

**TESTIMONY
OF
Steve Bromage, Executive Director
Maine Historical Society**

February 13, 2023

131th Maine Legislature

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
and the Joint Standing Committee on Education & Cultural Affairs

LD 258 "An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2023, June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025"

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, members of the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Steve Bromage, Executive Director of the Maine Historical Society. Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony to you today.

Mission and Programs

Maine Historical Society is a private 501(c)3 non-profit whose mission is to preserve and share Maine's story.

We are based in Portland, and work with communities and partners throughout the state.

This is a significant moment for MHS—in 2022, we celebrated our 200th birthday as an institution. We have marked that occasion by focusing on preparing the organization for its third century of service to Maine.

Maine Historical Society (MHS) was founded in 1822—two years after Maine became a state—and has been collecting, preserving, and promoting research, scholarship, and engagement with Maine history ever since.

Our program areas include the **Brown Research Library**, **MHS Museum**, and **Maine Memory Network**.

(1) The **Brown Research Library** includes the most comprehensive collection of archival material related to Maine history and serves researchers, scholars, educators, students, genealogists, the general public, and professionals from across many fields.

Through our research library, MHS supports extensive scholarly and collections activities—the foundation for meaningful civic dialog. MHS publishes the scholarly journal *Maine History* in partnership with the History Department at the University of Maine. We also host fellowships and scholarly forums, and have recently completed major collections care and access initiatives related to our photography, clothing, and architecture collections.

With funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, we are just completing a major initiative to digitize our Proprietors and Northeast Boundary collections which document the settlement and distribution of land throughout Maine from the 17th through 19th centuries. It was a massive undertaking, and is now fully-accessible online through the Maine Memory Network.

Major, recent collections acquisitions include the extensive archive of the Merrill Companies.

I encourage you to draw on us—our collections, knowledge, and staff are a tremendous resource for you in your work in the Legislature. MHS documents the evolution of virtually every aspect of Maine life and issue you address in your work here.

(2) The **MHS Museum** offers changing exhibitions and public programs that use Maine history to provide context for issues of contemporary interest and concern. Recent major initiatives explored immigration, veterans' issues, Maine's food heritage and economy, and Maine's evolving paper industry.

Our major Bicentennial exhibition, ***Holding Up the Sky: Wabanaki People, Culture, History & Art*** explored 13,000 years of Wabanaki stewardship of Maine and was developed with eight Wabanaki co-curators.

Our 2021 exhibition—***Begin Again: Reckoning with Intolerance in Maine***—explored how Maine fits into the national dialog on race and equity.

Our 2022 exhibition—***Northern Threads***—featured never-before-seen historic clothing from MHS' 3,000-piece collection, which we recently digitized, rehoused, and conserved with a major federal grant.

This year's major exhibition, ***Code Red***, opening in March, will explore the importance of the environment to Maine's identity and way of life, and how climate change may affect that.

Each initiative includes an exhibition, digital resources, extensive public programs delivered via Zoom, and educational resources that support remote learning. All are available online via the Maine Memory Network.

Our Museum also includes the Wadsworth-Longfellow House (1785-86), a National Historic Landmark.

(4) Finally, the **Maine Memory Network** (www.mainememory.net), our nationally-recognized digital platform, empowers Maine communities to share their collections, stories, and perspectives. Maine Memory has evolved constantly since its launch in 2001 and is a robust platform for a wide range of historical interests and activity. It includes historical items contributed by 285 partners across Maine, hundreds of digital exhibits, educational resources, *My Maine Stories*—a portal that enables individuals to share their stories, and *Maine History Online*, a sprawling introduction to Maine. The model gives status to local knowledge and expertise, and radically expands the perspectives that are included in Maine history. New material is added constantly. I encourage you to visit and explore online—no doubt you will find material from your corner of Maine.

In addition to those program areas, we partner with and provide archival, curatorial, storage, and other services to individuals, institutions, and businesses.

Public Service

Through these activities, MHS serves approximately 500,000 people each year on our campus, through outreach programs, and online.

Employees, Total Budget, and the General Fund

MHS has a staff of 18 full-time and 16 part-time employees with a current annual total budget of approximately \$2.25 million. Our budget is supported by individual philanthropy, membership, earned income, endowment, and foundation and government grants. In the proposed Biennial Budget for 2024-2025, MHS would receive \$44,864 annually from the State of Maine General Fund, or approximately 2% of our operating budget.

Funding Initiative

State funds received by Maine Historical Society support the development, maintenance, and outreach services provided through the Maine Memory Network. Annual operating costs for Maine Memory are approximately \$250,000 per year. In the current year, state funding accounts for 18% of its operations. Sustaining Maine Memory

as a free and vital public resource is one of MHS' foremost strategic priorities. The state's general fund allocation is essential to that.

Our Third Century

With that overview, I'd like to speak briefly about our strategic focus.

The MHS Board, Staff, Stakeholders, and I spent the latter part of the pandemic focused on developing a new 2022-2027 MHS Business Plan that lays the foundation for MHS' Third Century.

Our Business Plan outlines 5 critical paths and 22 initiatives that will guide us as we transform MHS from a small but mighty organization that consistently fights above its weight to one that has the capacity and resources to inspire and be a source of perspective *for all people who care about Maine*.

Specific goals include:

- To leverage MHS' significant assets to **grow audience, increase revenue, and expand financial capacity**
- To methodically and sustainably grow our annual operating budget from **\$2 million to \$3.5 million**
- To create the infrastructure needed to seamlessly serve MHS' digital and in person audiences.

Each activity is measured by Key Performance Indicators, including **Revenue, Capacity, Partnership, and Audience**.

The Plan invests in and draws on the incredible assets and expertise that MHS built over the past 200 years—the cornerstone of our mission, work, and future, and the core of what we have to offer the people of Maine.

These assets include:

- the premiere collection of historical material documenting the Maine Experience;
- deep and expansive knowledge about Maine that grows every day;
- professional staff skilled at facilitating research, telling stories, and making connections;
- landmarks including the Wadsworth-Longfellow House & Garden and Brown Research Library;
- state-of-the art collections facilities;
- the groundbreaking Maine Memory Network;
- a museum dedicated to exploring how Maine is shaped by its history; and,
- two campuses bristling with potential.

We also have one other essential asset: the unique "Maine-ness" of our mission.

The love that people across the state—and far beyond—have for Maine is a powerful force and provides a remarkable foundation and focus for MHS' work.

We have built an organization dedicated to exploring what makes Maine "Maine", and to drawing together and sharing the stories and contributions that people from every corner of the state—and from Away—make to the Maine Experience.

We look forward to sharing more about our plans and collaborating with you in the months and years ahead. We are now completing a new Audience Engagement Plan that will guide program development, and launch a new brand and institutional website this month. We will be launching expanded digital content this year, and a new membership program. There is lots going on!

Thank you so much for your interest and support. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

About Maine Historical Society

Maine Historical Society (www.mainehistory.org) is a private non-profit located on a one-acre campus in downtown Portland. MHS consists of the Brown Research Library, the Maine Memory Network, the MHS Museum, and the Wadsworth-Longfellow House & Garden. We serve a statewide audience, visitors to Maine, and people interested in Maine throughout the world.

BROWN RESEARCH LIBRARY

The Brown Research Library is the premiere resource for beginning and conducting your study of Maine history. Our staff connects researchers to collections and resources at MHS and held by organizations throughout Maine and beyond. Our comprehensive online catalog and reading room provide access to MHS's remarkable collections which cover thousands of years of Maine history. Strengths of the collections include: lithic, archaeological, and other materials that illustrate the Wabanaki experience; maps and treaties that explore European exploration, settlement, and land-use; documents that illustrate the evolution of Maine communities, regions, and industries; family, business, and institutional records; topics ranging from immigration, to religion, to social and political movements, to recreation; Maine's participation in national and international events; natural resources, maritime history, and the Maine Woods; and exceptional photography, architecture, and engineering records.

MAINE MEMORY NETWORK

The nationally-recognized Maine Memory Network (www.maine-memory.net) is a statewide digital museum that empowers communities and individuals to share their history. Since its launch in 2001, Maine Memory has evolved constantly and is now a robust online museum and platform for a wide range of historical interests and activity. MHS provides training, support, and technological infrastructure to 270+ contributing partners—museums, archives, and local historical societies, libraries and community organizations throughout Maine and beyond. Maine Memory currently offers access to more than 70,000 historical items, hundreds of online exhibits, websites built by community teams, educational resources, and much more. Maine Memory is a key platform for sharing Maine's story and a gateway for exploring Maine history.

MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM

The MHS Museum features changing exhibitions, public programs, and K-16 activities, curriculum, and programs. Exhibits and related lectures, workshops, and events explore how contemporary Maine is shaped by its history. The Museum features the voices and collections of community partners across the state, including individuals, local historical societies, and non-profit and business partners who share their knowledge, expertise, and perspectives about Maine.

WADSWORTH-LONGFELLOW HOUSE & GARDEN

MHS is the steward of the Wadsworth-Longfellow House, the boyhood home of poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow—the most famous cultural figure of the 19th century. Built in 1785 by Longfellow's grandfather, a general in the American Revolution, the house is visited by thousands of students, tourists, and Mainers every year. MHS uses the family's legacy to celebrate Maine's creativity and explore Maine's part in the American story. The colonial revival Longfellow Garden surrounds the house and Brown Library and is a quiet oasis in downtown Portland.

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A Brief History of Maine Historical Society

11,000 BC Approximate settlement of region that is now Maine by the first people of Maine, the Wabanaki.	1880	James Phinney Baxter, mayor of Portland, becomes President of MHS and launches a 30-year period of dynamic growth for the organization.	1992-1996	MHS purchases 489 Congress Street, establishes its museum and public programming space, and begins effort to engage the community more deeply.	2015-present	Strategic planning, studies, and piloting of vision and programs that will drive MHS as it enters its third century.
1785 Wadsworth-Longfellow House built by Peleg Wadsworth, Revolutionary War general and grandfather of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.	1901	Anne Longfellow Pierce, sister of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, dies and leaves the Wadsworth-Longfellow House to MHS with the agreement that MHS make its headquarters at the Congress Street location.	2001	MHS completes Centennial Restoration of the Wadsworth-Longfellow House, and prepares to welcome 21st century audiences.	2017	Solar panels installed on Riverside collections management facility, helping to reduce operating costs and contributing to MHS's sustainability.
1820 Maine separates from Massachusetts and becomes the 23rd state in the Union as part of the Missouri Compromise.	1903	The Wadsworth-Longfellow House opens to the public, one of the nation's first house museums.	2001	MHS launches the Maine Memory Network (www.mainememory.net), its statewide digital museum. Maine Memory evolves constantly and earns MHS a national reputation for innovation that continues today.	2020	Bicentennial of Maine Statehood.
1822 Maine Historical Society founded by the State's leaders, including first Governor William King, in recognition of the central role that history would play to the state's identity and vitality. MHS begins collecting materials that document all aspects of Maine's history.	1907	The MHS Research Library, located behind the Wadsworth-Longfellow House, opens.	2010	MHS completes Centennial Renovation and expansion of research library, creating a state-of-the-art research facility and collections storage space. Library is named in honor of Alida Carroll and John Marshall Brown.	2022	Bicentennial of MHS's founding.
1830s-present MHS focuses on promotion of research, scholarship, and publication. This work is the bedrock of MHS and the foundation for research and understanding of Maine today.	1927	The Longfellow Garden, a colonial revival landscape designed by Myron Lamb, opens.	2014	In another innovative collaboration, MHS establishes an off-site 18,000 square foot collections management facility with Portland Public Library. "Riverside" creates a state-of-the-art facility to process, manage, and house MHS's collection. The facility frees key spaces on our Congress St. campus.	2022-forward	Expanded audience, visibility, impact, and service to the people of Maine.
1881 After spending its first 60 years on the Bowdoin campus, MHS moves to Portland, first to the Portland Public Library in the Baxter building, then to City Hall.	1967	MHS membership opens to the general public.	1980s	MHS begins decades-long commitment to improving the care, management, and access to its collections. Effort includes providing full digital access to its catalogs and continues today. MHS is the steward of collections that represent centuries of Maine history.		



MHS FUNDAMENTALS

MHS STRATEGY

The MHS strategy articulates what we do (mission), why we exist (purpose), and what we aspire to achieve (vision).

