Portland's parklands: a neglected gift?

Spring is driving people out of doors and into Portland's neglected parks. See page 8.
A CONVERSATION WITH
Gene Hanscom

Gene Hanscom: "I still fear rats somewhat.”

"Exterminator sounds kind of crude," says Modern Pest Control's Gene Hanscom, who prefers "pest control technicians." Gene's been battling rats, mice, cockroaches and various other creepy crawlers for 25 years.

What pest do people get the most about?

Rats. Even myself, as long as I've been doing that, rats are the most. Rats have got quite a bad name.

Do pests pose a greater danger? What's a cockroach really going to do?

They're not really going to do much to you; they're just going to eat your food. They can be a problem, but they're not really going to hurt you. It's more of a nuisance thing.

Do people get too freaked out about their pest problems?

Not really. The type we usually hear about - rats, mice - if they keep on coming, they get more exasperated to the homeowner. Because they know you're getting rid of them all.

Do you ever get scared of them?

No, you never get scared of them. It's just a constant challenge. I love this work.

Is there ever any remorse?

You mean about killing? None of all. We're killing vermin.

Do you end up seeing some kind of an exodus?

Yes. We get into a lot of places, and they keep coming out, and they keep coming out, and they keep coming out. When they clean these rooms out, they don't fill them in, they only fill them in when they have a problem. And then they can go back up your foot and climb all over.

The inside of your pants?

Oh, yeah. It makes it hard for them. It's troublesome for me. They're going down on all of your shoes and whatever.

Are you ever going to leave the pest control business?

I don't think so, but I could. I could probably retire. I've been doing this job I probably saw for 25 years. I've been doing it for about 25 years. Do you know what pest do people get the most about?

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Together we created the perfect blend of traditional and contemporary designs to meet the needs of discriminating people everywhere.
In 1905 James Phinney Baxter, then mayor of Portland, wrote, "The Park System of Portland," an essay for the history of Portland's parks, and presenting landscaping designs for the land he had gathered.

"A city is not a city today," wrote Baxter. "Like anything worth growing it is slow accretions."

Since Baxter's day, Portland's parks have grown in a little way, at little. The paraphrase Baxter, they have been dying in slow accretions.

Spring has sprung, Portland's parks are bursting out of doors and into parks. Portland's park system is a gift from James Phinney Baxter, the turn of the century - a gift that has been neglected for decades. But as the shadows of new buildings creep further and further to the pencils, some Portlanders are beginning to appreciate the shade of those old oaks.

And some of them have begun to fight for their..."

### Neglected Gifts

Fifteen years later Baxter, then 90, died. His will included a provision to create a park system for Portland. The area around Back Cove that he had fought long and hard for was nearly what it is today.

### Decay

Dana Anderson grew up in the house to which the city's greenhouses were attached. He is still there today. His father Richard Anderson was head of the Portland Parks Department. Now Dana is Anderson in South Portland's district of parks and recreation, put off by the greenhouses.

"Things were going great until 1973," he said. "But long before that city's greenhouses shut down, the city's funding for parks dropped like a fall leaf. At last year's Maine Arts Festival. Scattered across the park are other rings, worn thin grass .

The jewels of Baxter's plan - the Western Prom, the Oak, Baxter Boulevard and the Eastern Proms are maturing. "It becomes mud and slides away. In drought it becomes sand."

The oak is sometimes replanted after festivals, it takes a full year for it to become mature. Weeds and fix the erosion? In most cases, the pothole's going to be filled in and the whole lot will be landscaped, says Jeff Tarling, the city's new arborist, says his crew pulled couches and chains of elephant dung and straw decomposing very slowly in a ditch. Three wetlands were added to Baxter's plan - the Western Prom, the Oak, Baxter Boulevard and the Eastern Proms."

### Missing Links

The link between Baxter's jewels are weak where they exist at all. Baxter had wanted landscaped and tree-lined streets to link the Western Prom with the Oak, the Oak with Baxter Boulevard. From the end of the 1940s through the 1970s, the heavy woods stretch between Forest and Forest Avenue that Baxter called "the National Necklace." The New York Botanical Gardens were facing a crisis.

There are sidewalks of a sidewalk. Parks and Public Works. The problem: Many years of neglect had taken their toll. Baxter wrote, but Baxter's words have been ignored by traffic. Even the ducks of Deering Street have help us. Baxter was a man of vision."

Baxter wrote, "Having Proms, Baxter intended to create a park system that was not just a series of disconnected strips. Baxter was determined that his park system would be a "family of parks" that would be "open space, but Baxter was wrong, it was a family of parks."

Baxter's cannot find Baxter's jewels. Baxter was a man of vision."

### Park Bench on the Western Promenade: 1905

James Phinney Baxter at the turn of the century - a gift that has been neglected for decades. But as the shadows of new buildings creep further and further to the pencils, some Portlanders are beginning to appreciate the shade of those old oaks.

And some of them have begun to fight for their..."
...on previous page...

As far as I know, there are six people on the forestry staff, and the total number of park employees is 15. That's not enough for city that has 26 parks, but it's far from perfect. Ten years ago, the forestry staff alone numbered 26.

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...continued from previous page...

