Glooskap looking at the whale smoking his pipe.

Gifts from Gluskabe:
Maine Indian Artforms from the Hudson Museum
ON THE COVER:
Glooskap Looking at the Whale Smoking his Pipe is an illustration made by Tomah Josephs (1837-1914), the Passamaquoddy artist, guide, and community leader, published in 1884 in the book Algonquin Legends of New England by Charles Leland. Josephs’ drawings illustrate the traditional stories and the legends of Glooskap (or Gluskabe), a powerful mythical figure who created the world. The MHS exhibit opening in February will feature objects that reflect the spectrum of Maine Indian traditions.

A Ground Breaking Event – Literally

We’re on our way! By the time you read this we will have broken ground for the expansion and renovation of the MHS research library. We expect construction to take about 14 months, and you can check the progress on HistoryWatch, our construction webcam, which should be available soon on www.mainehistory.org. It’s hard to imagine all the preliminary work it took to arrive at this point. The exhaustive process of design, engineering, and cost estimating has come to an end. The agony of easements, permits, permissions, and approvals is just a memory. The big machines have arrived. But a small voice wonders: “Uh, how will we pay for all this?” We’ve been working hard on that too, behind the scenes: putting together financing, leadership gifts, challenge grants, and all it will take to bring us to the public launch of our fundraising campaign. More to come after the new year!

Richard D’Abate
— Executive Director

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Focus on the Exhibit

Clara Neptune Keezer wakes up early each morning and begins her day making baskets at her home at Pleasant Point on the Passamaquoddy Reservation in Perry, ME.

“I can’t wait to get started. Every night, I go to sleep thinking tomorrow morning, I get to make baskets,” she says.

From brown ash and sweetgrass, Clara makes baskets, building on Maine Indian traditions thousands of years old. She uses molds and tools handed down to her by her grandmother and other family members, and creates a variety of forms—strawberries, blueberries, plums, pumpkins, and corn—and even basketry bumblebees. In 2002, Clara received a National Heritage Fellowship Award from the NEH in recognition of her contribution to our nation’s traditional arts heritage.

Basket making has been part of the daily lives of the people of Maine’s Native American communities for centuries. Using materials from the nearby environment such as brown ash and sweetgrass, Maine Indians made baskets for a variety of uses—some for work, some for domestic purposes, some for sale, and some for decoration.

In the early twentieth century, Maine Indian baskets were popular souvenirs of visits to Maine’s ocean and lakeshore resorts and would be featured in department stores, fairs and specialty shops.

Opening in February, 2008 Gifts from Gluskabe – Maine Indian Artforms from the Hudson Museum will feature over 70 objects that reflect a spectrum of Maine Indian traditions such as basket making, beadwork, and wood carving.

The Hudson Museum is one of Maine’s premier cultural institutions with a rich and significant anthropological collection including many artifacts associated with Maine’s four tribes—the Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Maliseet and Micmac. Founded in 1986, the museum is located on the University of Maine campus in Orono, and serves a wide audience including visitors to the Greater Bangor area, UMaine students and faculty, researchers, and school groups of all types. The museum is undergoing a major renovation and is temporarily closed. Because of this, Maine Historical Society is hosting a special exhibit of artifacts from the Hudson’s collections.
MHS, in partnership with the Maine State Library, has received a National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum & Library Services to extend the Maine Community Heritage Project across the state. The MCHP is an innovative, nationally recognized program that promotes collaboration between local schools, historical societies, and public libraries through the exploration of local history. The $852,000 three-year grant is the largest MHS has ever received for programmatic purposes, and one of the largest that IMLS has awarded in Maine.

This project grows out of field work that MHS staff has done in support of the Maine Memory Network (www.mainememory.net) and a pilot project in Skowhegan, New Sweden, and Mt. Desert Island with funding from Jane’s Trust. Over three years, local teams from sixteen Maine communities—one from each county in the state—will work closely with MHS and MSL staff to create content-rich websites within the Maine Memory Network dedicated to the history of their communities. The teams will conduct an inventory of historical resources in their communities; identify and digitize key historical items; write a narrative history of their community, and create a number of online exhibits on locally significant topics. The websites the teams create will provide a centralized place where people in that community and beyond can go to begin to learn about their unique history. Community groups will receive extensive training and support.

The MCHP will create a partnership model, resources, and a technological infrastructure that will then enable other communities around the state to share their history online. It will also foster intergenerational collaboration between historical societies, museums, libraries, and schools. Students will be key players and full partners in the project. (IMLS has previously recognized MHS as a national leader in the museum field for its successful efforts to engage youth through the Maine Memory Network.)

