

The Quorum Review

Official Newsletter of the Brownstone Quorum, Inc.
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Portland's newest landmark, the Arch Pavilion was dedicated on Sunday, November 9, 2008

President's Message

from **Jim Tripp**

2008 was a very exciting and successful year for The Brownstone Quorum. Two significant projects, opening up a usage area in the Riverfront Park and the construction of the Arch Pavilion on Main Street, were completed. In addition to these two projects, the Quorum once again sponsored the 2008 Brownstone Festival. Thanks to the hard work and support of many volunteers, 2008 was a tremendous success.

In 2007 we began a project to develop a defined area in the Riverfront Park that could be used for picnicking, walking, town events and general recreation. In 2008 we completed this usage area. With the support assistance from the Portland Town crew we were able to obtain sufficient fill for the area to be prepared for final grading and the planting of grass. Through the hard work of many Brownstone Quorum volunteers, the area was graded and seeded in the spring and we were able to use the area, which is approximately the size of a football field, for the riverfront portion of the 2008 Festival. Our hope is that this area will be used for an increasing array of events in the coming years.

One of the most exciting projects for the Brownstone Quorum in 2008 was the completion of the pavilion to
(cont'd on page 2)

*Editor's Note: Each issue of the Quorum Review focuses on the activities of the Brownstone Quorum and what has been accomplished. That's important, but recently it occurred to us that none of the activities or accomplishments would have been possible without **people**. Therefore, this edition will focus on actions and accomplishments and also let you know some of the people responsible. Enjoy.*

Brownstone Quorum Annual Meeting

The Quorum will hold the annual meeting at 7:00 PM, on Monday, January 26th in the Mary Flood Room at the Portland Library.

Following a brief business meeting, including two by-law revisions, the election of officers and the awarding of commendations, the guest speaker will be **John Monroe**, Program Director of the Rivers and Trails Division of the National Park Service. Boston.



Many of you will remember John Monroe. He is the one who organized the Planning Charette in 2000 that led to the development of an overall plan for the Portland Brownstone Quarries National Historic Landmark Park.

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President's Message (cont'd from page 1)

display the historic Brownstone Arch. After four years of planning, designing and fundraising, we broke ground for the Pavilion in the fall of 2007. Thanks to the efforts of Howard Rosenbaum and his team on the Arch Pavilion Committee, the expertise of many volunteers in the Portland community, and the generosity of Portland residents and businesses, we were able to complete the project in 2008. The Arch Pavilion was officially opened at a dedication ceremony held in November 2008. If you have not yet had the opportunity to do so, I invite you to visit the Arch Pavilion and see this latest addition to our town.

The 2008 Brownstone Festival was a great success. Jeanne Dilworth once again chaired the Festival Committee. The Brownstone Quorum hosted a cookout at the riverfront, where we served hundreds of burgers and hot dogs, and **Dave Kuzminski** provided the music. There were many events in town throughout the day, such as games and activities on the Green, rides on antique fire engines, hay rides along the riverfront, and food and music at the riverfront. We are looking forward to sponsoring the 2009 Brownstone Festival in September.

Goals for 2009 are still being finalized, However, some additional goals have been established for the continued development of the Riverfront Park. Plans are being discussed on moving forward with another usage area we call Heritage Plaza. This area, when completed, would provide space for a stage where we could have riverfront concerts and plays during the summer months. Additional goals for the park are to improve access and parking and relocating the gate at the end of Brownstone Avenue. Additional plans will be forthcoming as they are developed by the Design Committee.

2008 was another strong year for memberships. We hope and need to continue that trend in 2009. The more support we get from the community the more we can accomplish. It is important to note that support comes in many forms. Some residents are able to give time and others choose to support Quorum efforts through financial support. Both are critical to our success. If you are a member and have not yet paid your 2009 dues, please take the time to do so using the self addressed, stamped envelope we have provided. Your continued support is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

In summary, 2008 was a terrific year. We had three significant projects in motion at the same time and all were successful. We have strong momentum heading into 2009 and with your continued support I am confident we will meet our 2009 goals. We look forward to seeing you at one of our Quorum events - work parties, meetings, celebrations, any or all.

