

1984

# The History of the Maine Bear

Alpha Phi Omega, Sigma Xi Chapter, University of Maine

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STATE OF MAINE  
COLLECTION

# The History of

# T H E M A I N E B E A R





Sigma Xi Chapter  
**Alpha Phi Omega**

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It is with great pleasure that we present to the University of Maine Community and all Maine Alumni this history of the Maine Bear Mascot.

This publication was prompted by two motivations. It originally was the four page work of Geoff Miller who portrayed the bear from 1976-1980. The work was rediscovered by Peter Domino and Peter Debruin of Alpha Phi Omega in the fall of 1983. The two noted the inherent value of the work to the University Community and began the initial research.

As December 1983, rolled around a major improvement took place in the Maine Mascot program; Alpha Phi Omega, the General Alumni Association, and the Graduate M Club purchased a \$1200 bear costume. This cost plus the cost of cleaning and maintaining the suit as well as the estimated \$50 per game cost of transportation to away athletic contests served to motivate the members of Alpha Phi Omega and Gamma Sigma Sigma to take on the "Bearbook" project in an effort to financially assist in the maintenance of this Maine tradition.

Having told you the motivations of this publication we would like initially to give credit to all of those Maine Alumni and friends who have enthusiastically supported this effort. Your encouragement and letters have shown us the unique dedication that University of Maine Graduates have toward "their" campus.

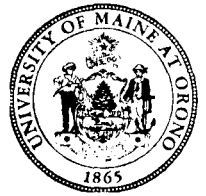
The Brothers of Alpha Phi Omega

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D E D I C A T I O N

The Brothers of Alpha Phi Omega would like to dedicate this publication to Dr. William Lucy who for the past fourteen years has contributed so much to the students and organizations of the University of Maine.

We would especially like to thank him for letting us physically take over his office, encouraging us to scatter "bear memorabilia" about, and allowing us to drive his secretary to the brink of insanity. We feel that he is the driving force that keeps so many campus organizations running smoothly, it is Dean Lucy's unique "Maine Spirit" that made this publication possible.

A "SPECIAL THANKS" IS EXTENDED TO THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| *Gamma Sigma Sigma                       | *Graduate M Club                  |
| *UMO General Alumni Association          | *UMO Public Information Center    |
| *Muriel Sanford, UMO Special Collections | *UMO Instructional Systems Center |
| *The Maine Campus                        |                                   |
- \*Dr. William Lucy, Student Activities Office  
\*Mrs. Faye Woodcock, Student Activities Office

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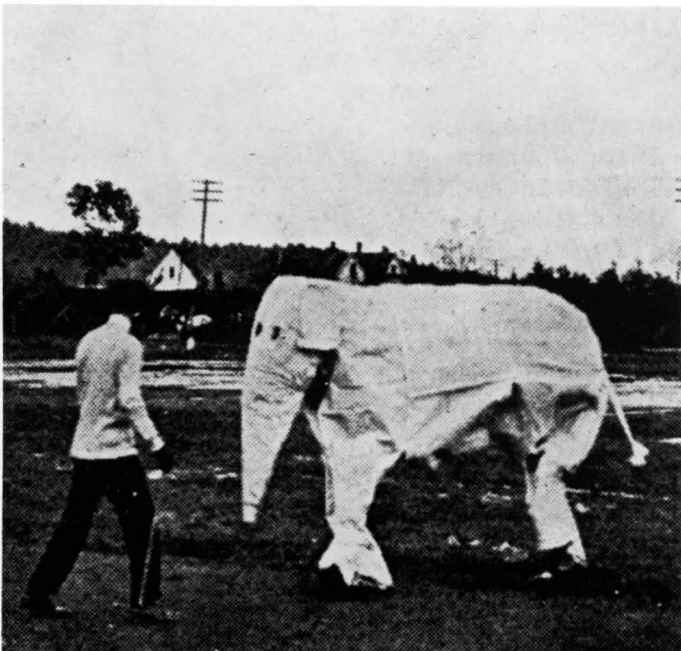
Scott Lemieux, Author, Editor  
Faye Woodcock, Special Assistant  
& Cover Photograph



In the spring of 1914, a wee black bear was born near the headwaters of the Penobscot River and the Canadian boundary. However, this was no ordinary bear; Jeff as he was soon named, was to start a tradition that would last over 70 years and establish his species as a permanent characteristic of the University of Maine at Orono. Jeff was to become the first University of Maine Black Bear.

Legend has it that the first University of Maine mascot was not always the infamous bear, but an elephant. Apparently, a student named Seldon from the class of 1903 and two accomplices stole an elephant that was being used as an advertisement for a Bangor clothing company. One night Seldon and company "borrowed" the elephant by coaxing it with peanuts.

One of the pranksters was so surprised that the trip had been successful at the kidnap attempt that he yelled "Great Bolivar!" in astonishment, and that's how the elephant was named.



Bolivar II  
The Maine Elephant



Jeff, the first Maine Bear, 1914

After arriving on campus, it was the trio's wish to take the elephant to the next football game as a good luck charm. However, this proved to be no easy task as rumors were rampant of the stolen animal and the authorities were on the watch. Seldon and company were forced to think of a place to hide the huge creature. Being rather ingenious, the three men built an encasement under the bleachers of the football stadium and hid the elephant there until game time. The scheme proved successful with the authorities being outwitted and Maine having its first school mascot.

The legendary Great Bolivar was followed in 1914 by a tiny bear cub named Jeff. Jeff was born in a cave on the northeast slope of Mt. Kathadin and, while his mother was away, was kidnapped by an Old Town Indian guide named Sebat Nicola. As a tiny cub, Jeff was later presented to O.B. Fernandez, a former Old Town Police Chief and collector of wild animals. Fernandez, in turn, loaned the bear to the University in hopes that the ailing football team would get some good luck as a result of having the beast in their training quarters.

