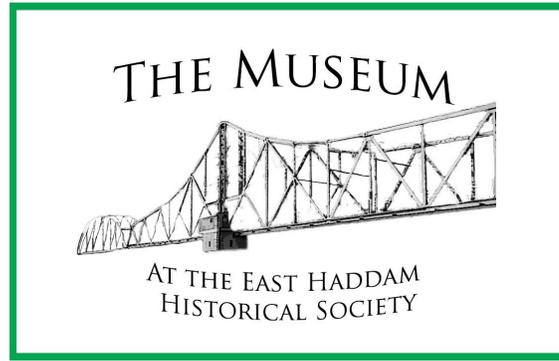




August 2022



## Welcome to the EHHS August Newsletter!



It's been a busy summer at EHHS! More than 275 visitors attended the Natural History Summer Series at the Museum and learned about owls, bears, fishers, bats, and snakes! The final session on snakes was popular with both adults and children!

The museum is open Saturday and Sunday, 12:00 - 4:00, May through October. Come visit us - we'd love to share our history and our Museum with you! Click below to learn more about EHHS.

### East Haddam Historical Society and Museum

#### President's Message

Dear Members,

The joys of summer in East Haddam enrich our lives and provide the memories that will sustain us through the time until the sun warms the land and waters again next year. One of the singular joys of Summer 2022 has been the series of Nature and Wildlife presentations at the Museum on Tuesday afternoons.

We have welcomed over 100 visitors to these free-of-charge presentations! Many thanks to our Museum Director Marianne Halpin and all the volunteers who have made this program an outstanding success. To read the full letter



from Bruce Sievers, President of the Board of Directors, [click here](#).

## 26th Annual Venture Smith Day

Join East Haddam Historical Society on *Saturday, September 10th from 1:00 - 4:00 PM* for Venture Smith Day. The program begins at his burial site at First Church Cemetery on Town Street, with displays of African-American quilts and several presenters. The festivities will then move on to the Historical Society Museum with an exhibit of the Smith family genealogy, his original 1798 narrative, refreshments, and more.



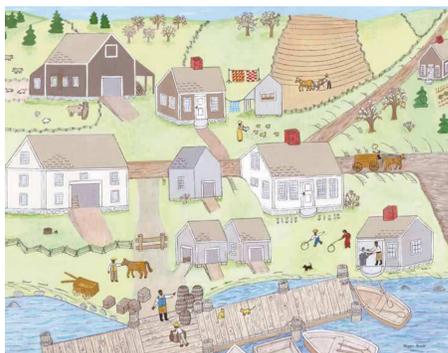
Venture's descendants will be in attendance, including speaker Amina Merritt, Esq. from Sacramento, California. Dr. Karl Stofko, East Haddam Town Historian, Thomas Thurston from Yale University, and Elizabeth Wood of the Stonington Historical Society will offer fresh perspectives on Venture's quest for freedom. Please join us for this free event!

## Venture for Freedom - Part 2



*"Being thirty-six years old, I left Col. Smith once for all. I had already been sold three different times, made considerable money with seemingly nothing to derive it from, been cheated out of a large sum of money, lost much by misfortunes, and paid an enormous sum for my freedom. "*

Venture's harrowing journey through the middle passage took him from West Africa to Barbados to Newport, Rhode Island. By Venture Smith's own words, we know that he was first enslaved to George Mumford of Fisher's Island, was sold to Thomas Stanton 2nd of Stonington, and lastly was sold to Oliver Smith of Stonington.



He suffered many setbacks, both physical and financial. Through his ingenuity, perseverance, and industrious nature, Venture eventually purchased his freedom from Oliver Smith. He sold property he had already acquired and came to East Haddam. He hired himself out to Timothy Chapman and Abel Bingham, ultimately purchasing 10 acres from Bingham on Haddam Neck. Over

acres from Bingham on Haddam Neck. Over time he purchased 134 acres there, owned 20 boats, canoes, and sailing vessels, owned commercial fisheries, and built 3 houses.

To learn more about Venture Smith's homestead on the Salmon River, [click here](#).

Come visit the new Venture Smith exhibit at the museum!

## EHHS Awarded Grant from CT Humanities

EHHS was recently awarded a \$25,000 Phase 2 planning grant from CT Humanities. The grant will ensure that EHHS can share local stories that resonate with community members, envision how the stories will be told, and work with an exhibit design firm to create new, dynamic, exhibition spaces. EHHS strives to become a cultural center for the community and display its many collection items to maximize the impact of the rich history of East Haddam. We tell your story!



## Become a Member!

Renew your membership or become a new member of EHHS!

Members enjoy free admission to our museum, monthly lectures, events or meetings, a gift of hand-drawn notecards, and the joy of knowing you are illuminating and preserving East Haddam history!

Individual memberships are \$20/year and household memberships are \$35/year. Click [here](#) to become a member or renew membership! Call 860-873-3944 with questions.



