

WILSON MUSEUM BULLETIN

Spring 2020

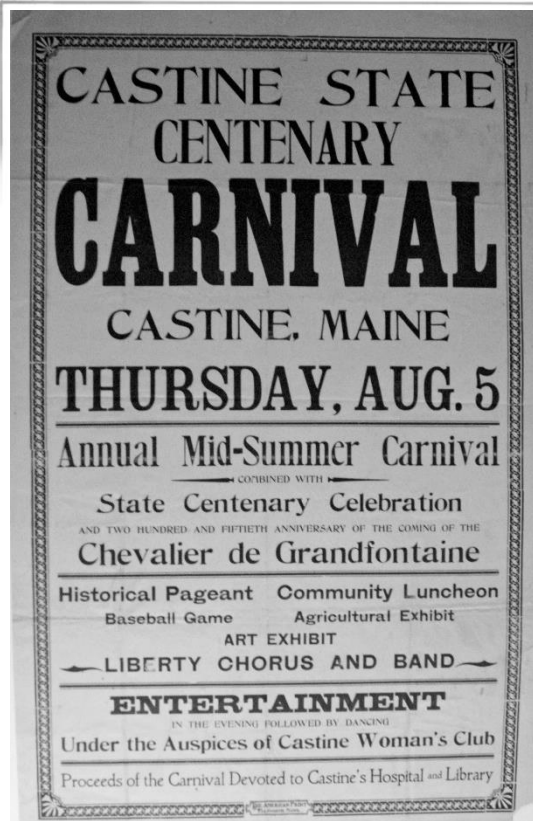
Vol. 5, No. 21

Castine State Centenary Carnival

MISSION

Building on the legacy of its founding family, the Wilson Museum uses its diverse collections and resources to provide learning experiences to stimulate exploration of the history and cultures of the Penobscot Bay region and world.

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On August 5, 1920, Castine held a Centenary Celebration ostensibly in observance of Maine's 100-year anniversary of becoming a state, but which appears to have been more celebratory of the town's history than the State's. Leading up to the event, The Republican Journal of Belfast published the following article on July 29, 1920:

Castine's Historical Pageant
Castine, being so rich in historic lore, has a wonderful amount of material for a pageant, so the several committees have had an opportunity to arrange a splendid celebration. An excursion on steamer Golden Rod will leave Belfast at eight o'clock in the morning, reaching Castine in

season for the Pageant which takes place at ten o'clock.

The Ellsworth American had an extensive write-up of the festivities following the day, in the August 11 edition of the paper:

Castine, town of romantic history, had a centenary carnival last Thursday that in picturesqueness and perfection of detail rivals anything of the kind ever presented in Maine. Ideal summer weather prevailed, and the old town on the Bagaduce never



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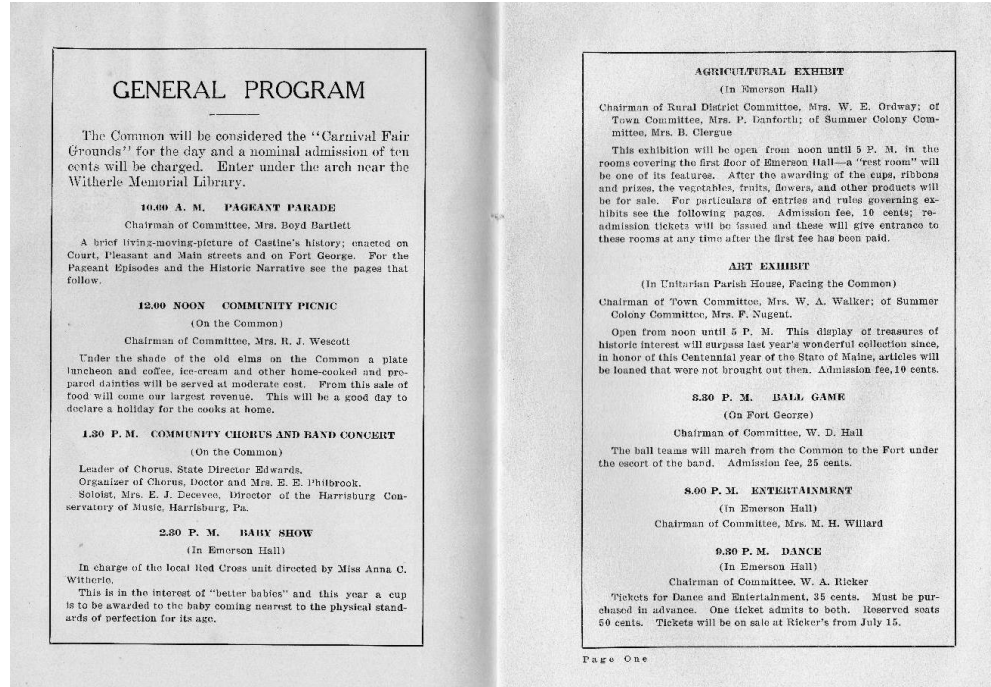
Haley Blake
Education Coordinator