The bear was first introduced that year at a football rally in preparation for the Colby game. As the tiny black

bear entered the auditorium, the surprised crowd applauded enthusiastically. Thinking it the only proper thing to do, Jeff gratefully stood on his head; the crowd went "bananas!".



*Bananas in Front of Beta House*

J. Edward Doyle (Class '15) was Jeff's trainer. According to an old Bangor newspaper story he had learned "considerable" bear talk and he and Jeff were able to discuss situations at great length. The newspaper clippings added that Doyle was teaching Jeff the finer points of football at the defensive end position, for the bear was the only individual at Maine who showed any talent at tackling. "Definite varsity material" was the scouting report for the Maine Black Bear.

In preparation for the Colby game Jeff was escorted to Waterville with the football team. Jeff proudly led the parade in the pre- and post-game show. He had performed his mascot job so well that Maine thoroughly overwhelmed Colby in the football match. Jeff's performance was so impressive that he was present as an honored speaker for "Maine Night" and thanks to Jeff's speaking talents, UMO athletic teams have been known as the Maine Black Bears ever since.

It is not known what happened to Jeff after that year, but in the fall of 1915, a new bear was presented to the University of Maine.

The bear was presented to the University by former track and cross-country captain Lloyd E. Haughton, (Class '12). Haughton was fond of the young cub, which weighed nearly one-hundred pounds. He brought the bear everywhere and at a practice, Art Smith, the coach, remembering the crowd's reaction to Jeff, and the earlier cub Jeff's premiere, suggested the name "Bananas".

Upon hearing the University of Maine undergraduates had prepared a campaign and slogan called "Make This a Clean-Up Year" for the athletic teams, Haughton decided to give the amiable cub to the University as a token of good luck.

Mr. Smith became the bear's trainer and keeper. He kept the bear in a pen on the athletic field and periodically allowed her to visit with students while chained to a tree on the mall. One day the adventurous bear decided to climb the tree to which she was tied. She bounded up the tree, over a limb, and then down. Losing her grip she slipped and hung by her chain. If it had not been for the timely passing of Professor E.R. Wingard, Bananas would have prematurely become history. The headline of the Maine Campus read "Bananas Attempts Suicide".



*Bananas Went to All Maine Games*

Surviving that traumatic event, Bananas used her lively personality and talent to become nationally recognized. She began the "Clean-Up Year" by leading the football team to the State Championship. The State and New England Cross-Country titles followed and soon after the winds of winter led the bear into her long winter nap.



Bananas awoke in the spring in time to lead the Maine baseball and track teams to state titles. The "Clean-Up Year" had come to pass, and Bananas had become the idol of campus and the envy of the college world.



Bananas with Keeper Joe McCusker '17

Maine's winning habits continued throughout the next year, as Maine's Cross-Country Team sprang to national prominence by winning the National Intercollegiate Championship. Bananas led the team, and her reputation became so widespread that the U.S. Naval Academy, looking for a sure win, requested that the Maine Black Bear be on its side of the football field for the annual Army-Navy game.

After such an active year Bananas became disenchanted with the cold and convinced her master to sell her to a man who lived on the sunny shores of the gulf in southern Texas.

UMO was not to go without a bear; funds were immediately raised, and Bananas II appeared on the University Campus. She continued the bear tradition as Maine captured the Football and Cross-Country Championships in 1919. Bananas II was very popular as she could be seen boxing and wrestling with her keeper.

In the fall of 1920, Bananas III made the UMO sports scene. Of all the Maine mascots to date, Bananas III seemed to conjure up the most affection from the student body. Her awkward, sideways shuffle when leading a parade, her interest in the big brass drum of the band, and her fondness for a bottle of "pop" or a bag of peanuts made her a crowd favorite. She directed the Maine team to win the New England Intercollegiate Cross-Country Championship.

When Bananas III was on campus during that fall, George K. Stackpole (Class '25) took a special interest in the bear and became its guardian and keeper. Stackpole, a member of Beta Theta Pi Fraternity, took personal care of the playful beast, with help from other house members. Although the bear technically belonged to the University, the Beta House members had the distinction of being the "bear caretakers" for many years.

Bananas III, as well as many future bears, found a warm den at the University, thanks to the efforts of trainer Mr. Stackpole. Across from the Beta house by the Stillwater River



there was an old abandoned pump house. Stackpole recalls, "Around the 15th of November, things would get cold, the sky would start to spit snow, and this was a sign that it was time for old Bananas to get some shut-eye. Adjacent to this pump house lived a Mr. Jenkins, the University plumber. We got permission from him to use the pump house as a den," Stackpole continues, "we broke the cement floor, and threw in a few bales of straw, put the bear in there and locked the door. That's all there was to it."

During the winter months some of the Beta Brothers would check the den about once a month to see if Bananas was okay. If steam was seen to come from Bananas' mouth, then they knew all was well. Around the 15th of March, Bananas III would come out of hibernation and Stackpole would chain her to a nearby tree. "Near the pump house by the Stillwater," he says, "there was quite a cluster of alder bushes. We'd place her down by these bushes, she'd bend the branches over, and Bananas would start to eat the new tender buds, which proved to be a very powerful laxative, and we soon knew she was in business for the coming summer."



Fill The Steins . . .

The Maine Campus interviewed the bear in one of her waking moments. "Yes, I'm out to stay," growled Bananas to the reporter as she rubbed her eyes with a grimy paw and stretched bear-fashion, "because I couldn't sleep well anyway. December was so warm that I couldn't fall asleep, January was so cold that I couldn't stay asleep, and this last month was so warm and changeable that I kicked off most of my hay and caught a cold. This college life is a severe one; to think that I was denied a good winter of sleep after my strenuous work last fall of mascotting the football and cross-country teams to victory." The reporter detected a sob in her growl as she continued.

"Just consider my extreme youth and the danger in which my health is placed - you who attend classes get to see all those pleasant professors and have so much fun studying and taking examinations while I'm only considered when you point a little black box at me and make it click or when you snap your fingers and make appealing noises as if I were a fool kitten."

