

The Friends' Quarterly

Newsletter of the Enfield Shaker Museum

Sharing history and hospitality



Vol. XXXI No. 2
Spring/Summer 2021

UPCOMING EVENTS

For more details, visit our website
at shakermuseum.org

- Sept 9 **Special Tour: Enfield Shaker Barns**
- Sept 11 **Shaker-Style Carryall Basket Workshop**
- Sept 23 **Special Tour: Enfield Shaker Water System**
- Sept 23 **Herbal Wreath Making**
- Sept 24 **Harvest Festival to Go**

- Oct 9 **Fall Pie Sale**

- Nov 7 **Enfield Shaker Museum Annual Meeting**
- Nov 15-30 **Online Fall Auction**

A publication of Enfield Shaker Museum
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Mascoma Lake and the Enfield Shakers - Part 1

by Mary Ann Haagen

The Enfield Shakers had the good fortune of living on Mascoma Lake. It figured significantly in their sense of place, in their economy, in their spiritual vocabulary, and in their social and recreational life.

It is perhaps fitting that one of the earliest mentions of "Lake Mascomy" in the Shaker historic record involves a religious conversion. The year was 1783 and a young man from Maine was traveling to Vermont to investigate and possibly join a gathering of New Light Baptists. He stopped over night in Enfield, New Hampshire, at the home of James Jewett, a former New Light who had recently been converted to Shakerism. Jewett shared his newfound convictions with John Cotton and according to the young man:

The power of God came upon me, filling my soul and controlling my whole being. It raised me from my chair and under its influence I turned around, swiftly, for the space of half an hour. The door of the house was open. I was whirled through the doorway, into the yard among the stones and stumps, down to the shore of Lake Mascomy, some rods distant. On reaching the shore of the lake that same power that led to the water whirled me back again in like manner, and I found myself in the same chair that I had been taken from. This was a seal to my faith and a baptism of the Holy Spirit, and I promised to obey it to the end of my days.¹

John immediately returned to Maine proclaiming his new faith and gathering others who became the nucleus of the Alfred and Gorham Shaker societies.

In 1793 the Enfield Shakers moved from Shaker Hill to the west side of Mascoma Lake and began to "gather into order," establishing the Church or center family in 1793, the Second or South Family in 1794, and in 1812 the Novitiate or North Family, all on the western shore of the Mascoma. Beside the increased availability of water power on this side of the lake, the soil was richer and easier to cultivate. In an 1855 publication *New Hampshire as it Is* the author notes, "On the southwestern shore of the pond is situated the Shakers' village. This society owns the land on the southwest bank, nearly the entire length of the pond. The village is located on an alluvial plain of great fertility and under a very high state of cultivation. About 20 acres of this are devoted to horticulture, from which large quantities of garden seeds and all the valuable varieties of botanic medicinal herbs and roots are produced. The buildings are neat and convenient- with some on a large and splendid scale."²



Mascoma Lake. From a glass plate negative c.1880

Many other economic benefits accrued from living close to the lake. When it froze in winter the lake became an essential highway for moving vast amounts of lumber and granite. Building materials for major projects like the Great Stone Dwelling, the Shaker Bridge, and the two railroad bridges across the Connecticut and White Rivers at White

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Mascoma Lake and the Enfield Shakers *Continued from page 1*

River Junction were all transported in this way. Some of the accounts of using the frozen lake to move Shaker buildings from their original location to North Enfield make good reading even today:

About 1852, houses being in great demand, C. M. Dyer with the consent of the Church Family Shakers decided to move a building known as the Carrier's shop, which stood just above the stone mill near the tan house.

The building was got ready to move by placing it on two long spruce trees, the end being shaped like a sled runner. A day was set and invitations were sent to the farmers about town who owned oxen to come to the moving bee. The Shakers had a dozen yoke of heavy oxen and enough responded to swell the number to thirty-six yoke. A pair of heavy cart wheels were attached by a strong chain cable to each shoe and the heaviest oxen were put next the building, the others being arranged something according to size. When all was ready there were two strings of cattle, eighteen yoke in each team, with a driver to each pair.

