

# LANDMARKS OBSERVER

GREATER PORTLAND LANDMARKS, INC.  FALL 2013, VOL. 38, NO. 3, FREE  
our homes, our neighborhoods, our future

## UNDOING URBAN RENEWAL



PHOTO: DAPHNE HOWLAND

Renovations at the Cumberland County Civic Center provide an ideal opportunity to reintegrate the Spring Street Arterial into the fabric of Portland. Landmarks helped develop Portland's concept plan for the Spring Street/Free Street area, and is active on the study committee to revitalize Franklin Street.

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# Dear Members and Friends:

**A**S HISTORIC PRESERVATIONISTS, we often discuss the importance of neighborhoods and context to our sense of place. At a recent presentation in Eastport, Maine, architect and educator Julian Smith, Director of the Willowbank School in Ontario, outlined an “ecological” approach to preservation and place that integrates architecture, nature and culture. This new approach is contrasted to the idea of preserving buildings, landscapes, and monuments as independent artifacts to either commemorate history, or embody aesthetic principles of architecture and design. According to Smith, under the ecological view, places must be experienced, linking artifact and ritual, the buildings and the experience of them by different constituent groups, who create their own perception of a place. The layering of activities, history, and experiences becomes central to placemaking as do diversity, creativity and ongoing evolution.

Portland’s India Street neighborhood seems ideal to examine from the ecological perspective. India Street and the waterfront is where Portland began, with its magnificent harbor being the center of commerce and transportation and gateway to the interior. India Street (then King Street) was its first street, and the site of its protective Fort Loyall. The construction of Commercial Street in the 1850s to expand rail transportation to Canada and points south, changed the face of the city, as did the Great Fire of 1866. After the Fire, the city center moved west toward the Old Port, which was rebuilt in contemporary architecture of the late 19th century. India Street continued to be the base for workers serving the Portland Company foundry, the Grand Trunk Railroad, and the variety of waterfront businesses and services that populated the area.

Always the site of immigration, the neighborhood housed ethnic groups including African Americans, Italians, Irish, and Jews – all of whom experienced the neighborhood in different ways. For example, the African American community based near the Abyssinian Meeting House included many workers supporting the steamships and locomotives that called on the city. Jewish families attended one of the two synagogues in the area, and operated a variety of businesses. The area evolved from the residential, industrial and transportation focus of the original settlements and 19th century. In the 1970s it was cut off from the city by the four-lane Franklin Arterial. Now, with the Ocean Gateway Marine Terminal near its base, and new housing under construction, the area links working waterfront and heritage tourism, office, retail, and residential uses. India Street’s buildings, streets, and landscapes, including Eastern Cemetery, spans from the 1600s through the present and help tell its fascinating story.

Today, tourists, apartment dwellers, tug boat operators, retailers, cyclists, lobstermen, bakers, merchants, recent immigrants, artists, and evening revelers are revitalizing India Street, with their intersecting and overlapping, but distinctive experiences of the area. The neighborhood is being rediscovered and reinvented. As the City embraces a master planning process for the area, Smith warns that urban planning efforts are often too narrow, and fail to include the broad spectrum of voices and possibilities that make for creative, diverse, and multi-layered places. As the neighborhood asserts its identity, it will be important to engage the widest range of constituents in laying the groundwork for a dynamic future.

– HILARY BASSETT *Executive Director*



## PRESERVATION UPDATES

### Landmarks Remembers Dear Friends

**T**his summer, three longstanding Landmarks supporters passed away, leaving a legacy of great energy, hard work and passion for our mission and the community. **Nan Sawyer** served on the board for six years, and **Cissie Lindemann** and **Bill Laliberte** were docents at the Observatory for many years. “Nan’s leadership, community connections, and her ability to reach out and inspire people to get involved made an enormous difference to us. She was engaged in every aspect of the organization,” said Hilary Bassett, executive director. “Cissie was so enthusiastic about everything she did for Landmarks, from walking tours for kids to guiding visitors to the top of the Observatory, to volunteering for events and making everyone feel welcome wherever she went,” said Jen Pollick, manager of education programs. She added that “Bill loved to be at the Observatory, especially on opening day, Flag Day and July 4th. For 12 years, he wrote “Info Bits,” emails that highlighted information on the Observatory and local history.” We will miss our dear friends.

### Greater Portland Landmarks recently awarded new Historic Markers



1. Thomas Brackett Reed House, 1830, 295 Brackett Street, Portland, Lauri Gibson & Vivek Bandhu

2. James Bradley House, c. 1851, 71 Gray Street, Portland, John Berard & Regina Barrett

3. Elizabeth MacDonald House, 1882, 161 Pine Street, Portland, Candice Lee

4. Life Saving Station, District 1, 142 Two Lights Road, Cape Elizabeth, Donald Kennel

For more information about Landmarks’ Historic House Marker program, please call 774-5561, or email [info@portlandlandmarks.org](mailto:info@portlandlandmarks.org).

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# UNDOING URBAN RENEWAL

AS GREATER PORTLAND LANDMARKS approaches its 50th anniversary, the city's urban planners and advocates are in many ways undoing the blunders of the Urban Renewal movement that in part spurred the formation of the organization in the first place. In particular, plans to dismantle the over-engineered Spring Street and Franklin Street roadways promise to bring those areas to a more pleasing and economically vital urban scale.



Closing two lanes on Spring Street to allow room for the Civic Center renovations has shown that the narrower street width proposed in the Spring Street/Free Street Concept Plan is viable.

Those involved with the plans believe it could spur well-planned and well-designed development in those areas.

