

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**COMMISSION TO DESIGNATE OUTSTANDING MAINE
CITIZENS WHOSE PORTRAITS ARE TO BE
DISPLAYED IN THE STATE HOUSE**

FINAL REPORT

February 27, 1998

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Commission to Designate Outstanding
Maine Citizens Whose Portraits
are to be Displayed in the State House

Final Report

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MEMBERS
COMMISSION TO DESIGNATE OUTSTANDING MAINE CITIZENS WHOSE
PORTRAITS ARE TO BE DISPLAYED IN THE STATE HOUSE
Chapter 64, Resolves of 1997

Joint Appointments by the Governor, President and Speaker

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Dr. H. Draper Hunt 94 Coach Road South Portland, Maine 04106 Tel: 774-1720	Public Member
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Other

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Introduction

The Commission to Designate Outstanding Maine Citizens Whose Portraits are to be Displayed in the State House (Chapter 64, Resolves of 1997) has completed its work and is reporting its recommendations to the Maine Legislature.

The Commission endeavored to select individuals who made lasting contributions to Maine and the nation. The Commission made the selections within the following categories: Business, the Arts, Literature, Science and Invention, Religion, Sports, Entertainment, Military and Maritime, Social Reform, and Scholarship. It was the intent of the Commission, given that the State House is uniquely the people's house, that the selection represent a broad cross-section of distinguished Maine people.

While the enabling legislation did not specify the number of portraits to be selected, or define "citizen," it was the conclusion of the Commission to limit the selections to 20 and in some cases, broadly define "citizen." The number was chosen to conform to potential funding and to assure the completion of the new display at the beginning of the millennium. "Citizens" were primarily considered in terms of birth, but if residence in Maine was associated with major achievements, some selections were not so limited.

During its deliberations, the Commission considered many worthy candidates. It is our hope that these selections will be the base of an ongoing process for including significant Mainers in the State House Portrait Collection.

Designated Citizens

Charles H. Best, 1899-1978. A native of Pembroke, Dr. Best was the co-discoverer of insulin, which revolutionized the treatment of diabetes.

Rachel Carson, 1907-1964. A native of Springdale, Pennsylvania, Carson was a writer, scientist, and ecologist who spent many of her summers on the Maine coast. In 1962 she published the highly influential book *Silent Spring*, which alerted the world to the long-term effects of misusing pesticides. Her work led to new policies for protecting human health and the environment.

Cornelia Thurza "Fly Rod" Crosby, 1854-1946. A native of Phillips, Crosby worked and fished in the Rangely area. By 1895 she had become Maine's first registered guide, first paid tourism promoter, and a nationally known sports celebrity with a widely syndicated outdoor column.

Samuel de Champlain, 1567-1635. This skilled navigator and cartographer made three voyages of exploration along the Maine Coast between 1604 and 1606, which resulted in many place names in use today. Champlain was a key figure in the first French settlement at St. Croix in 1604 and produced the first reliable map of the Maine Coast.

Dorothea Lynde Dix, 1802-1887. A native of Hampden, Dix led an international reform movement for the care of the mentally ill and directed the United States nursing effort during the Civil War.

Fannie Hardy Eckstorm, 1865-1946. A native of Brewer, Mrs. Eckstorm was a noted authority on the Native Peoples of Maine, natural history, ballads, and lumbering. Her studies, such as *The Penobscot Man*, are vital in understanding major changes in Maine at the turn of the twentieth century.

John Ford, 1895-1973. Born Sean O'Feeney in Cape Elizabeth and raised on Portland's Munjoy Hill, John Ford directed more than eighty motion pictures. He received four Academy Awards for his films such as *Stagecoach* and two for his World War II documentaries.

James Augustine Healy, 1830-1900. A native of Macon, Georgia, Healy was the first Black Roman Catholic Bishop in America, serving the Diocese of Portland in that capacity from 1875 until his death in 1900.

Winslow Homer, 1836-1910. A native of Boston, Homer lived and painted at Prout's Neck from 1883 until his death in 1910. There he created many seascapes which are considered to be among the most significant American paintings of the period.

