



GREATER PORTLAND LANDMARKS

PLACES IN PERIL



PHOTO: RACHEL SIEBEN PHOTOGRAPHY

Buildings with an uncertain future, like South Portland's Mahoney School above, are among seven places added to Landmarks' endangered properties list. **PAGE 4**



PRESERVATION UPDATES

PAGE 3



MAX PAGE

Provocative Book
& Keynote Lecture
May 9th

PAGE 9

LANDMARKS CALENDAR

Programs & Events

PAGE 16

New Year's Resolution: Get Involved in Shaping Public Policy

One of the great things about living in the Portland area and in Maine is the strong tradition of civic engagement. In general, if you want to be civically engaged, you can be. Just show up at the meetings and start participating.

In the past year, this characteristic has been more important than ever – whether at the local, state or national level – as key decisions affecting land use, sustainable practices, and tax policy have been considered. These decisions will affect how our communities will evolve and whether they will retain their personality and character. As people who care about preserving the special places and neighborhoods that define our communities, it is essential for all of us to be part of these conversations.

Nationally, we've just seen how important it has been to reach out to legislators in support of the historic tax credit. Your efforts making calls, sending emails, sharing information and expressing concerns saved this important economic development tool as part of the recently-approved tax legislation.

Many voices calling attention to the powerful outcomes that historic preservation projects bring to communities all over the state made an enormous difference in saving the credit. Spurred by this incentive, projects like the transformation of Falmouth's Plummer Motz School and Portland's St. Joseph's Convent Motherhouse into senior housing, the conversion of the Mellen-Bolster House in Portland into The Francis Hotel, and many others will continue to revitalize neighborhoods throughout greater Portland.

Locally, communities have been updating their comprehensive plans. In Portland, starting in 2015, city planners staged over 40 events and heard from over 2,000 participants in online surveys to update the plan and vision for the next 10 years. They identified six major themes in the new plan approved by the Council in June 2017. Among the themes are "authen-

ticity" and "sustainability," including aspirations to celebrate our history, to enhance our unique neighborhoods, to maintain our character through preservation, innovation and excellence in design, and to balance our historic fabric, sound infrastructure, and the best of new technology and design for the future. Residents from all over the city, including many of you, helped shape the plan and ensure that preservation infuses the document.

Guided by the new plan, the City is updating the zoning code and developing plans for growth at "nodes" where major transportation routes intersect. At Landmarks, these goals have spurred our efforts to learn about "node" areas through architectural surveys and neighborhood gatherings. This summer, we'll be deploying graduate student interns to gather data and conduct research, soliciting information from residents, and sharing our discoveries at public programs. We invite you to be part of these activities.

At the neighborhood level, Portland's Munjoy Hill has been under tremendous development pressure, leading to a recent spate of teardowns and new and proposed construction that prioritizes parking and ignores the traditional character of the streetscape. Largely built in the 19th and early 20th century and including properties that survived the Great Fire of 1866, the Hill is not protected by historic designation. Landmarks has been meeting with city leaders and concerned residents, participating in the public process, and gathering information to guide possible solutions. To that end, we recently surveyed 767 properties on the Hill and commissioned a study of views to and from the Portland Observatory.

Given the rapid pace of change and the importance of balancing preservation and new development, we supported the recently-approved moratorium on new development on the Hill. We believe that it is essential to take a short break to study the outcomes of zoning and other policies, make changes as needed, and investigate potential strategies and incentives to preserve the historic buildings that remain. We will keep you posted on upcoming workshops, informational gatherings, and public hearings and encourage you to attend.

Your involvement makes a difference! Please join us as we work together to shape our future. ■



HILARY BASSETT
Executive Director



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PRESERVATION UPDATES



PHOTO: SPIRITS ALIVE!

Spirits Alive! has tackled a range of preservation projects at Portland's Eastern Cemetery including conserving and re-setting these original headstones.

Places in Peril Update: Spirits Alive! Leads Preservation Efforts at Eastern Cemetery

In 2012 the Eastern Cemetery was named as one of Landmarks' first Places in Peril. Five years later, thanks to the efforts of Spirits Alive! at the Eastern Cemetery things are looking much better.

