



Journal of Vexillology

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FLAGS IN THE NEWS

From time to time, more so recently than otherwise, flags become news. This summer, Maine news was filled with stories on two forgotten Civil War Flags, the Regimental Color of the 17th Maine Volunteer Infantry and the National Color of the 20th Maine Volunteer Infantry.

The former was located in a collection in Georgia and a successful negotiation resulted in its return to Maine. The latter was found in a box,

sent to Maryland for restoration and placed on display recently in the Maine State Museum in Augusta. It is one of two flags known to have been displayed by the 20th Maine under its most famous commander, then-Colonel Joshua Chamberlain on the first day of the Battle of Gettysburg at Little Round Top.

The Gettysburg flag reminds us that flags are always news; even after 136 years the emotional feelings

and stirring sentiments are still with us. In other news articles presented here, a designer, a reenactor, a conservator, and an organization (NEVA!) are all profiled to one degree or another. The editor hopes you enjoy this material.

One final note: This Journal often seems to be very heavily weighted with material from Maine. It is up to the members and readers to remedy this!

NEVA SECRETARY TO BE NAVA PRESIDENT

NEVA's Secretary-Treasurer, Dave Martucci, has been nominated for the Presidency of the North American Vexillological Assn. The election will take place on Saturday, October 10, 1998 in Québec City, Canada.

INSIDE

Colors of the Wind . 2
Flag Headed Back to Maine 3
Reenactor Dresses for Patriots Day .. 4
New Flag for 'State of Maine' 4
Gettysburg Flag 5
Cartoons 6
NEVA Meets 7
Next Meeting 8
Minutes 8

MAINE STATE MUSEUM BROADSIDE WINTER 1997

Conservator on board for flag project

The Museum's historic flag preservation project has advanced significantly as fundraising nears the \$100,000 mark and textile conservator Gwen Spicer of Albany, N.Y., has been hired to direct the preservation of individual flags.

Spicer spent four days at the Museum in December working with Registrar Deborah Smith and Curator of Historic Collections Douglas Hawes to develop a plan for the coming year. In general terms, the plan calls for:

**Photo documentation of an additional 50 flags in the collections storage and research area; seek grant support for 1998 conservation work; order the reproduction of four important flags in the collection. Install data-logger in Hall of Flags to record environmental conditions.

**Select and hire two interns for summer work; begin planning of educational exhibition in Hall of Flags.

**Unwrap and stabilize 11 undocumented flags now attached to their staffs. Train and direct interns to perform a complete condition survey of all flags in collection to determine the highest priority conservation needs. Begin lab work to stabilize those flags.

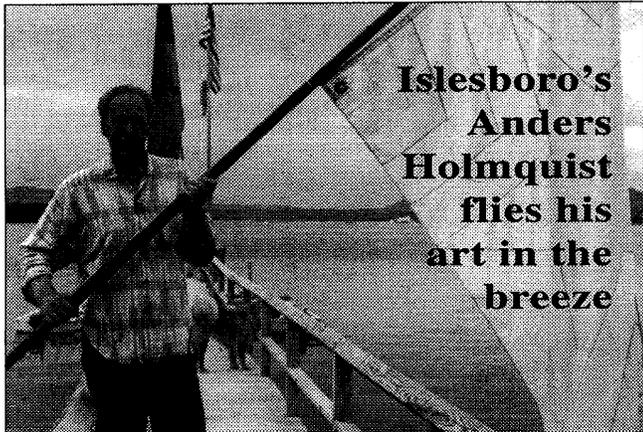
**Begin planning and secure approvals for

removing flags from the Hall of Flags; select flags for future display in Hall, along with reproductions.



Gwen Spicer with box containing 20th Maine flag to be preserved as part of the Save Maine's Colors project.

“Colors of the Wind”



Anders Holmquist displays his handiwork (Bonnie L. Mowery-Oldham photos).

By Bonnie L. Mowery-Oldham

“**L**ook at the sound of the sky, and listen to the colors of the wind” is an adaptation of a Buddhist maxim that artist Anders Holmquist uses to describe the philosophy behind the flags, banners and “flag environments” created by his company, Colors of the Wind.

Holmquist has been producing stunning and unique flags for close to 30 years for such varied personages as George Bush, King Carl XVI of Sweden and Andrew Wyeth.

Taking his inspiration from various sources, Holmquist’s flags exude a hard-to-define spiritual quality. During a lengthy sojourn in the Orient, he was struck by the Buddhists’ extensive use of flags, and the Tibetan sun wheel has inspired many of his flag designs. Buddhists wave flags to enlist the aid of the wind in sending their prayers upward. The Native American belief that “the wind is the breath of the spirit and serves as a transporter of natural energies” is also an integral part of Anders’ artistic philosophy. Holmquist believes that flags can be a spiritual expression and extension of oneself, so he considers himself to be a channel for the forces that find expression in a person’s being.

There’s also a fanciful aspect to his creations — for instance, he has created “Forest Witches,” flags that move with the wind like elves in a forest, flitting from tree to tree.

