HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Introduction

This chapter outlines the Town's history, identifies known prehistoric and historic resources, and recommends steps for their protection. The history of Union is substantially based upon the natural resources that drove the local and regional economy, including forestry and agriculture. Early residents engaged successfully in a variety of businesses. Many current residents can trace their families back to the town's early days. The town's current land use ordinances offer limited protection of identified historic and archeological resources, especially in shoreland areas, where most archeological resources are found. However, professional surveys can help determine specific areas in need of additional protection. For these areas, ordinance amendments should be considered in order to protect such resources more fully.
[NOTE: PURPLE TEXT IS FROM THE 2005 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND MAY BE WORTH RETAINING OR REVISING.]

State Goal

To preserve the State's historic and archaeological resources.

Analyses

(1) Are historic patterns of settlement still evident in the community?

Yes, numerous buildings, predominantly dwellings, from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries can be found in Union. Civic, religious and commercial buildings from this era are present especially in the village area around the Union Common.

(2) What protective measures currently exist for historic and archaeological resources and are they effective?

Many of the Town's historic resources are found in the village area, while many prehistoric resources are found in shoreland zones. One of the purposes of the Village District as defined in the Land Use Ordinance is, "to preserve and protect historical and cultural structures and sites in the Union Common area." General Permit Standards in the Land Use Ordinance include, "Will protect archaeological and historic resources as designated in the Comprehensive Plan (1.12.6.6.6)."

Within the Site Plan Review standards of the Land Use Ordinance, is the following review criteria that new development, "Will not have an undue adverse effect on historic sites (2.5.7)." Furthermore, "In historical areas the Planning Board shall require new construction to harmonize with surrounding properties to be designed so as not to be architecturally incompatible (2.5.10)."

In the Shoreland Zoning provisions of the Land Use Ordinance one of the purposes is defined as, "to protect archaeological and historic resources…(4.1)" and the Change of Use of a Non-conforming Structure standard requires, "In determining that no greater adverse impact will

occur, the Planning Board shall require written documentation from the applicant, regarding … archaeological and historic resources…(4.12.3.6)."

The Shoreland Zoning provisions state that to approve an application and issue a permit, the Planning Board/Code Enforcement Officer must make a positive finding that the proposal: "Will protect archaeological and historic resources as designated in the comprehensive plan (4.16.4.6)." Shoreland Zoning provisions also state, "Any proposed land use activity involving structural development or soil disturbance on or adjacent to sites listed on, or eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as determined by the permitting authority shall be submitted by the applicant to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for review and comment, at least twenty (20) days prior to action being taken by the permitting authority. The permitting authority shall consider comments received from the Commission prior to rendering a decision on the application (4.15.20)."

In the Wireless Telecommunication Facility Provisions of the Land Use Ordinance, is this standard, "Historic, Cultural, & Archaeological Properties: The proposed facility, to the greatest degree practicable, shall have no unreasonable adverse impact upon districts, sites, businesses, buildings, structures, or objects that are significant in local history, architecture, archaeology, engineering or culture (3.7.2.14)."

The Subdivision Ordinance includes the statutory criteria that the subdivision will not have an adverse effect on historic sites (1.H). A provision allows for the, "Retention of Open Spaces and Natural or Historic Features" of up to 10% of the land area, and, "The Board may require that the development plans include a landscape plan that will show the preservation of … historic…areas (10.B)."

The Floodplain Management Ordinance allows reconstruction of historic properties in floodplains, subject to limitations.

Taken as a whole, these ordinance provisions have been somewhat effective, predominantly in the village area and in shoreland zones.

(3) Do local site plan and/or subdivision regulations require applicants proposing development in areas that may contain historic or archaeological resources to conduct a survey for such resources?

The Shoreland Zoning provisions of the Land Use Ordinance require, "written documentation from the applicant, regarding … archaeological and historic resources." This could take the form of a survey. In order to meet the requirements of the Land Use Ordinance in general, information on the location and a description of archaeological and historic resources is necessary. "A permit is not required for an archaeological excavation as long as the excavation is conducted by an archeologist listed on the State Historic Preservation Officer's level 1 or 2 approved list…(4.16.2.2)." The subdivision ordinance does not require a survey but does require that appropriate measures for the protection of the historic resources be taken.