Spirits Alive! has trained a team of conservation volunteers to clean and repair stones as needed following the guidelines of the cemetery's Master Plan. Since 2013, Spirits Alive! has regularly scheduled conservation days resulting in the conservation of 368 stones with projects ranging from simple cleaning and resetting to complex repairs.

The number of visitors taking guided tours has steadily increased as well, from under 200 in 2013 to over 800 in 2017. Tours are now offered four days a week and in October 2017, *Yankee Magazine* named Spirits Alive! one of the "Best 5 Cemetery Tours in New England."

Additionally, Spirits Alive! spearheaded the restoration of the 1871 Victorian tool shed (the "Dead House") which has been an integral part of the Cemetery landscape and initiated a photography project to document gravestones. They have ensured the installation of a water line that is essential to the conservation effort, installed a new iron gate for the holding tomb and tackled the eroding hillside toward the back of the Cemetery. They hosted the Maine Old Cemetery Association meeting in the summer of 2017 and established the special Walk Among the Shadows cemetery tour every October.

Finally, through the efforts of Spirits Alive! board member Ron

Romano, the Eastern Cemetery has been the subject of two books. *Early Gravestones in Southern Maine: The Genius of Bartlett Adams* (History Press, 2016) about Portland's first resident stone-cutter and *Portland's Historic Eastern Cemetery: A Field of Ancient Graves* (History Press, 2017).



PHOTO: ARTHUR FINK

Drew Atripaldi of Riverview Martial Arts and **Hilary Bassett**. Drew enjoys the Armory's historic details, including the original roof framing, tower ladder and letters naming the building featured in his studio.

Landmarks Honors Preservation of former Maine National Guard Armory

At the annual meeting in September, Greater Portland Landmarks presented a Preservation Honor Award to Priority Real Estate, of Topsham, Maine for preserving the head house of the former Maine National Guard Armory and finding contemporary uses that make the building and its unique architecture and details accessible to the public. Jim Howard, President, noted that he has received many positive comments on this challenging project which included restoring the original exterior features of the Armory's head house and refitting the interior as the Rusty Lantern convenience store and Riverview Martial Arts karate studio. The building is a gateway landmark that provides a striking visual introduction to South Portland, and Landmarks members gathered in the 2nd floor karate studio to celebrate its preservation. Completed in 1941, the Armory was built in the flurry of new government construction following the United States' entry into World War II. It features details in the Art Deco style, including glass block windows, zig-zag patterned decorations, sculptured eagles, and carved keystones with images of tanks, grenades, and bullets. In 2004, the Armory was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Call for Nominations for Landmarks' 2018 Preservation Awards

Greater Portland Landmarks is accepting nominations for the 2018 Preservation Awards to honor outstanding historic preservation achievements in the greater Portland area. The nomination form and details are available on Landmarks' website (www.portlandlandmarks.com) and must be submitted to the Greater Portland Landmarks office by June 15, 2018 no later than 3:00 PM.

We invite you to nominate any historic property or landscape that has been restored, rehabilitated, undergone sensitive new construction, or adapted to a modern use between January 1, 2015 and June

15, 2018. We welcome projects large and small. In addition, please consider nominating people, organizations or programs who have strived to educate and advocate for the cultural heritage of the greater Portland area.

The 2018 Preservation Awards will honor projects and people in the greater Portland area, with the goal of inspiring efforts to preserve the great history and material culture that makes our community a treasured place. For more information contact Julie Ann Larry, Director of Advocacy at jlarry@portlandlandmarks.org or 207-774-5561 x102.



PHOTO: ARTHUR FINK

Chris Beebe and **Jim Howard**, President of Priority Real Estate of Topsham and developer for the project, were on hand to receive a Landmarks' Preservation Honor Award for the Maine National Guard Armory rehabilitation.



Damaged by use of an inappropriate replacement mortar, the iconic tower of the historic Dunn Memorial Church (1906-1907) in Deering Center needs an estimated \$1.5 million to restore its stone exterior.

PLACES IN PERIL

BY JULIE ANN LARRY

GREATER PORTLAND LANDMARKS announced its fourth list of Places in Peril in September to call attention to the threats facing character-defining, historically-significant properties in greater Portland. This year, Landmarks identified seven buildings or areas that are at critical points where they could be irreparably altered or destroyed.