The route taken was across the field towards the North Family Shakers coming into the highway just south of the brick office, following the road to the North Family Shakers boat landing, then on to the lake. It was in February and the ice was twenty-eight inches thick and did not give perceptibly. John Jones of this place was in charge of the job and everything went smoothly, the only mishap being the breaking of a chain or two. At noon the building was fairly on the ice. Then the oxen were baited, not being unhitched and the men were served a bountiful lunch, all eating from the hand without much ceremony. In those days those who went to such a bee gave their service as a neighborly act and neither expected or received any other compensation but thank you and the remembrance of a kindness freely rendered to others. After the lunch was over and the team well rested a start was made and as I recollect no stop was made till the shore was reached. A landing being made where the Cox orchard was afterwards set out, thence up the hill to where Wells street now ends, and following near where that street now is, down Union street crossing the railroad, near where the passenger station now stands, and across the mill pond on to the spot where it was to stand.³

HOUSE MOVED BY 50 HORSES ACROSS LAKE.

Newspaper account of moving a Shaker building across Mascoma Lake on the ice. April 9, 1905, Boston Daily Globe.

But not all accounts of moving materials have such a charming ring. In 1853 Shaker Brother Hervey Elkins wrote:

Ah Lake Mascomy – sometimes the most pleasant of all our vocations was to cross its reverberating area; at others the most cold, desolate and dreaded of all our tasks. At one time, after a tremendous rain, which thawed the snow and weakened the ice, we needed to cross with horses drawing a heavy load of elm timber. There were three of us, each having a span of horses, tackled to as many sleds. We mounted the backs of our near horses, and started out. The ice sagged, more and more as we advanced. It soon became four feet deep and we had a mile and a half still to go. We became alarmed. We dare not stop, and urged our horses on. Half walking and half swimming, the water was within a foot of their backs and submerging our legs. But we sank no deeper, for the horses bodies helped buoy us up. We continued on, and reached the shore in safety, shouting for joy.⁴

Ice cutting was an essential winter chore, but it must have been such a routine matter that it receives not a mention in surviving Shaker records until the 1890s. March 1892: “The ice harvest was completed earlier than is usual with us. We must belong to the conservative party, for the old fashioned wheelbarrow still does duty for us, in conveying it to the Office, Dining Hall and Infirmary. The Dairy has an especial provision in this line. No span of horses for this business.”⁵ And in February, 1899: “Snow enough to make sledding easy enough to draw from the hills 100,000 ft. of logs, 200 cords of fire wood and 17 cords of ice from Mascoma lake.”⁶

Although ice fishing is mentioned in Hervey Elkins' book, it is used as a spiritual metaphor for temptation. Recreational fishing at the Shakers seems to have been a summertime thing. “Sometimes we would enter our boats, lying in a creek below our garden, and rowing half way to the opposite shore of the lake, would then drift in obedience to the impulse of the rippling waves. I, seated in the stern, was intoxicated with the voluptuous undulations of the boat, and contemplated the radiance, beauty and splendor of the sun, the sky, the distant mountains almost hid in the soft purple light of September air....Francis, more impulsive and perhaps less susceptible of poetical feelings, would at such times, throw out his baited hook to tempt the inhabitants below us.”⁷

Following the summer work of haying their great field on Mt Assurance, Henry Cumings wrote: “After supper many of the young men and boys go to the lake for a bath and swim and then all put on clean clothes.” But that was not the end of their day.

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NEW HAMPSHIRE.

The ice on Mascoma Lake is from fifteen to eighteen inches thick, and it is estimated that there are 4,000,000 tons on the lake that could be spared for places where the crop is short.

Ice on Mascoma Lake. February 4, 1880, Boston Post

David Mitchell: From Wooden Kayak Paddles to Shaker Oval Boxes

by Nan Munsey

Have you ever wondered what people do with the skills they've learned after taking a class at Enfield Shaker Museum? When **David Mitchell** of Canaan, NH, took Eric Pinar's Oval Box Workshop in 2020 he returned to his Mitchell Paddles workshop and proceeded to refine his techniques, creating over 80 boxes to date.