"We've lived with the changes that Urban Renewal brought for years, and we're now revisiting those concepts to see whether we can modify them, improve them, and make those two streets more urban friendly and more people friendly," says historian Earle Shettleworth. "In both the cases of Spring Street and the Franklin Arterial we feel just instinctively uncomfortable about those designs."

Pam Plumb, Landmarks' first executive director and one of the early preservation activists who fought Urban Renewal changes, cautions against demonizing the urban planners and architects of the time, who, she says, thought they were doing right to rescue an ailing city.

In fact, the United States Department of Transportation awarded the Spring Street redevelopment with a third place ribbon in 1976, while today it is widely recognized as an example of failed urban design.

"By the time Landmarks was created in 1964, the city was pretty bleak, frankly," says Plumb, "with a lot of abandoned buildings, a lot of low-income folks. After WWII, people were moving to the suburbs and emptying out the city. All of this was making downtown Portland a bit of a wasteland. The city fathers of the moment believed that old was bad and new was good, and there had to be bold things done in response to the situation. They thought they needed to accommodate the automobile, and that's what brought about those two highways."

In fact, she says, city planners were actually cautious enough and Landmarks' activism was strong enough that Urban Renewal in Portland moved slowly. Much more

damage could have been wrought.

"By the late 1970s there came to be an economic value to old buildings," Plumb says. "We didn't devastate our downtown, unlike other cities. We were lucky that we didn't."

## FRANKLIN ARTERIAL

Before its stark undoing, Franklin Street had been a regular, two-way urban street, a natural part of the east end of the Portland peninsula. Cross streets Oxford and Lancaster once connected east and west. One regrettable consequence of building the Franklin Arterial – now already renamed Franklin Street – is the way it cuts off the eastern end of the peninsula from the rest.

Essentially, Franklin Street has been an interstate-style highway cutting through a city that was built in the 18th and 19th centuries with a tight grid of streets, says Shettleworth. Its street pattern is foreign to people navigating the rest of the city, unlike Marginal Way, which crosses Franklin but whose purpose and scale fit its design and which "people accept and understand." Franklin Street is useless to pedestrians and dangerous for both pedestrians and cyclists because of the roadway's design and the speed of its traffic.

One of the saving graces of the arterial is its wide expanse of green space. Still, another regret is that it yanked away a quarter of Lincoln Park's space, Shettleworth says. "If there's some way, we should make Lincoln Park whole again."

Meanwhile, Spring Street shares many of Franklin

URBAN *continued on page 4*

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# ABYSSINIAN MEETING HOUSE UPDATE

## New hope in endangered designation

On Juneteenth, the June 19th celebration of America's emancipation of the slaves, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named Portland's Abyssinian Meeting House to its 2013 list of the nation's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places.

"The Abyssinian Meeting House is the third oldest standing African meetinghouse in the United States," said Brent Leggs of the National Trust, shown standing in the church in a video by Troy R. Bennett of the Bangor Daily News. "Some of the greats in the Abolitionist Movement such as William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglass walked this hall."

Greater Portland Landmarks and Maine Preservation joined Leggs, Portland Mayor Michael Brennan, and Leonard Cummings from the Committee to Restore the Abyssinian to announce the listing.

According to the National Trust, the annual list "spotlights examples of the nation's architectural, cultural, and natural heritage that are at risk of destruction or irreparable damage. More than 240 sites have been on the list over its 26-year-history, and in that time, only a handful of listed sites have been lost."

As the India Street neighborhood grows and thrives around it, the Abyssinian Meeting House still struggles to complete its historic restoration.



The Abyssinian Meeting House is at 73 Newbury Street, in the India Street neighborhood.

"The threats to the Abyssinian Meeting House have intensified because there is so much current interest and major development in this area of town. The level of attention that this

designation from the National Trust for Historic Preservation brings can have a huge influence on boosting the understanding of the significance of the site, the state of its fragility, and hopefully

attract resources to complete the restoration and position the building as a resource for the community as a whole," said Sally Oldham, Greater Portland Landmarks trustee.

Leggs said putting the church on the list will hopefully be a call to action, as it has for other endangered places. "It would be great if individuals that have the financial capacity would donate to the Abyssinian Meeting House. We need about \$2.5 million for its restoration, programming, staffing – all of those needs – to open it up to the public." ■



National Trust for Historic Preservation  
**America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places**

For a complete listing of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places for 2013 see the National Trust for Historic Preservation's website at [www.preservationnation.org](http://www.preservationnation.org)

PHOTO CREDIT: KATIE UFFELMAN

## URBAN *continued*

Arterial's downsides, and more, Shettleworth says. "It created a stark urban wasteland. There are no broad redeeming features there that would have softened the blow."

### **SPRING STREET TODAY**

Rick Knowland, city planner in Portland, agreed that Spring Street was strangely quiet for such a large thoroughfare, but that planned and hoped-for changes will make it more inviting.

"I would ride my bike to work and I found Spring Street extremely safe because there's not much traffic," he says. "With the construction at the Civic Center, we had to decrease the lanes from four to two, which just shows that we didn't need that huge swath."

A Spring Street/Free Street Streetscape Concept Plan published this year by the city discusses possibilities for narrowing the roadway, eliminating the middle barrier, creating bicycle lanes, redesigning pedestrian crossings, and adding amenities like benches, trees, and public art.

Knowland says that narrowing the road will make the area more pedestrian friendly and will reclaim the space for traditional neighborhood use. The city has received funds from several sources, so, he says, there is a "fair amount of resources to transform Spring Street. There is also going to be space available for redevelopment opportunities on the southerly side of Spring, between Center and Portland

Square. Greater Portland Landmarks and the Portland Society for Architecture were big proponents of a redesign of Spring Street. We're working with the Civic Center to do some additional improvements along their frontage. So hopefully this year you will see basically two lanes of traffic in front of the Civic Center, with the raised central barrier removed, and over the next couple of years you'll see the remainder of the barrier removed."

