

MAINE ARCHIVES & MUSEUMS

NEWSLETTER

A BANNER DAY *for Maine Museums*

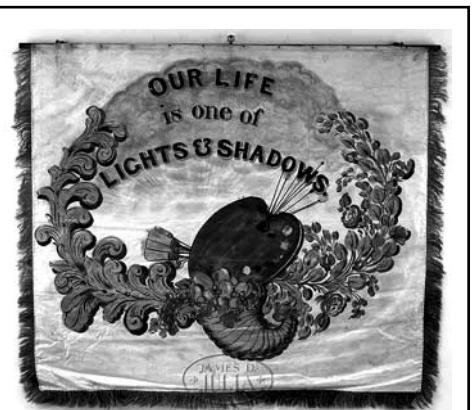
by Jessica Skwire Routhier

It was the last day of the last month of what we call summer here in Maine. Tourists were tucking away their last lobster roll of the season, kids were getting in one last weekday swim before the start of school, and the Maine museum community, too, was celebrating the triumph of a “last chance” seized. The *Portland Press Herald* of August 31, 2010, proclaimed “Group’s purchase will keep banners together in Maine,” bringing a satisfying end to a full month’s worth of shared anxiety and effort centered around the fate of a treasure of Maine art and history.

It was the *Portland Press Herald* that first broke the story (Bob Keyes, “Banners’ sale concerns state arts community,” July 26, 2010): 17 rare, hand-painted fabric banners depicting the varied industries of 1841 Maine—the property of the Maine Charitable Mechanics Association since the moment of their creation—were to be sold, one by one, to the highest bidder. The auction house contracted by the Charitable Mechanics, James D. Julia in Fairfield, Maine, recognized the importance of the collection of banners and created incentives for a single bidder to purchase all 17 together; however, the overall estimate of upwards of \$200,000 for the group provided a daunting challenge for any single Maine museum to consider.

Locals grieved over the situation. Equally distressing were the possibilities that the collection might be broken up, and that, in whole or in part, it might leave Maine. “Once separated, the banners’ historical significance diminishes, and the opportunity to share in our past is lost,” observed Elizabeth Suchar in a letter to the *Press Herald* (“Labor History should be preserved,” August 3, 2010). The leaders of the Maine Charitable Mechanics Association were mindful of public concerns but pointed out that funds from the sale would support the maintenance of their historic building: Vice President Gregory St. Angelo described the magnificent 1859 granite building on Portland’s Congress Street as the association’s greatest asset as well as its greatest liability. There seemed to be no satisfying solution to the conflicting needs of the Mechanics Association—a venerable institution founded in 1815 to “promote excellence among Portland’s various mechanical and artistic trades,” which has maintained a library and a collection of artifacts since 1820—and the ideals of so many similarly-minded institutions throughout the state.

The controversy was followed on a national level, with the Antiques column in the *New York Times* reporting on both the sale, to take place August 26, and the controversy (Eve



**Painters’, Glaziers’, and
Brush Makers’ Trade Banner**

1841, painted silk or linen.

Collections of the Maine Historical Society.
Photo courtesy James D. Julia & Co.



Blacksmiths’ Trade Banner

1841, painted silk or linen.

Collections of the Maine Historical Society.
Photo courtesy James D. Julia, Inc.

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Maine Archives and Museums MAM Newsletter

Volume 13 • Number 4 • November 2010

Maine Archives and Museums
P.O. Box 5024, Augusta, ME 04332-5024
207-441-1410 • Fax 207-621-8048
www.mainemuseums.org

The *Maine Archives and Museums Newsletter* is published on a quarterly basis as a benefit of membership in MAM, whose purpose is to develop and foster a network of citizens and institutions in Maine who identify, collect, interpret and/or provide access to materials relating to history and culture.

Contributions to the *MAM Newsletter* may be submitted to MAM. Contact information provided above.

To purchase copies of the *MAM Newsletter*, please contact MAM at the above address or phone number.

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(207) 287-2724, www.mainearts.com —
Call for deadlines.

MAINE HUMANITIES COUNCIL (MHC)

(207) 773-5051, www.mainehumanities.org
Discretionary Grants (up to \$500), reviewed on a rolling basis. Outreach Grants (up to \$1,000), reviewed quarterly. Major Grants (up to \$6,000), reviewed twice a year.

NEW ENGLAND FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

(617) 492-2914 — Call for deadlines.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS

(202) 289-9118, www.aam-us.org — Call for deadlines.
Museum Assessment Programs I: Operations
Museum Assessment Programs II: Collections
Museum Assessment Programs III: Public Perception

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Phone (202) 634-1422 • Fax (202) 634-1435
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NEA Challenge America: Access to the Arts — Aug. 18
(202) 682-5400, www.arts.gov

INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM & LIBRARY SERVICES

General Operating Support — Call for deadlines.
(202) 606-8539, www.imls.gov
Conservation Project Support —
110 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506
(202) 606-8539 — Deadline March 5.
IMLS Conservation Project Support — Oct. 15. NEH Exemplary Education Projects — Oct. 15.

ODIORNE GRANT PROGRAM

Supports projects combining archives and archaeology.
Maine State Archives, #84 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04332-0084 — deadline March 1.

NATIONAL HISTORIC PUBLICATIONS AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION (NHPRC)

Application guidelines and forms may be requested from NHPRC, National Archives & Records Administration, 700 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Room 106, Washington, DC 20408-0001
(202) 501-5610
fax (202) 501-5601
e-mail nhpnc@arch1.nara.gov

or web site at <http://www.nara.gov/nhprc>
Deadline is October 1.

Information and advice available from State Archives — (207) 287-5793.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF)

(202) 357-9498
www.nsf.gov

NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

(617) 523-0885
www.nationaltrust.org

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NEXT ISSUE: FEBRUARY 2011

Only submissions received by the Editor by December 30, 2010,
will be considered for publication.

Jessica Skwire Routhier

Saco Museum, 371 Main St., Saco, ME 04072
207-283-3861, ext. 114
www.sacomuseum.org

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

7 June 2010 via Tok box

Treasurer's report: In Patty's absence, Edna reported that membership (234) has surpassed last year's number of 230. Edna will post lapsed member list on Google Docs so EC/board members can select who they will contact to urge rejoining. In general, MAM financial situation is very good. Todd has been doing some work on the MAM site and will add a resources page when we're ready.

Regional reps: Jay will talk with George about regional reps contacting institutions that have never been members.

Membership: Edna now has image (jpeg) requirements of the site and will contact member institutions that indicated they would like an image with their listing. PDF forms seem to be working. Jessica/newsletter can help with PR to promote this site enhancement work.

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

2 August 2010

Maine State Museum conference room

Guests: Sheri Leahan, Sheila McDonald

This meeting focused on the future of CRIC-like activities. Sheila noted that MAM and CRIC have been interconnected for a long time. General agreement that MAM wants to provide technical assistance to the professional field and, thus, picking up some of CRIC's services makes sense. MAM does not want to take over grant administration tasks but only the distribution of information and resources.

Sheri explained that most inquiries have been about funding opportunities and grants. Second most frequent inquiry is how to start a historical society or museum. Others ask for sample collecting policies. Sometimes consultants ask for these samples. Information in the CRIC files may be dated and needs updating. There are also some books in the CRIC collection. Unclear who owns these materials (archives or museum).

Sheila has written to Dave Cheever to tell him and Janet Roberts that CRIC is winding down. Sheri's contract ends this fall. There are two databases maintained by Sheri and her predecessors. One has grant history information, the other tracks inquiries. Both are in Access. There are also some electronic files (correspondence, resource information). Sheri will vet files and convert Access to Excel during her remaining time.

Jay observed that at the 2009 MAM annual meeting we promised to develop a "bottom-up" organization. Having MAM provide CRIC-type information to the field is one way to keep this promise and also helps promote MAM via this service.

