

LANDMARKS OBSERVER

GREATER PORTLAND LANDMARKS, INC. **1** FALL 2012, VOL. 37, NO. 3, FREE
our homes, our neighborhoods, our future

WHAT'S INSIDE



GPL's Annual Report
 PAGE 6



Modernism Comes to Portland
 PAGE 4

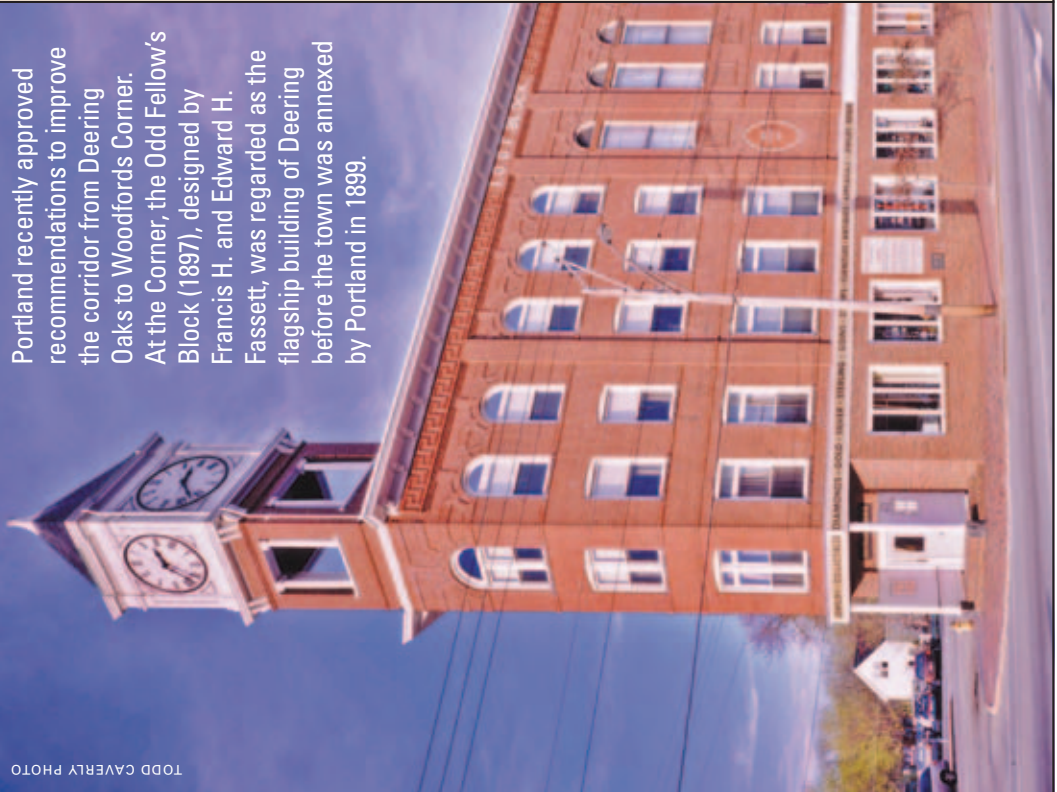


Who We Are: Max Yeston
 PAGE 5

Transforming Forest Avenue

Portland recently approved recommendations to improve the corridor from Deering Oaks to Woodfords Corner. At the Corner, the Odd Fellow's Block (1897), designed by Francis H. and Edward H. Fassett, was regarded as the flagship building of Deering before the town was annexed by Portland in 1899.

TODD CAVERLY PHOTO



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Meet the Authors Series: For Greater Portland Landmarks Members

Thursdays, October 4, 11, and 18 from 6-7 pm
 at Greater Portland Landmarks, 93 High Street

Kieran Shield, *The Truth of all Things*

Thursday, October 4, 6-7 pm

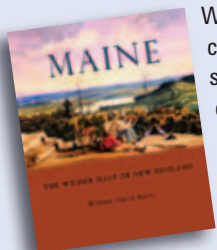
An entertaining first novel by native Portlander Kieran Shields begins when newly appointed Deputy Marshal Archie Lean is called in to investigate a ritualized murder in Portland. Lean secretly enlists the help of historian Helen Prescott and brilliant criminalist Perceval Grey. Together the detectives pursue the killer's trail through postmortems and opium dens, into the spiritualist societies and lunatic asylums of gothic New England, and discover a pattern hidden within the dark history of the Salem witch trials.



William David Barry, *Maine the Wilder Half of New England*

Thursday October 11, 6-7 pm

Written by noted Maine historian, William David Barry, who also co-authored Landmarks' *Deering* book, this concise, solid, and surprising overview traces 500 years of Maine history, from first contact between Native Americans and European explorers to the achievement of a Down East identity, national political power, and worldwide cultural identification. Changes in the economy, religion, ethnicity, arts, leisure, and education have all shaped Maine and Mainers, with some intriguing results.



George C. Daughan, *1812: The Navy's War*

Thursday, October 18, 6-7 pm

Prizewinning historian George C. Daughan tells the thrilling story of how a handful of heroic captains and their stalwart crews overcame spectacular odds to lead the country to victory against the world's greatest imperial power. Through a combination of nautical deftness and sheer bravado, the American navy managed to take the fight to the British and turn the tide of the war: on the Great Lakes, in the Atlantic, and even in the eastern Pacific.



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Dear Members and Friends:

IN THE PAST DECADE, the India Street neighborhood has shifted from the edge of city planning efforts to the center of the action. The new Ocean Gateway cruise ship terminal opened in 2008 along with an extension of Commercial Street, several new hotels and a parking garage. While a large condominium development failed to materialize as the economy faltered, now, three large condominium and mixed use developments are about to begin. The City's planning board recently called for a more comprehensive look at the India Street neighborhood, including a more in-depth examination of a possible historic district in the area.