After years of producing the finest wooden kayak and canoe paddles in the industry, Mitchell turned his woodworking skills to the challenge of creating silky-smooth boxes out of maple and oak from his own woods, mixing it up with cherry, mahogany, and walnut for variety. He has repurposed several tools for box making including building a metal box for soaking the veneer which he then wraps around a box form secured with a repurposed bike tire to mold the veneer into an oval. A little super glue and tiny copper tacks hold the sides in place when done.

Although not everyone who takes a workshop at Enfield Shaker Museum is as productive as David Mitchell has been with oval box making, everyone comes away from the workshop with new or improved skills and endless possibilities for future creative endeavors. If there is a skill at which you would like to try your hand, send an email to education@shakermuseum.org or call 603-632-4346 and let us know.



David Mitchell with a walnut oval box.



David with his purpose-built soaking tub.



Repurposed bicycle tire "web" clamp.



A sampling of David's oval boxes.

2021 Spring Shaker Forum Held Online

by Kyle Sandler, Education Coordinator

In May, the Museum held its annual Spring Shaker Forum online for the first time. Seventy-two participants tuned in for a six-part series which included presentations by well-known Shaker scholars **Robert Emlen**, **Ned Quist**, **Sharon Koomler**, **Christian Goodwillie**, **Jerry Grant**, and **Kerry Hackett**.

This year's Forum presentations had two general themes. The first was the degree to which visual arts have and can inform our understanding of Shaker lives. **Robert Emlen** kicked off the Forum with a discussion of his 2019 book, *Imagining the Shakers*, in which he charts and interprets the changing perception of Shakers in visual culture throughout the 19th century. Presenters **Jerry Grant** and **Ned Quist** took a closer look at late 19th- and early 20th-century photographs of the Mount Lebanon, New York and Harvard, Massachusetts, Shaker villages and the photographers who made them. **Sharon Koomler** placed Shaker gift drawings in the wider context of the American tradition of Christian inspirational art.

The second theme of the Forum was the important role that biographical studies can play in placing a human face, with all its complexities, on the Shaker experience. **Christian Goodwillie** discussed the turbulent life of charismatic western Shaker leader Malcolm Worley, who was exiled by Ohio's Union Village Shakers at the height of the Era of Manifestations. In the final presentation of this year's Forum, **Kerry Hackett** reassessed the often-controversial life of Shaker Brother Philemon Stewart through his work as a physician at New Lebanon and his painful struggles with chronic illness.

We are grateful to this year's sponsors **J K Russell Antiques, Inc.**, South Salem, NY and **Shaker Workshops**, North Sandwich, NH. Overall, the 2021 Forum was a success with attendees, near and far, enjoying access to the latest in Shaker research. We are all hoping that we will be able to return to an in-person experience in 2022 while still retaining some remote access for those who are not able to join us at the Great Stone Dwelling.



Plymouth State University 2021 Archaeology Field School

by Hannah Dutton, Field School Director

From June 1 through June 25 of this year, Enfield Shaker Museum and Plymouth State University held their seventh archaeological field school. Four students from Plymouth State University, as well as several volunteers (including **Dick Dabrowski, Dan Pontbriand, Kristen Powell, Carolyn Smith, Ardis Vaughan, Lynn Waehler, and Paul Waehler**) formed the dig crew (right).



This year's field school goals were varied. First, we excavated in front of the Brethrens' East (1819) and West (1820) Shops (below) in anticipation of a French drain installation and to help uncover what specific activities may have been undertaken in and around the buildings. We also excavated around the well in front of the Brethrens' Shops to try and find either the well cap or the supports underneath. Our third goal was to determine what remained of the Wood House beneath what is now the parking lot. The final goal



for the year was to continue washing, sorting, and bagging the wealth of artifacts found in the 2019 Boys' Shop excavation.