Pat asked which services can be provided through the MAM web site and which need human intervention. Also: what are other states/regions doing to provide technical services? Jay will investigate AASLH and NEMA. Pat will investigate the statewide consortium in Vermont, which is robust. More discussion: how to use regional reps to connect individuals/organizations with the information they need. CRIC books may be added to circulating "Connecting to Collections" library such as at Bangor Public Library. Additional service: perhaps as MAM membership increases, we can use 10% of dues to help start up projects around the state.

CRIC Transitions to Maine Archives & Museums

By Sheri Leahan

Starting in November this year, Maine Archives and Museums (MAM) will begin providing the kinds of technical assistance services formerly provided to Maine collecting institutions by the Cultural Resources Information Center (CRIC). Many of you may be familiar with CRIC, especially if you have ever applied for and/or received New Century Program Historical Facilities grants. The Maine State Museum has just awarded the last of these grants from the 2007 bond issue (see separate article) and thus, there are no longer funds available to staff the CRIC office.

Founded in 1992, CRIC has helped hundreds of small historical societies, museums, libraries, archives and other collecting institutions doing good work throughout Maine. Beginning as a joint venture of MAM, the Maine State Museum, and the Maine State Archives, CRIC's purpose has always been to serve as an information clearinghouse and provide outreach services in support of Maine's collecting institutions.

Since 2002 (the earliest year in which data are available), CRIC has responded to over 1000 inquiries from volunteers and staff at collecting institutions statewide. Many were searching for funding sources while others sought solutions to specific problems, such as preserving a historic building or artifact, improving access to a collection, improving governance and trusteeship, and more. CRIC offered specific guidance, informational materials, or referrals to professional consul-

tants. The inquiring individuals (many from very small, all-volunteer run organizations) appreciated finding helpful materials but also a human voice to talk to and discuss their issues or challenges. Providing more than just technical assistance, CRIC worked to cultivate partnerships among Maine's cultural preservation organizations by putting professionals and volunteers together, connecting local groups with regional and national museum interests, and encouraging organizations to contact one another about a particular kind of project.

As Maine's statewide umbrella organization for collecting institutions and an original sponsor of CRIC, MAM is pleased to assume CRIC's functions as one more way of providing service to its members and assistance to the field in general. Such service will generally take the form of referring staff and volunteers to available resources to help with specific problems—whether the best resource is a printed document, an online resource, a person, or all of the above.

Key to providing these services will be MAM's website, which will provide links to most regional and national organizations, up-to-date conservation and technical information, current grant sources, and much more. Those seeking assistance will also be encouraged to contact the MAM Representative in their region, who will put the person in touch with others in the same area who may be working on similar projects, other regional groups, or a resource specialist knowledgeable about the particular issue or topic.

MAM's Executive Committee has been meeting with Sheri Leahan, CRIC's current Project Director, and is working diligently to plan for a timely transition. Sheri is providing guidance on the types of inquiries that CRIC receives, what online resources are available and most helpful, and culling the CRIC files to gather books, pamphlets, and documents that may be transferred to the MAM office.

More about this transfer of support services to the field will be available at the annual meeting in October, on the MAM Web site, and in the next issue of the *MAM Newsletter*. MAM wants to assure its membership and the greater cultural community at large that it will uphold the record of prompt, thoughtful, courteous support service for which CRIC was known, be ready and willing to explore the many resources available within the professional museum and archival community in Maine, and to do its best to provide timely and appropriate assistance in the most effective and efficient way possible.

Maine Archives & Museums

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MAM News, *continued from page 3*

REMINDER

The MAM website is now ready to display images of your organization! Gather together the images you want to use—up to four—in jpg form, and then contact Edna Comstock at the MAM office for more information: mam@gwi.net, info@mainemuseums.org, or (207) 441-1410.

MAM Regional Representatives *as of September 2010*

Got a question and you don't know who to ask? Got a program or a collaboration to propose for your area? Want to bounce an idea off of someone? Contact your Regional Rep!

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GRANTS

New Century Community Program Facilities Grant Recipients Announced

submitted by Sheri Leahan

The Maine State Museum recently awarded New Century Community Program Historical Facilities Grants to five nonprofit cultural organizations from around the state. The grants, totaling \$22,500, provide funds to assist Maine's nonprofit cultural organizations improve facilities that house historically, scientifically, or artistically significant collections. New Century Community Program grant funds were approved by Maine voters in a 2007 bond issue.

"This was an exceedingly competitive grant round with more funding requested than we had available to award," says Maine State Museum Director Joseph R. Phillips. "Only five high-priority awards were granted out of 19 applications."

Grant recipients include:

- **Page Farm and Home Museum** (University of Maine, Orono): \$5,000 to assist with reroofing the 1855 Holden South District Schoolhouse to protect the historic building and its significant collection of early educational books, prints, furniture, and other artifacts.
- **Penobscot Marine Museum** (Searsport): \$5,000 to help underwrite the purchase and installation of an upgraded climate control system for the museum's Douglas and Margaret Carver Memorial Art Gallery which houses marine paintings, Maine seafaring artifacts, and other items collected by mariners from around the world.

- **Skowhegan Free Public Library** (Skowhegan): \$2,500 to partially fund the improvement of the library's storage area with new environmental controls to ensure the public's continuous access to precious newspapers and historical documents.

- **Skyline Farm and Carriage Museum** (Yarmouth): \$5,000 towards the repair of Storage Bay #2, with improvements to the foundation and drainage systems to provide a secure facility for storage of up to 30 historic New England horse-drawn vehicles.

- **Tate House Museum** (Portland): \$5,000 to help underwrite the development of a drainage plan to ensure the building's long-term preservation by securing its envelope; fixing chronic drainage problems to reduce high humidity levels that threaten the physical structure and the artifact and archival collections.

Since 2007, the New Century Community Facilities Grant Program has awarded over \$230,000 to historical societies, libraries, museums, and other nonprofit collecting institutions throughout Maine. These grants are no longer available as the program has been terminated pending additional funding. •

New Floor Makes MMM's Boat Collection Accessible to Visitors

submitted by Dave Garrison

AS PART OF THE NATIONAL Endowment for the Humanities Visible Storage Grant, Maine Maritime Museum's largest, 3,840-square-foot boat storage barn now has a new concrete floor. This extraordinary change is the culmination of three years of watercraft storage improvements aimed at increasing public access to the bulk of the museum's 130-boat collection.

New cradles, a new rack system, two stairways, and railings are also part of the improvements. The barn's original soft dirt floor was detrimental to the boat cradles, attracted digging varmints, and was almost impossible to shift heavy objects upon. One of those heavy objects is the 14-ton compound steam engine from the tug *Seguin*, which had settled a foot into the dirt. A Bath Iron Works crew came down at 5 a.m. on a September morning with an 18-ton Hyster lift to extract the engine so the concrete could be poured. The new floor is six inches thick overall, with a 12-inch-thick section where the *Seguin* engine will be reset.

The interior layout will be refined to allow the use within the space of a forklift, also part of the grant award, so boats can be brought down to the floor for documentation. Most of the 65 boats in the barn have never been seen by museum visitors since the day they were donated, in most cases, decades ago. The large Wilbur Morse 1916 Friendship sloop *Chance*, a 1911 Northeast Harbor A-class



With the pouring of the first section of the new Boat Storage Barn floor juxtaposed against the dirt floor that additional pours will cover, the incredible improvement is clearly visible.

(#1), the Wyeth family lobster boat *Eight Bells*, and many other seldom seen jewels of the boat collection will now be accessible.

Of similar consequence to the collection was the summer renovation of the lowest level under the Boat Shop, a cavernous and largely neglected space, formerly adapted for casting boat fittings. The wooden floor and support posts for the floors above had suffered from groundwater seepage over the years; these were demolished and repaired where appropriate, a new wooden ceiling was installed, and electrical wiring and lighting improved. Several concepts for the use of this space are under consideration. •



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EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS



LECTURE

"An Engine for Economic Development: The Lewiston and Auburn Railroad"

Bethel Historical Society • Nov. 4, 4 p.m.