MISSION

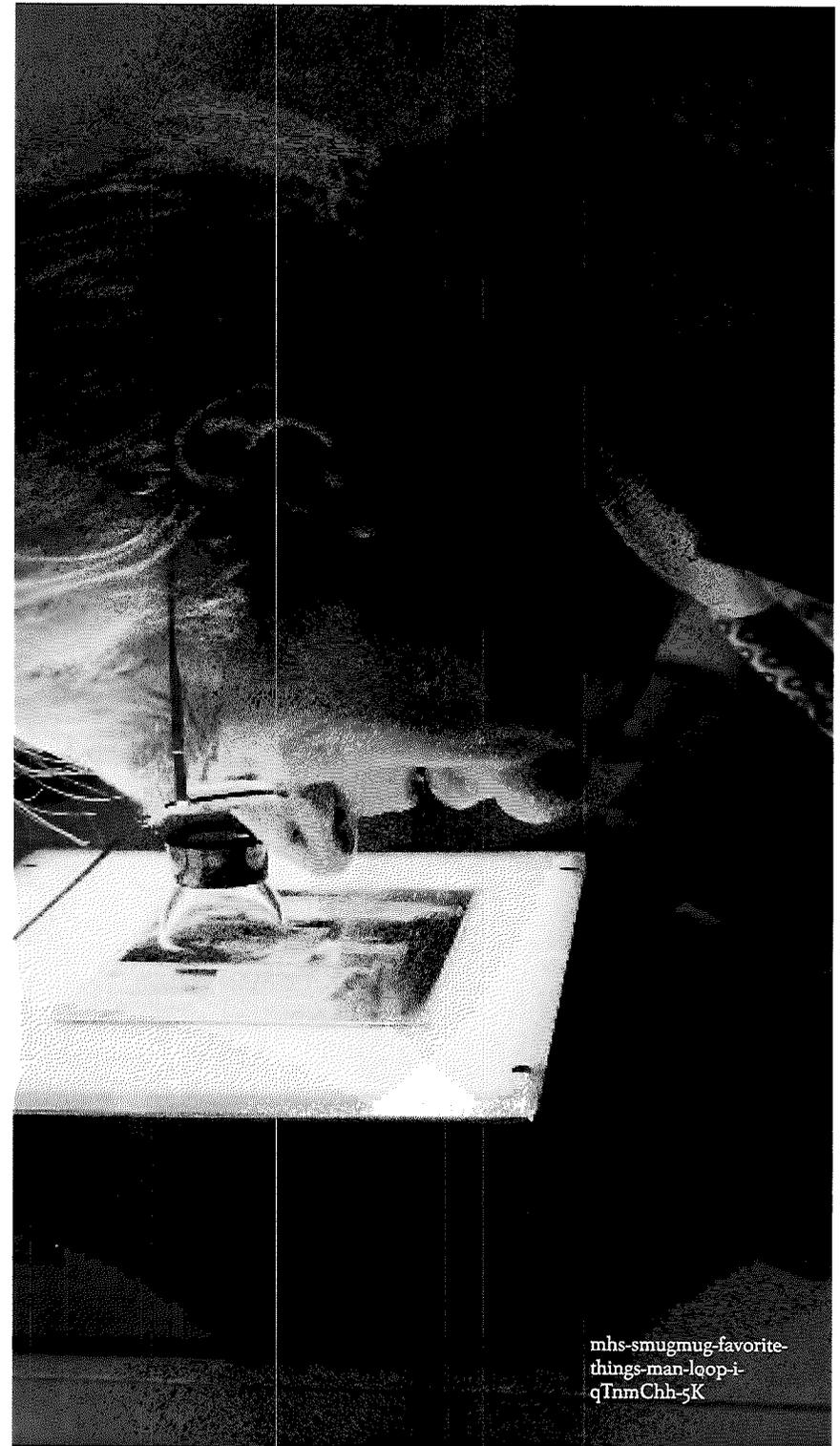
Maine Historical Society preserves and shares Maine's story.

PURPOSE

MHS enriches life in contemporary Maine by exploring the essential connections between our past, present, and future, celebrating our sense of place, and recognizing the contributions that all people make to the Maine Experience.

VISION

MHS envisions a Maine in which all people feel connected, empowered, and inspired by history, and embrace the critical role that our understanding of it plays in Maine's wellbeing and vitality.



LAUNCHING OUR THIRD CENTURY: BUILDING ON OUR UNIQUE MISSION AND ASSETS

MHS has built incredible assets and expertise over the past 200 years—the cornerstone of our mission, work, and future. MHS has vast resources to offer people who care about Maine, including:

- The premiere collection of historical material documenting the Maine Experience;
- Deep and expansive knowledge about Maine that grows everyday;
- Professional staff skilled at caring for historical material, facilitating research, telling stories, and making connections;
- Landmarks including the Wadsworth-Longfellow House & Garden and Brown Research Library;
- State-of-the art collections facilities;
- The groundbreaking Maine Memory Network;
- A museum dedicated to exploring how Maine is shaped by its history;
- Two campuses bristling with potential;
- An innovative, entrepreneurial spirit; and,
- A deep commitment to Maine’s long-term vitality.

We have one other essential asset: **the unique “Maine-ness” of our mission.**

MHS is ideally-positioned to nurture, celebrate, and strengthen the sense of connection to Maine that people feel so strongly. We have built an organization dedicated to exploring what makes Maine “Maine”, and to drawing together and sharing the stories and contributions that people from every corner of the state—and from Away—make to the Maine Experience.

MHS VALUES

MHS values are the core principles that guide the way we work.

Service

We are dedicated to sharing our knowledge, expertise, and resources. We are driven to contribute to the understanding and practice of history, and to the needs of our community.

Inclusivity

We are committed to documenting, honoring, learning from, and sharing the experiences and perspectives of all Maine people and communities.

Innovation

We are imaginative, entrepreneurial, and forward-looking. We pursue new opportunities, relationships, and ways of thinking that can enrich our work and community.

Collaboration

We strive to be a valued partner, leader, and friend—across audiences, fields, sectors, and geography.

Commitment to the Future

We provide perspective that helps Mainers understand the issues that shape their lives today, and to imagine and prepare for the future.

THE VALUE WE BRING TO MAINE

The section identifies MHS's brand messages, which communicate the organization's value proposition.

WHO WE ARE

Stewards

We play an essential role in preserving and providing access to information about Maine.

Experts

We are passionate professionals with unique skills, expertise, and knowledge about Maine.

Collaborators

We are a skilled and resourceful partner who supports and enriches the work of Maine communities, institutions, businesses, and people.

Entrepreneurs

We are imaginative and forward-looking in pursuing new opportunities, relationships, and ways of thinking that enrich its work and community.

WHAT WE DO

Preserve Maine History

We have been collecting, stewarding, and providing access to essential material about Maine for 200 years, and work continually to build the premiere collection of historical material documenting the Maine Experience.

Grow Knowledge

We foster research, scholarship, and dialog that expands knowledge and deepens understanding of Maine.

Provide Context

We provide context, information, and perspective that helps people understand the issues that shape Maine today.

Inspire Stewardship & Action

We use our unique mission and resources to highlight the role and agency of every person who is part of the Maine Experience, to encourage stewardship of Maine, and to inspire preparation for Maine's future vitality.

Bring the Maine Experiences to Life

Through our programs, resources, and services, we create opportunities for people to discover and experience Maine.

Strengthen the Maine Brand

We celebrate and enhance Maine's special sense of place by highlighting and sharing the stories of its people, places, and way of life.

Help People Preserve Their Own Part in the Maine Story

We provide programs, resources, and services that help individuals, institutions, and businesses preserve, celebrate, and share their own Maine stories.

THE VALUE WE BRING TO MAINE

HOW WE DO IT

Take the Long View

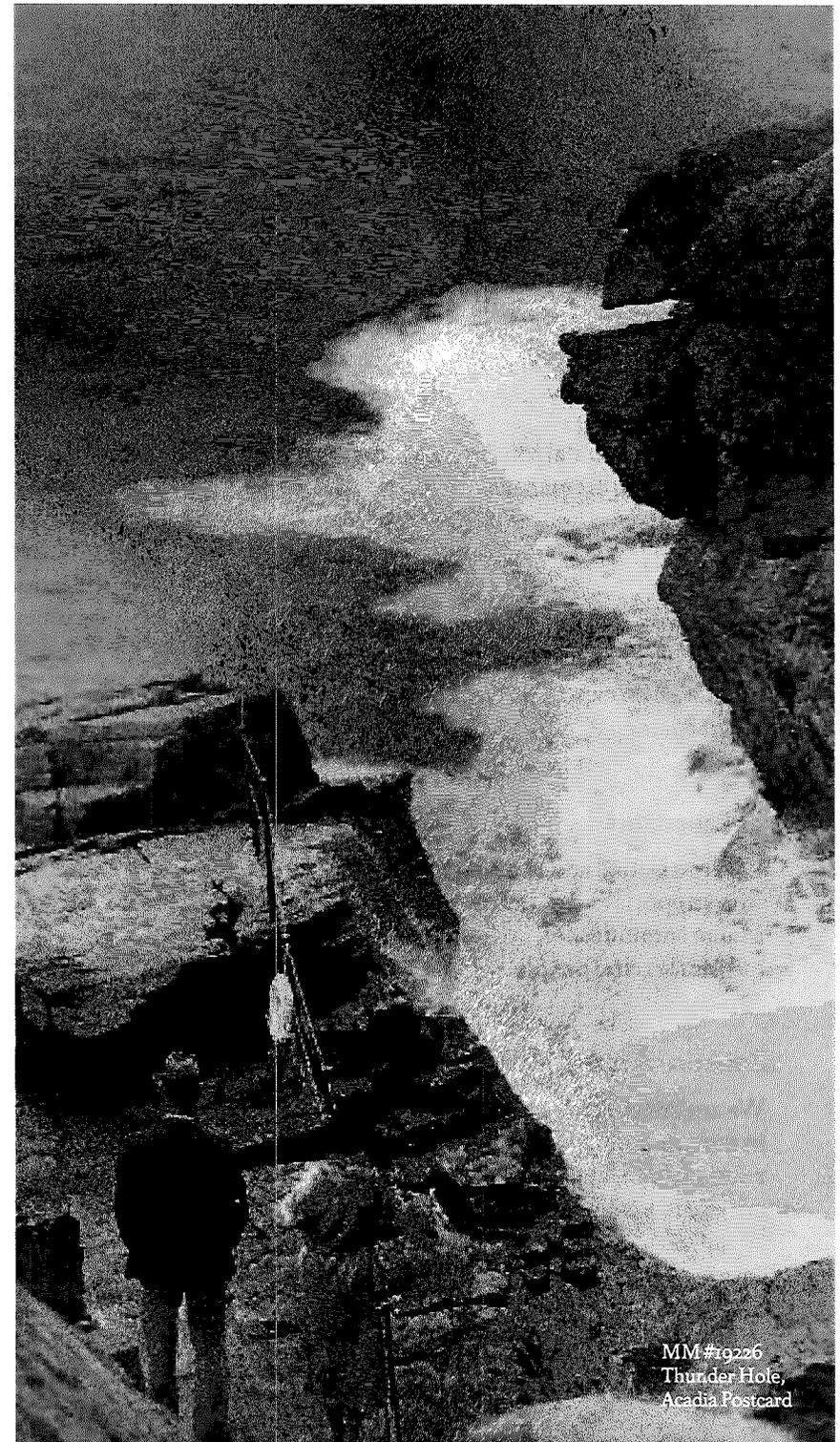
We explore the continuity between past, present, and future to help people better understand Maine today and prepare for the future.

Look at the Big Picture

We draw together knowledge, expertise, perspectives, and experiences from across Maine to explore how its diverse sectors, industries, and regions contribute to Maine's identity and well-being.

Provide a Seat at the Table

We seek to recognize and demonstrate the important role played by all people who are part of the Maine story.



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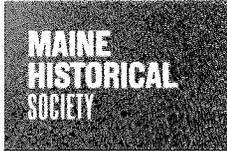
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Maine Memory Network Contributing Partners – January 2023

Abbe Museum
Abbot Historical Society
Abel J. Morneault Memorial Library
Abplanalp Library, UNE
Acadia National Park
Acadian Archives
Acton-Shapleigh Historical Society
Alexander-Crawford Historical Soc.
Alfred Historical Society
Allagash Historical Society
Ambajejus Boomhouse Museum
Androscoggin Historical Society
Aroostook Co. Hist. & Art Museum
Baldwin Historical Society
Bangor Daily News Library
Bangor Museum & Center for History
Bangor Police Museum
Bangor Public Library
Bar Harbor Fire Department
Bar Harbor Historical Society
Baxter State Park
Belfast Historical Society
Biddeford Historical Society
Biddeford Mills Museum
Blake Library Spec. Collections
Blue Hill Historical Society
Blue Hill Public Library
Boston Public Library
Bowdoin College Library
Bowdoin College Museum of Art
Brewer Public Library
Brick Store Museum
Bridgewater Historical Society
Bridgton Historical Society
Buck Memorial Library
Buckfield Historical Society
Bucksport Historical Society
Bureau of Parks and Lands
Buxton Hollis Historical Society
Byron Historical Society
Camden Public Library
Camden-Rockport Historical Society
Camp Runoia
Camp Winnebago
Caribou Fire & Ambulance Dept.
Caribou Public Library
Carmel Historical Society
Cary Library
Cary Memorial Library (Wayne)
The Cedars
Charlotte Hobbs Memorial Library
City of Brewer
City of Portland Dept. of Public Works
City of Portland – Planning & Dev.
City Point Central Railroad Museum
Clifton Historical Society
Clinton Historical Society
Colby College Special Collections
Congregation Shaarey Tphiloh
Cornish Historical Society
Craig Brook National Fish Hatchery
Cumberland Historical Society
Davistown Museum
Dedham Historical Society
Dixfield Historical Society
Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society
Durham Historical Society
Dyer Library Archives / Saco Museum
East Grand School
Easton Historical Society
Eastern Maine Medical Center
Eddington Historical Society
Edythe Dyer Community Library
Eliot Baha'i Archives
Ellsworth Historical Society
Ellsworth Public Library
Farmington Historical Society
Farmington Public Library
Fifth Maine Regiment Museum
First Parish in Portland
Fort Kent Historical Society
Fort Kent Public Library
Franco-American Collection, USM
Franco-American Heritage Center at St. Mary's
Freeport Historical Society
Friends of Wood Island Lighthouse
Friendship Historical Society
Frontier Heritage Historical Society
Friends of the Kotschmar Organ
Fryeburg Academy Archives
Fryeburg Historical Society
Fryeburg Public Library
Garland Historical Society
Gorham Historical Society
Great Cranberry Island Historical Soc.
Great Harbor Maritime Museum
Greater Portland Landmarks
Greater Rumford Area Historical Soc.
Guilford Historical Society
Hallowell Fireman's Association
Hamlin Memorial Library
Hampden Historical Society
Harmony Historical Society
Harrison Historical Society
Hartland Historical Society
Haystack Historical Society Hermon Historical Society
Hiram Historical Society
Hollingsworth Fine Arts
Hose 5 Fire Museum
Houlton Grange
Hubbard Free Library
Hudson Museum, Univ. of Maine
Island Falls Historical Society
Islesboro Historical Society
Jesup Memorial Library
John Bapst Memorial High School
Jonathan Fisher Memorial, Inc.
Kennebec Historical Society
Kennebec Valley Comm. College
Kennebunk Free Library
Kennebunkport Historical Society
Kings Landing Historical Settlement
L'Heritage Vivant Living Heritage
L.C. Bates Museum / Good Will-Hinckley Homes
L.L.Bean Corporate Archives
Lamoine Historical Society
Leeds Historical Society
Lewiston Public Library
Life Story Center
Lincoln Academy
Lincoln Historical Society
Lithgow Public Library
Lisbon Historical Society
Long Creek Youth Development Ctr
Longfellow Garden Club
Longfellow National Historic Site
Lovell Historical Society
Lubec Historical Society
Lubec Landmarks
Lubec Memorial Library
Lyman Moore Middle School
Maine Aviation Hist. Soc. & Maine Air Museum
Maine Bureau of Parks & Land
Maine Conservation Corp
Maine Central Institute
Maine Department of Transportation
Maine Folklife Center, UMO
Maine Forest Service
Maine Granite Industry Historical Soc.
Maine Historical Society
Maine Historic Preservation Comm.
Maine Irish Heritage Center
Maine Maritime Museum
Maine Medical Center Archives
Maine State Archives