Brownstone Quorum Annual Meeting

(cont'd from page 1)

The "charrette" was a three-day affair involving seven park-building professionals who visited every nook and cranny of Portland, talked with everyone they met, read our history, our Charter and various rules and regulations, and then organized about 300 Portland residents who gathered at the Senior Center for an idea-sharing seven hour day. The end result was a road map of where the townspeople wanted to go with the quarry property and what was needed to get us there.

John Monroe's services were part of The NPS program of free planning assistance provided to communities for worthwhile park projects. Nancy Mueller, at that time Portland Town Planner, applied for this planning help for the usual one year allowance.

She subsequently reapplied for two more years. Both were granted, and Portland had *three* invaluable years working with John.

When John first met with us here in Portland (we weren't even the Quorum, then, only a group of quarry-interested individuals brought together by **Nan Zimmer**), he told us about the life cycle of organizations - storming, norming, performing, transforming, reforming - to help us understand and be prepared for the stages any organization experiences and successful organizations deal with successfully.

The Quorum has navigated the first three. We are eagerly moving into stage 4, transforming. Come join us at the Annual Meeting as we all learn more.

Arch Pavilion Update

by Howard Rosenbaum

At long last, the Arch Pavilion is essentially complete. I say "essentially" because after the pavilion was complete and the Arch installed, seventeen additional people asked if they could order bricks. These people were accommodated and we are now awaiting the arrival of the bricks. They will probably be installed in the springtime unless we get some warmer weather beforehand.

Otherwise the pavilion is complete. All the bricks are installed, the arch is on display, and the lighting has been installed. There are plans in the spring to sand and paint the metal rims of the wheels to further preserve them. **Bud Harmon** has volunteered to undertake that task. In the spring we will also look at further landscaping.

Once again, I would like to thank all of the people who donated their money and their skills to make this project possible. Hopefully, the Arch and the Pavilion will stand for a long time to remind the citizens of Portland of their rich heritage.

A special thank you to people who donated their services to complete the project: **Mike Susca; Tom Bransfield; Jim Tripp; Frank Winiski; Mark DeFrancesco; Reed Johnson** and his son **Christopher; Dave Steiner**, electrician; **Bobbie Baines, Jr.**, electrician; Exchange Club members - **Jim Hill, Dave Thompson** and his son **Tyler, Ben Syrb**, and **Mike Woronoff; Rick Kelsey** and members of the **Town crew; Carl Johnson** and members of the **Grounds crew; Jeff Jacobson**, Engineer; **Sue Fiedler**, Landscape Architect; **Rick Staub**, Architect; **Brian Adams; Howard Rosenbaum**.

everyone to the Senior Center where the Quorum served refreshments, including hot mulled cider - well received on a very brisk day. People lingered over the refreshments, talked about the arch and what it meant to the history of the town. They expressed pride in that history and pride in the arch and its pavilion.



Senator Eileen Daily and Representative Jim O'Rourke with Howard Rosenbaum at the Arch Dedication



Joe Chiabrero, Bill Long, Eddie Chiabrero, Howard Rosenbaum and Jim Tripp.

The Pavilion was dedicated on Sunday, November 9, 2008. **Jim O'Rourke**, Representative, 32nd District and **Eileen Daily**, Senator, 33rd District, who were instrumental in Portland's obtaining a grant toward the cost of the pavilion, were both present and spoke briefly.

New Face at Park & Rec: Sean Dwyer

There is a new face in the Parks and Recreation Office. It's **Sean Dwyer**, Newington native, Ellington resident, and Portland's new Parks and Recreation Co-Ordinator.



Sean Dwyer, Park and Recreation Co-Ordinator

The first thing your **Quorum Review**

"reporters" noticed was Sean's big smile and warm handshake when we visited him at his new office in the Buck-Foreman Community Center on Day 2 of his Portland career. We went to interview *him*, but he turned the tables and interviewed *us*.

He wanted to know all about the Quorum, and the Riverfront Park. And, of course, we were only too glad to talk to him about our favorite project. We gave him an up-to-date on what's happening now, and the history - all the way back to the 1800s - of what has happened in the past. His smile got bigger and brighter. The idea of being on the ground floor in the creation of a genuine community park definitely excited him.