Holmquist’s interest in flags began when he was a young boy growing up in Sweden. He memorized all the national flag designs that were illustrated on the end papers of his school book almanac. This intense interest caused him to create a Finnish flag when he was just seven years old for a school project. Very proud of it, he flew it outside his childhood backyard tent. The family would observe somewhat of a ritual, raising and lowering the flag every day.

Raised in Sweden, Holmquist has been coming to Islesboro to sail ever since he was a child. He has fond memories of staying at a west side cabin where the deer roamed freely. At one time he had a shop on Islesboro, where his company “Colors of the Wind” often received mail that had been addressed merely to Flags, 04848, USA.

Anders Holmquist’s formal introduction into the world of flags as art grew out of an incident that occurred on Seven Hundred Acre Island, just off the southwestern corner of Islesboro. He was helping David Outerbridge build a house on the island, and

on a whim, quickly conceived and created an original flag that flew over the site. That same evening, at a party on the beach, he met a woman wearing purple sunglasses who was raking clams out of a bonfire on the beach. Impressed with the flag, she told him about a flag exhibition being held in England. Anders immediately flew to the South of France, where he wrestled with a sewing machine to execute six flags to enter in the “Invented Flag” category at the English exhibition he’d been told of, thus embarking on his lifelong work of creating flags and banners in various artistic forms.

Holmquist had learned to sew as a young boy in Sweden, where such skills are taught routinely to all students, and later studied techniques at a flag factory in New York. Wanting his creations to be as durable as possible, he incorporated reinforced corner pockets and special shapes and designs for flight in low winds. His company uses various fabrics, ranging from a durable, colorfast, water-repellent nylon to the softest of silks.

When Holmquist started creating flags, three



standard colors were generally used — red, white and blue. Today over 30 flag colors are available in nylon. Besides working with individuals to create one-of-a-kind appliquéd banners, he has been known to use 10,000 yards of silk-screened fabric to create flags for a festival. “Colors of the Wind” flags have flown at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, as well as at the Cultural Palace in Warsaw, Poland.

When Holmquist was commissioned to design a flag for the King of Sweden, the King requested that he include a green beam on the flag. Anders took that to mean a wooden beam, and designed a flag accordingly. Although the King had actually been thinking of a ray of sun when he said “a green beam,” he loved the flag and flies it on his private motorboat. The flag Holmquist created for Andrew Wyeth is a simple yet elegant star design, based on the Finnish flag. Incidentally, Holmquist is the flag maker from SoHo mentioned in the film “My Dinner With Andre.”

Having built a career based on following his intuition, Anders Holmquist is now an independent artist who travels to various festivals and events. He maintains a studio in Santa Monica, CA, where a fine 8-knot north or northwest wind blows 240 days of the year. Anders tests his new flags there because it’s close to the sea, and the winds are more apparent. For further information on Holmquist’s creations, contact “Colors of the Wind” at: 3025 Second Street #5, Santa Monica, CA 90405-5431, (310) 399-0404. ♡

Battle Flag

After residing in a wooden box for decades, a flag that is one of Maine’s most valuable historical artifacts recently went on display to the thunder of Civil War muskets.

The tattered flag, believed to be the one that Gen. Joshua Chamberlain’s 20th Maine Regiment took into the Battle of Gettysburg, was unveiled at a ceremony at the Statehouse.

“It was the last thing some Mainers saw before dying,” said Douglas Hawes, curator of historic collections at the Maine State Museum, where the flag will be on show for about two and a half months. “This would have been a proud moment for those men.”

The faded flag, missing its lower right-hand corner and with only 11 stars visible, was given to the museum nearly 30 years ago as part of a transfer of about 1,000 items from the state adjutant general’s office. It came in a wooden box marked fragile and was identified as the flag of the 20th Maine.

But museum officials didn’t realize the treasure they had until Army officials spotted it during a private tour of the state’s flag collection last December.

The U.S. Army Historical Foundation, a public, nonprofit agency, offered \$10,000 to help pay for the restoration, provided it be displayed at last July’s re-enactment at Gettysburg.

Total price for the restoration was \$16,000, and the balance is still being raised.

Entrusted with defending a key Union flank at Gettysburg’s Little Round Top on July 2, 1863, Chamberlain’s regiment was out of ammunition when he led them in a heroic bayonet charge that turned the tide of the battle.

Chamberlain went on to win the Medal of Honor and serve four terms as Maine’s governor.

Civil War re-enactors saluted the flag at the recent unveiling ceremony. Gov. Angus King helped remove the red cloth covering the flag and praised the Union general as “Maine’s greatest citizen.”

“What Chamberlain did at Little Round Top is one of the few times in human history that you can say with some reasonable assurance that one person saved the nation,” King said.

King and Adjutant Gen. Earl Adams joined four National Guard soldiers in dress blues and carried the heavy metal frame holding the flag down the Capitol steps and about a block to the museum.

