

# The Friends' Quarterly

## Newsletter of the Enfield Shaker Museum

Sharing history and hospitality



Vol. XXXII No. 2  
Annual Report 2022

### UPCOMING EVENTS

For more details, visit our website at [shakermuseum.org](http://shakermuseum.org)

- Feb 26 Enfield Shaker Supper Club
- Mar 4 Lunch and Learn: Making Soup Stock
- Mar 11 Tapestry Needle Felting Workshop
- Mar 15 Chair Seat Weaving Workshop
- Mar 26 Enfield Shaker Supper Club
- Apr 21-23 Spring Shaker Forum
- Apr 30 Enfield Shaker Supper Club
- May 4 Biscuit Making 4 Ways Workshop
- May 6 Geology Nature Walk to Smith Pond
- May 13 Victorian Bookmark Workshop
- May 20 Wildflower & Fern Nature Walk

We are adding programs and events to our website calendar weekly. Check often for details.

A publication of Enfield Shaker Museum  
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### Without a Doubt: Jason Kidder, Second Family Trustee

by Mary Ann Haagen

Trustee Caleb Dyer (1800-1863) had a defining influence on the history of the Enfield NH Shakers. An 1863 memorial publication, "The Life and Tragical Death of Caleb Marshall Dyer," records for posterity his extraordinary abilities, his deep commitment to his faith and his far-reaching economic ambitions for his community.<sup>1</sup> His murder at the hands of a disgruntled father only adds to the dramatic story of his life. It is no surprise, then, that a photographic image of Caleb would be highly prized by a Shaker historian. And indeed, back in 1956 when Clarice Carr was offered a copy of his photograph, she understood its significance, and treasured the gift.<sup>2</sup> She also shared the news of her good fortune with a fellow historian and genealogist, George McKenzie Roberts.

Enfield, N.H.

April 16, 1957

Dear Mr. Roberts,

Your letter was received this morning and I shall reply immediately lest I forget. Thank you for the notes on the Dyer family: they have always interested me tremendously. Last fall Stella Dorothy of Enfield gave me a photograph of Elder Caleb; it is mounted in an antique velvet-lined case, and shows him, I should think, in his last years. Within a few months also I received several pictures from an elderly man in Exeter, N.H. whose wife had been a South Family Enfield sister. The pictures are all of a much earlier vintage than most of the others I have acquired. Some of those he sent were marked for identification, others I know, but some I must take to Canterbury one day for help. In the latter group is one I am confident is Caleb Dyer, taken at about the same time as the one Mrs. Dorothy gave me, though with different props – he has a very high round beaver hat on his lap in this one. I think when you see them both you will agree that this, too, is Caleb. The Dorothy photo is in a rather hefty case, so unless I have the second photo positively identified beforehand, perhaps it will be better to wait til you can call to see them. You are most welcome to copy either or both. I am sure I have seen it before. Clarice Carr will be through the I cannot recall where just now. I shall look among other material.



Cartes de Visite of "Caleb Dyer" as described by Clarice Carr in the letter.

It is good to hear from you and I shall look forward to seeing you when you are in this area again.

Sincerely,

Clarice Carr<sup>3</sup>

As years passed and Shaker scholarship broadened, publications referencing the Enfield, N.H. Shakers were likely to include the Caleb Dyer story, often accompanied by his photograph. At the museum we have also relied on Clarice's "Caleb" images for exhibitions and articles that touched on his pivotal role in Enfield's history.

Continued on page 5.

## Enfield Shaker Museum Receives Donation of Unique Child's Chair

by Michael J. O'Connor, Curator

Some objects in the Museum's collection are unique or so unusual they illustrate some aspect of Shaker history in a way no other object can. Other items, despite being commonplace, come with a story that brings the object alive in a way that transcends the physical object itself. When an object fulfills both these conditions, it is a very special artifact indeed.

This spring, Canaan resident Ruth Conwell visited the Museum with three Enfield chairs that had been handed down through her family. There were two Enfield side chairs and a child's chair with a very special story. Ruth related that her great-grandfather, Thomas Egan, worked for the Enfield Shakers helping them run the farm. The Shakers gave the child's chair to the family as a gift when Ruth's grandmother Anna (Annie) Frances Egan was born in 1886.