Sean grew up in a sports-active family. Traditional sports were the primary focus, but as a teenager he became interested in outdoor challenge sports. Intrigued by white water kayaking, he went on to compete and win. He showed us a poster of a kayak, paddler almost lost in wash of white water, plunging over some rapids - and the paddler was Sean. Great advertising.



First Selectwoman **Susan Branfield** with representatives from the Board of Selectman and the Volunteer Fire Department

Susan Bransfield, Portland's First Selectwoman, expressed her appreciation to the Quorum, to all who had contributed in any way to the project, and especially thanked **Eddie** and **Joe Chiabrero** for their fine work and their generosity to the town in restoring this treasure from Portland's quarry past. It was a great pleasure that the Chiabrero brothers and their nephew **Bill Long** were able to be present.

Howard Rosenbaum gave a brief resume of the project, thanked all who had participated, and invited

After high school graduation, Sean attended Northwestern Community College where he received an Associate's degree and a Certificate in Recreation. His recreation internship was at Eastern Connecticut where, in 1998, he established an outdoor adventure program which remains in effect today. Sean stayed on there as a volunteer for fourteen months.

Sean enrolled at Springfield College to complete his degree work for a BA in Recreational Management. Portland has a number of Springfield College alumni, a very cohesive and proud group, so Sean has a good base of support here.



Sean with Jeanne Dilworth

A position in Worcester, Massachusetts as Parks and Recreation Co-Ordinator provided Sean with the opportunity to develop programs that involved people in all types of outdoor activities, with an emphasis on water activities, that they could pursue throughout their lives.

These experiences provided Sean with all the skills Portland sought in their new director. With the Town's interest in a community park on the riverfront, Portland is a good fit for Sean. Here he will have a chance not only to lead a recreation program, but a chance to utilize all his educational preparation and interest in building a park that will make all aspects of a recreational program possible. Good fit.

Sean was scheduled to tour all Portland's parks and fields. He has a goal of creating a guide book of hiking trails in town to encourage people to get out and enjoy them. We told him about **John LeShane** and the Meshomasic Hiking Club. He is interested in developing an outdoor adventure program including river activities for young people.

Sandy Darna was an outstanding Parks and Recreation Co-Ordinator. She will be a tough act to follow. We think Portland has found the right person to do that. Sean Dwyer. Himself a tough act.

The 4th Annual Brownstone Festival

September 13th was another great Festival day! Weather was good, not too bright, or too hot. Just right for fire engine rides, hay rides, face painting, music, barbecue - lots of stuff!

It started early. The **Portland Ecumenical Youth Group** woke everybody up with a delicious pancake breakfast at the Senior Center. This was the third

year these kids have done breakfast. Bright and early they set up the large room, prepared all the ingredients and beginning at 8:00 served a few hundred pancakes. Then they cleaned up and got ready for the stuffed baked potatoes they started serving around 10:30 out on the Town Green. If you see **Bree Currier, Mary Pellin, Rachel Ramcke, Paige Julbe, Elizabeth St. Paul, Ben Adams, Olivia Breece, or Jessica Kirby** congratulate them on another year of service to their community. **Jeff and Lori Adams** are adult advisors of the group and readily express their pride in the kids' accomplishments.

The fire engine rides started around 10:00 and continued to about 3:00. Because they started so early and went so late, several Festival volunteers were able to take a ride and enjoy the fun either before or after their shifts. **Bob Baines, Jr., Joe Carlson, Steve Klick and John Rzaza**, members of the **Connecticut Cellar Savers**, provide these rides using their own antique fire engines at their own expense. It's a wonderful gift to the town. The trucks stopped at the **Cellar Saver Museum** for riders to get off and visit. Then they continued on to the **Portland Historical Society Ruth Callander House Museum of Portland History** so riders could visit their Portland Farm display. And on back to the Town Green.

The **Town Green** area was packed. The **Crafters Market** filled the parking lot. There you could learn about "painting with imagination." You could cuddle a Sojourn Bear, do some sand art, get to know the **Portland Historical Society** and buy one of their books. The **Portland Garden Club** sold orchids and craft items.

