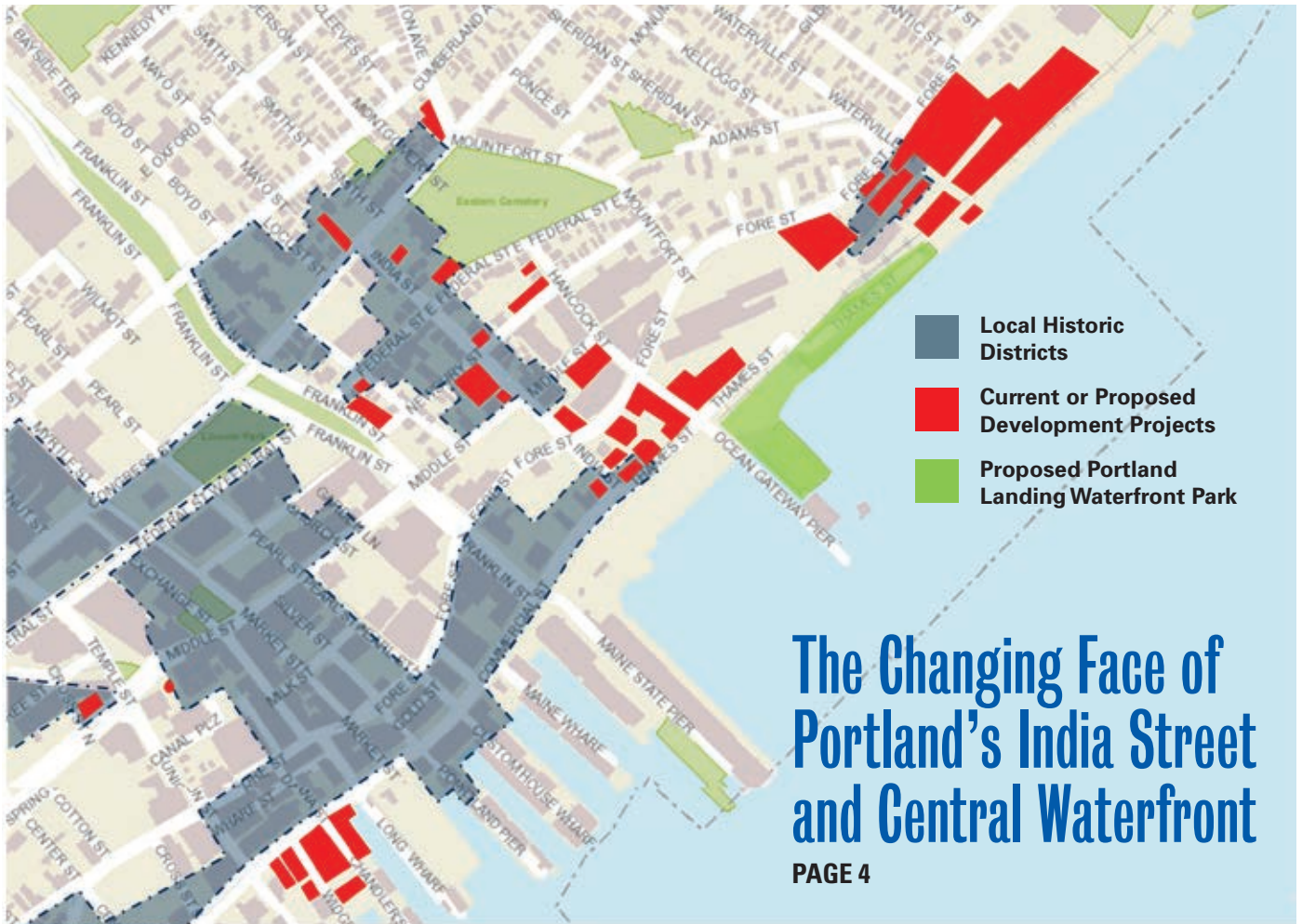




# GREATER PORTLAND LANDMARKS



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Sunday, October 15



## When Modernism Came to Maine

Lecture & Reception with Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.