Jocelyn Willis
Program Support



entertained more visitors. The efforts of the local committees, who have worked so long and so hard, were fully rewarded. The day was one big success.

The big feature of the day was the pageant, depicting in fifteen episodes the romantic history of Castine. Incidental features were the agricultural exhibit, which County Agent Bridges declares was far above the average, a big community picnic, a baby show, a baseball game, and an entertainment and dancing in the evening. It was a full day's program, arranged in nicest detail and carried out without a hitch.



The town's historic old common was the scene of the carnival proper, and was gay with decorated booths and tables; entrance to the common being through a large double arch, decorated with evergreen, and the national colors. At 10 o'clock in the morning, on old Fort George, the celebration opened with the historical pageant, arranged for the occasion by Mary Dunbar Devereux. Hundreds of interested spectators crowded the parapets upon the south side of the fort when the Muse of History entered by the north entrance, accompanied by the State of Maine and followed by the sixteen counties.

The newspaper then goes on to report in detail on the costumes, scenery, storyline and organization responsible for each episode, which followed Castine's history from its earliest inhabitants to a look into the future (the twentieth century). The reporter then goes on to say:

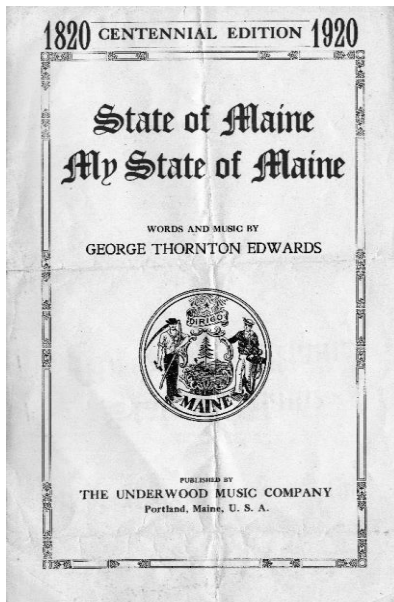


The actors in the various scenes numbered some two hundred, all appropriately costumed in the dress of the period represented in each episode; and the pageant certainly reflects great credit, not only upon Mrs. Devereux, the author, but upon these actors, and Mrs. Bartlett, chairman of the pageant committee, and Mrs. Grace Knudson, carnival director.

Following the pageant was a parade, marshalled by W.D. Hall, headed by the Bangor band, and in which appeared a number of beautifully decorated floats, gaily dressed cars, and, not its least feature, the Castine Humpitosh band.

The parade disbanded on Court street near the common, where at noon, was served a community picnic. The first event in the afternoon was the community chorus, which was led by State Director Edwards, and accompanied by the Bangor band. From the platform, gaily adorned with bunting, and upon which the band played, several short speeches were delivered by visiting celebrities, just before the concert, Arthur W. Patterson acting as master of ceremonies. An interesting feature was the reading of a letter from the only living descendent of the Baron de St. Castine. The Community chorus was organized by Doctor and Mrs. E.E. Philbrook, who put much effort into the work, and the result repaid them for all that they did. The soloist was Mrs. Decevee, director of the Harrisburg Conservatory of Music, and the great crowd which packed the common, certainly showed that it enjoyed every feature of the concert, liberally applauding band, soloist, speakers and chorus.

Following the concert many took advantage of the opportunity to inspect the visiting destroyers, the Leary and Dixon, while the art exhibit and agricultural exhibit were crowded all the afternoon. The collection of treasures of historic interest displayed in the art exhibit, loaned from the old homes of the town, was doubtless as wonderful an exhibit, and one as well worth seeing as has ever been gathered together in the State. The silver challenge cups and other valuable prizes to be awarded made an interesting and valuable display in themselves.



