

## News Release

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For Immediate Release

### **Ocean National Contributes to Brick Store Museum**

**Photo Caption:** (Left to right): Standing in front of quilted images of Kennebunk's history on display in the Brick Store Museum, Ocean National Bank's Kennebunk Market Manager Maureen Raynes and Kennebunkport Market Manager Sandra Bisson present a contribution to museum Executive Director Tracy L. Baetz.

PORTSMOUTH, NH and KENNEBUNK, ME – A \$1,000 gift from Ocean National Bank to the Brick Store Museum in Kennebunk, Maine, where the bank got its start in 1854, will help the museum continue to delight history lovers and sustain a 21st-century mission.

The Brick Store Museum occupies 1.6 acres and five historic buildings dating from 1810 to 1860 in the heart of Kennebunk. Part of an increasingly rare, iconic small-town Main Street, this regional history center serves as a gateway to the Kennebunks and houses nearly 70,000 artifacts and documents from the time of the earliest settlements to the present.

An ongoing capital campaign is seeking \$1.5 million to expand the museum's endowment and ensure the structural integrity of the buildings.

“The bank was founded to support the merchants that were establishing themselves in Kennebunk in the 1800s, and now this brings it full circle to preserve that history as we move into the future,” said Ocean National's Kennebunk Market Manager Maureen Raynes.

Tracy Baetz, the museum's executive director, said a comprehensive structural engineering study has identified approximately \$750,000 in much-needed repairs to the museum's four buildings that front Main Street. “The floor loads have become so

compromised after almost 200 years that the collections are currently kept around the perimeter of the walls,” she said.

The goal is to raise enough money to fund structural upgrades and increase the museum’s total endowment to \$1.5 million. As part of that effort the museum is selling custom-engraved bricks to the public at \$100 each, to be installed on pathways in the museum courtyard.

“We’re very grateful for Ocean National’s support,” Baetz said. “It’s a vote of confidence from the business community, and as we’re going into this next phase of the campaign the timing is really wonderful.”

The library, archives, changing exhibitions, educational programs and special events drew more than 5,300 locals and visitors last year, the facility’s milestone 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. Anyone who is curious about what made our predecessors tick will find a treasure trove of information here to fascinate and instruct. Turn back the pages of time, and the storylines of local institutions such as Ocean National Bank and the Brick Store Museum repeatedly crisscross.

In 1825 William Lord, a merchant, ship builder and ship owner, built the centerpiece of what is now the Brick Store Museum as a dry goods store. Skip ahead a few years, to 1854. Ocean Bank, as it was then called, the town’s first bank, was established in offices on the second floor of another downtown brick building known as the “Old Brick,” now gone. Robert W. Lord, the son of the man who built the brick store, grew up to become the president of the bank.

According to Baetz, who tracked down the story in the museum’s archives, Robert went to Bowdoin College briefly and dropped out to follow an interest in engineering and industrial design. He trained as a machinist and worked in cotton plants. He went west in the Gold Rush of 1849; the museum has a piece of the gold ore he brought back.

When he got home in 1855, 26 years old and an eligible bachelor, he became engaged to Lizzie Bourne, also from a leading Kennebunk family. Her father was a big-name lawyer of the day, Edward Emerson Bourne, who was a member of the first board

of directors of the new Ocean Bank, which had been founded the previous year. But shortly before they were to be married, Miss Bourne died climbing Mt. Washington.

Robert went on to marry someone else and establish a company that manufactured twine and netting. In 1887 he joined the board of Ocean National and six years later became its president. In this capacity he served the bank and the community for the next 24 years, into his late 80s, efforts which, according to his 1923 obituary, gained him “a place of high esteem and respect in the opinions of his fellow citizens” and “resulted in the constantly increasing prosperity and development” of both the bank and the community.

In 1936 William Lord’s great granddaughter, Edith Cleaves Barry, inherited the brick store building and established a museum on the second floor. Since then it has grown to become a regional history center, accredited by the American Association of Museums, open to the public year-round, with a full-time executive director, a part-time coordinator, three professional staff volunteers and an outpouring of community support in the efforts of more than 100 volunteers.

Today Ocean National is a locally managed commercial banking company with more than \$1.6 billion in assets and 36 branches in New Hampshire and southern Maine.

For more information about the museum and the capital campaign, please call 207-985-4802 or visit [www.brickstoremuseum.org](http://www.brickstoremuseum.org). For more information about the bank and its services, please visit [www.eOcean.com](http://www.eOcean.com) or call 800-367-8862.

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