(4) Have significant historic resources fallen into disrepair, and are there ways the community can provide incentives to preserve their value as an historical resource?

The following historic structures are in overall poor condition: Matthews Mill (12 Sunk Haze), Thurston Brothers Casket Factory (63 Thurston Lane), and the horse trough on the Common. See ***Conditions and Trends*** (3) below for inventory information.

The community can inform owners of historic properties about the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program. This program can foster private investment to rehabilitate certified historic structures (building listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places or a building located in a registered historic district and certified by the Secretary of the Interior as contributing to the historic significance of the district). As well, owners of historic properties can be informed that a Maine State taxpayer is allowed a credit equal to the amount of the Federal credit claimed by the taxpayer under Internal Revenue Code for rehabilitation of certified historic structures located in Maine.

Condition and Trends

(1) The community's Comprehensive Planning Historic Preservation Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Historic Preservation Commission, and the Office, or their designees.

The data set prepared by the State has been incorporated into the following text on Union.

Prehistoric Period and Related Archaeological Sites

Prehistoric archeological evidence has been found in several areas in Union. Late Archaic Age "Red Paint" Native American graves and artifacts of possible Susquehanna Tradition were found in 1961 on R. Bliss Fuller's farm at the east side of the St. George river where it leaves Sennebec Pond. Early of Middle Archaic Age plummets and slate spears found by Wendell Butler's ancestors, probably on their farm on the west side of Sennebec Pond near the Appleton Town line suggests that there may have been a "Red Paint" cemetery or campsite on that property.

Judson Josselyn Alden, a dentist in Union, worked with Warren K. Moorehead when he dug many "Red Paint" Native American cemeteries researching his 1922 book, *Archeology of Maine*. Judson Alden's son, Edward Avery Alden, worked with his father and Moorehead one summer. Judson Alden sold many items of his own collection of Native American artifacts, but several are in the Matthews Museum on the Union Fairgrounds. On the former Oscar Upham farm on the east side of Pettengill Stream in North Union, in the early 1900s, plowing exposed a Native American campsite, and some family members who moved away may have some of the tools recovered by their father.

In South Union, along the east side of Seven Tree Pond and along the Crawford River, Native Americans camped and several local residents have small collections of artifacts. On the west side of Seven Tree Pond, along the St. George River and around Round Pond there are several

more places where local people have found Native American tools. Moorehead's map of Knox County shows a Native American village on the shore of Crawford Pond. The rusty iron-rich soil over the nickel mineral prospect on the east side of Crawford Pond may possibly have been the source of the red paint used in area Native American burials. Only limited archeological surveys have been carried out, but the Historic Preservation Commission considers most of the shoreline of Union's several ponds to be likely sites for archeological remains of Native American activities.

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission surveyed most of Union in 1981 as part of the Knox County Architectural Survey. Only limited archaeological surveys have been carried out. There are seven known sites, numbered 27.12, 27.57, 27.62, 27.82, 27.83, and 28.01. Site 27.57 is not significant. The others are not sufficiently known to judge significance. The potentially significant sites, and undoubtedly others, are located on the shores of Sennebec, Seven Tree, and Crawford Ponds.

Unfortunately, as of 2016 no archaeological planning map is available from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. A systematic professional survey of river and lakeshores in Union is needed.

Historic Period and Related Archaeological Sites

The book, "History of the Town of Union, in the County of Lincoln, Maine, to the middle of the nineteenth century: with a Family Register of the Settlers before the Year 1800, and of Their Descendants", was written in 1851 by John Langdon Sibley, son of Dr. Jonathan Sibley, who moved to Union in 1799. He initially lived on the north bank of the St. George River between Round Pond and Seven Tree Pond. He later built a larger home on Sennebec Road.