Then as if remembering that she represented the fight of Maine, she straightened up and cast a sidelong glance to see if anyone else had seen her in this moment of weakness. She concluded the interview as she slouched toward her manmade den.

"I have alot of things to be thankful for; for instance, in a few weeks I will be a Sophomore and will be able to stay up late at night and enjoy the other privileges that are forbidden now; and also, Mr. Stackpole treats me so well that I am sometimes ashamed of the way I complain. If Mr. Stackpole could have his way he would build me a new house like my mother's in the White Mountains where I was born, and this house would not be a warehouse for plumber's supplies with the accompanying noise that disturbs my rest. You will admit that I need this rest to get ready for my spring work with the baseball and track teams, and above all to prepare for my trip to Brunswick for the state track meet at Bowdoin."





*Bananas Takes Grub*

Bananas III was one of Maine's most successful movie stars. She premiered in the summer of 1921, in the movie "Rider of the King Log", which was a famous Holman Day story. Bananas also had starring roles with many famous screen stars of the day and "Bananas III, the University of Maine Black Bear Mascot," became a familiar screen caption.

The bear was often seen on the sidelines and after many a football game, it was a common practice to catch a trolley for Bangor and "tip a few" to celebrate or drown the sorrow of the game. Whatever the case, Bananas III would join the crowd on many occasions, and is known to have become one of the few bears to experience the sorrow of a hang-over. After a night on the town Stackpole would tie the bear to a tree, let her sober up, "and she'd be ready to go the next day".

The bear and her keeper summered at Kennebunk Beach, where they came in for a good share of notoriety. This was especially true when Bananas disappeared one August night and a "beach bear hunt" was started to locate the cub. In an article entitled "Bananas Gives Summer Visitors a Real Scare", Stackpole tells the Maine Alumnus of the bear's adventure. Stackpole recalls, "I kept the bear tethered in back of the hotel in plain view from the house. On this particular morning, at daybreak the night watchman looked down the field and discovered that the bear was gone. I went down and discovered that the bear had broken her collar. I organized a hunt and started for the woods. We learned from the natives that the bear had been loose since 11 p.m. that evening, and had visited all the garbage cans of the various hotels there on the beach. Last traces seemed to indicate that the cub had started for the tall timber, having answered the call of the wild at last."

"We searched until 9 a.m. without results, then gave it up as a hopeless case and returned to the hotel for breakfast. Shortly after break-

fast, I received a telephone call from the Reed cottage, just across the golf links. Mrs. Reed informed me that a big black bear was curled up fast asleep on a willow rocking chair on her next door neighbor's veranda. She said that the bear had been there since daybreak and not a soul dared venture for the house."

Stackpole continued, "I went over and lo and behold, I found the cub enjoying a morning snooze in the warm sun. I approached her with a piece of cube sugar which she refused. I then grabbed her by the ear and led her home, much to the relief of the Reed family. She's in the pink of condition now. She finished shedding her old coat about a week ago and is now jet black. She is as fat as a barrel. Having the bear at the beach this season has turned 'Ole Maine' a pretty piece of free publicity, and I think the Athletic Association will have to buy me a willow rocking chair to keep the bear on campus at night."

After coming out of hibernation in the spring of 1922, Bananas III became violently ill, and in spite of qualified veterinary treatment, died within a few days of ptomaine poisoning. The body was stuffed and placed in the then new Memorial Gymnasium.

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*It is with deep regret that the students of the University learn of the death of Bananas III, the popular Maine Mascot.*

*Since her debut as an awkward cub at the Maine-Bowdoin football game, Bananas has been a great favorite with the student body, as well as being a great attraction to all visitors to the Campus. So widespread became her prestige that no football game, no baseball game, nor any Maine celebration was complete without her.*

*Assuredly her loss will create a vacancy in the program of future athletic events.*

*--Maine Campus, April 26, 1922*

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A trapper in Southern Aroostook County, upon hearing of the demise of Bananas III, informed the college that he had the cutest bear cub that he had ever caught; and Bananas IV soon entered the prestigious mascot dynasty of the University.

Bananas IV quickly earned the love and respect of the University community as she joined the University of Maine mascot team.

Bananas spent the summer with George Stackpole at the Atlantis Hotel at Kennebunk Beach, where George worked. When asked why he took the bear to the beach Stackpole replied, "I knew she would get plenty to eat, and could go swimming when she wanted, which would make for a most enjoyable summer for her."

The bear was staked out on a chain outside the boiler room where "men and children came from all parts to see the cub. They would stand watching her antics for hours. Bananas became a very popular creature on the beach that summer."



*Bananas at Atlantis Hotel*

Bananas IV loved to wrestle while on her chain and she tried to coax viewers to get close enough so she could wrestle. "Ole Bananas loved to play if you were standing close to her. She would reach out and grab you and pull you into her

ring for a 'bout of wrestling'." "She weighed about 250 lbs. so you really couldn't refuse her invitation," said Oren "Ginger" Fraser, (Class '26).

There were those who knew of her wrestling antics and were on guard; and then there were those like a young female violinist at the Atlantis. "Well, the girl got a little too close and 'ole Bananas decided she wanted to play. Bananas made a playful swipe at the girl, who jumped back leaving her dress with the bear. Screaming, she ran for cover," chuckled Mr. Fraser.

Bananas IV did make some friends that summer at Kennebunk, one of which was a dog named Jiggs that belonged to Mr. Court, a guest at the hotel. No dogs were allowed at the Atlantis, so Stackpole agreed to take care of the dog, and on one of the dog's walks the bear and dog met. "We were on the beach," said Stackpole, "and were passing by where Bananas was tied. The dog seemed fearsome yet mighty inquisitive, but he walked over to the bear. They sniffed each others noses, gave each other the up and down and then the dog wagged his tail and the bear sat up on his haunches.

