



Maine Historical Society

COLLECTING • PRESERVING • PRESENTING THE HISTORY OF MAINE

Spring 2005

In the Main Gallery: Buzzing and Biting

What would a trip to the Maine woods be without that familiar and annoying buzzing, swatting, and scratching? And what would an exhibit about the Maine woods be without some bugs? The accounts of Maine woods journeys featured in *Umbazooksus and Beyond: The Maine Woods Remembered*, the current exhibit in the MHS gallery, all wax poetic about pesky insects.

Henry Withee, who paddled the Allagash in 1911, wrote:

A little while after we had gone to bed, the impression of an enchanted region was further carried out by the attack of thousands of evil spirits in the form of "no-see-ems" which crawled through the fine-meshed screens over our heads. They bit with such fierceness that we ran in agony from the tent and sought refuge by the camp-fire.... We were well supplied with dope, but it seemed to serve for the little pests as sauce for our meat.

The adventurers usually came away with thoughts about the beauty of the natural environment of Maine, or the personal challenges encountered, or the solitude of the woods. Still, they wrote about insects.

Thanks to Charlene Donahue, Forest Entomologist for the Division of Forest Health and Monitoring of the Maine Forest Service, *Umbazooksus and Beyond* features historic black flies, mosquitoes, and no-see-ums, collected and pinned by Forest Service employees.

The good news is, these insects no longer bite.



Black fly



No-see-um

In the Showcase Gallery: Recent Acquisitions



Hooked wool rug by Barbara Merry (born c.1923) from Swanville, Maine. Her distinctive style often led to recreation of familiar rural scenes.

Currently on view in the Showcase Gallery is an extraordinary sampling of artifacts that have been acquired by MHS over the past two years. The range and quality of all the acquisitions have been outstanding; unfortunately we can only present a fraction of them.

Among the items on display are a circa 1845 Portland-made, painted side chair, a Victorian mirror and towel rack made in the workshops at the Maine State Prison, and a scenic hooked rug from Swanville, Maine made circa 1970, to name but a few.

The Maine Historical Society is constantly receiving new additions to the museum and library collections. There were over four hundred acquisitions made in the year 2004 alone, either by gift or, less frequently, by purchase. The size of each gift ranges in scale from single items — a single manuscript letter, or a single painting — to major collections with hundreds or even thousands of items — the collection of Central Maine Power, for instance.

Collecting for the museum and library is perhaps one of the most important and dynamic activities of the Historical Society. It involves our extremely generous donors who place their trust in our ability to care for the collections, trustees who work to provide the necessary resources, and staff who evaluate, research, catalog and make collections available to our audiences. If you would like to know more about the collections or our collecting policies, please contact John Mayer, Curator of Museum Collections or Nicholas Noyes, Director of Library Services. Perhaps you might like to join the Friends of Collections, a group who provides funding to help acquire and conserve collection objects. Let us know of your interests.

A 2003 grant from Linda Bean Folkers provided the funds to build the Showcase Gallery. Please be sure to tour this gallery, and see some of the Society's most recent acquisitions, on your next visit.

Ceramic pitcher made by English Wedgewood pottery works, 1880. Pitcher is decorated with a portrait of Longfellow and selections from his 1877 poem, "Keramos."

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Portrait of Nathan Cushman by Joseph B. Kahill (1882-1957). See article on Page 4 about the Cushman Baking Company, founded in Portland by Mr. Cushman in 1914.

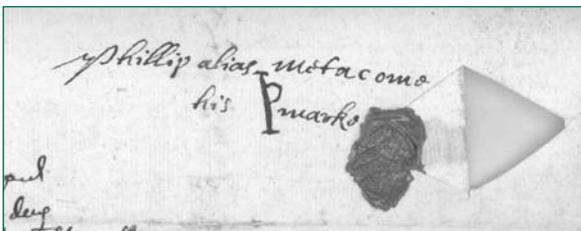
Ceramic pitcher made by English Wedgewood pottery works, 1880. Pitcher is decorated with a portrait of Longfellow and selections from his 1877 poem, "Keramos."



PHILLIP alias METACOMET of Pokanoket.
Engraved from the original, as Published by Church.