To learn more about the Egan family, I turned to Mary Ann Haagen, who has been gathering information concerning hired labor at the village in addition to her research on the Shakers. She provided references that enrich the context of Ruth's family history. The first three references to the Egans are from *Enfield Advocate* articles penned by "Old Timer." The first discusses a day of haying at the Shakers' Canaan property: "Mrs. Thomas Egan assisted the Sisters in the years following the decline in health of several of the older members. Thomas Egan, her husband was for more than thirty years caretaker of the stock at the Church Family. It was said during all those years the animals knew no unkind word or ever received harsh treatment." (*Memories of Shaker Village IP*)

In "*Memories of Shaker Village IV*," "Old Timer" discussed the mill where firewood was prepared and states the mill was "located at the point in the brook just back of the house where Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Egan and family lived several years." This seems to indicate that the Egans lived in the Blacksmith Shop, which was also referred to as the "Hired Help's Lodge" in a 1938 map.

The last "Old Timer" account entitled "*Memories of the Old Brick School House Days*," describes the long distances some students had to walk to get to school; "... and the neighboring family of three children, Michael, Margaret and Annie Quirk, who lived at the very top of Shaker Mountain, walking down the long side hill past the 'Unlucky Stone' crossing Shaker Bridge on the way to school; Mary and Annie Egan (now Mrs. Eugene Lorden of Canaan) living near the Church Family Shakers, all took the long walk." (Michael, Margaret, and Annie Quirk are cousins of the Egans and lived on Shaker Mountain near the Shaker Feast Ground.)

Several other brief mentions of the Egans help us further understand the Egan family's relationship with the Enfield Shakers.

- The 1890 Enfield Church Family Shaker school register lists Mrs. Egan as a visitor. Her children are not enrolled.
- *Enfield Advocate*, Dec. 3, 1897, describes an entertainment at the Church Family with 12 girls as the 12 months of the year, Mary Egan was October and Annie Egan December.
- *Enfield Advocate*, July 22, 1898. "The Shaker school closed last Friday. Roll of honor: Mary E. and Annie F. Egan."
- *Enfield Advocate*, Nov. 24, 1899. Miss. B.A. Quirk and Miss Annie Egan went to Fitchburg, MA, to attend the wedding of a cousin.
- *Manchester Union Leader*, Aug. 13, 1900. Reports that "Mrs. Thomas Egan, who lives at Shaker Village" was badly injured while traveling with her daughter from West Canaan. They were thrown from their carriage, the daughter escaping uninjured, but Mrs. Egan suffering a broken leg and head injury.
- 1910 US Census. By 1910, the Egans seem to have moved from Shaker Village, and purchased a house in the Cambridgeville neighborhood of Enfield Village, where Thomas was employed in the woolen mill.

The Egan family history speaks to a largely untold part of the Enfield Shaker history. The Shakers' declining population through the second half of the 19th century created many hardships for a community whose greatest strength was the energy of its communal family. With the Brothers' population declining more rapidly than that of the Sisters, the chronic shortage of male labor caused the Shakers to increasingly rely on hired male labor to keep the farm operating. Although not members of the Society, families like the Egans lived on the site, worked beside the Shakers, sent their children to Shaker school, and were an important part of the survival of the community in the later years. The connection with the Shakers was important enough for the Egan family descendants to hold and cherish this chair for over 130 years, and we are very pleased that they have made it available to us so we can share this one-of-a-kind chair, and its fascinating story, with our visitors. The chair received some repairs and is undergoing paint restoration now, in hopes it will be ready for display by the end of the year.



*Enfield Shaker Child's Chair. Left, c. 1975 (photo Kate Emlen, Right, Chair on arrival to ESM Mar 2022 (photo Michael O'Connor)*

## Stone Mill Concert Series Debuts Summer 2022

Enfield Shaker Museum was excited to introduce the Stone Mill Concert Series for this summer!

There's no denying that the grounds of the Museum are beautiful. After all, that's what inspired the Shakers to call them Chosen Vale. So, what could possibly make a summer evening at the Museum even more amazing? Live music on the lawn for free!



