

# The Quorum Review

Official Newsletter of the Brownstone Quorum, Inc.  
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July 2005

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** - Jeanne Dilworth

The voters have spoken. Of the 160 people that attended the Town Meeting on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 128 voted in favor of the lease of the north and south quarries and 5 ½ acres of riverfront property to the Brownstone Exploration and Discovery Park, L.L.C. and 32 voted against it.

Those opposed gave several reasons for their opposition: the loss of free access to the quarries; the destruction of the quiet peaceful beauty currently to be found there; the loss of the fine stand of cottonwood trees on the peninsula; the fact that what can now be used for free will later only be available for a fee. One man claimed that the town is the loser in this contract, that it was written in such a way that even if the project doesn't succeed, the town cannot reclaim the property, and that without a firm rental, the town has no income guarantee. The plan is a potential threat to existing Brownstone Avenue businesses. And traffic congestion and parking are major problems.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield addressed each of these issues clearly. Town Attorney Jean D'Aquila, addressed each legal issue with specific reference to the contract draft assuring townspeople that their concerns could be put to rest.

Several people spoke in favor of the proposal. The Quorum position, determined by the Executive Committee, is that the plan is a good one.

- (1) It meets most of the requirements for recreation revealed in several surveys taken by the Quorum over the years. Fishing is the only activity not in this plan because of the hazard to SCUBA divers of fish hooks and lines.
- (2) Development of the site is not permanent – all building and docks can be removed and the site allowed to revert to its natural state if the town chooses.
- (3) The plan does not include either housing – which townspeople have consistently opposed for this property – or the sale of any of the property – also strongly opposed.
- (4) The plan takes care of two issues advanced by all professional surveys taken: seed money to fund park improvements and eyes on the land to prevent misuse of the property and vandalism. By investing about \$500,000 in the first year, including the installation of fencing required by the Town's

insurance carrier as well as other site improvements – clean-up and dock installation – the necessary seed money is provided without the town having to sell any property or approve the development of housing. With the contract requirement for total property maintenance and 24/7 security, the eyes requirement is also met.

- (5) The Brownstone Avenue businesses have been very helpful to the Town and to the Quorum. The Hayes brothers have been talking with each of them to continue that good neighbor policy.
- (6) Traffic problems are the Town's responsibility and First Selectwoman Bransfield said that she has been working with the State to address those issues and develop a safer entrance from Middlesex Avenue. The Hayeses are working with a Brownstone Avenue neighbor to lease vacant land for parking and working, as well, with the State to lease land under the bridge for parking.

Finally, with regard to townspeople's access to the quarries and riverfront. Portlanders will receive a 50% discount on Park fees. A season's pass is being considered. Fees will be comparable with fees at similar parks in the area, but are not set as yet. The Quorum has entered into an agreement with the Hayes brothers to use the Park for four Town events each year, free of charge.

The contract is still undergoing some revision, but Bransfield has been authorized to enter into this agreement in the Town's name. The Brownstone Exploration and Discovery Park, L.L.C. hopes to start work this fall to be open for Memorial Day next year. Everyone, townspeople and Hayes investors alike, has a stake in the success of this venture. We will all need to work together for our mutual benefit.

## **THE BROWNSTONE FESTIVAL - A REAL ROCK PARTY**

For five years, the Brownstone Quorum has held Quarry Focus Days to celebrate our National Historic Landmark. Because the quarries are entering a new phase in their productive life, with the proposed development of a water park and dive certification center, we decided to expand from a Focus Day to a town-wide Brownstone Festival. We thought it would be a great idea to get people together to see all the

things Portland has to offer - to introduce new and potential residents to our town and to bring old friends together in a new way.

We called upon other organizations and individuals to join with us to plan a really exciting event. In March forty-five organizations responded. We have had two additional meetings since then and the events and activities list is continuing to grow. To date we have decided that:

The date is set - Saturday, September 17th from 9:00 AM to ??? PM. We're looking for a smashing closer.

The place - central Portland from the Arrigoni Bridge to Trinity Church, from the River to the Town Green.\*

The following are only some of the events.