Along the way, a detail of five re-enactors fired volleys as they passed. Two more soldiers in period costumes saluted with swords.

Through November, the flag is the center of “The Colors of Glory: The 20th Maine and the Battle of Gettysburg,” a display that includes a revolver that a Confederate officer surrendered to Chamberlain. The display also includes letters, reports and notebooks from the period. Also on view is a furled flag believed to be the one the 20th Maine carried for the rest of the war after Gettysburg.

The flag cannot be on permanent display because of its fragility.

APn, 15 September, 1998

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Flag headed back to Maine

Banner from Civil War waved for state's most devastated unit

By GLENN ADAMS
Associated Press Writer

AUGUSTA — It was tattered and shot full of holes by musket fire. Three Union soldiers were wounded while carrying it, and two others died supporting it on a Civil War battlefield.

For years, the flag of the 17th Maine Volunteer Regiment remained in a museum in Atlanta, the heart of the old Confederacy.

Now, after months of negotiations, the flag that once belonged to the unit that suffered the most casualties of any Maine regiment in the Civil War is returning home.

The torn flag, housed in the Atlanta History Center since the early 1990s, is being restored in Maryland before going on display in the Maine State House.

"The cast of those involved would probably rival that of 'Gone With the Wind,'" said Maine state Rep. William Lemke, a college history instructor who has pushed for the flag's return since 1995.

The flag was one of two that were presented to each regiment during the war. One was the familiar Stars and Stripes, and the other was blue and designed with either an eagle or the state's seal.

Maine's flag is in such poor shape — about 60 percent of it is missing — that historians aren't sure what's on it, but "we think it's an eagle," said Douglas Hawes of the Maine State Museum.

The national flag was never accounted for. A damaged staff in the state's possession stands as the only link to the storied regimental banner.

The flag was presented by Portland merchants to the 17th Regiment in 1864, after the previous banner became too tattered to be

carried into battle again.

A month before the end of the war in 1865, the flag came back to Maine. The staff had been snapped and repaired, and the flag had been shredded by 130 musket shots. A Portland newspaper reported at the time that two sergeants had been killed and three other men wounded while supporting the flag, said Hawes.

"The color saw some of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War," said Hawes, including engagements at Spottsylvania Court House, Wilderness, Petersburg and Sailor's Creek, all in Virginia.

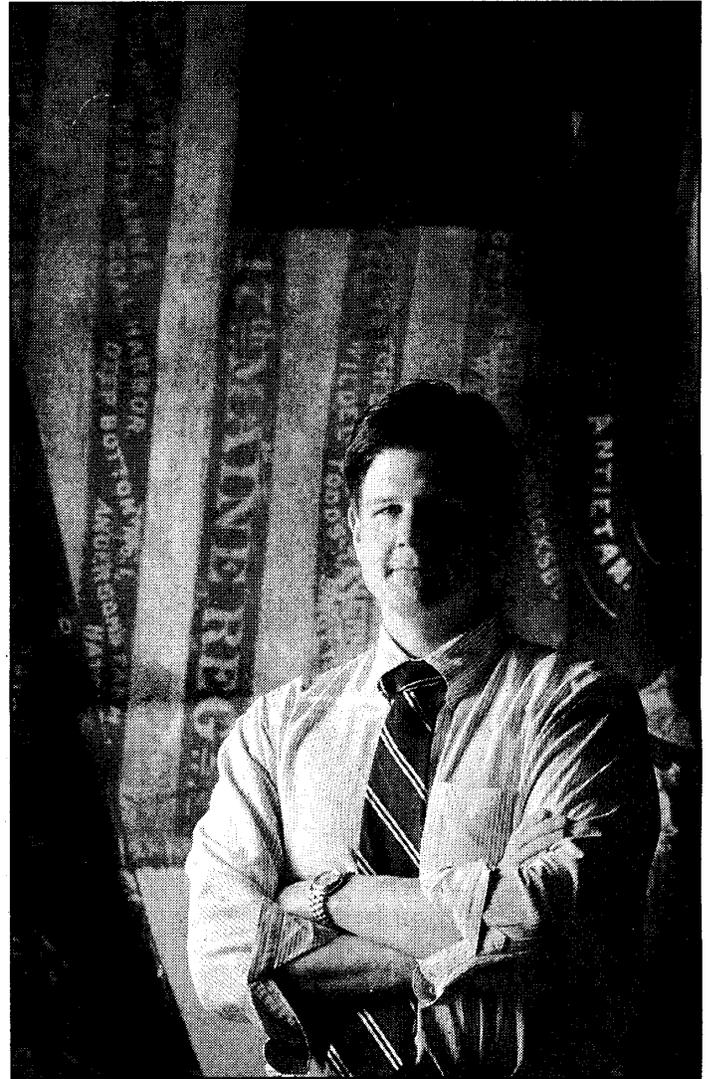
Like so many other military banners, the 17th Regiment flag ended up in private hands, although Hawes does not know how. The Beverly M. Dubose Collection in Atlanta obtained the flag in the 1960s, and about three decades later gave it to the Atlanta museum, along with more than 5,000 artifacts from both the Union and Confederate armies.