This was undoubtedly performed at this event as its author led the community chorus. Boyd Bartlett mentioned in his diary on Feb. 1 "Beginning of State Song Week," which may have been the first opportunity for its performance in Castine.



Thousands of people witnessed the ball game between Castine and the team from the Boston university summer school at Ellsworth, won by the home team. A summary of the game appears elsewhere.

In the evening an entertainment was given in Emerson hall. Following the entertainment was a dance, so many participating that an overflow dance was arranged at the Acadian hotel, the committee being indebted to Landlord Walker for his courtesy in throwing open the music room of his inn.

The net proceeds of the carnival will be distributed among the various activities in which the Castine Woman's Club is interested, the members of the club being the people who sponsored the affair, and who deserve the credit for its success. The whole community worked as one for the success of the carnival and

centennial celebration.

As every aspect of the event required an admission fee, the net proceeds did indeed prove the success of the event and benefitted the community greatly. A Report of the Disbursing Committee of the Woman's Club designated the following projects and organizations as recipients of the proceeds gleaned from the Centenary event:

1. For the hospital –
 - a. That \$500 be given to the charity fund of the Castine General Hospital to be used for the benefit of residents of Castine
 - b. That \$50 be given to Dr. Babcock to be used for some needed equipment for the hospital
2. For the town library
 - a. That \$200 be given to start a fund to be known as the Dr. G.A. Wheeler historical fund, the \$200 to be safely invested by the Library Committee, and the interest to be used for the purchase of historical books.
 - b. That \$25 be given for the purchase of magazines.
 - c. That \$25 be given to be used to meet the state requirement that the librarian should attend library meetings.
 - d. That \$50 should be given to the Library Maintenance Fund.

continued on page 6

Education Department

by Haley Blake

Summer is almost here and the Wilson Museum is conjuring up some new programs and adventures for our members and visitors.

Everybody loves the blacksmithing, woodturning, and boatbuilding demonstrations on Wednesdays and Sundays in July and August. They will be back this summer along with other favorites like fireside and outdoor cooking demonstrations (check our web calendar for cooking dates)! This year we are kicking it up a notch by adding other demonstrations on various Wednesdays and Sundays in July and August.

Weaving on the Earth Loom will be demonstrated by Joanne Steenberg on Wednesday, July 1 and Sunday,



July 5; felting with Lyn Mayewski on Wednesday, July 22; and basketmaking by Pam Capurso on Sunday, August 9. Stay tuned as we add others.

Feeling the need to keep your social distance? That's okay, here are three suggestions for distancing adventures:

1) Go on a navigational scavenger hunt.

Compete against a friend or relative to see who can finish first, or time yourself and add your name and time to our All-Star list. Pick up the course instructions at our front desk; then, like a circuit trainer of the brain-exercising variety, explore our campus until you get yourself back to the

Looking Forward



beyond our campus. Explore Castine and learn about our historic sites! The tour features short histories, audio, and galleries of historic images. Try it on your next visit, or from home. The *Castine Virtual History Tour* mobile app is available for download for mobile devices on Google Play and the Apple App Store. Or you can go to castine.ocell.com to use the full app on the web. You can even take a tour of Castine from the comfort of your home – now that's some serious social distancing!

As you can see, we have lots of ideas with more on the way. Be sure you are on our email list so that you will receive news and updates to our programs all year long. Just send an email to info@wilsonmuseum.org with "add me to your mailing list" in the subject line.



Recent Gift to Museum

Do you see a resemblance between the two pumps pictured to the right?

One is a nineteen-inch, working model given to the Museum by Bill and Reta Hunter along with a facsimile of the original operating manual. The other is a six-foot, full-size hot-air water pump from East Blue Hill given by Leslie S. Pearl in 1965.

The hot-air engine was developed in 1816 by Robert Stirling, a Scottish minister. Hot-air pumps had many advantages: they were reliable, ran on virtually any fuel, had easily replaced parts, and could not explode. (No steam was used, only a few cubic feet of hot air.) They are still one of the most efficient engines ever designed. By chance, one of the World's leading experts on Stirling Engines lives right here in Castine. Do you know who?