The diggers did a fabulous job in undertaking and completing these investigations—even during an unexpected heat wave! We uncovered several glass and metal buttons, possibly parts from the tailoring workshop we know was housed in one of the buildings. We also found a small piece of a Shaker medicine bottle, redware tobacco pipes, and a whiteware/ironstone ceramic sherd with a maker's mark! The maker's mark (right) shows that it originated at the Cockson & Chetwynd potters of Cobridge, United Kingdom. It dates between 1866 and 1875.



We had hoped to find the foundation of the Wood House underneath the Museum's parking lot. Alas, it seems all the foundation remains had been removed, but what we did



uncover was a Shaker drain—a very exciting find for everyone there that day. The Shakers built this extensive schist-lined and covered structure (left) to drain rainwater from the Great Stone Dwelling. Yet another engineering marvel at the Enfield Shaker Village!

Thank you to everyone at Enfield Shaker Museum for making this archaeology field school a success! We made many great discoveries this year and the students and volunteers were able to learn even more about the lives of the Enfield Shakers.

Member Appreciation Week: An Extravaganza of Gratitude

by Kathryn Jerome, Development Coordinator

This year's Enfield Shaker Museum's Member Appreciation Week ran from July 6–11, and featured in-person tours, a special digital-release interview, and a surprise preview of the Shaker Workshops Furniture Sale the following weekend. With over 50% greater attendance than last year's event, the Museum is excited to add this extravaganza of Member appreciation to our yearly program of events.

The week began with a Tuesday *Tea and Tour* led by Museum Garden Coordinator **Diana Kimball-Anderson**, followed by Thursday's *Shapes of a Shaker Village 2.0*, led by Education Coordinator **Kyle Sandler**. Saturday's tour of the Great Stone Dwelling through Shaker apostate Hervey Elkins' eyes, led by Museum Curator **Michael O'Connor**, was a roaring success. We finished off the week with a Member-exclusive digital release: an interview with **Richard Dabrowski**, long-time Museum volunteer and Preservation Coordinator, who discussed the past year's preservation efforts at the Museum, as well as many of the projects still in the works!

This event was organized by Museum Development Coordinator **Kathryn Jerome**. Many thanks to Diana, Kyle, Michael, Dick, and our Executive Director **Shirley Wajda** for sharing their time and knowledge throughout the week.

We would also like to extend our deepest thanks to our Members, who are truly our greatest strength, for their continued support—especially during the past year, when at times things have seemed so uncertain. Next year's Member Appreciation Week will run July 11–17, 2022—so mark your calendars, Members! We hope to see you then.



Mascoma Lake and the Enfield Shakers *Cont. from page 2*

“At 7:30 the bell rings again and all gather to the dwelling house. A hymn is sung and then the Elder quietly speaks of the labors of the day and how thankful all should feel for the blessing of God, that attends the worthy efforts of all to secure and store away the bountiful harvest.”⁸ A tiny snapshot of Shaker life: shared labor, shared fellowship, shared gratitude for the gifts of God.

A boat ride on Mascoma Lake was a special treat for Shakers visiting Enfield from other Societies. In 1854 leaders from Ohio and Kentucky Shaker communities took a boat trip to North Enfield to see the Shakers’ business interests.

“Next went to the Lake Mascoma to take a ride in a flat boat. We went on across the Lake & on to a little village at the foot of the Lake. The object of the ride besides the pleasure of it was to see the Shaker Mills.” After describing the mill and factory tours the author notes, “Our ride back was more pleasant for the wind was in our favor & we glided over the Lake quite smoothly. Sung & rejoiced within our good company.”⁹ After those pleasure rides on the lake, visitors were invited to purchase a sit down meal at the Trustees’ office, and perhaps make a few purchases at the Office store.

