Callendar House
Bar Harbor

The Story
This grand and imposing Bar Harbor “cottage,” built in 1901 for Mrs. John Callendar Livingston, was designed by the legendary architect Fredrick Savage. The structure was Savage’s most formal design -- and also the most expensive (due in no small part to the fact that a fire destroyed the entire building just prior to completion, requiring a near-complete rebuild.) Savage was a native of Northeast Harbor, designing over 300 buildings, and was the most influential architect in the development of Mount Desert Island. The vast majority of his work comprised the cottages and hotels that marked Bar Harbor’s place as a “summer colony.” Savage built cottages in many styles, including numerous prominent Shingle Style structures that became popular in the late 19th and early 20th century. The Callendar House, however, is firmly Colonial Revival in design and was the first brick summer “cottage” in Bar Harbor. At the time of its construction it was praised by the Bar Harbor Record for both its refinement and its modernity.

The Threat
In 1992, the Callendar House was purchased by The Jackson Laboratory at a foreclosure auction. Since then, the structure has remained largely unoccupied. While 25+ years of limited use takes a toll on any structure, the most pressing issue here is the lack of a future path for the building as the owner considers campus expansion plans that could include demolition of this landmark.

The Solution
The Callendar House is significant both for its impressive architecture and for its evocative representation of Bar Harbor’s gilded age. Maine Preservation would like to work with The Jackson Laboratory to help identify an adaptive use for the house that ensures its continued existence and enhances its value to the Lab.