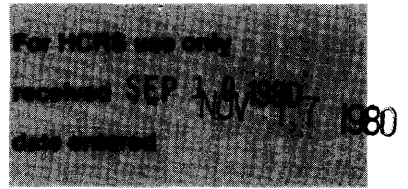


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections



1. Name

historic Maine Historical Society

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 485 Congress Street ___ not for publication

city, town Portland ___ vicinity of congressional district 1st

state Maine code 23 county Cumberland code 005

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Maine Historical Society

street & number 485 Congress Street

city, town Portland ___ vicinity of state Maine

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cumberland County of Deeds

street & number

city, town Portland state Maine

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Maine Historical Society building of Portland, Maine, built in 1907, is a dignified and restrained example of Colonial Revival Architecture.

It was designed by Alexander Wadsworth-Longfellow, a nephew of the poet, with the assistance of Maine's most distinguished mid-19th century architect, Francis H. Fassett. The structure consists of a two story brick exterior and a flat roof. The facade faces southeast and has a second story palladian window flanked by decorative thick rectangular panels. There is also a brick string-course running across the front of the building between the second and first floors. A triangularly pedimented central doorway is flanked by pilasters of the Doric order. On either side of these pilasters are decorative false windows. The right hand side of the building unfortunately is blocked from view by a later structure. The left hand side is four bays deep with the lower floor having arched windows and 8/8 fenestration. Simple rectangular windows with the same fenestration appear on the second floor.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–Present	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1907 **Builder/Architect** Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Incorporated by the State legislature on February 5, 1822, the Maine Historical Society ranks second in age among state historical societies in New England and third in the nation behind Massachusetts (1791) and New York (1804). Among the 49 incorporators appear names to conjure with in Maine history: Preble, Payson, Longfellow, King, Lincoln, Vaughan, Abbott, Williamson, Sewall, Dana, and Robert Hallowell Gardiner.

From 1822 until 1880, because of its close connections with Bowdoin College, the official location of the Society and its collections was at Brunswick. In the latter year, upon the offer of free use of the hall and anteroom in the city building by the Mayor of Portland, the headquarters were moved to that city in which the majority of the members lived. In 1887 the Society moved to rooms provided in the new Portland Public Library, a gift of Hon. James P. Baxter, a Society member.

Pressure of space in the library led to another move in 1892 from the first to the second floor where larger quarters were available called Baxter Hall. In 1895, Anne Longfellow Pierce, a sister of Longfellow, the poet, bequeathed the Wadsworth-Longfellow House (N.R. 10-15-66) to the Society and upon her decease in 1901 it was gratefully occupied becoming the first home owned by the organization. The house, restored by the Longfellow family, became a mecca for devotees of the poet but a repository for the now greatly enlarged collections of the Society was required. The present library building located on the same lot as the Longfellow House, was the result and the formal dedication took place on the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, February 27, 1907.

Over the years the Society has been extremely active, both as an important historical research center and also as an agent for numerous publications. These include three series of Collections and Proceedings in 22 volumes, published between 1831 and 1906, a 24 volume Documentary History of Maine, 1869-1916, which embodies the vast resource of the Baxter Manuscripts, York Deeds, 1883-1910 in 18 volumes, Maine Province and Court Records in six volumes, 1928-1975. There have also been numerous publications of historical documents, monographs and bibliographies, the most recent being the Maine Bicentennial Atlas in 1976. An ongoing publication is the Maine Historical Society Quarterly.

The Maine Historical Society building reflects the early interest among residents of the state in their heritage and serves today as a vital resource in perpetuating and understanding the history of the region.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Centennial of the Maine Historical Society, April 11, 1922. Portland, 1922.

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property 1/4

Quadrangle name Portland West

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	1 9	3 9 8 3 5 0	4 8 3 4 3 3 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

Assessor's map 37F, lot 14

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Frank A. Beard, Historian, James Schimmer, Intern

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date July, 1980

street & number 242 State Street telephone 207/289-2133

city or town Augusta state Maine

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Eileen S. Shelton

title S.H.P.O. date 8/29/80

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

<u>Brian MacDougal</u>	date	<u>11/17/80</u>
Keeper of the National Register		

Attest: <u>Katieck Andrews</u>	date	<u>11/10/80</u>
Chief of Registration		