What makes India Street especially significant is that it is the place where Portland began – and India Street, then known as King Street, was its first major thoroughfare. The area has been a major center for commerce and transportation since the 1700s, not only by ship but also by rail as the terminus of the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railroad, later the Grand Trunk. The neighborhood has been home to Portland's immigrants, including the Italian, Jewish and African-American communities, still represented by religious structures in the area. And close by you will find Eastern Cemetery (1668), which is Portland's oldest.

Landmarks and the City have been interested in India Street for some time, having commissioned a survey of the area in 2002. The survey revealed at least seven surviving buildings built prior to the Great Fire of 1866, although many are greatly altered. Another 25 buildings were built between 1866 and 1870 in the rapid reconstruction after the Fire. Some reveal great stories. For example, who knew that the building that currently houses Micucci's Grocery started out in 1855 as a "respectable three-story brick mansion", was enlarged as a sailor's home, then became a hotel, and after a fire in 1930 became a two-story tenement, stores and an assembly hall. Upper India Street retains some finely detailed

brick Italianate and Second Empire buildings, such as the Lunt-Weatherbee Block of (1868) designed by George Pelham. The India Street Fire House of 1869, designed by George M. Harding, was rehabilitated and its tower reconstructed in 1983. These are among many hidden gems in the India Street neighborhood.

At the foot of India Street, the Grand Trunk Railway Company Office (1902) located at the site of Fort Loyall, Portland's first defensive fort, remains vacant, awaiting a new use. At the top of the street, the Maine Jewish Museum has given new life to the former Etz Chaim Synagogue (1921), now rehabilitated with its stained glass windows and original interior, and the site of our upcoming annual meeting.



Today, India Street is a target area for redevelopment. Recent demolitions weren't contributing to neighborhood historic character, like the Jordan's Meat plant of 1961 and the Village Café of 1974. But, now, as the area becomes highly desirable, larger sites are harder to find and much of the older housing stock is in badly deteriorated condition. Therefore many of the buildings identified on the survey as contributing to the historic character of the neighborhood are at risk. The new India Street Neighborhood Association is encouraging the City to give greater attention to master planning in the area. Landmarks looks forward to working with them, the City and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to define a potential new historic district. As Martha Burke noted in her survey of 2002, "the neighborhood's rich historic resources have been adapted many times in the past and continue to offer opportunities for restoration or rehabilitation to accommodate new uses." A district would help preserve the identity and historic character of the area, while also encouraging well-designed new development that fits well with the context of the neighborhood.

– HILARY BASSETT *Executive Director*

IN THE NEWS

Landmarks Remembers Barbara Davisson

LANDMARKS WILL DEEPLY MISS Advisory Trustee Barbara Davisson, who passed away in July 2012. In the mid to late 1990s, Barbara served on the board organizing special events including the "Everything and the Kitchen Sink Garage Sale," a highly successful sale of architectural salvage. Barbara also put together a guide to Portland's historic churches and sacred spaces. "Barbara's enthusiasm was contagious – she got everyone motivated and excited to be part of Landmarks activities," said Executive Director Hilary Bassett.

Greater Portland Landmarks' Historic Marker Program Reactivated

LANDMARKS' HISTORIC MARKER PROGRAM offers a way to recognize the area's great wealth of historically and architecturally significant structures by identifying buildings of architectural and historical merit and honoring an owner's efforts in sensitively restoring and maintaining a structure's exterior.

Most people in greater Portland are familiar with the iconic acrylic markers with the Greater Portland Landmarks' blue logo – there are over 250 buildings with markers on them! While buildings with markers predominate in the historic districts of Portland, they can be found on buildings as far away as Standish and Parsonsfield.

Reactivation of the Marker Program is one of the goals of Landmarks' Strategic Plan for 2012-14, and we are delighted to report that we now have a new local source for the markers. If you are interested in applying for a marker, replacing a marker, or learning more about the Marker Program, please contact Sharon Colgan, scolgan@portlandlandmarks.org.



Tim and Gretchen Greene of StandFast Works Forge donated their time repairing the fence at Landmarks' Safford House headquarters. The Greenes, who are based in Parsonsfield, were working in Portland on another project and noticed the poor condition of the fence. They removed loose pieces and created molds to cast replacements, and repaired broken links to make the fence sound. Landmarks thanks Tim and Gretchen for their generous donation!

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Greater Portland Landmarks promotes preservation and revitalization of historic buildings, neighborhoods, and landscapes and encourages high-quality new architecture to enhance the livability and economic vitality of Portland and surrounding communities.

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Transforming Forest Avenue

New Plan Aims to Renew a Sense of Place

“Transforming Forest Avenue,” a project developed by city planners and adopted by the City Council this past June, aims to confront major traffic problems for motorists and safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists, and to restore, from Woodford’s Corner to Park Avenue, a renewed sense of place. Such improvements, officials say, could also spark new development in several areas along the route.



Forest Avenue, once a quiet thoroughfare of country estates, evolved as a site for churches and businesses, and has become a pass-through where historic buildings are barely noticed. A recent planning study aspires to return a sense of place to the area. Shown top to bottom from upper left: the entrance to Interstate 295, the Hinds Building (1921), by John Calvin Stevens; the residence of tanner Joseph Ricker (1855, demolished in the 1920s); the US Post Office (1933) by John Calvin and John Howard Stevens, and a 1920s automobile dealership that is now a dance studio.

“That it is officially an element of the city’s comprehensive plan is very significant,” says Rick Knowland, senior planner for the city of Portland. “Now that it’s official city policy, we can apply for grants and pursue other opportunities” to pay for aspects of the plan.

Forest Avenue wasn’t always the busy thoroughfare it is now. Once known as Bivalve Avenue because it was surfaced with crushed shells, it remained unpaved and removed from the activity of the peninsula into the 1800s. As it developed, especially after Portland’s Great Fire in 1866 when people began to look to live and run businesses beyond the peninsula, Forest Avenue became a pleasant and bustling main street, with Woodford’s Corner an inviting center of entertainment, retail establishments, houses of worship, and gathering places, according to *Deering: A Social and Architectural History* by William David Barry and Patricia McGraw Anderson, published by Greater Portland Landmarks in 2010.

