Kresge Challenge Launches Public Phase of Library Campaign!
What’s in a Name?

A great deal, as it turns out. For over 100 years the library of Maine Historical Society had no name. Or rather its name was Maine Historical Society—the physical embodiment of the entire organization (a place just behind the Wadsworth-Longfellow House). By the end of the 1990s perceptions began to change. With the purchase of a new building MHS was clearly becoming a more complex organization: a research library, a true museum, and a national historic landmark—each articulated in its own building. Freed from the burden of being all things to all people, the library began to reclaim its role as the intellectual, archival (and yes, digital) center of the institution. It began to shine with a new light. As plans for renovation and expansion moved forward, so did the sense that the library’s time for distinction and rebirth had come: its history, promise, and intrinsic worth warranted the gift of a new name. This is why we feel so very pleased (and humble and grateful) to announce that such a gift, rich with historic associations, has finally come. Through an anonymous donation of $1,000,000, (thoughtfully planned and lovingly given) the library of MHS will now be called the John Marshal and Alida Carroll Brown Research Library. (Please see more about the Browns in this issue.) What’s in a name? A key moment in the life of Maine Historical Society.

Richard D’Abate
— Executive Director

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The John Marshall and Alida Catherine Brown Research Library

Through the great generosity of an anonymous donor, the MHS research library will soon be named in honor of a family that played an important role in local, state and national history, not to mention the success and growth of MHS itself: General John Marshal Brown and his wife Alida Catherine Carroll Brown. Here’s a brief biographical outline.

John Marshall Brown was born in Portland, in 1838, a son of Portland businessman John Bundy Brown and Ann Matilda Greely (the J.B Brown Company still thrives, in fact). He attended Portland Academy, Gould’s Academy (Bethel), Philips Academy (Andover, MA), and Bowdoin College. His devotion to Bowdoin lasted throughout his life: Overseer, from 1867; President of the Board, 1882-1892; and Trustee until his death in 1907.

On August 29, 1862, en route to the Maine Historical Society’s 400th anniversary celebrations at Popham, he received word of his appointment as First Lieutenant and Adjutant of the 20 Maine Infantry, and returned immediately to Portland. He sailed with his regiment under Joshua L. Chamberlain on September 2nd and saw his first great battle at Antietam just a few days later. He was at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg (among other battles) and ultimately wounded at Petersburg. He was made Brevet Brigadier General in 1864. It was during the war that he met Alida Catherine Carroll. She was born in Washington, in 1844, the daughter of William Thomas and Sally (Sprigg) Carroll, a prominent Maryland couple. Family lore has it that the two met while Alida was out riding. On being admonished by Brown that a war was on and danger everywhere, Alida allegedly replied that she would ride where she wished. Moved by her spirit, Brown determined to court her, and they were married on December 18, 1866.

After the war, General Brown, as he was called, became one of Maine’s leading citizens: Commissioner to the Paris Exposition, on the staff of Governor Chamberlain, banker and real estate developer, book collector and historian, and a member and leader of many church and civic organizations. One of these was the Maine Historical Society, where he helped advise on the design, construction, and landscaping of what would become the Society’s brand new library, completed in 1907—the same library that will, so happily, now bear his and Alida’s names.

The Browns, long associated with Falmouth estate known as Thornhurst, had 5 children: Sally Carroll Brown, born 1867 and married in 1893 to Herbert Payson, grandson of Rev. Edward Payson, a founder of MHS; Alida Greely Brown, 1870 to 1889 (in whose memory the building that is now St. Mary’s Episcopal Church in Falmouth was built as a memorial chapel); Mary Brewster Brown, born 1876 and married in 1901 to George Strong Derby of Boston; Carroll Brown, born 1881 and married to Amanda Juneman; and Violetta Lansdale Brown, born 1883 and married to Harold Lee Berry in 1906.
Kresge Challenge Launches
Public Phase of Library Campaign!

$7.5 million raised to date!
Library named with a $1,000,000 gift!

Thanks to a challenge grant from the prestigious Kresge
Foundation of Troy, Michigan, we are pleased to announce
that the public phase of our capital campaign to renovate
and expand the MHS Research Library has begun. At work
for two years under the leadership of campaign chair Debbie
Reed, a hard working team of volunteers, board members,
and staff has quietly raised $7.5 million. Included in that
sum is a gift of $1 million from an anonymous donor that
will name the research library after one of Maine’s most
illustrious 19th century couples: John Marshall Brown and
his wife Alida Carroll Brown (for more on the naming see pp
2 and 4). Now the final lap has begun.