Engraving of King Phillip, also known as Metacom, a war chief of the Wampanoag Indians. He sought to live in peace with the Massachusetts colonists, adopting a European name and western dress. After trading away land and armaments, hostilities broke out. He was killed in 1676 by another Indian who purportedly was paid by colonists. His wife and son were then sold as slaves in the Caribbean.

long interest in collecting autograph letters and documents, particularly those relating to the history of the United States. This autograph collection includes documents and



Phillip's mark on a transfer of land ownership document, Fogg Collection

Declaration of Independence, and a complete collection of presidential and vice presidential autographs through Grover Cleveland. Hundreds of other important letters and documents signed by such notables as John Calvin, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Drake, William Blake, William Wordsworth and others are included.

Concurrent with re-housing the Fogg collection into archival boxes, folders, and interleaving papers, the collection is also being cataloged into PastPerfect, collections management software. Notes MHS Archivist/Cataloger, Nancy Noble, "This project stands as a model for item level care and cataloging of a very valuable and unique collection which is truly one of the treasures of the Maine Historical Society."

The Historical Collections Grant Program has been a joint project of the Maine State Museum and the Maine State Archives, a Bureau within the Department of the Secretary of State. We appreciate the work of several volunteers on this project: cataloging, Katharine Goepel and Jamie Fors; rehousing: Myron and Gladys Hager and Andrew Fenton.

Society Treasure Given Its Proper Due: **The Fogg Autograph Collection**

The Maine Historical Records Advisory Board recently provided MHS with a \$1969 grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. Its purpose is to preserve and provide better access to collections. MHS is using the funds to support its project: "Re-housing of the John S. H. Fogg Autograph Collection."

Acquired by the Society in 1894, the Fogg autograph collection of 5000 signatures was created by John Samuel Hill Fogg (1826-1893). Born in Eliot, Maine, Fogg graduated from Bowdoin College in 1846. While a student at Bowdoin, Dr. Fogg developed a life-

long interest in collecting autograph letters and documents, particularly those relating to the history of the United States. This autograph collection includes documents and letters signed by Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492, and by English monarchs from Henry VII (1497) to Victoria (1847). There are complete collections of autographs representing all the royal governors of the thirteen colonies, a complete set of the signers of the

MHS receives Grant to Develop Community Heritage Galleries

The Maine Historical Society has received a \$150,000 grant from Jane's Trust, a private foundation in Boston, to fund the *Maine Community Heritage Project*. "This grant builds on the extensive outreach that MHS has done to schools and historical societies throughout Maine in support of the Maine Memory Network in recent years," says Steve Bromage, MHS Director of Education. "We will work with teams from several pilot communities to develop online "community heritage galleries" that draw together and provide access to a variety of resources—including town histories, primary documents, and online exhibits—related to the history of those communities. Eventually, every town in Maine will be able to use tools and resources on www.mainememory.net to develop their own local history web site within Maine Memory." *Stay tuned for more details!*



(above) Glass negative: Maine Centennial 1926, Governor Carl E. Milliken and Governor Neptune canoeing at Deering Park, Portland, Maine

From the Collections of the Maine Historical Society...

INNOCENT INTERLUDE:
Scenes of Life in Portland, Maine, 1940-41.

An extremely rare color film record of Portland in the 1940's.

VHS. 60 minutes.
Available for purchase at the Maine Historical Society, 489 Congress Street. 774-1822.
www.mainehistory.org

INNOCENT INTERLUDE

Now Available!

Several years ago, the City of Portland donated a remarkable set of color films to the Maine Historical Society. The films — which document life around Portland in the early 1940's — had been discovered in the attic of City Hall in the early 1990s

and then sat on a shelf for the better part of a decade while the city went about its business and tried to figure out where they belonged.

Initially it wasn't clear exactly what was in those films or how special they were. They came to Maine Historical in a cardboard box, seven cans of 16mm film, vaguely labeled with masking tape. MHS applied for and received a grant from the National Film Preservation Foundation to have the film stabilized and to have viewing copies made.

It was then that MHS staff members were finally able to screen the film and our story really begins. The film captures a remarkable array of life around the city: longshoremen unloading ships on the waterfront; regattas; a soap box derby on Park Avenue; baseball, softball, swan boats, and ice skating at Deering Oaks Park; aerial views of the city; snow plows; the removal of trolley tracks from Congress Street, and many other subjects. It documents how people worked and played more than sixty years ago and documents the appearance of numerous locations around the city. Given its age, the quality of the film and of the camera work is amazing.