Downstairs at the **Senior Center, the Brownstone Art Association** displayed paintings, ceramics, photography for display and sale. An interesting part of the Association's participation in 2008 is that they also set up at the riverfront. It was a great setting for an outdoor show and sale, especially with the demonstrations.

The Green was alive with **Family Day**. Kids bounced on the inflatables and played games. They did crafts, listened to stories, got "tattooed" by the **Methodist Church**, and squealed with delight at the "magic" all around them. All that gave the parents a break so they could learn more about **Youth Services**, the **Early Childhood Council** and about bike safety from **Dr. Mormile**, there again with bike helmets for kids as well as information on chiropractic services for children and adults.

Clean Energy, voter registration, a motorcycle/motorcross display, Emergency Management Services, the Police and Fire Departments, the Portland Library packed every inch with information,

except for those inches already filled with food: baked goodies from the **MOMs Club** and the **Friends of the Library**, popcorn and drinks from the **Cellar Savers**, cool cones and cups from **80 Licks**, and hotdogs by **Youth Services** and the folks from **Edward Jones**.

The **Festival Ambassadors** were back this year. Again, **Carolyn Susca** organized students from the three area high schools to serve as guides throughout the Festival. They all knew what their tasks were, and they went about them responsibly and with good humor, serving at the Green; at **Trinity Church**, where they directed people to the tours, the refreshments, the flower show, flower arranging class, the butterfly garden exhibit.



Jeff Kelsey's Hay Rides

The Ambassadors were especially important at the hayride station at **Brownstone Intermediate School**. **Phil Nanfito** has been our "man-in-charge" at the hayrides for several years. This year he was unable to take part, so the students, who had worked with Phil before, knew just what to do and did it. The hayrides continued all day, from early morning till close to 7:00 PM. Starting around 11:00 AM, **Jeff Kelsey**, his son **Jordan** and nephew **Zachary Kelsey** shuttled folks from the Main Street events down Middlesex Avenue to the north gate into the riverfront park, along the river to Brownstone Avenue and back to Main Street. All the hay wagons were full all day. Even with three rigs leaving BIS every 20 minutes or so, at 4:00 people were still coming for rides. They could get off the hayride at the Festival events on the riverfront to visit the **Brownstone Arts Association** display, demonstrations and sale. Or join in games organized by the local **Cub Scouts**. And listen to the music of the staff and students from the **Connecticut Valley School of Music and Dance**, compliments of **Dave Kuzminski**. Then they could catch a ride on another rig back to BIS or just stay for the picnic.

Many riders left their cars up on Main Street and rode the hay rigs down to the Quorum picnic and stayed until the Kelseys drove them back to Main Street afterwards. Dave's music filled the air all afternoon.

For four years the Brownstone Quorum has undertaken sponsorship of the Festival. That sponsorship involves collecting the names of all

organizations in town, all the churches, schools and Town departments, contacting them by mail and phone, placing articles in **RIVEREAST News Bulletin** to catch any we missed. Local businesses and individuals learn about the Festival through the newspaper publicity and word of mouth and are invited to participate.

We ask them all to join us at an organization meeting at the Senior Center in late March where we get to know each other, plan participation, and find ways of cooperating for a successful event. We have two more large group meetings before the Festival.

A Steering Committee does the melding of all these groups. This year, that committee consisted of **Mary Pont of Portland Youth and Family Services**, longtime sponsor of Family Day, who is in charge of the Town Green area; **Mike Susca of the Brownstone Quorum**, in charge of riverfront activities; and **Cari Klick and Jeanne Dilworth of the Brownstone Quorum** general coordinators for the Festival.

In addition to the organizing of the Festival, the Quorum provides the printings, mailings (usually three) to all the organizations, the general advertising, signs, posters and the Festival map. Our 2008 map was a vast improvement over what we've had in the past. **Cari Klick** came up with something like your computer desk top using icons to convey the information.

The Festival is a major project, but the Quorum considers it a good investment in Portland.

A Picture of a Picnic

Each September, as part of the Brownstone Festival, the Quorum gives the people of Portland a party - a free town picnic - for everyone to share. Each year they come, eat, talk, meet new people, and just enjoy themselves.