Douglas I. Hodgkin, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus at Bates College, will discuss the Grand Trunk branch line that was opened to Auburn and Lewiston, Maine, in July 1874, thanks to a total of \$300,000 in capital stock raised by local businessmen and residents after a charter for the "Lewiston and Auburn Railroad" was granted by the Maine Legislature in 1872. Until New England's position as a leader in the textile industry was displaced by the New South, the cotton mills located here made extensive use of this railroad route to ship their products, and thousands of French Canadian immigrants passed through the doors of Lewiston's Grand Trunk depot (1873), which survives today. The 5.43-mile branch line maintained passenger service until 1956. Mason House exhibit hall; 14 Broad Street; 4:00 p.m. FMI: (207) 824-2908.

GALLERY TALK: ALVAN FISHER

Farnsworth Art Museum

Wednesday, December 9, 1 p.m.

Alvan Fisher (1792-1863) made a successful living as a painter of portraits and the picturesque. Based in Boston, he exhibited and marketed his canvases of various genres, including views of scenic splendor developed after sketches he made during travels throughout New England and abroad. His landscapes graced the walls of the homes of both armchair travelers and those who ventured to feel the spray of Niagara Falls or the breezes and warm light of summers in Maine. Join Curatorial Assistant Jane Bianco for a closer look at Alvan Fisher's *Camden Hills and Harbor* and *The Falls of Niagara* on view in the Rothschild Gallery through December. Program is limited to 20 people and free with museum admission. Meet at the Farnsworth's main entrance on Museum Street. Call (207) 596-0949 for reservations.

CROSS CURRENTS: VISUAL ART DISTILLED FROM THE MARITIME WORLD

Maine Maritime Museum, Bath
November 20 through February 6, 2011

Maritime history is simply a convenient, but surprisingly superficial way to cope with the broad disorderly snarl of culture, economics, folklore, craftsmanship, politics, and technology that is life lived in close proximity to Maine waters, whether upcountry lakes, descending rivers, or convoluted miles of ocean shoreline. Drawing on the same complex interwoven sources as history, *Cross Currents* will explore how diversely maritime life has been distilled by four disciplines in the visual arts: printmaking (Carroll Thayer Berry); painting (Loretta Krupinski); photography (Salt Institute for Documentary Studies); and sculpture (Christy Georg). FMI: (207) 443-1316 / www.maine-museum.org.



SECOND SUNDAY FILM SERIES

North Haven Historical Society

Sundays, Nov. 14, Dec. 12, Jan. 9, Feb. 13

2 p.m.

This winter, the North Haven Historical Society will again run a "Second Sunday" film series during the winter months. Each program features a short segment of film taken here on North Haven about 20 to 50 years ago, followed by an hour-long commercial DVD that is either a documentary or a fictionalized historic story from Maine. The entire program takes less than two hours and takes place in the afternoon when night's darkness is not an impediment for older residents. FMI: (207) 867-4752 / nhhist@midcoast.com.

FREEPORt'S GOLDEN AGE OF WIRELESS

Produced by Freeport Historical Society
Radio broadcasts on WYAR 88.3

November 7, 14, 21 and 28

Gather the family 'round the radio for some original programming featuring a fictionalized version of history from each of four decades: 1910s, '20s, '30s and '40s. On Sunday, October 17th, four original radio programs loosely based on Freeport history were performed and taped in front of a live audience at the Freeport Community Library. On the four Sunday evenings in November (7, 14, 21 and 28), these shows will be aired on local fm station, WYAR 88.3. You may recognize some specific places such as Grove Street Elementary School, hear some familiar names such as Babe Ruth, or enjoy learning about past events such as the building of the Red Oaks. And music from each of the decades will be part of each radio show. This project is produced by the Freeport Historical Society. Tim Ryan is both the project Director and a contributing scriptwriter. FMI: (207) 865-3170 / www.freeporthistoricalsociety.org

IT IS A BLESSING: MARGARET CHASE SMITH AND MEDICAL RESEARCH

The Margaret Chase Smith Library,
Skowhegan, ongoing

The Margaret Chase Smith Library is pleased to announce the opening of *It Is a Blessing: Margaret Chase Smith and Medical Research*. Inspired by historian David Oshinsky's book *Polio*, the exhibit explores the role Senator Smith played in pushing for more medical funding by the federal government. It especially focuses on the support she provided to the March of Dimes as it evolved out of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. The library is open to the public Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. FMI: (207) 474-7133 / mcslibrary@mcslibrary.org



UNCONVENTIONAL PORTRAITS: PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLES E. MOODY

Saco Museum, Jan. 15 - Feb. 24, 2011

Saco native Charles E. Moody was one of the most gifted and prolific area photographers of the early 20th century. Find out more in this special exhibition co-organized by the Saco Museum and the McArthur Public Library in Biddeford. About 75 prints made from the original glass plate negatives will be on display, along with Moody's camera equipment and a selection of his lantern slides. This exhibition and the accompanying publication are made possible, in part, by a grant from the Maine Arts Commission and the Maine Humanities Council. FMI (207) 283-3861 / www.sacomuseum.org •



Photo of Charles Frederick Moody, Emma Wight Moody, and Frederick Shaw Moody at Camp Ellis, Saco, circa 1906, by Charles E. Moody (1859-1915), original glass plate negative in the collection of the Dyer Library and Saco Museum.

DISPATCHES

Our member organizations report on news, awards, and achievements from throughout the state.

ALFRED

Townspeople are always generous where the **Alfred Village Museum** is concerned, but one particular donation this summer by a village shop has been especially appreciated. It is a 1920s era satin wedding gown, complete with lots of beading, beaded train and veil. The museum has also been given a large school blackboard (on wheels) which may be put in the one-room schoolhouse under the care of the committee. Extensive work was done on the schoolhouse this spring under the flooring, and more is needed. The museum is actively seeking a grant to support completion of the work in the spring.



1835

"Schoolgirl"
map of Oxford
County recently
acquired by
the Bethel
Historical
Society.

BETHEL

In July, the **Bethel Historical Society** was made aware of the upcoming sale at auction of an 1835 "schoolgirl" map of Oxford County, Maine. Drawn by Lydia D. Carter (born 1823), daughter of Dr. Timothy Carter of Bethel, the town's first settled physician, the 10 x 18-inch map is highly accurate and remarkably detailed. As it turned out, the map—one of the earliest known of Oxford County—was acquired at the auction by someone who recognized its value as a significant local artifact that should be preserved in the Society's collections. Through the collaborative efforts of Norman and Sylvia Clanton and auctioneer Joe Gaidis, the 1835 map was made available to the Bethel Historical Society, which was able to utilize funds set aside for the purchase of exceptional artifacts and documents to acquire the piece.

Several Telstar Regional High School students participating in a summer history course made use of resources at the **Bethel Historical Society's** research library during their study of the individuals buried in the Ames Cemetery in nearby Greenwood, Maine. Among the prod-



ucts of their efforts was a series of display panels highlighting local, state and national events that effected the lives of those interred in the cemetery; the students also created a website (www.amescemetery.org) with photos of each gravestone and a map of the cemetery. So successful was this collaboration (which was aided by Blaine Mills of the Greenwood Historical Society) that similar projects that encourage local high students to make use of the holdings of the Bethel Historical Society are planned for the near future.

BIDDEFORD

The **McArthur Public Library**, built in 1863 as a church, was last expanded and renovated in 1996. Due to funding problems, over 2,500 square feet of this addition was left vacant. This year the McArthur Library Association Board of Trustees voted to move forward with renovating that space. Oak Point Associates of Biddeford was hired in June to complete a conceptual plan and construction drawings, and construction has been in full swing since August. The new second-floor spaces include reading and meeting rooms, improved stacks, and dedicated spaces for teens and history. Purchase of condensed shelving for special collections was an unexpected and exciting development, and a nice complement to the NEH Preservation Assistance Grant received last year for collection storage. Collocation of archival, local history and genealogy resources



Steel girders were installed in September to support new condensed shelving for archives and special collections storage at the McArthur Public Library in Biddeford.

will greatly enhance access to McArthur's many "hidden collections" and will improve the research experience at the library for locals and visitors alike. FMI: www.mcARTHURPUBLIBRARY.ORG.

