

The Castine Historical Society

The Castine Historical Society (CHS), located in the Abbott School and Samuel P. Grindle House on the town common, serves as a window into Castine's extraordinary past. Much more than a repository for objects and archives, the CHS is a dynamic year-round community organization focused on the history of our town. Managed by a professional staff, the CHS hosts permanent and temporary exhibits, lectures, guided walking tours, the House & Garden Tour, educational programs, and events.

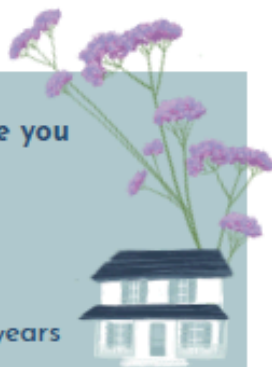
The Abbott School and Grindle House

The Castine Historical Society purchased the Abbott School in 1994 following a grassroots fundraising effort. The building served as the town's high school from its construction in 1859 until 1961. The CHS restored the building and opened to the public in 1996, with an exhibition gallery, gift shop, and meeting room. In 2008, the Historical Society purchased the adjacent c. 1850 Grindle House. After restoration, the Grindle House now houses exhibit space, staff offices, a research facility, and state-of-the-art collections storage. Researchers are welcome year-round by appointment.

Both buildings will be open during the House & Garden Tour.

A few reminders while you are visiting homes:

No high heels
No picture taking
No food or drink
No children under 10 years
No pets



2026 House & Garden Tour

Co-Chairs
Ruth Scheer & Mary Dearborn
Artistic Director
Meredithe Stuart-Smith
Flowers
Nancy Mundth
Houses' Committee Chairs
Meg Taylor & Lindsay Scott
House Write-ups
Mason Hoeller
Map
Betsy Lieser
Parking & Shuttle Services
Ken Scheer
Publicity
**Emily Eerdmans, Jennifer Scheer Lieberman,
Matt Powell, Melanie Twomey, Jordan
Richards,
Loi Thai & Stefanie Scheer Young**
Purchasing
Debbie Rogers & Ashleigh McKenzie
Signs
Sarah & Bryan Carey
Tea Service
Stefanie Scheer Young & Courtney Tilinski
Tickets & Registration
Susie Hatch & Mary Durost
Preview Party
Lisa Haugen & Karen Koos
Hosts of Preview Party
Ellie & Doug Benjamin
CHS President
Dabney McKenzie
CHS Executive Director
Kate McMahon

A very special thank you to Meredith Stuart-Smith and Heidi Walker of Meri Meri for the original artwork and design, their tireless patience and extreme generosity. A special thank you to the Castine Historical Society staff and volunteers for managing so much with such calm and finesse.



A Brief History Of Castine

Castine's rich history begins long before Europeans came to this place in the early 17th century. The place now known as Castine was deeply important to indigenous Americans, particularly Wabanaki people of the Penobscot Nation, who have lived on this land since time immemorial. Castine, particularly Dyce's Head, was central to wayfinding for Penobscot people as they traversed the Penobscot and Bagaduce Rivers to return to the interior parts of Maine.

The location of Castine at the mouth of the rivers made it a key place for Wabanaki people to live and navigate, and a valuable location for colonization by Europeans.

Samuel de Champlain identified this area on his 1607 map. The French called it "Pentagoet," meaning "at the falls," possibly referring to the tidal falls on the Bagaduce River. It was also shown on a map which Captain John Smith made for the British in 1616.

The Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts established a trading post here in 1626. The French and British continued to spar over the peninsula throughout the colonial period, with the French regaining control around 1635 and establishing a fort named Pentagoet.



