

# Maine History

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Volume 23 | Number 1

Article 2

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7-1-1983

## The Society

Maine Historical Society

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### Recommended Citation

Maine Historical Society, . "The Society." *Maine History* 23, 1 (1983): 3-12.  
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## THE SOCIETY

The 161st Annual Meeting of the Maine Historical Society was held at the Bethel Inn on June 4, 1983. The meeting was called to order by President Joan S. Hayden, who extended the greetings of the Society and offered special thanks to Elizabeth M. Robinson for her efforts in planning and arranging the meeting.

In addition to transacting the usual business of the Society, the Annual Meeting paid special tribute to the memory of Ernest Cummings Marriner and Dr. Robert E. Moody, two distinguished Maine historians and members of the Society, who passed away during the past year.

Dean Marriner of Colby College, was ninety-one at the time of his death on February 9, 1983. He had served his state well as Colby faculty member and administrator, state archivist, trustee of the Maine League of Historical Societies, president of the Waterville Historical Society, author, and weekly television broadcaster. In recognition of Dean Marriner's outstanding contributions to the knowledge of Maine history, the Society approved a resolution introduced by Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., who noted that the legislature had adopted a joint resolution honoring Dean Marriner for "sharing his great wealth of information on Maine life and institutions through his many publications and broadcasts."

Robert E. Moody, professor emeritus of history at Boston University, died on April 4, 1983, at the age of eighty-two. Dr. Moody's fascination with Maine history began while he was a graduate student more than fifty years ago. He received his Ph.D. degree from Yale University in 1933, upon the completion of his dissertation, "The Maine Frontier, 1607-1763." Subsequently, he edited three volumes of the Society's much-lauded *Province and Court Records*, and he devoted more than twenty years of meticulous scholarly effort to the editing of *The Letters of Thomas Gorges, Deputy Governor of the Province of Maine*, also published by the Society. In recognition of these and other contributions to Maine history, the trustees announced the establishment of the Robert E. Moody Memorial Fund.

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President Hayden also announced the selection of Marion L. Dunn of Portland and Majorie Murphy of Gorham as this year's recipients of the Elizabeth Ring Service Award. Conferred by special vote of the trustees, the Award recognizes the many years of unselfish service rendered the Society by these most worthy recipients.

Following the adjournment of the business meeting, luncheon was served at the Bethel Inn, followed by tours of Bethel's Moses Mason House, Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village, and several historic sites at Paris Hill.

### *TREASURER'S REPORT*

Our auditor's report for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1983, shows that the excess of income and net transfers amounted to \$8,858, and served to reduce the cumulative deficit from \$67,634 to \$58,776. Our budget for the year had called for income of \$344,323 and expenses of \$344,810 which would have produced a deficit for the year of \$487.

Principal differences in actual results from the budget lie in a substantially higher income than projected from the Annual Appeal, and a lower rate of transfers of Heritage Fund money. The Annual Appeal produced \$32,660. Among differences in expenses, the most notable was for postage and mailing, including that applied to membership and development.

The principal balance of unrestricted funds on March 31, 1983, was \$978,474, a reduction of \$5,281, resulting chiefly from transfer of Heritage Fund money to endowment and to Longfellow House restoration. Together, these contributions from the Heritage Fund amounted to \$201,666; the Heritage Fund also provided \$5,496 for restoration of paintings.

The balance of restricted funds was \$63,533, an increase of \$7,172; of this, \$2,000 came from contributions.

For the fiscal year ending March 31, 1983, the Finance Committee has recommended a budget calling for income of \$268,160 and expenses of \$267,900, which would produce a slight surplus, amounting to \$260.

I am happy to have this opportunity to thank the Society's staff for their kind advice and assistance through the year.