*Stone Mill Concert Series with Patrick Ross on August 31, 2022.*

For five Wednesdays throughout the summer, the Stone Mill's lawn was slated to be the stage for some amazing local bands to perform. We started the series on June 15th with local jazz favorites, **The Flames**. The **Upper Valley Community Band** joined us on July 13th. **The Michele Fay Band** brought us folk, swing, and bluegrass-influenced songs on July 20th, and the original crew from **Cardigan Mountain Tradition** served up classic bluegrass tunes as only they can, on August 17th.

Our series finale on August 31st featured **Patrick Ross**, a Vermont-born fiddle master, who has performed at the Grand Ole Opry, the Library of Congress, and The Kennedy Center for Performing Arts. Patrick has shared the stage with Willie Nelson, Johnny Cash, and Paul McCartney.

Dinner was available at one of the food trucks and so were snacks in the gift shop. The bar table served up beer, hard cider, wine, soda, or water. And of course you could wander through our historic garden or check out the Museum's newest exhibit, Weather-Wise.

Special thanks to our sponsors **Mascoma Bank, Gallagher, Flynn & Company, LLP, Vanessa Stone Real Estate, Bar Harbor Bank and Trust, Legacy Mortgage, LLC, Farnum Hill Ciders, and Unique Media Systems.**

All summer, folks brought a chair and a picnic basket, and claimed a spot on the lawn for the Stone Mill Concert Series! Plans are in the works for this summer's Concert Series, we will keep you posted.

## History Comes Alive Again in 2022

After an almost three-year hiatus, we were able to host our first in-person History Alive program since the pandemic started. Over six days, we welcomed 123 students and 35 teachers and parents. Participants from Canaan Elementary, Enfield Village School, Mount Lebanon School, and Cavendish Elementary brought a willingness to learn, insightful questions, and a sense of adventure. One group was so enthusiastic they spent forty-five minutes just asking questions before the field trip began.



*Starting the day with an introduction to the Shakers in the Meeting Room of the Great Stone Dwelling*

As Museum educators, we often ask ourselves how we can make the past relevant for today's students. In the case of our History Alive program, we rely heavily on the impact of doing. In today's world, we often take for granted the amount of time that went into even the simplest of daily activities in the 19th century. By participating in experiential and place-based learning activities such as churning butter or creating whisk brooms, students get a chance to experience a little sample of the past. At the end of the day, our dedicated volunteers and staff hope that we have shared our love and appreciation for the exciting and relevant role that history can play in all our lives.



*Sue Jukosky, ESM volunteer teaching students penmanship with a steel pen and ink.*

Our thanks to the dedicated ESM History Alive volunteers that make it possible to offer this program; **Nan Munsey, Mary Ann Haagen, Sue Jukosky, Gail McPeck, Joan Holcombe, Betsy Drinkwater, Shirley Green, Kristi Wilson, Lisa Torres, Ken Munsey, and Happy Griffiths.**

History Alive is made possible by a generous grant from the **Charles E. and Edna T. Brundage Charitable, Scientific and Wildlife Conservation Foundation.**

## Preservation Update: Dairy Window Restoration

The Museum's 2020 Fall Fundraising Auction's "Cause Within a Cause" raised \$7,000.00 to fund the restoration of seven Dairy windows. The eighth window on that facade was installed in the 20th century in place of the door that had been there originally.

In February 2022, **David Lewis** of Boxwood Preservation and Woodworking documented the condition of each window and removed the sashes for restoration. The sashes were restored at his shop over the next few months. Of the seven sets, five were restorable. Two sets of sash were too degraded to be repaired and were reproduced. In mid-July, David removed the temporary plywood covering the window openings and installed both the beautifully restored and new sashes, creating an instant improvement that needs to be seen to be appreciated.