“The *Deering* book reinforced what many already knew: that there is a great story to be told along Forest Avenue and many historic buildings along it reflect the evolution of our city,” says Hilary Bassett, Greater Portland Landmarks’ executive director. “It is exciting to see steps to reintegrate the street into the fabric of the city.”

Transportation technology is a great shaper of cities. It’s no surprise; cities are the ultimate gathering places for large numbers of people, and their spaces must be developed to accommodate the movement of people and goods. When the automobile arrived, it quickly transformed Forest Avenue. By the mid-20th century, it was a mecca of car showrooms and auto service shops. Many of those brick buildings remain, their large indoor spaces useful for businesses like dance schools and retail furniture outlets, and car-services shops of all kinds still dominate the avenue.

But by late century, the automobile had transformed Forest Avenue in another way, too. The street was relegated by heavy traffic to what it is now: mostly a pass-through

that leaves pedestrians and cyclists feeling nervous and uninvited, and even drivers, who seem to have the upper hand, jammed in and frustrated. Woodford’s Corner is a shadow of its former self. It’s almost impossible to cross the street, even with the help of signals, and traffic gridlocks are common. With the concentration it takes to navigate through Woodford’s Corner and south to the 295 entrances and exits or up to Congress Street and the peninsula, the historic nature of several buildings and Deering Oaks park are hard to notice. (Some improvements to the exit ramps on Forest Avenue are separate from the plan and have already begun.)

“The corridor from Woodfords Corner to Park Avenue hasn’t really become that off-peninsula place that it could be because people associate it with traffic,” says Carl Eppich, transportation planner with the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS), the planning organization for Greater Portland, who helped with the plans. “The potential of the project is to bring some of the ‘place’ back to it. Zoning already allows three to four stories there, which could be used for law offices or artists. Portland’s planning requires too much parking, so we’ve boxed ourselves in, thinking that development requires more car infrastructure. And Woodfords Corner is the problem there. It’s really not fixable – you can’t widen the road or close anything off. You have to reduce the number of cars.”

The traffic snarls at Woodford’s Corner and near the 295 ramps have long demanded attention, and a major goal of the Transforming Forest Avenue plan is to improve traffic flow. But city planners are also interested in restoring the walk-friendly, mixed-used aspect of the area. In an era in Portland when car ownership is falling, commuter cycling is increasing, and urban livability is in demand, they wanted to develop an integrated land use and streetscape improvement plan that could make the area more inviting and possibly spur development. The plan, which includes short and long-term goals

and still requires funding, “looks at land use, leveraging transportation and other public investments to stimulate private redevelopment and infill of underutilized properties,” according to the city’s dedicated website <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/forestave.htm>, where the full proposal can also be found. Urban automobile use trends will help; in Portland, studies show car ownership falling and alternative transportation on the rise.

“The point was to look at the corridor as a whole and at ways to move people, and to recognize that it’s a residential neighborhood with local services,” Eppich says. “It may always be something of a ‘gasoline alley,’ but it would be something else, too if walking, biking and driving are more compatible. And you can actually move more traffic with cars going at slower speeds because more cars go through when they are closer together.”

Specifically, planners propose changes in parking rules and traffic flow, sidewalk furniture, “bulb-outs” of sidewalks at crossings and other improvements for pedestrians, stronger street markings, bike accommodations, tree planting, and more. Near Oakhurst Dairy, many of the improvements will be streetscape improvements, while at Woodfords Corner changes aim to balance the safety and movement of all modes of travel. Changes to traffic signal timing will have already begun at press time, which Eppich says will improve traffic flow by at least 15 percent. (For a closer look at Oakhurst, see p. 4.)

“The great thing about Forest Avenue is that it is a great neighborhood,” Knowland says. “You have a population there that needs goods and services. They can walk to Back Cove and to the library near Deering High School. There are park systems on either side. It’s not like a commercial strip with nothing else. There are wonderful businesses, like Back Bay Bicycle, a small shoe shop, the Great Lost Bear, art supplies, the bakery. There are these wonderful things where people can easily walk. So we want to provide more of a balance between cars and bicycles and pedestrians.” ■

Oakhurst: A state-of-the-art dairy where the past is always present

THE BENNETT FAMILY, which has run the Oakhurst Dairy for more than 90 years, since its beginnings as a one-horse dairy, has always employed the latest in processing and delivering dairy products. Ever-improving technology has continually enabled faster, more dependable ways to transport, pasteurize, homogenize, and bottle milk. One thing that hasn't changed, they say, is the desire to whisk the best-possible dairy foods from farm to fridge so they're as fresh, tasty, and healthy as possible.

Another thing that hasn't changed is their location on Forest Avenue in Portland.

"We've been here longer than just about anyone here," says Bill Bennett, Oakhurst's chairman of the board and a grandson of the dairy's founder. "When the dairy was built, this was 'automobile row,' with car dealerships and all the services. It was not considered in-town Portland. It has changed over time, and we've seen the gamut of changes."

Bennett's father, Donald Bennett, an architectural engineer who also managed the company, oversaw the design and construction of a major expansion of the Forest Avenue facility from 1951 to 1953 designed by Earle Webster. Donald Bennett chose the International Style and insisted on a large front window so that people could see the state-of-the-art tanks. He also installed an electronic air filtration system unique for dairies at the time.

The building immediately became a showcase and



The Oakhurst Dairy (1951-53), a fine example of the International Style, features a large window that reveals the storage tanks inside.

was featured in several mid-century design magazines. In 2009, the Portland Society of Architects recognized the building with its 50-Year Building Award, calling it a "significant work of architecture, an example of how thoughtful stewardship by the buildings' owners can preserve Maine's built environment."

"Many of us think of Portland as a 19th century city, but the Oakhurst plant demonstrates that fine 20th century architecture was built here as well," says Hilary Bassett, Greater Portland Landmarks' executive director. "This building is a stand-out example of mid-century modernism – ideal for a leading company in the city."