They seemed quite friendly, and in a few moments began playing around; the dog making rushes at Bananas and the bear parrying them off with his great paws. Strangers at the beach hearing of the bear and dog, were ever requesting me to let them play together, so it can easily be understood that their playful hours during the summer were many."



*Bananas and Jiggs in Kennebunk*



Stackpole continues, "In fact, Jiggs became so fond of the bear that he would cry and beg to be allowed off the leash so that he could have a romp with Bananas. I could see the attachment growing between them and knowing that in a few days they would be having their last romp together, I approached the owner of the dog and declared in no uncertain words that I wished he would let me have him. The owner felt as I did about the companionship between the bear and the dog, but said Jiggs was a pedigreed bull and he was worth at least \$250. Therefore, he could not see his way clear to give the dog away. I felt I couldn't expend that much for Jiggs, I decided they would have to part company."

When Mr. McCourt and Jiggs left in the fall, Jiggs fell into severe depression and Jiggs "wasn't the same frisky dog at all, he almost passed away". In an effort to mend Jiggs broken heart, Mr. McCourt sent Jiggs back to Stackpole. Stackpole adopted Jiggs and returned to the UMO campus with both the bear and dog where they spent many more happy days.



*"Ladies and gentlemen, your attention, please. Before the main battle, Bananas, the Fourth, and Jiggs will engage each other in a one round 'bout. Kindly keep your seats."*

*This was the enthusiastically awaited announcement shouted through a megaphone, at the opening of festivities, to the spectators at the University of Maine football games.*



Bananas V filled the mascot position during one of the early years of the nineteen twenties. Her stay at the University was short as she died from ulcers.

In 1923 Bananas VI was donated to the University by Verne Beverly (Class '21). This bear was to have the distinction of setting the stage for one of the most impressive "come from behind" victories of the Maine football team to this date.

"When Donald MacMillan, a Bowdoin man, returned from his famous North Pole expedition," Stackpole recalls, "he returned with a beautiful white husky dog. Over on the Maine side was our cheering section and old Bananas VI. At halftime the team was down, and as a cheerleader, I had great difficulty cheering up enthusiasm with the crowd. During the half the young man who was in charge of the dog started across the 50-yard line toward the Maine cheering section. I put Bananas' chain around my waist and started across the 50-yard line to meet the man and the dog. We met at midfield, and the dog, sensing a wild animal, crouched, bristled up its fur and started to growl. Old Bananas also sensed that there was an enemy in camp, and she approached the dog rather stoutfully. The dog bared its fangs.

In one fell swoop, Bananas swatted the husky dog, and the dog rolled over and over in mid-field. Away with the dog went the attendant dressed up as white as the dog. The dog started back towards the Bowdoin cheering section with enough power to tow the poor man along with him. Arriving at Bowdoin's side of the field, the dog and the attendant were a sorry sight. The Maine cheering section went wild." The rest is history as the enthusiastic Maine crowd fired up, and the Maine football team then went on to win the game 28-6.

Bananas frequented many Maine football games both home and away. George Stackpole tells us of the

bear's first automobile ride and of another Bananas episode that occurred on another trip. "She rode in the back seat of my Ford, I sat with her, my arm around her and she was calm and apparently satisfied with the invitation and enjoyed every mile of the trip."

On another trip Stackpole's fiancée drove the Model-T through Biddeford, Maine, with Stackpole and Bananas in the back seat. As they came to a rather large hill, it was apparent that a church on the side of the hill was having a pot-luck supper for its parishoners. It was necessary to downshift the car several times when going by the church and Bananas jumped out of the car with Stackpole in hot pursuit.

A woman just leaving the chapel looked out and saw the bear coming her way. As Stackpole remembers it, "She let out a 'Wahoop!', threw her arms in the air, and started right up the brickwork on the side of the church, almost like a human fly!" The trainer eventually calmed the woman down a bit, apologized, and finished the trip to Kennebunk.



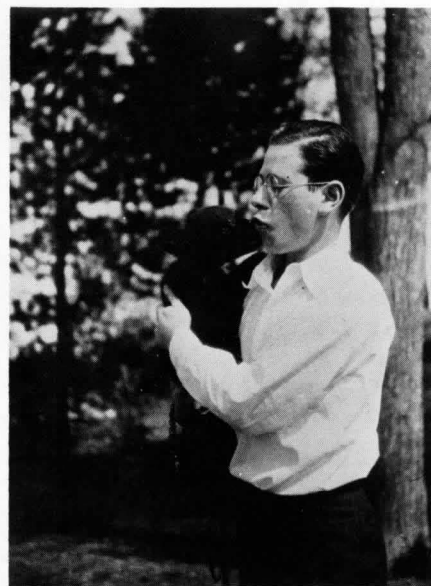
Bananas Rides in George Stackpole's Ford

Bananas VII was the gift of a Maine Alumnus of New Hampshire. She arrived at the University in a weak and unsophisticated condition, and was kept at the Beta house for several days. She was then handed over to the tender care of Mrs. Junkins of Orono, who raised her from a cub.

At this period of her royal career, Queen Bananas was rather kittenish and ran about without the halting influence of collar and chain. She enjoyed swimming in the river, but if the truth be known, she liked the Junkins bathtub much better. She became proficient in opening unlocked doors and was able to get to the porcelain pleasure giver several times. On one of these occasions she was in a temper and wrecked the bathroom. Her first winter was unenjoyably passed sleeping in the attic of Mr. Junkins shed.

Bananas once participated in a Shriner's initiation. The candidate was blindfolded and honey liberally sprinkled on his bare feet. Our bear was then released and she immediately made way with the delicacy provided by the unwilling hero.

At the athletic games of the school she was usually very quiet and dignified, seeming to have no doubt about the results of her team's battles. She was tired after one of the baseball games and Mrs. Junkins brought her home in the car. Ever since that time Bananas has been a great believer in the superiority of transportation by automobiles - over walking.



