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The Society

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THE SOCIETY

The 159th Annual Meeting of the Maine Historical Society, attended by approximately 125 members and guests, was held in Brunswick at Bowdoin College on June 13, 1981. During the morning business meeting, Miss Elizabeth Ring, chairperson of the Election Committee, announced that the following persons had been elected to the Board of Trustees (formerly the Standing Committee): Robert N. Bass of Cumberland; Eleanor B. Conary of Bethel; Nancy L. Cowan of Portland; Joel W. Eastman of Portland; Gordon F. Grimes of Freeport; John E. Ham, Jr., of Falmouth; Bruce W. Hazelton of Yarmouth; Bernard E. Kolkhorst of Portland; Thomas W. Thomsen of Portland; and John W. L. White of Freeport.

At the business meeting, the Elizabeth Ring Service Award was presented to the Longfellow Garden Club, on whose behalf Mrs. Joseph E. Porter accepted the award. John W. Hakola, chairperson of the Publications Committee, announced that Alan R. Whitmore was the recipient of the annual James Phinney Baxter Award, which is presented to the author of the best article appearing in the *Quarterly* during the year.

President William C. Pierce and Nancy N. Masterton, chairperson of the Bylaws Revision Committee, explained proposed changes in the Society's bylaws. At the conclusion of a lively discussion, members present voted to approve revisions affecting classes of membership, committee appointments, election procedures, and the name of the Society's governing board.

In a mid-day organizational meeting, the Board of Trustees elected the following officers for 1981/1982: William C. Pierce, president; Joan S. Hayden, vice president; John E. Ham, Jr., secretary; and Donald K. Saunders, treasurer.

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As I think most of you know, Tom Gaffney, our director, decided last fall that he would like to step down and go back to his old job as curator of manuscripts. We are very sorry that he reached this decision. He has served the Society faithfully and well. It is comforting to know, however, that he will continue with us. You will remember that our goal for the Maine Heritage Fund includes an amount for the salary of curator of manuscripts, a position that was abolished when Gerald E. Morris resigned the directorship in 1977 and was succeeded by Tom.

Our new director is William H. Toner, Jr., a native of Philadelphia. Bill received his bachelor's in history from Franklin and Marshall College and his master's from William and Mary. He taught history in private schools for five years and then became executive director of the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, in 1972. He left Wilkes-Barre in 1976 to pursue additional graduate work at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, and then joined the staff of the Worcester Art Museum. There, he was promoted in 1979 from the position of director of special events to director of public relations. He is a member of the New England Museum Association and the American Association of Art. He was one of seventy applicants who responded to our advertisement for an executive director, and we are pleased to welcome him aboard.

The Maine Heritage Fund has raised a total of \$348,764.25, exclusive of the first payment of \$50,000 received from the Challenge Grant Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Although we can certainly be encouraged by the progress made during the first half of our three-year drive, we should, by no means, relax. We are deeply indebted to Alice Mary Pierce, who has

coordinated the drive, and to those who have gone out and rung the doorbells. The broad basis of support is especially welcome.

Last summer, in our efforts to broaden interest in the Society and to make it more responsive to those interested in Maine history and genealogy, we formed a committee of advisory trustees, consisting of people interested in the Society, which we invited to attend Standing Committee meetings and to join in our discussions. This has involved many more people in the activities of the Society and has enabled us to find people who can be helpful to us in various areas of interest. I now intend to recommend the appointment of a number of advisory trustees to our regular committees, thus giving us the benefit of a wider perspective of ideas. Anyone interested in becoming an advisory trustee is invited to contact us.

One important activity this past year has been the review and revision of our bylaws, which many of us thought were unnecessarily complicated. Recommendations for changes in the bylaws will be made by Nancy Masterton, the chairwoman of the committee.

When the Society was incorporated by special act of the Maine legislature in 1822, it was customary for charters like ours to include limits on the amount of property that could be held. Such was the case with the charters of Bowdoin and Colby. Our original charter likewise restricted us to owning real estate with an annual value of not more than \$5,000 and personal property of not more than \$50,000. This apparently presented no problem until we received title to the Wadsworth-Longfellow House. So, in 1903, the legislature raised the limits to a total of \$500,000. By 1980, with an endowment exceeding that figure, to say nothing of the value of the Wadsworth-Longfellow House or of our collections, we were living in considerable sin. Thanks,

however, to Nancy Masterton, the legislature has removed the limits entirely, and we are now law-abiding citizens once again.