Oakhurst will likely be at that spot for the next 100

years, at least. In 2005, the company opted to construct a cooler next door, rather than moving operations out of town. With that investment, Oakhurst has sealed its commitment to remain on the two-and-a-half-acre property in what is now the heart of the city. The Bennett family and its Oakhurst business will witness more changes to Forest Avenue, and changes are underway. (see Transforming Forest Avenue, page 3.)

"I've noticed more foot traffic," Bill Bennett says. "It helps that we have more restaurants. If they can enhance the neighborhood, while we still have to do our business, it is better for us."

Bill's brother John Bennett, who is now co-president of the company, was involved in early committee meetings of the Transforming Forest Avenue project. Neighborhood businesses, including Oakhurst, were consulted and heard, he says.

"You've got to widen the sidewalks so the mix of traffic and pedestrians can balance out better," John Bennett says. "We're just one of the examples of businesses that are affected, and we do need to continue to function. But we'd like to make it a more pleasant, livable, and safer area – and a greener one. We have always supported the greening of the city. Why not put that and other street improvements closer to where we work?" ■

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Max Yeston, a candidate for dual Master of Science degrees in historic preservation and urban planning from Columbia University, served a summer internship at Greater Portland Landmarks. His duties included helping organize GPL's first endangered properties program, Places in Peril, modeled after similar programs of the National Trust and other states and cities. He also pulled together information and photographs of Portland's locally designated and regulated landmarks to be featured on our website. He recently took a break from his work to share his impressions of Portland, his views on historic preservation, and his ideas for the future.

What brings you to Greater Portland Landmarks?

I thought – and I still think – this position at Landmarks had the most responsibility and the most amount of experience I could get. It was not just paper-pushing. I spoke with all my professors, and, as cosmopolitan as New York City is, when it comes to preservation it's fairly provincial. It feels like real estate development and preservation are constantly at odds, which is not always the case here.

How is it going?

What I like about here is there seems to be an opportunity for compromise, and for dealing with issues beyond New York's issues, namely real estate. One of my professors is one of the country's experts on New York City history and preservation, and even he said that when he was up for tenure, his New York-only experience was questioned. Also, Columbia's program itself is very New York-centric.

Why is getting away from New York so valuable?

The first preservation ordinance in the U.S. was in Charleston, South Carolina 34 years before New York's Landmarks Preservation Commission. In fact, preservation in America is largely a Southern phenomenon. The myth is that Penn Station began the preservation movement in the United States, which is not entirely true. This work in Portland is helping me gain a perspective on the issues smaller cities are facing. It has been great to sit in on meetings and see what preservation professionals talk about.

What are those issues for smaller cities?

In smaller American cities, part of what makes people want to gather is a sense of place. Maintaining that character helps sell the city's brand. Portland, because the streets aren't on a grid, has a feel of a place of exploration and adventure. You don't really know what's going to be around the corner.

One issue that's prevalent for smaller cities is benign neglect, when people don't take a look at the state of the roof on a regular basis. More broadly it's about people not being good stewards of their built environment. Another topic is sprawl, which is more of a planning issue. One of the important factors is how the outer ring of suburbs draws resources away from the inner ring, in addition to the downtown core. This results in an unsustainable cycle, counter to the way civilizations have always grown, which is to cluster in cities.

Another problem is inappropriate development, and the need to find legislation and zoning to combat it. I'm



not necessarily talking about design review or regulating design details, as might be done in historic districts, but elements like the bulk and height of buildings to make them appropriate to their context.

How do you view the role of preservationists in development?

Preservationists are often wrongfully thought to oppose development. Let's say you have a vacant lot downtown, or a building that is not an architectural work of art, or that wasn't the residence of a famous or historic person. As long as what gets put in its place is appropriate and fits in, we have no reason to be against it from a preservation point of view. For preservationists, that leads to another, broader point: that preservation is a tool for economic development – that a sense of place is what draws business.

That also goes into a sustainability

argument, that the greenest building is the one that's already built. The amount of energy in this building, Safford House, for example, is substantial. It was built before air conditioning and central heat to maximize light, air, and heat. It does us no good to get rid of all this because that would be a huge waste of energy. The embodied energy in this building is significant and will help save both costs and energy in the long term.

Once you leave here and complete your degree, what kind of work do you see yourself doing?

I see myself as the planner-architectural historian-activist. I'd like to keep an open mind, even in good economic times that's a good thing. I could see myself working in a state historic preservation office or at the National Trust. After being here, things are done on a much more personal level, I've come to appreciate Portland and see how agreements and compromises are made. I can see myself at a nonprofit, or doing section 106 work. I don't see myself as a professor or a conservator. Broadly I see myself as promoting preservation as a design component, but also promoting preservation from a planning and zoning point of view.

How do you think planning and zoning fit with preservation?

There are so many zoning tools: the scale of houses, their proportions, pedestrian paths, street furniture – all of these are zoning tools that inadvertently create a pro-preservation environment. People need to realize that preservation isn't just about maintaining the old, but is also about establishing growth patterns that are consistent with the old. ■

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– Craig and Libby Owens, 104 West Street Portland, Maine '2007'

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Greater Portland Landmarks *Annual Report* 2011-12

Greater Portland Landmarks Strategic Plan for 2012-2014

MISSION:

Greater Portland Landmarks Mission is to preserve and revitalize the architectural fabric, history, and character of Greater Portland—renewing our neighborhoods, spurring economic development and keeping Portland one of the most livable cities in America.

VISION:

Greater Portland's long history and remarkable legacy of architecture, neighborhoods, parks and landscapes will continue to be a vital part of the area's wonderful quality of life and vibrant economy. Portland residents and visitors will be drawn to, appreciate, protect and support the historic fabric of the community, enriching their lives and those of generations to come.

WE BELIEVE:

- An understanding of and connection with our history through architecture and landscapes enriches our lives.
- The design, quality and condition of the built environment affect our sense of well-being and the economic viability of the community.
- Historic structures can be adapted to fit modern uses, contribute to sustainability, and still maintain the integrity and character of the original structure.
- The maintenance and enhancement of our historic buildings, landscapes and neighborhoods supports the livability, economic health and overall value of greater Portland.

