



# connecting to place

nature . history . arts

FALL 2023

## THE NEWSLETTER OF VAUGHAN WOODS & HISTORIC HOMESTEAD



STUDY THE PAST IF YOU  
WOULD DEFINE THE  
FUTURE . . .

- ALBERT EINSTEIN

### The Next Ten Years

#### *VWHH Defines Strategic Vision & Goals*

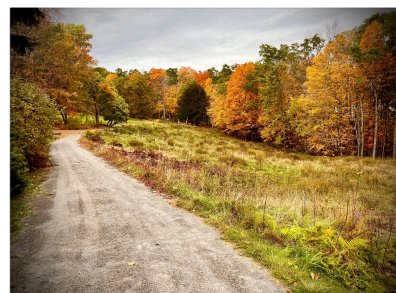
In a rapidly changing world historic sites like Vaughan Woods & Historic Homestead can provide a much needed sense of continuity and tradition for communities. At VWHH, though, we also believe that, like those who came before us, we must adapt to remain both relevant to the present and responsible toward cultural and environmental changes.

In a progressive strategic vision adopted this summer, the board and staff of VWHH set forth a series of goals that include reducing our carbon footprint and bringing forward traditionally excluded narratives (e.g. the inseparable relationships among enslavement, commerce and culture in central Maine,

including the Vaughans' involvement, and the colonization and appropriation of indigenous lands in the Kennebec Valley region). The vision also includes goals related to increasing public access to the Homestead, finding adaptive ways to care for VWHH's lands and waters amidst a changing climate, and providing programs that promote an inclusive community.

The vision states that in 2033 "Vaughan Woods & Historic Homestead is an authentic, interactive place of dynamic local and national history and spectacular natural beauty. It is a place where community members make new memories, and it brings hope to the local community, the state, and far beyond."

We hope  
you'll join  
us on the  
road  
toward  
making this  
vision  
possible!



LET US USE HISTORY TO INSPIRE US TO PUSH A COUNTRY FORWARD, TO HELP US BELIEVE THAT ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE AND TO DEMAND A COUNTRY LIVE UP TO ITS STATED IDEALS.

- LONNIE G. BUNCH, 14TH SECRETARY OF THE SMITHSONIAN

## A Difficult History

*Learning How To Tell The Story Of The Vaughan Family's Involvement In Atlantic Slavery*

Vaughan Woods & Historic Homestead joins museums and colleges from across New England to acknowledge our institution's history of involvement in Atlantic slavery.

Though enslaved people were never present at the Vaughan Homestead in Hallowell, for roughly three quarters of a century (beginning in the 1750s) Vaughan family members owned and managed enslaved labor sugar plantations in Jamaica. From key ports around the world, including Hallowell, they furthered both the family business and their own personal enterprises through trade and shipping, all dependent on the Atlantic slave economy. Their story can help us to understand and interpret the widespread role of merchants and traders from Maine and across New England in eighteenth and nineteenth century slavery.

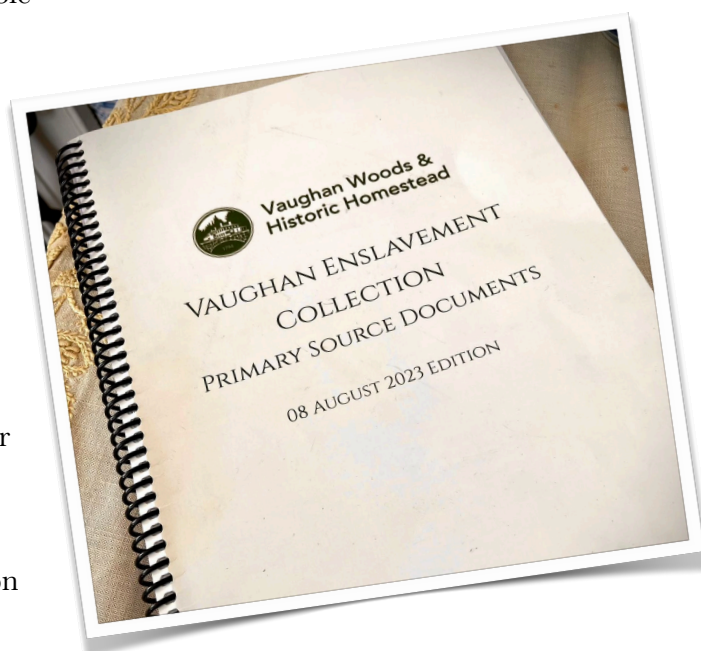
We have been working to build a collection of primary resources that will become the foundation of our efforts to tell this story and share the Vaughan family's history as both enslavers in the colonial West Indies and as merchants involved in trading Hallowell area timber and goods in ports across the Caribbean for commodities grown and produced by enslaved people.