Landmarks is listing these properties for several reasons. First, Landmarks desires to build community awareness about the importance of these properties and focus public attention on their significance in state and local history. Secondly, we will advocate for the preservation, protection, and in some cases, adaptive reuse of these properties so that they can continue to play a vital role in this area's defining architectural landscape. Lastly, we will offer advice, convene people, and identify resources to help preserve, protect and rehabilitate these properties.

Places in Peril is the only endangered properties program in Maine which focuses on a local region. There are approximately sixty such statewide and local programs in the United States.



The U-Haul building was a showpiece for Portland Motor Sales, Maine's largest Ford dealership, when it opened in 1963. Today, it is vulnerable to redevelopment as East Bayside evolves as an in-demand location for brewers and distillers and dense residential development.

The 2017 Places in Peril include:

1 **Dunn Memorial Church** at 4 Brentwood Street in Portland's Deering Center neighborhood is an architecturally significant structure and well-known visual landmark on Stevens Avenue. Built 1906-1907, it has been



The early 20th century Seth Thomas street clock on Congress Street stopped working decades ago due to a lack of maintenance and exposure to Maine's harsh environment.

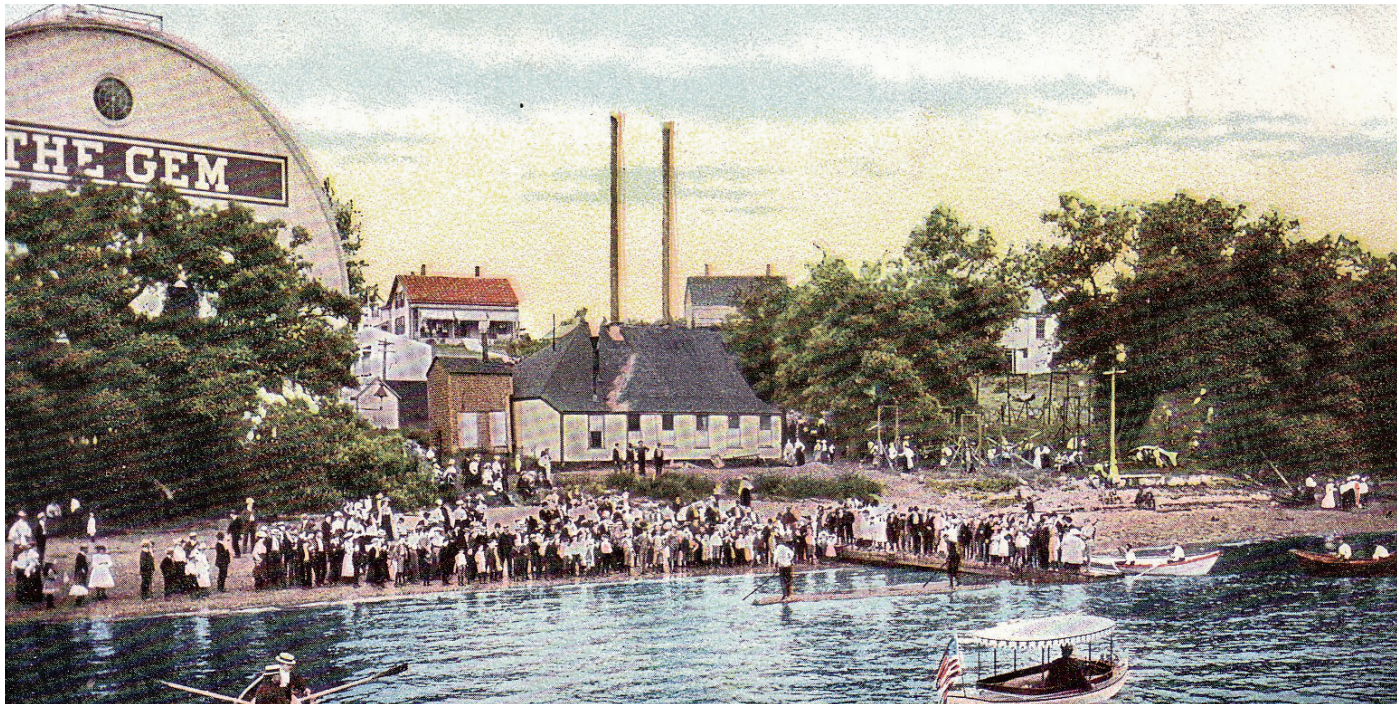
determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural character. It is one of the few buildings in Portland designed by noted Bangor architect Victor Hodgins. Improper use of mortar has led to decades of structural problems. The building faces extensive damage and an estimated \$1.5 million to repair the bell tower. Concern for safety of passing pedestrians led the church to install a fence to keep people away from the stone tower.

