



Maine's First Ship



ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

2023
Maine's
First
Ship

An Introduction

Our Work

After a quarter-century of planning & construction, we operated a 17th century inspired traditional sailing vessel from historic downtown Bath. We shared the magic of *Virginia* and the nearly forgotten story of Popham Colony with students and visitors from over 40 states and a handful of countries.

- **History** - Explore the little-known story of the Popham Colony and balance that telling by creating lenses to share the Indigenous experience of early colonial contact. Also share the amazing story of an "all-volunteer" crew who built a ship in order to help tell the early stories.
- **Ingenuity** - Celebrate talented volunteers, who are masters of their crafts, and curious novices in a history & maritime-themed gathering for all makers. Encourage a continued spirit of curious problem solving while working to hone and share traditional maritime craft.
- **Community** - Foster connections and relationships for visitors, volunteers, presenters & students using adventure, creation, and storytelling aboard *Virginia*, in the historic Bath Freight Shed, and on the shores of the Kennebec River.

Mission: Maine's First Ship strives to use our reconstruction of the 1607 pinnace *Virginia* to immerse the public in an exploration of the region's early history, craftsmanship, and relationships, and their impact on our community and environment today.

Our Purpose

We are stewards of the recently built & launched 17th-century-styled wooden pinnace *Virginia* as well as the 19th century railroad building known as the Bath Freight Shed. Using these historic cultural resources, along with a talented pool of nearly 100 active Volunteers, we Explore History, Celebrate Ingenuity, and Foster Community in Maine's Midcoast. We are keepers of a history, of a story, of historic spaces, and of the talented people who make these spaces magical.

Explore History

Celebrate Ingenuity

Foster Community



Boatshed sign 2022



Orman Hines est 2014

Our Success in 2023

There are several ways MFS had an impact:

- Increased social media presence & engagement to tell our story
- Celebrated many full moons with good food & great friends
- Continued to increase our Member-Supporter base
- Vessel crew participated in first-ever trainings & enrolled in USCG required drug testing program
- Nearly 100 volunteers shared their talents, told our stories, and continued to weave the rich sail cloth of our community



First Days of Educational Deck Tours for Paying Passengers w/ Crew Dorsey Harrison

PROJECTS	DETAILS	OUTCOME
Virginia as a Storytelling Ambassador	Port Visits – leverage visiting captains & volunteer crew	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spent time in 3 Midcoast ports & harbors • Introduced the stories of Virginia to new audiences. • Business Sponsorship
Passenger Sails Aboard Virginia	October limited sail & tour schedule – a new FIRST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generated first-ever \$1,000 in ticket sales. • Sailed with students, major donors, and volunteers. • New Business Partnerships
Hands-On Workshops for Youth & Adults	students, adult & child pairs, and adult groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 elementary schools / 60 students visited • 20+ adult participants • \$3,500 dollars in revenue generated

Our 2024 Goals

1 DIVERSIFY REVENUE STREAMS MOVE TOWARD FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

You can see from pages 5-7 that Maine's First Ship lives close to the margins and relies heavily on the generous support of our members & partners. One area we are looking to grow is public funding. Though this won't likely be the level of state funding support enjoyed by peer organizations such as Jamestown-Yorktown or the *Kalmar Nyckel*, we hope to show our impact & make the case for public funding.

Estate & planned giving to help grow our endowment - currently \$250,000 - is another aim.

2 LEADERSHIP & BOARD DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

The literature on nonprofit boards describes the MFS Board of Directors as moving from a **Founding** model to a **Governing** model of leadership. In addition to "role your sleeves up" folks, MFS will need increased professional capacity to support growth.

Similarly, the organization has been described as moving out of the **Start Up** phase into **Adolescence**. Our Key Questions are "How can we build this to be viable and ensure sustainability?" These can be answered in part with people and plans.

3 DEEPEN PROGRAMS & EXPAND EDUCATIONAL CAPACITY

Part of this work will be made possible by the hiring of an Education Manager & a Vessel Operations Coordinator.

Education Manager - Tour groups, school visits, Visitor Center interpretive elements

Vessel Ops Coordinator - Vessel readiness, port visit logistics, maintenance oversight

Each of these positions will allow for:

- INCREASED SAILING SCHEDULE & EARN THE USCG COI
- DEEPEN VISITOR CENTER EXPERIENCE FOR DOCENTS & VISITORS
- INCREASE USE & PUBLIC APPRECIATION OF THE FREIGHT SHED AS A COMMUNITY ASSET WE STEWARD

4 CONTINUE TO FORMALIZE & PROFESSIONALIZE WHILE KEEPING THE SPIRIT VIBRANT

Includes Everyone's favorite Ps - Policies & Procedures for...