Intern projects in 2022 and 2023 focused on this work as did the Gerald T. Mahoney

Research Fellowship project this fall. Slavery related papers from our collection, scanned and transcribed by interns Lucas Gillespie and Joey Wagner, are now available to researchers by request. Additionally, house tour visitors this summer had the opportunity to hear our early attempts to tell this story and provide feedback.

At VWHH we believe that the repercussions of slavery are still impacting our world today, and that it is our responsibility to bring this piece of our history to light. In order that we may better understand and acknowledge how this past impacts the present we are dedicated to the continued exploration and sharing of this history.

We have so much to learn. Stay tuned for more on this topic in 2024. Programs and online exhibits are coming soon.





# Annual Report - 2023

## Programs & Exhibits

- Simple Machines Field Trip, Hall-Dale 3rd Grade
- Ice Cutting Field Trip, Hall-Dale 4th Grade
- Maypole Dance Community Program
- Annual Spring Garden Party
- Summer House Tours for the Public
- Summer College Internship Program
- Fall Gerald T. Mahoney Research Fellowship
- Senior College Historic Architecture Class Visit
- Fall Community Gathering
- Food Bank "Tiny Farm" program

## Hosted Events & Community Service Groups

- Gaslight Theater Summer Performances
- Helene Farrar Art & Yoga Retreats
- Row House Annual Gala
- UMaine Augusta Freshmen Orientation Service Project
- Summit Utilities Service Day
- Hall-Dale 7th Grade Day of Caring Trail Work
- Blue Marble Geographics Service Day
- Place Justice Advisory Committee Retreat

*Continued . . .*

*Top to Bottom and Left to Right:  
Maypole Dance 2023, Art Retreat participant,  
Hall-Dale 4th Graders Ice Program - building  
bridges and cutting ice with Homestead staff,  
intern Joey Wagner delivers apples and carrots  
from the Homestead's "tiny farm" to the  
Hallowell Food Pantry, Rainy Garden Party  
"game room" in the barn!*





# Lands & Buildings Improvements

- **VWHH electricity is now provided by community solar!**
- Leveled and widened pathway to pavilion for accessibility
- Metal chimney “hats” installed for music room and grandma’s room chimneys
- Improvements made to front parlor cupboard for exhibiting and protecting collections materials
- New gray water system installed at the shop
- Driveway re-topped



# Collections Projects & Restoration

- “Furniture of Significance” Intern Research & Presentation
- Digitization of early 20th century “home videos” featuring the Homestead (soon available to watch online)
- Reupholstered original couch from music room
- “Diana of Hallowell” watercolor painting restoration
- “Two Turns Parading” color woodcut on paper restoration
- Collections database - project to add photographs to all records - ongoing!



*Top to Bottom: community solar farm, local kids play at the Homestead’s fall gathering, “Two Terns” block print recently restored, Property Manager Dan Mitchell delivers carrots, tomatoes, apples and pears to the Hallowell Food Pantry.*

Thank You 2023 Business Partners - Making our Community Programs Possible!

## Gold Level:

Kennebec Savings Bank  
Pro Moving Services  
Wipfli



## Silver Level:

Blue Marble Geographics  
Chalmer’s Insurance Group  
Gosline’s Hardware  
Kramer’s  
Longfellow’s Greenhouses  
Quality Copy

## Bronze Level:

Berry and Berry Floral  
Cribstone Capital Management  
E.D. Bessey Lumber Products  
Renaissance Gallery  
Sarah Dunkel and Associates