### **PROGRESS ON FRANKLIN**

Changes to Franklin Street are somewhat more complicated because it is actually well-used by traffic. Proposals to bring its scale in better proportion to its urban environment will take into account its current and projected traffic patterns according to the Franklin Reclamation Authority, an advocate for Franklin Street since 2006, when it formed to fight a proposed widening of the highway.

The city, in partnership with the Maine Department of Transportation and the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System, is working on a feasibility analysis of three alternatives. The final concept is likely to be a mixture of plans that incorporate a few basic ideas: traffic must slow down to promote neighborhood safety and enjoyment, too much space of the corridor's prime real estate is dedicated to cars, and the space must be redesigned to encourage development of public space. Such development could include the rehabilitation of Lincoln Park, as well as private development in hous-



Landmarks participated in a design charrette to create a vision for Spring Street sponsored by the Portland Society for Architecture.

ing and retail, according to a recent essay by Markos Miller, co-chair of the Public Advisory Committee on the Franklin Street Redesign Study. Landmarks trustee Sally Oldham also serves on the committee.

"Cities across the country are redesigning urban highway corridors to improve livability and mobility," Miller writes. "In so doing, they are strengthening transportation options by creating multimodal

corridors and hubs and stimulating private investment. They have generated higher property values and a broader tax base, and they've enhanced public spaces for community enjoyment." ■

For more information, visit the website of the Franklin Reclamation Authority, a citizen group that includes Landmarks, at <http://franklinstreet.us/>.

PHOTO CREDIT: MARK JOHNSON

# Portland's Surging HOSPITALITY

**W**ITH THE RENOVATION or new construction of four hotels in Portland, the city will add some 300 rooms. Maine experienced record hotel revenue in 2012, and, developers say, Portland is more than ever a destination place. Increasingly, when people think of Maine they think not just of island stays or camping trips, but also of Portland's historic streets. "If you're coming to Portland to experience what we have to offer in the Old Port, you want to be downtown," says Press Hotel developer Jim Brady. All are in historic or historic-adjacent districts, and Landmarks and the City's Historic Preservation Board have worked to ensure that they're compatible with the city's distinctive urban fabric.

"The hotel projects range from rehabilitation to new construction, and span the downtown from Congress to Commercial Street – so our role was to advocate for preservation and high quality new design that works well with the existing historic fabric. The hotels will bring more people into our historic core, demonstrating that historic preservation is a catalyst for economic development and urban vitality," said Landmarks' executive director Hilary Bassett.

## Press Hotel, former Portland Press Herald building, 390 Congress Street

Still in the planning stages, the Press Hotel will be a 100-room boutique hotel. State and federal historic preservation tax credits plus the state's new market tax credit program are enabling its feasibility, says developer Jim Brady. Tremont Preservation Services is helping steer the historic preservation, and Archetype is the architect of record.



## Hyatt Place Hotel Fore and Union Streets

Tim Soley, owner of East Brown Cow Management, is devoted to Portland's urban fabric and hopes this project, employing 21st century design and high-end materials, will help spark a fresh approach to new development here. He and architects Canal 5 Studio aim to design a building that is compatible with its historic surroundings without being derivative. Soley wants to create a signature contemporary building, what he calls a "legacy asset." Soley says he prefers to try and fail in this attempt than produce a more mundane project.



## Westin Hotel, former Eastland Park Hotel, High and Congress Streets

The Eastland, which for years has been a tired shadow of its 1927 12-story glory, will emerge sometime next year as the Westin Portland Harborview Hotel. State and federal historic preservation tax credits will help preserve its outer shell. The project has been overshadowed by controversy over developers' hopes to buy a portion of city-owned Congress Square Plaza, a deeply set public space at the side entrance. Landmarks is following the issue closely to ensure that, sale or no sale, there is high-quality open space and that any development there demonstrates design excellence enhancing the entire intersection.



## Courtyard by Marriott 321 Commercial Street

Owned and developed by J. B. Brown & Sons, this new hotel will activate the western end of historic Commercial Street and could spur further development in that area. Landmarks had significant input during the planning stages, advocating for siting and design that would create a strong presence and identity at one of the major gateways to the Old Port and West End Historic Districts. Landmarks advocated to reinforce the historic character by orienting the building to the adjacent Foundry Lane, a narrow historic cobbled street, which will be enhanced for public use.



# INDIA STREET IS ITS OWN PLACE

**W**ITH AN INCREASE in development and encouragement from its neighborhood association, the India Street neighborhood, as a place in its own right, has become a focus of the city's urban development plans.

City Planner William Needelman gave credit to the city's newest neighborhood group, the India Street Neighborhood Association, for the push to treat the area as more than a periphery of Munjoy Hill or downtown. "The neighbors have appropriately self-identified India Street itself as a distinct place," he said.

"The city's job now is to work with the neighborhood and property developers to take it to the next step of developing new land use policies that would inform zoning and building heights," says Needelman, senior planner with the city's planning department. "Our goal is to have revised land use policies that are consistent with a neighborhood vision as well as broader city policies."

The planning process will include decisions about whether to designate a historic district and, if so, what its parameters would be, Needelman said, as historic preservation has been key to the thinking about the area from the beginning. Landmarks has a long-standing interest in preserving the historic character of the neighborhood, and undertook an initial survey of the area in 2002. The city is using consulting funds from the historic preservation program to contract with ttl-architects to conduct a historic resources survey and inventory.