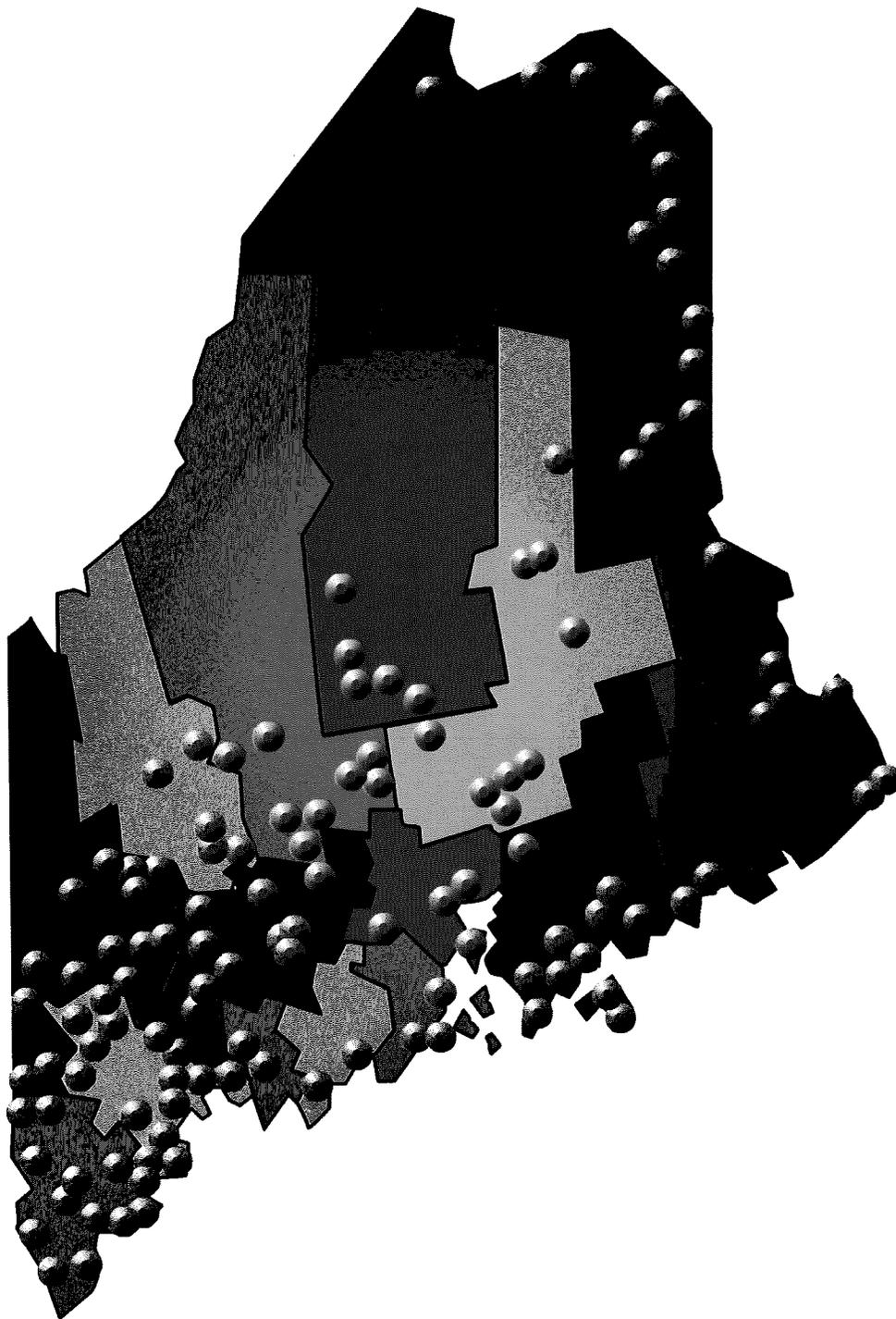
Maine State Library
Maine State Museum
Maine's Paper & Heritage Museum
Maine Today Media
Mantor Library at UMF
Margaret Chase Smith Library
Mark & Emily Turner Library
McArthur Public Library
Mechanics' Hall
Mercy Hospital
Mexico Historical Society
Milbridge Historical Society
Millinocket Fire Department
Milo Historical Society
Minot Historical Society
Monhegan Museum
Monmouth Museum
Monson Historical Society
Montpelier, The General Henry Knox
Museum
Moosehead Historical Society
Moosehead Messenger
Mt. Desert Island Historical Society
Mt. Desert Island Hospital
Museum at Portland Head
Museums of Old York
Muskie Archives & Special Coll. Lib.
Naples Historical Society
National Archives at Boston
New Gloucester Historical Society
New Hampshire Historical Society
New Portland Historical Society
New Sharon Historical Society
New Sweden Historical Society
Norcross Heritage Trust
Nordica Memorial Association
Norridgewock Historical Society
North Yarmouth Historical Society
Northeast Harbor Library
Northeast Historic Film
Northern Maine Museum of Science
Norway Historical Society
Norway Memorial Library
Nylander Museum
Oakfield Grange #414
Oakfield Historical Society
Old Berwick Historical Society
Old Canada Road Historical Society
Old Orchard Beach Historical Society

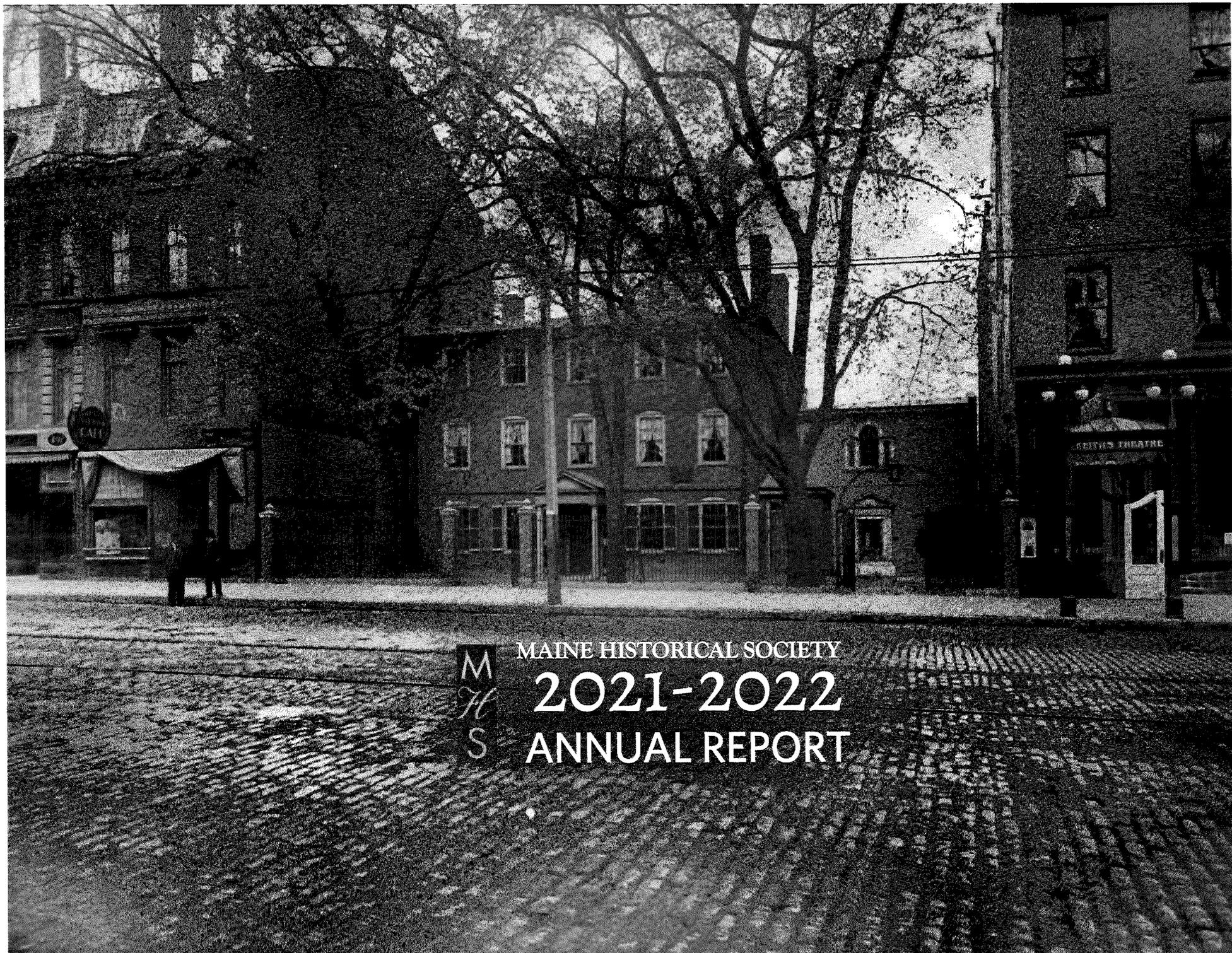
Old York Historical Society
Osher Map Library, USM
Otisfield Historical Society
Owls Head Transportation Museum
Palmyra Historical Society
Paris Cape Historical Society
Paris Hill Historical Society
Parsons Memorial Library
Parsonsfield-Porter Historical Society
Patten Free Library
Patten Historical Society
Patten Lumbermen's Museum
Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum
Pejepscot Historical Society
Penobscot Marine Museum
Peru Historical Society
Phillips Historical Society
Phippsburg Historical Society
Pittsfield Historical Society
Poland Spring Preservation Society
Porter Memorial Library
Portland Harbor Museum
Portland Public Library
Portland Water District
Pownal Scenic and Historical Society
Presque Isle Air Museum
Presque Isle Fire Department
Presque Isle Historical Society
Prince Memorial Library
Princeton Public Library
Raymond H. Fogler Library
Robert A. Frost Memorial Library
Rockland Historical Society
Rumford Historical Society
Saco Museum
Salmon Brook Historical Society
Sanford Historical Committee
Scarborough Historical Society
Seal Cove Auto Museum
Seashore Trolley Museum
Sebago Historical Society
Sedgwick-Brooklin Historical Society
Ski Museum of Maine
Skowhegan History House
Skowhegan Public Library
Skyline Farm
South Bristol Historical Society
South Portland Historical Society
South Portland Public Library

Southern Aroostook Agricultural Mus.
Southwest Harbor Historical Society
Southwest Harbor Public Library
St. Albans Historical Society
St. Croix Historical Society
St. Joseph Healthcare
Stanley Museum
Ste. Agathe Historical Society
Steep Falls Library
Stetson Historical Society
Steuben Historical Society
Stockholm Historical Society
Strong Historical Society
Sullivan and Sorrento Historical Soc.
Surry Historical Society
Swan's Island Educational Society
Tate House
Telephone Museum
Thomaston Historical Society
Topsham Historical Society
Town of Cumberland
Trenton Historical Society
Trescott Historical Society
Turner Historical Society
United Society of Shakers
University of Maine at PI Library
Vaughan Homestead Foundation
Waldoboro Fire Department
Walker Memorial Library
Warren Memorial Library
Washburn Memorial Library
Washburn Norlands Living History Ctr
Waterford Historical Society
Waterville Public Library
Westbrook Historical Society
Westport Island History Committee
West Quoddy Head Light Keepers
Association
Western Maine Cultural Alliance
Whitefield Historical Society
William Fogg Library
Wilson Museum
Windham Historical Society
Winslow Historical Preservation
Committee
Winter Harbor Historical Society
Yarmouth Historical Society

*68 individual contributors of items
and hundreds of My Maine Story
contributions

Map showing geographic representation of Maine Memory Network Contributors





M
H
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MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2021-2022

ANNUAL REPORT

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CELEBRATING
200
MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Connect with us online at: mainehistory.org

Follow us!