Thanks to Joel Eastman and Jane Moody, we had two interesting and successful lecture series last year. In October, we had a series involving old houses, and in April, a series on the history of three of Maine's ethnic groups, the French, the Italians, and the Jews. Both series were well attended and well received. We hope to deal with the backgrounds of other ethnic groups in the future.

On February 27, we held another successful Longfellow birthday party at the Wadsworth-Longfellow House, which was attended by Governor Joseph E. Brennan who used the occasion to introduce *Mr. Goodhue Remembers Portland*, a sketchbook of old Portland based on the Society's collection of drawings by Charles Quincy Goodhue. The publication was prepared by Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., and William David Barry. We were delighted to welcome the governor to the library and to the Wadsworth-Longfellow House, and we believe that everyone enjoyed the occasion.

Last March 18, the legislature honored the Maine Historical Society by passing a joint resolution, sponsored by Nancy Masterton and cosponsored by Senators Mary Najarian and Joseph Sewall and by Representative John Martin, which characterized the Society as "a treasure chest of our past and source of endless knowledge and joy for now and for generations to come." It was an occasion at which the work of the Society was again pleasantly recognized.

In April the Standing Committee voted to change Sigrid Austin's title from administrative secretary to administrative assistant, a small bouquet to toss her in acknowledgement of her devoted services to the Society. In mentioning Sigrid's dedication, I do not want to leave the impression that we are not equally conscious of the worth

and devotion of the others who work for the Society. Indeed, we are deeply grateful to them all.

William C. Pierce

THE TREASURER'S REPORT

Our auditor has presented his statement of income and expense for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1981. The budget we adopted at the beginning of the fiscal year called for income of \$120,950 and expenses of \$144,216, to produce a deficit of \$23,266. Our actual income was higher than anticipated, and expenses came close to the projections: the resulting actual deficit amounted to \$16,172. While this is better than our projections, our accumulated deficit now amounts to \$87,172.

This lower deficit is the result of greater than anticipated income from interest and dividends and from an increase in dues payment received, together with expenses deferred beyond the year-end for repairs and maintenance. These were somewhat offset by greater than anticipated costs for printing and postage.

The principal balance of unrestricted funds was increased from \$666,197 at the beginning of the year to \$840,670 at its close, a net increase of \$173,476. The audit shows that nearly all of this increase comes from cash contributions and earnings totaling \$216,901, attributed to the Maine Heritage Fund, offset by deductions of \$38,434 for fund-raising, debt retirement, and painting conservation.

The balance of restricted funds decreased slightly from \$44,835 to \$44,720.

The Finance Committee, on April 16, recommended a budget for the current fiscal year that again provides for a substantial deficit. The prospect of continuing deficits emphasizes the Society's need for increased income, without corresponding increases in expenses.

I am pleased to use this report as an opportunity to express my appreciation to the officers and staff of the Society for their advice and assistance.

Donald K. Saunders

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSE

for the years ended March 31, 1981, 1980 and 1979

	<i>1981</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1979</i>
Income:			
Interest and dividends:			
Unrestricted funds	\$ 54,090	\$ 46,401	\$ 43,593
Restricted funds	2,496	2,353	2,553
Longfellow House savings interest	414	353	128
	<u>57,000</u>	<u>49,107</u>	<u>46,274</u>
Dues	27,605	22,163	19,666
Gifts	4,556	1,460	10,503
Grants	24,200	24,800	31,100
Longfellow House receipts	14,094	9,264	11,771
Book sales	3,149	6,063	4,225
Other	4,237	4,760	3,737
	<u>134,841</u>	<u>117,617</u>	<u>127,276</u>
Expenses:			
Salaries, library	66,777	56,162	54,002
Salaries, Longfellow House	5,501	9,524	10,560
Longfellow House expense	6,826	4,452	7,478
Employees' retirement plan	2,655	1,633	—
Insurance	3,814	2,928	2,166
Utilities	9,511	9,108	7,900
Pensions	2,220	1,320	1,320
Repairs and maintenance	675	2,088	2,266
Supplies	2,896	3,043	2,018
Payroll taxes	6,468	6,903	5,587
Telephone	1,596	1,454	1,250
Newsletter and printing	13,802	9,754	8,662
Postage and mailing service	4,553	3,455	3,143
Professional services	2,898	2,800	2,044
Custodian fee	1,860	1,293	1,132
Interest	369	1,549	1,709
Travel	530	418	155
Equipment purchased or rented	1,628	1,823	364
Expenditure of Restricted			
current funds	6,696	4,248	3,691
Miscellaneous	2,960	1,786	1,910
	<u>144,235</u>	<u>125,741</u>	<u>117,357</u>
Carried forward	(9,394)	(8,124)	9,919