Lemke, who has written books on Maine's role in the Civil War, said he learned of the flag's whereabouts from Alan Poor, a shipyard worker and 17th Maine Regiment re-enactor from East Lebanon, Maine.

Lemke, a Westbrook Democrat, sponsored a non-binding resolution that passed overwhelmingly in 1995 asking Georgia to help return the flag to Maine quickly.

The flag is being restored by Textile Preservation Associates of Sharpsburg, Md. When the work is finished, the flag will be displayed with Maine's other battle flags in the state Capitol in Augusta.

The same firm also is restoring the flag of the 20th Maine Regiment, which was led by Major Gen. Joshua Chamberlain.



Associated Press / ROBERT F. BUKATY

Douglas Hawes, historic collections curator for the Maine State Museum, stands before military banners in the Hall of Flags at the State House on Thursday, in Augusta. Hawes negotiated for the return of a prized Civil War flag of the 17th Maine Regiment from the Atlanta History Center. The tattered flag is currently being restored by a flag-conservator in Maryland.

Amid storm of bullets, isolated Maine unit withered

"...it was a seesaw contest in which Confederate numbers were overwhelming. The 17th Maine halted in the open field, ordered to await support troops that did not come. Exposed to the fire of Confederates who took cover in the woods, the ranks of the 17th thinned.

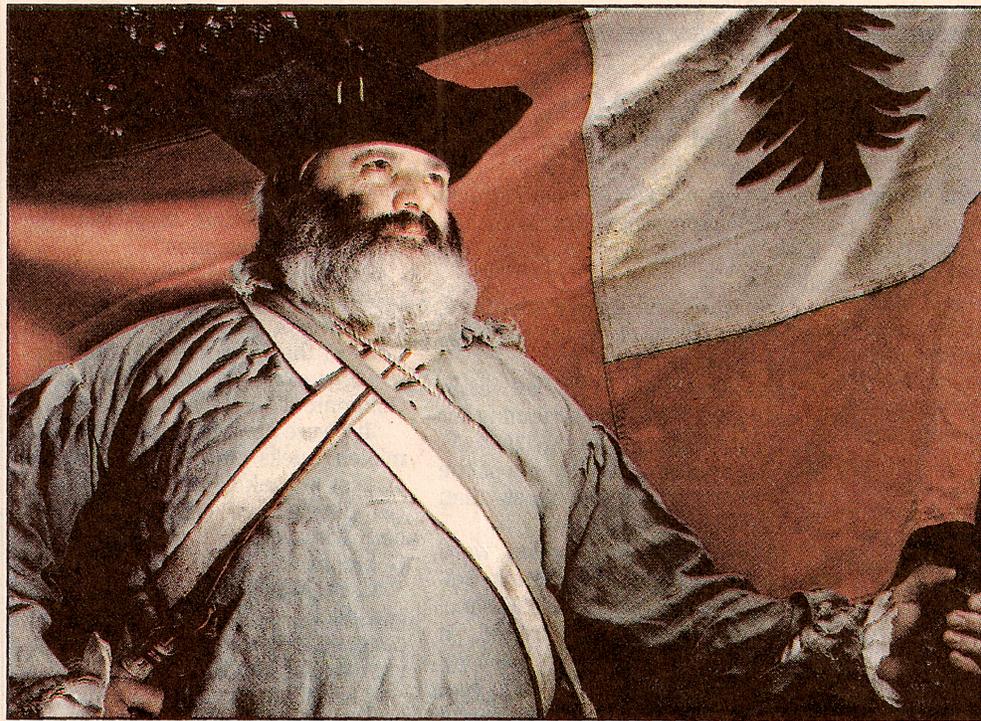
"The peach orchard and the wheatfield were swarming with gray and butternut-clad men now. Some of the boys of the 17th Maine cried at the scene. The salient was gone, and soon the Maine unit joined others streaming to the rear. For two brutal hours, they had slowed the Rebel juggernaut.

" 'Another terrible fight and yet I am safe,' Capt. (Charles) Mattocks wrote his mother. 'Our regiment was in the thickest of the fight — close musketry — and lost over 100 men in one hour. I had three men loading for me, and I blazed away at the Rebs.'

"His company went into the battle with 40 muskets. Only 18 could be

stacked at the close of this bloody day." — The 17th Maine Volunteer Regiment at the Battle of Gettysburg, as told by William Lemke in his book, "A Pride of Lions" (Covered Bridge Press: North Attleborough, Mass. 1997)

— Associated Press



Portland
Press
Herald
4/20/98

Revolutionary War re-enactor Dave Martucci of the town of Washington dresses for Patriot's Day, which commemorates the Minutemen's confrontation with British soldiers on April 19, 1775, the first battle of the war.

Associated Press photo
by Michael C. York



Maine Maritime Ensign presented to the Maine Maritime Academy's training ship "State of Maine" by the Maine Maritime Academy Parents Association.