The city's effort to devise a development policy has been supported primarily by the work of Sustain Southern Maine (SSM), an initiative supported by a group of



Demolition of this property on Newbury Street took place in June, highlighting the vulnerability of India Street's historic fabric.

nearly forty Southern Maine organizations. Technical assistance is also being provided by Portland State University's Urban Sustainability Accelerator (USA) program from Portland, Oregon.

SSM chose the neighborhood as one of its ten pilot "Centers of Opportunity." Funding for Center of Opportunity activities comes from a \$1.6 million Sustainable Communities Planning Grant awarded to the Greater Portland Council of Governments by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in 2010. As a partner with the city of Portland, SSM has conducted public meetings and devised early planning efforts that will eventually inform a master plan for the area.

Portland State University's USA program is providing technical assistance to integrate the area's urban redevelopment plan with historic preservation and transportation and sustainability issues. This support is made possible through resources of the university's Toulon School of Urban Studies and Planning, the Institute for Sustainable Solutions, and a grant from the Summit Foundation.

The India Street area had a strong role in African-American history, with several sites recognized on Portland's Freedom Trail.

Additional information and demonstration-level plans can be found at <http://sustainsouthernmaine.org/pilot-communities/portlandindia/>. The city plans to present findings and seek further input at a public meeting in September. ■



# Greater Portland Landmarks *Annual Report* 2012-13

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! With your support, we made major progress toward the goals of our Strategic Plan.

## **GOAL 1: Save and revitalize historic properties including landscapes and areas with historic character.**

### **LANDMARKS GALVANIZES COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO SAVE AND REVITALIZE AT-RISK PROPERTIES**

In September 2012, Greater Portland Landmarks (Landmarks) launched a new program, *Places in Peril*, to call attention to the threats facing character-defining, historically-significant properties in greater Portland. For the inaugural program, Landmarks identified seven buildings and landscapes that are at critical points where they could be permanently damaged or lost. Properties named include: House Island (Fort 1808-1989 and Immigration Station houses 1907); Grand Trunk Office Building (1903); Abyssinian Meeting House (1826); Eastern Cemetery (1668); The Portland Company (1847-1940); and the Masonic Temple (1911) all in Portland; and the former National Guard Armory (1941) in South Portland.

Landmarks listed these properties to:

- build public awareness about their significance in American and local history
- advocate for their preservation, protection, and, in some cases, adaptive reuse so that they can survive and prosper as part of our defining architectural landscape
- provide advice, convene people, and identify resources to preserve, protect and rehabilitate them.

During the year, Landmarks played a role encouraging community groups in their work to preserve these properties: Spirits Alive at Eastern Cemetery successfully advocated for City funds for access to water and improvements to the cemetery building. Masonic Temple's new nonprofit affiliate began a feasibility study for fundraising for building repairs. The Portland Company complex was sold, and Landmarks reached out to the new owners, who have not announced immediate plans for the site.

Exciting news greeted members of the Committee to Restore the Abyssinian Meeting House, the third oldest African American meeting house in the country. Nominated by Landmarks and Maine Preservation, the Abyssinian was chosen as one of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 11 Most Endangered Properties from



**Landmarks has offered a variety of workshops, programs, and meetings at the Safford House.**

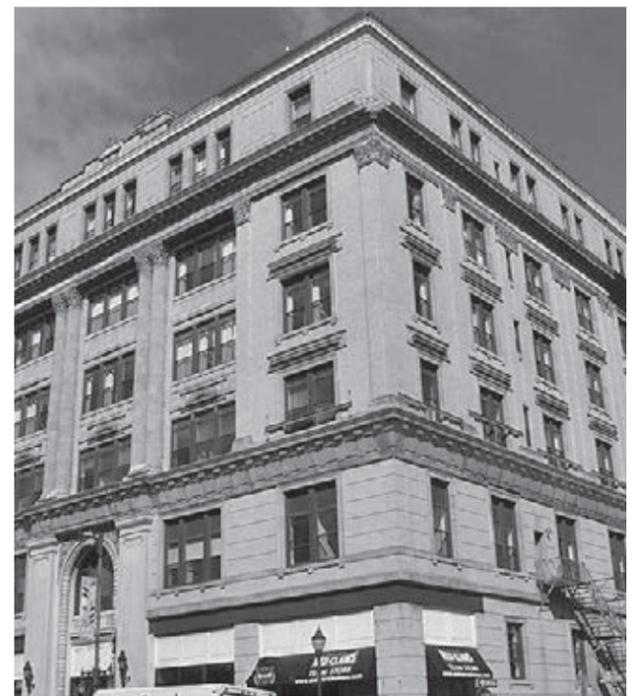
applications from all over the United States. (see page 4)

National recognition of the Abyssinian exemplified Landmarks' goal to collaborate with and support the work of local preservation allies, neighborhood groups, and state and national organizations. Other partners include the Friends of Eastern Prom, South Portland Historical Society, and the newly formed Friends of Lincoln Park, along with our longstanding collaboration with local historic sites and friends groups through the Portland History Collaborative.

### **ADVOCACY ADVANCES PRESERVATION, ECONOMIC VITALITY, AND LIVABILITY IN GREATER PORTLAND**

Landmarks participated in community discussions and city meetings on 24 different issues that affect historic neighborhoods, buildings, and landscapes in the greater Portland area.

This year, Landmarks developed a new advocacy policy and guidelines to prioritize our role in public issues, so that we can focus on areas where our involvement will have the greatest impact. We also conducted an assessment of Portland's Historic Preservation



**The Masonic Temple (1911) is one of seven properties listed in Landmarks 2012 Places in Peril Program. After obtaining nonprofit status, the Temple conducted a feasibility study to raise funds to preserve and enhance use of the Frederick Tompson-designed building.**

Program, to help strengthen the program and provide input to the mayor, city manager, and planning officials. An important tangible result of this effort was the approval of additional hours for the assistant in the Historic Preservation department.