Donald K. Saunders

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STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSE  
for the year ended March 31, 1983

Income:

Unrestricted funds:

Interest and dividends	\$ 92,824
Dues	34,217
Grants	24,200
Gifts	32,818
Admissions, Longfellow House	13,817
Sale of purchased items	5,393
Other revenue	10,254

\$213,523

Restricted funds:

Interest and dividends	4,374
Grants	22,822
Book sales	5,177
Library use fees	1,621

33,994

Total income

247,517

Expenses:

Salaries	116,422
Payroll taxes	11,242
Pensions and retirement plan	7,072
Employee hospitalization insurance	4,461
Telephone and alarm system	4,001
Office supplies	2,714
Accounting fees and bank charges	4,979
Equipment and equipment service fees	5,875
Postage and mailing	9,639
Utilities	12,920
Insurance	955
Maintenance supplies	1,993
Library renovations	4,468
Library equipment	1,031
Library supplies	1,187

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Lectures and workshops	2,317	
Purchases for resale	3,059	
Quarterly and newsletter	12,705	
Promotional publications	1,359	
Membership and development	4,030	
All other expenses	2,982	
	<hr/>	
Expenses carried forward		215,411
Expenses carried forward		215,411
Expenditure of restricted current funds:		
Purchase of books and periodicals	\$ 3,556	
Bookbinding	1,064	
Painting restoration	1,256	
Longfellow House restoration	21,592	
	<hr/>	
		27,468
		<hr/>
Total expenses		242,879
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Excess of income over expenses before other disbursements and transfers		4,638
Other disbursements and transfers:		
Program support from principal Heritage Fund	15,000	
Life beneficiaries Morton Fund	( 3,600)	
Transfer of book sales to principal	( 5,177)	
Unexpended restricted current funds	( 1,349)	
Income added to principal Conant Fund	( 654)	
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		4,220
		<hr/>
Excess of income and net transfers over expenses		8,858
Surplus (deficit), April 1, 1982		(67,634)
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Surplus (deficit), March 31, 1983		\$ (58,776)
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*THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT*

At the Maine Historical Society, the past year was one of considerable activity and noticeable progress in overcoming problems which have plagued the institution for several years. The most obvious accomplishment was completion of the repair and restoration of the exterior of the Wadsworth-Longfellow House and our library building. It was also possible to repair library reading and work areas, which was long overdue. As the Longfellow House opened this week, new brick walks and a new front lawn were completed to enhance the appearance of this historic site, while simultaneously reducing some maintenance problems. The work on our Congress Street buildings has been greeted with favorable comments from members and non-members alike.

These building improvements are the most visible achievement of the Maine Heritage Fund capital campaign. Without the generous support of many individual contributors, the National Endowment for the Humanities Challenge Grant, and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, the work of the past year would not have been possible. The impact of this critical fund-drive has been evident also in endowment recovery, support for staff positions, and collections conservation.

Equally significant last year was the success of the Society's first Annual Giving campaign to meet operating expenses. The response from members and friends exceeded our expectations and clearly demonstrates that many people are committed to the Maine Historical Society and its objectives. As a result of the campaign, the Society ended another year with a balanced budget, and we hope this year's campaign will repeat that achievement.

If at times last year it appeared the Society was more a construction site than a library and museum, we were still able to make progress in acquiring and preserving historical collections. Time does not permit mentioning all the acquisitions of the past year, but a few accessions should be

noted. The Maine Central Railroad gave our library approximately four hundred volumes of the records of the Maine Central's predecessor roads, an important acquisition of research material spanning more than century of state railroad history. As a gift, the library also received a collection of papers of nineteenth-century Maine governor and senator Lot Myrick Morrill. More than one hundred volumes of the records of Odd-Fellows lodges in Maine, covering the period 1845 to 1963, were also added to the collections. Gifts of manuscripts relating to Francis and Samuel Waldo, as well as the original manuscript of Josiah Pierce's history of Gorham, Maine, were also presented to the library last year. Such additions to our collection maintain the significant place of the Society as a research institution, and we wish to thank everyone who contributed over the past year.

Collections conservation, one of the goals of the Maine Heritage Fund campaign, also progressed in 1982-83. Six works of art from the collection underwent conservation treatment at the Williamstown Regional Art Conservation Laboratory. All the works restored are portraits, including Joseph Greenleaf Cole's portrait of Anne Longfellow Pierce, and one painting by artist William Merritt Chase. This work was possible because of the Heritage Fund and special grants from the Maine State Commission on the Arts and Humanities and the Dobson Foundation of New York. While mentioning these collection conservation measures, I should also note that protection of the Wadsworth-Longfellow House and its contents was recently enhanced by installation of a new fire-detection system, made possible by a gift from a generous donor.