Project leader and MHS Assistant Director, Steve Bromage, is especially pleased: “This is a wonderful opportunity for us to continue to deepen the many strong relationships we have developed through Maine Memory. It’s a great step forward.”

MHS and MSL will begin recruiting local teams in the beginning of 2008. Local projects will get underway in June.
MHS has partnered with Portland elementary schools since 2005 to provide an intensive study of state and local history based on the museum’s exhibits. On a first-come, first-served basis, 32 third and fourth grade classes from 8 of 10 Portland local schools have participated.

Each school program is carried out over two months, with MHS educators seeing each class four times. A preliminary meeting with teachers outlines the program and helps them begin to plan how to incorporate the program into their classroom practice. Teacher buy-in is vitally important, as the students are working throughout the session on a final project.

This year’s program focused on the current exhibit, Drawing Together: The Arts of the Longfellows. The exhibit, with its emphasis on family connections and abundance of children’s art, has proven accessible to and popular with the students. Students in the program became familiar with Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and his family’s life in Portland and in Cambridge, MA; became adept at using a genealogical chart; and created classroom magazines based on The Secret, a Longfellow family magazine edited by Henry’s daughter Edith when she was 12 years old. One regular feature of The Secret was rebuses devised by Henry, Edith, and other members of the family; students in the program made rebuses based on Longfellow poems.

Each session culminates in a family celebration at MHS. At this big party for all of the classes and their families, the students’ work is on display, and they have a chance to publicly show off their learning.

The Spring 2008 session will be based on the upcoming exhibit, Gifts From Gluskabe: Maine Indian Artforms From the Hudson Museum. Teachers in Portland are hungry for resources on Wabanaki culture, and interest in the program has been both gratifying and overwhelming. Although we are not able to accommodate more than 8 classes for the full program, MHS will offer a teacher-training workshop which will include the lesson plans and materials used by MHS educators, as well as the chance to sign up for the extended, two hour museum visit we provide as part of “Local History/Local Schools”.

A pair of students from Lyseth School came up with this rebus. The answer is a couplet from Longfellow’s poem about Portland, “My Lost Youth.” Their classmates were able to solve it – can you? (often in thought go up and down the pleasant streets of that dear old town)

Can you solve this rebus, created by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow for his daughter’s magazine, The Secret? (pride goes before a fall)
What do the New York Historical Society in New York, NY, the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum in Portland, ME, and the American Civil War Center in Richmond, VA have in common?

They are all currently exhibiting objects borrowed from the collections of the Maine Historical Society. MHS has a long history of lending objects to other collecting institutions for short-term display in their exhibition galleries. This past year has been particularly active, with MHS pieces on loan to twelve museums and libraries in major cities from Maine to Virginia.

A magnificent hand hooked rug made in Center Lovell was recently on display as part of the American Folk Art Museum’s *The Great Cover-Up: American Rugs on Beds, Tables, and Floors* exhibit. The New York Historical Society features a sampler made in Portland in their exhibit *French Founding Father: Lafayette’s Return to Washington’s America*. A Liverpool pitcher once owned by John Pery of Brunswick is part of *Legacy of Yorktown: Virginia Beckons*, currently on display at the Yorktown Victory Center. Closer to home, the Freeport Historical Society borrowed manuscript materials related to the Freeport-built schooner Dash for inclusion in *Shipwrights, Shopkeepers and Privateers: The Enterprising Porter Family*.

Loans such as these represent a healthy collaboration between fellow museums. Both the borrowing institutions and Maine Historical Society benefit from participating. Loan requests will undoubtedly increase as word spreads of the richness and depth of the MHS collections.
The MHS Research Library received two fellows this summer from the New England Regional Fellowship Consortium, a collaboration of 17 major research libraries including the six New England state historical societies, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Mystic Seaport and the business, law and special collections (Houghton) libraries at Harvard. Each $5,000 stipend permits the scholars (usually Ph.D. candidates) to spend at least two weeks at three or more of the member libraries, encouraging the use of unique or rare primary source material not readily accessible elsewhere. Ten fellowships were awarded from 86 applications, so the program is quite competitive.

With most of our manuscript collections now cataloged in the online-accessible Minerva database http://minerva.maine.edu, applicants can search our holdings from home and determine if a visit is warranted.