**For further information or
to become a member contact:**

Castine Historical Society
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castinehistoricalsociety.org

The Frenchman who gave Castine its modern name, Jean Vincent d'Abbadie de Saint-Castin, arrived in Quebec in 1665 as an ensign in the French army, and was later stationed at Fort Pentagoet. The Dutch, who also wanted to control this key area, attacked the fort twice, and destroyed it in 1674. In 1677 or shortly thereafter, Saint-Castin reestablished French control of southwestern Acadia, establishing a trading post about a mile and a half up the Bagaduce River from Fort Pentagoet Nation. He married Pidianske, the daughter of local sachem Madockawando, strengthening diplomacy between the French and the Penobscot. His trading



Castine Historical Society 2026-2027 Exhibition

*Francis Hamabe's Maine:
A Life in Art*
May 23 – October 12

post was inhabited by around 160 Penobscot people as well as Saint-Castin himself and a Jesuit priest.

Saint-Castin returned to France permanently in 1701. Widespread European settlement did not occur until the 1760s, when English settlers began to clear the land of its trees and built farmhouses, and the village center began to develop.

Because of its strategic location at the mouth of Penobscot River, its deep safe harbor, and access to resources, the British sought to establish permanent ownership of Castine (then known as

Majabigwaduce) during the American Revolution. They occupied the town in 1779, building Fort George at the top of the hill. In July and August 1779, the Americans unsuccessfully attempted to regain control of the peninsula in what is now known as the Penobscot Expedition, the worst U.S. naval defeat until Pearl Harbor in 1941.

The township was incorporated as Penobscot in 1787 and later separated and incorporated as Castine in 1796. It was reoccupied by British forces for 8 months during the War of 1812.

Castine was a bustling port town until the Civil War, when railroads began to replace ships. By the 1870s, "rusticators" began to build summer cottages and hotels in town, many of which still stand as a reminder of our town's rich history.



1 MidCoast Cottage

5 DRESSER LANE

This circa 1820s classic Maine farmhouse, as well as two other houses, were moved to Dresser Lane in 1888 from their original waterfront location on Perkins Street to make room for the construction of The Holiday House (currently a private residence). Likely during this move, an ell structure from the nearby Trinity Episcopal Church property was attached to the back of the house. The current owners purchased the home in 2023 from the Richardson family, its owners for 79 years. It had only one closet and no bathroom or heat on the second floor, but one of the new owners is an interior designer who saw its potential. The house has architectural elements of Greek Revival, typical of the early 19th century, with local vernacular Italianate details. The ell now has a modern kitchen, two upstairs bathrooms, and a master suite with water views over the rooftops along Perkins Street. Several historic items found in the attic — a model boat, old photos, a ship painting — are on display in the foyer. Additional renovations and landscaping are in the works. Owners: Jennifer Scheer and Gary Lieberman

2 Gardens on Pentaoget Lane

25 PENTAGOET LANE



Eight years ago, this property consisted mostly of swampy open land at the lower end of the property and a grass backyard — a blank canvas from which a master plan has unfolded. The homeowners initially focused on the backyard, where tiered hardscaping was built and planted with a mix of mostly native perennials and evergreens, providing year-round color and texture enjoyed from the house's rear windows. From the front of the house, footpaths lead visitors to perennial and vegetable beds that walk the line between formal and informal. The master plan reveals ambitious stages for newly cultivated areas, with the future addition of a greenhouse, a garden cottage, a fruit orchard, and an expanded vegetable garden. Inspired by The Good Table Foundation, a Castine-based charity that grows produce in a containerized farm for local organizations, the goal for the garden is to provide produce to communities in need. Their recognition of food insecurity on the Blue Hill Peninsula is propelling the master plan to fruition. Owners: Julie Bohan and Dan Leader