The premiere public screening of the film in November 2003, with live narration from historian and State Representative Herb Adams, turned into a major event in Portland: crowds of people lined up on Congress Street to get into Maine Historical, and hundreds of people saw the film here in encore screenings over the next several weeks. The audience provided great information and feedback: they recognized faces, told of participating in some of the events captured on film, and shared numerous memories.

There was huge demand from people and organizations who wanted to purchase copies of or screen the film but, at that point, we had very little information about the film and there hadn't been enough research done to allow us to package and distribute it. Research began in earnest.

A team of researchers carefully reviewed the film, talked to longtime city employees, and read through city newspapers of the era. Many of the scenes in the film have now been identified and dated. Many questions linger: Who commissioned the film, why were they taken, and how were they used? The current best guess is that the films were taken by the Parks and Recreation Department and/or the Department of Public Works. Parts of the film were clearly edited, and they demonstrate a number of municipal activities (snow removal, sewer building, track removal) very effectively, and show off the city's parks and facilities.

The product of this effort, *Innocent Interlude: Scenes of Life in Portland, Maine, 1940-41*, with captions, music, and narration by Historian Joel W. Eastman, will be screened regularly throughout the Winter and Spring and is now available at the Maine Historical Society Museum Store. *Innocent Interlude* provides a rare color, moving glimpse of life in Portland in the years just before World War II, and is destined to become an invaluable resource for students, scholars, and the people of Portland.

Tintypes, Ambrotypes, Daguerreotypes, & Cyanotypes

Photos of All Types!

(left) Lantern slide: Children's Gate, Longfellow Garden Club Collection, c.1930

(below) Album photograph, Fraternity Club, George F. Talbot, 1873



Perhaps the largest in-state collection of Maine-related photographs available to the public is housed at the Maine Historical Society's Research Library. With approximately 130,000 items, the collection includes many forms of photography beginning with images created in the mid-19th century up to and including modern day photographs and digital images.

Kinds of photographs include tintypes, ambrotypes, daguerreotypes, cyanotypes, glass negatives, lantern slides, photographic prints, postcards, stereographs, slide collections, digital images, albums and scrapbooks containing photographs.

This excerpt from our recently printed **Guide to the Photograph Collections** (ask for a copy at the Library desk) gives just a hint of the huge undertaking known as the **Collections Development Initiative**. A recent inventory conducted by Photo Curator Frances Pollitt and interns Brittany Hopkins and Jackie Mosher reveals the immense scale of the MHS photograph collection.

We invite you to come in and browse through the collection, or visit Maine Memory Network, where approximately 4,000 of these photographs may be seen online at <http://www.mainememory.net>. It is also possible to purchase digital copies of many of these photographs by contacting the Image Services Department.



Delivery wagon, Cushman Bakery c.1920; photographer unknown.

Folks in Maine know how to appreciate a good loaf of bread. We love our Nissen sandwich bread, our crusty bread-bowls full of fish chowder, and our B&M brown bread in a can at a down-home baked bean supper. In Portland alone, we have a plethora of bakeries and bread companies that produce enough pastries, cakes, pies and other bready delicacies to satiate the carbohydrate cravings of all of Southern Maine. Before there was Borealis, Standard and Foley's however; one name in Portland bread reigned supreme: Cushman's Baking Company.

Longtime Maine residents may remember the 1960's jingle: "*Cushman's, Cushman's; basket full of Cushman's...*" and some may even recall Cushman's famed home-delivery service that brought fresh loaves of bread, pastries, cakes and pies directly to your door. Indeed, Cushman's had become a baking empire by the 1960's, a company that developed from very meager beginnings at the turn of the century to later become a pioneer in the New England baking industry.

New York baker Nathan A. Cushman relocated to Portland in 1908. Upon arriving, he immediately began on the expansion of his thriving White Plains baking company to include a Portland factory. In White Plains, Cushman had been particularly successful in selling French-style breakfast rolls, and it was his intent to introduce this product to the Maine market.

