

QUEEN CITY REGISTER.

The Bangor Historical Society's Quarterly Newsletter

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Hill House Restoration Needs Your Help!



Early 20th Century Photograph of The Hill House With Fencing Surrounding The Property - Bangor Historical Society



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Built in 1835 as the home of lawyer, banker, and land speculator Thomas A. Hill, this Greek Revival home designed by renowned architect Richard Upjohn has seen many uses in its 188 years. As the home of Civil War-era Bangor Mayor Samuel Dale and his wife Matilda, the house was host to the presidential visit of Ulysses S. Grant in 1871 and boasts beautiful and original architectural details in a five-bay central hall with a brick ell on the side and a unique three-sided ionic portico paved with granite slabs. In 1846, Dale combined the two rooms to the right of the front hallway into a double parlor separated by an archway under corinthian columns. An original Italianate door from 1855-1860

includes etched glass panels with solid silver finials on the hinges.¹ Our Hill House Restoration Project is underway to repair and restore the granite portico while also replacing the original ornamental fencing around the property. We need your help to protect this Bangor treasure and ensure that future generations of Queen City residents can visit and admire this home of the Bangor Historical Society! Be a "Portico Patron" or a "Pillar Preserver" and help us rejuvenate this most important artifact in our collection! **Click below to donate!**

Help Us Finish It!

CLICK HERE



Curator's Corner



Welcome to autumn in Maine! While the warm early October temperatures haven't felt like those of a normal Maine fall, our minds have already slipped toward Halloween. In that spirit, I am happy to report that our showing of Pet Sematary at Mount Hope Cemetery in August was a huge success and that we are working on plans to have similar events again in 2024!

This time of year provides a break from our customary historical walking tours with October offering instead our Ghostly Bangor and Darker Mount Hope tours to entertain young and old during the "spooky" season. While these tours focus more on the paranormal, unexplained energies, and haunted buildings of Bangor, many of the related stories do have historical facts at the base of the respective legends. Regardless of an individual's personal opinions regarding the paranormal and haunted areas of our cities, the fact that these buildings and areas have an energy about them cannot be denied. The more time I spend at the **Thomas A. Hill House** the more I feel connected to the building. The sounds of the space become recognizable and the looks on guests' faces when they visit reveal that they also feel its energy. It isn't surprising then that the Hill House is considered to be one of the most "haunted" buildings in Bangor! Haunted with a rich history, the building, built in 1835, has seen the passing of a Bangor Mayor and his wife, a visit from the President of the United States in 1871, decades of gatherings of Civil War soldiers and their descendants, and now the repository of hundreds of artifacts that tell the stories of Bangor and its past. From the journals of BHS founder Judge John Godfrey to Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain's sword from the Battle of Gettysburg, these artifacts, our very own ghosts of the past, will give you as many goosebumps as any haunted mansion! If you would like to learn more about history's energies and the spooky stories of Bangor, please join us on one of our walking tours. Dates and times are available on the "Events Page" of our website: <https://www.bangorhistoricalsociety.org/events/>

Matt Bishop



October Logs and Legends Event to Celebrate Historic Preservation and Local

Join the Bangor Historical Society at the Wellman Commons at The Bangor Masonic Center on October 21 for our first Logs and Legends event celebrating those who protect and tell the history of Bangor! The Judge John E. Godfrey Witness to History Award, given to those who have played a significant role in shaping or documenting Bangor's history, will be presented to Brian Swartz and Ardeana Hamlin. Hamlin is the author of the novels "Pink Chimneys," "Abbott's Reach," and "The Havener Sisters." Swartz, a Bangor Daily News reporter for 27 years, launched his Maine at War blog in March 2012 and has published several books on Maine and Civil War History. The Founding Fathers Preservation & Stewardship Award, which honors an individual or organization who has contributed to the preservation of important artifacts or properties will be given to Abe and Heather Furth and Dash Davidson of High Tide Capital. The Furths passion and commitment for business development and property redevelopment has left a permanent mark on the Bangor's downtown and Davidson's recent re-developments of historic downtown buildings will forever protect our city's history. Hope to see you there in your best lumberjack plaid!

Special Thanks to
our Partners for Their
Support of the Bangor
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The Tangled Life and Legacy of Architect Charles Bryant



Early Bryant Buildings in Bangor
 - The Mercantile Bank and the
 Still Extant Kent-Cutting
 Double House -
 References 2 and 3

How many Bangor architects not only designed some of the most enduring structures and spaces in the Queen City but also led a failed invasion of Canada, opened a military academy, defended Texas from Mexican invasion, and joined the Texas Rangers before dying in a shootout with Apache raiders? Although the logical guess would be none, Charles Grandison Bryant did all of this and more in his controversial and storied career.