Landmarks actively participated in discussions about four new or rehabilitated hotels in the city (see related story page 5). But the most intensive debate involved a proposal by new owners of the Eastland Hotel to build an event center on part of Congress Square Plaza. Recently, the unmaintained and underutilized Plaza had been the focus of city examination of its future. As part of the advisory committee, Landmarks recommended that the city study the entire intersection, and that any new architecture and public space should fit well within the entire context, and be of high quality in design, materials, and public access. At the time of this writing the City was negotiating with the hotel to sell part of the Plaza to the Hotel.

Still another focal point was the rethinking of the transportation routes implemented during Urban Renewal (see page 3). Landmarks worked closely with the City's Advisory group, to contribute to the Spring Street/Free Street Concept Plan approved by the City Council. The area is especially important to Landmarks because it links four historic districts, and impacts the location of our headquarters.

### **SAFFORD HOUSE SERVES AS A COMMUNITY PRESERVATION HUB**

Throughout the year, Safford House served as a venue for public programs, events, and community meetings. The Green Spaces Coalition of local groups that advocate for parks and open spaces met at the building, and Landmarks held a variety of lectures, Energy Efficiency workshops, convenings of affiliated preservation and historical organizations, planning sessions, and community meetings on site.



**Landmarks report to the City on the preservation program provided data showing how preservation makes good economic sense. For example, the Ross & Lynch Block (1854), 211 Commercial Street, increased in value by 6 times after preservation and last year paid over \$41,000 in taxes to the City. 1990 on left, and 2013 right.**

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



Members of Sacred Heart Church (1888) are raising funds to preserve the distinctive building in Portland's Parkside neighborhood. Landmarks has provided guidance and encouragement through our Preservation Services program.

### PRESERVATION SERVICES PROGRAM SERVES PROPERTY OWNERS, DEVELOPERS, AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Landmarks' Preservation Services Advisor provided 84 field visits and consultations for property owners in greater Portland, conducted four historic preservation tax credit pre-assessments, two energy efficiency workshops, and participated in two radio talk shows. Among the buildings included in field visits were: US Custom House, Eighth Maine Regiment on Peaks Island, Portland Stage Company, Sacred Heart Church, Mechanics Hall, First Parish Church, and the Jesse Partridge Homestead, all in

Portland, and the Graves School in Falmouth and the Duck Pond neighborhood in Westbrook. Landmarks' Advisory Service continued to provide field visits of historic properties, adding reports and photographs to the archives in the Peabody Library.

Preservation interns, Max Yeston, Meg Kruthoff, and Brandon Grilc, gained hands-on experience in helping plan and implement the Places in Peril program, cataloguing and photographing Portland's 71 city-designated landmarks, evaluating the energy efficiency improvements at Safford House, and surveying historic markers. This is part of Landmarks' outreach to train future leaders in the field.

### OLD HOUSE TRADE SHOW HIGHLIGHTS SUSTAINABILITY, LINKING OWNERS WITH PRESERVATION PROVIDERS

As part of an intensive effort to provide preservation information to the public, Landmarks sponsored the Old House Trade Show March 23-24 at the Holiday Inn by the Bay. The event celebrated all aspects of preservation, with a special focus on energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. Featuring 54 exhibitors in trades and expertise from masonry to window repair, chimney sweeps to architects, painting to decorative tile, weathervanes,

and ironwork, the Show attracted over 900 attendees.

Partnerships with the US Green Building Council, Maine Chapter and Portland Society for Architecture led to an exciting

roster of 9 workshops, 7 question and answer sessions, and 10-minute architect consultations with local professionals. Historic New England, Maine Preservation, and the City of Portland's historic preservation program provided informative displays. Financial success of the Show was made possible through the generosity of the lead sponsors: Benchmark Real Estate/Cornerstone Building and Restoration, Taggart Construction/Freepoint Woodworking, Marvin Design Gallery by

Eldredge; and sponsors Artifacts, Hancock Lumber, Old Port Specialty Tile, and Sutherland Consulting.

### MARKER PROGRAM RECOGNIZES STEWARDSHIP OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Landmarks awarded ten historic building markers during the year. Relunched this year, the program identifies properties that owners have carefully stewarded and maintained. (see related story page 2)

### ENCOURAGING NEIGHBORHOODS TO PURSUE ARCHITECTURAL SURVEYS, DISTRICT AND PROPERTY DESIGNATIONS

With support from Landmarks, Portland's planning board and the India Street Neighborhood Association, the City began an intensive level survey of historic resources in the India Street area as part of a master planning initiative. The study will look at the evolution of the neighborhood, identify historic properties and propose boundaries for a potential historic district. Landmarks members and staff also participated in community meetings conducted by Sustain Southern Maine to recommend strategies for neighborhood development (see related story page 5).



The Old House Trade Show attracted over 900 people to connect with 54 vendors of products and services related to preserving older buildings. Above, trustee Nate Stevens answers questions about Landmarks publications.

## GOAL 3: Operate the Portland Observatory as an educational resource.

### OBSERVATORY ATTRACTS VISITORS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

From July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013, 10,471 visitors toured the Portland Observatory from all 50 states, one US territory, the District of Columbia, and 40 countries. A total of 874 children participated in school tours. Public programs included Flag Day, which brought 545 visitors to the tower, the children's authors series, which attracted 89 participants, and sunset tours attended by 163 visitors. An enthusiastic group of 60 volunteer docents offered tours at the Observatory. We recruited four new volunteers from the 18th class of Portland's History Docents (PHD), our training program shared with six other local history organizations.



