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## **POPHAM'S 400<sup>th</sup> – CELEBRATIONS AND CEREMONIES**

On Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2007, the little village of Popham Beach will open the 4 day celebration of the 400th anniversary of the landing and settlement of George Popham in 1607. Mr. Bud Warren will host the ceremonies which will start with a "Smudging Ceremony" led by Penobscot Tribal Elder Reuben "Butch" Phillips. Many political dignitaries from the US, State and local government will be present, as well as Alan Popham and Geoffrey Gilbert, who are visiting from England, and are the direct descendents of the original settlers, George Popham and Raleigh Gilbert. Also representing "the old country" is Phil Budden, from the British Consulate General (Northeast section) The keynote address will be by noted historian, Earl Shuttleworth, Director of Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

Among the many distinguished guests attending will be Dr. Jeffrey Brain, from the Essex Peabody Museum in Salem, Ma. He directed the archaeological dig at Fort St. George from 1997 – 2005, discovering many historical artifacts, which confirmed the original colonist's settlement.

The festivities will play out over the next four days, including “Flare night” on Friday 24<sup>th</sup>. This family favorite is in its 51<sup>st</sup> year and also commemorates the Popham Expedition of 1706. We'll start with a “BIG” parade which includes Popham and Gilbert descendents from the UK and US, Phippsburg Elementary School children, the Fire Dept. the Police Dept. and the Stevens sisters – Jane Stevens, Ellen Stalley and Carol Burke – whose combined time in Popham Beach can be counted in hundreds of years. Starting at the Fort Baldwin parking lot, the route winds down through the village, around Fort Popham and finishes at the River Beach in front of Percy's Store.....where bonfires and celebrations continue.

On Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> the Fireworks begin at dusk. This professional display is being sponsored by Glen Theall of Spinney's restaurant, with the help of many local donations.

As part of the closing day program, the 10:00am Sunday Service on the 26<sup>th</sup> will be celebrated at the historic Popham Chapel. Built in 1896 this Church by the Bay was dedicated solely to the worship of God and designated nondenominational. The Rt. Rev. Chilton R. Knudsen, the Episcopal Bishop of Maine, will lead this historic service using an Anglican prayer book from 1552, using the same words spoken by the colonists four centuries ago. Music will be led by the distinguished pianist, Richard Hankinson and soloists are scheduled to sing. An outdoor brunch reception follows and the menu is elegant. Fresh fruit, little quiches, assorted savory delights, baskets of home baked fruit bread, and a sweet surprise are accompanied by coffee and orange punch.

The Bath Municipal Band's Brass Septet will be on hand to lead the way as we leave the Church and walk to Fort Popham, for the closing Ceremonies, where Popham's descendents, local dignitaries and church attendees have been invited. Hosted by Popham 400<sup>th</sup> Co-chairmen, Bill Murray and Bill Perkins, they will thank “one and all” for their generous contributions of money, time, and talent. On the theme of “Reflecting on the past – looking to the future” Maine resident and soon-to-be Bates College freshman, Joseph Nowak will be the keynote speaker. As a school project he wrote a paper on the history of Popham and his countless hours of research allow him to show us Popham Colony in a “new light”.

For more information on Popham 400<sup>th</sup>, - directions, parking, event schedule and free shuttle buses, please go to <http://www.popham400.org>