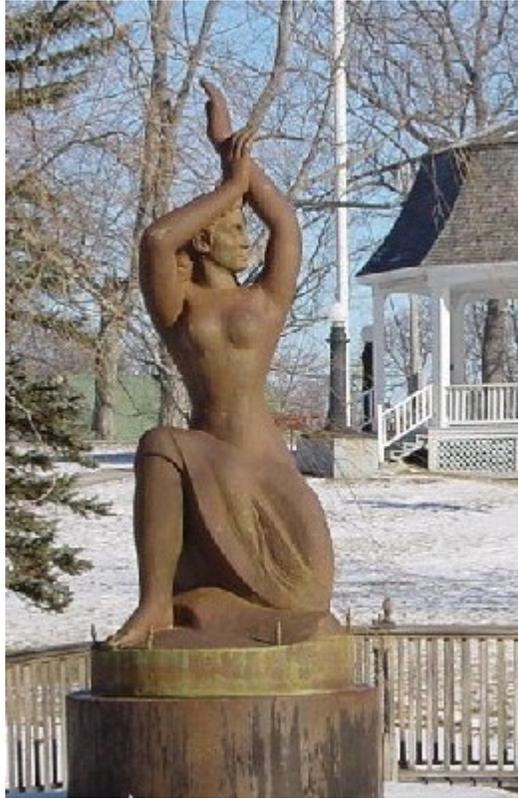


Friends of the Zorach Fountain



SPIRIT OF THE SEA

February, 1959 – The Bath Garden Club invites William Zorach to design and sculpt a fountain for Bath's City Park. He offers to donate his work provided that the Club assumes the cost of casting in bronze, the granite pedestal and base, and the plumbing.

May, 1959 - Bath Garden Club accepts gift with thanks and begins to raise the estimated cost of \$15,000. Commending articles and letters received from museums, universities, newspapers and distinguished citizens.

November, 1959 - \$6,900. raised.

December, 1959 - March, 1960 - Controversy over choice of Zorach emerges. Fundraising stopped. All allegations researched and refuted. Support renewed.

April, 1960 - Report of findings to Executive Committee and the membership of Bath Garden Club. Club votes to resume fundraising.

May, 1960 - Hearing before Bath City Council ends with commendation.

April, 1962 - Goal of \$15,000. reached and preparatory work in City Park begins.

William Zorach and the Bath Garden Club joined forces to create a sculptured fountain for Bath's City Park. In 1962, the dream became a reality; the fountain was installed, unveiled, the water turned on and the



combined gift celebrated by the citizens of Bath. The Maine Arts Commission now cites the Zorach Fountain as “perhaps the finest piece of outdoor sculpture in the state”.

In the more than forty years that have intervened, the weather, the iron content of city water and general wear and tear, have caused deterioration of the surface, some unhealthy cracks, and both bronze and black granite to take on the color of mud.

In the spring of 2002, the Bath Garden Club applied for and received a small grant from “Save Outdoor Sculpture!” to fund a thorough investigation of the Fountain’s current condition and to advise on its restoration and preservation. The Zorach family recommended Tuckerbrook Restorations and they, in turn, submitted a detailed report, estimating the cost of the restorative work alone at more than \$16,000. At this point, the “Friends of the Zorach Fountain” was organized with the help of the Bath Garden Club and the City, and charged with raising necessary funds for both the restoration and the needed improvements in plumbing, water filtration, landscaping and annual maintenance. Since then, the “Friends” have recommended flood-lighting the Fountain at night for both safety and enjoyment, complete reworking of the water system, and establishment of a small endowment for yearly care. We estimate a total campaign goal of \$70,000.

In August 2003, with help from the Garden Club, the Friends launched a membership campaign and soon there were over 250 members. Soon the Friends board began to plan for the restoration of the fountain and surrounding area. In 2004, The friends launched a capital campaign and the response was generously above the \$100,000 goal. The contributions from individuals, businesses and foundations enabled the board to surpass its goal and complete the work a year earlier than planned.

Andreas VonHuene, sculptor/engineer, oversees the work on the sculpture and the plumbing of the fountain. On Sunday, August 7, 2005 at 3:00 p.m., the restoration of the "Spirit of the Sea" was celebrated at the City Park. Patrons of the City Park were once again able to sit and enjoy William Zorach's Fountain.



Quotations (1959)

“It would be a wonderful thing for American art if other communities throughout the country were to follow your example.”

-Lloyd Goodrich, Whitney Museum of Art, NYC

“There is no question in my mind that the fountain you propose would bring fresh distinction to Bath and to Maine.”

-Perry Rathbone, Boston Museum of Fine Arts

“Because I think William Zorach is perhaps the best American sculptor of his generation, I am delighted ... that the Bath Garden Club has courageously decided to commission an important sculpture by him.”

-Alfred Barr, Museum of Modern Art, NYC

“I think your undertaking is absolutely first rate, and I can’t wait to see the (fountain) installed in Bath.”

-Willard W. Cummings, Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture

“As is always the case when Zorach is being shown, people will come from all over the country and the world to view this fountain.”

-Vincent Hartgen, Department of Art,
University of Maine, Orono