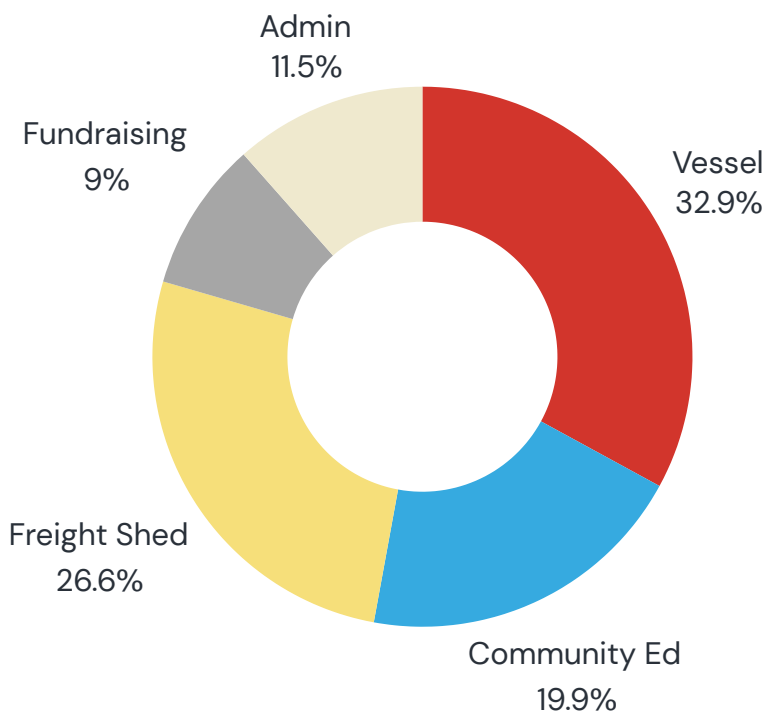
- Volunteer recruitment & management
- Training for all volunteers & staff
- Hire staff to coordinate & create capacity for a growing organization
- Decision making processes for new projects & programs

IN SHORT
WE BUILT A SHIP
&
NOW WE WILL
BUILD AN ORGANIZATION
AROUND A SHIP.

MFS Educational Programs

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION – Visitor Center, Events, Workshops
VESSEL AS EXHIBIT & CLASSROOM – Construction, Operation & Maintenance
STEWARDSHIP OF LANDSIDE FACILITY – Organization & Community Assets

2023 Expenses by Class: Major Program Area in Color



40+

Hosted Events:
lectures,
workshops, meals

10+

Sailing Adventures:
shakedown, port
visits, volunteer &
public

4,500+

Visitor Center
visitors, Workshop
participants, Lecture
guests & Other

A few Highlights for 2023 Finances:

- Vessel expenses increased in large part due to Insurance Coverage expansion in 2023.
- School programming was either off set by grant funds or paid for by nominal donations
- We exceeded our fundraising goals thanks to the generous support of Member Supporters.
- We “made” our budget revenue by year’s end, but we lived month to month and benefitted from a few “lucky breaks” and unanticipated generous donations over the course of the year.

Anticipated for 2024 Finances

- We will see the final “Construction” costs in the first half of the year, and going forward costs will relate to Labor & Maintenance.
- Begin to develop a 3 6 month operation ‘surplus’ cushion
- Increase program related revenue hope to double the 2023 numbers for workshops & vessel
- Identify public funding sources & more substantial grant opportunities