Oliver Otis Howard, 1820-1909. A native of Leeds, General Howard was a career military officer who won the Congressional Medal of Honor for heroism in the Civil War, directed the Freedman's Bureau from 1865 to 1874, was instrumental in establishing Howard University in Washington, D.C., and played a central role in the Indian wars of the 1870s and 1880s.

Sarah Orne Jewett, 1849-1909. A native of South Berwick, Jewett was a prolific writer of novels, such as *Country of the Pointed Firs*, and short stories which captured the essence of life in rural and coastal Maine during the nineteenth century.

Alvin O. Lombard, 1856-1937. A native of Springfield, Lombard invented a log hauler with a caterpillar tread, which he patented in 1901. This tread has been used widely in both civilian and military vehicles throughout the twentieth century. He was also a pioneer in the development of hydroelectric power equipment.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1807-1882. A native of Portland, Longfellow became the most widely read American poet of the nineteenth century. His international popularity earned him a place as the only American in the poet's corner of Westminster Abbey.

Elijah Parish Lovejoy, 1802-1837. A native of Albion, Lovejoy is remembered as an American martyr to the freedom of the press, who was murdered while publishing an antislavery newspaper in Alton, Illinois.

Edna St. Vincent Millay, 1892-1950. A native of Rockland, Millay was a prolific poet whose writing began early while she was a teenager in Camden with her poem "Renascence." Her work captured the imagination of Jazz Age America, winning her the Pulitzer prize for poetry in 1922.

Commodore Edward Preble, 1761-1807. A native of Portland, Preble captained the *U.S.S. Constitution* and achieved fame as the commander of an American naval expedition which subdued the Barbary pirates. His leadership skills earned him the title "The Father of the American Navy."

Edwin Arlington Robinson, 1869-1935. A native of Head Tide, Robinson became one of America's most significant early twentieth century poets. His poems created such memorable characters as Miniver Cheevy and Richard Corey and won him three Pulitzer prizes.

Louis Francis Sockalexis, 1871-1913. A native of Indian Island, Sockalexis was the first Native American to play major league baseball. After his death, his team changed its name to the Cleveland Indians in his honor.

Harriet Beecher Stowe, 1811-1896. A native of Litchfield, Connecticut, Harriet Beecher Stowe is best remembered for authoring the internationally popular antislavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1852. Cited by historians as one of the contributing factors to the Civil War, Stowe's book was written in Brunswick while her husband was teaching at Bowdoin College. She drew upon her knowledge of coastal Maine life in writing her novel *Pearl of Orr's Island*.

Rudy Vallee, 1901-1986. A native of Island Pond Vermont, who grew up in Westbrook, Vallee became one of the great entertainment idols of the 1930s through his singing and saxophone playing. He touched millions of Americans through his weekly radio programs, phonograph records, and movies. He first gained national attention in the roaring twenties by his popularization of "The Maine Stein Song."

Concluding Remarks

During its deliberations, the commission identified several issues relating to the care of the existing State House Portrait Collection and wishes to bring them to the attention of the Legislature.

We feel it is imperative to provide for the long-term care of the collection. We are concerned about environmental and security conditions in the State House, which are currently substandard for the care of art. Custom has treated the collection as decorations that can be moved around relatively casually; each move puts both canvases and fragile frames at great risk. There is no proper storage available for portraits that must be off exhibit for conservation, spatial reasons, or during building renovations. There has been no systematic provision for conservation of the collection. In addition, the Commission recognizes that educational opportunities exist for interpreting the State House collection to visitors and the general public, through such means as tours and publications. We hope that these issues can be addressed through the cooperation of the State House and Capitol Park Commission, the Maine State Museum, and the Maine Arts Commission.

In the event that it is necessary to commission portraits to fulfill these recommendations, we request that funds be designated pursuant to the Per cent for Art Program (Title 27, Section 451 *et seq.*), generated by the State House restoration work.