Remembering Sandy

Three memories of Sandy Armentrout (1940-2009). In the first, we are sitting on her patio in Kennebunkport. She is prepping me to take over as the executive director of MHS. That was about 1996. Sandy had been the interim director of the Society for almost a year, as the board conducted its search, and now she was giving notes—detailed written notes—on every conceivable aspect of the organization: personalities, talents, influence, programs, politics, finance. I could see she understood how institutions worked, that she’d been much more than a passive caretaker, and that both the Society and I had been very lucky to have her. The second was in my office, around 2001. Sandy was presenting her design concept for the MHS exhibition that would commemorate the restoration of the Longfellow House (she and Joyce Butler were co-curators). The plan was imaginative and elegant. It tested the limits of our collections, our carpentry skills, and our budget, but it was beautiful, and it showed a sure feel for the way objects and ideas illuminate each other. I could see that Sandy had intuition and taste, combined with a scholar’s attention to detail. The third moment took place in Rome; perhaps it was 1999. Four of us from the MHS Italy tour (Sandy, her partner Dick, my wife Bonnie, and I) had just found, after a death-defying taxi ride, what had to be the tiniest restaurant in the city. It was off the beaten path, unpretentious, but with the most sensational food. The wine and the talk flowed, cooked pears arrived, and I could see that Sandy was enjoying it all. She was adventurous, open to pleasure, and a believer in new friendships. We were lucky to have her.

Richard D’Abate
Executive Director

ABOUT THE COVER

Fourth grader Will Mathis from Hall School in Portland drew this view as part of the “Local History/Local Schools” program centered on the Main Street, Maine exhibit (see facing page). In addition to studying historic photographs, each class created a panoramic view of Congress Street, Portland’s “Main Street” as it is today. They sat in a circle around the Our Lady of Victories statue and drew just what was in front of him or her. All of the drawings are currently on display in the Showcase Gallery.

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Local History/Local Schools is a museum-school partnership program offered by MHS each year to Portland’s 3rd and 4th graders. For the pilot group in fall 2005, we signed up four teachers; in the spring, we expanded to six classes; for the 2006-2007 year we increased it to eight classes each semester.

Grants from the Horizon Foundation and the RBC Foundation allowed for this expansion and helped improve the quality of our materials. Although the grants have long since run out, MHS has remained committed to the program, and demand from teachers has risen to the point where this year, for the first time, we will be working with three groups of eight classes each.

These 24 classes represent over a third of the 61 eligible classrooms in Portland. Over the past five years, we have worked with 40 different teachers. Our goals for the future of this program include expanding it to include the communities of Greater Portland, as well as to offer multiple sessions each semester. It is a labor intensive endeavor, as education staff sees each participating class four times: twice in their classroom, once on a class trip to the museum, and once for our final celebration to which families are invited. We are currently exploring funding options to help make this expansion possible, and hope that in another five years, the program will be more vital and vibrant than ever.

Carolin Collins
Director of Education

Barbara Judge, 3rd grade teacher, Lyseth School:
“Working with the Local History/Local Schools program has provided me with in-depth, rich, hands-on experiences for my students. These programs have made the history of Portland come alive for my students and broadened my knowledge. I feel these programs have made me a better teacher.”

Anne Marie Demers, 3rd grade teacher at Nathan Clifford School:
“MHS brings history alive through well planned, student centered lessons, real life artifacts, and on site museum explorations. Learning is designed to dovetail with the Maine State requirements. The amazing outcome is that teachers, students, and parents learn in detail the rich history of Maine. I admire the high expectations MHS sets before us every year.”

Nathan Clifford teacher Cathy Gurney:
“All learning styles are taken into consideration and all students learn. Students AND teachers are engaged and excited. I have used many units again in the classroom year after year. Since parents and friends are invited to the ending celebration, it opens up an opportunity for the public to become familiar with the museum also.”

Reiche teacher Theresa Lee’s 2nd/3rd grade class show off their illustrations for another Wabanaki story, “The Frog Monster.”