Children's book author and illustrator Chris Van Dusen read and showed illustrations from his new book *If I Built a House* at the Observatory.

Landmarks wrote a successful grant proposal to the City's Housing & Community Development Block Grant program to repair the windows in the Observatory. Water infiltration along the frames and lantern had begun to cause damage to the structure. In addition, the City will repaint the tower. Work will begin in the fall of 2013 and into 2014.

### NEW CITY IS A CLASSROOM WORKBOOK ENGAGES CHILDREN WITH LOCAL HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE

In April 2013, Landmarks published the newly-revised *City is a Classroom* workbook, which highlights Portland's history and offers information and activities on 10 local historic buildings, museums and landscapes. Sites included are: the Observatory, Abyssinian Meeting House, Longfellow House, Evergreen Cemetery, Eastern Cemetery, Tate House, Safford House, Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad, Fifth Maine Regiment Museum, and Victoria Mansion. The purpose of the workbook is to support the school curriculum with classroom materials which bring local history and landmark buildings to life. The Portland Schools have designated it a required text for all third graders. The workbook was made possible by generous funding from the Leonard C. and Mildred F. Ferguson Foundation, and the CPB Foundation.



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- Antiques Homes Magazine
- Artifacts
- Atlantic Hardwoods
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# GOAL 4: Make Landmarks widely recognized with sustainable financial support.



Landmarks supporters gather at the Historic House Gala in May at the W. Barton Green House in Cape Elizabeth.

## MARKETING BROADENS LANDMARKS' VISIBILITY

Landmarks worked hard this year to expand public awareness of the value of preservation and to widen our base of support. Press conferences for the Places in Peril announcement and designation of the Abyssinian Meeting House to the National Trust 11 Most Endangered List were highly successful in garnering local and national media attention. In addition, judicious use of paid advertising paid off for the Old House Trade Show and Flag Day activities. The Old House Trade Show and the Observatory were featured in regular Facebook posts, and the monthly e-newsletter highlighted Landmarks outreach, advocacy, and education programs. A major focal point for the year was planning an exciting roster of events and programs to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Landmarks in 2014 (see related story page 10).

## INCREASED ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET STRENGTHENS EDUCATION, PRESERVATION SERVICES, AND ADVOCACY.

To implement Landmarks' 2012-2014 strategic plan, Landmarks' board voted to increase the annual budget by \$100,000 to strengthen programs, educational outreach, preservation services, and advocacy. To respond to the increasing demand for preservation information and guidance, Landmarks doubled the hours of the Preservation

Services Advisor. This allowed Landmarks to be more proactive in providing technical advice, field visits, and tax credit pre-assessments, and addressing emerging preservation issues. As important, it strengthened Landmarks relationships with preservation practitioners, property owners, and area developers.

In addition, our full-time Director of Development focused on implementing a robust major gifts program, expanding membership, and increasing communications and visibility. As a result, Landmarks increased charitable giving by 47% over last year. The John Calvin Stevens (JCS) Society, donors of \$1,000 or more to Landmarks, has grown to 55 individuals and families. Special recognition events for this group were held at a beautiful residence at Ram Island Farm in Cape Elizabeth designed by architect Carol Wilson in 1996, and at the Charles S. Foss House (1899) in Deering Highlands. New membership benefits were tailored to both individuals and businesses.

On a beautiful spring day, over 120 members and friends celebrated together at the Spring Historic House Gala at the W. Barton Greene House (1903-14) in Delano Park, Cape Elizabeth. Earle Shettleworth, Director of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, shared the story of the house and the historic summer colony, a favorite site of the Brush'uns, the *plein air* painting group which included Charles Kimball, George Morse, and architect John Calvin Stevens.

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

## AN ACTIVE AND ENGAGED BOARD SUPPORTS LANDMARKS MISSION

Landmarks benefited from the time, talent and expertise of 27 board members, including five new members who joined during the year. Trustees were active in all areas from creating and updating policies and structures, attending and testifying at community meetings, raising money and awareness, and overseeing the building and finances. The board made a conscious decision to invest in organizational growth to accomplish the goals of the 2012-14 strategic plan. The audited financial statements are being finalized at the time of this writing, and will be available at the annual meeting on Sept. 25, 2013. Please call our office at 774-5561 if you would like a copy of the statements.

At Safford House, a new sign greeted visitors and the new



Involved in all aspects of the organization, Landmarks trustees guide policies, while also working on programs, events, and fundraising.

heating and cooling system had its first year of operation. Ongoing preservation and maintenance of the building continues, and rental income is now supporting its operations.

\* Deceased

\*\* Please note these donors made gifts and pledge payments between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013

Greater Portland Landmarks has made every effort to record donor names properly. We apologize for any errors. Please contact Kate White Lewis, Director of Development, at 207-774-5561 ext. 105 with any corrections.

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system. They communicated well at every step as the projects  
progressed. We are very pleased with the final result,  
and we have recommended their work to others."*

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

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# Landmarks Legacy Society

As we approach our 50th Anniversary year, we would like to recognize those who have remembered Greater Portland Landmarks in their estate plans.

Please contact Kate Lewis at  
207-774-5561 x105 if you have included  
Landmarks in your future giving plans.

Thank you for helping to keep  
Landmarks strong for another 50 years.

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## Portland Observatory

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Thru Monday,  
October 14th

# Sharon Miller

is a trustee of Greater Portland Landmarks who brings high energy and enthusiasm. She and her husband Dan moved to Portland in the mid-1960s and first met Pam Plumb when Landmarks was in its infancy. She recently became more heavily involved in Landmarks after retiring from various positions in a wide-ranging career. She worked as a teacher and in educational research. She has managed Congressional and state campaigns and governmental offices, and she has served on several nonprofit boards. She chairs the 50th Anniversary Committee and reports great excitement about its plans. Above all, she says she would like the community to have fun with this celebration.