*A Kiss for a Friend*

In September, 1925, Bananas VII did one of her rare interviews. The bear gave an account of her summer's activities, emphasizing with eloquent grunts and cries the points she wished to stress.

Bananas' optimism regarding the Maine football prospects undoubtedly were encouraging to the squad. When asked by a reporter to air her views on the chances of winning the championship, Bananas snorted belligerently, "Why we're gonna have the best team ever. How can we help it when I'm behind the team. Look what happened last year because I was here; we won the championship. Here I am again this year, bigger and stronger and just raring to go. WIN?", she snorted, "Of course we'll win!"

"You were asking about what I have been doing for this past year. I'll never forget last fall when the boys played me a dirty - mean trick. They toted me down to the train for Bowdoin. The fellers shoved me on a truck and then pushed me in a dark express car, then they had the nerve to chain me to the side of the car while they sat at the other end and ate peanuts and candy and drank cider. I didn't mind them holding out on the cider - they made good use of that - but when they didn't let me in on the peanuts and candy, I made up my mind to get revenge, and oh, but revenge was sweet! ...My chance came after they had chained me



to a tree outside the hotel in Brunswick. When nobody was looking I gave a jump, broke my chain, and climbed up the tree. Well, believe me, you ought to have seen the fun when they tried to get me down. Next time they have peanuts and candy," she grunted with a glee, "I'll bet they don't hold out on me."

"Well, that's the most fun I had last fall. But this summer I've been having the time of my life. You know I stay here with Mrs. Junkins, and we sure do have great times together. Of course when she's away I have a little fun of my own, but when she's here she takes me riding in the car, and the breeze blowin' by sure feels great. I love my auto rides but I like it better when, in the afternoon and evenings, she takes me swimming down to the river. One day I swam all the way across the river, then I heard her call, so I had to come back.

And then another time she was away and I felt rather skittish, so I pulled out from my collar, opened the door to the house, went up to the bathroom and turned on the water in the tub and had a bath. Then I went into her bedroom tore some of the extra clothes off the bed, and when she came in, there I was lying down in bed, she caught me red-handed (pawed)."

"I got scared once," Bananas continued, "when I climbed a tree and got hung up there and couldn't get down, Mrs. Junkins came out and climbed the tree too and sat with me, holding my paw all during the hail storm, so I wasn't awfully afraid, but I guess I did cry once or twice when the thunder got real heavy - but then I don't want to talk about that 'cause I didn't like it much."

"Now, before you go, do me a favor and tell the gang that I'm behind them and that I know that Maine is going to take the championship again this year." Bananas was right as the headlines read, "Ginger Fraser's Bears Clinch State Title."

Being a member of the University yet not a member of any specific department, Bananas VII was supported by a number of student groups. In February, 1926, the Senior Skull Society took on the cause of the bear. In their fundraiser the Skulls were able to raise enough money to pay for the lodging and travelling expenses of Bananas as she went to State meets and games over the next couple of years.



Bananas cheered on the crowd at the games in the fall of 1927 and then retired to her abode in the Junkins yard. In the shed on Mr. Junkins backyard Bananas slept comfortably until January when she paid a surprise visit to her keepers. Apparently tired of trying to put in her long winter sleep, she came to the house for a little warmth from the stove and a little companionship from the dog. However, her visit was short lived ... when a knock was heard at the door, Mrs. Junkins hastened to open it and who should come waddling in but Bananas. Mr. Junkins who had been in the kitchen came back just in time to see the animal come in. He made a wild grab for the dog who was snoozing under the stove, and rushed into the next room locking the dog there until their visitor had taken her departure. Seeing the dog disappear, poor Bananas lay down by the stove and proceeded to enjoy the comforts of human habitation. But the house was no place for a big bothersome person like our mascot. So Junkins got the collar (which the bear had slipped out of) and



Mrs. Junkins put it back on. The procession then led back to the bear house. Upon reaching the veranda Bananas protested vigorously because she knew what her keepers were planning to do. Consequently she started for the nearest tree but the plumber beat her to it and scared her away to her lodge, where she was tied so that she could no longer cause any trouble.

As February, 1927 arrived Bananas did not sleep well, and Mrs. Jenkins was continually taking food and water to her. One day she became desperately ill and was inducted into bear heaven.

After the death of Bananas VII, the University went through a series of bad-luck incidences with its mascots. Four black bear cubs existed on the campus from the spring of 1927 to 1929. Mr. Goldsmith of the Goldsmith Toggery Shop in Orono donated the last of these unfortunate mascots. In spite of lack of success of these mascots, the Maine Black Bear Track Team managed to capture several championships.

Bananas XII, a tough bruin, was also presented to the University by Mr. Goldsmith. The bear was such a favorite that much concern was raised about his welfare.

In the fall of 1929, the needs of Bananas XII came to the forefront of the discussion on the University. Dean Corbett is credited for launching a noble funding program for the bear with these words, "The Maine Athletic Association is very much interested in the welfare of Bananas, and hopes that the student body will be successful in raising enough money to keep the bear in good health and spirits." Dean Corbett outlined a plan by which the Student Senate could raise money for the care and feeding of the bear.

The plan consisted of an effort by the Student Senate to sell small blotter/meal tickets with a picture of Bananas and the football schedule. Each ticket was sold for 25¢ and provided Bananas with roughly one

meal. All of the monies raised were deposited in a Black Bear Fund in the Merrill Bank. The Maine Campus, Oct. 3rd, 1929, reported the fund drive: "Meal Tickets go on Sale Today for Bananas XII, Queen of Maine's Mascotdom. The first meal ticket has already been purchased by the Maine Athletic Association, which felt that it had to support such a versatile star. It should be recorded that Bananas is the only all-around star the University boasts of. Long live Bananas XII; may her rule be long and happy."