2 The **Portland Motor Sales Building** at 411 Marginal Way in Portland is one of Portland's most well-known Mid-Century Modern buildings. The building is currently occupied by U-Haul and was built in 1963 with an iconic folded roof as a character-defining feature of its style. It recently attained "historic" status as it is more than 50 years old. The property is vulnerable to redevelopment in an area of rapid regrowth, because this style is typically undervalued and there are no preservation protections for this building or neighborhood.

3 The **Seth Thomas Clock** in front of the former Hay & Peabody funeral home at 749 Congress Street in Portland is a rare four-dial street clock that has a combination mechanical clockwork and electric motor. Installed in 1925, it is the only pole-mounted street clock built by the nationally renowned Seth Thomas Co. in Portland. The clock is in serious disrepair due to a lack of maintenance over the decades. The specialized skills required to fix the clock and its original mechanism, and the associated cost have been barriers to its being restored to working order.

PLACES IN PERIL

PHOTO : GREATER PORTLAND LANDMARKS POSTCARD COLLECTION



In the late 19th century Peaks Island became a regional summer entertainment destination as shown in the postcard above. While several elements of the island's former amusement area have been lost, many remain and are unprotected from alterations or demolition. Clockwise from below, the bowling alley is currently being rehabilitated after being threatened by demolition last year. The island's former shooting gallery is now a residence. Small cottages along Adams Street and Oakland Avenue retain much of their original designs.