In the 1870s, as membership in the Shaker Society at Enfield began to diminish, so too did some of the strictures against the community’s informal contact with its neighbors. A clear sign of this was Elder William Wilson’s decision to turn his lumber scow into a passenger pleasure boat. August 20, 1875 the *Granite State Free Press* announced: “William Wilson has re-rigged his sail boat and added much more sail to it, and now it is in fine condition for excursion parties who wish to take a sail on Mascoma Lake. It will accommodate 75 or 100 persons, and being built quite flat there is not the least danger of its capsizing. Elder Wilson has spent considerable money in getting it in good order and we hope he will be well patronized. No name appears on the boat but by common consent she is called the ‘Sally Ann’ in honor of a good old Shaker sister, Sally Ann Tucker.”

That same summer Elder Henry Cumings purchased a sailboat for the North Family Shakers, and in 1880 the *Granite State Free Press* announced, “The North Family Shakers have just built a boat and bath house on the shore of the lake just in rear of their seed house. Elder Cummings has some nice new boats to let for fishing or pleasure.”¹⁰ (“Mascoma Lake and the Enfield Shakers” Part II will be published in the next edition of this newsletter.)

Notes

1. Sister Mildred Barker, “History of Alfred, Maine” *Shaker Quarterly* 3:3 (1963).
2. Edwin A. Charlton, *New Hampshire As It Is* (Claremont, NH: Tracy & Sanford. 1855).
3. Henry Cumings, “Village History,” *The Enfield Advocate*, May 13, 1910.
4. Hervey Elkins, *Fifteen Years in the Senior Order of Shakers* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth Press, 1853), p. 52.

Enfield Shaker Museum Raises Over \$20,000 through New Hampshire Gives

by Kathryn Jerome, Development Coordinator

New Hampshire Gives, an annual 24-hour community giving event, brings together nonprofits and donors statewide to raise money for charitable causes. This year’s event raised almost 4 million dollars for about 600 nonprofit institutions in the Granite State.

Enfield Shaker Museum is thrilled to announce that we raised over \$20,000 during this event as part of the Museum’s campaign to “raise \$10,000 to support 10,000 visitors,” thanks to several extremely generous gift matches by anonymous donors, as well as the support of many of our friends!

These funds are inexpressibly helpful as we continue into the busy tourist season. Arrangements for expanded hours and tours, as well as more Museum front-of-the-house personnel, new and updated exhibits, and continued creative in-person and digital programming, are already in the works.

We would like to thank everyone who supported us during NH Gives by giving and spreading the word. Special thanks to our generous donors:

An Anonymous Trustee	Nancy Osgood
Anonymous	Geoffrey and Debra Parker
Blake	Michael and Petra Parker
John P. Dumville	Rebecca and Steve Powell
Joseph and Cathy Gasparik	Kimberley Quirk
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Jean Marchant	Chris & Ann Wadsworth
Gail McPeck	Paul & Lynn Waehler
Nan and Ken Munsey	Shirley Wajda
Rebecca Noel	

5. “Enfield, NH Home Notes,” *Shaker Manifesto*, March 1892.
6. “Enfield, NH Home Notes,” *Shaker Manifesto*, February 1899
7. Hervey Elkins, *Fifteen Years*, p. 80
8. Henry Cumings, “Busy Summer Days at the Church Family Shakers” *The Enfield Advocate*, July 20, 1906
9. Travel Journal of the Ministry (journal of a visit by the ministries of Union Village and South Union to eastern communities), Sept. 19, 1854, Western Reserve Historical Society (Cleveland, OH), Box 13 Volume 250.
10. “Enfield Notes,” *Granite State Free Press*, July 9, 1880.

Apple Pie Season is Coming!

Last fall during our *All At Home* online series we offered a tasting basket with our version of a 19th-century Shaker Apple Pie. We had so many requests for the recipe, we added it to the Shaker Recipes section of our website, and just to get you in the mood for the coming season we offer it here.

