



REPORT OF THE MAINE BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION



Updated February 2019 for the
Maine State Legislature's Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations



Herein is a February 2019 update to the November 2018 report of the Maine Bicentennial Commission, outlining our findings and recommendations to date, as required in the enabling legislation that established the commission, [Resolve 25](#) of the 128th Legislature, originally sponsored by Rep. Jim Handy, D- Lewiston, as LD 1143, “Resolve, Providing for the Official Observance of the 200th Anniversary of the Formation of the State of Maine.”

Following membership appointments as outlined in the legislation, the commission convened for the first time on Jan. 29, 2018 and has met six times since then.

Sen. Bill Diamond, D-Windham, was appointed chairman and subsequently appointed State Archivist David Cheever as the vice chairman and Peter Merrill, chairman of the Maine Cultural Affairs Council, and director of the Maine State Housing Authority, as the commission treasurer. The commission then appointed members to lead four subcommittees of the commission:

- Events/Programs Subcommittee Chairman: Alison Sucy, Maine Tourism Association, director of government affairs
- Education Subcommittee Chairman: Heather Perry, Gorham School Department, superintendent
- Marketing Subcommittee Chairman: Rep. Jim Handy
- Finance Subcommittee Chairman: Dana Connors, Maine Chamber of Commerce, president

The commission’s accomplishments to date include:

- Creation of the Maine200 logo and slogan.
- Launch of the Maine200.org website and social media feeds (@OfficialME200 on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook). *The logo design and web design work are donated by Meredith Strang Burgess and her team at Burgess Advertising & Marketing in Falmouth. The web hosting is donated by Eric Tompkins of Aptuitive, based in Farmington.*
- Approval of mission and vision statements
- Creation of a fundraising outreach packet with patron levels
- Preliminary planning of programs and events
- Educational guidelines for bicentennial curriculum and programs
- Non-profit corporation status for Maine200, which is incorporated as Maine200 with the Bureau of Corporations, Elections and Commissions
- Approval of bylaws for commission operations
- Approval of endorsement guidelines for programs and events seeking to identify with the bicentennial; as well as endorsement and usage guidelines for for-profit product use
- Preparatory work for a Spring 2019 launch of a webstore that will feature bicentennial merchandise, including a Maine Bicentennial Marketplace section that will feature MaineMade products
- Hiring of a bicentennial staff person, Business Manager Brad Sawyer

The commission has identified the following goals for its role in Maine's bicentennial commemoration:

- Host four signature events: A kickoff celebration in July 2019 that will include raising the bicentennial flag; a Statehood Day commemoration in March 2020; coordination with a Tall Ships Maine event beginning in Portland and continuing along the coast of Maine in July 2020; and a closing event in October 2020 in Bangor with a future-focused exposition and celebratory dinner, as well as completion of a time capsule
- Support and host ongoing programs that promote an appreciation of Maine's history, in all its complexity, and its present people and resources, while inspiring ideas and actions toward a bright future
- Encourage individuals, organizations and businesses around the State to embrace the bicentennial and create their own contributions to this commemoration

On Oct. 2, 2018, the commission publicly launched its outreach and fundraising efforts with an unveiling of the Maine200.org website, during a press conference at the Maine Historical Society in Portland. The website provides a centralized place for the public to access information about the commission and the state's bicentennial efforts.

The next meeting of the commission is slated for March 1 and commissioners will be focusing on the fundraising efforts and continuing to firm up plans for the signature events and programs. The commission will also be considering proposed programs from state agencies and organizations represented on the commission. The 501c3 filing for Maine200 is currently pending, to allow for tax-deductible donations, and a Maine200 bank account is set up at Bangor Savings Bank to accept those donations.

We look forward to continuing our work to prepare for a fulfilling commemoration of Maine's 200 years of statehood.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Diamond". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sen. Bill Diamond,
Chairman, Maine Bicentennial Commission (Maine200)

SIGNATURE EVENTS

July 26, 2019



Maine200 Kickoff Day

Location/details TBD
Announce planned events and
programs to encourage engage-
ment statewide

March 14-15, 2020



Statehood Day Weekend March 14-15, 2020, Statewide/ Augusta Armory or Statehouse

- Saturday night bean suppers hosted by various groups statewide, incorporating food drives
- Speeches, poetry and musical performance, display of statehood papers, Hall of Flags

July 16-19, 2020



Summer Celebration featuring Tall Ships Maine July 16-19, 2020, Portland/Coast

- City of Portland to host wide-ranging festival in concurrence with tall ships appearances, city-wide, in commemoration of being Maine's first capital city
- Opportunities to host events/galas/ local and national 2020 candidates and other dignitaries aboard ships or in nearby venues
- Tall Ships Maine to offer educational experiences for youth, travel ships to various ports along the coast; may include Rockland, Bucksport and others