WHAT’S IT ALL FOR?
The MHS research library was built a little over a century
ago. Since that time it has become an essential resource for
many thousands of researchers each year who are drawn
to perhaps the most comprehensive historical collections in
the state. It has also become the center for new, innovative
uses of technology that make Maine history accessible to
hundreds of thousands throughout the world. The project
will double the size of the library, correct long-standing
structural and storage problems, and improve the experience
of both staff and public. Work on the library began in
the fall of 2007 with completion set for early 2009. Full
library services are available throughout this period at our
temporary home: 510 Congress Street, Portland.
HOW DID WE GET TO WHERE WE ARE?
The simple answer is that many philanthropic individuals, foundations, and corporations have led the way with outstanding generosity over the past two years. From the start they recognized that Maine Historical Society was not just a venerable institution with extraordinary collections, but one of the most progressive cultural organizations in Maine, with a commitment to statewide access and innovation. The National Endowment for the Humanities awarded a 4 to 1 challenge grant of $500,000, which was quickly matched as giving began in earnest. Many friends reached deeply to make significant leadership gifts, while a few, including the Belvedere Fund of the Maine Community Foundation, made unprecedented donations of $1,000,000 or more. Corporations such Hannaford’s, TD Banknorth, Diversified Communications, Cianbro, and others pledged strong support. It is nearly impossible to adequately express our gratitude for the outpouring of generosity and support we have already received. But there is still a long way to go.

THE KRESGE CHALLENGE
Though we have raised a significant amount of money to date—$7.5 million—there is still a great deal more to do. Now the Kresge Foundation has come forward with a $400,000 challenge to help us finish the campaign. Kresge grants are rigorous, highly competitive, and designed to leverage broad public participation in the final stages of fundraising—always a critical time. This makes Kresge one of the most sought after grants available. “Ensuring the health and vitality of nonprofit organizations such as yours is central to building strong, vibrant communities,” said Kresge president and CEO, Rip Rapson. “We are proud to help advance your very important work.”

To meet the Kresge challenge (and to receive their gift) we must reach a total of $8.7 million by the end of 2008. With this amount in hand, plus long-term financing, we can meet the actual project cost of $9.5 million, which includes construction, relocation, additions to endowment, and campaign costs. It is our ultimate hope, of course, to raise enough money to eliminate the need for loans, but first we must meet the Kresge challenge: $8.7 million or bust. To meet this challenge we will need the help of everyone who understands the value of history in our community and appreciates the role MHS plays.

YOU CAN HELP!
You will shortly receive a letter that contains more information about the campaign. It will either ask for your financial help directly or prepare the way for a call from one of our volunteers. There is room for giving at every level. But yes, there are many appeals upon the land and an infinity of annoying phone calls to resist. We hope you will be patient with us, knowing the importance of this campaign, and be as generous as you possibly can. The future depends on it.

AND WHEN IT’S OVER…?
It isn’t. The renovation and expansion of the MHS Brown Research Library is just the first phase of an ambitious plan to transform the Society over the next ten years. This plan includes endowment growth to support key positions and programs, and the creation of a new, innovative museum of Maine history and culture. Things are just getting interesting; there’s much more to come.

OUR CURRENT VOLUNTEERS
Our success to date has been made possible by many hardworking and devoted volunteers. Though there is still plenty to do and opportunities for many more friends to become involved, the following people deserve our special thanks and recognition: Campaign Volunteers: Barbara Anderson, Bob BaRoss, Eric Baxter, Dodie Detmer, Phil Jordan, Jane Moody, Jane Morrell, Carolyn Murray, Mary Nelson, Debbie Reed, Connie Robinson, Neil Rolde, Laura Sprague, Didi Stockly, John White, Charlie Whittier, Nick Witte. Party Hosts: Eric Baxter, John Day, Talie Harris, Nancy Harvey, Susan and Richard Hennessey, Jeff and Carol Miller, Jane Moody, Margaret and Mason Morfit, Carolyn Murray, Ted and Ann Noyes, Larney Otis, Michael Payson, Debbie Reed, John and Connie Robinson, Imelda Schaefner, Laura Sprague, Didi Stockly, Rory & Linda Strunk, and Martha and Bob Timothy. Thank you all!
Mary Jones, in 1755, stitched into a sampler, “All you my friends which now expect to see a peace of work thus preformed by me cast but a smile on this…” the verse continues, surrounded by geometric designs and graced on the lower half by two figures, an animal, and classical designs of large urns and a pyramid.