Cushman's Baking Company opened in January of 1915. The facility was located on the corner of Elm and Kennebec Streets, across from the then defunct Portland & Worcester Line railroad station. The factory was modeled after the state-of-the-art bakeries in New York City, and therefore was equipped with the most modern machinery, able to produce 1,800 perfectly baked loaves an hour. The loaves were then delivered fresh to the doors of customers using horse-drawn wagons that traveled throughout the city on six routes.

Cushman boasted of using the finest ingredients available, never substituting synthetics such as plaster of paris or ammonia in to his recipes, which would compromise the quality of his baked goods. The Maine market proved to be less than receptive to Cushman's product however; despite its famed wholesome goodness. The French and Viennese breakfast rolls popular in New



Clerks, Cushman Bakery Store #3, c.1946; Sullivan Photo Services photograph

Cushman's Bakery: The Story Behind the Portrait*

*"Cushman's, Cushman's;
basket full of Cushman's,
merrily singing as we go.
Cushman's has bakery goods galore;
and delivers them to your door!"*

York were not to the taste of Mainers, who were accustomed to having doughnuts for their morning meal. Even the fresh-baked loaves did not sell as Nathan Cushman had expected. Women continued to make labor-intensive homemade loaves rather than opt for the convenience of Cushman's home delivery, for it was believed that only lazy and neglectful housewives did not make bread for their families.

Cushman's suffered financial losses for the first four years of operation before turning a profit. Nathan Cushman was forced to institute numerous changes in his company such as discontinuing the hard rolls in favor of doughnuts and biscuits, distributing free samples, and making

each of his delivery drivers independent businessmen who profited individually by purchasing baked goods at a discount to sell them to customers along their delivery routes. Furthermore, Cushman introduced the practice of profit sharing in order to give his employees some additional incentive to see the company flourish.

The profits at Cushman's Baking Company began to skyrocket largely due to the wartime rationing of goods such as flour and sugar. With this sudden monetary influx Cushman expanded his enterprise to include a shop on Congress Street and retired his wagon delivery service to employ more than 200 trucks that distributed goods throughout the northeast. From the mid-1920's onward, the success of Cushman's could not be stopped. The baking company's delivery service had become a staple in many New England homes, and its name had become an icon of mid-20th century Americana.

In the early 1960's, home delivery services were in their last stages throughout the country. Cushman's likewise felt pressured to discontinue the service and switch entirely to wholesale. Nathan Cushman thought this transition too difficult for the company, and therefore decided to sell out in 1962. Cushman did not end all business enterprises, for he went on to establish three other very well known companies: Oakhurst Dairy in Portland, the summer resort at Sebasco Lodge, and the Cushman's Bakery in Lynn, Massachusetts.

*See Nathan Cushman's portrait on Page 1, a recent acquisition.
All photos are gifts of Robert and Diane Cushman

The City Awakens – The Arts and Artists of early 19th century Portland, Maine

Coming in June is a fascinating new exhibit presenting an overview of the development of Portland as a major cultural center during the early 19th century. It will showcase an important group of paintings, mostly from the collections of MHS, by artists who worked in the city. The exhibit will also include examples of other decorative arts to provide a broader context for the artists and their works, as well as a broader history of Portland. Quotes from period writers, maps, illustrations, exterior and interior views of local buildings, and examples of locally made decorative arts — all will be on display.

This will be a must see for all the locals — and all their summer visitors!



Miniature likeness of Prentiss Mellen (1764-1840) attributed to John Brewster Jr. (1766-1854), painted about 1800. The artist, a native of Connecticut, was one of the most frequent itinerant painters to visit Portland between the 1790s and 1830s, when he settled in Buxton. Mellen was a patron of the arts and Maine's first Chief Justice.



Please Join Us!

The Maine Historical Society

Spring Gala

Saturday, May 21st, 2005
at

The Woodlands Country Club
Falmouth, ME

With the Phil Rich Big Band

Invitations to follow

CALLING ALL MEMBERS!

The 183rd Annual Meeting of the MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

will be held on

SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 2005
10:00 A.M.

Earl Shettleworth Lecture Hall
MHS 489 Congress Street, Portland

Good Food...Great Program
Mark your calendars



Annual Meeting 2004 at Boothbay Railway Museum: (l to r) Marta Bent, Jim Millinger, and Hannah Russell

Where is This?