PHOTO: ARTHUR FINK



PHOTO: ARTHUR FINK



PHOTO: ARTHUR FINK



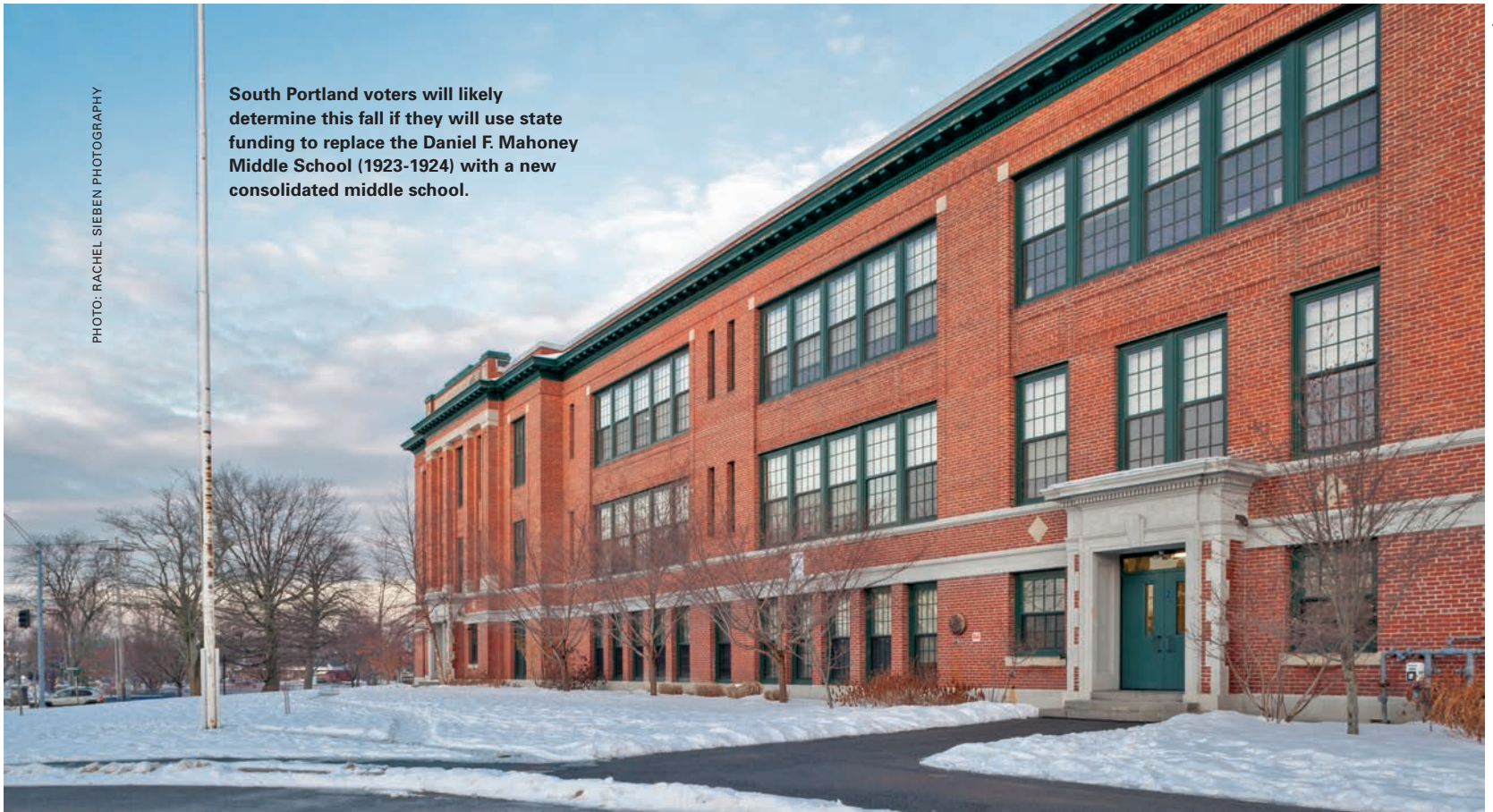
PHOTO: ARTHUR FINK



PHOTO: ARTHUR FINK



South Portland voters will likely determine this fall if they will use state funding to replace the Daniel F. Mahoney Middle School (1923-1924) with a new consolidated middle school.



4 **Peaks Island** in the late 19th century was famous for its summer entertainment and earned the nickname “Coney Island of Maine.” From 1880-1930, a variety of attractions along Island Avenue associated with Greenwood Gardens’ amusement park were significant elements on Peaks Island’s shoreline. Much of the **Amusement District** has not been formally documented and holds no preservation protections. As the demand grows for higher density and water frontage in the area, significant changes threaten this area’s integrity.

5 Eligible for the National Register of Historic Buildings, South Portland’s **Mahoney Middle School** is located at 240 Ocean Street, on a 15-acre lot at the corner of a major transportation route into parts of South Portland and Cape Elizabeth. It was designed by noted Maine architectural firm Miller & Mayo, and is a showcase for the Beaux Arts Style of architecture, preferred for important civic buildings when it was built 1923-1924. The South Portland School District has received state funding to renovate or replace Mahoney, or consolidate its two middle schools. As the result of a local task force recommendation to build a new school, the future of the historic school is at risk. No preservation protections exist on the building to prevent demolition, or to ensure its rehabilitation and guide future additions or changes.



The one-room former Bowery Beach School (1855) needs funding to repair its wooden structure, exterior siding and details.

6 The **Bowery Beach School** at 11 Wheeler Road in Cape Elizabeth is one of the last remaining one-room schoolhouses in the greater Portland region. Unlike other one-room schools in Cape Elizabeth, this building has been located on its original site since its construction in 1855 and contains most of its original features and architecture. A structural assessment shows that the building’s framing needs repair from rot and rodent activity, and the current owner’s lack of funding threatens their ability to maintain the structure, putting it at risk.

PLACES IN PERIL



The Abyssinian Meeting House was the center of an African American residential neighborhood off Portland's India Street, including the Abraham Niles House (1844) at left.

7 Few historic resources and buildings tell the story of the small but thriving community of African American citizens in 19th century Portland. Three areas in particular, including **Newbury Street, Lafayette Street, and the St. John-Valley Street neighborhood**, contain buildings that help illustrate the contributions of Portland's 19th century African American citizens to its robust history. Land values are so high that these neighborhoods are experiencing intense redevelopment, including teardowns for new construction. Most of the associated buildings have not been researched and are not within existing historic districts, with the exception of the Abyssinian Meeting House, a locally-designated landmark. Therefore, no historic protections exist for these buildings, many of which are modest in size and detail.