The Matthews Museum of Maine Heritage was begun with a collection purchased from Edwards A. Matthews, author of "Horse and Buggy Days," a book about Union, published in 1950. The museum on the Union Fairgrounds is open from July 1 through Labor Day. It houses a large number of tools and pieces of equipment used in the 1800s and early 1900s on many of the farms in this area. A carriage made at the Wingate and Simmons company factory in Union village, a Brown Brothers organ made in a factory in South Union, and a collection of Moxie (an early tonic or soft drink invented by Union native Augustin Thompson) memorabilia are some highlights of the museum collections.

The museum is divided into several rooms to effectively display the articles. One room is set up as a cooper shop, another like a kitchen and a third like a stable. Many wagons, plows, harrows, and other pieces of horse-drawn farm equipment are displayed. Some articles of clothing from times long ago are there also.

The Hodge School, a circa 1864 one-room school, removed from Washington, Maine to the Union Fairgrounds, is a separate building outside the museum, which shows how children were housed and taught years ago.

An historical novel about the early settlers in Union, "Come Spring", was first published in 1940 by Ben Ames Williams. The first work party started clearing land for settlement in this area in 1772. Trees were felled, but only a crude camp was built. Dr. Taylor purchased the entire township In 1774 and immediately put a party to work felling trees on the same site for a mill and a house. Rye was sown on the first cleared ground In 1775 and the first log house was built across Seven Tree Pond from this site. Ben Packard and the work party first stayed the winter here in 1775-76, continuing the work of clearing Dr. Taylor's land. In 1776, the first family of settlers moved into the Packard log cabin.

From these early beginnings the settlement, known variously as Sterlington and Taylortown, grew and was incorporated in 1786 as Union.

In 1793, Charles Barrett was authorized to build a canal along the St. George River from tidewater in Warren to Barrettstown, now Appleton and Hope. General Henry Knox became the sole owner in 1795, before it was completed to Round Pond in Union. A dam and locks at Warren, bypassing the falls, made the river navigable for boats or rafts of lumber. The canal was unprofitable and it was neglected after Knox's death in 1806.

In 1846, another canal was incorporated and laid out from Warren to Quantabacook Lake in Searsmont. Improvements in Union included three locks, a dam below Hill's Falls, and two bridges. The canal and improved river navigation was completed to Sennebec Pond in the late fall of 1847, and to Quantabacook Pond in Searsmont in 1848. A canal boat, the *General Knox*, came down from Appleton to Warren on Christmas Day, 1847, arriving in Thomaston the next day. On July 4, 1848, the 23-ton steamboat *Gold Hunter* steamed to Sennebec Pond, but never made another trip. Gundalows were poled in the locks and rivers and sailed across the ponds. However, this canal also failed to pay its expenses and was largely abandoned by 1855. Remains of the canal can be seen east of the river in the lowlands west of Union Common and west of the river south of Sennebec Pond near Hill's Mills.

Mills using waterpower were built early in Union. The first was at Mill Stream from Crawford Pond to Seven Tree Pond, which had four dams in the early 1900s. There were two dams in East Union at Lermond's Mills, now --- the only mill operating in the town. There were two other sawmills on Lermond's Mill Stream below East Union. There were one or more dams at Union Village at Bachelder's Mills on the St. George River and another dam at Hill's Mill below Sennebec Pond, which generated electricity at one time, as did the Thurston Brothers' dam at South Union until recently. There was a dam on Pettengill Stream in North Union at Fossett's Mills and another dam on Mud Pond west of Round Pond. The Medomak River west of North Union had a dam; there was another dam near the Skidmore Road, and a third dam at Hager's Mill below present-day Route 17.

The Georges Valley Railroad was built in 1893 from Warren Station on the Maine Central Railroad, near South Pond, across the St. George River, and up the east side of Seven Tree Pond to a terminal below Union Common. In 1919, the line was extended one-half mile west to the Bachelder farm where the new owner, Great Northern Paper Company, opened a lime rock quarry. Great Northern had re-incorporated the line as the Knox Railroad when it purchased it in 1918. A station and sidings at South Union also served the village of East Union, and another

spur reached limekilns south of the river in Warren. Following declines in service in the 1920s, the last train ran on November 30, 1932. Rails were pulled up a few years later.[2] Ownership of the right of way passed to the Lime Products Corporation after 1962 and owner, Harold Kaler, donated remaining portions of the right of way to the Union Historical Society.