“How will we know it's us without our past?”

— STEINBECK, *Grapes of Wrath*

A Strategic Vision for the Future

1. Save and revitalize historic properties including landscapes and areas with historic character.

- A. Galvanize community response to save and revitalize at-risk properties through advocacy, partnerships, preservation services, publicity, and direct investment, including launching the new Places in Peril program and engaging with developers to protect and envision future uses for historic properties.
- B. Use Safford House as a preservation hub and venue for public programs and events, community meetings, workshops and lectures.
- C. Increase advocacy on a range of public issues that affect historic neighborhoods, buildings, and landscapes in the greater Portland area.
- D. Collaborate with local preservation allies, neighborhood groups, and state and national organizations.

2. Increase use of preservation services by a broader range of Landmarks' constituencies.

- A. Reach out to property owners and sponsors of private and public sector economic development and urban design initiatives with consultation and preservation services.
- B. Implement updated monitoring plans for the 14 historic property easements held by Landmarks.
- C. Engage the public with preservation using a variety of strategies, including presenting an Old House Trade Show, and relaunching the historic building Marker Program. Focus on energy efficiency, sustainability, and green building in programs and preservation services.
- D. Encourage neighborhoods to pursue architectural surveys, National Register district and individual property nominations, and local historic designations.
- E. Enhance access to Landmarks' street files, library collections, and archives by coordinating with other local and state entities and digitizing information on historic properties.

3. Operate the Portland Observatory as an educational resource for the community and visiting national and international public.

- A. Greet, educate, and inspire 10,000+ local, national, international visitors each year while aspiring to reach a high percentage of greater Portland schoolchildren.
- B. Engage the neighborhood, community, and City of Portland in understanding this historic landmark as a model for best practices and value in historic preservation.

4. Make Landmarks widely recognized with sustainable financial support.

- A. Increase Landmarks' operating budget by at least \$100,000 annually to allocate staff resources to strengthen programs, educational outreach, preservation services and advocacy.
- B. Expand effectiveness of membership and communications programs through improving the website, participating in social media, and celebrating Landmarks' 50th anniversary in 2014.
- C. Raise capital funds needed to complete and sustain the Safford House renovation.

5. Focus governance and management on achievement of Landmarks' strategic goals.

IN 2011-12 GREATER PORTLAND LANDMARKS CREATED A NEW STRATEGIC PLAN, made a deeper commitment to preservation services, saw record-breaking attendance at the Portland Observatory, and invested in strengthening and improving programs, services and operations.

A highlight of the year was the adoption of Landmarks' new three-year strategic plan with three major areas of focus: advocacy, preservation services, and the Portland Observatory. Our goal is to be as effective as possible in serving the community, engaging people, and demonstrating the positive benefits of historic preservation. It was an exciting process chaired by Tom Dowd, working with an eleven-member steering team. The team analyzed current programs, reached out to community leaders and key stakeholders, and investigated similar organizations and national trends in the preservation field. They also learned how preservation is an essential tool for community revitalization and economic development, and explored the link between preservation and environmental sustainability.

To accomplish the plan, Landmarks' board committed to significant investments in staff time, programs, and operations. The first is to double the time of Preservation Services Advisor Chris Closs to respond to increasing requests for technical advice, field visits, and tax credit pre-assessments, and to help Landmarks stay in front of emerging preservation issues. The second is to hire full-time Director of Development Kate Lewis, who joined the staff in March, to broaden membership, engage members and donors in support of projects and issues, increase communications and visibility, and implement a robust major gifts program. An essential part of the plan is to engage interns to help with programs and outreach, and train the preservationists of the future.

Landmarks will strive to become more widely recognized with sustainable financial support. A major priority is to improve our communications, including our web site, and interaction with the public. A second focal point is to improve our marketing to increase our visibility, expand public awareness of the value of preservation, and to widen our base of support. A third goal is to expand learning opportunities for local third-graders through tours and classroom materials which bring local history to life.

Strengthening Preservation Services and Outreach

Landmarks strengthened the preservation services program to increase public access to preservation information, expand our role in advocacy, and provide technical and strategic advice to property owners and organizations.

Preservation Services Advisor Chris Closs provided 59 field visits and consultations, conducted 11 historic preservation tax credit pre-assessments, and responded to 71 telephone and email inquiries from property owners in greater Portland. Among the buildings included in field visits were the Cumberland Club (1800), the Durant Block (1908), the Lafayette Hotel (1903), Sacred Heart/St. Dominic's Church (1897), the Irish Heritage Center (1888), and the 8th Maine Regiment Memorial (1891) on Peaks Island.

Landmarks continued intensive assistance for Portland's Masonic Temple (1910), which founded a new nonprofit friends group to support preserving the building. We also joined community leaders celebrat-

ing the newly preserved exterior of Westbrook's Walker Memorial Library (1893), which boasts a new slate roof, repaired masonry, and the reinstallation of its magnificent granite steps. Landmarks also helped sponsor a study of the masonry repair requirements and potential future preservation scenarios for Cape Elizabeth's Goddard Mansion (1853).

Energy efficiency for existing buildings is a constant challenge and, in response, Landmarks published a new resource *The Energy Efficient Old House: A workbook for homeowners*, and presented five energy efficiency workshops for realtors and property owners. Ninety two participants attended these informative sessions held in Portland, Falmouth, and South Portland.

The quarterly *Landmarks Observer* newspaper continued to provide information about current advocacy, preservation techniques, and the story behind greater Portland's built environment. Landmarks again published the *Maine Restoration Directory* featuring over 40 providers of preservation services. In addition, Landmarks' Advisory Service continued to provide field visits of historic properties, adding reports and photographs to the archives in the Peabody Library.