Our engine is based on a John Ericsson patent, and was built by the Rider Ericsson Co. Beginning with a British Patent in 1826, John Ericsson developed many hot-air engine designs. Ericsson is also known as the builder of the ironclad *USS Monitor*, a steam-powered warship built for the Union in the Civil War.

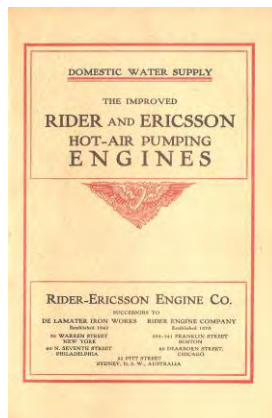
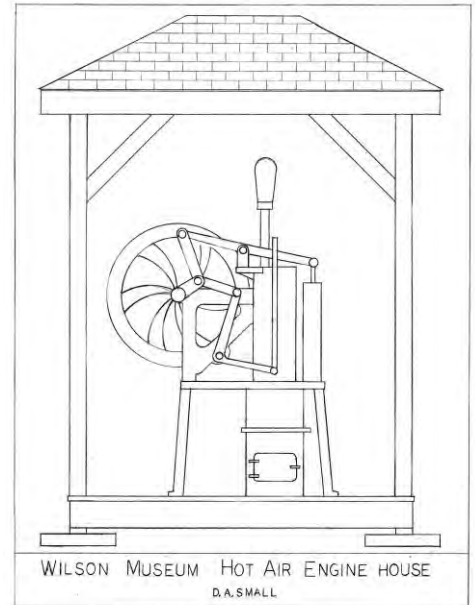
Our hot-air engine was used to pump water to a tank or cistern. Water then could be gravity fed where needed. The pump works using air compression through a process of continuously heating and cooling the same air. The little firebox at the base heats the air using wood or coal. The air expands and pushes the piston up. The piston is made in such a way that rising air escapes around the piston to the top of the cylinder. After all the air has risen, the piston drops. At the top, the water being pumped is routed through a jacket around the top of the cylinder cooling the air. A secondary air piston, activated by the flywheel presses the cooled air down passed the piston where it's heated again by the fire and the process is repeated over and over.



The Museum plans to move the full-size pump to its own little house where it can be run, on occasion. To the right is a proposed design.

Below right is the much larger building that originally housed our pump.

Below is a facsimile of the original Rider and Ericsson Hot-Air Pumping Engines owner's manual.



e. That the balance – about \$95 – after the preceding and the following gifts are made be given to the Library Committee to be used at their discretion for the benefit of the library.

3. For other causes –

a. For the school libraries –

That \$10 be given to each of the rural schools to be used to buy books of reference and pictures to be selected by the teacher.

That \$15 be given to the children’s library at the Normal School.

That \$20 be given to the Grammar School library.

That \$15 be given to the High School to be used for some books or equipment.

b. For the Canning Club –

That \$20 be given to the Canning Club

c. For the gymnasium –

That \$100 be given toward the gymnasium.

d. For welfare work –

That \$50 be set aside for general welfare work, the money to be used by the Educational and Civics Committees.

e. For dental charity work –

That \$50 be given for children’s dental work, the money to be used under the supervision of a committee of three – Dr. Babcock, Miss Jellison, and Miss Annie Dunbar; each child to pay five or ten cents for each visit to the dentist.

f. For our French orphan –

That \$36.50 be given to continue the help to our French orphan for another year.

Boyd Bartlett, in his diary for the date of August 5, 1920, summed it up this way: “The Pageant proved a success in every way.”

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Downes (1948-2020)



The Wilson Museum is sad to report that Board President Robert Downes died on February 28, 2020, after a long battle with cancer. Born and raised in Boston, MA, Bob joined the Army in 1969. He was selected for Officer Candidate School and travelled the world including Vietnam, France, and Germany, while rising in the ranks. He served on the staff of General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Bob retired and was honorably discharged in 1993. After retirement he continued to work at the Pentagon for defense contractors until he and his wife Pat moved to Orrington, Maine, in 2011. Sadly, only three years later, Bob’s beloved wife died.