Through the nineteenth century the town prospered, attracting a wide variety of industries, developing roads and bridges, becoming an apple-growing center, and was the site of lime rock quarrying until the late 1980s.

After 1850, Union entered a period of population decline, which accelerated after the Civil War, reaching a low point in 1930. Some of the losses were due to the increasing mechanization of New England agriculture. Many of the farms were abandoned and industries, which had flourished here, closed. Population varied only slightly from 1920 through 1970. It took until 1990 to surpass the population recorded in the 1850 Census (1,970 persons). The Census estimated that 2,290 persons lived in Union in 2014. See the Population and Demographics Chapter. Much of the cleared land reverted to forest as farmlands less suited for agricultural use were abandoned. Today fewer full-time farms exist, industry is limited but the area still retains a good deal of its rural character. See the Agricultural and Forestry Resources Chapter.

Sources:

1. *Canals and Inland Waterways of Maine* Hayden L. V. Anderson, Maine Historical Society, Portland, Maine, 1982.
2. "The Doodlebug Railroad", Linwood W. Moody**,** *Down East*, January 1969, Camden, Maine.

To this date, two historic archaeological sites are documented in Union:

1. Jason Ware Homestead, Clarry Hill Road (near northwest shore of Round Pond) , domestic, ca. 1778 (ME 440-001)
2. American Canal opened in 1847 (east bank of St. George River, below Sennebec Pond (field identified, not surveyed) (ME440-002), Known locally as the Georges Canal.

No professional surveys for historic archaeological sites have been conducted to date in Union. Future archaeological survey should focus on the identification of potentially significant resources associated with the town's agricultural, residential, and industrial heritage, particularly those associated with the earliest Euro-American settlement of the town in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

<u>Historic Building / Structures / Objects</u>

The following properties in Union are currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places:

1. Ebenezer Alden House, off Route 131, a well preserved and restored set of buildings from the late eighteenth century, including Union's first store

2. Lermond Mill, Union Village (CONFIRM IF THIS IS Morgan's Mill)
3. (Former) Union Town House, 128 Town House Road, constructed in 1840 and enlarged in 1887-1888
4. George's River Canal (structures including canal depression, dams, locks, prisms), upper falls, Georges River in Warren to Union Town line, extending through Union to Quantabacook Pond
5. Joseph and Hannah Maxcy Homestead, 630 South Union Road
6. The Common, between Common and Burkett Roads

Cemeteries

Cemeteries are also a cultural resource providing insight into the history of the community. An inventory of Union's larger cemeteries is listed below and shown on the Public Facilities Map.

- Common Cemetery (Ayer Hill) 1 acre
- Lakeview Cemetery 1 acre
- Sidelinger Cemetery 0.5 acre
- East Union Cemetery (Miller Rd) 1 acre
- Skidmore Cemetery (Skidmore Rd) 0.77 acre

Historical Society

The Union Historical Society, located in the Robbins House on the Common, meets monthly and preserves a wide variety of materials, provides the community with programs and assists visitors with research. Its members work diligently to ensure that future generations will have the opportunity to study and learn from the local past. The Society owns the circa 1840 Robbins House, the 1840 Former Town House on Town House Road, Cobb's Ledge across from the Former Town House and several very small pieces of the former right-of-way for the Georges Valley/Knox Railroad.

The Robbins House was nicely restored in the 1970s and houses most of the Society's collections as well as the Vose Library. The Former Town House (called the Old Town House locally) was painted, reroofed, and extensively restored inside in the 1990s and has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is currently used for some society meetings and is for rent for special occasions. Cobb's Ledge was donated by the Brooks/Upham families. This property was the site of the original mustering ground, a powder storehouse, and a WW II aircraft lookout tower. The small parcels of right-of-way have in several cases been given to the owners of the parcels through which they pass.

Presently, the Society numbers over 160 members. Many of them meet ten times a year for formal meetings and programs. Programs usually involve topics of area history or general topics that might apply to mid-coast Maine. The society has an active role in the annual Founders Day, celebrating the July 19th date when Union was founded.