A third grade student from Nathan Clifford School created this illustration for a traditional Wabanaki tale, “Badger and the Star Wives,” in spring 2008. The border features motifs commonly used on birch bark work.

Students from the Many Rivers program at Hall School are making quilt squares based on objects from the fall 2008 exhibit “Art of the People: Folk Art in Maine.”
What’s New in the Brown Library?

Just about everything.

Attendance is up. Past and present members, along with professional colleagues, have stopped in for a look and been impressed. Reference and technical services function in pleasant surroundings. Everyone appreciates the climate control, with special humidity and temperature for the three secure collections storage levels. And the elevator is a big help in moving collections (and people) about.

Ongoing processing of Library collections includes Forgotten Patriots: African American and American Indian Patriots in the Revolutionary War by the National Society DAR, the gift of the local Elizabeth Wadsworth Chapter. This 854 page compendium lists thousands of previously under-reported soldiers by state (with cross-references for those who moved), with essays on each state’s history and contribution.

A recent find resulting from the move back to the Brown Library is an important manuscript map by Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow (1814-1901), “Plan and profile of the Presumpscot River from Gambo Falls to Little Falls...,” 1840, showing the route of the Cumberland & Oxford Canal. Because of its large size, it is rolled, and was overlooked and un-cataloged. With improved storage for all collections including rolled maps, it was rediscovered and entered into our Minerva online database.

If you haven’t seen the ALIDA CARROLL AND JOHN MARSHALL BROWN LIBRARY, do come in! I’ll be happy to show you around.

Nicholas Noyes
Head of Library Services

Taking Stock – the Museum Collection Inventory Project

Just over a year ago work began on a two-year project to complete the inventory of the MHS collection of museum objects, over 15,000 items. It may sound simple, but there is a lot to the project which will have major benefits for MHS.

To make it possible, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) awarded MHS a grant of $150,000 through the Museums for America program. Dana Twiss, inventory project manager, and Tracy Lamaestra, inventory project technician were hired. Other members of the department are fully involved: John Mayer, museum curator, Holly Hurd-Forsyth, registrar, and Natalie Rose Liberace, curatorial assistant.

The object records are accessible and searchable-on-line (http://mainehistory.pastperfect-online.com). Each record is being reviewed and we are standardizing and updating the information. An image of every object is being made and added to the record. Where needed, we are improving storage and housing systems.

Perhaps most importantly, we are taking a close look at our collections with a goal to develop a collecting plan for the future. The museum collection includes a tremendous range of materials that document Maine history – from 5,000 year old stone tools to light bulbs from Central Maine Power – and are a central part of the MHS mission to preserve and interpret our history.

John Mayer
Museum Curator

Celluloid Political Button, Carl E. Milliken, circa 1918.
Milliken was elected governor in 1916 as a member of the Progressive Party. After leaving office in 1921, Milliken went on to become the executive director of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association.

Chapeau de bras, Portland Rifle Corps, circa 1854.
The hat was possibly worn by Andrew P. Morgan of Portland. It is made of black beaver fur and trimmed with a black leather medallion centered in a black silk rosette and with brass laurel leaf wreath around PRC.
Beachcombers and Blue Collars: Students Discover Biddeford’s Broad-based Past

Some aspects of a city’s history are bright and shiny, laid bare for the world to see. Others are murky and buried deep underground. Both parts are relevant. Together, they form a rich and complex story of the past.

That’s what students in Denise Doherty’s Project Aspire class at Biddeford High School—along with McArthur Public Library and Biddeford Historical Society, part of Biddeford’s Maine Community Heritage Project team—discovered when they started looking at old photos in their search for project topics.

The results might surprise you. Bright and shiny? Not local heroes or major events, but… early 20th century sunbathers at vacation-destination Biddeford Pool. The appeal? Those buttoned-up swimsuits of yesteryear. One young woman became so fascinated with the beachwear that she’s begun researching the era’s fashion.

Deep and murky? Not political scandals or ghastly murders, but… sewer construction on Main Street in 1914-15. When Doherty asked why, the student digging into those photos told her, simply: big machinery and manual labor.