### What has been your overall approach to this grand task?

I'm a newcomer to the organization, but knew that we needed a firm foundation for planning the 50th anniversary and that means having a great committee, including a number of activists in the preservation movement from throughout the years, founding members, and former executive directors. We brainstormed over the first six months of last year and then started narrowing ideas down.

### How is it shaping up?

We're going to have a final calendar pretty soon and we already have a lot planned. People are really excited. This is a chance to remind people of who we are and have fun.

To start off, we'll have a series of lectures in the fall that will be open to the public and lead into our anniversary year. And then early in 2014, Landmarks will have a photo exhibition in the public library. We plan to have some historic house tours, and other walking tours around different neighborhoods in greater Portland. People will see our celebration throughout Portland – banners on the Safford House and note cards around town.

### You are clearly interested in making this fun.

Yes! Educational and fun. We want to reach out to children, so we plan scavenger hunts for them and their families. We're hoping to have boat tours, a fun way for people to see the Civil War forts in the harbor and the wonderful John Calvin Stevens houses on the islands.

We think a lot of people are going to want to celebrate with us. Portland's been named one of America's most livable cities, yet we think that people aren't as aware as they should be of just how the historic buildings and their character bring people here. We want to emphasize Landmarks' role in preserving this appealing aspect of Portland's urban character, and the economic impact that it has on making a community desirable and a place where people want to live.

### Do you think that people appreciate it but don't necessarily think about it?

It's clear to me that, in the 40 or so years I've lived here, that people love the character of the greater Portland area. I think that people love it and appreciate it, but we have to do a lot of work bringing people along to get involved to make sure it stays charming and nice.

### So part of the celebration is also getting people involved?

Yes, passing it on to the next generation. I know that younger people are busy. What's changed from my generation is that in most cases people need two incomes to get by, which doesn't leave a lot of time. When I was taking care of my children one person could support a family, but those days are gone. The goal is to get them

# WHO We Are



Pictured, front row: Joe Conforti, Sharon Miller (committee chair), Candice Lee and back row: Kate Lewis, Nate Stevens Also on the committee are Tom Elliman, Kathleen Grammer, Sally Oldham, Ted O'Meara, Karyn Pellow, Pam Plumb, Joel Russ, Earle Shettleworth, Dodo Stevens, Paul Stevens, Ruth Story, and (ex-officio) Hilary Bassett

involved as members and get their children involved. We've had many successes along those lines – the program bringing Maine authors to children at the Observatory has been really fun. We need to get the word out there and provide a whole array of activities for all ages that expose people to fun things that teach them about what we do and about their city's history.

You know, Portland would look a lot different if that train station hadn't tumbled down. Landmarks became active in preventing more of that, and today we continue, with the Places in Peril program. It's an ongoing battle – it all takes vigilance. It takes people willing to stand up, willing to speak at meetings. It takes people who care and it's still needed as much now as it was then.

### All in all, what would you like people to know about the 50th?

That Landmarks has all kinds of things planned, that they should be staying tuned to the calendar. Starting in October there will be so many events that are coming up. We have a lot of talented people heading up each event, and we'll need a lot of volunteers for each event. We'd love to have help. We have something for everyone. We need more help, but we're in good shape because we have a lot of good people with good ideas. ■



## COMING SOON: Images of Change: Greater Portland's Cityscape since 1960

In celebration of our 50th anniversary, Landmarks is hosting an exhibition of photographs that explore the evolution and character of greater Portland's built environment since 1960.

Jury: Bruce Brown, Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., and Susan Danly

EXHIBITION DATES: January 3 – February 28, 2014 at the Portland Public Library

More information: [www.portlandlandmarks.org](http://www.portlandlandmarks.org)

## Preserving Your Historic Neighborhood: Considerations and Planning Strategies

**P**RESERVING NEIGHBORHOODS IS vitally important for the social and economic stability of communities, which includes protecting architectural character as well as maintaining property values. Portland is the only community in the immediate region offering protection for historic neighborhoods through its zoning power, in the form of the Historic District Ordinance adopted in 1989. As Maine's economy shows signs of recovery, we are seeing a gradual resumption of development pressure throughout Greater Portland. Consequently, there is more pressure on historic properties – from inappropriate exterior alterations to large scale developments, that adversely impacts the scale and character of historic neighborhoods.

This article considers successful strategies by neighborhood residents and leaders across the country to protect and maintain the architectural diversity and spatial character of older neighborhoods. Greater Portland Landmarks has spent nearly 50 years advocating protection of historic neighborhoods in Portland through district designation and a historic preservation ordinance. Portland's historic districts demonstrate, as national studies assert, that historic district designation results in neighborhood stabilization, increased and more sustainable property values, higher municipal tax revenues, and greater resilience in tough economic times.

No other area towns, including Cape Elizabeth, South Portland, Falmouth, or Westbrook (all communities with rich architectural heritage), have adopted measures to manage the process of growth and change in their historic building stock. The work of implementing public historic preservation policy always remains unfinished, as future opportunities for additional historic districts in Portland and the surrounding communities remind us.

### Initiating a Neighborhood Preservation Program

What do you do if a historic building in your neighborhood is threatened with demolition or severe alterations when there are no preservation protections? When



The India Street neighborhood has a mix of new and historic buildings.

advocating for improvements in a development proposal or contesting proposed destruction of a historic neighborhood asset, it's important to get the help of experts who understand preservation. Landmarks' Preservation Services Program at 774-5561 can provide guidance and help you or your group connect with resources.

