



PRESS CONTACT:

Michael Crotty

mcrotty@hancockshakervillage.org

817-821-4062

Hancock Shaker Village Awarded NEH Challenge Grant of \$750,000

(Hancock, MA, May 11, 2023) – The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has awarded Hancock Shaker Village an Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grant for \$750,000. This is one of the five largest grants in the 2023 [NEH funding cycle](#), which encompassed 258 recipients. The funding, and matching monies, will support the renovation of the Visitor Center/Center for Shaker Studies, providing a year-round footprint for the Village and a research hub for scholars.

With a dual goal of improving the visitor experience and protecting the Village’s world-class collection, the project will reconceive the existing building, introducing permanent collection galleries, a textile and works on paper gallery, open and vault storage, a library, new lobby, and multi-purpose spaces. It will include significant accessibility and visitor amenity improvements as well as the upgrade of all mechanical systems. “We are thrilled to announce this important award and thank NEH for its generous support. This project will transform Hancock Shaker Village into a museum-first experience. It promises to elevate our world-class collection, foregrounding the iconic designs and exacting craftsmanship of a diverse community whose astonishing ingenuity was rivaled only by its profound faith”, says Director Nathaniel Silver.

With over 33,000 objects, Hancock Shaker Village is defined by its collection. The building will introduce the history of Hancock through its objects, imparting Shaker narratives, highlighting works of artistic importance and cultural complexity, and foregrounding the hard-working community who crafted and used them. This collection-driven experience will inform the visitor’s journey prior to entering the grounds where they will be immersed in the physical context, the twenty historic buildings comprising the Village, where many of the objects functioned and were made.

“We thank NEH for this grant and look forward to fulfilling plans that will enable Hancock Shaker Village to better serve its communities”, says Board Chair Bob Plotz. Created in 1965 as an independent federal agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is one of the largest funders of humanities programs in the United States. Says NEH Chair Shelly C. Lowe, “NEH is proud to support exemplary education, preservation, media, research, and infrastructure projects that expand resources for Americans, support humanities programs and opportunities for underserved students and communities, and deepen our understanding of our history, culture, and society”.