Since announcing its first list in 2012, Landmarks has assigned Place in Peril status to 26 properties. This year, five from the original listing are considered protected or saved, and five others have made progress toward preservation. Landmarks announced its 2017 list inside a building that is a success story: the former Maine National Guard Armory in South Portland, a Place in Peril from 2012, is now adapted and rehabilitated for new uses (see story page 3).

Landmarks will continue to monitor all Places In Peril properties in hopes that they can be removed from the list in the near future. Landmarks' intention is to work proactively with property owners as much as possible to protect endangered



PHOTO: TED OLDHAM

Another small group of African American residents lived on Lafayette Street on Munjoy Hill, near a local livery stable, where several African American men worked.

properties for the future.

"The Places in Peril designation has helped us move to the front of the line with key preservation decision makers and funders," said Paul Drinan, Executive Director of Friends of Fort Gorges, a site listed as a 2013 Place in Peril.

"We've seen over the last 20 years how important historic preservation has been to the economic growth of Portland and retention of property values," said Ed Gardner, owner of Ocean Gate Realty and a Landmarks trustee. "Saving these properties can only enhance the vitality of greater Portland." ■

WHY PRESERVATION MATTERS: Shaping a Sustainable and Equitable Future

How can historic preservation be relevant to today's communities?

AUTHOR AND EDUCATOR MAX PAGE, professor of architecture and director of the historic preservation program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, will offer his perspective at a keynote lecture "Why Preservation Matters: Shaping a Sustainable and Equitable Future" in Portland at First Parish Church on **May 9, at 6 pm**. His talk is part of a series of activities planned by Greater Portland Landmarks to celebrate national Preservation Month.

Professor Page teaches and writes about the history of cities and architecture. His lecture will draw on his most recent book *Why Preservation Matters* (Yale University Press, 2016), a thought-provoking assessment of the preservation movement that offers a progressive vision for the future of preservation. Anyone interested in how to honor our past while working toward an equitable and sustainable future for our community will gain insight from Professor Page's ideas.



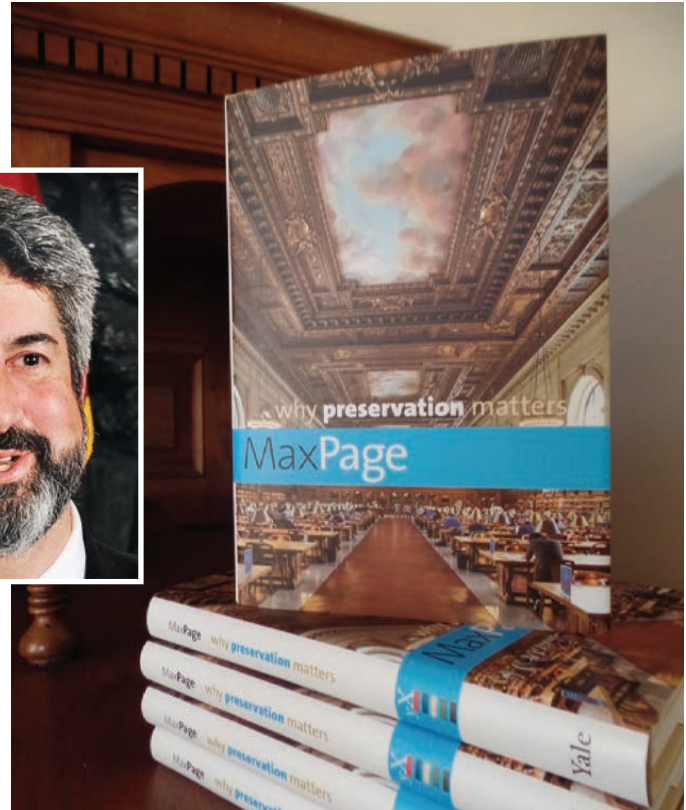
Max Page

Page argues that if the preservation movement is to play a central role in building more just communities, it must transform itself. As he writes in the book: "Preservation is impossible to understand without the stories of meaningful places – the celebratory, the uplifting, the beautiful, but also the painful, the shameful, and the divisive". He suggests that by standing against gentrification, working more closely with the environmental sustainability movement, and challenging communities to confront their past, preservationists can rejuvenate historic preservation for the next fifty years.