3 The John & Phebe Perkins House

120 PERKINS STREET

The John & Phebe Perkins House was built beginning in 1765 as a one-story "cape"-style house on what is now Court Street but was then woods and meadows. John and Phebe, both from York, Maine, began their married life here. They had few neighbors; there were only six other houses on the Castine peninsula in 1774, and three of these were log cabins. As the Perkins family grew and prospered, a four-room two-story Georgian-style addition was built. The house was enlarged again around 1783 — the original one-story section being rebuilt as a two-story ell. This home was dismantled in the late 1960s and reassembled (with some modifications) on the campus of the Wilson Museum. The Perkins House was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1969, one of the first in Hancock County. Visitors are welcome to explore both floors of the house and learn more about colonial foodways in the reconstructed kitchen. Owners: The Wilson Museum

4 Windmill House

12 MADOCKAWANDO ROAD



The Windmill of this house originally arrived by steamer from Philadelphia around 1910 for property owner Robert Haines. It served as his hobby house and its inner-workings were to whimsically rotate sails. In the 1960s, famed sculptor and Castine resident Clark Fitz-Gerald and his sister purchased the windmill property. They added a modest "shack" and it was again kept as a hobby space. In 2000, then owners hired Blue Hill-based architect William McHenry to design the current shingle style residence

which is attached to the windmill and shack. The old structures were lifted up and a new foundation was poured. The windmill's subfloor and tiny staircase were removed, exposing the original wood machinery. In 2022, the current owners enlisted local summer resident and designer Loi Thai to design new bedroom space over the garage as well as to assist with furnishings that enhance the house's bright open interiors. Builder: Rick Wight. 2025 windmill exterior restoration: Steve Skillin. Owners: Mary Pincoffs Wilson and Will Wilson

5 The Stone Cottage

5 PERKINS STREET



In 1763, Jacob Dyce purchased 300 acres that stretched from where this cottage sits to the southernmost tip of the Castine peninsula. In 1829, Dyce sold the house to Dorothy Perkins and her husband Otis Little. The couple wrapped the house with granite blocks, some speculate to protect it from errant bullets. In 1885, a new owner expanded the upper floors in a classic Victorian "Second Empire" style. Next came Frederick and Helen Shelton, who owned the cottage for 74 years and named it 'The Scallops', decorating with the scallop shell motifs still visible today. They added the half-timbered birch exterior, stone porch, and additional bedrooms. The current owners purchased the house in 2020 with all its home furnishings, as has been the tradition for more than 100 years. Existing photos inspired them to restore in the character of its 1905 renovation. They uncovered more than 50 wallpapers and were able to find a maker who specializes in New England 1800's patterns. With thoughtful restoration, the home is preserved for future generations. Owners: Hilary and Edmund Billings

6 Cullen Cabin

22 BATTLE AVENUE



Purchasing a dilapidated log cabin on a rainy Halloween in 2013 was an act of faith. The cabin was built as part of the "rusticator" movement of the late 19th/early 20th c., bringing urban visitors to the area. With the guidance of Boston, now Penobscot-based architect Craig Buttner, the owners have restored the cabin with an eye towards maintaining its authenticity and charm. Completed work includes a plumbing and electrical overhaul, a new roof, new diamond-paned windows, and the addition of pine paneling for insulation. They removed the back of the cabin and added a kitchen in its place. Additional plans call for adding two bedrooms that will connect with the existing cabin. The cabin is sited to catch Penobscot Bay breezes, and the front porch is a perfect place to enjoy waterfront activity. What began as an act of faith has more than exceeded expectations. Owners: Laura and Joseph Cullen

7 Zoller House

36 BATTLE AVENUE

Prominent architect Fred Savage either designed or inspired the design of this 1902 summer cottage. It contains many of Savage's signature features — a gambrel roof with an asymmetrical design, an eyebrow dormer, an octagonal turret, and a stone-pillared porch. Its most notable prior owner is Peggy Parsons Robinson, who inherited the house, then called Spruce Knoll, from her father, Francis Parsons of Hartford, CT. The current owners purchased the house 35 years ago. In 2021, they ordered a custom gazebo from Pennsylvania Amish, who drove to Castine and assembled it onsite. The gazebo has ample room for relaxing and dining, an island with running water, and screens (even under the floor!) to keep out pesky insects. This clever space is enjoyed all summer long by the owners' extended family. In 2024, Boston, now Penobscot-based architect, Craig Buttner, designed an addition to the main house that includes a garage, guest suite with kitchenette, elevator and garden room — all which blends with the original 1902 structure. Builder: Rick Wight; Landscaping: Down East Landscape & Design, Blue Hill. Owners: Pat and John Zoller

