History of the President's House

Office of the President

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The President's House

Built between 1872 and 1873, the University of Maine President's House has been home to 15 presidents and their families. Like much of today's campus, the home was erected on farmland that was originally purchased for $11,000. This transaction took place just 10 years after President Abraham Lincoln approved the Morrill Act, establishing our nation's tradition of land-grant universities. The first President's House was partially destroyed by fire and was rebuilt in 1893. The footprint of the house today with minor changes is the same as it was at that time. The additions of porches and a corner tower reflect the architectural styles of the turn of the century and add a visual appeal to the structure.

The elegant Victorian home has held thousands of visitors over the years, including international dignitaries, a Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, governors, senators, and countless esteemed scholars. The President's House has also served as a favorite gathering place for members of the University of Maine family, including alumni and friends, students, faculty, and staff. For over a century, members of the University of Maine's extended family have gathered at the President's House for events such as pre-game brunches, intimate dinners, holiday parties, and even Kentucky Derby celebrations. These events have often reflected the personal interests of the presidents and their families.

Improvements since the 1930's have made the President's House even more inviting for guests. Examples of these improvements include a sunroom, additional baths, and a reception room. The President's House serves as a repository for many campus treasures including books authored by University of Maine faculty members, paintings from the Museum of Art's permanent collection, and fine china and silver donated to the University by alumni and friends. Approximately 200-300 guests visit the President's House each month.