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# Positively Shaping the Future of This Authentic Place

**W**HAT IS HAPPENING to this very special place where we live? As the construction season hits its peak, the changes brought by new development are in evidence all around us. Throughout greater Portland, a range of residential, retail, and commercial projects are underway or in the planning stages.

While it is most obvious in and near downtown Portland, where several large-scale hotels, condominiums, and mixed-use projects are under construction, surrounding towns are also feeling the effects. In areas near the water, additions, teardowns, and infill construction are changing the character of traditional neighborhoods. Where there once were farms, the land is being subdivided for development and former industrial sites are being repurposed for residential and mixed use. Today, the greater Portland area is in the middle of a development boom.

For Julie Larry, Director of Advocacy for Greater Portland Landmarks, this translates into an intense schedule. Every week, Julie scans civic agendas, attends key community meetings and fields calls from concerned citizens and neighborhood groups. Her priority is to identify key issues and projects that require Landmarks participation.

Julie brings over 20 years of experience as an architect and architectural historian as she reviews project descriptions, architectural drawings, and draft policies to assess their impacts on historic resources. With this thorough grounding, she prepares substantive comments and recommends actions. Julie meets reg-



**HILARY BASSETT**  
*Executive Director*

ularly with developers, citizens, and planners to get to know the players and the projects, and to find ways to advance strategies that preserve the character of this special place.

The current intense development on the Portland waterfront and in the India Street area is the focus of Julie's article in this issue. Her recent talk about this topic recently attracted an audience of 85 people to the Trefethen Club on Peaks Island!

As a native-born Mainer, who studied architecture at Tulane in New Orleans, Julie has witnessed large scale changes over the years and presently. She recognizes the opportunities and challenges that new development and re-development bring to historic communities. To guide her work, she conducts a variety of research initiatives to identify historic places and the stories behind them.

For example, this summer Julie has been working with two interns to conduct an architectural survey and write a brief history of the Deering Highlands area of Portland. The study will add to our understanding of how the city evolved and will provide residents with information about their neighborhood. By identifying properties that could be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and distilling the character-defining elements of the neighborhood, it will also help Landmarks be proactive in our advocacy.

Greater Portland Landmarks is committed to taking an active role in positively shaping the future of this authentic place. When change is happening rapidly, it is essential for us to actively participate and advocate for projects and policies that will enhance and support the essential character of Greater Portland. Julie's work as our Director of Advocacy is crucial to our goal to encourage thoughtful new development that respects and enhances our historic context. ■



## GREATER PORTLAND LANDMARKS

93 High Street  
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(207) 774-5561  
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# PRESERVATION UPDATES

## Federal and State Historic Tax Credits Help Create Affordable Housing in the Greater Portland Area

**A** CROSS GREATER PORTLAND, developers are using historic tax credits to rehabilitate historic buildings to help create housing that is affordable, especially for seniors. The federal Historic Tax Credit (HTC) is a critical funding source for these projects that preserve our historic resources. After the August recess, Congress is anticipated to begin work on tax reform, and the federal Historic Tax Credit is under threat. Senator Susan Collins is a sponsor of a bill that would enhance the HTC program, rather than eliminate it. Please call Senator Collins' office to thank her for her leadership in introducing the Historic Tax Credit Improvement Act (HR.1158/S.425). We also urge you to call Senator Angus King and U.S. Representatives Chellie Pingree and Bruce Poliquin to urge them to support the bill. Historic Tax Credits have been an indispensable incentive for the preservation of historic buildings throughout Greater Portland. If you live outside Maine and would like to contact your legislators, or if you'd like to learn about national advocacy efforts, go to <https://savingplaces.org/historic-tax-credits>

Below are updates on three HTC projects that are providing much needed housing while preserving historic buildings in our communities:



**Groundbreaking at the former Sisters of Mercy Convent, Portland.**

Landmarks staff recently attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the rehabilitation of the former Sisters of Mercy convent on Stevens Avenue in Portland, a large Neo-Classical Revival building known as the Motherhouse. John Wasileski, founder and president of Seacoast Management is working with developers Kevin Bunker and Matt Teare to repurpose the convent as eighty-eight affordable and market-rate apartments for seniors. The building was vacant for nearly a decade, although the Sisters maintained the heating systems, thereby preserving the interior from fluctuations in temperature and humidity. The interior of the convent, as well-designed and crafted as the exterior, will be preserved, including the stunning three story chapel. The Convent and Academy buildings that comprise the Motherhouse were added to the National Register of Historic Places in March 2017. The listing allows the project to be completed using federal and state Historic Tax Credits, saves a historic Deering neighborhood landmark and adds to the affordable

senior housing stock in the city. Landmarks was delighted to help celebrate this first step toward the building's new use. We congratulate all involved in helping to save these two historic buildings and provide affordable senior housing in Portland.

In Falmouth the ongoing rehabilitation of the Sampson D. Plummer School will create thirty-four units of senior housing when it is finished this year, another project led by Seacoast Management. Apartments will range in size from 400 to 900 square feet and will



**Falmouth's Plummer School will become senior housing.**

be affordable for residents who earn no more than 120 percent of the area's median income. The school, a circa 1930 Colonial Revival style building, closed in 2011 and was sold by the town to the Ocean View at Falmouth retirement community. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2016, allowing the developer to utilize historic tax credits to help finance the rehabilitation project.



**The Schlotterbeck & Foss Building is now apartments.**

In Portland's Bayside neighborhood, developer John Anton has converted the historic Schlotterbeck & Foss Building into fifty-six apartments. Landmarks representatives recently toured the former industrial building, which was constructed in 1927 and listed in the National Register of Historic Places last year so it could be rehabilitated using federal and state Historic Tax Credits. It is significant as a rare example of an industrial building designed by John Calvin Stevens and of the Art-Deco style in Portland. The project included all new windows, masonry restoration, a new roof system with copper flashing, a new ADA accessible entrance, and extensive site work and landscaping. The existing concrete floors were polished and the structural concrete 'mushroom' columns are featured throughout the building. The former Schlotterbeck & Foss offices on the first floor feature extensive millwork that has been preserved, creating a distinctive common room for Maine College of Art students, who occupy the first three floors of the apartment building. ■



# The Changing Face of Portland's India Street and Central Waterfront

BY JULIE ANN LARRY

*A*n improving economy and the broad appeal of Portland's cultural and historical vitality led to a recent building boom on the peninsula.

*With numerous projects recently completed, still under construction, or in the permitting phase, the waterfront will undoubtedly have a different appearance within the next few years. The recent and proposed changes will affect the character of the city, particularly its working waterfront.*

Two new projects in the central waterfront would add a new hotel and several restaurants, as well as office and retail space on Fisherman's, Widgery, and Union Wharves. Both developments are outside the Old Port Historic District and won't be reviewed by the City's Historic Preservation Board. But both projects will have a significant impact on the character of Commercial Street, and may have a broader impact on the use of Portland's working waterfront that is a critical aspect of the character of the central waterfront.

Anticipating further development on the east end of the waterfront, the City is considering uses for land it owns on Thames Street. A consultant has developed conceptual plans for a new waterfront park called Portland Landing on the former Amethyst parking lot. The new public green space is envisioned as a place for recreation and public events that will also include

A large percentage of recent real estate development near Portland's waterfront has taken place in or adjacent to the new India Street Historic District.

PHOTO: HEATH PALEY



a landing for community sailing programs, public temporary berthing, and water taxi access. Portland Landing will adjoin public space anticipated in the recently-approved Portland Company master plan.

Opposite Portland Landing, on the inland side of the railroad tracks the City is looking to redevelop a gravel parking lot it owns at the corner of Hancock and Thames Streets. The City Council's Economic Development Committee recommended a preferred option from two proposals the city received. The City Council approved a plan to construct WEX's new corporate headquarters on the waterfront, in a project that includes a new retail and office building as well as a parking garage for 450-550 cars.