For individuals interested in promoting preservation, the neighborhood association may be a good place to start. Neighborhood organizations, while not necessarily focused on historic preservation, have added considerable breadth to the preservation aspect of city planning by invoking the tenets of preservation – Recognition, Rehabilitation and Reuse – when neighborhood character is threatened. Neighborhood associations help fill gaps in directing new development while helping to orchestrate change at levels that may exceed the reach or capacity of local government.

### Planning Tools for Successful Neighborhood Preservation

The community architectural and cultural resources survey is the keystone in developing any preservation planning strategy. The survey is a systematic evaluation of all the properties in a neighborhood to identify the historic buildings, monuments, and landscapes, and to discern the historical significance and identity of a place. It is the first crucial step in the process of determining the important buildings and landscapes that may be eligible for National Register or local landmark designation, and whether there are enough properties that could become a National Register Historic District or

local historic district. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission is the state clearinghouse for the National Register, and there is more information at [www.state.me.us/mhpc](http://www.state.me.us/mhpc).

Ideally, historic preservation districts are included as goals in a community or neighborhood Master Plan. Planning tools that can help promote preservation include:

- Designation of local Historic Districts
- Tax incentives for Preservation, including tax credits and property tax relief
- Retention of neighborhood schools
- Flexibility with Zoning, including density, occupancy, and parking requirements
- Creating quality infill design standards
- Maintaining high quality green spaces and parks
- Public transportation
- Demolition delay requirements

Protection of the historic built environment in our cities and towns is a sustainable strategy consistent with a community's historical development. Preserving neighborhood character and retaining viable historic properties are sound investments of time, energy, and resources that pay off environmentally, economically, and in our quality of life. ■



### Christopher Closs

Landmarks' Preservation Services Advisor  
(207) 809-9103  
[ccloss@portlandlandmarks.org](mailto:ccloss@portlandlandmarks.org)  
Providing historic preservation technical assistance and tax credit pre-assessments.

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# Landmarks Fall Calendar

## SEPTEMBER

**SEPT 13, 11 AM – 12:30 PM**

### Homes of Portland's Golden Age Walking Tour

Features the area around State and High Streets in the West End Historic District, departs from Landmarks, 93 High St. \$10/\$5 members

**SEPT 20, 11 AM – 12:30 PM**

### Homes of Portland's Golden Age Walking Tour

(see Sept 13 for details)

**SEPT 25, 5:30 – 7:30 PM**

### Annual Meeting of the Membership & Announcement of Places in Peril

At Pierce Atwood in the renovated Twitchell Champlin Building, 254 Commercial Street, Portland. Advance registration requested.

**SEPT 27, 11 AM – 12:30 PM**

### Homes of Portland's Golden Age Walking Tour

(see Sept 13 for details)

## OCTOBER

**OCT 2, 10 AM – NOON**

### Understanding Portland's Architecture & Historic Districts

A workshop and West End walking tour highlighting Portland's historic districts and examples of historic architectural styles. Advance registration required. \$35/\$25 members.

Open to all, CEUs available for realtors.

**OCT 4, 11 AM – 12:30 PM**

### Homes of Portland's Golden Age Walking Tour

(see Sept 13 for details)

**OCT 5, 10 AM – 3 PM**

### Western Promenade House Tour

Featuring houses, including interiors, and gardens in Portland's historic Western Promenade Historic District.

Tickets available at [www.portlandlandmarks.org](http://www.portlandlandmarks.org), or on the day of tour at the Christian Science Church, 67 Neal Street.

**OCT 10, NOON & 12:45 PM**

### Custom House Tour

See the beautiful interiors of Portland's Custom House built 1867-71, designed by Alfred B. Mullet; meet at Fore Street entrance. \$10/\$5 members. Advance registration for the tour is required.

**OCT 11, 11 AM – 12:30 PM**

### Homes of Portland's Golden Age Walking Tour

(see Sept 13 for details)

**OCT 14, 10 AM – 5 PM**

### Last Day of the Season at the Portland Observatory

138 Congress St.

**OCT 15, 6 PM**

### The Preservation Movement in the U.S. & Maine: Past, Present & Future

Lecture by Greg Paxton, Executive Director, Maine Preservation; Rines Auditorium, Portland Public Library.

**OCT 16, 10 AM – NOON**

### Understanding Portland's Architecture & Historic Districts

(see Oct 2 for details)

**OCT 17, NOON & 12:45 PM**

### Custom House Tour (see Oct 10 for details)

**OCT 24, NOON & 12:45 PM**

### Custom House Tour (see Oct 10 for details)

**OCT 30, 10 AM – NOON**

### Understanding Portland's Architecture & Historic Districts

(see Oct 2 for details)

**OCT 31, NOON & 12:45 PM**

### Custom House Tour (see Oct 10 for details)

## NOVEMBER

**NOVEMBER DATE TBA**

### Kemper Membrane Roofing Solutions for Historic Buildings

Lunch and Learn at the US Custom House, 312 Fore Street; Advance registration required. CEUs available for architects through Maine AIA.

**NOV 13, 10 AM – NOON**

### Understanding Portland's Historic Districts

(see Oct 2 for details)

**NOV 19, 6 PM**

### A City Evolves: Entrepreneurs, Politicians, and Architects who Transformed Portland

Lecture by Dr. John Bauman, faculty member, Muskie School, USM; Rines Auditorium, Portland Public Library

For more information, and to register for events and programs: [www.portlandlandmarks.org](http://www.portlandlandmarks.org) or call 774-5561.

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#1 Claim based total sales volume in dollars from public and private data, not MLS