CORINTH



Main Street 1911 centennial celebration in Corinth.

The **Corinth Historical Society** has joined with the Corinth Bicentennial Celebration Committee in planning for the 200th year of incorporation for Corinth. The actual date of the incorporation is June 21, 1811 and special festivities are being planned for June 21, 2011 to mark this historic event. There are also plans for other events throughout the 2011 year such as a parade and fireworks the weekend of July 15-17. The Historical Society will also be presenting a Bicentennial Baby quilt to the first child born in 2011. FMI: Corinth Historical Society & Museum, PO Box 541, Corinth, Maine 04427.

FALMOUTH

This was the inaugural year giving official guided tours of the Falmouth Historical Society Museum. The tour presents the history of Falmouth (using historical maps), the history of the farmhouse and a tour of the house including its many artifacts. The season started with with Opening Day on June 8th and tours each Saturday starting from June 19 through September 18. In addition, many special group tours attended tours on other days of the week.



Rod Duckworth, Chairman of Docents at Falmouth Heritage Museum, shares the history of the house with Roberta Johnson (left) and Ann Chilton (right), visitors from Philadelphia at Maine Heritage Day, Sept. 11, 2010.

continued on page 8

DISPATCHES

The last big event was Heritage Day, which just under 45 visitors attended and fun was had by all. Our thanks go to the wonderful "Founders Group" of Docents and Greeters who volunteered this first year. Our volunteers are: Sheri & Mayer Fistal, Diane & Fred Howe, Donna Little, Hannah Russell, Maytha Southard, Dorothy Ryan, and Betty Winslow.

FAIRFIELD

In June 2010, the **Kennebec Valley Community College Archive** initiated an Oral History project to further capture the institution's history. To date, two interviews have been conducted with several more in various stages of being arranged. The goal is to conduct up to twelve interviews each year.

In July of 2010, the KVCCA became a contributing member of the **Maine Memory Network** (<http://www.mainememory.net/>). With the initial posting of 36 images from the Maine School of Practical Nursing Collection, the archive has joined over 200 organizations from across Maine in support of this amazing project of the Maine Historical Society.

NEW GLOUCESTER

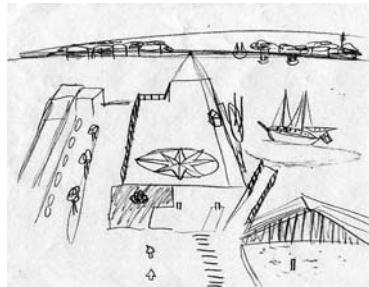
Work has begun on the stabilization of the 1824 Herb House at the **Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village**. Sills are being replaced in the second stage of work. Sheathing was removed and a treasure trove of items was discovered behind the sheathing and under a flight of stairs—a trove that included an 1850s Shaker seed box. The project is being funded by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission under their part in the Maine Community Grant Program.

NORTH HAVEN

Supported by a \$1,000 grant from the Maine Humanities Council, the **North Haven Historical Society** was able to exhibit about twenty island-made quilts this past summer. Ten of the quilts were historic or antique, and ten were contemporary quilts created by children from the school and women on the island. Serving as consultant was Jean Bake White, who gave several gallery talks, and helped island residents to learn more about their own historic quilts on two "Quilt Share" evenings.

PEAKS ISLAND

Aye Matey! Maritime lore abounds along the coast of Maine, and Casco Bay is no exception. In mid-July ten middle schoolers ages 11-14 set sail for the Fifth Maine Regiment Museum on Peaks Island to explore the lives of pirates and privateers in the museum's first ever History Comix Camp. Over a five-day period, campers traveled around Portland Harbor to view the seascape from different vantage points and learn the connection to the history



Camper's perspective of the inner harbor from atop the Casco Bay Lines garage.

of piracy and privateering locally. Under the expert guidance of illustrator Jamie Hogan and cultural historian Patricia Erikson they gained a whole new perspective of their front yard—Portland Harbor—while developing their art, history, and writing skills. By week's end each camper used his or her new knowledge and drawing skills to weave a tale and create an original 'zine (comic story) which they then exhibited for friends and family at the Fifth Maine Regiment Museum. The enthusiastic campers thoroughly enjoyed their adventure and look forward to History Comix Camp's new theme next year. Check out Jamie's blog at <http://jamiepeeps.blogspot.com/2010/07/epic-tale-of-history-comix-camp.html> for a fuller account of their artistic process.



The campers at Fort Gorges

ROCKLAND

From November 8 through November 29, Adelson Galleries in New York City will host an online auction of museum quality art works in support of the **Farnsworth Art Museum's** campaign for the Andrew Wyeth Memorial Endowment. The works to be sold have been generously donated by artists, collectors, and philanthropists with an interest in sustaining the mission of the Farnsworth. The live auction preview, to be held in the gallery, will begin November 8 and culminate in a special evening celebrating the life and artistic legacy of Andrew Wyeth on Monday, November 29th. The campaign aims to raise \$12 million, the income from which will fund the maintenance and operation of four of the Farnsworth Museum's properties: the Olson House in Cushing, Maine, and the Wyeth Center, Wyeth

Study Center, and Wyeth Research Center in Rockland. FMI: (212) 439-6800 / www.adelsongalleries.com.

SACO

The **Dyer Library and Saco Museum** are proud new hosts for Kinderkonerts, the Portland Symphony Orchestra's popular series of concerts for kids. Four performance days have been scheduled at the DLSM through the school year: Monday, October 25 (Strings: The Story of Abbie Burgess) at the Saco Museum; Monday, February 7, 2011 (Woodwinds: The Nature of Woodwinds) at the Saco Museum; Wednesday, March 23, 2011 (Brass: Brought to You by the Letter "B") at the Dyer Library; and Monday, May 23, 2011 (Percussion: Sounds All Around) at the Dyer Library. Performances are at 9:30, 10:30, and 1 p.m. each day. All are welcome; contact the PSO at 207-773-6128 ext. 308 or www.portlandsymphony.org for information or to buy tickets.

The library and museum are also recipients of a \$25,000 grant from the Wyeth Foundation for American Art to support the preservation and interpretation of its Moving Panorama of Pilgrim's Progress. This rare, 8 x 850-foot painting on muslin was created in 1851 by such luminaries of American art as Frederic Edwin Church, Jasper Cropsey, Daniel Huntington, and others. The project, which includes conservation of the panorama as well as the creation of a performance replica and a Flash-enabled performance video, has also received support from a Save America's Treasures grant administered by the National Endowment for the Arts. FMI: (207) 283-3861 / www.dyerlibrarysacomuseum.org.