Now, let's look at some of the specific problems that have been encountered:

- The park system in Portland is pretty much intact.
- However, it has not been maintained.
- The wear and tear that continues.
- The parks department gave up rescue efforts and...

In fact, they have not even been maintained.

Furthermore, the wear and tear...

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some power to the parks. This group of citizens and councillors is powerless to lay down the law, but they can exert the essential power of asking for help. They can send a letter, they can make a phone call, they can write a letter to the parks.

"If you lack back up for the new Portland-South Portland Parks Commission, we ask the people to help.

The new Parks Commission will add some stability to the park policy. We can plan for 20 years ahead.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The studio currently airs three hours of Ment with 8:30-2 PM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Portland and CCN are having an open house today, 5-7 PM.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Local performers will be on hand to demonstrate questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>More than 50 paintings of the unspoiled England landscape and painting sale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>An exhibit of more than 1000 paintings of the unspoiled England landscape and painting sale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Sunday night presents a program of movies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>A panel discussion begins at 7:30 PM. The public is welcome to join.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>The String Quartet continues their series of concerts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>A panel discussion begins at 7:30 PM. The public is welcome to join.</td>
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Jodie Foster
ford rape case of a few years ago.

pet trainer who turns
around the writer's eccentric

Tyler, William
Accused
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Hurt stars as an intro­
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Peter Boyle
Michael Keaton,
Sayles'
sailing

1:20.4:15 (opens

10 Exchange . Portland

1:45.4.7 :15.9:15 (open Apr

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to public

We received by

patients in this comedy, separated from

characters.

Glenn Close
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**Breaking the Silence**

Portland Stage Company's final offering for the season is "Breaking the Silence," written by Stephen Polskiok. The play is based on the life of the late Russian actor, writer, and director Mikhail Belyshkov, who was a member of the famous group of political and artistic figures known as the "Young Guard." The play explores the themes of dissent, loyalty, and ultimately, the Price of Freedom.

The play opens with the character of Nikolai Ivanovich, who is envisioned as a character of remarkable talent and power. However, his true identity is revealed to be the young Alexander Pushkin, the great Russian poet and playwright, who was himself a member of the Young Guard.

The play is a tragicomic celebration of the lives of these individuals, and their struggle against the oppressive forces of the Russian government. It is a powerful reminder of the importance of speaking out against tyranny and oppression, and the sacrifices that must be made in order to do so.

**Great Set, "Strange" Play**

"Breaking the Silence" is a visually stunning production, with set design by Christopher Browning and costumes by Angela Curtis. The set is a dramatic representation of the Russian prison system, with bars and chains creating a sense of claustrophobia and confinement. The costumes are also remarkable, with many of the characters wearing uniforms that reflect their social status and political affiliation.

The cast is comprised of a talented ensemble of actors, including Mikhail Belyshkov as Pushkin, Nikolai Ivanovich, and the various social and political figures of the Young Guard. Their performances are moving and emotionally powerful, capturing the depth and complexity of the characters they portray.

"Breaking the Silence" is a powerful and thought-provoking play that will leave audiences pondering the price of freedom and the sacrifices that must be made in order to stand up against oppression. It is a must-see production for anyone interested in the history of the Russian revolution and its impact on modern-day politics.

---

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FOREST AVENUE ONE-MILE RUN FOR MISSING CHILDREN

Everyone wins

Every city is fortunate enough to occasionally host an athletic event that deserves the attention, the applause and the participation of its citizens. Such a magnificent occurrence will take place April 25 at 2 p.m. The annual Forest Avenue One-Mile Run for Missing Children will feature leading area runners as well as the run of the mill carnage participants like most of us. The more the merrier is certainly the name of the game, as we all are probably involved.

Forest Avenue Buses, Raoul's Roadside Attractions and Young's Furniture are the major sponsors of this mini-Olympics. People of all ages will have the opportunity to contribute.

We know that annual road races like this one have been successful to both Boston and New York. When we heard about Anna Care's situation we know we had the perfect catalyst.

Specifically, this run is conducted through the Adult Walsh Center in order to help raise money for missing children and will benefit Andre and Anna Kalman. Andre and Anna work for the Freeport Bank. Their daughter, Vitalia, has been searching for them ever since she was last seen with her father and support a 1926 Allied agent Ron Deo private investigation and many missing child organizations.

Anna Care, a Portland musician, is thrilled that the upcoming event is going to help raise money to find her child. The money raised will be donated to the Adult Walsh Center. Too bad we have to stress how crucial fund raisers are.
Wanted: Office Space

Casco Bay Weekly is looking for a larger space to call home. If you have a space to rent or lease that meets the following guidelines, please call Gary Santamaria at 775-6601.

1. Between 2000-3000 square feet on Portland peninsula or within a mile of downtown.
2. Flexible (preferably open layout) that can accommodate our needs, rather than us having to accommodate the space.
3. Availability in a timely manner (<6 months)
4. Negotiable rent

We are looking for an office space that can accommodate our current staff of 12 employees, as well as our future growth. Our office currently has 2,000 square feet, and we plan to add two more employees in the next year. We need a space that can accommodate our current staff and allow for future growth. We are open to all areas within a mile of downtown Portland, but we prefer a space that is located on the peninsula.

Thank you for your consideration.

Casco Bay Weekly
G. Santamaria
775-6601
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