Oct. 10-12, 2020



Grand Finale Weekend

October 10-12, 2020, Bangor/Augusta/Statewide

- "Leading the Way" Expo, featuring Maine companies and nonprofits showcasing the technologies and innovations of the future, Friday, Oct. 9, Cross Insurance Center, Bangor
- Recognition dinner (invitation only) for sponsors, donors and volunteers, featuring Maine foods and entertainment, Friday, Oct. 9, Cross Insurance Center, Bangor
- Final Blaine House concert, Friday, Oct. 9, Cross Insurance Center, Bangor
- Bicentennial Festival: Entertainment and activities in Capitol Park; and official sealing of the time capsule by the capsule keepers, Saturday, Oct. 10, Capitol Park/ Statehouse complex, Augusta
- Cultural Days: Events hosted by religious and cultural groups statewide, recognizing the different cultures that made up Maine's past and are part of Maine's present; to include a multi-denominational statewide Maine convocation and a citizenship naturalization ceremony (location TBD), Oct. 10-12, 2020, Statewide

Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
February 20, 2019
Testimony Provided by David Cheever, State Archivist
In Support of LR 2406 FY 2019 Emergency Supplemental Budget

The Honorable Catherine Breen, Senate Chair
The Honorable Drew Gattine, House Chair
and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs

The Honorable Rebecca Millett, Senate Chair
The Honorable Victoria Kornfield, House Chair
and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

My name is David Cheever, I am the Maine State Archivist, and it is my honor to serve as Vice Chairman of Maine's Bicentennial Commission.

I am here today to speak in favor of LR 2406, Governor Mills' FY19 Emergency Supplemental Budget request.

As you deliberate about your Committee's recommendation, you have two central concerns – the size of the request, and the urgency relating to that request.

Most everyone from whom you will hear today can identify the programs, projects and events that will mark Maine's Bicentennial. Making the case for spending the money to make all of that happen is relatively easy.

After all, who among us would not want to see or experience a Tall Ships event on our coast, a magnificent recognition of Maine's outstanding maritime past, present, and future?

How could we not want to revel in the work of so many artists who have long identified Maine as a crucible of creative expression?

How could we overlook the opportunity to share the story of Maine through the miracles of modern technology – making a statement about yesterday, and of today, and for tomorrow?

And how could we not take at least a moment, a serious and thoughtful moment, to recount how Maine began, and how it has struggled and endured and continued to accept the challenge of self-government, and borne the responsibilities of balancing the competing demands of exploiting our environment, and preserving that same environment for future generations?

The money requested in LR 2406 is a significant amount, yes, but it is merely the down payment, the State's contribution that will – as many grant programs and government expenditures before it – trigger an outpouring of private money from people, corporations, and foundations that will set Maine's Bicentennial on solid financial footing.

Securing events such as the Tall Ships, or making it possible to share Maine's story, or marveling in the artistic and educational expressions of Maine people may appear to be something spontaneous – or that we wish we could have in some spontaneous fashion.

Alas, it is not that easy.

Agreements need to be forged, contracts need to be negotiated and secured, and expenses related to planning the events and the commemoration of Maine statehood, require committing money up front.

That is what this request represents. It provides the Bicentennial Commission with the money needed to ensure that the events and programs that begin in July of this year, and extend into late next year, can be planned properly.

The Bicentennial Commission is encouraging organizations and communities throughout Maine to join us in commemorating 200 years of statehood, and to do so with the enthusiasm, respect and creativity that befits such a milestone.

The Commission cannot pay for everything, but it must pay its fair share if the State intends to partake of an event or program, such as Tall Ships. It must be able to pay for those programs and projects it runs, for example, the kick-off day later this year, Statehood Weekend in 13 months from now, and the construction, location and contents of a 2120 time capsule. It must be able to help pay for the story of Maine that we want to tell about those who came before us, and about ourselves, so that those who come after us can share the appreciation for this place we call Maine, the place we call home.

Thank you.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY
LR 2406 – In Support
James Ritter, State Librarian

Senator Breen, Representative Gattine, Senator Millet, Representative Kornfield, members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Jamie Ritter, State Librarian, and I testify before you today in support of the Governor's requested appropriation to support our State's Bicentennial.

As you consider the Governor's supplemental budget request I offer testimony that underscores the impact that can be made in our communities through programs and experiences offered by the organizations represented through the Cultural Affairs Council (Maine State Archives, Arts Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, Historical Society, Humanities Council, Library, and Museum). All of these organizations are represented on the Bicentennial Commission established by the legislature last year, and all support the funding request made by Governor Mills in the Supplemental Budget.

Our state's bicentennial celebration offers a time for all of us to reflect on the past, celebrate Maine's heritage and to make investments in the state's future. We will deliver services designed to highlight our history using engaging activities and programs, and will provide grants to preserve and enhance our cultural resources for the future. Most importantly, our organizations are prepared to provide programs and leadership to ensure that every citizen, student, and community in Maine has the opportunity to actively participate in Maine's Bicentennial commemoration.

We recognize that most Mainers will participate in and experience the Bicentennial through commemorative events and activities in their local communities. **Together, we support history, arts, education, and preservation across the state and in your community and seek to ensure the Bicentennial has a meaningful and lasting impact.** How, specifically, do we envision we can make an impact?