Bryant (1803-1850), born in Belfast, who, as the son of a shipwright became interested in building and carpentry at a young age, re-established himself in the boom town of Bangor by 1825 where he became the first house builder in Maine to begin calling himself an “architect.”⁵ He drew a master plan for Bangor's early streets and was hired to imagine the landscape design for Mount Hope Cemetery, only the second garden cemetery in the United

States. He also designed a number of Greek Revival style houses and commercial blocks for the city's mercantile elite, such as Mercantile Bank (above left 1833-34, no longer standing), and began speculating in timber land as part of the booming lumber industry in Bangor.



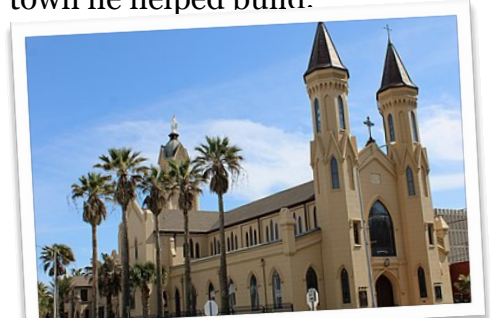
Bryant's Bangor House Hotel
 - Reference 4

Bryant's Bangor work as an architect reflected the values and ideals of the United States during his time with his embrace of the Greek Revival style, emulating the classical architecture of ancient Greece and Rome, which was seen as a symbol of democracy and civic virtue. His commercial buildings included the “second Tremont House” as the grand hotel of Bangor (above) was to be known. Named for the similarly designed Tremont House in Boston,

Bryant's Bangor House “awed local citizens” who claimed it was “as magnificent as any mansion public or private” in the country.⁶

Heavy economic losses in the panic of 1837 forced Bryant to abandon his architectural practice and turn instead to supporting the military adventures of settlers from Canada who planned the Canadian Rebellion of 1837. Bryant, who supported the separatists, was arrested in July 1838 for breaking a newly passed neutrality law and returned to Bangor in disgrace.⁷ His reputation in the Queen City forever tarnished, he moved to Texas with his son where he rekindled his architectural practice, designing the first capitol building for the independent Republic of Texas and then the beautiful and still-standing St. Mary's Cathedral in Galveston⁸ (pictured below and still standing).

Bryant wasn't done with adventure though, as his death as a Texas Ranger in 1850 proves. This Maine boy was a man of his times in architecture and American expansion and his mark still shines in the boom town he helped build.



Galveston, Texas' St. Mary's Cathedral
 - Reference 8



Hardy's Still Life of Roses - Reference 9

Did You Know?

Anna Eliza Hardy's Still Life Paintings Continue To Wow After A Century

Anna Eliza Hardy, the daughter of the artist Jeremiah Pearson Hardy, was born in 1839 in Bangor. Described by art historians as "the finest still-life specialist in Maine in the nineteenth century," Annie, as she was known, spent most of her life in an "outpouring of small but exquisite still life's."¹⁰

Known to craft her compositions with "loving precision rendering bouquets of roses and wild flowers, peeled oranges, translucent grapes, and folded linen napkins in a manner that blended the decorative instinct of a primitive with the illusionism of a trompe-l'oeil painter."¹¹ Hardy was also a teacher of art and instructed a number of women artists who also specialized in floral paintings. She exhibited at the National Academy of Design and the Boston Art Club and several of her works reside in the foremost art museums in the United States including the Portland Museum of Art, The Colby College Museum of Art, and the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, Georgia. Her paintings continue to fetch high bids at the most prestigious art auctions in the world but you can see them right here in Bangor with samples of her original work in the collections of the Bangor Public Library and the Bangor Historical Society.



Save the Date for Upcoming Events:

Darker
Mount Hope Cemetery
Tour

- **October 27 and 28** -Join us for the haunted tales of Mount Hope Cemetery!

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Life Lessons Shape Young Hannibal Hamlin

The boy who would be vice president, young Hannibal Hamlin of Paris Hill, Maine, longed to attend law school. His love of the Maine outdoors had long distracted him from serious study but now, at the age of twenty, he was ready to take his place at the bar and apprentice under his older brother Elijah. The tragedy of his father's death in 1829 undermined this dream, however, and Hamlin returned to the family farm to manage it and care for his ailing mother.¹² Resilience and determination were consistent principles for the boy who pursued independent law studies in between his farm duties and,



Young Hannibal Hamlin - Bangor Historical Society Collection

undeterred, he finally found his mentor. In the law office of Samuel Fessenden, he would apprentice with Fessenden's son and future U.S. Senator, William Pitt Fessenden and learned at the feet of one of Maine and the nation's finest legal minds. Both of the Fessendens were staunch abolitionists, likely helping shape the future of this one-day Republican leader and resolute legal scholar!¹³

This series of five life lessons that shaped the career and success of Bangor's Hannibal Hamlin will continue in future issues of the Bangor Register!
NEXT TIME - Hamlin enters politics!!