Girls and young women stitched many thousands of samples and decorative embroidery pieces during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. Some are simple pieces created for the girls to develop skill in executing a particular stitch and in forming numbers and letters. Many also include verses or moral sayings and most are signed and dated by the makers.

Sewing was crucial training for girls who would need to make and repair household linens, clothing, and other items. They often learned the basics of needlework at home. The samplers helped them with basic skills and practice that would be applied to marking initials and numbers on household items.

Fancier pieces, though, required different training. Girls often learned ornamental sewing at schools, some run by neighborhood women, and others more formal academies or seminaries that taught basics like reading, grammar, spelling and sometimes music and French, as well as needlework.

The ornamental works are signs of economic status as well as the girls’ skill in creating them. Some contain considerable text, detailed floral borders, and images of people, nature, or buildings.

Some, such as the one stitched by Mary Ann Twombly, age 12, of Portland in 1817, are family genealogies or records of marriage, births, and deaths. Hers also offers a verse that concludes, “Teach us the hand of love divine/In evils to discern/Tis the first lesson which we need/The latest which we learn.” She ran out of room for the third line of the verse, placing the “d” over the “nee,” an indication that she was a student learning how to plan her sewing project.

As important as samplers and decorative work were to girls, the practice of needlework declined by the late nineteenth century when girls studied more academic subjects and some began to find work outside the home. In addition, ready-made clothing and linens reduced the need for girls to learn sewing.
All images contributed by Maine Historical Society.

Mary Jones sampler, 1755. Mary Jones stitched into the sampler that she "did this in the 14 year of her age, 1755."

Twombly genealogy sampler. Mary Ann Twombly, age 12, of Portland, stitched this family genealogy in 1817.

Polly Warren sampler, ca. 1800. Polly Warner of Gorham practiced stitching letters on this sampler, but did not complete the alphabet.

Nancy Mansfield sampler, 1801. Nancy Mansfield, age 11, stitched into her sampler, “Our parents exert a prudent care to read our infants mind with proper acquired ease.” (Contributed by Maine Historical Society)
In 2003, Steve Hill, a history teacher at Greely Junior High School in Cumberland (part of MSAD 51, which includes the towns of North Yarmouth and Cumberland) asked Maine Memory Network to help him find local resources about the Civil War for his students to use. As a result of the request, North Yarmouth Historical Society put 12 items relating to James and Luther Lawrence and their service in the Union Army on Maine Memory Network.

The items include photos of each brother, several letters from Luther, (including one written a week before he was mortally wounded), orders and discharge papers for James, and a letter from the soldiers’ father to James.

Luther Lawrence was born on Jan 26, 1840 in Gray, where his grandparents had settled from Groton, Mass., and built a homestead in the early 1800s. He began his military career in the Militia and was among the first men who joined the Union Army when he enrolled with the First Maine Regiment (Co. E) in April of 1861 at the start of the Civil War. After three months, he re-enlisted in the 11th Maine Regiment (Co. H) where he went on to become a Lieutenant and later a Captain of his Company.

Luther’s younger brother James joined the 11th Maine, Co. H in 1864 and they served together until Luther was mortally wounded in the Second Battle of Deep Bottom, Virginia on August 16, 1864.

Fortunately, Luther left a legacy of his experiences during the Civil War as letters written to family members at home. Most of his letters were written to his older brother Frank, who lived in Portland, and a few were to his father, Nathaniel Lawrence of Pownal.

From Luther’s letters we learn that he was intelligent and passionate about his desire to help preserve the Union. He writes his views about slavery, officers (including General McClellan), military strategies, conditions in the camps, health of the men, and details of his travels.

A few years after the Lawrence items went online, a collector in Ohio saw them and contacted the North Yarmouth Historical Society because he had recently acquired some Civil War accoutrements that had belonged to Luther. Eventually the NYHS was able to purchase the Lawrence items with the help of a generous donor. Included were Luther’s haversack, (imprinted Capt. L. Lawrence), belt, bayonet and its leather scabbard, a leather sword drop, a collapsible cup, a musket cartridge box, and a cap box. The society now has a wealth of artifacts related to the Lawrence Family in part due to exposure of the collections of the NYHS on the Maine Memory Network.

Images contributed by North Yarmouth Historical Society.