Good for these young Biddeford residents who know real history when they see it. In those two sets of photographs, an entire narrative—full of daily lives, class issues, geography, and progress—is born. Doherty was charmed by her students’ choices: “It has done wonders to see their excitement.”

Offering a variety of self-selected and hands-on activities, MCHP is giving these students an opportunity to feel invested in their community in a bright and shiny new way.

Larissa Vigue Picard
MCHP Community Partnership Coordinator

MAINE HISTORY TEACHER OF THE YEAR: CYNTHIA STEVENS

Once again, MHS teamed up with the Gilder Lehrman Institute for American History and Preserve America to award the Maine History Teacher of the Year. Ms. Stevens is a second grade teacher at the W. G. Mallett School in Farmington. As the state winner, Gilder Lehrman provided Ms. Stevens with $1000 as well as a collection of books donated in her name to the school library. Ms. Stevens is shown here receiving her award from Carolin Collins, MHS Director of Education, at a ceremony at the Mallett School on October 21, 2009.
Pepperell Manuscripts
Given to Library

Five important manuscripts once belonging to the powerful Pepperrell family of Kittery have been presented to the Brown Library by Dr. Thomas L. Gaffney in memory of Arnold S. and Rosanna Hill. The documents descended through the family of Mr. Hill and eventually came to Mrs. Hill’s nephew, the donor. Tom Gaffney is fondly remembered by many as MHS Director (1977-81), and curator of manuscripts (1970-1987), when that position included a variety of tasks including editing the MHS Quarterly. He is also the author of the much consulted thesis, Maine’s Mr. Smith: A Study of the Career of Francis O.J. Smith, Politician and Entrepreneur (UMO, 1982).

The new Pepperrell documents include:

1. Document “To his Grace the Duke of Newcastle one of his Majesty’s Principal Secretaries of State. The Memorial of Christopher Kilby, Agent to his Majesty’s Province of Massachusetts Bay in New England...London 1 July 1746 (Concerning the New England expedition against French Louisburg).
2. Letter of Christopher Kilby at Spring Garden to “Hon Sir,” [Possibly William Pepperrell], Louisburg, September and October, 1746.
4. Letter of Christopher Kilby at Spring Garden to William Pepperrell in Kittery, dated 3 July 1748.

These splendid 18th century letters join related material including the Sir William Pepperrell Papers, 1707-1755 and other materials relating to the family, the Colonial Wars, and the town of Kittery. Sir William (1696-1759), was the son and later partner of the great Kittery merchant Col. William Pepperrell (1646-1734). The son engaged in fishing, lumber, land speculation and the lucrative West Indies trade. He owned tracts of land in Saco and Scarborough and commanded the Maine militia. In 1745 he was appointed commander of the colonial forces sent against Louisburg in Nova Scotia, and his success there earned him the first baronetcy ever conferred upon an American-born English subject.

The correspondents include Kilby, a Boston merchant elected as agent of the Massachusetts General Court in London and John Bradstreet, a Nova Scotian who fought with William at Louisburg. Thanks to Tom Gaffney’s kindness, students and scholars are offered new glimpses into life in 18th century Maine, New England and the Maritimes.

Bill Barry
Library Reference Assistant

The Children’s Gate
Longfellow Garden

With the restoration of the Longfellow Garden now complete, MHS has embarked on a special fundraising campaign to re-create one of the garden’s most important historical features: the Children’s Gate.

This $100,000 fundraising effort was initiated by a generous gift from the Longfellow Garden Club. Many friends and members of MHS have responded generously to our call for donations, including Oakhurst Dairy in Portland, which has recently made a grant of $2,500 toward the project.

“The Longfellow Garden is a wonderful retreat in the heart of Portland, appreciated by all who work in or visit our city,” noted Priscilla Bennett Doucette, chairperson of Oakhurst Dairy’s Charitable Giving Committee and MHS trustee. “Our grandmother, Blanche Huston Bennett, was a longtime member of the Longfellow Garden Club, and we are pleased to direct this contribution to something that was near and dear to her heart.”