	<i>1981</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1979</i>
Brought forward	\$(9,394)	\$(8,124)	\$ 9,919
Other disbursements and transfers:			
Life beneficiaries – Morton Fund	3,660	3,960	3,960
Transfer of unexpended Restricted current funds	(100)	894	1,765
Transfer of book sales to Moulton Fund	2,280	4,587	2,566
Transfer of book sales to Bicen- tennial Fund	869	1,476	1,659
Income added to principal of Conant Fund	<u>624</u>	<u>547</u>	<u>470</u>
	<u>7,333</u>	<u>11,464</u>	<u>10,420</u>
Excess of income over expenses and transfers (deficit)	<u>\$(16,727)</u>	<u>\$(19,588)</u>	<u>\$(501)</u>

THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Wadsworth-Longfellow House: It is a pleasure to note that in 1980 the Wadsworth-Longfellow House had its most profitable operating season in many years. Whereas in the past, the House has contributed substantially to the Society's overall operating deficits, last season ended with a surplus of \$2,181. This remarkable turnaround was made possible by the use of work-study students, a rebound in tourism, and an increase in the admissions fee.

Whether the House will do as well during the current season remains highly problematical. As a result of drastic cuts in the federal budget, the number of work-study students has been drastically curtailed. As a consequence of this, we were able to hire only one work-study student this year rather than four as we had hoped. Since the Society pays only 30 percent of a work-study student's wages, the savings would have been substantial.

Mrs. Julieanne B. Irving is House supervisor again this year. She will be assisted by Linda LaChance, Julie A. Manuel, Miles R. Parker, and Michele Powers, all full-time employees. Donald Foster, Roxie M. Insel and Donna Damon Miller have generously agreed to serve as volunteers.

As in past years, the Society is especially indebted to the Longfellow Garden Club. The Club and its members have lavished their time and financial resources on making the garden one of the prime downtown attractions and have borne the burden of decorating the House on special occasions throughout the past year.

The Society has received a \$20,000 matching grant from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission and a \$4,455 grant from the City of Portland's Community Development Program to assist with the second phase of the Wadsworth-Longfellow House restoration. These grants,

supplemented by approximately \$42,000 raised by the Heritage Fund will enable the Society to stabilize the exterior of the structure and to do some essential interior work as well.

Essentially, the project involves replacing the roof and electrical wiring; selectively repairing the exterior masonry; repairing downspouts and gutters; installing dehumidifiers in the basement; and repairing windows and sashes not included in the earlier project. In addition, the ivy will be removed from the exterior walls, and all remaining woodwork and trim will be repainted.

Bids for architectural services are currently being solicited, and we hope that the project can be completed before the onset of winter.

Painting Conservation: During the past year four major paintings in the Society's collection were treated by the Williamstown Regional Art Conservation Laboratory, Inc., of Williamstown, Massachusetts, at a total cost of \$5,914.40. Of that amount, \$2,400 was provided by a matching grant from the Maine State Commission on the Arts and Humanities, \$1,040 by the Dobson Foundation, Inc., \$1,430 by the Maine Heritage Fund, and \$974.50 by the Society's conservation fund. The paintings include the *Bombardment of Tripoli* (ca. 1805) by Michele Felice Corne (1752-1845), *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow* (1843) by Charles Octavius Cole (1814-1852), and an unidentified pair of American primitive portraits (ca. 1840) known as *A Lady Holding an Orange* and *A Gentleman Holding a Book*.

By far the most important is the Corne, which is one of the finest examples of Federal marine art in Maine. The painting was donated to the Society in 1919 by Mrs. Alice Preble Anderson, a descendant of Commodore Edward Preble (1761-1807) of Portland, the commander of the American fleet. Mounted on Upsom board and badly abraded, the canvas was in very unstable condition before treatment.

Cole's unfinished portrait of Longfellow is considered one of the finest likenesses of the poet as a young man, and it constitutes part of the permanent collection of the Wadsworth-Longfellow House. Although the portrait was in relatively stable condition, it was badly disfigured by layers of surface grime. Interestingly, the conservator discovered that the original painting consisted only of Longfellow's head and that the outline of the shoulders was added by a second artist at a considerable later date.