4 Tuesday, June 30, 1998

Gettysburg flag identified

The recent discovery of what appears to be the banner flown by the 20th Maine Regiment during the Battle of Gettysburg, nearly 135 years ago, reminds us how precious such artifacts are and how important it is to preserve these treasures while they still can be saved.

Transferred from the Attorney General's Office to the Maine State Museum decades ago and marked as a very fragile banner of the 20th Maine, forensic examination has led museum officials to believe that the banner kept in a box for years is indeed the flag that identified the regiment during its historic stand and

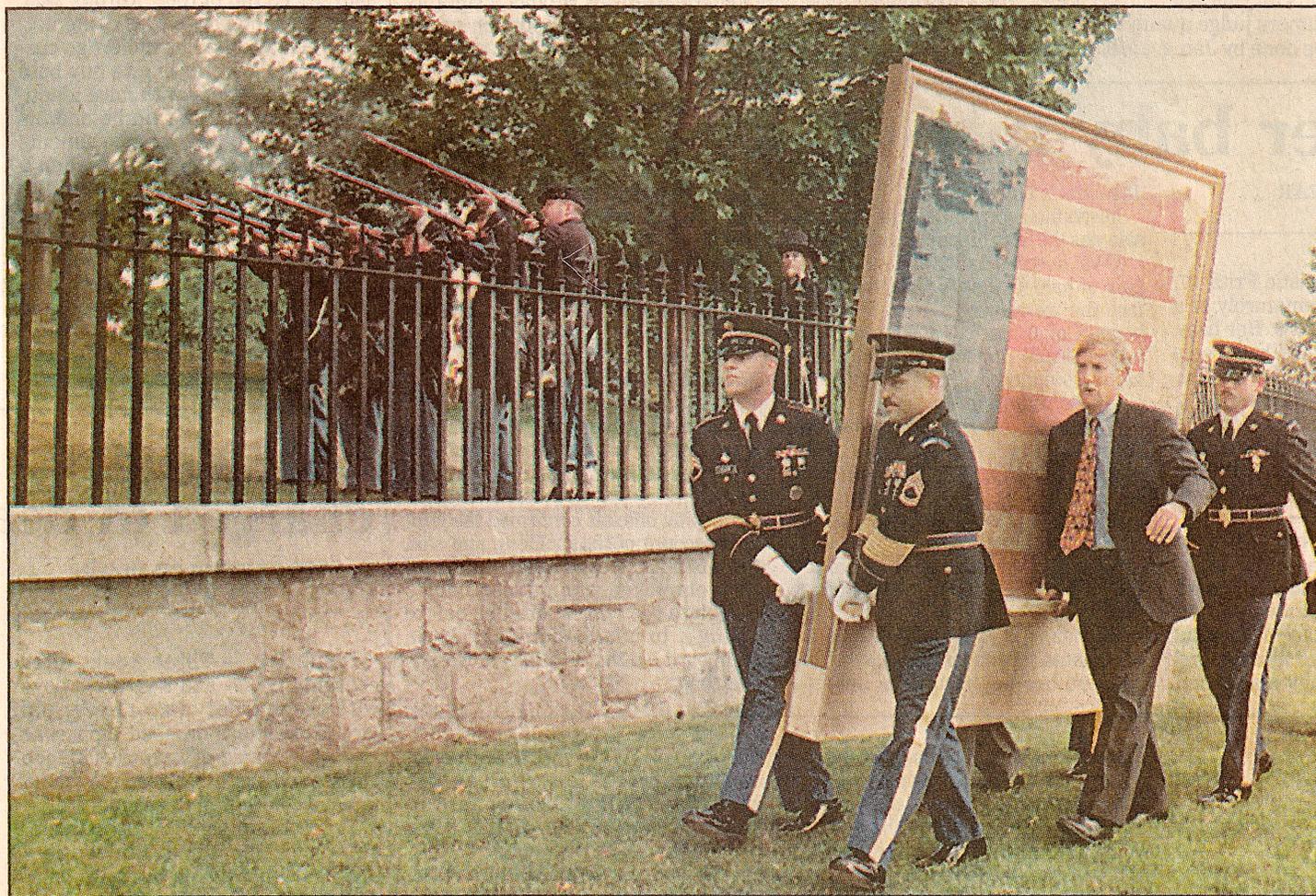
bayonet charge on Little Round Top.

Efforts to protect the battle flags of Maine's early military units have produced significant support from the public and businesses. But more can be done. The Save Maine's Colors campaign still needs support to ensure historic banners — many, like the 20th Maine's Gettysburg banner, kept in storage while funds to preserve them are sought — can be properly restored from the ravages of the past and protected against damage in the future.

Taking part is easy; simply contact the Maine State Museum in Augusta.