Many thanks to **David Lewis** for his efforts and to all the donors who made this important work possible. Our sincere appreciation to the following supporters of this important cause: **Tim Baker** and **Elizabeth Beliveau**, **Debra Ford**, **Judith Gandel-Golden**, **Mary Ann Haagen** and **Charles DePuy**, **June Hemberger**, **Virginia** and **Richard Hoxie**, **Carolyn Maloney**, **Ed** and **Juleann McLaughlin**, **Nan** and **Ken Munsey**, **Rebecca** and **Steve Powell**, **Amy Resnick**, **Nancy Rosenthal**, **Carolyn Smith** and **Richard Dabrowski**, **Nancy Smith**, **Bruce** and **Betsy Stefany**, **Ardis Vaughan** and **Bob Chorney**, **Chris** and **Ann Wadsworth**, **Paul** and **Lynn Waehler**, and **Shirley Wajda**.



1813 Church Family Dairy Building - west facade. Left: Dairy Building with seven windows and one doorway c. 1905. Center: Dairy Building with seven sets of sash removed for restoration February 2022. Right: David Lewis of Boxwood Preservation and Woodworking reinstalling sash on the ground floor of the Dairy July 2022.

**REGISTER NOW**  
for the  
**2023 Spring Shaker Forum**  
April 21 - 23, 2023

Visit our website to see the schedule of presenters/programs and download the registration form.

website - [shakermuseum.org](http://shakermuseum.org)  
email - [education@shakermuseum.org](mailto:education@shakermuseum.org)  
phone - 603-632-4346

**Enfield Shaker Museum**  
447 NH Route 4A ♦ Enfield, NH 03748

Enfield Shaker Museum is a 501(c)3 non-profit educational institution whose mission is to protect, enhance, and utilize its historical structures, landscape and Shaker cultural heritage. Gifts and donations are tax-deductible.

<p><b>Acting Director</b> Carolyn Smith</p> <p><b>Curator</b> Michael O'Connor</p> <p><b>Garden Coordinator</b> Susan Quinlan</p>	<p><b>Hospitality Coordinator</b> Lisa Rinella</p> <p><b>Historic Housekeeper</b> Jess Wyman</p>
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**Board of Trustees:**

Carolyn Smith - President	Carol Medicott
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Debra Ford - Treasurer	Becky Powell
Gail McPeek - Secretary	Mary Ellen Rigby
Shirley Green	Emily Rowe
Ed Hayman	Bente Tojusen West
Ian Kipperman	Ardis Vaughan

## Without a Doubt: Jason Kidder, Second Family Trustee *Continued from page 1*

As reliable as Stella Dorothy's identification seemed, however, there was another claim being quietly asserted in other historic resources. A photo album—containing portraits of Enfield, New Hampshire Shakers, is carefully preserved in the Canterbury Shaker Village Archive. In this album the image we “knew” to be Caleb Marshall Dyer is labeled “Jason Kidder.”<sup>4</sup> In a similar album at Hancock Shaker Village Archive one image is missing from its sleeve but retains the label “Jason Kidder.” Neither album has a portrait labeled “Caleb Dyer.”<sup>5</sup> And in a scrapbook kept by Enfield, New Hampshire's, former town historian, Nellie Pierce there is a newspaper article by former Canterbury Shaker - Nicholas Briggs, titled, “The Honest Shaker's Cheese.”<sup>6</sup> This light-hearted story is about Enfield's Second Family Trustee, Jason Kidder. Glued next to the article is our “Caleb” portrait.<sup>7</sup> Conflicting photo identifications are disconcerting. But no strategy presented itself for resolving the photo's seeming double identity.

During the spring of 2022 research was underway for the new “Weather-Wise” exhibit at the museum. Returning to the Rauner Library at Dartmouth College, I hoped to find photographs of Enfield in the Nellie Pierce Collection. Although I was unsuccessful in that search, the collection never disappoints. Tucked in Box 21, folder 17 was a glass plate negative labeled “Jason Kidder.” Visible in this photograph is a large leather-bound volume sitting on a table beside the Shaker brother (usually identified as Caleb Dyer). Easily readable on the book's spine is its title: “The American Conflict, Volume 1, by Horace



*Detail of book title in photo of Jason Kidder.*

Greeley.” Though the book serves here only as a photographic prop, it provides clarifying information. Greeley's account of the first years of America's Civil War was published in 1864.