Page's call for critical and creative thinking about preservation's future was published on the 50th anniversary of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act, a key achievement in the early preservation movement. The Act helped to temper government policies that led to

"The basic points we know: Old buildings can enrich neighborhoods and become regional attractions. They also make smart environmental sense more often than not. But on the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act, the author argues these points with detailed passion — and also stresses that the cultures embodied in a building, even the scars of history, can be more important than architectural details."

— John King, *San Francisco Chronicle*



the destruction of important buildings and neighborhoods. It also established the National Register of Historic Places.

Max Page has written or edited eight books and articles on a wide range of topics related to the urban built environment, including the history of skyscrapers, rebuilding after disaster, protest and public space, and the evolution of the historic preservation movement. His book, *The Creative Destruction of Manhattan 1900-1940* (Chicago 1999) won the Spiro Kostof Award from the Society of Architectural Historians. Among his other books are *The City's End: Two Centuries of Fantasies, Fears, and Premonitions of New York's Destruction* (Yale University Press 2008) and *Bending the Future: 50 Ideas for the Next 50 Years of Historic Preservation in the United States* (co-edited with Marla Miller, University of Massachusetts Press 2016). His recent awards include a Guggenheim Fellowship and the Rome Prize. ■

"Max Page offers a powerful argument for making historic preservation about more than just saving buildings — using it as a tool to fashion a more sustainable, a more equitable society."

— Inga Saffron, *Philadelphia Inquirer* architecture critic



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OBSERVATORY AT A GLANCE



PHOTO: HEATH PALEY

View of Portland looking down Congress Street from the top of the Observatory.

Portland Observatory Visitors in 2017

At the Portland Observatory in 2017 we welcomed visitors from all 50 states and over 37 different countries. We began with a visit from a Romanian wrestling team in April followed by students from Portland's sister city Shinagawa, Japan in July. Other visits were unexpectedly filled with music. A Hawaiian Studies group sang us a farewell song and an English as a Second Language class began their tour with a wonderful rendition of "Here Comes the Sun" complete with ukulele accompaniment. We greeted Colonial Dames from Savannah, Georgia and a group from the US Lighthouse Society even though we always remind our visitors that the Observatory is not a lighthouse! The most memorable day was the one which had a group of toddlers and a bachelorette party touring the Observatory at the same time, once again proving the Observatory's universal appeal.

Celebrating Special Events at the Observatory this Season

We found lots to commemorate at the Mighty Tower beginning with our annual observation of Flag Day on June 14th. We celebrated Captain Lemuel Moody's 250th birthday on June 30th; the solar eclipse on August 21st; Talk Like a Pirate Day on September 19th and Halloween on October 31st.



Bundled up for temperatures in the teens, Landmarks Manager of Education Programs Alessa Wylie (center, without hat) and docents readied to guide Observatory visitors by lantern-light.

The highlight was our first Lantern Tours on December 14th. The sold-out evening event offered people the opportunity to enjoy a holiday-inspired tour by lantern light. Experiencing temperatures similar to those Captain Moody recorded in December of 1816, a bundled-up crowd enjoyed hot mulled cider and fantastic night time views from the top of the Tower.

Of course, all of this wouldn't be possible without our engaging docents and dedicated site managers as evidenced by this Trip Advisor review: "This is well worth the time — a great piece of Portland history, staffed with people who love the Observatory and the city, capped off with an amazing view of Portland and the harbor. Brought my teenagers along and they felt that the payoff at the top of the tower was definitely worth the effort." A huge THANK YOU to all for an amazing season at the Observatory.

Landmarks' Custom House and Walking Tours

Thanks to eight dedicated docents, 230 visitors enjoyed the U.S. Custom House and Homes of Portland's Golden Age Tours that Landmarks offers. While a much smaller scale than the Observatory, these tours offer a more intimate view of Portland and are especially popular with locals.

2017 Observatory Season by the Numbers

15,268
total visitors for
the season

39 Observatory
docents donating
a total of over
4,000
hours

27 days
with over
150
visitors

100
trick-or-
treaters on
Halloween

491 visitors on opening
weekend including a record
256 visitors on Sunday, May 28

440 school kids
visited during
May and June

454
visitors on
Flag Day

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LANDMARKS PEOPLE AND PLACES



Maine State Historian Earle Shettleworth and Hilary Bassett at Earle's talk on Modernism at Holy Cross Church in South Portland.