Each year, we mean to tally the number of people who come to the picnic, but we always get too busy and forget. But, this year there were a lot of them. They came and went all afternoon. The parking lot was full with cars moving in and out. Smiles, waves, "Great picnic!" let your faithful parking attendant know she was missing a good time. They came early and stayed late, enjoying food, music, the lovely riverside park, and just being together.

And they kept the Quorum Crew busy. Let's check them out.

Mike Susca, Crew "Chief" gets up real early to load a couple of trucks with tents, tables, chairs, grills, cables, buckets, fire extinguishers, oceans of stuff, and heads down to the riverfront

(7:00 AM). Then he and the rest of the Crew (**Jim**

Tripp, Tom Bransfield, and Steve Klick) do the heavy lifting - setting up tents, generator, electric outlets - according to Fire Marshall stipulations. **Howard and Sari Rosenbaum** join them to get the "kitchen" organized, according to Health/ Sanitation requirements.



Deb and Mike Susca with grill masters Jim Tripp and Howard Rosenbaum

Sari Rosenbaum and Cindy Andrus have *their* team well organized. They start arriving around 8:30 - a lot of them - and they keep busy all day. There's **Gert Scully, Betsy Graziano, Harriet, Bill and Maureen Sanborn, Nan Zimmer, Dave Kaplan, Gloria Gdovin, Deb Machnik.** And **Ruth McGowan, Marion Bloomquist, Deanna Rhodes and her son, Patrick.** There is **Colby Gauthier and Eileen Guess, Debra Susca and Alice Schumacher.** Bet you never guessed a little picnic could require so many hands. They set up the tables, with cloths and flowers. Chairs go around tables and out to the band area. Washing stations are put in place; trash barrels are labeled and spaced around the park. The cooking/serving line is organized for efficiency and good sanitation. By noon they are pretty well set. They make it all look easy.

Then it's time to get the food. **Tri Town Foods** packs up the food so that Sari can take small amounts at time so that everything stays well refrigerated until it's needed.

By 2:00 they're all set and hungry people are already forming lines. That's when Mike, Jim, Tom and Howard don their aprons, fire up the grills and begin to sweat, the line to serve, the "busboys/girls" get ready to clean up as people finish their meal.

The hamburgs are generous, the buns soft. Hot dogs are plump and juicy. "Want it Black? OK!"

Ketchupmustardonions, over there." "Soda? Water? You got it!" "Seconds? Sure." "Chips?" Coleslaw?" "Don't forget your brownies." The Crew sweats and serves. There's a lot of back and forth.

Happy talk. The music bundles it all up.

Last call is around 5:30. It gets dark early. Clean up has everybody pitching in. The equipment is loaded back into the trucks and delivered to Mike's driveway where the rental company will pick it up in the morning. About 10:00 there is a general sigh. "Another year." "Hey, it was great!" "Everybody seemed to have a good time." "Did you see all the smiles, and the way people talked to each other?" "Yeah, it was great."



Eddie Chiabrero describing the Arch restoration to **Jeanne Dilworth** and **Bud Harmon.**

News Flashes

Brownstone Avenue/ Middlesex Avenue Reconnect

Until the late 1990s, the area at the end of Middlesex Avenue was the site of quarry workers homes. Middlesex Avenue ran all the way to the top of the hill overlooking the quarries. A connecting lane curved down the hill to Brownstone Avenue. At the top of the hill, on the south side, were two four-unit, two-story, row-type tenement houses. Each unit had four rooms. The buildings each had a full basement and attic space.

Across the street were two bungalows, like the two bungalows still standing on the south side of Silver Street behind the Hess gas station. The buildings were well-constructed with large windows and generous interior space. Alongside the lane winding down to Brownstone Avenue, someone (we don't know if it was occupants of the houses or the quarry owners) had planted vinca vine and daffodils. They spilled over the entire hillside. In the springtime, as recently as the 1950s, when people still lived in the houses and the lane was still drivable, the hillside was a lovely wild garden. Even today there are remnants of the vinca that speak of a different life.

