

Town of Canterbury  
Shaker Village Update  
10/6/25

**Admissions and Events –**

- **Free Admission to Canterbury residents** - Forty Canterbury residents have checked in at Admissions, taking full advantage of their free admission. Of course, this does not those who just come walk the grounds. We see lots of bodies, but are not sure how many individual visitors.
- **Special Tours** – 7 tours by special registration on Tuesday afternoons. Last one on Shaker water system tomorrow at 2 pm. We were pleased to see high participation from local residents who have seen the daily tour and want more. The same is true for other programs, like talks/lectures and the Artisan Market.
- **Concerts on the Green** – The season of 5 Sunday afternoon concerts wrapped up in early September. Averaged about 100 people for well known local talent, and half that for new acts, for a total of about 400 attendees. It was great to see people of all ages enjoying these activities.
- **Upcoming Events –**
  - **Car Show Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup>**
  - **Grappone Ford mobile oil change fundraiser Monday, October 20th**
  - **Ghost Encounters tours Friday and Saturday, October 31 and November 1**
    - Likely with special Halloween event – details coming soon
  - **Roger Hall local music event, Saturday, November 8<sup>th</sup>**
  - **Holiday Sale** Black Friday through Sunday, **November 28, 29, and 30**
  - **Christmas at Canterbury Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>** with free activities for children and adults, as well as special tours, and a ticketed concert by the NH Symphony followed by a cocktail reception.

**Buildings & Grounds –**

- **Horse Barn Roof** – the wood shingle roof replacement project is complete!
- **Bee House** – the roof has been replaced, and preservation of the building will continue next year, with a new exhibit related to agriculture. Funding for this project is in hand.
- **Meeting House** – the window restoration has begun, and we are close to having secured a contractor for the remainder of the work next season. The project is funded.
- **Carriage House Ramp** – construction of this funded project is in progress.
- **Brethren's Bathrooms** - the work to refresh the primary restrooms within the village will take place this winter. We are close enough to our fundraising goal that we can begin to move forward.
- **East House** – awaiting LCHIP grant results in November and have secured the match. We anticipate that in 2026-2027 we will rehabilitate this building for

continued use as staff housing (likely for interns in a new preservation trades internship program we are working on developing and hope to launch in 2026). We will be adding a public exhibit space in the building to talk about the children raised here by the Shakers.

- **Infirmary** – in a surprise twist, we received a federal Save America's Treasures grant. We will work to secure the match this winter and will begin preparing the building next year for construction primarily in 2027.
- **Grounds** – farmer Andy Messenger will be leaving at the end of the season. We will miss his excellent work and are in the process of figuring out the best way to find a new person to manage the gardens.

### **Strategic Plan –**

We are in the process of crafting a new strategic plan for FY 2027 through FY 2031. Our mission and values will change only slightly. We will focus on three strategic priorities: preserving the past, enriching the present, and shaping a sustainable future.

- The preservation priority will focus on our work to preserve the property, including both grounds and buildings, as well as the collection and archives, while utilizing them for education and engagement.
- To enrich the present, we will focus on animating the village by expanding activities, interpretation, and inclusive experiences. In addition to completing work on the Lilly grant to upgrade our interpretation of the Shaker religion in context, we will also reintroduce food service to encourage visitors to come more often and stay longer, focus on creating family-friendly facilities, and introduce multi-day programming to expand use of and engagement in the Village.
- To ensure that the future of the museum is sustainable, we will work on growing our operating budget and shifting the distribution of revenue to be less dependent on annual fundraising. In the short term we will likely focus on increasing earned income, to help us get through as we work to grow the endowment. We recognize that there are tax ramifications of different activities and will keep in close contact with the town as we consider and evaluate different alternatives.

The next project to come your way will likely be related to re-introducing food service. We have hired Bergeron Technical to conduct a code review and help us with the design and permitting of a state-approved commercial kitchen, as well as a separate location for daily food service. Based on our initial studies, it seems likely that the production kitchen will be in the lowest level of the Dewey School (or Shaker Table) building, with service in the Horse Barn. We like the Horse Barn for daily food service because it is easily accessible from the visitor parking lot and would allow locals to come and enjoy the property without having to walk far or deal with admissions. I hope to have this up and running for the 2026 season.