Front cover:
Wadsworth-Longfellow House campus, 1908, MMN #11711.



A contemporary view of Maine Historical Society headquarters on Congress Street in Portland overlaid upon a 1920 photograph.

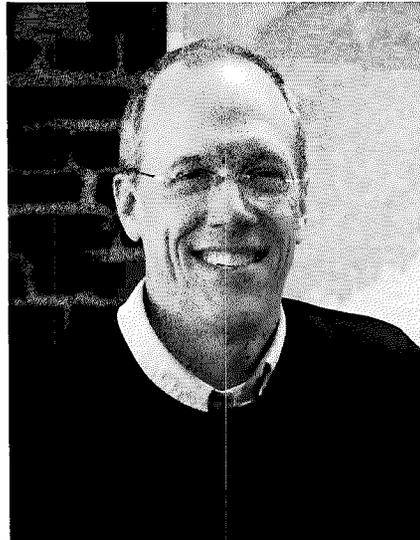
MHS Celebrates 200

This year MHS commemorates a remarkable achievement that very few entities get to experience—the 200th birthday of a living, breathing, thriving organization. MHS has made it to this point through the vision, hard work, stewardship, and generosity of generation after generation of committed people—people like you. We have made it to this point because MHS has managed to evolve, adapt, and look ahead. And I am sure that we have had plenty of good luck along the way.

As part of this special year, we're pleased to share an update on our progress and impact in the 2022 fiscal year, including activity from July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022.

MHS navigated the constant changes of a post-pandemic world in 2021-22, and engaged in meaningful work that both celebrated MHS' past and set the stage for our future.

Launching in February, our 200th anniversary has featured exhibits, public programs, and communications focused on MHS' history, evolution, and unique role in our state's development and cultural landscape. Our in-person *Northern Threads: Two Centuries of Dress* exhibition initiative and Maine History Maker fundraising event surpassed attendance records and helped MHS reach new audiences. Staff continued work to preserve and share Maine's story through



Steve Bromage, Executive Director

collections care and digitization initiatives and celebrated another organizational accomplishment: the 20th anniversary of Maine's statewide digital history platform, Maine Memory Network.

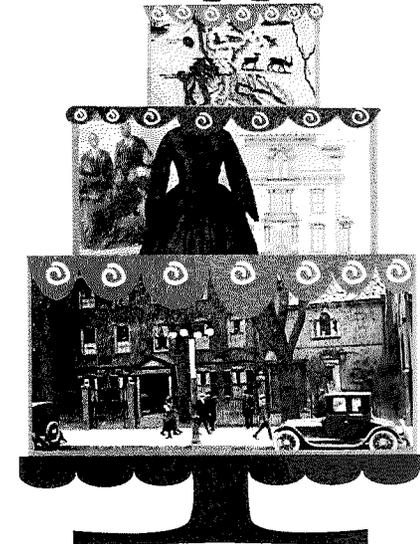
At the same time, MHS Board and staff worked diligently to lay the groundwork for MHS' Third Century. In June, the Board of Trustees adopted a new 2022-2027 Business Plan designed to transform MHS from a small yet mighty organization that consistently fights above its weight class, to one that has the



Eileen Skinner, Board Chair

capacity, resources, and presence to be a source of connection, inspiration, and perspective to all people who care about Maine.

As part of this multi-year effort, MHS began work with a national consultant to develop an Audience Engagement Plan that will guide our efforts; rebrand MHS to reflect the innovative, contemporary Maine organization we have become; and develop a new institutional website which will launch in early winter. We'll be sharing much more in the coming months.

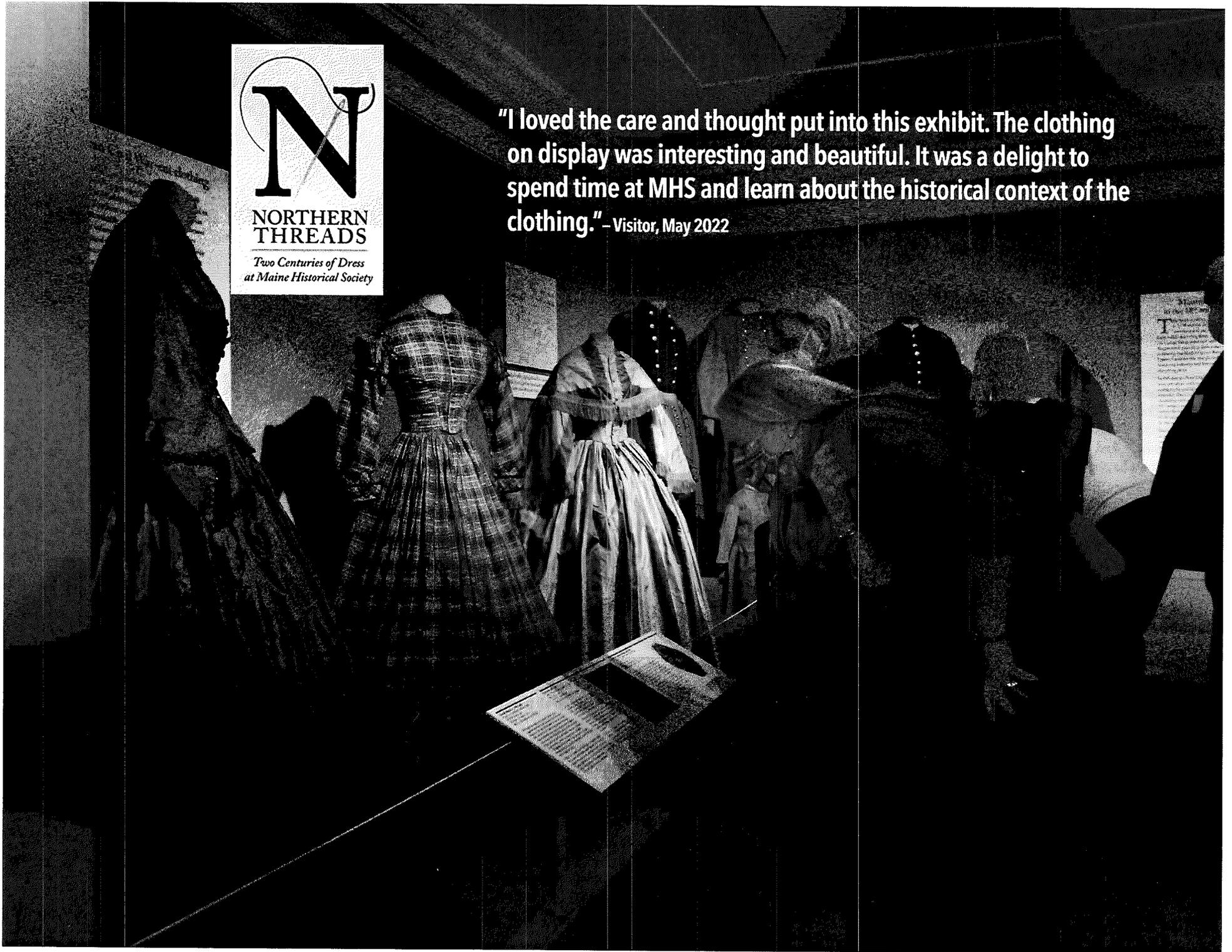


Our members and donors helped MHS achieve another year of increased fundraising performance and make this momentum possible. We're inspired by their engagement, values, and generosity, and look forward to working together to deepen our impact in the years to come.

— Steve Bromage and Eileen Skinner



"I loved the care and thought put into this exhibit. The clothing on display was interesting and beautiful. It was a delight to spend time at MHS and learn about the historical context of the clothing." – Visitor, May 2022



Exhibitions

2021-22 was a banner year for MHS exhibitions, with the re-introduction of active in-person visitation of our Wadsworth-Longfellow House and Museum Galleries and corresponding online offerings.

Begin Again: reckoning with intolerance in Maine

Last year's signature exhibition invited community reflection and dialogue on issues of historical inequity and racism in Maine. The exhibit was later awarded an American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) Award of Excellence, the most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation of state and local history.

Northern Threads: Two Centuries of Dress at Maine Historical Society

Our current, two-part exhibition opened in March 2022 and features never-before-seen historic clothing from MHS' 3,000-piece collection. Themed vignettes from Part One (1780-1889) examined Maine's role as a bustling seaport and how people accessed fashion, with Part Two (1890-1980) continuing conversations about clothing's impact on the environment, community, and cultural norms.

The Advent of Green Acre, A Bahá'í Center of Learning

Influenced by Abdu'l-Bahá, Sarah Jane Farmer established the Green Acre conferences in Eliot, Maine in 1894. The exhibition explored concepts of world peace, religious freedom, health, and social justice.

Passing the Time: Artwork by World War II German Prisoners of War in Aroostook County

A fascinating look at artwork created by German POWs at Camp Houlton in the 1940s from the collections of the Aroostook County Historical & Art Museum.

Sagadahoc County through the Eastern Eye: Selections from the Penobscot Marine Museum

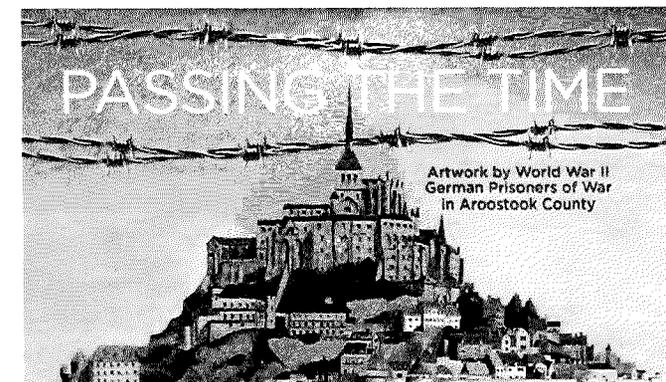
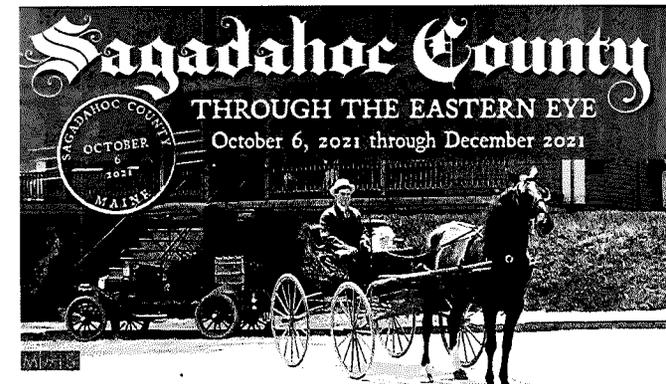
An exhibit of early 20th century postcard photographs by the Eastern Illustrating and Publishing Company of Belfast, Maine from the collections of Penobscot Marine Museum.

Maine Historical Society in Pictures: Exploring our First 200 years

A unique complication of images of MHS' five historic locations, along with leaders who steered our organization through pivotal times.

Representing every particular: John Martin's 19th century fashion illustrations

Bangor shopkeeper John Martin's journal illustrations and comments were paired with images of clothing from MHS' collections, to reflect how art imitates life.





"A knowledge of history is not just helpful, but essential to manage the complicated social and economic relationships among human beings and between the nations those human beings govern." —Harold Pachios, award acceptance remarks

Maine History Maker reception, University of Southern Maine

Maine History Maker

In May, MHS honored civic leaders Severin Beliveau and Harold Pachios at our annual Maine History Maker celebration at the University of Southern Maine. The event raised \$120,000 and attracted 250 guests, making it MHS' most successful History Maker to date.

Severin and Harold grew up in strong Franco and Greek Maine families at a time when discrimination against immigrants, Catholics, and other ethnic groups was rampant. Over their careers, their hard work and personal examples helped open doors to civic participation in Maine by immigrants and other communities who didn't previously have a seat at the table.

Our special evening included digital storytelling celebrating the honorees' Maine roots, establishment of Preti, Flaherty, Beliveau & Pachios, and advocacy for Mainers in politics. Guests enjoyed live entertainment, remarks, and a panel discussion featuring an emerging generation of new Mainers who follow in their footsteps.

The professional digital package of the live program, pre-recorded videos, and interviews are available for purchase at mainehistorymaker.org.



Clockwise L-R: Honorees Beliveau, Pachios, and family members; New Mainers Panel featuring PDG Muhamiriza, Marpheen Chann, and Cesarie Nindorera; Severin Beliveau and family; Harold Pachios and family

31 virtual programs. 3,030 attendees.



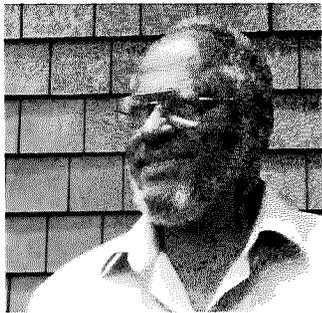
"Online programming has made it possible to broaden our perspective and engage with a diverse selection of contributors sharing expertise on social issues, legal history, and artistic expression from not only Maine but from all parts of New England and beyond."