At the center of activity along the eastern waterfront is the newly rehabilitated Grand Trunk Office Building. Long vacant, the building was listed on Landmarks' Places in Peril in 2012. Gorham Savings Bank recently rehabilitated the building, taking pains to undertake a faithful exterior restoration, in a project that was funded in part by federal and state Historic Tax Credits. The lobby is open to the public, so visitors are welcome to look at the interior rehabilitation and the historic images of Portland's waterfront on display.

Within the India Street neighborhood, fifteen projects are either complete, under construction, or in planning. These proj-



CREDIT: ARCHETYPE ARCHITECTS

**The Proprietors of Union Wharf recently received site plan approval for three new buildings totaling 40,000 square feet of non-marine use on the Commercial Street end of Union Wharf, outside the historic district. These two buildings in the second phase of the project will replace a parking lot and single story building on Commercial Street.**

ects include 129 units of housing and over 60,000 square feet of retail and office space. Three of the projects are within the Old Port Historic District and six are within the newly created India Street Historic District. Landmarks was integral to the passage of the historic district in late 2015 and assisted city staff in the expansion of the district just a few months later. The expansion allowed a local developer to take advantage of Historic Tax Credits to rehabilitate the Josiah Duran Block (1867/1924), a six-unit brick apartment building on Federal Street.

One of the largest projects on India Street is Reger Dasco's new Mason Block, located in the India Street Historic District.



The Amethyst parking lot owned by the City of Portland could be transformed into Portland Landing, as illustrated in this concept sketch, to improve public access to the harbor and provide recreational opportunities for Portland residents and visitors. To the left in the background, the city anticipates the redevelopment of two privately owned land parcels between Thames and Fore Streets. The grayed boxes show the area where new projects could be proposed in the future.

Landmarks will continue to advocate for creative reuse of historic structures and for well-designed new buildings that are compatible with the character of the city and that might someday be future landmarks.



Taking a cue from its neighbors, brick and granite will be featured on the exterior of the Mason Block, shown in this rendering and now under construction on India Street (see photo on pages 4 and 5).



PHOTO: HEATH PALEY

**The newly rehabilitated Grand Trunk Office Building on India Street (at upper right) anchors the corner of a large block of new construction activity bounded by Thames, Fore, and Hancock Streets. A new hotel is under construction and three additional commercial and residential buildings are planned for the site.**

The new building is named in honor of Edward Mason, the namesake of the former clinic across India Street run by Bowdoin College’s Maine School of Medicine. The clinic provided healthcare to the neighborhood’s immigrant families, as well as dispensing clean healthy milk to infants in an era before pasteurization. The new four-story building at 62 India Street will have three street-level storefronts below twenty-nine residential condominiums. The contemporary building was designed to be compatible with the district’s buildings through the use of red brick and elements such as projecting bay windows and commercial storefronts inspired by nearby buildings on Middle Street.

Just up India Street, an old Portland business will have a new look. Amato’s is expanding their store near the corner of Newbury Street to include a new indoor seating area on the site of their existing patio. The new addition will recall the corner entrance to the Amato’s store that formerly stood on the site in the mid-20th century, but will be very modern in scale and details as the existing building at 71 India Street was built in 2000 and is considered a non-contributing building in the historic district.

Just outside the India Street historic district on Franklin and Newbury Street is another large new condominium project, Luminato by NewHeight Group. Visible on the skyline, Luminato’s five floors of condominiums rest on top of two levels of parking. The new building is capped by a rooftop deck and green roof that will help to reduce its impact on storm water run-off. The inclusion of a green roof in the project earned the developer an extra floor of height under the city’s new Form-



PHOTO: HEATH PALEY

**The new Luminato building along Franklin Street was designed using the new Form Based Code that applies to parcels outside the historic district in the India Street neighborhood.**

Based Code provisions that apply only within the India Street neighborhood. Reflecting the appeal of Portland’s waterfront neighborhoods and the high demand for downtown housing, Luminato sold all twenty-four condominiums four months before the building is scheduled to be ready for occupancy.