Where is the "Empire/Miller Boarding House?"



Any information that you can provide about this photograph would be greatly appreciated. You can mail it to Holly Hurd-Forsyth, Registrar, care of MHS, or email her at hhurd@mainehistory.org. The first person to provide us with documentation identifying this photograph will receive a copy of the book, *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth* by Laurel Thatcher Ulrich.

Take Some of the MAINE WOODS Home With You

Visit the Museum Store
to find a variety of books,
videos and gifts related to
the Maine woods.

Books include such classics as "We Took to the Woods" by Louise Dickinson Rich and "A Year in the Maine Woods" by Bernd Heinrich. For videos/DVD's we feature a 1930's logging story called "From Stump to Ship," the biography of L.L. Bean, "Dead River Rough Cut," and "Katahdin: Wilderness and Spirit" plus many others.

We are open from 10-5 Monday through Saturday.

**REMEMBER YOUR 10% MEMBER DISCOUNT
IS GOOD AT THE STORE AND ON-LINE AT
WWW.MAINEHISTORY.ORG.**

CORRECTION: The MHS winter newsletter misstated the name of Central Maine Power's parent company. The parent company name is Energy East. MHS received a generous collection in 2002 from CMP and FPL Energy Maine Hydro, LLC, between whom there is no corporate relationship.



MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY *Incorporated 1822*

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Philip H. Jordan, 2nd Vice President
James F. Millinger, Secretary
Philip M. Harmon, Treasurer

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SPRING HOURS

Maine Historical Society

MHS Research Library (ext. 209)

Tues-Sat 10-4:00

Closed Holiday Weekends

Wadsworth-Longfellow House

Open for school group tours: April 1

Open to public: May 1 >summer

Mon-Sat 10-5, Sun 12-5

Museum Exhibits

Feb, March, April: Mon-Sat 10-5

May 1- June 5: Mon-Sat 10-5,

Sun 12-5

Museum Shop (ext. 208)

Feb, March, April: Mon-Sat 10-5

May 1: Mon-Sat 10-5, Sun 12-5

MHS Administrative Offices

Mon-Fri 9-5:00

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Maine Historical Society

489 Congress St.

Portland, ME 04101

Websites:

www.mainehistory.org

www.mainememory.net

www.vintagemaineimages.com

Upcoming Events at The Maine Historical Society

Ongoing

Umbazooksus & Beyond: the Maine Woods Remembered

Exhibit features journals, diaries, and photos from 1890 to 1932.

Mon-Sat, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. through June 5th

Maine Woods Book Discussion Group, led by Candace Kanes, curator of current exhibit

Tuesdays, March 8th, April 12th, May 10th at 6:30 p.m.

March

Discovering the Wreck of the S.S. Portland, with the Portland Harbor Museum

Ben Haskell of Stellwagen Bank Nat'l Maritime Heritage

Thurs, March 10th, 7:00 p.m.

Finding your Female Ancestors, Kathy Amoroso, Maine Memory Network

Sat, March 19th, 10:00 a.m.-noon

New England Crossroads, 8th New England Regional Genealogical Conference,

Holiday Inn by the Bay. Visit www.nergc.org for program details and registration.

March 31st-April 3rd

April

Bzzzz!!! The Maine Woods, Charlene Donahue, Forest Entomologist, Maine Forest Service

Tues, April 5th, 12 noon

Saving the Maine Woods, Jym St. Pierre, Maine Director of RESTORE: The North Woods

Tues, April 26th, 12 noon

Creating a Heritage Scrapbook, Stephanie Heatley, Maine Memory Network

Sat, April 30th, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Annual Spring Gala, Woodlands Country Club

Saturday, May 21st

May

A Genealogy Research Trip to Boston, NEHGS and Mass State Archives

Thursday, May 19th, 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.

June

Annual Meeting, Maine Historical Society

Sat, June 4th, 10:00 a.m.

The Maine Historical Society, founded in 1822, is a charitable, educational, non-profit corporation which devotes its resources to the discovery, identification, collection, preservation, and interpretation of materials which document the history of Maine and its people.

Maine Historical Society
489 Congress Street
Portland, Maine 04101-3498



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