-Kathleen Neumann, MHS Curator of Education & Public Programs

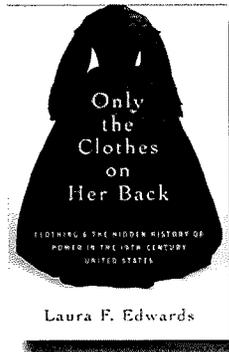
History Online

MHS engaged audiences in a wide range of Maine topics with an active schedule of free, online programming in 2021-22.

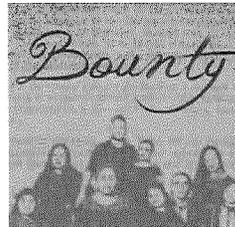
Our programming featured three series: Begin Again, MHS Celebrating 200 Years, and Northern Threads.



June 22, 2021
Black Politics in Portland
A talk with Bob Greene



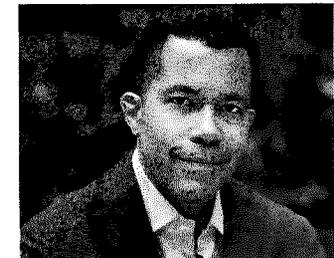
Sept. 16, 2021
Only the clothes on her back
Talk with Laura F. Edwards



Nov. 10, 2021
Bounty
A film screening with the
Upstander Project.



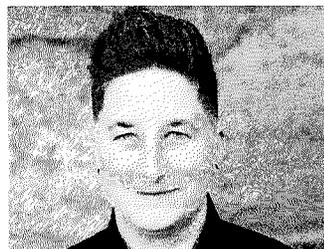
Feb. 2, 2022
Faces of Statehood:
Photographs in the Maine
Historical Society Collections
A Talk with Earle Shettleworth, Jr.



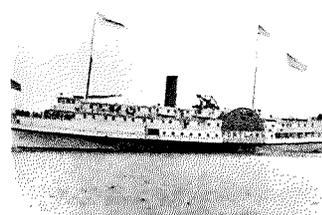
Apr. 13, 2022
Dress Codes: How the Laws
of Fashion Made History
Book Talk with
Richard Thompson Ford



Aug. 19, 2021
The Know-Nothings Menace:
When Hate, Fear, and Prejudice
Ruled Maine and America
A Talk with Matt Barker



Oct. 21, 2021
Trans & Nonbinary Adventures
in 19th century New England
A Talk with Jen Manion

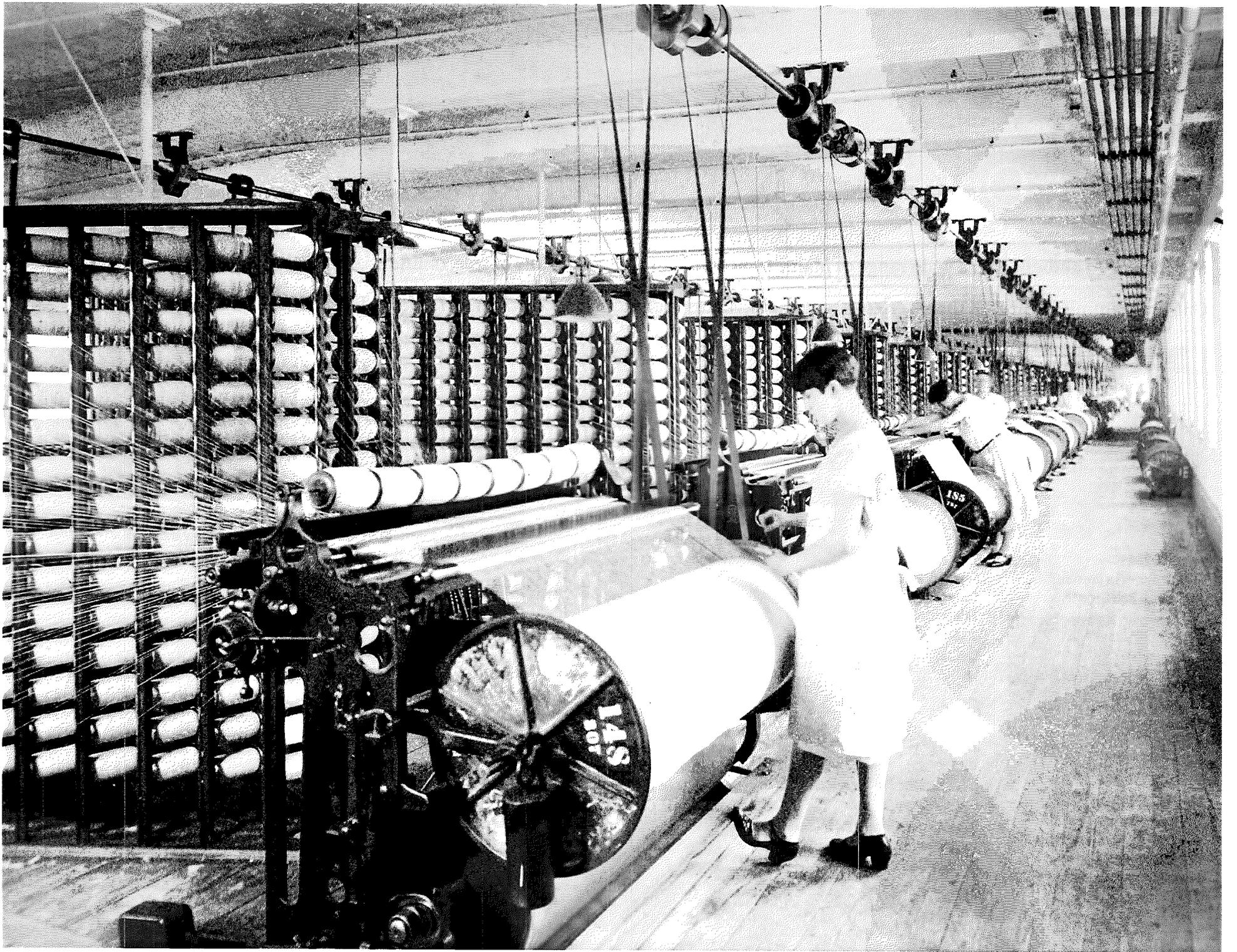


Nov. 17, 2021
The Wreck of the Steamship
Portland: Rediscovering the
Titanic of New England
A Talk with Dr. Calvin Mires



Mar. 22, 2022
Unpacking the Past: Fashions
from the Maine Historical
Society Collection
A Talk with Jackie Field

Watch all past programs on-demand at
mainehistory.org/onlineprograms



Maine Memory Network at 20

In late 2021, MHS celebrated the 20th anniversary of Maine Memory Network (MMN). MHS' statewide digital platform, MMN brings to life thousands of artifacts, photographs, and exhibits from hundreds of contributing libraries, historical organizations, and individuals across the state. With increasing annual usage, it continues to connect a wide variety of audiences to Maine people, places, and stories in unexpected ways. Showcasing our region's diverse history, MMN reminds us that every Mainer's story matters.

Since its early days, Maine Memory Network has connected more than 4 million people to Maine history with 25 million page views.

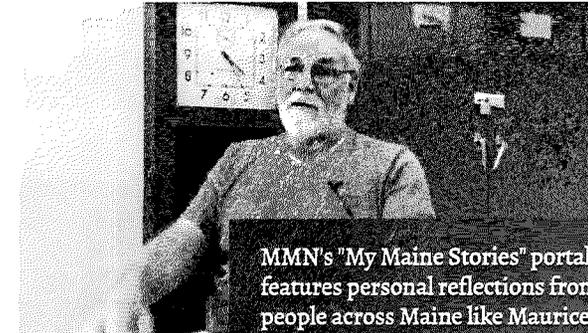
Left: High speed warping at Pepperell Mills, Biddeford, ca. 1925, *Collections of McArthur Public Library*, MMN # 29106

Right: Black evening dress line sheet, Paris, ca. 1931, *MHS Collections*, MMN #111081.

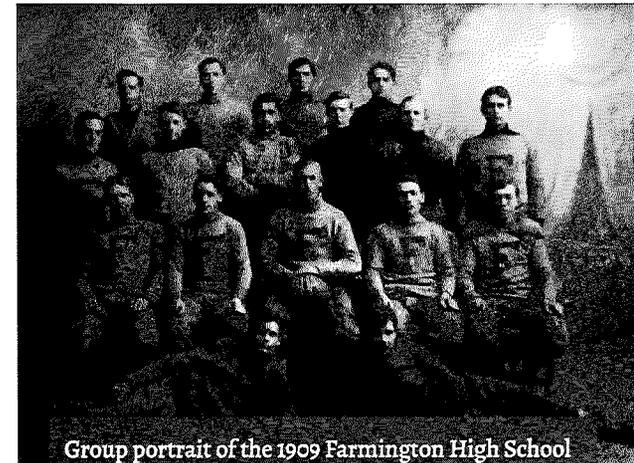
Far Right: Farmington High School Football Team, 1909, *Farmington Historical Society*, MMN #27452



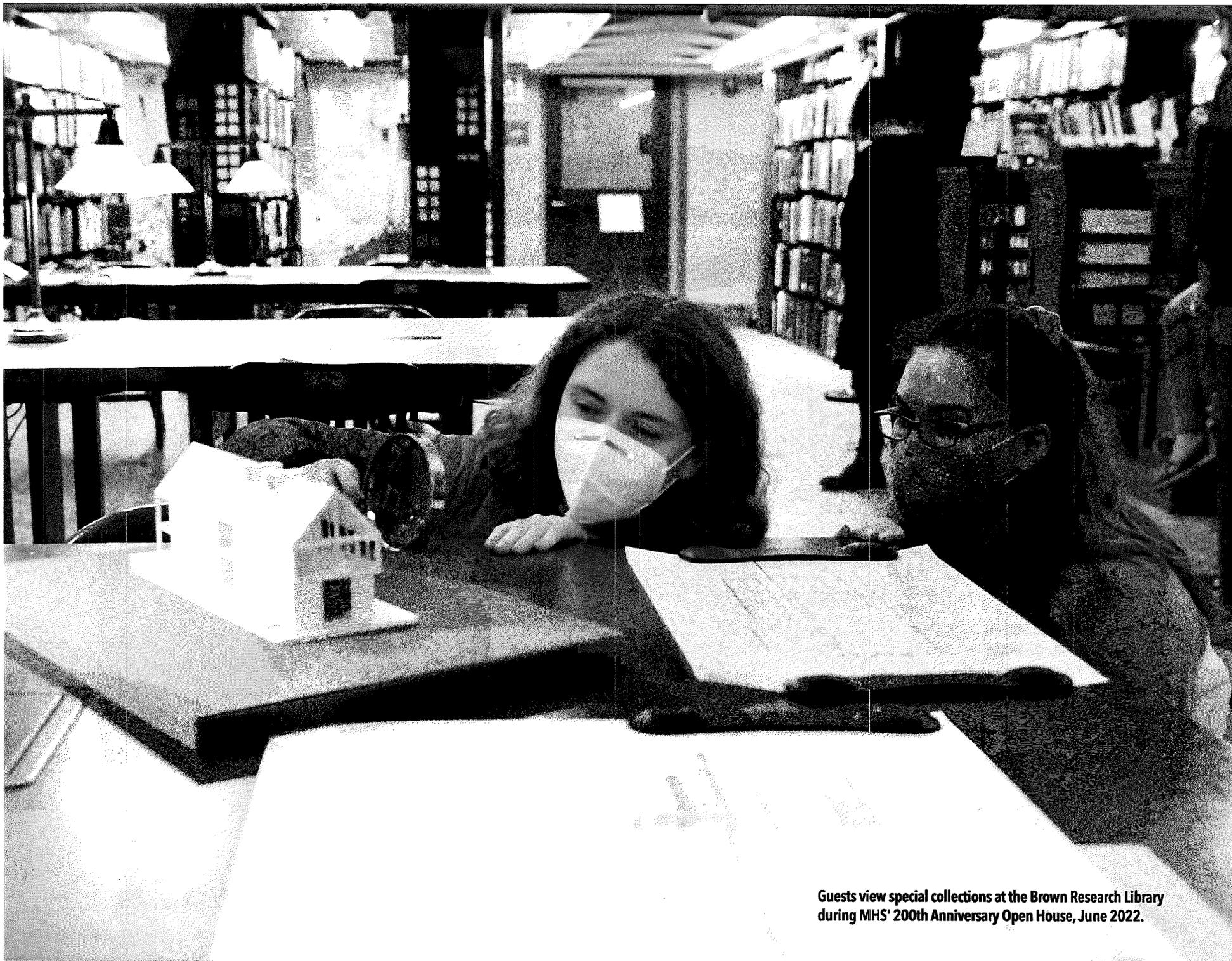
Digitization of Mildred Burrage's Parisian line drawings on MMN inspired MHS' current exhibit, "The Cosmopolitan Stylings of Mildred and Madeleine Burrage."



MMN's "My Maine Stories" portal features personal reflections from people across Maine like Maurice Paquette, who recorded memories of growing up in Biddeford and working at Pepperell Mills.



Group portrait of the 1909 Farmington High School football team contributed by the Farmington Historical Society. MMN contains tens of thousands of items from over 300 contributing partners.