The Society has reprinted Sibley's "History of the Town of Union" mentioned earlier. It has reprinted "200 Years in Union" and the historical novel set in Union, "Come Spring". All have

been well received. In 2003, the Society published a new book, "Bridges to the Past", primarily a photographic history utilizing previously unpublished old photographs and recent ones, often in a then-and-now format. "Bridges to the Past" was initiated due to the Society's growing files of photographs of Union's pre-1880 buildings.

Scientific investigation of the Ben Packard site, where Union's first settlers spent their first months, is also occurring. A climate controlled "archival" room --- is to be constructed within the Society's Robbins House during 2004. Collections of local and area town histories and genealogies provide important resources for visitors. Grants from the State of Maine and MBNA Corporation have assisted the Society in its work.

Local cooperative organizations are the Matthews Museum of Maine Heritage and the Yellow Schoolhouse Museum. Visitors may drive through Union, following a recently developed road map that directs people to sites of the earliest settlement, mentioned in the well-researched historical novel, "Come Spring". The Historical Society also provides a social setting for increasing the number of people interested in Union's history.

(3) An inventory of the location, condition, and use of any historical or archaeological resource that is of local importance.

See the list above of Prehistoric Archaeological Sites and Historic Archaeological Sites. The current general condition of select sites is noted in the next table.

Inventory of Historic/Prehistoric Resources of Local Importance	
Resource Name	**General Condition**
Ebenezer Alden House (off Route 131), set of buildings from the late eighteenth century, including Union's first store	Well preserved and restored
George's River Canal (structures including canal depression, dams, locks, prisms), upper falls, Georges River in Warren to Union Town line, extending through Union to Quantabacook Pond	
Horse trough on the Union Common	Poor
Joseph and Hannah Maxcy Homestead (630 South Union Road)	
Lermond Mill, Union Village	
Matthews Mill (12 Sunk Haze)	Poor
Thurston Brothers Casket Factory (63 Thurston Lane)	Poor
Union Common (between Common and Burkett Roads)	Regularly maintained
Union Fairgrounds	
(Former) Union Town House (128 Town House Road), constructed in 1840 and enlarged in 1887-1888	
ADD AS APPROPRIATE FROM BELOW	

Source: Town of Union

Union Common is on the National Register of Historic Places and is likely the first public common in the State of Maine, deeded to the town in 1809. Along the length of Common Road and along its cross-streets is a collection of old houses, mostly well maintained. The neighborhood is one of "old homes" and a scattering of more recent ones, rather than the opposite. Hugging the green common are new and old homes and businesses, reflecting long history and today's commerce. On the green are an 1895 bandstand, a Civil War Memorial that is a monument to Union's soldiers, an old trough and stately trees which were thoughtfully planted to replace the elms of years ago. South Union and East Union also reflect the vitality of those communities and might be considered for listing as well.

Union's Yellow School served as the town's educational center from the 1930s until the 1980s. It now serves as a community center along with the adjacent Thompson Memorial Building (former town offices) and it serves as an example of what good things small towns might do with such structures. It continues as a place of learning and local involvement.

The Fuller House in South Union sits on the site where the Taylor Party first felled trees and camped, while surveying what would become Taylortown, Sterlingtown and now, Union. Founders Day commemorates that 1774 tree felling annually on July 19th. The house is a remarkable "presence" dating from the 1790s

The Maxcy House in South Union stands as a reminder of that neighborhood's earlier days, when South Union was an economic center. There were as many as eight factories along today's quiet Crawford Brook, flowing from Crawford Pond to Seven Tree Pond. The house, completed before 1805, reflects styles and tastes very similar to the Alden House, and was undoubtedly partly built by Alden. It is in very good condition and is presently undergoing structural and appearance restorations overseen by a practiced owner.

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission recommends based upon on preliminary survey data, that following properties may also be eligible for listing in the Register:

- 233 North Union Road
- Barn, 332 Clary Hill Road

More generally, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission recommends that a comprehensive survey of Union's historic aboveground resources be conducted in order to identify those properties that may be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places

Properties which, according to the Union Historical Society, should be considered for the National Register of Historic Places are listed below. They are not listed in order of importance.