8 The Pink Palace

65 BATTLE AVENUE



The Pink Palace, completed in 1923, was designed by architect William Bottomley for Effie Kerr Branch, who was from a prominent Virginia family. Architect Bottomley had recently designed famed Turtle Bay

which is attached to the windmill and shack. The old structures were lifted up and a new foundation was poured. The windmill's subfloor and tiny staircase were removed, exposing the original wood machinery. In 2022, the current owners enlisted local summer resident and designer Loi Thai to design new bedroom space over the garage as well as to assist with furnishings that enhance the house's bright open interiors. Builder: Rick Wight. 2025 windmill exterior restoration: Steve Skillin. Owners: Mary Pincoffs Wilson and Will Wilson

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Gardens in Manhattan, which were built in the same Spanish Colonial style. Shared features include the shield cartouches over the doors (Pink Palace's contain lions which references the Branch family crest), colored leaded glass French doors, and ironwork. Unusual for Maine, the house is made of stucco and was originally tinted a deep terra cotta with dark wood trim and shutters. Bottomley's entrance hall evokes an outdoor Spanish courtyard — the Zenotherm floor (a cork composite), meant to resemble stone, is original and a Bottomley signature. The sun porch-cum-library features an original ceiling fresco and built-in arched bookcases. Restorations continue with the repairing of the stucco exterior, repainting the house a pale pink, and adding a formal garden. Owners: Emily Eerdmans and Andrew McKeon

9 Always Gardening

105 BATTLE AVENUE

Entering the property from Battle Avenue, the owner has transformed what was once an invasive-ridden, overgrown area within the drive-through into a calm and welcoming place. A former professional gardener, she has planned, dug, and planted a natural design using sweeps of color and texture. The result invites friends and visitors to wander the paths and pause to enjoy the setting. Plant choices tend towards natives and pollinators with heavy consideration given to deer-resistance. By her own account, it's a constant work in progress. On any given day, if you are strolling past the house, you'll likely see her toiling away in the garden! On the water side, the property opens to lovely views of the Bagaduce. From the patio, the sloping yard is managed through extensive hardscape which creates a more formal appearance. Granite steps, stone walls, ground cover, shrubs and perennials control the slope that leads down to raised beds and a frog-filled pond. Owners: Lindsay and Phil Scott

10 Lieser House

121 BATTLE AVENUE

This modern home was built in 2020 on a long-overlooked, alder-covered lot. After 17 years of raising four kids in a drafty 1790 Federal-style house, the homeowners were ready for something smaller, brighter and easier to live in, while still honoring traditional Maine craftsmanship. They dreamed about the design for so long that "it sort of built itself" through a close collaboration with a site planner and a small responsive construction crew. Northern light streams in from the top floor to both diffuse the southern light and also provide views of the surrounding nature. The vaulted ceiling is clad in reclaimed wood from a 200-year-old chicken coop that was painstakingly hand-cleaned and oiled by the homeowner. The large square windows were inspired by a great uncle and sculptor Clark Fitz-Gerald, whose home beautifully invited the outdoors in. The house feels perfectly suited to empty nesters — though they still happily fill it with their grown kids every summer. Owners: Betsy and Steve Lieser