After the collapse of the Malloy quarry marina plan, the houses, now vacant, deteriorated. Neighbors,

concerned with vandalism and squatters, petitioned the Town to demolish them. **Jim Sarbaugh** and others interested in saving them as historic buildings, boarded them up, with the hope of restoring them to use, but concern persisted and they became a fire department training exercise.

That area is now the gated block at the end of Middlesex often used for parking for quarry/riverfront events and activities at the athletic fields.

Plans are nearly complete to construct a new road down the hill to restore the connection between Middlesex Avenue and Brownstone Avenue. The Town has received a STEAP grant to do the work. Feasibility studies are complete. Engineering plans are nearly ready. It is hoped work will begin in the spring. Additional grant applications have been submitted to fund a sidewalk along Middlesex Avenue from Main Street and to pave the parking area.

When the work is complete, Middlesex Avenue will become the main entrance to the Portland Brownstone Quarries National Historic Landmark.

A Boat Launch? Maybe.

Work continues on the development of a boat launch from the Riverfront Park. Long high on the wish list of Portland small boaters, a boat launch on the east side of the Connecticut River in the Portland area is also high on the list for the Connecticut DEP. Since the tiger beetle has prior claim to the possible site upriver by the Fairgrounds, the Park area is now being studied.

The Design Committee

Parks don't just come about because someone thinks they are a good idea. They require a whole lot of planning. That is what the Design Committee does for the Quorum as the organization works toward building a community park at the riverfront.

Frank Winiski, Design Committee Chair works with **Sue Fiedler**, a licensed Landscape Architect, **John LeShane**, a graduate Forester, and **Steve Klick**, an artist with heavy equipment, to study not only what townspeople want in their park, but what the land has to say for itself about what happens there.

Our Riverfront Park is a historic artifact, that is, it is a result of human activity, not a creation of nature. The rocks piled on one another over an old river sandbar, tell a story of the brownstone quarry industry. **Sue Fiedler** has researched this land and knows its story beginning with its geology, through its industrial period to the present.

John LeShane knows the story of the land from the trees that grow on it and the wildlife that occupy it or pass over it.

Steve Klick understands how to move things around constructively, not destructively.

Frank Winiski brings his artist's eye to the ways the land now lends itself to human use.

Together, the members of the **Design Committee** set goals, long and short term, and provide the guidance for the rest of us as we clear some areas, protect some, manicure others.

The Organization Committee

No organization can survive without organization. **Eunice Wiseman** and her committee provide that organization. The Quorum membership decide what they want to do, and then the Organization Committee does it. Not quite, maybe, but Eunice has the ability to look at a situation and analyze it to determine what needs to be done, how to do it and who best to be responsible for each element. Then she shares that information with her committee members.

Whether it is the planning of:

the January Annual Meeting
the Quorum's Town-wide tag sale in May
the Flag Plaza Dedication on Flag Day, June
the Brownstone Festival in September,
the Quorum's Portland Fair Booth in October
the Arch Pavilion Dedication in November

or any of the smaller projects or workdays in between, the **Organization Committee** works to get it done.

In between they plug away at dream projects like "quarry stories," recruitment, and such.

Eunice wants to publically thank **Cindy Andrus, Jeanne Dilworth, Ruth Freeburg, Romanie Gussenhoven, Ruth McGowan, Sari Rosenbaum, Gert Scully, and Nan Zimmer.**

The Brownstone Quorum, Inc. **2008 Officers**

President: **James Tripp**
Vice President: **Cindy Andrus**
Treasurer: **Tom Bransfield**
Recording Secretary: **Ruth Freeburg**
Corresponding Secretary: **Gloria Gdovin**
At Large: **Debbie Machnik**
Howard Rosenbaum

2008 Committees

Design: **Frank Winiski**
Mailing: **Luiza McDougall**
Membership: **Romanie Gussenhoven**
Program: **Nan Zimmer**
Newsletter: **Jeanne Dilworth**
Organization: **Eunice Wiseman**
Promotion/Education: **Jeanne Dilworth**
Web Site: **Bob McDougall**
www.BrownstoneQuorum.org

The History of Portland, Part 32
The Brownstone Quarries Part IX

by William Van Beynum

(Editor's Note: This is the fifth part of an article printed in THE NATIONAL MAGAZINE in 1853.)