Guided by the new strategic plan, Landmarks created the new Places in Peril program to focus attention and resources to save significant historic properties in

By far the most intense and controversial issue this fiscal year, was the proposed conditional rezoning of the Williston West Church (1888) and Parish Hall (1904), both city landmarks. The congregation sold the buildings to a new owner, who offered to rehabilitate both buildings in exchange for flexibility on the zoning. Landmarks became involved because of the historic importance of the church complex by architects John Calvin Stevens and his mentor Francis Fassett, which was where the modern Sunday School movement began. Landmarks urged the city to require a performance bond to complete eight essential preservation projects, including repairing the tower and replacing the sanctuary's slate roof. In June 2012, the City Council approved the conditional rezoning, including the stronger requirements recommended by Landmarks. In July, several abutters appealed the Council decision to the superior court, and the matter is under review at the time of this writing.

The Custom House (1866-74), designed by Alfred B. Mullet, is one of the most important city landmarks, not only for its distinctive granite exterior, but also for its magnificent interior. During the year, the customs function moved out of the building and major capital improvement projects began. The US General Services Administration (GSA), owner of local federal buildings, approved Landmarks as an official consulting party on its

Portland Observatory, reaching a wide array of students, residents, and tourists. Jennifer Pollick, Manager of Education Programs, was the key player in presenting these programs, as were trustees Ruth Story and Sally Oldham.

The year opened with a milestone event: the 50th anniversary of the demolition of Union Station (1888) on August 31, 1961, the event that spurred Portland's preservation movement and the founding of Greater Portland Landmarks. More than 100 members and friends gathered to look at pictures, reminisce, and hear a presentation by John Marcigliano, author of *All Aboard for Union Station*.

Over 180 people participated in public programs highlighting preservation in action along with current advocacy. In October, "Preserving Ancient Trades" was the theme of an illustrated lecture featuring local artisans who had worked on two period rooms at the new American Wing at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. In the spring, Landmarks and Maine Historical Society co-sponsored four panel discussions that explored landscapes in the greater Portland area. Topics including new initiatives at Fort Williams Park, replacement of the Veterans and Martin's Point bridges, reconsideration of Franklin and Spring Street corridors, and development along Portland's waterfront.

An enthusiastic group of 60 volunteer docents gave



PHOTOS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

On Flag Day at the Portland Observatory, kids enjoyed hearing children's author Lynn Plourde read her book *The First Feud*.

Christine Cantwell and Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. shared period letters and photographs with the John Calvin Stevens Society at the John Marshall Brown House.

Mark Johnson, Nancy Montgomery, Curtis Bohlen, Steve Bromage, and Hilary Bassett envisioned interpretive panels for the new Veterans Bridge.

the greater Portland area. Our goal is to draw attention to vulnerable sites and serve as a catalyst for adaptive use and community revitalization. Summer intern Max Yeston helped set up the program and research the historic significance of the nominees. (see story on page 5)

Taking the Lead in Historic Preservation Advocacy

Landmarks' Public Issues Committee, chaired by Sally Oldham, focused on developing core principles for Portland's elected mayor, saving landmark buildings, exploring a potential new historic district, and participating in transportation-related issues that impact historic areas.

One of the most extraordinary experiences of the year was engaging with the 15 candidates for Portland's first elected mayor since 1923. Landmarks crafted four core principles endorsed by the majority of candidates including our new elected mayor Michael Brennan.

Landmarks' Core Principles for Portland:

1. Preserving Portland's historic buildings and landscapes is critical to sustaining its competitive advantage as a world class city.
2. Portland's historic preservation ordinance and designated districts and landmarks have proven their success, over 21 years, as catalysts for economic development and revitalization.
3. As the City strives toward its vision of a "Sustainable Portland" – a clean environment, economic well-being and a vital community – historic preservation and adaptive reuse are very important components of its sustainability strategy.
4. It is critically important for the City to invest adequate resources in its historic preservation and planning staff, and its own historic structures and landscapes.

preservation and that of the Gignoux Courthouse (1911). This status allows us to participate in construction meetings about projects on each of the landmark buildings.

Transportation projects that affect historic districts or serve as community gateways dominated many of the discussions by the public issues committee. Landmarks consulted with the Maine Department of Transportation on the design of the new Veterans Bridge, and served on the advisory committee for a new Martin's Point Bridge. Landmarks convened property owners and participated in design charettes to consider the redesign of the Spring Street Arterial, which links the West End and Old Port areas. In addition, Landmarks participated in deliberations about zoning requirements along West Commercial Street that impact the West End Historic District.

India Street came to the fore as several new construction proposals moved ahead, highlighting the fragility of the neighborhood where Portland's first settlements began. With encouragement from the planning board, and information from our 2002 survey of the area, Landmarks is working with City staff to explore the possibility of a new historic district in the area. The timing is important as efforts to reintegrate Franklin Street into the city fabric move ahead this year.

Finally, Landmarks representatives were active in discussions of the future of Congress Square Plaza, including a proposal by the new owners of the Eastland Hotel (1927, 1964) to build an event space on part of the plaza. Landmarks supports high-functioning well-designed public space, which also could incorporate new architecture on part of the plaza.

Teaching Preservation, Architecture and History

Landmarks offered educational tours, lectures, programs and events and provided tours and interpretation at the

guided tours of the Portland Observatory (1807) and of Portland neighborhoods. The 17th class of Portland's History Docents (PHD) graduated, bringing 14 new docents to Landmarks' volunteer force. Marjorie Getz became PHD coordinator organizing the program and recruiting and training over 50 new docents for seven area organizations that focus on local history.

From July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012, 10,630 visitors toured the Portland Observatory. Visitors came from 48 states, 8 Canadian provinces, and 41 countries. In the spring, 1,167 students and chaperones climbed to the top of the Observatory in school tours, and used new pre- and post-visit materials. Many of the students also toured the Eastern Cemetery (1668), where the Observatory's Captain Lemuel Moody is buried. On Flag Day, June 14th, 463 people toured the tower, and enjoyed sea songs by David Peloquin and storytelling by Lynn Plourde and Jim Sollers, author and illustrator of the children's book *The First Feud*.