- The Grusik House in North Union is unique in that neighborhood for its early date (c. 1805) and for its splendid front door. The door, probably Union's finest, is large and well-proportioned door with sidelights and a fan window of clear glass set in a curvilinear lead.

- Seven Tree Island, once boasting seven pine trees, provided the name for Union's largest pond (approximately 700 acres) and sat just offshore from the earliest settlements. It continues to be a focus for residents and visitors, as it is near the town recreation park (Ayer Park), and is widely visible from the pond's surface and from the many high-ground locations around the pond.

- People's United Methodist Church (1902) stands near the common and is Union's third Methodist Church. The exterior form is virtually unchanged; though now vinyl-sided, the educational wing has been added to the back without detracting from the original architecture. The interior is a tour de force of the tin/steel type of decoration. It too, is in a superb state of preservation.

- Sterlingtown Realty is located in a small building on the Common, which has been a blacksmith shop, a firehouse, and an antiques business. The recent restoration reflects aspects of its earliest functions. It dates from the mid-nineteenth century.

- The Thurston Brothers Factory produced caskets and furniture since the 1870s. It exemplifies the large wooden multi-storied structures built throughout New England along waterways. It is the only remaining large mill building in Union.

- Brae Maple Farms includes historic acreage as well as one of its oldest houses. Recognized by Land for Maine's Future and site of Master Gardener work, this property operates as a farm even today. The large, federal style house is one of Union's oldest, built before 1800.

- The Hawes Farm remains in that family today. A Hawes was one of the original settlers of Union. The circa 1800 house, sited above Seven Tree Pond, and its many acres, still operate as a farm. The picturesque farm is a popular subject for photographers.

Although not of historic vintage, the Birdhouse Road signs have been a Union trademark since their invention by Robert Heald in the 1970s. Celebrated locally and far away, and the subject of an ABC news special, they are a "sign" of our unique town and actual homes for birds, too.

(4) A brief description of threats to local historic resource and to those of state and national significance as identified by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

Union's history has left the town with a number of likely Indian settlement sites and much historic architecture. Like all old buildings, historic structures require regular, ongoing maintenance. They require ongoing upkeep to repair damage from heavy winds, rain and snow.

While some historically or architecturally significant buildings have been preserved or authentically restored by private individuals, others have fallen into decay or have been changed with inappropriate renovations that replace the original architecture.

Policies

Protect to the greatest extent practicable the significant historic and archaeological resources in the community.

Strategies

Historic and Archeological Resources: Strategies	Responsible Parties	Timeframe
(1) For known historic archeological sites and areas sensitive to prehistoric archeology, through local land use ordinances require subdivision or non-residential developers to take appropriate measures to protect those resources, including but not limited to, requiring a professional survey of historic and/or archeological resources, *modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, and/or extent of excavation.*	Planning Board, Ordinance Review Committee, Selectmen, and Town Meeting Vote	Immediate and Ongoing
(2) Adopt or amend land use ordinances to require the planning board (or other designated review authority) to incorporate maps and information provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission into their review process, and other information on historic resources as included in this chapter.	Planning Board, Ordinance Review Committee, Selectmen, and Town Meeting Vote	Immediate
(3) Work with the local or county historical society and/or the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to assess the need for, and if necessary plan for, a comprehensive community survey of the community's historic and archaeological resources, especially in shoreland areas and the Georges Canal (also known as American Canal); one of relatively few navigation canals in Maine.	Planning Board, Union Historical Society, and Maine Historic Preservation Commission	Midterm
(4) Adopt design standards, as needed for the village area to preserve the architecture of historic structures and to encourage new development in keeping with the scale and character of traditional development.	Planning Board, Ordinance Review Committee, Selectmen, and Town Meeting Vote	Long Term
(5) Explore funding opportunities for preservation efforts from private donors and non-profit sources.	Town Manager, Union Historical Society	Long Term

Note: Strategies proposed in this Comprehensive Plan are assigned responsible parties and a timeframe in which to be addressed. Immediate is assigned for strategies to be addressed within two years after the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan, Midterm for strategies to be addressed within five years, and Long Term for strategies to be addressed within ten years. In addition, Ongoing is used for regularly recurring activities.