"In the immediate vicinity of Middletown and Portland three kinds of rocks abound, which are entirely distinct in their characteristics, as may be seen by the most superficial observer, and the most unpracticed eye. Their relations to each other are perceived by the practical geologists at a glance; but, for the benefit of others, we give a brief description.

"The first two we notice are the granite rocks, which are seen all the way on both sides of the river, from its mouth nearly to Portland, as we have before stated. They are often called *primitive* rocks, as being generally the oldest found on the surface of the globe; but whether they be always so or not, they are certainly the oldest found in this region, and in our description may properly take this title. They are usually more or less crystalline in their structure, and are entirely destitute of fossils. In them, however, are found exclusively the beautiful mineral species, the beryl, tourmaline, columbite, iolite, epidote, kyanite, &c., for which they are visited ever summer by mineralogists from all parts of the country, and even from Europe. These constitute the great mass of the rocks of New England, forming everywhere the boundary of the proper valley of the Connecticut, and sometimes rising into hills of considerable height, as at the east and south of Portland and Middletown. They also evidently underlie the whole sandstone deposit, and form the natural basin in which the sandstone is contained like a cake in a dish in which it has been baked. No argument is needed to prove that it is more ancient than the sandstone.

"Next in order comes the sandstone, which extends from New-Haven, at the south, to the north line of Massachusetts, and is in some places several miles in width. It everywhere lies in regular strata, which are but a little inclined to the horizon, and the inclination very generally is in a direction a little south of east. These rocks are always of a deep brick-red color, and are composed of grains of fine sand, mixed in many places with coarse gravel, and often pebbles of considerable size. Sometimes the rock is composed chiefly of these pebbles, which are cemented together by a finer material, and the stone is then called *conglomerate* or *pudding-stone*.

"These pebbles are always round and smooth, as if polished by attrition against each other, by the moving force of water, before becoming cemented in their present places, and are not angular and rough, like the fragmentary masses constituting the refuse in a quarry, or in chips of a stone-cutter's yard. In the Portland quarries and vicinity they are found to be mostly of three kinds, one of which is composed of a species of ferruginous quartz; the second of a blue slate, itself often containing gravel and small pebbles; and a third of flesh-colored, crystalline feldspar. "The third kind of rock characterizing the Connecticut valley is the trap, or *greenstone*, which commences at the West Rock in New-Haven, and extends in ridges diagonally, across the valley, in a northeasterly direction, to Mount Holyoke, in Massachusetts. It is always of a dark green or black color, is unstratified and uncrystalline, and often contains cavities, in which other species are found, as calcareon apar, prebite and datbolite. This rock, which constitutes the high ridge seen at a distance, to the west, from the Portland quarries, geologists affirm, with great assurance, is of still more recent origin than the sandstone, having been forced up in a melted state through both the granite and sandstone. The ridges formed by this rock, in the Connecticut valley, whenever they attain any considerable elevation,

are very uniformly found, on the east side to present to view a gradual slope, while on the west side they form often a nearly perpendicular front. On the east side the sandstone strata rest against the trap, being very much inclined to the horizon than elsewhere, as if their western edges had been raised up by some force which thrust up the trap, but on the west side the trap overlies the sandstone. A case exactly similar to this is found in the Palisades, on the Hudson River, with only this difference, that here the perpendicular front is presented to the east. Persons ascending the river, when the water is low, may plainly see the sandstone strata on which the Palisades (composed of trap) repose, like the walls of a building upon their foundation...

"Further, it is believed that when these vast masses of trap were forced up, the whole region was covered with water. In our own day, we know that similar masses have been raised by subterranean action in the Mediterranean sea, and in other parts of the worlds, thus forming inlands, some of which remain permanent, while others have again disappeared. Now, if the waters of the Mediterranean Sea should hereafter subside, or if the whole region in which the sea is situated should be raised above the general level of the ocean, these inlands would appear as hills or mountains, more or less elevated.

"The gradual slope of these trap ridges in the Connecticut valley, on the east side, and the perpendicular front on the west, is a natural result of the inclination of the strata, the semi-fluid mass as it burst through the strata, lifting some of the upper ones to the east, and flowing out over the top of those on the west side.