WATERVILLE

Colby College Special Collections is pleased to announce the completion of a WordPress exhibit of images, text and audio from the Wesley McNair Papers. Wes McNair is an acclaimed Maine poet. Special Collections acquired his personal papers in 2006 and receives annual accruals. Using McNair's newly-published collection, *Lovers of the Lost: New & Selected Poems* (David R Godine, 2010), staff scanned and transcribed notebook pages showing the development of selected poems, presenting them online with the final published texts and related audio recordings. The exhibit is accompanied by teaching and learning tools, intended for use by educators and students in public school and college. In this way, McNair's rich archival collection is used to increase understanding of and appreciation for the making of poetry. Please visit the site at <http://web.colby.edu/specialcollections/>. FMI contact Patricia Burdick at Patricia.Burdick@colby.edu or 207-859-5151 •



Anvil Monument in Pembroke Honors “Clairvoyant Physician”

by Gail Menzel

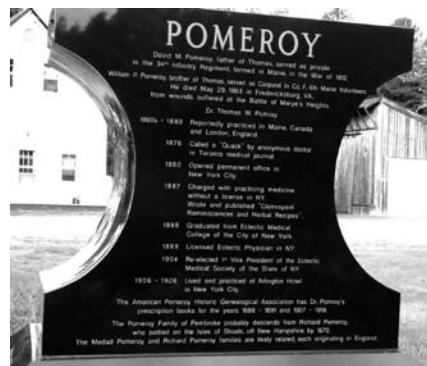
The 2010 schedule of Independence Day events in Pembroke, Maine, included one that was unique in the annals of town celebrations on the Fourth of July—the dedication of a six-ton-plus monument honoring a town resident who died more than 80 years ago. The monument of polished black granite, carved in the shape of a blacksmith's anvil, was erected in a field next to the American Legion building to honor Dr. Thomas W. Pomeroy (1832-1926), known as “Pembroke's Clairvoyant Physician.” It is a gift to the town from William G. Pomeroy of Syracuse, N.Y., founder and president of the American Pomeroy Historic Genealogical Association (APHGA).

Bill Pomeroy, his wife Sandra, and niece Laura Pomeroy traveled to Pembroke from their up-state New York home for the ceremony, along with Nancy Maliwesky, an APHGA researcher who has been studying Dr. Pomroy's life for several years, and her husband Jerry, who filmed the event. The Pembroke Pomeroy Anvil is the eighth that Bill Pomeroy has given to towns in four states where Pomeroy/Pomroy families have lived.

The anvil commemorates Medad Pomeroy, a blacksmith who settled in Northampton, Mass., about 1660 and was the family's American progenitor. Together, the monuments comprise the Pomeroy Anvil Trail that genealogists might follow across much of the nation. It is likely the Pembroke anvil will always mark the most easterly point of the trail and serve as its stepping-off stone.

Pembroke's anvil is inscribed with text on both front and back that highlights events in the doctor's interesting life from his birth in 1832, the year the town was founded, to his death in 1926 and burial in the town cemetery. Dr. Pomroy prescribed herbal remedies for his patients that he learned as a boy from Passamaquoddy natives. He built a mansion in Pembroke where he spent several months every year while practicing in New York City.

The dedication ceremony for the monument on the Fourth began with patriotic music provided by bands that were part of the local parade. Bill Pomeroy formally presented the monument to Pembroke, with Select Chair Milan Jamieson accepting on behalf of the town. Lloyd “Johnny” Leighton, Commander of the American Legion Cobscook Post 59, acknowledged the placement of the anvil on Legion property. Arthur Carter, President of the Pembroke Historical Society, thanked the doctor for his efforts to preserve Pomeroy family history in Pembroke.



The ceremony concluded with comments by Lee Corbett, the current Master of Crescent Lodge of Pembroke, the Masonic chapter Dr. Pomroy joined on July 25, 1868. Dr. Pomroy was a Mason for more than 75 years, and in 1897 served as Master of Darcy Lodge No. 187 in New York City. Historical society researchers believed he was also affiliated with Crescent Lodge, but it was only in late June that this was confirmed through the efforts of member George L. Carter of Tyngsboro, Mass., who discovered and photographed a rare book in the Boston archives of the New England Historic Genealogical Society. Printed in Portland in 1872, the book by John C. Walker is a history of the Pembroke lodge from 1854 to 1870.

Though the doctor's Pembroke mansion burned to the ground in the 1940s, a glimpse of its Victorian architectural style may still be seen in

a small home that sits on the riverbank below the hilltop where it was located. At the time of the fire, the “pool house”—where the doctor and friends played billiards—on the property was moved to the street below to save it. The visitors from Syracuse enjoyed the tour of the home, kindly provided by the current owner, as well as a tour of the mansion grounds where foundations and granite walls still attest to its existence.

In his remarks, Bill Pomeroy mused about the life of the colorful character who claimed he was in a “clairvoyant trance” when he prescribed herbal remedies for the ailments of his patients. Sometimes called a “quack” and once accused of practicing medicine without a license, the doctor was idolized by many who attributed remarkable cures to the treatments he prescribed. As the monument donor said in his presentation, “So how did a guy from a large family, without the benefit of higher education, who worked as a semi-skilled laborer in a local ironworks in eastern Maine, become a well-known, wealthy physician with offices in the Arlington Hotel in New York City?” Perhaps the text engraved on the anvil monument summarizing Dr. Pomroy's life will inspire future students of history to continue the search for an answer. As Alexander Pope reminds us, “The proper study of mankind is man.”

The installation of the Pomeroy Anvil monument in Pembroke involved more than two years of planning and several visits by APHGA representatives and contractors from Syracuse, as well as local coordination with town selectmen, the American Legion post, the Masonic Lodge, and others, with the Pembroke Historical Society acting as liaison among the interested parties. The society had earlier reprinted copies of Dr. Pomroy's 1881 autobiography, *Clairvoyant Reminiscences and Herbal Recipes*. The town has pledged to maintain the grounds around the monument, and the historical society plans to install plantings to enhance the setting. •

A Very Merry Museum and a Happy Historic House!

A round-up of holiday events at our member institutions.



The Mason House dining room decorated for the holidays.

Christmas at the Mason House

*Bethel Historical Society
December 9, 6 to 8 p.m.*

Enjoy music and refreshments in the 1813 Mason House period rooms, decorated in traditional mid-nineteenth century style and illuminated by candles! 6:00 to 8:00 PM; 14 Broad Street, Bethel; FMI: (207) 824-2908

Holiday Open House

*Boothbay Region Historical Society
December 4, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.*

On December 4, the Boothbay Region Historical Society will hold an open house from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the museum located at 72 Oak Street, Boothbay Harbor as part of the Harbor Lights Festival. In addition to books, tote bags and other items for sale, visitors may purchase raffle tickets for an original woodcut of the Boothbay Peninsula donated by Villard Studios of Boothbay Harbor. Although the winning ticket will be drawn during the open house, ticket holders need not be present to win. FMI call 633-0820, Wednesday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., or visit www.boothbayhistorical.org.

Holidays Past: Sixth Annual Festival of Trees

*Dyer Library and Saco Museum
November 27 through December 31*

Don't miss this popular community event! Dozens of magnificently decorated trees and wreaths will be displayed and raffled off to benefit programs at the library and museum. The Festival also includes a gingerbread village, visits with Santa, and many other events and activities for all ages throughout the month

of December. Admission to the Festival of Trees is FREE thanks to the generosity of many sponsors. The Festival opens on Friday, November 26 at 5 p.m. with a public tree-lighting ceremony at the Saco Museum and will run through New Year's Eve. The Dyer Library and Saco Museum are located in the heart of Saco's historic downtown district at 371 Main Street, Saco, U.S. Route 1. FMI: (207) 283-3861 / www.dyerlibrarysacomuseum.org.

Share the Wonder Holiday Festival

*Farnsworth Art Museum
November 27, 10 a.m.-1 p.m*

In conjunction with Rockland's annual Festival of Lights, the Farnsworth Art Museum is hosting the fifth annual Share the Wonder Holiday Festival on Saturday, November 27, 10 am-1pm. The traditional presentation includes a wonderland display of holiday artifacts built around a magnificent model train set. Family activities as well as museum admission will be free of charge for the entire day. The 2010 Share the Wonder celebration is underwritten by a grant from the Wyeth Foundation. FMI: (207) 596-6457 / www.farnsworthmuseum.org.

Christmas at Norlands

*Washburn-Norlands Living History Center
December 4, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.*

The Christmas at Norlands event, held at the Washburn-Norlands Living History Center in Livermore, is a great chance to get a first look at recent rebuilding efforts (see page 14). Tours of the interior of the "new" farmers' cottage—rebuilt after the devastating fire in 2008—will take place during the event. FMI: 207-897-4366 / www.norlands.org.