Trinity Church will offer tours of the beautiful brownstone church and the old cemetery, final resting place of many of the graves moved from the original burying ground on the quarry lands. Visitors can also enjoy a brownstone-themed flower show presented by the three local garden clubs, relax in a lovely setting, sip fresh lemonade and munch homemade cookies, compliments of the Trinity "family".

In the area of the Town Green will be the Farmers' Market sponsored by the EDC, the Youth Services Family Fun Day with games and crafts for young kids, the Police Department Bicycle Road-E-O. and the annual Arts-on-the-Green Show and Sale presented by Quarryside Downtown. A sidewalk cafe along Main Street in front of the Green will provide rest and refreshment for the Art Show. Edward Jones Financial Services will do hot dogs *and...*

Up the street a ways, stop in at the PVNA for all sorts of screening services, informational material and other good things to have. Balloons will mark the spot.

Across Main Street at the BIS, the Girl Scouts will host two square dance sessions with professional caller Ed Rutty. It's good fun for everybody. Don't know how to square dance? Not to worry, the girls and Ed will show you how.

When Jeff Kelsey gives hay rides, everyone wants to climb aboard. This year Jeff will run round trip rides between BIS and the quarry going down Middlesex Avenue Extension and up into the riverfront park from the north end. Along the way, you'll get a chance to see a display of some antique cars, including one of Jarvis Barton's.

Once on the riverfront, you can get off the hay rig to take guided walks or do some letterboxing - we'll provide the clues. Or you can continue on up to the

quarries where you'll find the Quorum Paddlers ready to take you for a canoe or boat ride. Mike Giuliano, who has been teaching himself stone carving, will show you what he has learned. Local sculptors will present some of their work and the Connecticut Plein Aire artists will be capturing scenes live on paper and canvas. Music will play all day. And you'll be able to get a bite to eat here too.

The Brownstone Exploration and Discovery, L.L.C. will have a display of their project plans, some divers to demonstrate equipment and SCUBA techniques. They're planning on a climbing wall and some "rocky" face painting.

Connecticut Cellar Savers Fire Museum and the Callandar House Museum of Portland History will have special exhibits. \*Shuttle service between the Main Street events and the two museums will be provided by the Cellar Savers with their antique equipment leaving from and returning to the area in front of the Police Department.

This is just a partial list of things to do and see. A complete list, along with maps setting out details and locations will be available before the event. But first things first: Mark Saturday, September 17th on your calendar now to hold the day for a wonderful celebration of Portland.

If you, your organization, business or church are not yet involved, it is not too late. Call Jeanne at 342-2260 and let us know what you'd like to do. There is no charge to participate. The Quorum will underwrite advertising and printing. We'd love to have you join us.

## **2005 CANOE DAYS**

Our Canoe Days have been somewhat limited this year by the uncertainty of the status of the quarries. At one point it appeared that the proposed SCUBA program would commence this spring. That has changed, with late October becoming the earliest date for Brownstone Exploration to lease the park.

On short notice, Jim Tripp was able to assemble a team of Quorum Paddlers and support staff to provide the rides for the June 11th CT Open House Day (which see). Cindy Andrus, Bart Barresi, Sue Fiedler and Mike Susca manned the paddles while Wayne Andrus and Jeanne Dilworth handled the shore duties. An extra canoe provided rides for several visitors who paddled themselves.

The July Canoe Day, scheduled for the 9th, was cancelled because Hayes brothers had scheduled a massive two-day quarry clean-up (see QUARRY CLEAN-UP DAYS).

With good luck, the Quorum Paddlers will paddle their canoes on Sunday, August 14th, Saturday, September 17th, (Festival Day, which see) and Sunday, October 16th. The October day will be the last day for Quorum-sponsored canoe events as the Brownstone Discovery and Exploration project planners are hoping to commence work shortly after November 1st. (See SCUBA UPDATE).