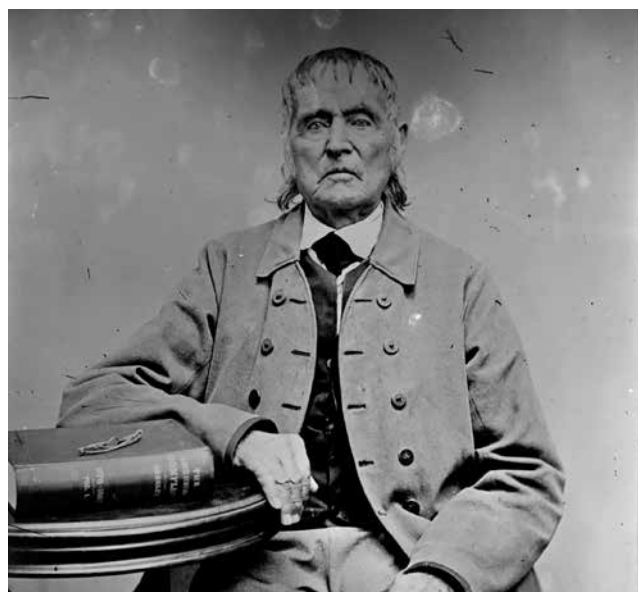
Trustee Caleb Dyer died of gunshot wounds on July 21, 1863.<sup>8</sup> The Shaker sitting for this photograph is not Dyer but Second Family Trustee, Jason Kidder.<sup>9</sup>

In 1784, when Jason was only 3 years old, the Kidders moved with other converts to Enfield, to help form a Shaker society here. Along with the Barkers, Lyons, and other like-minded Believers, they “gathered into order” in 1794 as Enfield's Second, or South Family. Jason, his parents and five siblings all proved lifelong Shakers. His two brothers were subsequently moved to Canterbury but Jason remained at Enfield, serving for five decades as either associate or first Trustee of the Second Family. Though lacking Caleb's far-flung connections in the world, Trustee Jason Kidder quietly adhered to the Shaker ideal of “owing no man anything but love and good will.”<sup>10</sup> Under his stewardship the Second Family, unlike the Church Family, never suffered the devastating consequences of crippling debt.<sup>11</sup> Upon his death in 1867 Jason was eulogized as “a self-made man; honest, just and kind. Firm in his belief in the religion he early espoused, he reached the age of 87 without a blemish upon his character. Many businessmen in and out of the State can bear witness to his honor and integrity. The Society has sustained a loss which will long be felt.”<sup>12</sup>

It is a loss, too, not to have a photograph of trustee and elder, Caleb Marshall Dyer. But it is good to know for certain that the visage we celebrate here is that of a beloved Enfield Shaker brother, Jason Kidder.

### Notes

1. “A Biography of the Life and Tragical Death of Elder Caleb M. Dyer,” A memorial pamphlet published by the Enfield Shakers, 1863. Printed in Manchester, NH.
2. Clarice Carr lived in Enfield and actively researched the Enfield Shakers. Her strong interest in Shaker music led her to form and direct the Enfield Shaker Singers, a quartet of women's voices. Her work is documented in *Shaker Fever*, by William D. Moore, University of Massachusetts Press.
3. Letter transcribed from the Shaker music scrapbook of Ann Tarney, a member of the Carr's quartet. Private Collection.
4. Photograph Album 53 image #59 Canterbury Shaker Village Archive.
5. Photograph Album 9406 Alb 1, Vincent Newman Collection, Hancock Shaker Village Archive.
6. “The Honest Shaker's Cheese” *The Sunday Herald-Boston*, 23 April 1905
7. Scrapbook compiled by Nellie Pierce, ENH1984.5 Canterbury Shaker Village Archive.
8. “Death of Caleb M. Dyer,” *Granite State Free Press*, 25 July 1863. Dartmouth College Library.
9. Nellie L. Pierce Collection on Enfield, NH. ML19 Box 21, folder 17. Dartmouth College Library Special Collections.
10. “The Rise and Decline of the Shaker Society, part 4” *The Collected Writings of Henry Cummings*, edited by Mary Ann Haagen, Richard W. Couper Press.
11. Shortly after Caleb Dyer's death in 1863 his Enfield business partners, Dodge, Davis and Conant, brought an opportunistic and probably fraudulent lawsuit against the Enfield Shakers. Though contested in the courts for many years, the final judgment against the Shakers left the Church Family \$20,000 in debt.
12. *Portsmouth Journal of Literature and Politics*, Portsmouth, NH, 6 February 1867.