11 The Sail Loft

SEA STREET

Since the early 1800s, the Sail Loft has stood sentinel on Sea Street, watching over the Castine waterfront. Originally erected as a wharf that projected twice its present length into the harbor, the structure served as home to the Dennett family's sail-making business from 1880 to 1910, which operated on the second floor. The wharf remained in the Dennett family's possession as part of their boatyard enterprise until they sold it in 1967. At that time, a storm damaged the structure, reducing its length by nearly half, and for more than 30 years, it served as an antique store and residence for one happy owner. In 2007, the present stewards began a detailed restoration and preservation to ensure its soul remained intact. Every decision was a nod to its history, while allowing modern amenities to enjoy the true Maine experience. Owners: The Smith Family

12 East of Eaton's

91 WATER STREET

This contemporary home had once been the site of an old red-roofed boat house. In 2019 when the current owners began some modest upgrades, their builder discovered serious foundation issues, so they

decided to tear down the old structure and replace it. They envisioned a design with minimal upkeep in order to prioritize friends and family. Enter the team — Tim Kennerson, structural engineer; Ted Lameyer, design draftsman; Curtis Jaffrey, builder; Deb Berger of Maven Designs, interiors — who collaborated to create a "boat" feeling inside and out, "letting the environment and the harbor be the star." A new seawall was built — but remained unfinished days before the January 2024 storms. The wall was breached but the new fiberglass ties did not break. The homeowner and builder hastily completed the work before the second storm hit days later. The house's unofficial name — East of Eaton's — is an homage to the homeowner's favorite book, *East of Eden*. Owners: Lara and Chip Terry

13 Sweet Life

102 WATER STREET

This cottage's unusual shape indicates that it was not originally built as a residence — it was likely a chicken barn. While the exact building date is unknown, it sits on land that was originally part of the Hatch farm. Captain Mark Hatch (1746 — 1833) was one of the earliest settlers of Castine who owned the northeastern portion of the peninsula and operated as a farmer and surveyor. While the modest structure had long been used as a residence, when the current owners purchased it in 2017, they worked with designer and local resident Deborah Neve to refresh the interior. A clever detail is a boat-style ladder to access the loft. Several paintings displayed are by the homeowner's grandmother who studied in Castine with renowned Maine artist Francis Hamabe. The cottage's name, Sweet Life, is a rough translation from the Papiamentto phrase "Dushi Bida" — Life is Good. Owners: Beth and George Murnaghan

14 Points of View

125 WATER STREET

When literary critic and writer, Elizabeth Hardwick, sold this property in 1998, she told the new owners that "it is not much of a house, but I leave you my views." Hardwick owned the property, which included an existing barn, which was used by her then-husband, prominent American poet Robert Lowell, partly as a writing studio. In 1972, Hardwick commissioned architect David Austin (designer of the Castine Yacht Club and other contemporary residences in Castine) to build an addition on the barn. The house and barn that you see today were designed in 2018 by Austin's partner and Castine resident, McKee Patterson. His unique designs echo and expand upon the original structures. One notable feature is a tunnel that connects the buildings. With a nod to the past and a firm foothold on the present, this thoughtful residence is well-worthy of the views. Owners: Jean and Tom Pedersen

15 Hale House Garden

89 COURT STREET

Built into the sloping lawn of an 1810 estate, the Hale House Garden sits within walls of pale granite blocks. Several stone-bordered beds are precisely spaced along wide gravel paths and organized around an old millstone that serves as the garden's focal point. The overall effect is ceremonious and dramatic, yet the plantings are as humble as can be: greens, leeks, zucchini, herbs, and other good things to eat. Flowers add splashes of color, but their role is largely a supporting one. Borage, or starflower, partners with tomatoes and squash because it deters hornworms and its bright blue flowers attract pollinators, like bumblebees. Yellow and orange marigolds pair nicely with cucumbers because they repel Japanese beetles and whiteflies. Fragrant lavender, planted along the uphill edge of the wall, keeps moths, mosquitoes, and fleas at bay. Designed by Boothbay landscape architect Bruce Riddell, it is a garden based on the traditional French potager. Owners: Marianne and Bill Buchanan