Grants to Local Communities:

A Bicentennial grants program designed to support the energy, creativity, and local interests of Maine communities. Grants will be made to local nonprofit cultural organizations whose work embodies the best that Maine's cultural community has to offer. Funds will support local events, programs, exhibits, and arts and preservation projects.

Our organizations will also work individually and collectively to deliver statewide Bicentennial programming. The brief examples below are representative of the type of programs that we seek to offer:

Students:

- Expand arts education programming in each school district, including an Arts Integration Project challenging schools to integrate at least two art forms using Maine's Bicentennial as the theme.
- Enhance curriculum-based educational outreach through a Maine 200 Years Poster Series, and a Maine history experience employing Virtual Reality learning.
- Engage schools and communities in a statewide literacy initiative built around the "Leaders Library Card Challenge." Using partnerships designed to improve educational and literacy outcomes, the initiative will position Maine to be the first state to ensure that "every kid has a card."
- The Maine Memory Network (www.mainememory.net) will provide the public, students, and Maine communities with extensive online resources for exploring the path to Maine statehood, how history shapes Maine today, and for sharing their own stories.

Curated Exhibits and Guided History Tours:

- Expand dynamic exhibits and access to Maine's historical artifacts. *Regional Struggle-National Story: Maine's Path to Statehood*, will offer first-ever displays of rare artifacts; *Whales and Little Fishes: the Future of Maine's Fisheries* will feature the only Right Whale skeleton in Maine.
- Create a technologically engaging and interactive (cell phone app-based) tour of the State House, featuring architectural, artistic, historical, and political highlights of Maine history.
- Develop posters using National Historic Landmarks as focal points in describing and understanding Maine's history from its founding through statehood, highlighting Maine's role in culture, politics, and commerce.

Celebrations and Targeted Programs:

- Create a crowd-sourced and geo-located Story Map, gathering and curating the images and information to inspire communities to discover their roles in the 1819 statehood vote, and the 1820 granting of statehood.
- Celebrate cultural leadership in Maine through the Maine International Conference on the Arts 2020 whose DIRIGO theme will focus on leadership development and inspiration.
- Host a community-facilitated "Big Read" statewide reading and discussion program for all ages to capture compelling, unique manuscripts and historical novels relevant to Maine history.
- Work with Maine's Poet Laureate to expand poetry programming to include a broader Maine Youth Poetry Competition, and statewide community-based poetry programs.

As has been made clear through the testimony provided today, there is significant enthusiasm around the Bicentennial. Thank you for listening and considering how these important programs offered by Maine's cultural agencies can make a significant impact during 2020 and beyond. I recognize that there are many efforts associated with the bicentennial and the funding provided by the State of Maine is but one resource among others that will help to make our State's Bicentennial memorable and impactful. As such, my colleagues and I stand ready to be a part of this incredible period in our State's history, and will help prioritize the role of local community programs and activities through our voice on the Bicentennial Commission.

Sincerely,

James Ritter, State Librarian

Testimony Supported By:

Hayden Anderson, Maine Humanities Council

Steve Bromage, Maine Historical Society

Bernard Fishman, Maine State Museum

Kirk Moheny, Maine Historic Preservation Commission

Julie Richard, Maine Arts Commission

Maine State Cultural Affairs Council

129th Maine Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

LR 2406 - An Act To Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government and To Change Certain Provisions of Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2019

February 20, 2019

Sen. Breen, Rep Gattine, Sen. Millet, Rep. Kornfield, members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Peter Merrill. I am Chairman of the Maine State Cultural Affairs Council.

The Cultural Affairs Council was created by the state to provide a forum for the state's arts and cultural agencies to coordinate their efforts. The Council is made up of five state agencies and two non-profit organizations - the Maine Arts Commission, the Maine State Library, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, the Maine State Museum, and the Maine State Archives, the Maine Humanities Council, and the Maine Historical Society.

I am also honored to have been asked to serve as Treasurer for the Bicentennial Commission.

The Maine State Cultural Affairs Council strongly supports the Governor's request for \$1,000,000 for Bicentennial activities in the supplemental budget. The Council has been discussing, advocating, and planning for the Bicentennial for a number of years and has a number of programming proposals for the Commission to consider.

Maine's Bicentennial is an opportunity for us to understand how we got where we are today and where we want to go in the future. It is an opportunity to understand everything that happened here before statehood and everything that has happened since. It is an opportunity to look at the many events, forces, and people who helped to meld our culture into what it is today.

We need to focus on the bad as well as the good; on our failures of weakness as well as our feats of courage and strength; and on the ugly as well as the beautiful. This is an opportunity to reach out to every town and encourage them to look at the contributions their area made to the whole, to take pride in their past, and to think about the state and society we want to be tomorrow.

The members of the Cultural Affairs Council, all serving as members of the Bicentennial Commission, can play a key role in providing these opportunities and facilitating our celebration. We urge your support for this proposal.

Thank you.