Christmas Bazaar

*North Haven Historical Society
December 5*

The North Haven Historical Society will participate in North Haven's annual Christmas bazaar in December. NHHS will have a table where they will sell copies of the yearly NHHS calendar, reproduction maps from 1859, and a number of Historical Society publications. FMI: (207) 867-4752 / nhhist@midcoast.com.

Happy Holidays!

"Presque Isle and the 1959 National Christmas Tree"

Presented by the Presque Isle Historical Society, December 7, noon

On December 7 at 12 noon, the Presque Isle Historical Society will be providing a FREE presentation on the campus of Northern Maine Community College, 33 Edgemont Drive, Presque Isle, Maine. In 1959, the National Christmas Tree in Washington, DC was provided by the Alice Kimball farm in Presque Isle, Maine, marking the first time ever the national tree came from east of the Mississippi. The Presque Isle Historical Society also has available to schools and organizations a free presentation on "A Victorian Christmas—current holiday traditions from the Victorian era." This presentation includes participants making their very own Victorian Christmas ornament. Supplies are furnished. FMI please contact Kim Smith, Presque Isle Historical Society, pihistoricalsociety@hotmail.com; or (207) 762-1151.

Shaker Christmas Fair

*Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village
December 4, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.*

Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village in New Gloucester will host the Shaker Christmas Fair on Saturday, December 4th from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The fair is a fundraiser not only for the museum, library and village needs, but it also underwrites the Shakers' annual gifts to local needy families. FMI: (207) 926-4597 / www.shaker.lib.me.us.

Winter Festival Open House

*Turner Museum and Historical Association
December 11, 10 a.m.*

The Turner Museum & Historical Association and the Turner Public Library will hold their annual Winter Festival and Open Houses on Saturday, December 11, 2010. The museum will feature local craftsmen, a food sale, our quilt raffle and the sale of the museum's historical calendar for 2011. The library will have the very popular silent auction and crafts for kids, and Mrs. Santa will read stories though the day. Santa will make his usual visit and the new Turner gazebo "on the green" will host Christmas music in the afternoon. Activities start at 10 a.m. Persons mentioning this article will receive a free ticket for the quilt raffle. FMI: (207) 225-2629 / turnermainehistory@yahoo.com. •

SEEN & HEARD



ABOVE: Young soil scientists collecting, exploring, and comparing sand and clay at the L.C. Bates Museum.



The Maine Humanities Council funded the expansion of the L.C. Bates Museum's popular early 1900s children's history programming, "Learning About the Past Through Play." Rosemary is in costume and ready to explore the toys and tools of 100 years ago.



LEFT: On June 14, 2010, the South Bristol Historical Society celebrated the successful completion of its three-year project to restore the S Road School, dedicating the building to "all who came here to teach and to learn."



ABOVE: Digging again at Colonial Pemaquid! Archaeologists from the Bureau of Parks and Lands search newly found early foundation at Colonial Pemaquid. Photo by Herb Watson, New Harbor.



OPPORTUNITIES

New England Museum Association 92nd Annual Conference

*"Museums Matter, Yes They Do;
The Proof Is In the Pudding, Too!"*

November 3-5, 2010,
Springfield, Massachusetts
(Home of Dr. Seuss)

It's not too late! You can register at the door for a single day or the full conference. This year's agenda includes opportunities to hone your professional skills in more than 60 panels and workshops; network with 750+ museum professionals; enjoy terrific off-site, after-hours entertainment at top museums; learn about the latest innovative products and services in our exhibit hall; and get the big picture from keynote speaker Carlo Rotella, author, NPR commentator, New Yorker/*New York Times* columnist, American Studies professor. *New for 2010: Career Conversations*—informal interaction between museum veterans and emerging professionals—and a pre-conference “salon” on Tuesday night—discuss hot issues over cool drinks. FMI: (781) 641-0013 / www.nemanet.org.

New England Archivists Fall 2010 Conference

*"Looking Inward/Looking Outward:
Changing Roles and Expectations in
Archival Settings"*

Keene State College, Keene, New Hampshire
November 5-6, 2010

Archival work has always been an evolving field—it must be, to maintain its place on the modern front of history amidst changes in collections, technology, and our patrons. The technological revolution has spawned new types of collections, new possibilities for managing them, and new expectations in those who use them. Born-digital materials, and born-digital younger patrons, require new strategies and techniques. New possibilities abound, including searching digitized photograph collections, archiving email, processing digital collections, and digitizing images for publication. How can technology facilitate collaboration between institutions? What can archivists learn from established volunteer and donor-relations programs as budgets shrink and our work grows? Even in the sectors of our work that remain constant—disaster preparedness, new generations of patrons, unconventional collections—we can look at new models for successful management. The semiannual NEA meeting

brings together archivists, records managers, special-collections librarians, students, and historians for two days of panel discussions, poster sessions, and workshops. More information and registration materials can be found at www.newenglandarchivists.org.

- Keynote address: “Digital Natives in the Archives,” Richard Sweeney, University Librarian, New Jersey Institute of Technology.
- Reception and screening of the newly restored *When Lincoln Paid* (1912) at Cheshire County Historical Society; guest speaker Professor Larry Benaquist, Film Studies, Keene State College.
- Workshops on identifying and caring for audiovisual materials, Archivists’ Toolkit, and advanced reference and access.
- Panel discussions include email archiving, born-digital collections, digitizing and marketing images, managing volunteers, donor relations, unconventional collections, and more.

Annual Maritime History Symposium Scheduled

Maine Maritime Museum, Bath,
April 30, 2011

Marking local concerns regarding the imminent closure of Brunswick Naval Air Station and complementing our upcoming exhibit *Cold Waters, Cold War: the 20th Century Navy in Maine*, the topic of the 39th Annual Albert Reed and Thelma Walker Maritime History Symposium will be “The Navy and Maine.” The Symposium, to be held on Saturday, April 30, 2011, will cover a broad range of naval topics that had or have an impact on Maine. Naval vessels built in the state, naval seamen from Maine, the defense of the coast and naval action along the coast are among the anticipated topics of discussion. All subjects that fit within the theme of the Symposium will be open for presentation and debate; there will be no time-period limit. Additional details will be published in the next Museum’s quarterly newsletter Rhumb Line and in later communications from the Museum. To propose a speaker or to volunteer to speak, contact curator Nathan Lipfert, lipfert@maritimeme.org, or 207-443-1316, ext. 328.

Maine Civil War Trail Moves Forward

Some twenty-four museums have committed to participating in the trail during 2013. Many others who are not able to mount an exhibit are planning special Civil War-themed programming during the Sesquicentennial years 2011-2015. The Fifth Maine Regiment Museum on Peaks Island is happy to include information about your Civil War programs on the sesquicentennial page of its website and will also post them on the Civil War Trail website which is expected to be up and running next year. Just forward your information to Kim MacIsaac at fifthmaine@juno.com and we'll take it from there.

New Nomenclature Forum on AASLH Website

A new forum on the American Association for State and Local History website is designed to assist current or prospective users of “Nomenclature 3.0,” the latest incarnation of “Nomenclature for Museum Cataloging” (aka, “Chenall”). The newly inaugurated web site provides an introduction to the new edition (which differs significantly from its predecessors), and offers an opportunity for users or prospective users to interact with one another and/or with members of the “Nomenclature Committee” regarding their experience/questions/problems, etc. Check it out and start participating at <http://aaslhcommunity.org/nomenclature/submission>.