2023

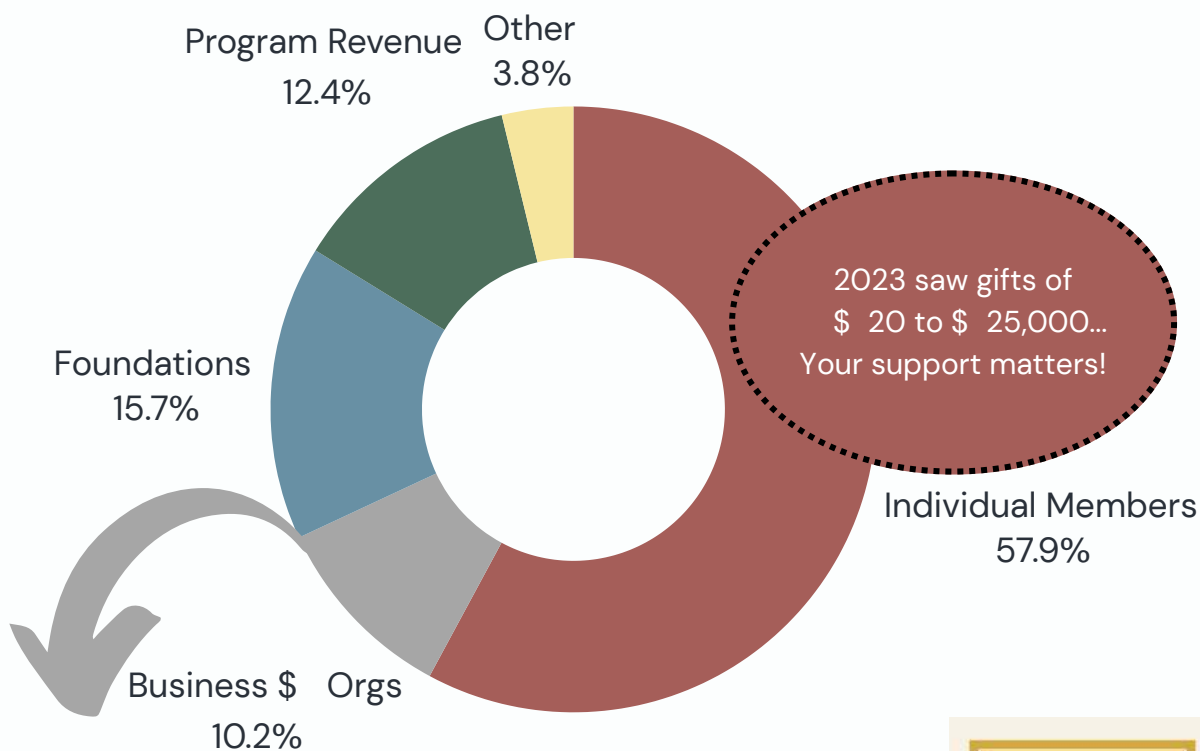
\$ 295,827 Revenue

\$ 253,165 Expenses

INCLUDES
\$ 10,000 ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT LOAN
&
ABOUT \$ 40,000 IN GRANTS
CARRIED FROM 2022



We thank you for your ongoing support of our education & stewardship efforts



1893 Society

Investors

Contributors

Gold
Transparency
2024

Candid.

EIN: 04-3364532
Virginia Project, Inc
dba Maine's First Ship

- Supporters & Friends**
- New Meadows Marina
 - Maine Home Realty
 - Lisa Marie's Made in Maine, Inc.
 - Now You're Cooking
 - Bath Subaru
 - Cahill Tire, Inc.
 - Vessel & Vine LLC
 - Trudeau Yacht Services International
 - La Nef Chocolate
 - Kharris B Creative Studio
 - Town of Arrowsic
 - Kennebec Tavern & Marina

Visit www.mfship.org/support for more details



***values from Independent Sector \$30.00 / hr
National \$31.80 / Maine \$28.89**

Estimated Value of Volunteers to MFS

1,075 hours per month

\$ 32,250 per month

\$ 387,000 per year

Docents
Shipwrights
Riggers
Board of Directors
Other Program "Staff"



**BUT EVEN THIS VALUE IS AN
UNDERCOUNT!**

**It's Time to Truly Capture
and Count the Treasure
that is Our
MFS Volunteers**



Acknowledgements

Thank you to our

Volunteer docents, shipbuilders & riggers,
mentors & instructors;

Board of Directors & Committee Chairs;

Committee members;

Lecturers, presenters,

Captains & Crewe;

Community Partners who help us connect
with our audience;

and Staff.

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2023 Board of Directors

Jeremy Blaiklock VP
Lori Benson VP
Allison Hepler Secretary
Michael Walton Treasurer
Orman Hines Past Pres
Dorsey Harrison Chr
**Jim Parmentier Chr **
**Paul Johnson **
Rowan Wagner
Will Neilson
Ed Rogers
Dan Sortwell

2024 Slate of Directors

Jeremy Blaiklock President
VP open seat
Allison Hepler Secretary
Michael Walton Treasurer
Dorsey Harrison Chair Gov
Rowan Wagner Chair Devo
Lori Benson Chair Prog
Will Neilson
Ed Rogers
Dan Sortwell
**John Joseph Smith **
** Dana Leonard **
** Matthew Goodman **