*From a glass plate negative labeled “Jason Kidder” found in the Nellie Pierce Collection at Rauner Library, Dartmouth College.*

## 2022 Board of Trustees

### Executive Committee

**Carolyn Smith** (President) was the founding Director of ESM. She retired in 2021 after 25 years at Shaker Workshops where she was responsible for managing the order processing and order fulfillment departments. She and her husband Dick Dabrowski are actively involved in the preservation efforts underway at the Museum.



**George Pennacchi** (Vice-President) is a professor in the Dept of Finance at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where his research and teaching focus on financial markets. He obtained an Sc.B. in applied mathematics from Brown University and a Ph.D. in economics from MIT. In 2018, he, his wife, and daughter took up residence in a Shaker-built home in Enfield.

**Debra Ford** (Treasurer) recently retired from the Mascoma Valley Regional School District where she was the Business Administrator. Prior to that, she owned and operated Ford Bookkeeping, LLC performing bookkeeping services for small businesses and non-profits. Debra grew up in West Lebanon, moving to Enfield in 1985. Debra is honored to be a Trustee of the Enfield Shaker Museum.



**Gail McPeck** (Secretary) holds degrees in Natural Resource Management (Rutgers University) and Wildlife Biology (University of Kentucky). She worked for six years at the Kalamazoo Nature Center in Michigan. It was there that she recognized the value and role of nonprofit organizations. In 1992 Gail and her husband Mark moved to Hanover, NH,

where they raised two children. She and her husband now live in Enfield.

### Board of Trustees - Returning Members



**Shirley Green** of Enfield, is a former member of the Board. She is a retiree of the Lebanon School District. She serves on the Boards of NH LAKES, Crystal Lake Improvement Association, and the Eastman Charitable Foundation. Shirley is an Enfield Library Trustee and serves on several other committees and commissions in the town of Enfield.

**Ed Hayman** earned a Ph.D. at the University of Southern California in Cellular and Molecular Biology. Ed, his wife Carrie, and their son Tim moved from California to Hanover in 1985. He worked in R and D for a number of biotechnology companies. Now retired, Ed joined the ESM Building and Grounds Committee in 2016 and enjoys volunteering at the Museum.



**Ian Kipperman** is a Senior Accountant, specializing in for-profit and not-for-profit audits with a side of tax and consulting, with Gallagher, Flynn and Company, LLP in Lebanon, NH. Though he has resided in the Upper Valley since 2014, his family has roots in Enfield. Ian is passionate about his clients and giving

back to the community.

**Nan Munsey** served on the ESM Board between 2008 and 2014, with specific responsibilities for developing educational programs and garden outreach. A veteran middle school teacher in the Lebanon and Mascoma schools, she retired in 2008 after receiving the Air Force Teacher of the Year Award for her work with the NASA Explorer Schools program.





**Becky Powell**, for the last 30 years, along with stints as a software writer and tester, has focused primarily on designing and hand weaving textiles—and being a full-time mother. As a volunteer, she established the Enfield Main Street program (now Enfield Village Association), and the Enfield Community Gardeners.

**Ardis Vaughan**, a long-time Boston resident, spends time in NH with her partner Bob Chorney, who lives in Enfield. She owns Shawmut Environmental, LLC, providing environment and safety consulting services to manufacturing companies. She holds degrees from Rutgers University in Chemical Engineering and Chemistry.



### Board of Trustees - New Members (2023)

**Carol Medicott** is Associate Professor of Geography at Northern Kentucky University. She came to Shaker studies relatively late. After a first career as a national security analyst for the FBI, Carol returned to graduate school to study geography in the late 1990s. Carol has published widely, with numerous articles and book chapters dealing with the Shakers. Her teaching interests include courses in historical geography, historic preservation, environmental history, and geography of religion.