History Press Seeks Proposals

The History Press, based in Charleston, South Carolina, specializes in publishing local and regional history titles with a wide appeal. The Press is always looking for new projects to add to its collection of books on Maine’s rich history, and individuals active in local museums are among the Press’s most professional and prepared authors. The History Press is a traditional publisher and handles all parts of the publishing process, including financing, sales, editorial, design and printing, and we compensate our authors with royalties. Its core series of books include Brief Histories, American Chronicles, and True Crime. If you or someone you know has an idea to propose or a book in the works, please contact Whitney M. Tarella, Commissioning Editor, at The History Press, 635 Rutledge Avenue, Suite 107, Charleston, SC 29403 or 843-577-5971, ext. 152. For more information about The History Press, please visit www.historypress.com. •

A Banner Day

continued from page 1

M. Kahn, "Victorian Guild Banners," *New York Times*, August 19, 2010). That column ended with the hopeful statement by Maine Historical Society Assistant Director Steve Bromage that "a consortium of Maine museums is working together to raise funds to participate in the auction." By the end of the month, the news was out that efforts to keep the banners together, in Maine, and in a museum collection had succeeded. But to this day, few know the full story about this remarkable collaboration, which is only the most recent manifestation of the shared vision and commitment of this state's cultural institutions.

*M*ore than 13 years earlier, a similar quandary presented itself to the Maine museum and archives community. In early 1997, Cyr Auctions in Gray, Maine offered the 650-page illustrated journals of John Martin (dated circa 1860-1890), consigned by a private individual. The Cyrs worked with scholar Arlene Palmer Schwind (now curator at Portland's Victoria Mansion) to research the journals and help to enable their placement in a Maine museum. Initial contact was made with the Maine State Museum, and efforts soon also included Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, the Maine State Library, the Bangor Public Library, the Maine Historical Records Board, and the Maine Historical Society, along with several corporations and individuals. Ultimately, in what Maine State Museum Director Joseph R. Phillips described as an "unprecedented" achievement (Joseph R. Phillips, "Unprecedented Cooperation Preserves Historic Treasure," *Maine Association of Museums Newsletter*, April 1997), the journals were purchased for \$45,000, to be jointly owned by the Maine State Museum and the Maine Historical Society.

Phillips, still Director at the Maine State Museum today, sees that collaboration as well as the banner purchase as emblematic of the mutual trust and respect among Maine cultural organizations, remarking in an e-mail, "I believe you would have to search

long and hard to find similar examples in other states." He also cites consortiums like the New Century Community Program, the Maine Art Museum Trail, and Maine Archives and Museums as examples of this shared desire to pool resources and work towards common goals. The Maine Print Project (2006), the Maine Folk Art Trail (2008), the Maine Drawing Project (scheduled for 2011), and the Maine Civil War Trail (2013) are additional examples of collaborative exhibition initiatives. Maine Historical Society Director Richard D'Abate echoed those sentiments in an August 30, 2010 press release about the purchase of the labor banners: "The focus, hard work, and unselfish generosity of the cooperating museums was unprecedented in my experience. I think we owe that to our common recognition that the banners were one of the state's true artistic and historical treasures. They had to be saved."

And yet, enthusiasm and support for the banner purchase came not just from all corners of Maine, but from outside the state as well. The charge was led by the Maine Historical Society, which had worked in cooperation with the Charitable Mechanics Association for years to research and care for the banners (see William David Barry and Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., "Portland, Maine, trade banners of 1841," *Antiques*, September 1984), and had made a significant investment in purchasing storage containers in 2005. Moral support and financial commitments to help the Maine Historical Society purchase the banners quickly came in from many players familiar from the purchase of the Martin journals—the Maine State Museum, Shettleworth, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission—as well as other leading Maine museums like the Maine Maritime Museum, the Portland Museum of Art, and the museums at Bowdoin, Bates, and Colby Colleges. Midway through negotiations among these organizations, D'Abate was contacted by Harry Rubenstein of the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C. Well aware that the Smithsonian had the means to outbid the Maine museum consortium for the banners, D'Abate was relieved when Rubenstein

made it clear that the Smithsonian, while very interested in the banners, would bid on them only if the bidding went higher than the Maine consortium could afford.

"Ultimately it was a good result, though it was nerve-wracking," said D'Abate in September, pointing out that having the Smithsonian's demonstrated interest ended up being helpful in securing and confirming pledges. The final list of contributors included not only Maine museums, but also corporations and individuals like James Julia, L.L.Bean, Diana and Linda Bean, Chris Livesay, Elsie Viles, the Libra Foundation, and an anonymous Boston foundation. "[The Smithsonian's] interest was unequivocal and demonstrated the importance" of the banners, he said. "From their point of view these things were absolutely essential pieces of Americana."

*I*n the end, the consortium landed the winning bid of \$125,340 at the James D. Julia & Company auction on August 26. The banners are now fully owned by the Maine Historical Society, thanks to the outright generosity of the aforementioned organizations and individuals, all of whom donated funds with no expectation of any direct benefit to themselves. Immediate plans for the banners include a full examination by a conservator in order to determine their materials (it is unclear whether they are silk or a high grade of linen) and condition and make recommendations for their treatment, storage, and display. Funding for the conservation survey will come in part from a conservation and exhibition fund established as part of the acquisition effort.

A full-scale exhibition and a publication of the banners are also on the "to-do" list. In fact, D'Abate hints that the Smithsonian may have exhibition plans for the banners as well. If that's the case, Mainers may have to resign themselves to the banners leaving Maine, after all. But knowing now that their permanent home—past, present, and future—is here in Maine, it may be a sacrifice that all are willing to make for the greater good. •

Norlands Rising From the Ashes

PART THREE OF THREE ARTICLES

by Kathleen Beauregard, Executive Director, Washburn-Norlands Living History Center

Recovering from the disastrous 2008 fire at the Washburn-Norlands Living History Center in Livermore (Norlands) has been described as a “phoenix opportunity.” In 1867, the Washburn family lost their home (Boyscroft) to fire. They wasted no time in building the Italianate mansion (Norlands) that stands today. The process the contemporary board of trustees has undertaken to rebuild the barn and farmers cottage at Norlands might seem foreign to the experiences the Washburns had as they quickly planned, raised funds, cut lumber and hired carpenters, masons and plasterers to accomplish the reconstruction. Today’s challenge of building a structure for public access that will meet safety codes, replicate the details of specific historic buildings, and provide the museum visitor with an immersed living history experience of life on a 1800s farm is a complicated task. But at the core there is a shared love of place and history . . . and a spirit of perseverance.

In this last of a three-part series, I’ll discuss the exercise of aiming the arrow high, a lesson taught to the remarkable Washburn children by their mother, Martha Benjamin Washburn.

The first weeks following the 2008 disaster at Norlands were filled with quick decisions about how best to protect the remaining collections and buildings. Weeks and months of sorting through debris, cleaning, and documenting and assessing damage were interjected with grief, regrets, and the questions: Can we rebuild? Should we rebuild? What would we rebuild? But on that rainy night in April as the timbers were blazing, the board released a simple statement to the press: we will rebuild. And we never looked back.

Can we rebuild? The process began with an assessment of resources, including the anticipated fire insurance claim, our capacity to raise additional funds and the existing organizational leadership/management. As cost estimates were presented, it was clear that *Rebuilding Norlands* would require a two-phase approach to allow adequate time to raise the funds needed in excess of the insurance claim. Yet it was more than the daunting task of raising \$500,000 in an economic recession that caused us to pause and ask: should we rebuild?

Great losses slow momentum, at best. The trick, I found, is to look forward while honoring the past. The museum lost so much, but it also was incredibly fortunate. Heroic and skillful firefighters from 11 departments saved the mansion and kitchen and their irreplaceable contents. It was not only seen as possible to recover and continue to provide living

**“Not believing in looking back
on what cannot be helped,
we pressed on to see what might be
done in going forward.”**

—from the journals of
Algeron Sidney Washburn, 1867

history programs, it was unanimous. Norlands is a place that transforms one’s appreciation of the humanities. The mission of the museum, the story of the Washburn family’s achievements, and the impact the living history center has had on students and researchers across the globe could not be abandoned.

“Nothing is impossible,” said the late Billie Gammon, founder of the Norlands Living History Center. If for no other reason than to propel Gammon’s legacy into the future, we will rebuild.