Guests view special collections at the Brown Research Library during MHS' 200th Anniversary Open House, June 2022.

Library and Collections

Supporting the evolving needs of scholars, researchers, and the public, Library and Collections initiatives continued at a rigorous pace, including 102 new items added to the permanent collection. Activity highlights include:

Maine Architecture and Landscape Design Database

MHS completed the first phase of a major digitization project to provide public access to thousands of historic Maine architectural and landscape design commissions. New acquisitions include Maine architect Carol Wilson, and renowned landscape architect and historian Patrick Chassé. The project was made possible with lead support from the Leon Levy Foundation and Maine Olmsted Alliance, and generous corporate sponsorships. Learn more at architecture.mainememory.net.

North Map

MHS sent one of its most significant cartographic collections to the Northeast Document Conservation Center in Massachusetts for conservation. Named after its lead surveyor, John North, the North Map is nearly nine feet long and four feet wide and contains the names of individual settler-colonialists, land holders, and place names written by hand. View the map at "Plan of a tract of land lying 15 English miles on each side of Kennebeck River," 1751 on Maine Memory Network (MMN #110867.)



Livesay Collection

A complement to his premier Early Maine Imprint Collection donated in 2011, former MHS Board chair Chris Livesay transferred a significant amount of printed materials and manuscript from the Colonial era through statehood, including early newspapers, books, and ephemera. A notable example includes a request for returned personal property after the Burning Falmouth in 1775.

Penobscot Chief's Collar and Cuffs

The Penobscot Nation Museum, with additional resources from MHS and the Maine State Museum, purchased an exquisite Penobscot Chief's hand-sewn beaded collar and cuffs, which had been in private collections for more than 100 years. The partnership is an example of decolonization in practice—and appropriately so, knowing Penobscot peoples regard a Chief's collar and cuff as infused with power to inspire collaboration and trust.

Collections staff celebrate the happy return of the North Map to the MHS Riverside Collections Management Center.

Maine History Journal

Maine History, Maine's premier peer-reviewed publication devoted to scholarship on the history of our state is published in partnership with the University of Maine's Department of History. Provided to all MHS members, *Maine History* back issues are also on UMaine's Digital Commons. So far, it has been downloaded 44,159 times from 1,691 institutions in 166 countries.



Penobscot Chief's Collar and Cuffs, Collections of the Penobscot Nation Museum.



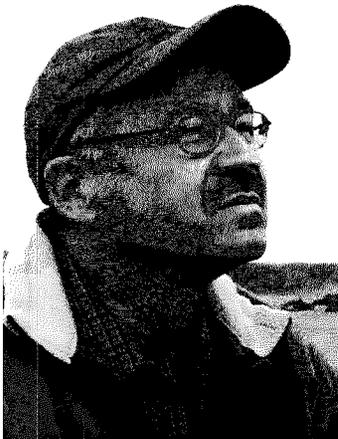
Awards

MHS was pleased to present awards to the following individuals at its 2022 Annual Meeting in June.

**Neal W. Allen, Jr. History Award:
DONALD SOCTOMAH**

In recognition of outstanding contributions to the field of Maine History

Donald Soctomah (Passamaquoddy) serves as the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Passamaquoddy Tribe. A historian, educator, author, film maker, civic leader, and long-time MHS collaborator, Donald is renowned for his contributions to Maine history.



**James Phinney Baxter Award:
DR. CATHERINE M. BURNS**

In recognition of the best article published in Maine History this year

Catherine Burns is a historian specializing in U.S. History. Katie's *Maine History* article, "It May Be Questionable: Granger v. Avery and the Redaction of Article X, Section 5 from the Maine Constitution," explores the 1876 redaction of Maine's obligations to Wabanaki communities from the state's constitution.



**Elizabeth Ring Service Award:
VIVIAN CUNNINGHAM**

In recognition of unselfish dedication and service to the Society

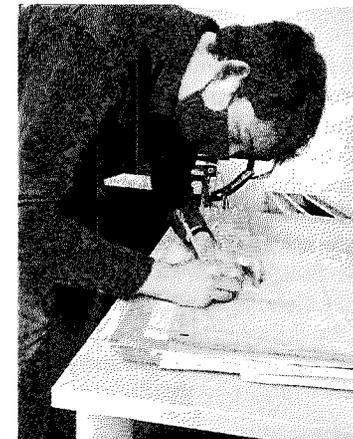
Vivian Cunningham is a Maine College of Art & Design student in the fashion program, who came to MHS in 2021 as MHS' historic clothing intern for the two-part exhibition *Northern Threads*. Vivian hand crafted dozens of custom mannequins, repaired clothing, and supported exhibit preparations.



**Elizabeth Ring Service Award:
CHRISTIAN LAMONTAGNE**

In recognition of unselfish dedication and service to the Society

Christian LaMontagne worked as an intern on the Architecture and Landscape Design Project. A recent graduate from Bowdoin College, Christian is a year-round Long Island resident and licensed lobsterman. His appreciation for architectural nomenclature helped MHS add nearly 500 Coombs Firm drawings to Maine Memory Network.



Board & Staff

STAFF

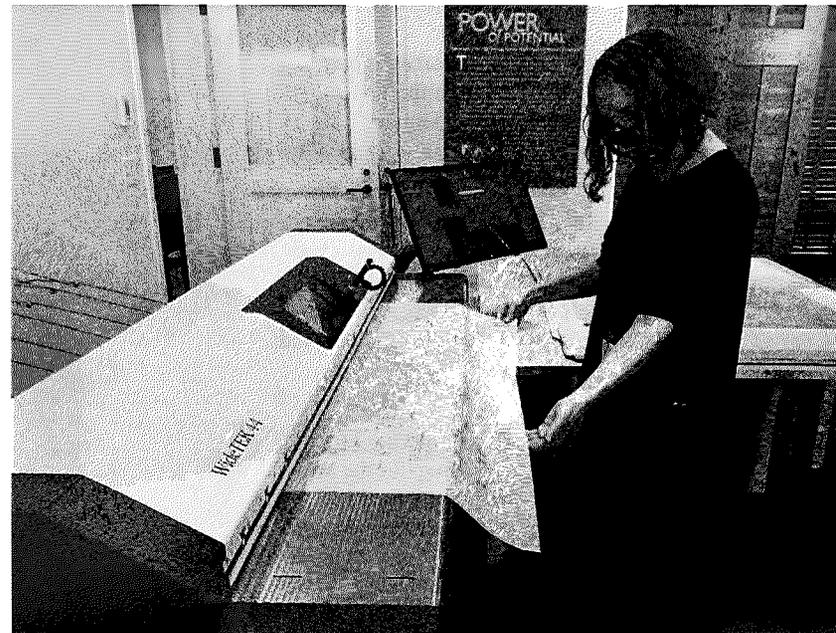
Kathy Amoroso, *Manager of Information Technology*
John Babin, *Visitor Services Manager*
Bill Barry, *Project Historian*
Mia Becze, *Membership & Events Specialist*
Steve Bromage, *Executive Director*
Henry Caiazzo, *Digital & Project Archivist*
Brittany Cook, *Reference Assistant*
Patricia Cousins, *Graphic Designer*
Gail Dodge, *Curatorial Assistant & Digital Technician*
Steve Landry, *Facilities Manager*
Tilly Laskey, *Curator*
Tiffany Link, *Research & Manuscript Librarian*
Joyce Mongeau, *Museum Store Buyer & Visitor Services Associate*
Cindy Murphy, *Office Manager*
Kathleen Neumann, *Curator of Education & Public Programs*
Nancy Noble, *Archivist & Cataloger*
Nicholas Noyes, *Librarian Emeritus*
Jennifer Polisner, *Advancement Operations Specialist*
Jamie Rice, *Deputy Director*
Joanna Satalof, *Digital & Metadata Archivist*
Andrew Smaha, *Chief Financial Officer*
Christina Traister, *Director of Institutional Advancement*
Elaine Tselikis, *Communications & Grants Manager*
Isabel Turk, *Library Assistant*
Sofia Yalouris, *Image Services Coordinator & Collections Technician*
Abby Zoldowski, *Collections Manager & Registrar*

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Tyler Judkins
Robert Peacock
Thomas Platz
Tobey Scott
Stephen Sears
Natalie Solotoff
Andres Verzosa
Lee Webb
Timothy Woodcock

Sofia Yalouris digitizing architectural drawings



Financials

The FY22 budget, ending June 30, 2022, focused on maintaining existing staff resources and matching programmatic output despite the natural conclusion of temporarily restricted grants and public program stresses caused by the pandemic. The balanced budget reflected a stay-the-course approach from the previous year and was supported by \$217,000 in PPP pandemic funding.

We are pleased to report that MHS outpaced its financial goals. Revenue exceeded budget due to strong performance in fundraising, Image Sales, Museum Admissions, and the Maine History Maker event. MHS was also the recipient of a large, unrestricted bequest. Total revenues were \$2,543,585, up 43.5% from the previous year. Subtracting the bequest, operating revenue was up 13.4%.

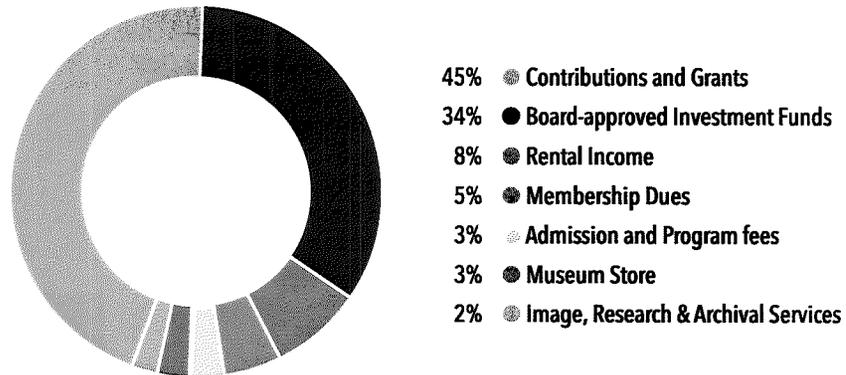
With market ebbs and flows and many global forces in play, the MHS Finance & Investment Committee monitored endowment portfolio performance closely. Like most organizations, our total endowment took a hit in FY22, ending down in value by 16.5%.

Meanwhile, MHS successfully launched its 200th anniversary year without deferring any planned projects. The staff worked hard to continually track, communicate, and adjust projections and spending throughout the year. Total operating expenses were \$2,087,229, inclusive of special project expenses approved mid-year.

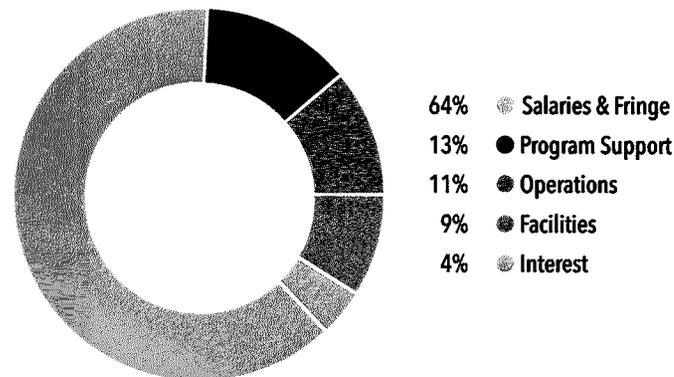
In addition, MHS commissioned a Business Planning Committee to methodically research new and existing growth opportunities and create an operational roadmap for the next five years. The resulting, Board-approved 2022-27 Business Plan will ensure MHS has the institutional and programmatic capacity to thrive in its third century.

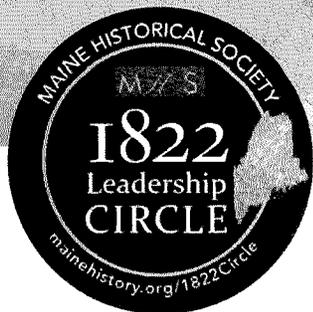
Andrew Smaha, Chief Financial Officer

FY 21-22 TOTAL INCOME \$2,543,585



FY 21-22 TOTAL EXPENSES \$2,087,229





1822 LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

MHS is deeply grateful to the following 1822 Leadership Circle members and donors of \$1,000 or more for their generous support between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.

PLEASE NOTE

* Every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of the annual report. We would appreciate notification of any errors or omissions to correct our records. If you'd like us to make changes for future reports, please contact mbezce@mainehistory.org.

Patron (\$10,000 or more annually)

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 William Sloane Jelin Foundation

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Adam Zimbalist

Memorials

In Memory of Nancy F. Adams
John and Ann Adams
Sarah J. Adams
Laura Brewer
Teresa Myrwang
Charles Perkins
Virginia Danielson and Jim Toth

In Memory of Warren Baldwin
Deborah Weare
and John M. Slavin

In Memory of Eric S. Baxter
Gay Fawcett

In Memory of Elbridge William Boyle, Sr.
Deborah Weare
and John M. Slavin

In Memory of Owen Chester Edgerly
Linda Edgerly

In Memory of Alice Hawes
Robert O. Hawes

In Memory of Ethel May Farwell Irish
and Leo Judson Irish
Deborah Weare Slavin
and John Slavin

In Memory of James G. LaRose
Lori Horan-Fortina
Leonard Noyes, Jr.