Adam Jortner of the University of Virginia used the Pejepscot and Kennebec Proprietors’ land records and other material for his topic, “A Political History of American Miracles, 1780-1848”. Also from UVA and a Bowdoin graduate, Kanisorn Wongsrichanalai (known as Kid) used the John Marshall Brown Papers, among others for his “New England Elite: Young Northerners in the Civil War Era.” While it is often said that sons of the wealthy paid substitutes to serve in this war, Kid’s research suggests otherwise.

As in years past, the Fellows volunteered that there was a wealth of material at Maine Historical beyond the time allotted for review. They also found the staff to be most knowledgeable about collections and willing to share information. At the end of their two week stay, each gave a half-hour presentation to the staff, reviewing their findings at MHS.

Nicholas Noyes
- Head of Library Services

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Image #12388, Percival Baxter, manager of the Bowdoin College baseball team is second from the left in the back row, photo c. 1896. Collections of MHS
Talk of the 1930s evokes images of food lines, unemployed people looking for work, belt tightening, government programs, and other economic hardship associated with the Great Depression. While Maine and Mainers experienced a number of economic hardships, that fact does not tell the whole story of Maine in the 1930s.

Another, perhaps surprising, story is the strength and vitality of the arts and artists in Maine during that decade.

In Ogunquit, Charles Woodbury and Robert Laurent both operated art schools and the community teemed with artists and galleries. In Kennebunkport, writer and historian Kenneth Roberts built a new home, “Rocky Pasture,” in 1937 with proceeds from his book *Northwest Passage*, and continued to write from that location. Booth Tarkington, who had won two Pulitzer Prizes, dictated his works at his home, Seawood, near Roberts’ home. Tarkington lived in Maine half the year. Gladys Hasty Carroll of South Berwick published her best-known novel, *As the Earth Turns*, about farm life in Maine, in 1933.

On Monhegan Island, Abraham Bogdanov and numerous others painted during the summer months as artists had since the middle of the nineteenth century. In Surry, a drama school and theater opened in 1929 and continued until 1938, when it took a break for the duration of World War II. In Southport, Lucius Hitchcock worked at his summer home drawing illustrations for books and magazines.

(continued on next page.)
These particular Depression-era arts activities in Maine are chronicled in newspaper articles and accompanying photographs – arts contributions in themselves – by Emmie Bailey Whitney, editor of the Lewiston Journal Saturday Magazine, and her husband, G. Herbert Whitney, repairman for New England Telephone and Telegraph in Lewiston, and an accomplished amateur photographer.

Between 1933 and 1940, the Whitneys visited a number of artists, writers and others connected to the arts in Maine. The stories and photos celebrated both the artists and the inspiration of Maine in their works and left a record of the 1930s version of Maine’s “creative economy.”

Emmie Whitney’s 1935 Lewiston Journal article about Abraham Bogdanove began, “Monhegan has inspired some of the finest marines that have been painted in the eastern section of the United States, and among their painters – artists who have come year after year and had their summer studios on this ‘farthest east’ island of the Maine coast – none stand higher in the art world than Bogdanove.”

The celebration of Maine and of art did not always ignore the economic hardships of the 1930s. Whitney also wrote, “Mr. Bogdanove has never consented to commercialize his art. When the depression and adverse economic conditions have made customers for his paintings scarce, he has preferred to live unpretentiously on the income from his teaching and lectures.”

Herb Whitney’s photographs, Collection 553 at the MHS Research Library, offer a reminder that understanding a particular time period, especially one as talked about as the Great Depression, requires looking beyond the expected sources and topics to explore the complexity of experiences. The photographs also are reminders of the persistence of the inspiration of Maine to artists, writers and musicians and of the effects of these artists on Maine and beyond.

To see more of Herb Whitney’s photographs of this era, go to www.MaineMemory.net and type Coll. 553 into the search box.
Otisfield Historical Society

An Otisfield Teacher and Her Students

The Gore School photograph leaves no clues about why the students and teacher posed on ladders and on the school roof – something unimaginable in 2007. However, it leaves many clues about a small town in Western Maine and the nature of education in 1920.

Perhaps the students and teacher posed as a farewell to the Gore School, one of 14 one-room schools in the small community of only around 650. The schools each served a different district. The Gore School pictured here, built in the 1830s, closed in 1922. It was torn down and a new wooden building replaced it.

The teacher, Ruby Jillson, of the 9 boys and 6 girls was only about 18 when the photo was taken. Teachers at the time were not required to receive special training and many rural teachers, like Jillson, were barely out of secondary school themselves.

The only identified students are Helen Brett, who was about 9; and Helen Ahonen, bottom left. The latter, about age 8, was one of seven children of Finnish immigrant Carolina Ahonen, a widow. Three of Helen Ahonen’s older sisters, ages 14, 16 and 18, were servants in private homes. Everyone in the family spoke Finnish as their first language.