"When the earth is removed from the surface of the rock, in the Portland quarries, the surface is everywhere found polished and smooth, except that is more or less striated by very distinct markings. In every part of the quarries these striates are very nearly in a north and south direction.

"Besides the tracks of animals, found at various places in the sandstone of the Connecticut valley, some of which have been described, there are other facts tending to show some of the circumstances of that ancient time...A fish was found in the sandstone strata, a little distance from the Portland quarries. It possessed the characteristics of the fishes of that early period, and has been named *Catopteras Gracillas*. (There was a block of stone in the office of the Middlesex company which was a) mass of several tons weight, and its upper surface are what appear to be the remains of a log of wood, some six feet in length, and some fifteen inches in diameter at the largest part. Near the middle it is considerable bent downward. Other portions of the same tree were found by the workmen, but were not preserved.

"It is remarkable that as yet we have, in the sandstone, fewer indications of vegetable than of animal life.

"But a few, considerations, not heretofore noticed now require our attention. These impressions, dominated "footprints", if they be really "what they seem," must, of course, have been made upon what was then the surface, though now they are found many feet below, in the solid strata.

*This article first appeared in
The Portland Citizen, Vol. 1 No. 35, November 14, 1958
Courtesy of the Portland Historical Society*

Quorum Membership

In reading through this issue of the *Quorum Review*, you've encountered more names than you'd care to count. Probably most of those names are familiar, some not. But they all represent people committed to serving Portland in some way. For some, the service has been an hour or two. You can tell that for others the time donation has been extensive.

Ever since 1997, when the first group got together, the amount of an individual's time contribution was not the important factor. What has been important is that people share - time, ideas, and labor, even money. As Nan Zimmer says, "No one of us is as good as all of us." And she is right.

The Quorum has accomplished an amazing amount of work. And all that has been accomplished has been accomplished by lots of people making lots of contributions in lots of ways. We are grateful for every bit of it.

As we enter our "transforming" stage (see John Monroe, Annual Meeting), we invite all of you to join us, in whatever way you can, to create a community park along the riverfront. We envision a park that invites quiet contemplation as well as community concerts. A place where families can gather, Scouts can camp, where you can launch anything from a canoe to a sailboat to a river cruiser - or a paper airplane. A place for horseshoe games, a Frisbie tournament. Dog

walking and rock climbing. Nature study. Industrial archaeology. A town picnic. This piece of property has room for it all.

Just as the Quorum has room for all who want to be a part of *this* "transforming."

Romanie Gussenhoven, Membership Chair, will be glad to talk with you, as will we all.

E-Mail Addresses

Gloria Gdovin is trying to update our e-mail list. When you send in your dues, we would appreciate it if you could include your e-mail address.

Membership in The Brownstone Quorum, Inc. is open to all. Dues are ten dollars (\$10.00) per person per calendar year. The Quorum has no paid representatives. All monies received go toward Quorum activities (see below). The date on your address indicates the last membership renewal. A self-addressed return envelope is included if your membership has lapsed.

We welcome all supporters and whatever degree of participation they choose. A reading of this issue will apprise you of the variety of opportunities for fun (and service).

Call me if you have any questions. Romanie Gussenhoven, Chair, at 342-7237

Quorum Calendar

2009 Events To Think About And Dates To Remember

Town-wide Tag Sale: Saturday, May 9, 2009.

5th Annual Brownstone Festival: Saturday, September 12th. The Quorum sponsors this Festival each year to give the townspeople an opportunity to meet and enjoy their Town and each other.

Riverfront Park Work Parties: Watch Rivereast News Bulletin for dates and times.

Portland Agricultural Fair: Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 9,10,11. The Quorum will be there with a booth in the Pole Barn.

Note: *Because much of the work the Quorum will be doing this year will be actual labor in clearing and developing the Park itself, the regular meeting schedule has been changed. Four community meetings will be held instead of the monthly meetings currently scheduled. Notice of these meetings, agendas, times and places will be provided in Rivereast and on the website.*

Newsletter: Jeanne Dilworth & Bob McDougall

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The Quorum Review

January 2009

Brownstone Festival:
Saturday, September 12th 2009
9 AM - 6 PM