With several hotel, residential, and office projects still under review and more in the very early planning stages, Portland’s waterfront will undoubtedly be very different in five years than it is today. Landmarks will continue to advocate for creative reuse of historic structures and for well-designed new buildings that are compatible with the character of the city and that might someday be future landmarks. ■

# Who We Are



# Don Head

A trustee since 2016, Don Head comes to Landmarks with a passion for the Portland Observatory, where he is currently a docent. He helped raise funds for the 1998-2000 restoration and with his wife Caron Zand planned the grand reopening celebration on Flag Day 2000. Don has an extensive background in investment work and founded HeadInvest, an investment management firm, in 1989. We met with Don at Landmarks' offices to learn more.

## **Tell us about your background.**

I grew up in a small town in West Virginia on the Ohio River. I'm a graduate of Denison University and after college took a job in a bank in Cleveland, where I lived twelve years. During that time my family discovered the Maine Coast, specifically Islesboro in Penobscot Bay. We returned often, and after a few years the kids began saying "Can't we live in Maine?" So I found a way, taking a management position in the trust department of the then Casco Bank in the early 1980s.

## **How has Portland changed?**

The biggest difference to me is the re-purposing of downtown Portland - the added restaurants, galleries, and other amenities. When we first came to town, for a quality lunch or dinner with clients we were largely limited to Boone's or the Roma. Now we seem to have new openings almost weekly. In the eighties few tourists stopped in Portland. People would drive past the city on the way to Camden and Bar Harbor. That is very different today.

## **What interested you in the Observatory?**

I moved here in October 1982 and thought "Why is there a lighthouse on that hill near downtown?" When I visited the Observatory the following spring, I learned what it actually is, and it immediately became a highlight of my personal tours of Portland. I took every visiting guest to the top. When it was in trouble [due to an infestation of powder post beetles in the mid 1990s], I called Eric Altholz [the Landmarks trustee leading the effort to restore the Observatory] and said I wanted to be involved.

I became involved as a docent immediately after I retired 4 years ago. We

docents meet people from all over the world. I met my first tourist from China 2 years ago. At the Observatory we interact with people of all kinds.

I especially enjoy the spring visits by Portland third graders. Third graders study Portland history before coming to the Observatory. When I first started giving tours for kids, I followed an experienced docent who started by asking the kids questions: What is this building? "The Portland Observatory." When was it built? "1807." Who built it? "Captain Lemuel Moody." We tour the building asking them questions, and they provide the answers that docents would have to provide for adults.

## **In your involvement with nonprofit organizations, what have you observed?**

Smaller, usually younger, organizations struggle to get enough "boots on the ground" to meet enough people in the quest for money. In those cases there must be determined leadership and a broad enough mission to enlarge the base of support. Continuity of leadership is important. It is easier if your mission can be well-defined like Landmarks. That definition has made it possible to broaden *where* we conduct our mission.

## **Tell us about your recent move to the city from the suburbs.**

We had a huge house with a huge attic. My wife Caron had to clean out her father's house after his death and suggested that we do the same at our house now, so it wouldn't be a problem for someone else later. So we did. She then said, "Now we are ready to downsize." I immediately said no, enjoying our large house on 10 acres overlooking the Scarborough Marsh. A friend suggested

we look at the condos to be built at 118 Congress - which then existed only as drawings. When the developers took us up on a lift to show us what views would exist, I learned I would be able to see the Portland Head Light, the islands, and the Observatory. I said "Let's do it!"

## **How is Portland evolving?**

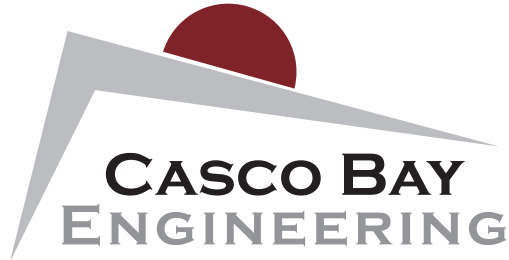
I think the boom that is going on now has some time to run, and I think we'll see actual population growth. Portland's economy is driven today by knowledge businesses - medicine, law, finance and accounting, and so on. An increasing number of these professionals are deciding to forsake the suburbs for the delights of the city. Further, a growing number of people are buying second homes in both Portland and the suburbs. We sold our house to a couple who both have big jobs in the D.C area. Of the 12 units in our condo building, only 6 residents call it their primary home. More of this behavior will happen. These new people will add support to the restaurants and cultural institutions.