We continue to receive requests for collection loans, and last year objects from the collection were lent to the Maine State Museum and to the Maine Humanities Council's *Maine At Statehood* exhibitions which will travel to four Maine museums this year. We have continued loans to the Maine Maritime Museum and the Boston headquarters of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. It was an indication



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of the importance and quality of the Society's collection that the Portland Museum of Art requested several paintings and one sculpture for exhibition during the opening season of the museum's new Payson Building, and we are pleased that this summer thousands of visitors will see works from the Maine Historical Society at the new Portland museum.

Our objective is to have these collections available to both scholars and the public. In 1982-83, library users numbered almost 4,000, not including many more research questions answered by phone and mail. Over 7,600 visitors toured the Wadsworth-Longfellow House between June 1 and October 15 last year, and approximately 800 people attended the Society's lectures. How many more benefited from the work of the Maine Historical Society in other ways is impossible to gauge, but we can be confident that, although there is always more of an audience to reach, the Society is serving members and the public well and doing so with an operating budget and staff much smaller than that of many comparable institutions.

It has also been the Society's purpose to publish Maine history, and in September 1982 we released our latest publication, *Canals and Inland Waterways of Maine*, a study by the late Hayden L. V. Anderson. Although graduate programs in history have been reduced and even fewer scholars are working in the field of Maine history, the Society continues to search for manuscripts that deserve to be published as monographs or as articles in the *Maine Historical Society Quarterly*.

The responsibility for these and other accomplishments of the past year falls to staff members and volunteers, including the trustees. Some staff changes have occurred since the last Annual Meeting. After seventeen years as library cataloger, Virginia Gronberg retired in February. Margaret McCain, our reference librarian, continues to serve in that capacity but has been promoted to librarian in charge of both technical and reference services related to the imprints collection. Linda Jayes joined the staff as cataloger, bringing with her ten years of professional experience at Nason College. To give

year-round attention to the needs of the Longfellow House program, Joan Ray was appointed to fill the new part-time position of Longfellow House assistant. And in April, Norman Cash joined the staff as part-time custodian. Given the limitations of the Society's budget, we are especially pleased that, as staff vacancies have occurred, the Society has been able to find individuals with the desired qualifications, who have much to contribute to the work of our institution.

Trustees and others serving in a volunteer capacity have been an important factor in the achievements of 1982-83. The many individuals who have served without pay on our various committees, in conjunction with special programs, and as promoters and fund-raisers for the Maine Historical Society deserve our gratitude. The successes of the past year are the result of their efforts in combination with the efforts of our staff. We also owe special thanks to the Longfellow Garden Club, particularly for their patience during the building-restoration period and for the fact that club members have returned to rejuvenate the House garden following the departure of contractors who were not always sympathetic to nature.

When we point to accomplishments of the last year, we do not wish to disguise the fact that the Maine Historical Society continues to face serious obstacles. The Society's problem of space — for library and museum storage, for collections exhibitions, for educational programming — is a major obstacle to providing the professional management our research library and museum collections deserve. To pursue our potential as an institution that adequately cares for and makes educational use of its historical collections, the Society must improve and expand the facilities available for these functions. Our library building, which was erected in 1907, was the long-awaited permanent home for the Maine Historical Society's library, and the building served the Society adequately for many years. However, collection growth, an increase in staff, more rigorous standards for the care and management of collections, and, not least of all, the Society's goal of serving a

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much wider community have made our library building insufficient. We have passed the point where a few more shelves are still the answer to storage problems.

We have also gone beyond the stage of institutional development that permits assigning diverse job responsibilities to one staff position and asking staff members to wear many hats, some of which don't fit properly. If we are to succeed in carrying out the mission of the Society, we must find not only money but also ways to allow staff members to work at what they do best and to free them of duties that only serve to undermine their overall effectiveness.

During the past year we were able to overcome a number of the most urgent problems facing the Society, but in the coming year we must work to develop a plan for meeting long-range objectives. It is not enough to survive from year to year and regard that as achievement.

To close with a bit of good news, the Society very recently received a grant from a Maine foundation which will allow us to acquire a small computer. Despite media reports that the computer is changing society more quickly than we can grasp, I suspect it will take longer for the computer to change the Maine Historical Society. It is encouraging, however, that at last we will have a chance to experiment with technology that is making work more manageable for libraries and museums, as well as for business and industry. I will probably not be reporting next year that our library and museum collections have been computerized, but I may be able to report that at least your luncheon reservations were computerized and that my comments were prepared with the help of word-processing.

William H. Toner, Jr.