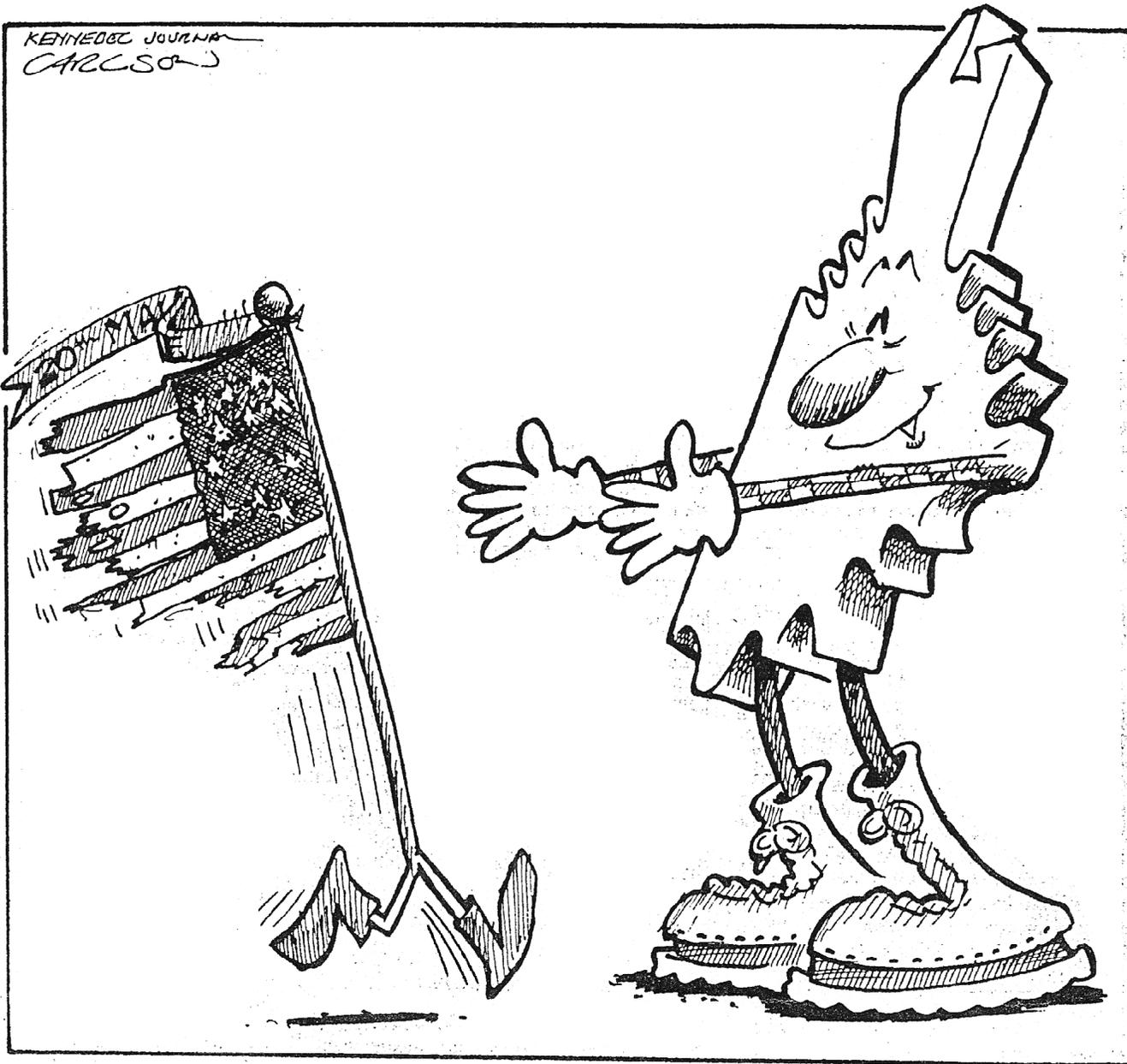
Gettysburg banner

KENNEBEC JOURNAL 9/5/98



Staff photo / TOBY HOLLIS

Members of the 3rd Maine Civil War Regiment fire a salute as an honor guard from the Maine Army National Guard and Gov. Angus King carry the colors of the 20th Maine Regiment from the State House to the Maine State Museum in Augusta on Friday. Story, B1



HAGAR by Chris Browne

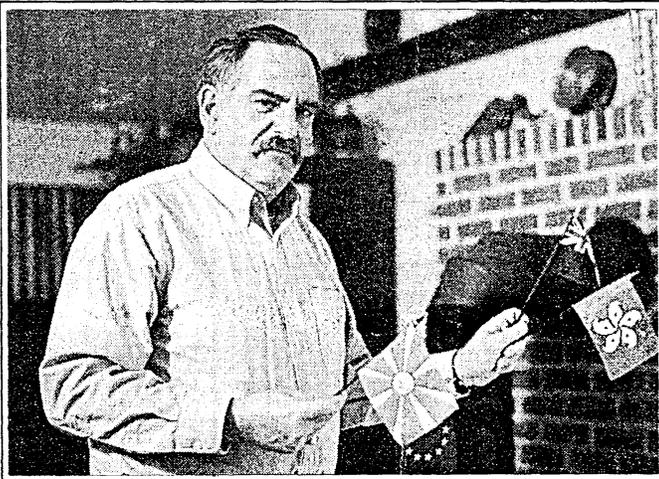


Members and readers are reminded that their contributions to this *Journal* are requested and very important to its mission. Although we will give priority to New England related articles, any article about flags submitted will be published. Also, if you see interesting news clippings or articles in local magazines, please send along copies of them. Thanks.