The Children’s Gate was designed by the architect Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow to honor his Uncle Henry’s famous affection for children. Installed soon after the original library opened in 1907, it helped connect the Longfellow House with the library. By the 1960s it was dilapidated and removed. MHS would like to begin construction on the gate in the spring, 2010, but needs your help to reach our goal.

If you would like to make a donation to the Children’s Gate project, please contact Bonnie Vance at 207-774-1822, ext. 231. Gifts can also be made from our website, www.mainehistory.org.
In the past year, MHS images have appeared in over 75 books, magazines and newspapers, film projects, television shows, museum exhibits and catalogs, educational programs, websites, and commercial venues. Our diverse clients represent 28 states and seven countries: Australia, Canada, China, Germany, New Zealand, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

National and international clients include:

- The Martha Stewart Show
- Smithsonian Institute
- National Endowment for the Arts
- Boston Children’s Museum
- The London Daily Telegraph
- New Hampshire Public Television
- U.S. Navy
- Montreal Museum of Archeology and History

Local projects using MHS images include:

- MHS Trustee Neil Rolde’s book Maine in the World (Tilbury House)
- Bruce Bourque and Laureen Labar’s book Uncommon Threads: Wabanaki Textiles, Clothing, and Costume (Maine State Museum)
- Hugh MacMahon’s Progress, Stability and the Struggle for Equality (Drummond Woodsum)
- Theresa Mattor and Lucie Teegarden’s book Designing the Maine Landscape (Down East)
- Display aboard The Cat, international ferry from Portland to Nova Scotia
- Maine Red Claw’s basketball team program book
- 53 Danforth, Portland’s new green energy apartment building, has 26 MHS framed images decorating the hallways


During December MHS members receive a 20% discount on all orders placed online, or call 207-774-1822 ext. 217, or email dfazio@mainehistory.org.

Dani Fazio
Image Services Coordinator
Blaines and guests, Bar Harbor, 1889
Contributed by Maine Historical Society.

Lillian Nordica and Turk, Berlin, Germany, 1894
Contributed by Nordica Memorial Association.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Trap, Cambridge, MA, ca. 1864
Contributed by Longfellow National Historic Site.
People, Pets, and Portraits

On a summer day in 1889, James G. Blaine, former member and speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and current Secretary of State, posed on the steps of his summer residence in Bar Harbor with his wife and children, and guests President Benjamin Harrison and U.S. Rep. Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts.

The party are dressed fashionably, the women in hats and parasols, the men in suits, holding their hats. A professional photographer, S. Towle of Lowell, Massachusetts, took the photo and probably posed the group for greatest effect.

In front is a dog, not as carefully posed, but looking at the camera.

People and animals have a long history together and pets – the companion variety – were well entrenched by the early nineteenth century. People's fondness for pets was apparent even before the days of photography when those who were wealthy enough to hire artists sometimes included their pets in painted portraits.

Daguerreotypes, which became available in Maine in 1840, and subsequent photographic processes democratized all that and images of pets – with or without people – proliferated.

By the end of the 19th century, people in Maine and elsewhere could buy books about pets and pet care, prepared food and health items for pets as well as numerous other products, all of which suggests that dogs, cats, birds and some other creatures mattered to Americans.

Maine Memory Network has many images of people and pets. As one might expect, a number of them are pictures of children or family groups. Some are snapshots. Others are formal portraits, taken in photographer’s studios or at outdoor settings.

One category of these more formal images is notable people and their dogs.

Most Mainers would not be surprised to find a studio portrait in an oval format of Maine Governor Percival P. Baxter and his Irish setter Garryowen. Baxter, who donated the land for Baxter State Park, was a legendary animal lover whose Irish setters were his constant companions and are buried on Mackworth Island where Baxter lived.