Leonard Cummings (right) of the Committee to Restore the Abyssinian shares the story of the historic African American meeting house.



John Calvin Stevens Society members previewed The Francis, a new hotel in the Mellen Bolster House on Congress Street.



Developer John Wasileski and leaders of the Sisters of Mercy at the groundbreaking for the convent's rehabilitation as senior housing.



Supporters joined Sharon and Frank Reilly (center, white blouse, red tie) of Friends of Lincoln Park in celebrating the restoration of the park's historic fountain, major progress in saving a 2012 Place in Peril.

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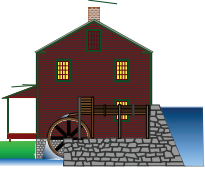
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- Sue & Bob



Tom Landry has both restored and sold hundreds of historic properties in Southern Maine. A Maine native, he lives in a turn of the century victorian on Portland’s Back Cove with his wife Amy and daughter Maddie.

Start A Confidential Conversation
207-775-0248
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wheretheyoucallhome.com



GREATER PORTLAND LANDMARKS

93 High Street, Portland, Maine 04101

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LANDMARKS CALENDAR

Volunteers Welcome! Become a Portland History Docent

Thursdays, February 22 – April 26, 9 am to 12 pm

Are you interested in Portland history? Do you enjoy talking to people? We invite you to enroll in the Portland History Docent program. This collaboration of 8 local historic sites is geared to training prospective volunteer guides. Join us for lively and informative presentations combined with visits to each site. It's a great way to learn, give back to the community and have fun! The 9-week program is just \$30 and begins at Maine Historical Society, 489 Congress Street, Portland. For information and to register: www.portlandhistorydocents.org

Help Your Building Get to the Next Century: Energy Performance, Sustainability, and Durability

Thursday, March 15, 9 am to 12 pm

Peter Taggart of Taggart Construction will provide guiding principles and specific techniques and efforts that can be taken to save energy, improve occupant health, and promote durability and sustainability of older buildings. There will be time to discuss strategies for specific situations and to ask questions. This program has been approved for continuing education credits through the Maine Real Estate Commission. Program at 93 High St., Portland.

Residential Architecture: Uncovering the Story of Your Historic Building

Thursday, March 29, 9 am to 12 pm

Back by Popular Demand! Julie Larry, Landmarks' Director of Advocacy will show you 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 credits through the Maine Real Estate Commission. Program at 93 High St., Portland.

Advance registration required for courses above. Space is limited.
www.portlandlandmarks.org

SAVE THE DATES



Keynote Lecture and Reception: Why Preservation Matters: Shaping a Sustainable and Equitable Future with Max Page

Wednesday, May 9, 6pm, First Parish Church

A leading voice on the national stage is Max Page, professor of architecture and history at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and the author of *Why Preservation Matters*. Join us for a timely discussion of the changing face of historic preservation. Page argues that preservation is no longer just about old buildings; instead it needs to address issues of gentrification, environmental sustainability, and how places can be windows to understanding difficult pasts. Mark your calendars, you won't want to miss this! See page 9.



2018 Historic Gala: Friday, June 22

At the former Greenwood Gardens on Peaks Island

Be a part of the fun, be a part of history. Celebrate historic preservation with Landmarks at our annual Gala held for the first time at a Places in Peril site, the Peaks Island Amusement District, which was a center for summer fun and recreation. Join us in "rusticator style" for a boat ride, a lobster dinner, live music for listening and dancing, and live and silent auctions.

PRESERVATION DIRECTORY

To list in the 2018 Preservation Directory visit www.portlandlandmarks.org/list-in-the-preservation-directory

Greater Portland Landmarks' annual listing of tradespeople, consultants, product providers, and experts who focus on historic preservation, building restoration, and traditional construction methods is being compiled now!

- Reach thousands of people in print, online, and through emails.
- Build your reputation as a high quality provider of preservation products and services.
- Introduce your unique restoration services to future prospects, current clients, and other expert tradespeople.
- Educate the public and support the preservation community.

DEADLINE TO LIST IN THE 2018 PRESERVATION DIRECTORY IS THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15

PHOTO: COREY TEMPLETON