What would we rebuild? We asked ourselves this question early in the process. If you ever find your museum facing a major loss (my sincere wish is that you never do) dust off the strategic plan. Step back from the urgency and look outward at the current strengths, opportunities, resources and challenges. Involve those who come across your path during the recovery. (When we asked people to help us recall the architectural details of the lost buildings, we heard amazing stories of living history “moments” that were created at Norlands.) Examine your museum’s capacity to recover, and be realistic about the pace you can expect. Recovery and rebuilding is incremental, and it takes time. For us, it was the loss of physical property; for other museums it might be the loss of expected revenue or a major turnover in staff. Once the crisis stage passes, take time with your team to plan for the long haul. Think big.

Our board conversations in those first months were energizing and sustain me today. Is the mission still relevant? Are we approaching the strategies to achieve this mission most effectively? Would we use the reconstructed buildings differently than the lost structures were used? Which of the collections are priorities for conservation? What unmet needs could be fulfilled with the new buildings or during the conservation process? How can the process and products support our mission and move us toward our long-term vision for Norlands? If you let it, a disaster can challenge you to revisit what is most important about your museum’s mission.

I hope you’ll keep an eye on Norlands as we embrace this “phoenix experience.” Tours of the interior of the “new” farmers’ cottage will take place on December 4 during the Christmas at Norlands event. The barn foundation is now complete and awaiting funds for the barn frame and roof. The grand opening of the farmers’ cottage is slated for February 2011. Our website is www.norlands.org. You may find us on Facebook or phone 207-897-4366. •

Historical interpreters cook up some “boiled pot” in the former farmers’ cottage kitchen at Norlands. Willi Irish, Dianne Cox, Shelley Cox.
Photo by Ryan Burnham.



Washburn-Norlands Living History Center is a nonprofit museum dedicated to preserving the heritage and traditions of rural life in Maine’s past, to celebrate the achievements of Livermore’s Washburn family, and to use living history methods to make values, issues, and activities of the past relevant to present and future generations.

The 445-acre property is comprised of working land and buildings relating to the site’s role as the nineteenth-century homestead of the Washburn family. It includes a preserved 1828 Universalist meeting house, the Washburn’s mansion, an 1885 granite library built by the Washburn brothers, eighteenth-century cape, sap house, carriage house, and restored one-room school house.

MAINE ARCHIVES & MUSEUMS

PURPOSE

Maine Archives and Museums is a membership organization whose purpose is to develop and foster a network of citizens and institutions in Maine who identify, collect, interpret and/or provide access to materials relating to history and culture.

MEMBERSHIP

Students, trustees, volunteers, entry-level or experienced paid and unpaid professionals, museum and historical society members, the interested public and service providers — all are welcome as members of MAM.

BENEFITS

Quarterly Newsletter

Provides information on funding opportunities; books and publications; statewide museum, historical society, archives news and activities; shared resources; all-volunteer organizations; ideas that work in Maine; computers; conservation; technical questions; ethical matters.

Listings

On the Department of Tourism's Internet/World Wide Web Home Page (free!).

Annual Conference

Opportunities to gather with fellow professionals, volunteers and other colleagues in the state to share ideas, network and review and acquire the skills to manage our state's cultural resources.

Regional Workshops

Conference topics listed above are also available as local and regional workshops to make attendance easier and to tailor needs to local issues and groups of societies, museums and archives.

Discounts on Museum and Archival Supplies

Offered to all MAM members by Brodart, Gaylord, and University Products.

JOIN/RENEW TODAY!

Your support and participation enable MAM to provide ever-improved services to Maine's cultural community of historical societies, archives, museums and galleries. We have very important work to do. By working together, we can realize our vital dreams and visions.

★ JOIN MAINE'S CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS E-MAIL LIST!

This is a great opportunity to share with others what we are all doing and to get information about problems, resources, grant opportunities, and more.

Maine's cultural community has an e-mail based discussion forum available through the Internet. Intended for archives, museum, historical society, preservation, arts, library, etc., organizations, their professional staff and active volunteers, the Maine Cultural Organization List Serve is a way of keeping in touch. If you're not familiar with this type of thing, it's a way of sending an e-mail message to everyone who has joined "the list." When you join, you also receive any message posted to the list by others. You can read, ignore, or respond as you please. You need to subscribe before you can send and receive list messages.

To subscribe, point your web browser to <http://lists.maine.edu/archives/mcultr-l.html>. Click on "Join or leave the list," and follow the directions. Then, whenever you send mail to the list at MCULTR-L@lists.maine.edu, all subscribers will see your message and will be able to respond to the list in general or to your own address. If you have problems subscribing, e-mail janet.roberts@maine.gov.

Maine Archives and Museums – Membership Application

Renewal_____

RETURN TO: Maine Archives & Museums • P.O. Box 5024 • Augusta, ME 04332-5024

New_____

Tel. 207-441-1410 • Fax 207-621-8048

Address change?_____

Membership Year is January-December. Applications received in Oct., Nov., Dec. will include the following year.

Name _____

Institution _____ Type (historical society, archive, etc.) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ County _____

Tel. _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

Interested in serving on a committee?

- ___ Membership
- ___ Finance/Development
- ___ Long-Range Planning
- ___ Conference/Programs
- ___ Marketing
- ___ Maine Heritage Day
- ___ Newsletter
- ___ Regional Rep.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Personal:

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$40
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$75
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$150

Institutional Memberships (based on museum and/or archive annual budget):

<input type="checkbox"/> 1A: \$0 - \$15,000	\$25 (1 conf. or wksp. attendee at member price)
<input type="checkbox"/> 1B: \$0 - \$50,000	\$40 (up to 4 conf. or wksp. attendees at member price)
<input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 - \$100,000	\$50 (unlimited conf. attendees at member price)
<input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 - \$500,000	\$75 (unlimited conf. attendees at member price)
<input type="checkbox"/> Over \$500,000	\$150 (unlimited conf. attendees at member price)

Send names of friends or colleagues — individuals, associations and/or institutions — that might need or want MAM!



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Maine State Museum Adds Important Late 20th-Century Materials to Collection

by Sheila McDonald

On April 15, 2010, long-time Stinson Seafood employees (from l. to r.) Nancy Harrington, Lela Anderson, and Mytress Harrington packed the last three sardine cans processed in the United States. These three cans and other objects from Stinson's have been added recently to the Maine State Museum's collections as a result of efforts to collect late twentieth-century materials.

Photo courtesy of Alton West.

HISTORICAL MATERIALS from the distant past comprise the bulk of most collections in Maine's museums and historical societies. But what about objects from the past decade, 25 years, or 50 years? Do those materials have places in museum or historical society collections?

The Maine State Museum has often faced questions, debates, and quandaries about just this issue as donors offered items for the collection that dated from post-World War II Maine life and culture. To help guide the debate about whether these objects fit into the museum's collecting mission, Maine State Museum staff developed an addendum to the collections policy that specifically addresses the acquisition of recent materials. Among other guidelines, this policy stipulates that recent materials must reflect what was characteristic or unique to Maine people and their stories, and they must focus on universal activities within a Maine context.

Careful use of this policy has led to the museum's recent acquisition of several important collections relating to Maine life and culture in



the 20th century. These include materials from the recently-closed Stinson sardine cannery in Prospect Harbor; two laptop computers from the state's pioneering initiative to provide laptops to seventh graders; objects from the Perry Greene Kennels in Waldoboro, unique breeders of Chinook dogs; a collection of documents, objects, and media pieces from ten-year-old Samantha Smith's historic trip to the Soviet Union; items from the Worcester Wreath Company's project to provide wreaths to graves in Arlington National Cemetery; and several animal taxidermy specimens relating to hunting activities by a master Maine guide and hunting camp owner.

Many of these collections have already been the subjects of recent exhibition and public education activities at the Maine State Museum.

More will follow as these collections and their richly detailed stories about Maine life and culture in the late 1900s are preserved in perpetuity in the museum's collections. •