Enfield Shaker Apple Pie

6 cups apples (3 cups McIntosh and 3 cups Cortland)

Juice of 1/2 lemon

1/2 cup granulated sugar

1/2 cup light brown sugar

1/4 tsp nutmeg

2 tbsp flour

1/2 tsp salt

1 tsp ground cinnamon

2 tbsp unsalted butter

Unbaked 9-inch pie crusts (2)

Preheat oven to 375° Fahrenheit. Line a 9-inch pie plate with pie crust dough.

Wash, core, peel, and slice apples into a uniform thickness and place them in a large mixing bowl. Toss apples with lemon juice.

In another bowl, combine the sugars, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt, and flour, then sprinkle over the apples and toss to coat. Melt butter and pour over the filling mixture, stir, then turn apple mixture into dough-lined pie plate.

Cover mixture with a top pie crust (solid dough with slits cut to release steam, lattice work, or decorative). Cover edges of crust with aluminum foil or a silicone pie crust protector and bake for 25 minutes. Remove the edge protector and bake for an additional 20-25 minutes or until crust is golden brown and filling is bubbly. Allow pie to cool completely on a wire rack before slicing. SERVES 8.



Enfield Shaker Museum Gifting Garden

Beginning in 2015 volunteers working in the Gifting Garden, a part of the Enfield Shaker Museum's Herb Garden, began donating produce weekly during the summer months to the Haven in Hartford, VT. In 2017 the Friends of Mascoma Foundation began their food banks in Enfield and Canaan and our Shaker Museum produce has stayed local ever since. Lana Evans from the Friends of Mascoma (right), happily accepts this week's donation of kale, bok choy, swiss chard, lettuce, broccoli, and cherry tomatoes.



Shaker Motto Cross-Stitch Kits

We are pleased to announce the availability of Shaker motto cross-stitch kits in the Museum Gift Shop. Numerous counted cross stitch charts, originally designed and sold by Shaker Workshops in the 1980s, were recently donated to the Museum. To start with we are offering seven different designs: Shaker Tree of Life, "Hands to Work, Hearts



to God," "Do All the Good," "In Loving We Shall Be Loved," 1804 Alphabet Sampler by Betsy Crozman, "Basket of Apples," and "A Good Name." Each of the kits contains a chart, floss, cloth, and needle. We look forward to having more designs in the near future.



ESM Awarded Competitive 1772 Foundation Preservation Grant

Keep your eyes on the Stone Mill—even more preservation work is on the way, thanks to a New Hampshire Preservation Alliance Grant and the 1772 Foundation! Enfield



Phase I of Stone Mill Building window restoration.

Shaker Museum is one of 13 private non-profit organizations to receive a one-to-one matching historic preservation grant of \$10,000 to continue its Stone Mill windows restoration project.

Phase I of the project, which included thirteen windows, is now complete. The work is being done by **David Lewis** of Boxwood Restoration. Phase II, supported by this grant, will restore nine windows on the third floor. Most window frames need significant sill repairs, replacement of rotted or missing muntins, and lead paint abatement. Some need to be totally replaced. One of only three Shaker-built stone structures in the state, this mill hosts educational programs and generates significant rental income for the Museum.



David Lewis returns restored sash for installation in the Stone Mill.

Enfield Shaker Museum Welcomes New Summer Staff



Lindsey Ladd of Enfield, NH, is excited to join our staff as an interpreter this summer! She participated in many museum events growing up including Harvest Festivals, Festival of Trees, and Holiday Cookie Fairs. She also enjoys exploring the hiking trails on Mount Assurance and around Smith Pond.

Lindsey is a rising junior at Bates College with the goal of becoming a social studies teacher. During the summer of 2021, Lindsey has enjoyed expanding her knowledge of Shaker history and teaching others. While at the Museum, she will explore ways to create more in-depth educational resources for visitors. In her spare time, Lindsey enjoys spending time outdoors exploring. Lindsey's position is funded through a generous grant from the Hypertherm HOPE Foundation.