In Memory of Seth Wilde Minton
Deborah Weare
and John M. Slavin

In Memory of Peter Marc Slavin
Deborah Weare
and John M. Slavin

Tributes

In Honor of Robert R. Atwood
Robert and Jennifer Chatfield

In Honor of Thomas Neil Fitzgerald
Deborah Weare
and John M. Slavin

In Honor of Robert and Susan Fusselman
Deborah Weare
and John M. Slavin

In Honor of Sandy Krasker
Andrea Krasker Gavin

In Honor of Nick Noyes
Deborah Weare
and John M. Slavin

In Honor of Harriet H. Price
Nathan H. Price

In Honor of Thomas Salvadore
Deborah Weare
and John M. Slavin

PLEASE NOTE

* Every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of the annual report. We would appreciate notification of any errors or omissions to correct our records. If you'd like us to make changes for future reports, please contact mbecze@mainehistory.org.

Materials and Objects

In-kind donations

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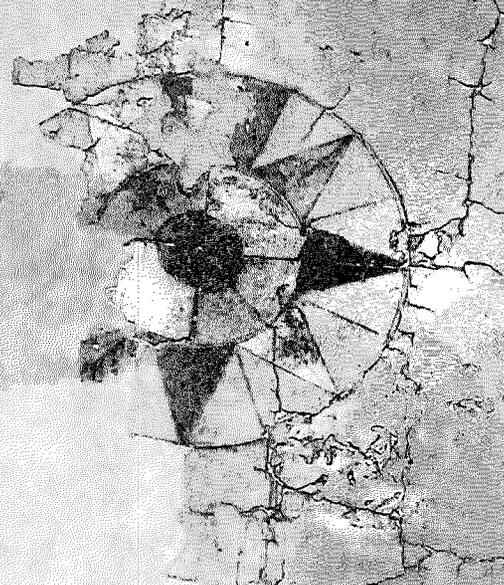
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2



The present map or plan is a copy of the
book of land lying Jeffrey's field
in the town of Weymouth in the County
of Essex - signed of William North
Esquire - the said book lies in the
office of the Clerk of the County
of Essex in the City of Weymouth
the 10th of May 1780

William North of Dunstable in the State of New York Esquire do hereby and
declare that I am well acquainted with the hand writing of my father John North
formerly of George in the county of Lincoln in the State of Virginia and that I
have not any doubt that the above certificate dated 16th December 1781 is
written and subscribed by him, the same appearing to me quite similar to
the writing in his last will and in other papers in my possession which
have always been considered as his hand writing

Wm North

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Suffolk Co. September 16th 1800
William North by above named personally appeared and having taken
about deposition and to him subscribed and was duly sworn to
the same it being taken at request of the Plaintiff of the above
last Patent in perpetual remembrance

Witness my hand
at Weymouth
the 10th of May 1780

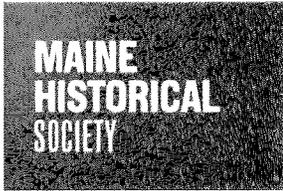
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Portland, Maine 04101

Lincoln's Record 28th 1800 & the above Deposition of Wm North
North was entered in the records of the County
Lib 70 Vol 80
Wm North Esq Reg



Accession for Lincoln's Record 28th 1800



Examples of MHS's Responsive Programming:

*Exhibits and Public Program Initiatives
Responding to Interests and Issues in Maine Today*

Begin Again: reckoning with intolerance in Maine

May 27-December 31, 2021



Description

A pandemic, political unrest, race-based violence, and drastic economic inequities in 2020 spurred conversations about intolerance in America and Maine. During this crisis, many asked, *How did we get here?* *Begin Again: reckoning with intolerance in Maine* explored the centuries old histories behind the roots of injustice and discrimination in Maine. This exhibition examined different paths of experiences in Maine and the sometimes difficult and shocking histories. *Begin Again's* installation promoted empathetic and emotional responses. We purposely obscured colonial maps with Indigenous objects, and large graphics drew attention to topics. Spatial design, especially the division of the room by a curtain, communicated inequity. Another room with images and quotes created space for reflection.

Begin Again explored MHS as a colonialist institution and asked *Who is missing?* to engage visitors in a dialog about the role of museums and representation. Curators and a network of advisors from around the state invited visitors to work toward healing through truth, and "Begin Again," envisioning a more equitable experience for all of Maine's residents in the future. By truly collaborating, we ceded the typical museum authority dynamic and acknowledged there are perspectives on Maine history which have been left out or subjugated over the centuries, and are necessary to contextualize why Maine is the whitest state in the nation.

Direct collaborators

Curated by **Tilly Laskey**, Maine Historical Society, **Anne B. Gass**, Independent scholar and women's rights history activist; **Darren J. Ranco PhD** (Penobscot), Chair of Native American Programs, Professor of Anthropology, Coordinator of Native American Research, University of Maine; and **Krystal Williams**, Attorney and Executive Advisor, Providentia Group.

Collaborators:

Graffiti artist Ryan Adams, Matthew Jude Barker, Maine Irish Heritage; John Banks (Penobscot); Civil Rights attorney Mary L. Bonauto of GLAD; Franco-American writer Rhea Cote Robbins; Cape Verde descendant Lelia DeAndrade; Attorney Angus Ferguson; David Freidenreich, PhD, Colby College; Seth Goldstein, Atlantic Black Box; Michael-Corey F. Hinton (Passamaquoddy); Dr. Andrea Louie, anthropologist and granddaughter of Toy Len Goon; Kristina Minister, PhD First Parish Church; Sherri Mitchell (Penobscot); Alivia Moore (Penobscot); Jennifer Neptune (Penobscot); Garrett Stewart, AFL-CIO; Charmagne Tripp, Malaga Island descendant; and poet Arisa White, Colby College.

Outcomes

- Won the 2022 Leadership in History Award of Excellence (one of 52 nationwide) from the American Association of State and Local History

- Polyvocal labels allowed collaborators to tell their stories in first person narratives.
 - Added 17 My Maine Stories
- Co-curator Krystal Williams became an MHS board member
- 1 Exhibition added online: www.mainememory.net/beginagain
- Prototyped 3D imaging of exhibitions to expand audience accessibility during the pandemic. Virtual tours are now added to all MHS main gallery exhibitions on Maine Memory Network.
- Pivoted MHS programs online, hosting Zoom webinars for 22 public programs relating to Begin Again, including keynotes by Dr. Eddie Glaude Jr. (*James Baldwin's America and its Urgent Lessons for Our Own*) and Edward Ball (*Life of a Klansman*)
 - Zoom programming allowed us to reach expanded audiences to a total of 2812 people attending live (this does not include views since the program), almost tripling our 2019 numbers for onsite attendance.
 - All programs were free and open to the public, and are preserved on MHS On-Demand programs and podcasts. <https://www.mainehistory.org/onlineprograms/begin-again-series.shtml>
- Created five new lesson plans for *Begin Again*, all available on MMN
 - Hosted professional development workshop for teachers of grades 6-12 via Zoom webinar in partnership with the Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine called "History and Justice in the Classroom."
- Display MHS historic collections with new interpretations
 - Declaration of Independence interpreted by a Passamaquoddy attorney as scaffolded to genocide, slavery, land theft and suppression of women's rights
 - A Klan robe (1923) demonstrated Maine as one of the largest KKK strongholds outside the South
 - A photograph of Malaga Island interpreted by a descendant
- Opportunity to diversify and contemporize MHS collections through purchases
 - "Blanket Coat" (2021) by Jennifer Neptune (Penobscot) framed scalp bounties on Wabanaki bodies from the 1750s.
- Opportunity to exhibit new, contemporary collections
 - A "Pussy Hat" from the 2017 Women's March highlighted suffrage and inequality
 - Two prints by Daniel Minter featuring the Abyssinian Meeting House

State of Mind: Becoming Maine

March 13, 2020 to January 30, 2021



Description

State of Mind: Becoming Maine explored Maine as the homeland of the Wabanaki people, as a European province, as part of the District of Massachusetts, and the State of Maine. It considered Maine's Bicentennial milestone in relation to Maine's formation as a state 200 years ago; the significance of the Missouri Compromise; how the idea of "Maine" is perceived by people today; and how the changing landscape could alter Maine's future. The exhibition featured manuscripts and items relating to statehood, historic maps, contemporary artwork, and opportunities to learn about the experiences of Wabanaki people alongside the early settlers, including: European American, African American, and Acadian communities.

Direct collaborators

Curated by Tilly Laskey, Maine Historical Society.

Advised by:

Deborah Cummings Khadraoui, Abyssinian Meeting House, Portland;
James E. Francis Sr. (Penobscot) Director of Cultural and Historic Preservation, Penobscot Nation;
Bob Greene, Author, Portland, Maine;
Daniel Minter, Indigo Arts Alliance;
Lise Pelletier, Director, Archives Acadiennes, University of Maine, Fort Kent;
Darren Ranco (Penobscot), Professor of Anthropology and Coordinator of Native American Programs, University of Maine;
Donald Soctomah (Passamaquoddy) Director, Passamaquoddy Cultural Heritage Center and Passamaquoddy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

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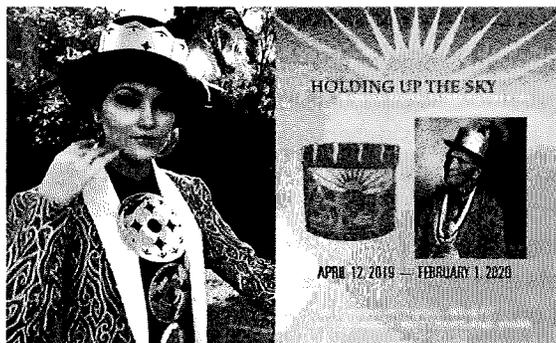
Jason K. Brown
Donna Decontie Brown
Canadian-American Center
Thérèse L. Provenzano
Liam Riordan

Outcomes

- Purchased 4 items for MHS permanent collections
 - James E. Francis Sr. (Penobscot) "We Walk On: Eternally", 2020
 - Decontie & Brown (Penobscot), "Dawnland Couture" 2019
 - Jason K. Brown (Penobscot) musical soundscape, 2020
 - Therese Provenzano (Acadian) pastel, "Buckwheat No 2, Hooked diversion ditch red and green"
- 1 Exhibition added online: www.mainememory.net/stateofmind

Holding Up the Sky: Wabanaki People, Culture, History & Art

April 12, 2019 -February 1, 2020



Description

Holding up the Sky explored Wabanaki philosophies of leadership and obligation relating to humans and non-humans by highlighting 13,000 years of Wabanaki residence in what is now known as Maine. Wabanaki co-curators guided the exhibition, interpreting 17th century colonial treaties, photographs, heritage items, and contemporary artworks—everything from ash baskets to haute couture fashion. Wabanaki voices provide context for the present-day relevance and repercussions of 400 years of shared histories between

Wabanaki people and immigrants to their region. The exhibit featured 60 artists, 42 of them living.

Direct collaborators

Co-curated by:

Lisa Brooks (Abenaki) Professor of English and American Studies, Amherst College, Massachusetts;

James Eric Francis Sr. (Penobscot) Director of Cultural and Historic Preservation, Penobscot Nation;

Suzanne Greenlaw (Maliseet) Ph.D student, University of Maine, Orono;

Tilly Laskey, Curator, Maine Historical Society;

Micah Pawling, Professor of History and Native American Studies, University of Maine, Orono;

Darren Ranco (Penobscot), Professor of Anthropology and Coordinator of Native American Research, University of Maine, Orono;

Theresa Secord (Penobscot), Artist and Maine Historical Society Trustee;

Ashley Smith (Wabanaki descent), Assistant Professor of Native American Studies and Environmental Justice, Hampshire College, Massachusetts;

Donald Soctomah (Passamaquoddy) Director, Passamaquoddy Cultural Heritage Center and Passamaquoddy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer.