In the summer of 2014, Barbara Mallonee, a good friend of both Bob and the Museum, brought him to Castine for a visit, and in a whispered aside, said that he would make a great addition to the Board. He did, indeed, joining the Board on September 23, 2014, and immediately becoming a valuable member of the Finance Committee. In 2016 he was elected Vice President and in 2019 he was elected President, a position he held until his death. Bob was a champion of the John & Phebe Perkins House. He sponsored two Candlelight Suppers and was instrumental in acquiring a plaque honoring the Perkins House’s 1969 listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

James Elijah Austin (1933-2020)



James Austin, another staunch supporter of the Wilson Museum passed away on May 6, 2020. A local contractor and carpenter, Jim renovated many historic homes in Castine and throughout the peninsula. He freely shared his expertise in his roles as a former Trustee and, until his death, as a member of the Museum’s Building and Grounds Committee. His friendship and generosity will be greatly missed.

IN MEMORIAM

We remember the following members of the Wilson Museum who believed in the Museum’s mission and gave of themselves to further its outreach.

Their legacy will live on.

James Austin
1933-2020

Lois Cyr
1935-2020

Robert Downes
1948-2020

John Gardner
1929-2019

Additionally, the Museum has received generous donations in memory of the following:

James Austin

Lois Cyr

Robert Downes

John Gardner

Harry Kaiserian

Collections Conversations

by Abby Dunham

At a program in early March, I spoke to a group of homeschool families about the history of writing, drawing on a few parts of the Wilson Museum's collection to illustrate the subject. It's a topic that has long been of personal interest to me and has become an area of professional interest as well. I've also been thinking more broadly about communication, both with language and without language.



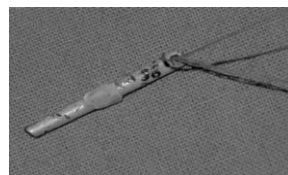
Writing, conversation, oral history, and songs are all ways in which communication may happen through language. The use of language typically allows for a precise style of communication, where many diverse facts, ideas, and possibilities may be directly conveyed. Sometimes a language, the meaning of its writing system, or both become lost in time. At that point, the written records that survive in that language may not impart much beyond the writer's desire to communicate something.



Paintings, drawings, carvings, and sculpture are just a few of the ways in which humans have communicated that either do not depend on any language or employ a limited system of conventions. Communication without language is often about broad ideas or emotions and, while meanings can be tied to a culture, understanding can also transcend these bounds in ways that do not happen with language.



In the context of museum collections, there are also the artifacts that people have made for reasons other than communication, that nevertheless "speak" to us. From a paleolithic bone needle to a 19th century plane, much can be indirectly learned about past cultures. It



is fascinating to me that so many of these modes of communication are represented within the collection of the Wilson Museum. Perhaps this perspective on collections as means of communication will enrich your next visit to the Museum.



Collecting Castine 2020



Though there are many unknowns this year, we do know that our community is filled with amazing people of great kindness, optimism, perseverance, and talent. This is why we are moving forward with our plans for *Collecting Castine 2020*, so save the date - August 3 (5-7 p.m.)! We are excited to be honoring Goody-B Wiseman for her artistic excellence and for her dedicated support of the art community by way of Gallery b. and the Annex. As always, we will highlight our talented Castine artists and enjoy a fabulous evening of good fun and food. We are changing things up a bit, in keeping with this year's trend, so check back for more details as we move into summer.

Alice McLaughlin Watercolors Exhibit & Invitation

Alice McLaughlin's family built a summer home, "Otter Rock," across from Otter Rock Ledge on Perkins Street in the late 1800s. For the next twenty years Alice created lovely watercolor views of Castine and finely detailed mushroom studies. The painting above was Dr. North's home which is still standing today.



Do you own an Alice McLaughlin watercolor that you would be willing to loan to the Museum for display in our main hall for a month this summer (or the whole summer)? If so, contact Abby Dunham, 207-326-9247 or info@wilsonmuseum.org.

WILSON MUSEUM
P.O. Box 196
Castine, ME 04421

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**THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH
WOOD SHOP DEMONSTRATIONS**
Wednesdays & Sundays 2-5 p.m.
July & August

**Board Member
Appointed
to Fill Unexpired Term**



Robert Kilpeck – is the Owner/President of Digital Security Solutions, Inc. He is a 21-year veteran of the Massachusetts State Police and served 9 years as Director of Campus Safety and Security for Husson University. Bob has volunteered his time and talents to several area organizations and currently serves on the Wilson Museum’s Building & Grounds Committee and Museum Council. He enjoys living in and working on his historic Castine home.