In addition to providing tours, Landmarks stewards the Observatory building, which is owned by the City of Portland. This year the City allocated funds to paint the tower and replace the windows (the windows are not original) to solve ongoing problems with water infiltration. Landmarks is working closely with Portland's historic preservation and buildings departments and the state historic preservation office to devise a plan for the windows which solves the water problems. Work will begin in fall 2012.

From July 1 to Sept. 30, 2011, Landmarks served 377 participants in walking tours of the Old Port and the High Street/State Street area. Beginning in our next fiscal year, based on our strategic plan, Landmarks will be taking a three-year break from regularly scheduled walking

continued on page 9

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Annual Report

continued from page 7

tours to focus on programs at the Observatory and other educational outreach. Happily, Maine Historical Society has taken on the Old Port tours and Landmarks docents will remain active ambassadors to the history of our city.

Building a Firm Foundation for Strategic Initiatives

Implementing the new strategic plan is an exciting challenge for Landmarks. With leadership from board president Marjorie Getz, we spent significant time reviewing and improving administrative and financial systems, laying the groundwork for the plan priorities, and strengthening our base of support. These initial steps have created a strong foundation to move ahead with the objectives of the plan.

We implemented refinements to our internal budgeting, financial reporting, annual work-planning and management. These activities have been ably led by Sharon Colgan, Office and Financial Manager, working closely with treasurer Tom Dowd and the Finance Committee. Once again, Landmarks hired Runyon Kersteen Ouellette to conduct the annual accounting audit. At the time of this writing, the audit had not been completed, but financial reports will be available at the annual meeting September 20, 2012. Please call the office at 774-5561 ext. 103 if you would like a copy of the financial statements.

With partial funding from Efficiency Maine Trust, Landmarks replaced a failing boiler and air conditioners with a new energy-efficient heating, ventilation, and cooling (HVAC) system for the Safford House (1858). Efficiency Maine sees the project as a good example of how new technologies can help historic buildings operate more sustainably. Now, we have reliable heating and cooling, better energy efficiency, and significant cost savings. Mac Collins and the Building Committee continue to guide preservation projects for Landmarks' building.

Consultant Al Whitaker conducted a comprehensive study of Landmarks' library with support from a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Board established a Library Task Force, led by Gordon Grimes, to review and implement the recommendations for improved preservation of and access to library collections.

The Development Committee, chaired by Norm Nelson, worked hard this year to expand participation in the John Calvin Stevens (JCS) Society, donors of \$1,000 or more to Landmarks, which has grown to 39 individuals and families. Landmarks held behind the scenes JCS-only events at the Harold and Hazel Blanchard House (1914) in Deering, designed by Miller and Mayo, and the John Marshall Brown House (1867) in the Western Promenade district, designed by Charles Alexander, which boasts spectacular paneled interiors. Additional special events and private tours are planned to thank these dedicated Landmarks supporters.

In May, the Historic House Gala was held at the Clinton W. Davis House (1914), designed by Wait and Copeland of Boston. Hosts Kathy and Bob Whelan welcomed 150 Landmarks members and friends to their lovely Colonial Revival style home. (see story on page 10). This annual signature event is coordinated by the Marketing Committee, led by Tom Elliman.

Finally, the Governance Committee, led by Dave Robinson, recruited a dynamic roster of new board members, three of whom joined the board during the year, as permitted by the by-laws, and an additional slate who will be elected at the annual meeting. The committee has worked hard to broaden the range of skills and perspectives represented on the board to bolster Landmarks success. ■

Greater Portland Landmarks would like to extend our sincere thanks to all our members, trustees, volunteers, supporters and friends who have helped make our advocacy, preservation services, and community education programs possible!

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A 3-hour seminar will be presented by Tom Caron of Northeast Inspection Services, an opportunity to earn 3 Maine Real Estate Commission CEU's this fall. Join us for an interesting and informative entry-level training program investigating the facts behind historic districts and buildings.

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- Learn about landmark buildings, historic buildings, historic districts, the historic plan review process, Portland's Historic Preservation Office and some of Maine's most accomplished architects.
- Take a walking tour of some of Portland's finest vintage homes

Tours and classes will take place Wednesdays at 10:00 am on September 5, 19, and October 3.

Advance registration is requested as class size is limited. Please register online via www.portlandlandmarks.org (under Events). The fee is \$35. For more information contact Jennifer Pollick at jpollick@portlandlandmarks.org or 774-5561 ext.104.

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HOUSE GALA

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Landmarks annual Historic House Gala was held May 28 at the Clinton W. Davis House of 1914 in Portland's Western Promenade neighborhood.

Hosts Bob and Kathy Whelan welcomed 150 guests to their completely restored Colonial Revival style house, which was designed by Boston architects Wait and Copeland. Special guest speaker Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Director of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, spoke about the architects and the major families who were prior residents of the house. Members of the Bennett family, owners of Oakhurst Dairy and among those who once lived there, attended the event and shared their fond memories of the house.

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GREATER PORTLAND LANDMARKS

ANNUAL MEETING & ANNOUNCEMENT

of the 2012 Places in Peril

Thursday, September 20, 2012
Maine Jewish Museum • 267 Congress Street, Portland



JUDITH ELLIS GUCKMAN PHOTO

Join Greater Portland Landmarks for a special behind-the-scenes look at the India Street neighborhood and the Maine Jewish Museum, formerly the Etz Chaim Synagogue, of 1921. This outstanding project links historic preservation with the celebration of Jewish life and culture in Maine.

Historic Building Management Cyclical Maintenance Plans: Past and Future Potential

THANKS MAINLY TO rising energy costs, substandard insulation, and underperforming and outdated heating and ventilation systems, operational cost analysis is increasingly being merged with maintenance issues in managing older and historic commercial buildings and private residences.