## **How is Landmarks evolving?**

People who come here enjoy that so many historic buildings are being maintained. When I talk about the Observatory being built in 1807, and the Portland Head Light being constructed in the George Washington administration, it boggles people's minds. We consistently discover more landmarks that are at risk. That maintains public interest in our work. Preservation is a broader concept than individual landmark buildings. It includes pieces of ground and vistas. Especially as people move to the city, the desire for preservation will increase. ■



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# OBSERVATORY AT A GLANCE



PHOTO: HEATH PALEY

Panoramic view from the Portland Observatory of the shipping channel.

## View Study from the Portland Observatory

As stewards of the Portland Observatory, and with a generous gift from one of our trustees, Greater Portland Landmarks has hired technical experts to professionally evaluate the impact of potential development on key views, especially from the top of the Portland Observatory to the shipping channel. The information we generate will help us understand how best to protect the interpretation and character-defining elements of this National Historic Landmark that is such a crucial element in U.S. maritime history.



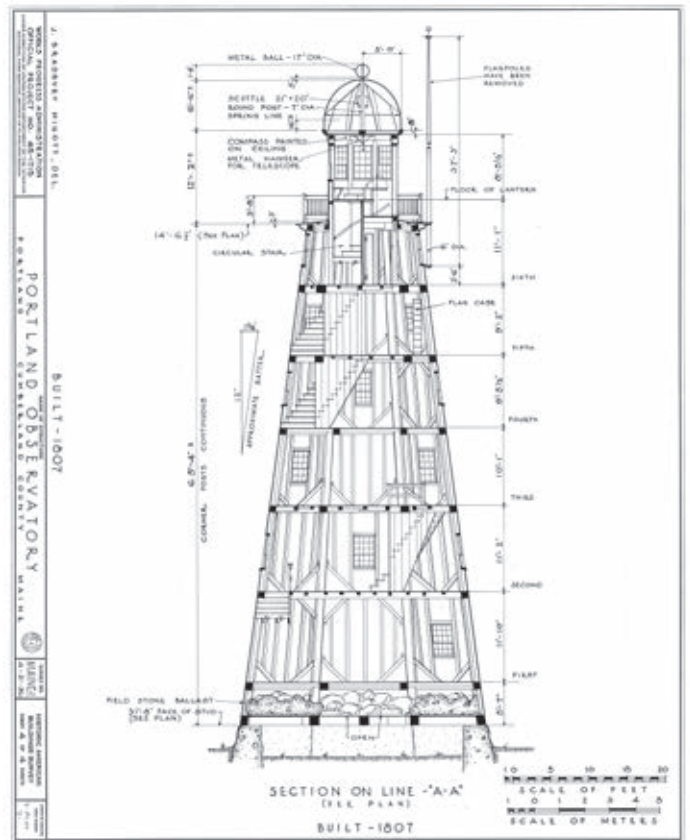
Tom Grill and Martha Vrana-Bossart view the recently-donated Dollond telescope.

## The Visitor Experience Project

With a 40% increase in visitors at the Portland Observatory over two years, and the donation of a Dollond Telescope similar to the one originally used by Lemuel Moody, Greater Portland Landmarks is working on ways to incorporate this new artifact into an enhanced visitor experience at the last remaining maritime signal tower in the United States. We are the grateful recipient of two grants, from the Northeast Intervention Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Davis Family Foundation, to evaluate tours and install the telescope starting this winter.

## How Much Ballast?

The Portland Observatory was built in 1807 using loose granite rubble stone as ballast at its base to anchor the structure on Munjoy Hill so that it would withstand wind forces. For decades, common information has it that the granite stone amounts to 122 tons of ballast. Recently, long-time



Drawing of Observatory from 1936 Historic American Buildings Survey.

document Roland Hawkes took to calculating the weight of granite by volume. Based on his calculations that each ton of granite comprises 11.9 cubic feet, the base of the Observatory would need to hold solid granite to a height of 2.62 feet to reach 122 tons. As Roland concludes, "Casual inspection can tell us that the boulders spread about the base of the Observatory do not amount to an average of 2 ½ feet. I will be surprised if there are as much as forty tons of granite ballast. I welcome any challenge to my arithmetic but until then I am convinced."