Dave Martucci, Editor

York Weekly

Interest never flags when the New England vexillological group meets



CARL GURTMAN, president of the New England Vexillological Association, holds a few of the several hundred miniature flags in his collection. "Flags are the shorthand of history," Gurtman explained when asked about his hobby. Photo by Eric M. Holt

By Eric M. Holt

Unless you're a trivia buff, you probably can't even venture a guess at the topic of discussion at the semi-annual meeting of the New England Vexillological Association (NEVA) in York last Sunday.

Just pronouncing "vexillological" is difficult enough.

But to NEVA's 38 members and its president, Carl Gurtman of York, it's a subject they find fascinating and well worth the spare time they devote to learning more about...okay, here it is...

Flags.

"Vexillology is the scientific study of flags," Gurtman explained. "People who study flags are called vexillologists."

In other words, vexillologists are

■ NEVA, see page 28

■ NEVA

continued from page 1

"serious students," or historians who have higher-than-average interest in the composition and use of a flag in relation to its maker, which can be a country, state, town, civic organization, company, individual, etc.

"Someone once said, 'Flags are the shorthand of history,'" Gurtman added.

Gurtman considers himself a hobbyist of flags. In his home he has a small library of over 50 books about flags and their histories. He also has a collection of several hundred miniature flags of different countries that he keeps rolled up neatly in plastic containers.

Like most members of NEVA, Gurtman's fascination with flags began at an early age. While in the second grade, some bubble gum

cards he purchased had pictures of flags inside instead of baseball cards.

"My cousin also had a set of flags from the United Nations. I found that intriguing," Gurtman said. He also collected stamps from the United States and foreign countries.

He admits that the study of flags is not for everyone, and understanding the concept might be difficult for some people. He likens the hobby to stamp collecting. If you've ever collected stamps at one time or another, he said, your interest was probably piqued about their origin and what the images on the stamps mean.

Studying flags means something different to different people, Gurtman explained, but they share some characteristics.

"Vexillologists are often designers of civic and national flags.

Some, for example, write letters to chambers of commerce pointing out that they are flying their flags in the wrong order. They're also generally more familiar with history and geography than the average person on the street."

In April and November of each year, members of NEVA meet somewhere in New England, usually in a member's home or municipal office, such as a police station or fire department building, to share information they have learned about flags.

Membership dues are \$10, which goes toward the publishing of NEVA's *The New England Journal of Vexillology*. The journal features articles by members, cartoons and clippings of flag-related newspaper articles. Gurtman said the journal is published on an irregular basis, usually twice a year to coincide

with NEVA meetings.

NEVA's secretary and treasurer, David Martucci of Washington, Me., has also given the association a presence on the Internet by creating and continually updating www.midcoast.com/~martucci/neva. The web site includes links to other vexillological sites on the Internet, as well as NEVA's journal and membership information.

On Sunday, April 19, the association met at Gurtman's home in Brave Boat Harbor. "One man showed flags he picked up in Austria and told of his observations of flags in that country," Gurtman said. Another attendee explained how he makes his own miniature flags, while another outlined his interest in flags of provinces, districts and, interesting enough, football teams.

Gurtman, who is also president of the Maine Maritime Academy

Parents Association (his son is a junior), also told how the parents association recently created a flag and presented it to the school to fly on its training ship.

Although the name of the association sounds quite scientific and possibly intimidating to some, Gurtman said NEVA is open to all people with all levels of interest in flags.

"Members must have at least a level of interest that high enough to join the group," Gurtman said, emphasizing the association's informal nature. "We're a small enough group that we want to be inclusive with no defined goals.

"We're interested in people who would like to learn more, or to teach the rest of us something we don't know."

Anyone wishing to join NEVA can contact Gurtman at 363-4920.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

The April meeting of NEVA was held Sunday, April 19, 1998 at Carl Gurtman's house in York, Maine. Thanks Carl!

Attending the meeting were members Carl Gurtman, President; Dave Martucci, Secretary/Treasurer; Bob Koeller; Bruce Macadam; Janet Martucci; Cleone; and Robert Lloyd Wheelock.

Meeting was called to order by President Gurtman at 1:20 p.m. Introductions were made around.

Minutes of the November 2, 1997 meeting were accepted as written in NEJV No. 7.

Treasurer reported our balance on 11/2/97 was \$143.03. Income since then was \$275 (dues, gifts and the sale of back issues of the NEJV) and expenses were \$118.14 (printing and postage), leaving a new balance of \$299.89 as of 4/19/98. Report was accepted as pre-

sented.