Tom Dickson, Sr. and Bananas



Bananas VIII

Bananas XII, like her predecessors, was a major motivating force behind the football squad. The headline of the Maine Campus on October 24, 1929 read, BANANAS TO TRAVEL TO BATES IN ROYAL CHARIOT. The underlying story read: "Glad tidings are at hand, her Royal Highness Bananas XII will be going to the Bates game. The Gridiron Grizzler will be transported by Henry White and Pat Patterson who will fill the positions of coachman and footman on the trip."

Records of the fate of Bananas XII are unclear. Samuel Sezak (Class '31) a longtime University employee, recalls a bear being on campus until 1931. A Bananas did appear at the Homecoming game in 1934 and was a key figure as Maine whipped Bates.

1934 was a very exciting year for Maine and the Maine Black Bear, as the entire campus was motivated to leading the athletic teams to victory. The Maine Campus led the way with two columns entitled "BANANA PEELING" and "BEAR FACTS". These features served to psych-up the campus community and together with Bananas they can be given partial credit for the Maine Football Team winning its fourth straight title and the Maine Cross-Country Team being the State Champions.



Back From Bates



In 1935 Maine football took on a more downward slope, but according to a Maine Campus reporter Bananas didn't seem to mind. "It didn't make much of a difference to Bananas that the football team played poorly Saturday. She thought the sun was awfully warm and tied out in front of the stands watching the team roll around on the field, she too joined in. On to her back... bear paws in the air...what a life. Then, just to see if she could reach the top of the post...yes, she made it BRAVO BEAR! With paws outstretched, little eyes dilating, belly distended...Gee, it was fun, thought Bananas, to go round and round the post...drag the chain around and wind it tight... then wait for someone to unreel it... sissies, Bananas wanted to see them work...a Maine fumble...Oh well, he gave a desultory glance toward the cheerleaders as if to say, "Girls, why don't you give it a try?" Bears don't know football either...but Bananas knew there might be some grubs or ants or worms under the log that bound the green turf...a scratch and a couple of pulls; snuffle, snuffle went his muzzle...and a disgusted youth dragged Bananas' toy away.

During the late '30s and '40s Bananas resided at the Sutton Farm in Orono. From there she commuted into the games weekly. At the end of the season the bear rode down to an animal farm in Gray, Maine, for the duration of the winter.

As the 1950's rolled along both the sports scene and the Maine Black Bear made their return to UMO.

1957 was an incredible year for Maine spirit. As "Keeper of the Maine Spirit" Mayor Ernie "Humphrey Pennyworth" Park was an outstanding personality in '57-58. He re-introduced the Maine mascot, a playful bear cub dubbed "Sally Bananas". Humphrey Pennyworth provoked laughter and cheers with equal ease. Rallying the student body behind the Maine athletic teams, he proved to be the most colorful and most popular mayor of his time. " ... his bugle blasts, signaling for either a scoring drive or a goal line stand ... his spectacular entrances to rallies ... his

graceful leap from the scoreboard during the third period of the '57 Bowdoin game. Among the first credited to Humphrey was a motorcade to Colby, followed by a pre-victory parade through Waterville. Mayor "Hump" was a real-live counterpart to the equally versatile Humphrey Pennyworth of the Joe Palooka comic strip."

Park will be remembered for his "Humpmobile", a homemade contraption that he "pedalled" to the Bates and Colby football games.



"I can 'bearly' wait," says Sally Bananas . . .



**BANANAS** The frisky little black bear that leads our Campus Mayor around at athletic events is our mascot, "Bananas." Since the "Sally Bananas" introduced to us during a previous mayorship now weighs over 200 lbs., Paul McGuire brought the new black bear to reign as "Maine Mascot for '58-'59."





*Humphrey Pennyworth Charms the Maine Bear*





Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity cared for the last live bear mascot at Maine, Cindy Bananas. Cindy was at the University for about two weeks in the fall of 1966, until she died of pneumonia around October first.

The practice of using live mascots at the University of Maine ended after Cindy Bananas, when a Maine court outlawed the tradition. Recently this law has been questioned as there has been much talk of reinstating a Black Bear on campus. Such a bear might be used on the University of Maine to study the bear's hibernation control and the possible information the bear could provide to modern dialysis techniques. If this were to occur, the live Black Bear Tradition would continue and Maine would once again be the envy of the college world with a live Black Bear named Bananas.

Following the loss of live black bears the University of Maine went without a mascot until the spring of 1969. In that year Robert Smullin a brother of Sigma Xi chapter of Alpha Phi Omega made a proposal that the fraternity adopt the responsibility of providing a human mascot to the University as part of the fraternities service program. The vote was affirmative, and Smullin was designated by the brotherhood as the first "human bear" and was now, by virtue of dreaming up the idea, assigned the responsibility for obtaining a bear suit. With this the exciting history of the human bear began.



Phil Benway, Bananas 1974

The bear suit itself has a rich history, the first suit was made by Drapeau's Costume Shop in Lewiston, Maine. It consisted of a head, a pair of legs, a sweater, and two genuine bear paws. In the fall of 1969, the first football game of the season, Robert Smullin made the first human bear debut. He led the band, scored a pregame touchdown, and performed acrobatics to the delight of

the crowd. After the first game it became apparent among the brotherhood that it would be worth the investment to re-shape the bear to make him less human-like. It was quickly decided that the bear costume should be made into a one-piece suit.



Watch Out Bananas ... She's Strong!

A few days before Homecoming, Smullin not being one to have significant sewing talent, sought the aid of a Gamma Sigma Sigma sister to reconstruct the suit. A willing GSS sister was soon found and the full body suit was put together in time for Homecoming.

In the years following Smullin's 1969 debut, a variety of APO brothers wore the suit. The bear gradually worked its way into the varsity cheering squad and in 1976 Larry Reynolds received the first UMO Varsity Letter ever awarded for being the team mascot.