Otisfield was primarily a farming community. Jillson’s father, Bertram, was the first large-scale poultry farmer in the area. Her mother, Ida, had died in 1915, leaving Ruby and her younger brother. Helen Brett’s father and Helen Ahonen’s mother also were farmers. The Brett farm burned in 1917, but the family rebuilt it. The clothing suggests the families were neither wealthy nor destitute.

Jillson left teaching by September 1922 when she married Nathaniel A. Green. They had three children.

See an online exhibit about Otisfield’s one-room schoolhouses at:

www.mainememory.net, View All Exhibits and look for “Otisfield’s One-Room Schoolhouses.”

Gore School, Otisfield, ca. 1920; Contributed by Otisfield Historical Society

The brick schoolhouse, built after 1830, was closed in 1922. The only individuals identified are teacher Ruby Jillson in plaid dress; student Helen Brett, standing next to teacher; and Helen Ahonen, bottom left.

Interior, Scribner Hill School, Otisfield / Contributed by Otisfield Historical Society

Of particular interest in this interior photo are the benches at the front of the room that may have been used for students’ recitation exercises.

Contributing Partner Profile: The Otisfield Historical Society

Founded: 1980 when volunteers were sought for a survey of historic buildings. Ethel Bean Turner started the society.

Mission: To inform the townspeople about Otisfield’s history and to collect information on the town’s history for the archives.

Collections: Collections include letters, diaries, photographs.

Facilities: The Society does not have a building of its own. Its collections currently are stored in a privately owned barn. For access to collections, contact Jean Hankins.

Activities: Meetings are held four times a year, in April, June, September, and November, with speakers on local topics or hands-on programs. A recent meeting was an antiques appraisal/educational session focusing on glass bottles. A picnic is held each summer.

The society recently had a grant to restore a public watering trough to working condition. The town once had ten public watering troughs for horses. One vanished in 1930 and one is being restored. The tubs were made out of wood and rotted if neglected. The remaining tub is cement.

Membership: Approximately 50 members. Thirty to 40 people attend most meetings.

Contacts:
Jean Hankins, Curator
202 Scribner Hill Road
Otisfield, ME 04270
539-2521
hankins@megalink.net
OR Henry Hamilton, President
627-4458
A SHORT HISTORY OF PORTLAND

One of MHS’ very own, Allan Levinsky, has written this new book which will be on bookstore shelves in January. Maine’s largest city is celebrated in this concise narrative history, abundantly illustrated, and featuring two dozen biographical profiles of important people. Allan, a Portland native, has worked for many years at MHS as a guide and visitor services coordinator at the Wadsworth Longfellow house. He is also the author of At Home With the General, about Maine’s Civil War hero Joshua Chamberlain.

YEAR-END TAX SAVINGS OPPORTUNITY FOR DONORS AGED 70 ½ OR OLDER:

If you’re 70 ½ or older, the Pension Protection Act of 2006 has made an allowance that could be beneficial to you. Under the provision, you can make a gift to Maine Historical Society using funds from your individual retirement account (IRA) and not be assessed any penalties or taxes. The gift counts toward your required IRA distribution amount, but does not count as taxable income. There are no federal minimums imposed on making gifts from IRAs and you may contribute funds this way if:

• YOU ARE AGE 70 ½ OR OLDER
• THE GIFT IS NOT MORE THAN $100,000 FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR
• YOU TRANSFER FUNDS DIRECTLY FROM AN IRA OR ROLLOVER IRA TO A QUALIFIED CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION

The provision only extends until December 31, 2007. After consulting with your financial or tax advisor, contact your IRA custodian to transfer your desired gift amount to Maine Historical Society. It’s a tax advantaged way to make your gift this year!

NOTICE!

Maine State Senator Paula Benoit, co-sponsor of LD 1084 and an adult adoptee born in Maine in 1955, shares this bit of news:

On January 3, 2009, Maine adult adoptees will be able to go to the Office of Vital Statistics in Augusta and receive their original birth certificates. This will be the first time since 1953 that they have had equal birth identification rights with all other native Mainers. In the spring of this year LD 1084 – An Act to Allow Adult Adoptees Access to their Original Birth Certificates—was passed by the 123rd Maine Legislature and signed into law.