**Emily Rowe** grew up in New Hampshire, her interest in the Shakers began on a field trip to Canterbury where she later worked as a tour guide. She attended Hampshire College in Massachusetts. She is currently the circulation and communications manager for Northern Woodlands magazine in Lyme, NH. She lives in Corinth, VT, and enjoys hiking, soap making, and basket weaving.



**Mary Ellen Rigby**, a native of Philadelphia and avid sports fan. Mary Ellen holds a degree in Architectural History from the University of Utah. She has worked in a series of small businesses at jobs including marketing and public relations, finance, retail shop buyer, merchandising and inventory control and project management. Her last job was as Museum Shop Manager at the Hood Museum of Art, at Dartmouth College. In retirement, she travels, entertains herself in the market of stocks, and plays pickleball.



**Bente Torjusen West** served as AVA Gallery and Art Center's Executive Director for 30 years, until her retirement in 2016. Born and raised in Norway, Bente worked at the Munch Museum in Oslo prior to her move to the US with her artist husband, the late Clifford B. West, and their two daughters. At AVA, she oversaw the \$4.5 million capital campaign that made possible the extensive 2006-2007 renovation of what is now known as The Carter-Kelsey Building. Since 2019, she has served as AVA's "Strategic Advisor."

### ENFIELD SHAKER MUSEUM AWARDED SAVE AMERICA'S TREASURES

We are pleased to announce that we were awarded a \$129,667 matching grant from the National Park Service "Save America's Treasures" program in September 2022. This grant will support a three-year project including restoration of the windows and repointing the masonry of the Stone Mill Building. The Museum's grant was the only one given to an institution in NH for 2022 and is part of the \$24.25 million in Save America's Treasures grants to fund 80 projects in 32 states and the District of Columbia.

The window restoration will be done by **David Lewis** of Boxwood Preservation and Woodworking, the masonry work will be done by **Jeremy Brown** of Wachusett Chimney, and **Robert Adam**, Project Supervisor and **Richard Dabrowski**, Chairman of the Museum's Preservation Committee will administer the grant. Be sure to check out their progress next time you visit the Museum!





Enfield Shaker Museum  
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## NH Humanities Grant Funds Weather-Wise Exhibit

For millennia, weather has shaped human life. The Shakers at Enfield, like the “World’s people,” adapted to daily and seasonal changes in temperature, atmospheric pressure, wind, humidity, precipitation, and cloud cover. These weather conditions were noted in personal journals and letters, newspapers and magazines, and scientific records, including those produced at Dartmouth College’s Shattuck Observatory in nearby Hanover, NH.

The Weather-Wise exhibit has two components. Most dramatic are the 13 colorful Tempestries: long, hand-knitted banners representing the daily weather of a given year with 365 rows, each denoting a specific temperature. Visitors can see the actual weather conditions that the Enfield, NH, Shakers confronted. All Tempestries use the same yarn colors and temperature ranges in order to create a visually cohesive narrative across a wide expanse of makers, places, and eras.



Accompanying the Tempestries are historic photographs, newspaper clippings, excerpts from Shaker journals and letters, as well as reproductions of original Shaker clothing. These items, together with the Tempestries, raise important questions about human choices, weather and climate change. Through the comparison of many years of Tempestries, we can see how human choices and actions have led to climate change.

*Hand-knit tempestries, text and photo panels in Weather-Wise exhibit.*

We recruited 13 community members to create the hand-knitted Tempestries. The knitters met at the museum to select their



year, get a temperature chart, wind the appropriate yarn colors, and go over hints and tips for knitting a Tempestry. The Tempestries are knit in linen stitch. This stitch, combined with frequent color changes, proved to be challenging for most of the volunteers, but this intrepid group was not to be dissuaded.

*Special thanks to our knitters:*

*Front Row (left to right): Kristi Wilson, Kris Burnett, Sue Jukosky, Betsy Gibbs, Linda Pendleton.*

*Back Row (left to right): Nan Munsey, Becky Powell, Mary Ann Haagen, Susan Brown, Leab Goat, Carolyn Smith.*

*Not pictured: Luli Josephson and Karen Wolk*



**This project was made possible with support from New Hampshire Humanities, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Humanities.**

**Learn more at [www.nhhumanities.org](http://www.nhhumanities.org).**