Other portraits – all from the nineteenth century – might be more surprising. Lillian Norton, a Farmington native, was a soprano who performed as Lillian Nordica. She and her standard poodle, Turk, posed for a photographer in Berlin in 1894. Turk is on a table next to the singer, who has one hand behind him and the other holding his paw. The dog traveled throughout Europe and the U.S. with her as she performed.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow posed in about 1864 with his dog, Trap, who sat on a table beside the poet. Of the dog, Longfellow wrote, “The last and greatest of all the dogs was Trap; Trap the Scotch Terrier, Trap the polite, the elegant, sometimes on account of his deportment called Turneydrop, sometimes Louis the Fourteenth.”

Peace activist Sarah Jane Farmer of Eliot in 1891 had painter Frank Hector Tompkins portray her in her garden, seated in a chair, her arm on the back of her dog, Barry.

Several Maine Memory images show Samuel Anderson, a Portland lawyer and longtime president of the Portland and Ogdensburg Railroad, and his dog. In one studio portrait made in 1888,

Anderson is seated in a chair in front of a heavy, dark curtain, his walking stick in his hand and his dog, Nellie, lying on a rug at his feet. The portrait has a wistful quality. In most of the dog-human portraits, the dog is seated or standing and posed to be at about the same level as the human’s upper torso.

The portraits of noted Mainers and their dogs are interesting because of their formality. The people are wearing their “dress-up” clothes and the scenes, as well as the animals, are pristine. More casual snapshots are expected, perhaps. Together, though, they support the claim that pets have long been firmly integrated into Maine lives.

Candace Kanes
MMN Project Historian

> Samuel Anderson and Nellie, Portland, ca. 1888
Contributed by Maine Historical Society.

> Sarah Jane Farmer and Barry, Eliot, 1891
Contributed by William Fogg Library.
On June 5, 1930, two couples got married in the skies over Caribou.

It was far from an ordinary wedding.

One after the other, two wedding parties left a home in Caribou – a bride and bridesmaid, a groom and best man, each turning their heads slightly as they walked toward waiting decorated automobiles so the moving picture camera could capture their faces.

Numerous decorated cars, two bands, one of which was all women; girls in dress-up clothes pushing decorated doll carriages, men in uniform on horseback, and fire engines paraded the mile or so out of town to the airfield.

A banner on the back of one of the cars and writing on the side of the plane read, “Go Smiling Thru.” Was it an advertising slogan for Digesto Pep or Lydia Pinkham’s Compound? Or perhaps a reference to the lyrics of James Johnson’s “A Porter’s Love Song to a Chambermaid?”

The couples and their entourages flew one at a time, saying their vows in the air. It is not clear why the couples warranted the huge parade, nor why they chose to get married in the air.

It had been only three years since Charles Lindbergh flew solo across the Atlantic. TWA was beginning a regular flight from New York to Los Angeles. Still, it was faster to cross the country by train. Flying was not yet commonplace.

Equally as remarkable as the weddings is the surviving 16 mm film of the event. What may have been a home movie is now part of the collections of Northeast Historic Film. Two video clips of the double aerial wedding are on Maine Memory Network. One shows the parade, the other, one of the in-flight weddings.

Also on MMN are other Northeast Historic Film clips of home movies – a ship being launched, herring fishing, winter logging and others. They offer a unique view of community life and of work, enhancing what we might learn from still photographs and objects, seeing people interacting with their surroundings.

To see the films, go to http://www.maine-memory.net/exhibits. ■
The Maine Historical Society preserves the heritage and history of Maine: the stories of Maine people, the traditions of Maine communities, and the record of Maine’s place in a changing world. Because an understanding of the past is vital to a healthy and progressive society, we collect, care for, and exhibit historical treasures; facilitate research into family, local, state, and national history; provide education programs that make history meaningful, accessible, and enjoyable; and empower others to help preserve and interpret the history of our state.

THANKS TO DONORS 2008-2009

We gratefully acknowledge the following donors for their generous support over the past fiscal year in helping fulfill our mission. Your generosity has enabled us to expand access to our library and museum collections, offer public and educational programs, create engaging exhibitions, and provide online access to historical documents. Giving levels represent cumulative unrestricted gifts to the annual fund and supporting membership contributions for the period from 10/1/2008 – 9/30/2009.

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Anne Longfellow Pierce to her sister Mary, Christmas Eve, 1850.

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