## SCUBA UPDATE

Negotiations between the Brownstone Exploration and Discovery Park, L.L.C. and the Town of Portland have been completed with the BOS sending the contract to Town Meeting on August 10<sup>th</sup>.

First Selectman Susan Bransfield has worked closely with the Town Attorney, the Board of Selectmen, and the Hayes brothers to develop the best contract possible to protect Portland's interests and assure business success for both the Town and the Hayeses - mutually beneficial goals.

The plan is to convert the quarries into a revenue-producing water park that will include both recreational and technical SCUBA opportunities, swimming, boating, picnicking, rock climbing, waterslides and a team building program. Eventually, the plan will include a museum of quarry history and nature and science programs.

The South quarry - on the left going down Silver Street - will be dedicated to advanced training for professional police, fire, and rescue SCUBA teams. The rim, including the area surrounding the base of the long-gone 1889 derrick, the monument on Brownstone Avenue, will be landscaped as a park with the area above the east quarry wall a "secret garden" for quiet contemplation and re-creation.

The larger north quarries, reached off Brownstone Avenue, will house the water park. To the right of the promontory, in the cove created by the junction of Silver Street and Brownstone Avenue, the Hayeses propose a recreational SCUBA center with wide docks framing the promontory where divers can access the water, and visitors can relax in deck chairs and watch the activity.

To the left of the promontory, the Hayes brothers plan a rope ferry, patterned after the original ferry that plied between the end of Ferry Lane and Cromwell, to carry visitors out to the peninsula at the base of the east cliffs. This area which once served as the bed for the railroad that carried flatcars of brownstone from the quarries to the boats on the river, will be named Quarry Town, with a pavilion and toilet facilities, and provisions for picnicking and swimming.

An aqua culture project to keep the water fresh will operate in the areas to the right and the left of the peninsula. A water slide and rock climbing center will be located along the east wall to the right of the peninsula.

Years ago, at the planning charette sponsored by the National Park Service, park planners proposed a floating dock that could be raised from the water surface (like an elevator) and moved horizontally to allow geology students to

get close to the east quarry wall. *This* plan provides a geology deck located to the left of the peninsula to provide a semblance of such access. At present it is only floating dock. Possibly in the future it can become a "magic carpet" to range the entire wall.

Other floating docks out in the quarry lake are designed for boaters who want to picnic in a water world.

Team-building is an important aspect in corporate employee training in today's business climate. The Team-Building Center, to be located off Brownstone Avenue north of the WPA wall, is an integral part of the Hayeses proposal, as is the two part Quarry Museum, located at either end of the WPA wall.

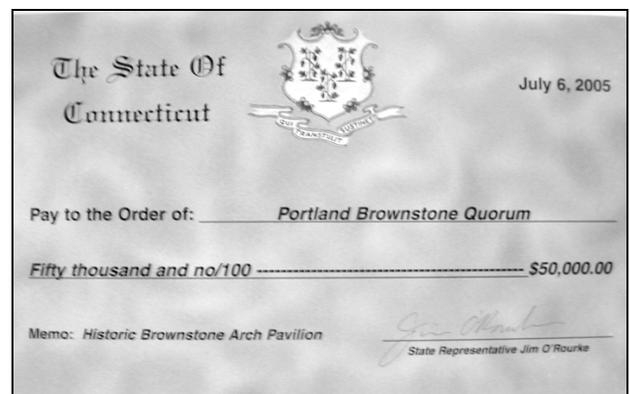
A trail system is planned around the quarries for history and nature study as well as casual walking. Two snack bars, boat/canoe rental, park headquarters and meeting sites, along with ample rest room facilities, complete the quarry plan. Parking will be available through arrangements with other property owners in the area.

The final element of the proposal is the inclusion of a small campground and Science center to be located at the south end of the adjacent riverfront park.

This proposal is for five increments of five years each with renewals negotiated before the end of each five year interval. Details of the plan are available at the Town Hall.

