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MEDIA ALERT – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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London Town Awarded NEH Grant to ReInterpret William Brown House

Edgewater, Maryland - The London Town Foundation, which interprets Historic London Town and Gardens, is thrilled to be one of only 6 Maryland cultural organizations to receive a Sustaining the Humanities through the American Rescue Plan (SHARP) grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The London Town Foundation was the only organization in Anne Arundel County and one of only two organizations outside of Baltimore to receive this funding.

London Town's grant of \$49,500 will reinterpret the William Brown House, a National Historic Landmark, at Historic London Town and Gardens. Constructed around 1760 on the bluffs of the South River, the William Brown House began as a tavern before becoming Anne Arundel County's Almshouse in the 1820s. As the Almshouse, the site served local residents facing poverty and health issues. It served as the Almshouse until opening to the public as a museum and park with Anne Arundel County Recreation and Parks in 1971. Today, the William Brown House is the center of the historic area at Historic London Town and Gardens. The museum is operated by the London Town Foundation, a 501c3 nonprofit, on behalf of Anne Arundel County Recreation and Parks.

The cellar level of the William Brown House will become a commemoration to the enslaved people of London Town. Without their brutal, forced labor, the colonial port town would not have flourished. The main level will highlight different classes of colonial society with rooms dedicated to the Brown family, travelers of different socio-economic levels, indentured and convict servants, and more. One room will focus specifically on the Almshouse to delve into this crucial story.

“We are grateful to receive this grant because it will enable us to showcase the people who lived and worked at the William Brown House, from their joys to their heartbreaks, all to give visitors a rich understanding of the experience of everyday Americans spanning the past two and a half centuries,” says executive director Rod Cofield. “London Town is currently celebrating its 50th anniversary of being open to the public this year, and this grant will help us continue to serve our community for the next 50 years and beyond.”

On Monday, October 4, 2021, the National Endowment for the Humanities announced \$87.8 million in American Rescue Plan funding to nearly 300 cultural and educational institutions to help them recover from the economic impact of the pandemic, retain and rehire workers, and reopen sites, facilities, and programs. Grant awards were made in all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and Northern Mariana Islands.

NEH’s SHARP grants provide emergency relief to help offset financial losses sustained by humanities organizations over the last 18 months. They allow cultural and educational nonprofits to retain and rehire staff, maintain operations essential to their missions, and rebuild programs and projects that have been disrupted by the pandemic. The humanities activities they support include education, preservation and access, public programming, digital humanities, and scholarly research. [The full announcement from NEH is here.](#)

Other Maryland cultural organizations awarded NEH SHARP grants include St. Mary’s College, the B&O Railroad Museum, Reginald F. Lewis Museum of African American History and Culture, the Walters Art Museum, and the University of Maryland - Baltimore. [The full list of organizations awarded grants is here.](#)

About Historic London Town and Gardens

Historic London Town and Gardens is a twenty-three-acre park featuring history, archaeology, and horticulture on the South River in Edgewater, Maryland. The park is owned by Anne Arundel County and managed by the London Town Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (EIN: 52-1396159). Created in 1993, the Foundation manages the site under a formal operating agreement with the Anne Arundel County government. The Foundation is responsible for developing and conducting interpretive, recreational, and educational programs that allow visitors to learn about our historical, archaeological, and horticultural offerings. Our mission is "To inspire a deeper understanding of our region’s history, environment, culture, and arts through living history, historical artifacts, experiential public gardens, and collaborative cultural & arts programs."

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