All of the tumbling, dancing, and cheering had taken their toll on the suit during the years preceding Larry. The papier mache head was in serious need of repair, so Sean Buggy Maguire, on a limited budget, set out to build a new head. Sue B. Corning, an artistic friend from Gamma Sigma Sigma, and Buggy collected fiberglass resin, several yards of polyester, and styrofoam from which they planned to sculpt the bear's head in an empty room in Carnegie Hall.

On the appointed date, Bugsy and Sue ran into immediate trouble as Carnegie Hall had been locked up for the night. This was of little matter as Bugsy, a man who had the trait of extreme dedication to the bear, managed to find an "unlocked" door by which they entered the Art Room.

Having gained access to the Art Department, Bugsy and Sue quickly ran into further difficulties as the fiberglass resin touched the foam, the foam melted and gave off a horrendous fume that, according to Bugsy, "grew most of my chest hair on the spot".

It became quite obvious that the two would have to improvise and use their ingenuity if the bear's head was ever going to be built. Sue soon discovered a possible course of action; she found that by placing pieces of plastic trash bag between the foam and resin, the fiberglass could be molded without the smokey fumes. After the head had taken shape the bear fur was to be added. Again trouble arose as the fur would not stick to the fiberglass. An assortment of tapes, and glues were used until finally acoustical adhesive was found to work wonders. That still had its drawback, "it smelled up the inside of the head".



Bananas Helps MPBN



Pat Dunn "Going Bananas"

The activities of Bananas expanded over the years; the Maine Mascot has been seen in a variety of places and in a variety of situations. One year Bananas (Bill Vanderlock) attended the Shamrocks Against Muscular Dystrophy Campaigns at various places

Maine. To get to each of the events he donned the bearsuit and travelled via motorcycle. Can you imagine the shock of driving down Route 1 and being passed by a black bear riding a motorcycle?!

At another Shamrock campaign, Bugsy Maguire created himself a lifetime memory as told by former bear Geoff Miller, "There are always little brats who insist on pounding you on the head. I can tell you from experience that it can cause a severe headache for the man inside", Miller remembered. "This day Bugsy was faced with one of those kids. At one point, the kid hit Bugsy while he was off guard. Assuming it was an APO brother, Bugsy turned and belted his assailant. As Bugsy realized his mistake his eyes met the child's mother, and lawsuits flashed in his mind. As he stepped forward to apologize, the mother met him with a congratulatory tone, 'I was wondering when you would break down and do that'."



Pat Dunn (class '84) from Gardiner, Maine has played the role of Bananas for the past three years (1981-1984). Pat's first shot at playing the Maine mascot was during the basketball playoffs in the spring of 1981. Although Pat had been chosen to assume the role of Bananas for the fall of 1981, he was suddenly thrust into the limelight as a result of a decision made by Geoff Miller. Pat gave his playoff tickets to his date and in his first game as "the Bear", saw Maine beat Niagara University. In the victory celebration, Bananas attempted a cartwheel and his head fell off. However a good recovery prevented any lasting embarrassment and thus began a 3½ year stint as the mighty mascot of Maine.

The summer of 1981 saw Bananas and the rest of the UMO cheerleaders at the Universal Cheerleaders Assoc. National Camp at Virginia Tech. Univ. It was there that Pat learned the fundamentals of mascoting - something that takes much time and concentration if one wants to be truly good. During the clinic, Bananas won national recognition by winning three blue ribbons and two spirit sticks (an award given to the individuals showing the most enthusiasm). The following years brought additional recognition to UMO and saw development of one of the most popular mascots the Univ. has ever seen. During this three year span, Bananas appeared in many parades, at fund-raisers, Alumni events, Admission Office functions, and many other community events.

Playing Bananas has meant a great deal to Pat Dunn and he has many fond memories of his three-year career. A favorite memory that Pat says is very special occurred when he was first asked for his autograph. Pat says, "After a 'BROADWAY ON ICE' show in the spring of 1981, I had just gotten off the ice when one of the young skaters came up to the Bear crying and looking in need of a hug. I gave that young girl a hug and an amazing transformation took place. Her tears disappeared and her eyes lit-up with wonderment. Her first words were, 'Mr. Bear, can I have your autograph?' Well I gave her that autograph but she gave me something much more -- a smile."



Organizational Fair United Way Day '83

Pat didn't limit his antics to giving hugs -- he built himself a reputation as "the campus Romeo". This stemmed and still stems from Bananas' actions on the ice at the UMO hockey games at the Alford Arena. Bananas always managed to find a girlfriend in every corner of the rink with whom he flirted outrageously. The girls embarrassment was only temporary and the rest of the fans loved it.

Football season brought another round of memories for Pat -- especially his memories of a UMO-UNH game at Durham, in the fall of 1982. The UNH band managed to get past his security guards (the UMO Cheerleaders) and kidnapped him. In retaliation, the Maine band tried to attempt a rescue, the end result was a tug-of-war with Bananas acting as a pseudo-rope. Final score??? Maine 1 -- Bananas 1 (one pulled groin muscle that is).



"The New BANANAS!" (Pat Dunn '84)

The summer of 1983 brought the greatest publicity and change for Bananas. For the second time Bananas attended cheering camp and was rewarded with national television exposure on ESPN, a ranking as one of the top fifteen mascots in the country. In his second year at cheering camp Pat Dunn also received several ribbons and three more spirit sticks.

The fall of 1983 marked a great change in the appearance of Bananas. It was felt that the Maine bear should have his image changed so that he could better represent UMO pride and cast a more friendly image. Pat Dunn and Mike Mardosa, a staff artist for PICS attacked this task by creating a "Yogi-Bear" type character.

With the design outlined, the two set out to choose a color which would promote Maine Spirit by being visible and functional to all University of Maine media. Available colors included black, blue and grey.

Black was reluctantly ruled out because it was known to be extremely difficult to photograph and thus did not appear well in newsprint. The black mascot was also viewed as being very difficult to approach by many easily frightened Maine youngsters. This left Pat and Mike with the relatively easy decision of using blue - the University of Maine color or gray. Light blue was quickly chosen.