Cyclical Maintenance Plans (CMPs) are a fundamental building maintenance tool that enable professional managers and property owners to link three principal concerns: (1) design and conditions, (2) time (durability/rate of decay), and (3) money (maintenance budgets). The CMP concept applied to historic buildings was formally introduced by National Park Service architect J. Henry Chambers in 1976 in his seminal work, *Cyclical Maintenance for Historic Buildings*. The idea is to examine the building systematically on a regular basis, and to develop a long-term schedule for needed upgrades, repairs, and replacements.

Today, the same principles can be presented in computer tables or spreadsheets. In the past decade, energy efficiency has emerged as a vital new concern because fossil fuels no longer offer consistent price predictability. For that reason, energy efficiency – and particularly weatherization – is a necessary addition to the traditional elements of a CMP.

CMPs will differ for all properties, depending on building size, use, and systems complexity. Homeowners may create their own CMP with Word or Excel software by creating a table or spreadsheet to guide annual inspections, while reasonably projecting future maintenance costs. This can also be a valuable budget tool for non-profit institutions managing historic buildings.

Most CMPs are organized by “building system,” but can also be organized by “building materials.” Traditional real estate management for long-term maintenance of historic properties is rapidly being enhanced with sophisticated computer modeling. While it is particularly applicable for high-value commercial properties, scaled-down versions can be used by homeowners as well. An excellent resource for homeowners looking to improve energy performance in existing buildings is *The Energy Efficient*



Cyclical Maintenance Plans are a powerful tool in managing overall building operational costs.

Old House: A Workbook for Homeowners (2011) published by and available from Greater Portland Landmarks.

The basic systems that should be included for routine inspection can be grouped into four categories: (1) Site, (2) Exterior Building Envelope, (3) Interiors, and (4) Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning & Mechanical and Electrical Systems. Energy efficiency considerations could also be added, if sufficient data are available through an energy audit.

To assess the cumulative energy performance of building systems at variable levels of demand and to reveal all possible cost reductions, large institutional users are increasingly using computer modeling software generically called Building Performance Evaluations (BPE). At least one commercial real estate management firm in the Greater Portland Region (*see www.strategic-energy-group.com*), has identified this approach as having upward market potential, particularly for Investment Grade, or Level III Audits. Greater Portland Landmarks suggests that the BPE, when coupled with a carefully tailored Cyclical Maintenance Plan, could be a powerful diagnostic combination that can provide owners

with a consistent and comprehensive approach to building management. Advanced software can reveal enhanced opportunities for energy efficiency while decreasing the risk of significant, unwelcome or unpredicted, deferred maintenance cost surprises – lowering overall operating costs.

Whether for a commercial property, cultural institution, or private residence, Cyclical Maintenance Plans, with routine inspections, can help avert the death-spiral consequences of deferred maintenance. Once a building reaches this tipping point (often manifested in hidden structural hidden structural damage), an event that can happen suddenly or catastrophically, the costs of correction and restoration increase exponentially. That can force sale, abandonment or even demolition of your property. For institutions or commercial managers seeking contemporary, in-depth guidance for historic property management, *Operations and Maintenance for Historic Structures* (www.wbdg.org/resources/omhs.php) by Barry Loveland (Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 2012) is an excellent reference. ■

If you would like to receive a sample Cyclical Maintenance Plan template for residential property applications, contact Christopher Closs at Greater Portland Landmarks (ccloss@portlandlandmarks.org) or (207) 774-5561 ext 102



Christopher Closs

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Could Streetcars Take Portland Back to the Future?

Imagine a system of speedy commuter streetcars connecting points within the Portland area and out to towns in Downeast and western Maine and south all the way to Boston.

IT WAS AN EXTENSIVE REALITY ONCE, an efficient transportation network that spurred development throughout the Portland area – from homes and businesses to amusement parks – that attracted people to build their lives here and helped the city thrive. Beginning with horse-drawn lines in 1860, the system began to evolve into electric trolley lines in 1891. Cars and buses undermined the systems beginning in the 1930s, but until then it was streetcars that brought farmers and other merchants into Portland for business and that carried Portlanders to various stops for work and play.

By the mid-20th century streetcars and trolleys seemed largely relegated to history, tourist attractions, or Europe. But in the last decade, streetcar systems of different



Portland streetcars c.1914

scales in North American cities from Portland, Ore., to Providence, R.I., are helping those communities spark economic development, enable foot traffic and livability in urban neighborhoods, and grapple with traffic and parking issues. This transit-oriented development, or TOD, is a growing form of economic investment; 22 cities are constructing or have planned streetcar projects in just the next two years.

At a recent Maine Real Estate and Development Association (MEREDA) breakfast in Portland in June, Carl Eppich, transportation planner with the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS), the planning organization for Greater Portland, and Dan Hodge, principal economist with HDR Decision Economics in Boston, presented information on contemporary streetcar systems and Portland's general potential for implementing one.

Successful systems link important sites and have room for development along the route, Hodge said. Federal funds, public-private partnerships, and innovative funding like tax increment financing (TIF) have made these projects possible. In Providence, a new streetcar line's return on investment includes 3.6 million square feet of new development and 6,000 jobs over the next 20 years.

Even before conducting a feasibility study, which would assess specific areas, their potential return on investment, funding potential, and other complex issues, city leaders and the public must discuss pros and cons.

There is a healthy new interest in city living and a demand for pleasant, walkable access to homes and businesses in Portland, Eppich said. But to be worth the investment, any system must be a development strategy, not just a transportation solution. It's possible that could be better addressed by improving the area's existing bus system, he said.

Still, the streetcar may have come full circle. Some 80 years ago the automobile decimated the rail systems of Portland and Maine and similar systems across the country. Today, energy inefficiencies, traffic, and parking limitations have us looking to the past for future alternatives to cars. ■

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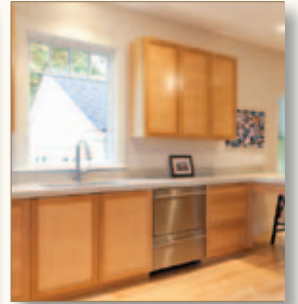
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