Roland Hawkes conducts research at the Osher Map Library.

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# LANDMARKS PEOPLE AND PLACES



Portland Paddle guided a Landmarks kayak trip to Fort Gorges in August.



Portland Greendrinks featured Greater Portland Landmarks at its May event. Trustee Nate Stevens addressed a crowd of 300.



Students from Shinagawa, Japan, Portland's sister city, toured the Observatory in July.



Landmarks supporters made record-breaking bids at our Mid Mod Gala auction in June.

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### LANDMARKS TOURS

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Open daily through Monday, Oct. 9, 10 am – 5 pm,  
last tour at 4:30 pm

Tour the last remaining historic maritime signal tower in the country. Amazing views and fascinating history appeals to visitors of all ages. Landmarks members receive free admission. 138 Congress Street, Portland

#### Tours of the US Custom House, Portland

Wednesdays through October 25, 10 am and 11:30 am

Visit the Custom House (1867-72), designed by Alfred B. Mullett, with its grand interior embellished with marble, decorative plaster and gold leaf. Meet at 312 Fore Street, Portland.

**Advance registration required.**

#### Walking Tours: Homes of Portland's Golden Age

Tuesdays and Fridays through October 6, 10 am

Stroll along Portland's State and High Streets with their magnificent 19th century residences and houses of worship. Tour begins at Greater Portland Landmarks, 93 High Street.

Sponsored by  **Norway Savings Bank**  
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### Identifying Kit & Catalog Houses

Thursday, September 14, 2017, 9 am – 12 pm

This program will discuss the history of kit home manufacturing, and will conclude with a walking tour of the Oakdale neighborhood to practice identifying kit homes. *This program has been approved for continuing education credit through the Maine Real Estate Commission.* Begins at 93 High Street, Portland. **Advance registration required.**

### Annual Meeting & Places in Peril Announcement

Tuesday, September 19, 5 pm

Join Landmarks members to celebrate the creative rehabilitation of a 2012 Place in Peril! Tour the elements that made this project so distinctive, and hear the announcement of 2017's most endangered properties. Members and the public welcome. Suggested contribution. **Advance Registration Requested.** Riverview Martial Arts at the Maine State Armory Building, 682 Broadway, South Portland.

### Residential Architecture: Uncovering the Story of Your Historic Building

Thursday, October 5, 2017, 9 am – 12 pm

Learn how to research the history of an historic home and share its story. The program will conclude with a walking tour of the State Street neighborhood to practice identifying building styles in Portland. *This program has been approved for continuing education credit through the Maine Real Estate Commission.*

Program at 93 High Street. **Advance registration required.**

### When Modernism Came to Maine: Lecture & Reception with Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.

Sunday, October 15, 2:30 pm lecture; 4 pm reception



Learn about mid-century modern residential, religious, and civic architecture in this afternoon program and celebration. Maine State Historian Earle Shettleworth will present an illustrated talk about Maine's mid-century modern domestic architecture at Holy Cross Church (1958). Afterwards, cross the street for a public reception to mark the 50th birthday of the South Portland Public Library (1967).

Lecture at Holy Cross Church, 124 Cottage Road, South Portland.

**Advance registration for lecture required.** Public reception at South Portland Public Library, 482 Broadway, South Portland.

### What Does It Mean to Own Property in a Local Historic District?

Thursday, November 9, 2017, 9 am – 12 pm

Portland has eleven local historic districts. This program will cover guidelines that govern ownership and care of properties within these districts, and increase understanding of the designation process. It will conclude with a walking tour of the historic Western Promenade in Portland. *This program has been approved for continuing education credit through the Maine Real Estate Commission.*

Program at 93 High Street. **Advance registration required.**

**Advance registration at [www.portlandlandmarks.org](http://www.portlandlandmarks.org)**