On the Ancestor Trail: City Directories

When trying to track ancestors through the years, city directories can be valuable resources. In the mid-1800s and early 1900s urban areas started publishing city directories of adult residents in alphabetical order with addresses; they were equivalent to our modern day phonebooks. Often listed are the person’s occupation, employer, and spouse. One might even find someone’s death date (in the year after they died), or a wife listed as widow (implying the husband died in that year). If the person moved, sometimes directories noted a relocation address.

Since city directories were published every year or two, they are a great way to fill in the gaps between federal census records, which were taken every 10 years. They can also serve as a census substitute for 1890, a federal census record that is not available. Other family members can be found by browsing all the persons with the same surname to see who is living at the same address. If there is a reverse lookup section, a street name might reveal who lived on that street. Perhaps there are other relatives living nearby. If an ancestor owned or worked for a business, it may be included in the business advertisements of the directory.

As with most old records, inaccuracies were common. Alternate spellings and accidental omissions mean that consecutive years and varied surnames need to be checked. A missing name in one year doesn’t necessarily mean that person moved or died.

City directories for Maine may be found at the MHS library, the Maine State Library, and/or local libraries. Other states’ directories should be available at local historical societies and libraries. Some directories are also online at Ancestry.com, HistoricMapWorks.com, or www.Cyndislist.com/citydir.htm.

Happy Hunting!

Kathy Amoroso
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WINTER HOURS

MHS RESEARCH LIBRARY
Tues-Sat 10-4:00
Closed Holiday
Weekends

WADSWORTH-LONGFELLOW HOUSE
December Hours:
Mon-Sun 12-5:00
(Last Tour At 4:00)
Closed 2:00 Dec. 24
And All Day Dec. 25, 31
Closed January
Through April

MUSEUM
December Hours:
Mon-Sat 10-5:00, Sun
12-5:00
Closed 2:00 Dec. 24,
All Day Dec. 25, 31
Closed For January
Opens Feb. 15th.
Mon-Sat 10-5:00

MUSEUM SHOP
December Hours:
Mon-Sat 10-5:00, Sun
12-5:00
Closed 2:00 Pm Dec. 24,
and
All Day Dec. 25, 31
After January 1
Mon-Sat 10-5:00

MHS ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
Mon-Fri 9-5:00
Tel: (207) 774-1822
Fax: (207) 775-4301
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489 Congress St.
Portland, Me 04101

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www.mainehistory.org
www.mainememory.net
www.vintagemainememories.com
www.hwlongfellow.org

MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MUSEUM
LIBRARY
LONGFELLOW HOUSE
MAINE MEMORY NETWORK

CELEBRATING TOGETHER: Christmas with the Longfellows

TOUR THE LONGFELLOW HOUSE this December and enjoy the holiday season as three branches of the family celebrated it in the mid-19th century. The house will be decorated and open for tours daily from Saturday, December 1 through Sunday, December 30.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s sister, Anne Longfellow Pierce, and aunt, Lucia Wadsworth, had no children of their own, but they did have many nieces and nephews to share the holidays with. The artworks of those children are on display in the current MHS Museum exhibit.

VISIT DRAWING TOGETHER: The Arts of the Longfellows, and this December, their holiday traditions will be on display in the Wadsworth-Longfellow House. In addition to the family dinner arranged by Anne for her nephew Hen, who lived as a young boy with his aunt and great-aunt, highlights include recreations of Alexander and Lizzie Longfellow’s 1867 Christmas Eve party, as described by Anne, and of the Christmas scene Henry’s daughter Edith painted at 9 years old.

Following the tour, guests are invited to enjoy Children’s Activities and the annual Holiday Book and Gift Fair (opening Saturday December 8) next door at the Maine Historical Society.

House Tours, Children’s Activities, Holiday Book and Gift Fair

AT THE LONGFELLOW HOUSE, SATURDAY,
DECEMBER 1 – SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2007
(CLOSED DECEMBER 25)

MONDAY – SUNDAYS: 12:00 NOON – 5:00 PM
LAST TOUR AT 4 PM


A gifted artist herself, Fanny Appleton Longfellow often noted her children’s artistic endeavors. For example, one evening Edith rushed into the study like “a sunbeam for pencil + paper to draw wonderful faces.” Family Christmas activities inspired this drawing by Edith, age nine.

CONSIDER THE GIFT OF MAINE HISTORY FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

YOUR GIFT OF A NEW MEMBERSHIP OR RENEWAL WILL ARRIVE IN SEASONAL TRAPPINGS WITH YOUR BEST WISHES. BASIC MEMBERSHIP LEVELS: $40, INDIVIDUAL; $50, FAMILY.
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GIFTS RECEIVED BY DECEMBER 15 WILL BE MAILED BY DECEMBER 20.