Although the identities of the artist and subjects of the American primitives remain unknown at present, the portraits came to the Society from a Maine benefactor in the early 1960s and can, probably, be presumed to be the likenesses of a Maine couple. Mr. Gerald Hoepfner, the director of the Williamstown Regional Art Conservation Laboratory, considers these paintings to be superb examples of American naive art, made yet more interesting because they retain their original, crudely made frames. Both paintings, prior to treatment, were in very fragile condition.

National Register: The Maine Historical Society's library building was entered on the National Register of Historic Places on November 17, 1980, by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. This action enables the Society to apply for a matching grant from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to assist with the major repairs required to restore the building to sound condition.

While the impact of federal budget cuts upon the ability of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to assist us with these building repairs remains uncertain at this time, we plan to submit a request for a matching grant of \$25,544 on July 1. Combined with a like amount raised by the Maine Heritage Fund, the grant will enable the Society to replace the roof and cornices, reputty and repoint the window

sashes, selectively repoint deteriorated mortar joints, repaint the replastered areas in the reading room, and make other minor repairs to the building. The completion of this work will do much to insure that no additional water damage is done to the interior of the building or to its valuable and irreplaceable contents.

Lecture Series: The Society conducted two very successful lecture series during the past year at the Portland Public Library Auditorium. The first series, dealing with architecture, featured Thomas C. Hubka of the University of Oregon who delivered two lectures on Maine's connected farmhouses, and Brooks Stoddard of the Portland School of Art who spoke on the conservation and psychology of moving old houses. The April series focused on Maine's ethnic communities. Dyke Hendrickson of the *Maine Sunday Telegram* discussed the Franco-American presence in Maine; Professor Tony Lacognata of the University of Southern Maine gave an overview of Maine's Italian-American community; and Rabbi Harry Z. Sky discussed the early days of Portland's Jewish community.

The Society owes special thanks to the speakers for having contributed their time and talent toward making the series a success and to Loring Short and Harmon of Portland for having underwritten the second series.

Accessions: Since the Society relies greatly upon the generous donations of members and friends in building its collections, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed during the past year. While it is not possible to list all our benefactors or their gifts, the following acknowledgements provide some overview of the recent accessions.

Mr. Richard H. Dana of New York, Mr. Richard deRham of Garrison, New York, and Mrs. Arthur L. Shipman, Jr., of Hartford, Connecticut, have donated a large silver tankard made by James Butler (1713-1776). Known as the

“Schoolmaster’s Tankard,” this important addition to the Longfellow House collection was given to Stephen Longfellow (1723-1790) of Falmouth (now Portland) by the will of Stephen Longfellow (1685-1764) of Newbury, Massachusetts, in 1760. It was in the possession of Henry Wadsworth Dana, a grandson of Henry W. Longfellow, until his death, at which time it passed into the possession of the donors.

The First Parish Church of Portland has donated a large charcoal portrait of Rev. Thomas Hill (1818-1891) by Charles Akers (1835?-1906). Hill served as pastor of the First Parish from 1873 until his death in 1891. Prior to that time he had been president of Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, from 1859 until 1862, and president of Harvard College from 1862 until 1868.

A large, double-walled, silver-plated pitcher, manufactured by Rogers Brothers, ca. 1854, was donated by the late Mrs. Laura Sleeper White in memory of her mother, Mildred Jordan Sleeper. The pitcher is handsomely decorated with reliefs of rural scenes.

Since the Society is the largest repository of architectural drawings in Maine, it is a pleasure to note the addition of two more collections. The most important of these was generated by George S. Coombs (1851-1909) and his son, Harry Coombs (b. 1878), both of Lewiston. Given by Alonzo J. Harriman Associates, Inc., of Auburn, Maine, the collection contains drawings for approximately 700 projects. Among the interesting structures represented in the collection are the Kora Shrine Temple (Lewiston), the Dominican Fathers’ Block (Lewiston), the Lewiston Public Library, the William P. Frye House (Lewiston), the Dr. E. S. Bradford House (Lewiston), the Rumford County and Municipal Building, and the First Congregational Church of Farmington, all on the National Register of Historic Places.

