Xtina Parks Gallery. Additional sponsorship support provided by Guardian and The Red Lion Inn.

For more information or to schedule press appointments for **Baby Animals** please contact Michael Crotty (mcrotty@hancockshakervillage.org) or call 817-821-4062.

For a complete list of events and exhibits for the 2024 season please visit hancockshakervillage.org.