Jordan Sansone hails from Norwich, VT, and is thrilled to be joining the team as Historic Garden Intern for the summer and fall. She recently graduated from Colgate University where she studied Philosophy and Asian Studies and is happy to be back home in the Upper Valley. Jordan is an avid skier and "music nerd" - though not much of a musician herself. Jordan has always been drawn to plants and nature and is excited to get her hands in the soil and gain new insight into sustainable agriculture and gardening practices. Jordan's position is funded through a generous grant from the Eastman Foundation.

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Thanks to a generous Hypertherm HOPE Foundation grant, **Morgan Smith** joined the Museum team in July as an interpreter and gift shop associate. Morgan recently graduated from Elizabethtown University in Pennsylvania, where she majored in History. She also has museum and public history experience,



having worked in several capacities at the Mount Gretna Area Historical Society, also in Pennsylvania. Morgan enjoys working in a museum environment as it provides the opportunity to share important history with the public in a creative and interactive capacity. The Enfield Shaker Museum provides the perfect chance to show visitors that the Shakers were more than just their furniture!

SAVE THE DATE - Fall Pie Sale

SWEET AND SAVORY PIES OF ALL KINDS
WHILE THEY LAST!



Saturday, October 9
11:00 AM (until we are sold out)
Come early for the best selection!



A view of Enfield Shaker Museum from Mt. Assurance taken during the 2019 Cider and Cheese Festival.

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>Executive Director Shirley Wajda</p> <p>Curator Michael O'Connor</p> <p>Development Coordinator Kathryn Jerome</p>	<p>Education Coordinator Kyle Sandler</p> <p>Garden Coordinator Diana Kimball-Anderson</p> <p>Historic Housekeeper Bonnie Lambert</p>
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2021 World Wide Knit in Public Day

The Shakers knit—and so do we! On Saturday, June 12 we welcomed fiber artists from around New England to join us in a celebration of World Wide Knit in Public Day, the largest

knitter-run event in the world. Started in 2005 Knit in Public Day is now celebrated in fifty-seven different countries.

We provided tents and chairs, Shaker rhubarb punch and cookies, hourly door prizes, stash renewal through a yarn swap, and a pop-up exhibit of Shaker spinning wheels and related fiber production tools.

We also gave participants the option of knitting washcloths for the Upper Valley Haven in White River Junction, Vermont. We provided cotton yarn and a dishcloth pattern for folks to knit. Attendees were also invited to bring a packaged bar of soap to be included with their hand-knit washcloth.

Twenty-six knitters representing New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, and Massachusetts spent Knit in Public Day enjoying beautiful summer weather, each others' company, telling knitting stories, and of course, KNITTING much needed washcloths for the Haven. We are happy to report that more than forty hand-knit washcloths and bars of soap were donated to the Haven.



Faith Alexandre (Haven volunteer) accepts washcloths from Nan Munsey.

Special thanks to **Nan Munsey**

for pulling this all together, from gathering sponsors and door prizes, and setting up tents, to making cookies, and to



Ken Munsey, Joan Holcombe, Kyle Sandler, and Carolyn Smith for setting up and taking down the tents. Thanks to **Nan Munsey** and **Joan Holcombe** for preparing the delicious rhubarb punch, and to **Happy Griffiths** for supplying the rhubarb! **Karen Wolk, Joan Holcombe, and Carolyn Smith** provided cookies. **Patty Williams** of Aker Farms donated knitting needles and patterns for the washcloths. Special thanks to **Dorr Woolen Mill, The Woolly Thistle,** and **Scratch** for donating door prizes. Thanks, too, to Curator **Michael O'Connor** for creating a pop-up exhibit of Shaker knitted goods.

Special thanks to **Shirley Wajda** (ESM's Executive Director) for alerting us to this world wide event and encouraging the staff and volunteers to make it happen. When asked about the event, she said "One thing is absolutely certain: we will be doing this again!

As I told several folks on June 12th: Enfield Shaker Museum is not a community center, with all that that term applies. But it is a center of many communities, serv-



ing as an educational bridge linking Shaker history, practices, and ideas to contemporary life. It was heartwarming to look out and see so many knitters in an ever-increasing circle, share their stories as we shared the Enfield Shakers' stories."