Luther Lawrence, 11th Maine Volunteer Infantry, Company H, when he was about 20. MMN #9293

Photo: Luther Lawrence items in NYHS collections

The Gazette is published three times a year and contains original research articles about North Yarmouth history.

Facilities: NYHS maintains the Old Town House on Route 9; and houses its archives at Walnut Hill Station, a town-owned building at 463 Walnut Hill Road in North Yarmouth. The archives are open to the public from 9 a.m.-noon on the first Saturday of each month.

Founded 1975:

Mission: “To collect, preserve and share the history of North Yarmouth as well as to promote interest and appreciation of the character of the present town of North Yarmouth and its old houses;

• to maintain, interpret and use appropriately the 1853 Town House;
• to work with Town officials to preserve, maintain and provide access to the historical records pertaining to the people of North Yarmouth.

Collections: The NYHS owns North Yarmouth’s 1853 Old Town House, and holds archival collections dating from ca. 1800 that include documents, manuscripts, ephemera and close to 2,000 photographs reflecting the business, architectural, maritime, family, civic, agricultural, religious and educational history of the town. Important holdings include records of the Civil and World Wars.

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Activities: Eight public programs yearly. At least one program each year is planned collaboratively with an area historical society or town organization.

Membership: 200+ members

Contact: nyhs@maine.rr.com
10 Village Square Road
North Yarmouth, Maine 0409
846-4379
(Katie Murphy, President)
Searching your roots

**Keys to the House:**

How to Research a Property

Curious about who used to own your home? When it was built? Satisfying that curiosity might begin at the county Registry of Deeds, usually found in the county courthouse, and not as daunting as it may first appear.

When land changes hands, a written record, usually a deed or will, is required by law to make the transaction legal. Most prominent at the Registry of Deeds are the index books listing the names of the owners and sellers; the listings reference the book and page of the actual recorded deed. Index books in the Cumberland County courthouse are labeled with the years covered and arranged alphabetically by name. Deeds are indexed according to the year they are officially recorded at the registry of deeds (not by address). Some registries have separate indexes for the grantor (the seller) and the grantee (the buyer), but in Cumberland County they are combined.

Where to begin? First, it’s important to find the year the grantee (possibly you!) most recently purchased the house, looking up the name in the index. There will be listed the grantee’s and grantor’s name, the location of the property, a volume or book number, a page number, and the date of record. The index should reveal what kind of record it is: commonly a mortgage, a warranty deed, a quitclaim deed, or a will. With this information, the actual deed book can be located.

The deed books contain copies of deeds recorded by the registrar. Older books are handwritten. Opening the book to the page referenced in the index, one should find a copy of the deed and description of the property. In the text of the deed should be a reference to the previous deed and where it is filed. This is the important link to the past! This will lead the researcher from one deed to the prior one, back in time.

The records contain a wealth of information. Tracing a property back through the deeds will lead to finding the document showing acquisition of the land without a dwelling. This reveals when the house was built and sometimes who built it.

Other helpful sources are maps, city directories, obituaries, architectural drawings, and photographs, to name a few. The MHS Research Library has a large collection of these documents and a librarian would be happy to assist you in your research.
What’s behind a painting?
Often more than you expect.

Portrait paintings have always been an important part of the MHS collecting interests. When I received a phone call asking if we would be interested in a group of portraits painted in 1840 of Shepard Cary and his family, I was delighted – it seemed to be an obvious match to our collecting interests. After a period of thoughtful consideration, the donation was made, and the portraits along with a small group of family papers came to MHS.

The three portraits in the group included paintings of Shepard Cary (1805 – 1866), an important and colorful figure in Aroostook County who made a living as a lumberman and was active in state and national politics, his wife Susannah Whitaker Cary (1814 – 1871), and William Holman Cary (1779 – 1859), Shepard’s father. Each was signed on the back by the artist A. T. Haddock and dated May 1840, and was in “original” condition – meaning they had been cared for, but had not been conserved or altered.

From a curatorial perspective, signed and dated portraits provide invaluable insights into our cultural and social history. They are benchmarks that aesthetically represent a particular period, capture the personality of each subject, and document the work of a specific artist. Shepard Cary and his family are known figures in Maine history – but little was known of the work of Haddock. His story is just emerging, most notably in his connection to collections in the National Gallery of Art and the New York Public Library.