Carl showed the new Greek Flag Book. He reported the original Maine Maritime Flag was found in the office of the Economic Director of the Maine Maritime Academy. He also reported that a proper Maine Maritime Flag was presented for use on the Academy's training Ship, the "State of Maine."

Bob Koeller told how he displays flags and showed some of the more unusual flags he has (US Bond Drive, Bedford, Lower Austria, post-war German proposals).

Robert Wheelock reported on his completion of the new South African Flag info. He told of his handbook and showed the Liberty Island and Statue of Liberty Centennial flags.

Bruce Macadam told of his visit to the Delorme Map Store in Yarmouth and showed the flag poster he got there.

Cleone, a local visitor, asked some questions. Carl answered them.

Dave Martucci (dressed in his Patriot's Day Revolutionary War clothes) talked about the Pine Tree Flag and Patriot's Day. He mentioned he had been photographed earlier that day by the Associated Press and to look for it in the newspapers.

Carl raised the issue of NEVA Goals. Dave recounted NEVA's history and its relationship to NAVA. The general feeling of those present was that an informal association was good.

Carl told of his press release prior to the meeting and the interview he gave the local paper. He urged everyone who will be sponsoring NEVA Meetings to do the same. Please contact him for a copy and more information.

Next meeting was set for Sunday, November 8, 1998 at Bob Koeller's in Gloucester, Massachusetts.

Jim Croft could not be present, so there was no presentation.

Bob will look into having some future meeting at the USS Constitution museum.

Refreshments were served, show and tell was continued and everyone had a great time.

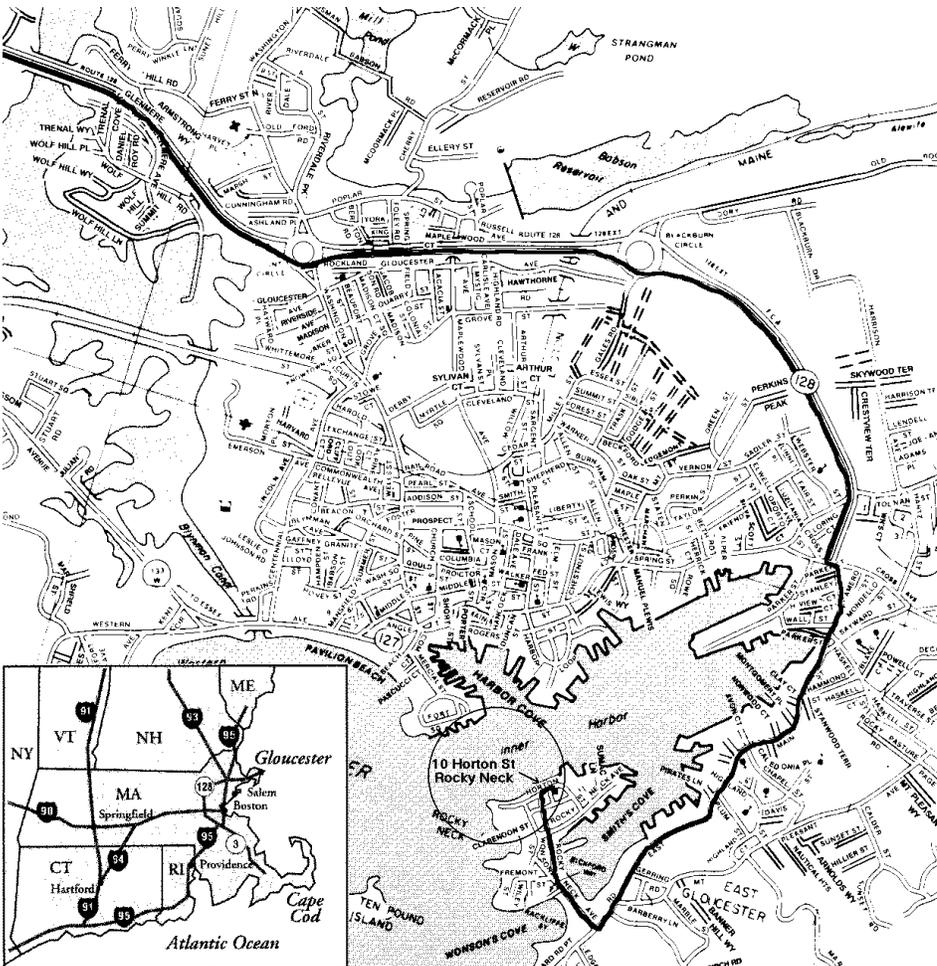
Meeting adjourned at 4:07 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Dave Martucci, Secretary*

Notice of Next Meeting

Next meeting of NEVA will be held on Sunday, November 8, 1998, 1 pm at Bob Koeller's house, 10 Horton Street, Rocky

Neck, Gloucester, Massachusetts. Refreshments will be served. Bring your latest flag stuff and stories!



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