The second collection, representing the work of Beal DePeter Ward, Inc., of Portland, was given by Mr. Edwin C. Ward of Scarborough. The collection contains drawings for approximately 500 projects, among which are Fairfield's Lawrence Library, Farmington's Cutler Library, and the Rumford Mechanics Association Building, all of which are on the National Register. An interesting set of drawings for Freeport's Casco Castle are also to be found in the collection.

Mrs. George S. Johnston of Portland, Maine, has contributed additional material relating to Walter Griffin (1861-1935), a nationally recognized Portland artist. The collection includes newspaper clippings relating to the careers of the artist and his father, Edward Souther Griffin (1834-1928), a noted ships carver and sculptor. Also included are genealogical data, autobiographical and biographical sketches, prints of Griffin's works, and 125 family photographs.

William B. Jordan, Jr., of Portland has contributed a copy of his M.A. thesis, "Chapters in the Early History of the Town of Cape Elizabeth, Maine," as well as his large collection of research material, which includes extracts from Cape Elizabeth town records, 1765-1895, a copy of the records of the proprietors' of Vaughan's bridge, 1794-1829, extracts from newspapers, ca. 1785-1921, photographs, and other memorabilia. In addition, Mr. Jordan has donated a 187-page typescript volume containing copies of newspaper articles on steam navigation in Maine. Also received were the records of the Liberal Ministers' Monday Meeting Association of Portland covering the period 1895-1901; the records, 1843-1864, of the Maine Western Ministerial Association; and the records of the Sunday School Superintendent of Portland's First Parish Church for the period 1879-1890.

Mrs. Hugh H. Butler of Rochester, New York, has donated the reminiscences of Samuel Gibson Rand (b. 1826). This manuscript contains a highly literate and interesting history of the family of William Rand III (1776?-1856) of Canaan, Maine.

From Persis Hall Harding of South Windham, we have received the records of the annual reunion of the descendants of William and Emma Cook of Windham, Maine. These records, consisting of ninety-two typescript pages, cover the period 1909-1980.

An M.A. thesis, "The Industrial Geography of the Kennebec Valley," was received from Mrs. Katheryne Colvin (Thomas) Whittemore. The thesis was prepared by Mrs. Whittemore in 1925 while a student at Clark University.

Three volumes of Bradford town records were donated by Yale University. Covering the period 1823-1887, the records contain tax assessments and payments, treasurer's accounts, information relating to the support of paupers and schools, plantation and town expenses, and other data.

An architectural rendering of the side elevation of the Warren Congregational Church of Westbrook was presented by Howard W. Stevens of Cumberland Foreside. Done in ink and watercolor on cardboard, the rendering was prepared by George Pelham Browne (1831-1889).

Mr. & Mrs. Franklin H. Stevens of Chester, Vermont, have donated a volume of records of the First Freewill Baptist Church of New Sharon. Containing minutes of meetings, lists of members, baptisms, and dismissals, the records cover the period 1824-1845.

The Federal Archives and Records Center at Waltham, Massachusetts, has transferred the papers of the Augusta Grammar School Association to the Society. Consisting of seventy pieces, the papers cover the period 1802-1807, and

contain the rules of the association, minutes of meetings, lists of officers and members, and memoranda relating to the construction of a school building.

From Kay Clegg of Santa Rosa, California, we have received copies of Parsonsfield marriage intentions, 1799-1855, taken from the papers of Elder John Buzzell.

A letterbook, 1846-1851, containing correspondence of the Grand Masters of the Maine Lodge, I.O.O.F., has been received from R. N. Richardson of Middletown, Ohio. Concerned largely with the application of bylaws by the local lodges, the book contains correspondence of Elisha Clarke, Nathaniel F. Deering, Ezra B. French, Allen Haines, William R. Smith, and L. B. Straw.

A collection of Oxnard family material has been received from Nancy Oxnard Longley of Norway, Maine. Covering the period 1865-1980, the collection includes newspaper clippings, personal narratives and recollections, photographs, and genealogical data.

From Mr. Richard F. Dole of South Portland, we have received typescript copies of the directors' records, 1846-1901, and the stockholders' records, 1846-1902, of the Portland Company, one of the nation's early manufacturers of locomotives. These records are an important addition to our existing collection of Portland Company records and engineering drawings.

Copies of the records of the Warren Rifle Company of Warren, Maine, were donated by Mr. Abbott Spear of Warren. The records cover the period 1828-1843 and contain information on the organization of the company, records of meetings, and regimental and brigade orders.

Thomas Gaffney