Albert Tracy Haddock was born in Buffalo, New York in 1818. During the 1830s, he studied with the painter (and inventor of the telegraph) Samuel F. B. Morse. His correspondence from the 1840s includes letters to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and reflects his desires and struggles at making a living as an author and painter. In 1847 he enlisted in the Army and served during the Mexican War, in military expeditions to Utah in the late 1850s, and in the 15th infantry during the Civil War. He served as Maine’s adjutant general from 1852 – 1854. A few paintings and illustrated journals survive from this period in other collections, and reflect his ambition and talent. For some reason, he dropped his family name and became known as Albert Tracy.

Tracy has another connection to MHS – in 1856 he married Sarah Parris, the daughter of Gov. Albion Parris, the first President of the Society.

John Mayer
Museum Curator
Maine Community Heritage Project:

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Maine Historical is seeking applications from Maine communities who are interested in participating in the Maine Community Heritage Project, an innovative, nationally-recognized program that promotes collaboration between local schools, historical societies, and public libraries through the exploration and celebration of local history. The project grows out of the Maine Memory Network (www.mainememory.net), our statewide digital museum, and is being offered in partnership with the Maine State Library.

Over the course of a year (June 2008-June 2009), eight participating communities will work closely with MHS staff to create content-rich websites within the Maine Memory Network dedicated to the history and culture of their communities. These websites—which will include narrative histories of the communities, online exhibits, and hundreds of primary documents—will provide greatly expanded access to information about the history of those communities locally and beyond.

The MCHP will create a partnership model, resources, and a technological infrastructure that will enable other Maine communities to share their history online; foster intergenerational collaboration between libraries, historical societies, museums, and schools; and engage young people as key participants in their community. The project is funded by a major grant from the Institute of Museum & Library Services.

Applications will be accepted through April. For more information, please visit: www.mainememory.net/mchp or call 774-1822.

Moby Dick Rehearsed:

Evening Lecture Series
in Partnership with PCA Greater Performances

HENRY, HERMAN, NATHANTI, AND THE LURE OF THE SEA

Thursdays, March 6, March 20, and April 3, 7 pm

Thursday, March 6, 7 pm
The seaside meets the fireside: longfellow as a maritime poet
Charles calhoun, author, longfellow: a rediscovered life

Thursday, March 20, 7 pm
Moby dick and nineteenth-century american culture
Dr. Joseph conforti, university of southern maine

Thursday, April 3, 7 pm
Pip’s descent: freedom and terror in moby dick

Free and open to the public.
At the maine historical society. 489 Congress street, portland.
For more information, please call 774-1822.

On April 16, The Acting Company, one of the most respected touring repertory companies in the us, will visit the merrill auditorium to stage moby dick rehearsed, the only play written by orson welles. To learn more about moby dick rehearsed or to purchase tickets for the april 16 performance, please visit: http://pcagrepeatsperformances.org/2007-08/mobydick/

Sanford Town Hall ca. 1900, Fred Philpot.
In 2005, the building was turned over to the Sanford-Springvale Historical Society for a museum, which opened in 2006. Contributed by the Sanford-Springvale Society.
Maine Indian Artforms from the Hudson Museum

The native people of Maine have legends that tell how the Creator made Gluskabe who then made the people and taught them how to use the natural resources of their world. He showed them how to weave baskets, build birchbark containers and canoes, and carve. These traditions were central to the survival of the Native People of Maine; they continue as living traditions today.

This exhibition explores the rich and diverse collections of the Hudson Museum and celebrates the craft traditions of Maine’s Micmac, Maliseet, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot tribes.

FEBRUARY 15 – JUNE 1, 2008 • MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
SPONSORED BY: THE BHA FOUNDATION FUND AND THE ELsie A. BROWN FUND

VISIT US ONLINE OR AT OUR MUSEUM SHOP
to see more books and gifts related to our current exhibit
“Gifts From Gluskabe”

Treehouse Puppet with Birds  $19.95
American Chestnut: The Life, Death & Rebirth of a Perfect Tree, Susan Franke  $27.50
The Life and Traditions of the Red Man, Joseph Nicolai  $19.95
Thanks to the Animals, Allen Sockabasin, $16.95
Birch Bark Frames – Assorted Styles $4.95-$7.95
“Frog Monster and Other Penobscot Stories” Dvd. $19.95
Alder Wood Garden Stakes $15.00/set of 6 with marker
Yellowware Teapot $24.95 ; Cup & Saucer $9.95/Set
Assorted Reproduction Arrowheads $0.95
Traditional Native American Arts & Activities, Arlette Borman, $12.95
Birch Bark Canoes- Assorted Sizes $4.95-$9.95

Members receive a 10% discount on-line and in the museum shop