Collaborators who provided stories and label copy

Patricia Ayala Rocabado (Widow of David Moses Bridges, Passamaquoddy)

John S. Banks (Penobscot, Director of the Department of Natural Resources for the Penobscot Indian Nation)

James Boyce (Micmac)

Gina Brooks (Maliseet)

Jason Brown (Penobscot)

Donna Decontie Brown (Penobscot)

Catherine Burns, PhD (University of Wisconsin)

John Dennis (Micmac)

Jeremy Frey (Passamaquoddy)

Bunny McBride

Geo Neptune (Passamaquoddy)

Jennifer Neptune (Penobscot)

Harald Prins

Donna Sanipass (Micmac)

Emma Soctomah (Passamaquoddy)

Frances Soctomah (Passamaquoddy)

Chris Socklexis (Penobscot)

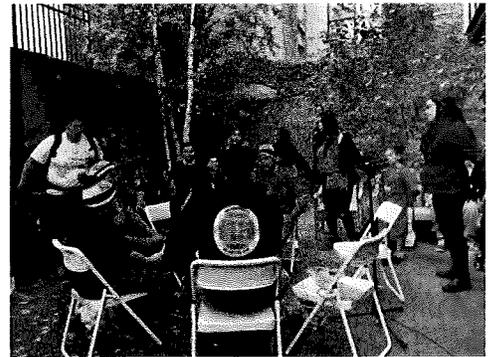
Wabanaki REACH

Outcomes

- 1 exhibition added to MMN www.mainememory.net/holdingupthesky
- 13 Wabanaki My Maine Stories added to MMN
- 6 items purchased from Wabanaki artists
 - Gina Brooks (Maliseet) "Indian" painted leather Jacket, 2018
 - Decontie & Brown (Penobscot) Gingham Glam fashion dress, 2019
 - James E. Francis Sr. (Penobscot) Kapase sturgeon painted drum, 2019
 - Gabriel Frey (Passamaquoddy) ash woven Pack Purse, 2019
 - Jennifer Neptune (Penobscot) Waterlily beaded fabric pouch, 2019
 - Frances Soctomah (Passamaquoddy) Strawberry beaded fabric necklace, 2019
- 2019 gallery attendance to *Holding up the Sky* numbers doubled over previous year and school visits rose by 900%
- Decontie & Brown Fashion Show in Portland during Magical History Tour events
- Theresa Secord donation of handkerchief basket
- October 14, 2019 Maine's FIRST Indigenous Peoples Day celebration organized by Bridgid Neptune (Passamaquoddy) and Fiona Hopper from Portland Public Schools

Public Programs, including:

- film screening and discussion, *DAWNLAND*
- Decolonization Teacher Workshop, with Portland Public Schools and Upstander Project (teacher program)
- Maine-Wabanaki REACH workshop for MHS staff (not a public program, for MHS staff and volunteers to support the work with public for *Holding Up the Sky*)
- Upstander Project Teacher Workshop (teacher program)
- book launch, *Canoe Maker*, with Donald Soctomah and Jean Flahive
- Children's Hour with storyteller Mihku Paul
- book launch, *Properties of Empire*, with Ian Saxine
- Wabanaki Studies Teacher Workshop, with Joe Schmidt (teacher program)
- film screening and discussion, *Wilderness and Spirit: A Mountain Called Katahdin*, with Huey
- talk, Teaching Wabanaki History & Culture, presented by UNE (MHS a partner)
- Indigenous Peoples Day at MHS, with performance by Huntley Brook Singers, remarks from cultural director for the Aroostook Band of Micmacs John Dennis, remarks from Penobscot Nation Tribal Ambassador Maulian Dana, film screening of *Dear Georgina*, Native crafts with artists and vendors, free admission to *Holding up the Sky*
- film screening of *DAWNLAND*, presented by UNE (MHS a partner)
- panel discussion, Indigenous Communities in America – Understanding Cultures in Clinical Settings, presented by UNE (MHS a partner)
- talk, Wabanaki Place: Language and Landscape, with James Francis
- monthly curator tours of *Holding Up the Sky*



Maine Eats: The Food Revolution Starts Here

March 2, 2018 – March 2, 2019



Description

Using historical and contemporary stories of individual people and communities, *Maine Eats: The Food Revolution Starts Here*, told the Maine food story. Throughout the interactive exhibition, visitors were invited to engage their senses and to think deeply about the past, present and future of Maine's relationship with food.

Direct collaborators:

Dan Blackstone (Aroostook County potato farmer)
Titi De Baccarat (Artist, Portland; Asylum seeker from Gabon)
Mufalo Chitam (Maine Immigrant Rights Coalition)
Maria Cushing (Cape Verde healthcare worker and activist)
Marie and Dell Emerson (Blueberry farmers, Columbia Falls)
George Fowler (Norcross Heritage Trust)
Marian and Albert Fowler (Norcross Heritage Trust)
Debbie Gagnon (Red's Eats)
Henry Gartley (Aroostook County Historical and Art Museum)
Caitlin Gerber (Chebeague Oyster)
Marie Harnois (Passamaquoddy Maple)
Robert Indiana (Artist)
Kheyro Jama (Empower the Immigrant Women)
Muhidin Libah (Somali Bantu Community Association)
Andrew Pershing (Gulf of Maine Research Institute)
Kathy Pollard (Gedakina Indigenous Women's leadership)
Alain Ouellette (Acadian)
Darren Ranco (Penobscot)
Parivash Rohani (Iranian asylum seeker)
Sadie Samuels (Lobsterwoman)
Barton Seaver (Chef and National Geographic Explorer)
Kathy Smith (Wolfe Neck Farm)
Kim Smith (Presque Isle Historical Society)
Brian J. Theriault (Acadian)
Edmond Theriault (Acadian)

Outcomes

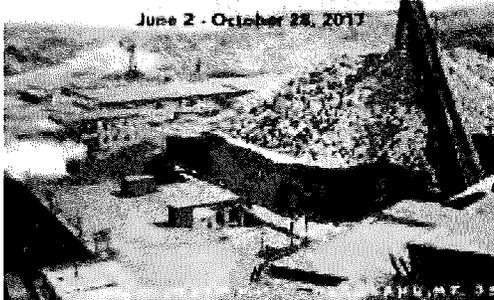
- 27 My Maine Stories added to the Food section of Maine Memory Network
- 1 exhibition added to MMN www.mainememory.net/maineeats
- Series of public programs

Making Paper, Making Maine

June 2 through October 22, 2017

MAKING PAPER, MAKING MAINE

June 2 - October 22, 2017



Description

Paper has shaped Maine's economy, molded individual and community identities, and impacted the environment throughout Maine. When Hugh Chisholm opened the Otis Falls Pulp Company in Jay in 1888, the mill was one of the most modern paper-making facilities in the country, and was connected to national and global markets. For the next century, Maine was an international leader in the manufacture of pulp and paper. *Making Paper, Making Maine* recognized the historic transition taking place in Maine's paper industry, and asked, what's next for Maine's economy? *This exhibition was generously supported by The Elsie A. Brown Fund, Inc.*

Direct collaborators:

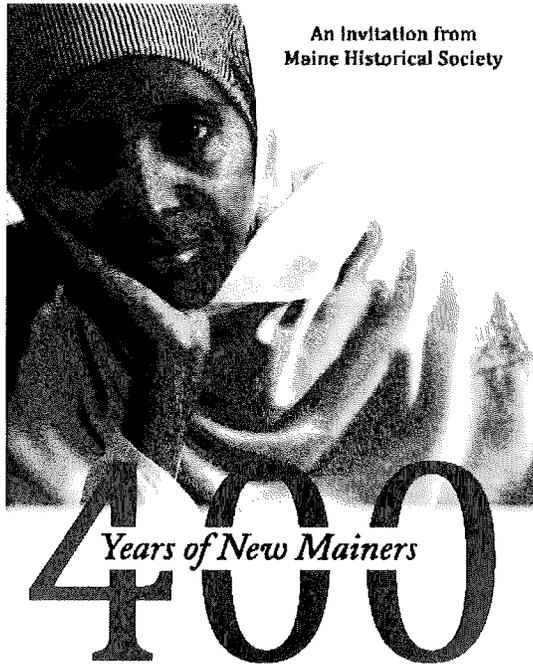
- Forest Society of Maine
- Maine's Paper & Heritage Museum

Outcomes

- 1 exhibition added to Maine Memory Network
- 16 Paper Mill Worker My Maine Stories added to MMN
- Series of public programs

400 Years of New Mainers

February 4 – May 30, 2016



An Invitation from
Maine Historical Society

Description

Co-curated by Tilly Laskey and Reza Jalali, a Kurd from Iran, educator, writer, scholar, human rights and refugee activist who has lived in Maine since 1985 and currently works for the University of Southern Maine. The exhibition was based upon black and white photos taken by Jan Pieter Van Voorst Van Beest, an immigrant from the Netherlands who has lived in Maine since 1970. The exhibition was augmented with items from MHS's permanent collections and loans from the community. Artist Natasha Mayers worked with international students from Portland Public Schools to paint lobster buoys with the flags of their home countries. The Buoys were installed on the historic iron gate of MHS's Wadsworth Longfellow House.

Direct collaborators

Reza Jalali (USM)

Jan Pieter Van Voorst Van Beest (Artist)

Orson Horchler aka Pigeon (Artist)

Natasha Mayers (USM artist in residence)

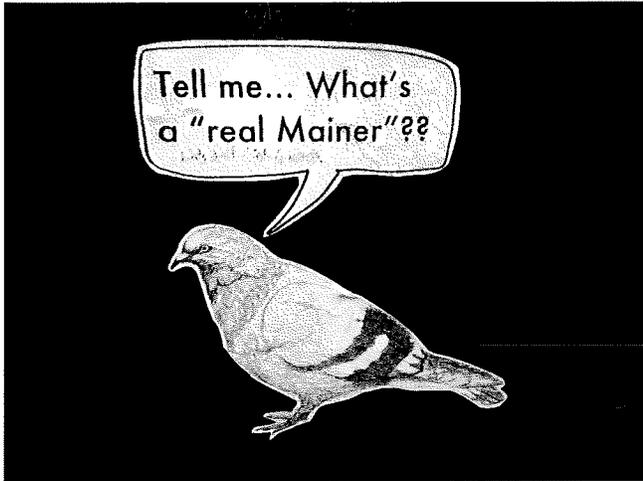
Major themes in *400 Years of New Mainers* were racism and nationalism, including the KKK in Maine. Street artist Pigeon was commissioned to wheat paste his series, the Mainer Project on the front of MHS's museum building as well as on the gallery walls.

Outcomes:

- MHS purchased Penobscot artist Jason K. Brown's "Creation Cuff" for MHS permanent collections and display in 400 Years of New Mainers. Jason sang and did a prayer for the opening of 400 Years of New Mainers.
- Jan Pieter Van Voorst Van Beest's New Mainer portfolio added to MMN
- 1 exhibition added to MMN www.mainememory.net/400years
- Visitor attendance rose 10 times over 2015
- School visits increased 900% over 2015
- Series of public programs

Pigeon's Mainer Project: street art meets history

March 4 – May 1, 2016



Direct Collaborators

Orson Horchler aka Pigeon

Description

Orson Horchler's (aka Pigeon) original artwork was combined with current news, historic photographs, manuscripts, and newspapers from the Maine Historical Society's collections to provide context to social justice issues, events in our past, to inform our future regarding the often contentious subject of immigration, and to ask, what does it mean to be a Mainer?

Outcomes

- MHS purchased Horchler's "Portrait of Hawa", 2016 for the permanent collections
- 1 exhibition added to MMN
- Horchler gave a talk on the Mainer Project at MHS

Veteran's Voices

January 12 – May 28, 2017

VETERANS' VOICES

Opens January 12, 2017 at Maine Historical Society



VETERANS' VOICES features first-person stories of veterans from World War II to Afghanistan drawn from Maine Historical Society's new online storytelling portal, MY MAINE STORIES: MaineMemory.net/mymainestories.



Maine Historical Society
489 Congress St., Portland, ME
www.MaineHistory.org

This exhibition received generous support from The Simmons Foundation.

Description

Veterans' Voices featured first-person stories from veterans spanning World War II to the Afghanistan wars. Veterans' Voices was the inaugural exhibition drawn from My Maine Stories, Maine Historical Society's online storytelling portal that, for the first time, opened Maine Memory Network to individual contributors to tell and archive their own personal histories.

Direct collaborators

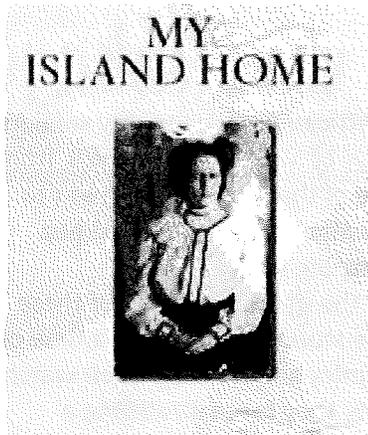
Veterans: Joy Asuncion, Vera Cleves, Adam Cote, Ted Heselton, William B. Hinderer, Sam Kelley, Nicholas Krier, Mary D. McGuirk, Doug Rawlings, Bob Small
Maine Veterans Association: Karen L. Olson, M.D.

Outcomes

- 35 Veteran stories added to MMN
- Series of public programs

My Island Home: Recollections of Verlie Colby Greenleaf of Westport Island

November 8, 2019 through April 25, 2020



Description

Verlie Greenleaf (1891-1992) bore witness to over a century of Westport Island's history during her 100-year life. Verlie donated photographs, personal notes, and sat for an interview in 1987, all part of the Westport Island History Committee's collection today. Her words frame the exhibition, providing a first-person account of her life. Westport Island History Committee is an active partner in Maine Memory Network, a collaborative network of over 270 Contributing Partners administered by Maine Historical Society.

Direct collaborators

Gaye Wagner and members of Westport Island History Committee

Outcomes

- *My Island Home* is the first in a series of Contributing Partner rotating exhibitions in Maine Historical Society's Showcase Gallery.
- 18 items and 1 exhibition added to MMN
- Exhibition will be redeployed at Westport Island's facility

A Convenient Soldier: the Black Guards of Maine

Fall 2020



Description

The Black Guards were African American army soldiers sent to guard the railways of Maine during WWII, from 1941-1945. The purpose of their deployment was to prevent terrorist attacks along the railways to keep Maine citizens safe during the war.

This installation looks at the day-to-day lives of these loyal citizen-soldiers who stood watch during a time of a racially segregated country and military. Their watch embodied the incongruity they faced straddling a complex state of racism, and a citizenship that was exercised as a matter of convenience during war-time.

Direct collaborator

Asata Radcliffe, African American and Indigenous writer and multi-media artist

Outcomes

- All of MHS Black Guard items digitized (14)
- Previously non-digitized collections from Monson Historical Society accessible
- Art installation and collaboration with artist in gallery a new methodology for MHS