The new bear made his debut by skating onto the ice at a Maine Hockey game. The initial response was one of shock as small children seeing the fluffy blue bear immediately embraced Bananas. The older Maine fans were not initially as enthusiastic about the color but as time progressed and the bear's giant smile became apparent, the fans accepted the change with thunderous ovations each time the bear entered the ring. Pat Dunn was particularly moved by the reaction to the suit and was noted to do an excellent job of ushering in the new suit at all winter athletic events.

As spring approached the 1984 baseball season began to get exciting. Alpha Phi Omega decided that Bananas should entertain at Maine baseball games. At the Northeast Regionals Scott Lemeiux of Fort Fairfield, Maine, stepped onto the baseball diamond as Bananas and led the crowd in the Maine Stein Song, kissed babies, and danced to the crowd's delight.

During the Seton Hall game Bananas went all out for Maine Spirit. With frisbees donated by the University of Maine Bookstore and a fresh bunch of bananas, the Maine Bear lept onto the field tossing the items to the most spirited sections of the crowd. The crowd psyched-up and our team responded with a Maine win. Maine continued its winning ways and the team earned its fourth trip to the College World Series.

The exposure proved to be a blessing for Bananas on the Tuesday prior to the first College World Series game. Dr. William Lucy, Student Activities Office, threw out a suggestion to our mascot, "Hey Bananas" he exclaimed, "why don't you go out to Omaha?" A plan quickly unfolded and Cyr Bus Lines of Old Town offered to donate a bus ticket for the mascot if a definite yes confirmation could be given by 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday. The challenge lay ahead for Bananas as \$350.00 in hotel and food expenses needed to be raised in less than 24 hours.

Our furry friend began Wednesday morning on the telephone. Every source within dialing distance was called in search of the necessary funds.

The public response was, as expected knowing the loyalty of Maine Alumni, incredible. With the support of numerous University officials, contributions from Maine Alumni and area institutions, the funds were secured in time for the deadline. The Maine Bear would for the first time cheer on the baseball team in Omaha!

Since we began this text with a tiny cub in 1914 we have told many of the stories of the history of the University of Maine Black Bear. This is not the whole story as one will quickly find if one asks any proud Maine Alumnus.



Surprise! College World Series 1984





Farewell to Fans, College World Series

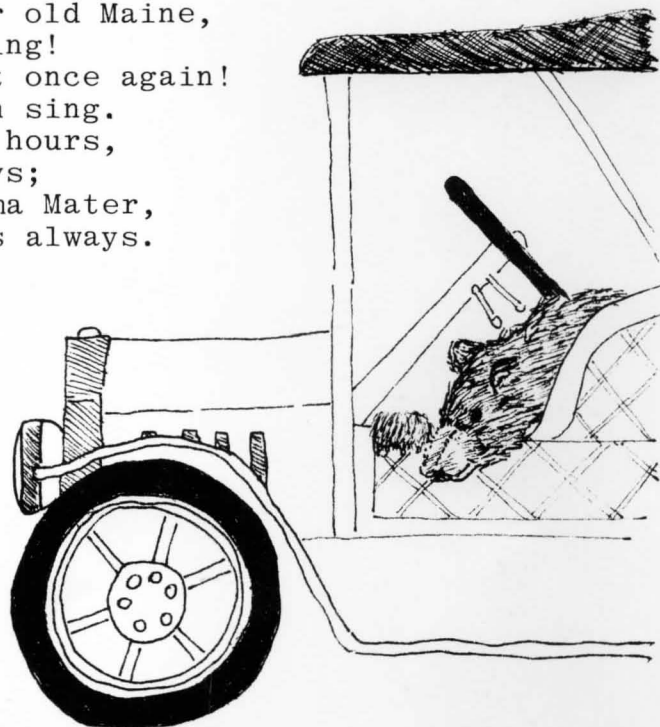


### THE MAINE STEIN SONG

Fill...the steins to dear old Maine,  
Shout 'til the rafters ring!  
Stand...and drink a toast once again!  
Let every loyal Maine man sing.  
Drink...to all the happy hours,  
Drink to the careless days;  
Drink...to Maine, our Alma Mater,  
The college of our hearts always.

To the trees, to the sky!  
To the spring in its glorious happiness;  
To the youth, to the fire,  
To the life that is moving and calling us!  
To the Gods, to the Fates,  
To the rules of men and their destinies;  
To the lips, to the eyes,  
To the girls who will love us someday!

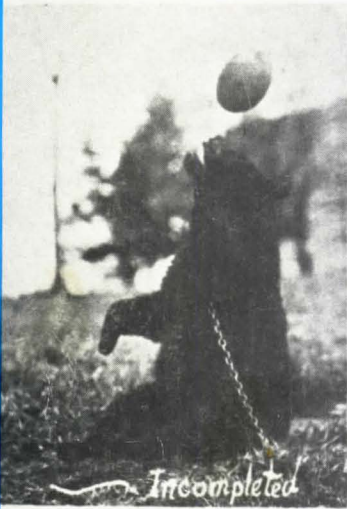
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*Kick from Placement*



*Incompleted*



*Down*



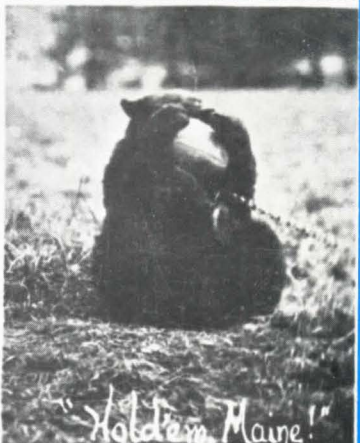
*A Bear of a Play*



*A set back*



*A Trick Play*



*"Hold'em, Maine!"*



*Football Sent*



*"Touchdown!"*