## A HOME FOR THE ARCH

In March, the Board of Selectmen agreed to locating the pavilion for housing the thrice-restored brownstone arch in the area between the Bank of America and the driveway to the Police Department. The spot was selected by townspeople at the 2004 Fair as being a complement to Main Street renovation tying Main Street to the quarries, as easily accessible to visitors and drivers on Main Street, and as having excellent lighting and security. Further study by the Quorum and the Board, confirmed this as the best location.



The Board authorized the Quorum to start fundraising and suggested that local individuals would probably be willing to provide materials and services as well as funds. Immediately the Quorum received an offer for logs from

the Chiabrero brothers who had restored this arch and from Don Guilmette who offered his construction help and suggested that he had a friend who might help with site work.

Howard Rosenbaum and Tom Bransfield accepted the responsibility of researching this project and developing cost estimates. Dan Davis and Sue Fiedler agreed to help. Work was moving forward, when hints of a major money source turned into a blockbuster announcement made at the Senior Center on Wednesday, July 6th, by State Representative James O'Rourke, 32nd District, of a \$50,000 grant from the State of Connecticut for this project. It was a part of a larger package covering Main Street improvements, Senior Center renovations, repairs to the historic Strong and Hale Lumber Company building on Lower Main Street to become a sculpture studio, school and gallery, with all these elements going a long way toward the goal of revitalizing Main Street by building on its existing strength and history.

Needless to say, the Quorum is overwhelmed and very grateful. This grant changes some of the steps we must take to get the project built, but Howard and Tom are moving ahead with plans so that they will be ready to go when the "check" received on the 6th becomes a check deposited in the bank.

#### **QUARRY CLEAN-UP**

From 9 AM to 4 PM on four days, June 18th & 19th and July 9th and 10th, the Hayes brothers did a quarry clean up that netted about 4 1/2 tons of small trash, plus two cars and numerous tires some with rims and some from trucks, on the first weekend, and numerous appliances - a washer/dryer set, refrigerators, air conditioners, stoves, a water heater - car parts of all types, another car, milk crates, bottles, cans, furniture, lawn mowers and on ad infinitum on the second weekend. They hauled out so much stuff that the bottom silt was roiled up making it almost impossible to see in the murky water.

As a measure of good faith as well as in hopeful anticipation that their water park plans would be approved by the townspeople, the Hayeses sent out a call to all interested SCUBA divers to join them at the Quarries for a real scavenger hunt. Divers responded in large numbers and went to work. They were assisted by people on shore cleaning up around the edges. John Jarzabek of the Hometown Garage used his wrecker to haul away the cars. Waste Management provided thirty yard containers to haul away the small stuff. Triram provided food. Lots of people watched, fascinated.

On the first weekend, Chuck Boyd of Vertical Horizons scaled the east wall of the quarry to check it out as a possible climbing wall. There he saw a mess of overgrown brush, weeds and some junk. On the second weekend he came back with a hatchet and cut away the brush along the edge of the east quarry wall. Other climbers cut away the growth around a monument dedicated to the quarrymen of old, exposing it for the first time in twenty or more years. That made the residents of Quarry Heights very happy, because they knew of the monument, but couldn't see it. Over the

years they had complained that their "good view" of the quarry was lost in weeds and had asked the Quorum to clean the place up. With only four feet or less between the fence and the quarry edge, the Quorum Trailblazers had to pass on that service. Now, thanks to a rock climber and the imagination of the Hayes brothers, the Quarry Heights residents have their view(s).

More clean up days are scheduled for the future. Watch RIVEREAST NEWS BULLETIN for dates and times. It's a good show.

#### **"HEALTHY YOUTH, HEALTHY COMMUNITY"**

From 8:30 AM to 2:00 PM on April 26th, John LeShane and other Quorum members joined science teachers, Sue McDougall and Shirley Coulombe, of the Brownstone Intermediate School, as they took classes of BIS students on a field trip at the Riverfront Park to learn how to read a topographic map and to identify trees by bark and habit of growth.

Each pair of students had a copy of the Quorum's new Tree Trail Map as a guide and John gave them a quick introduction to map reading, parts of a tree and the difference between native and invasive species of plant life. Then groups of twenty-five students hiked over the park trails, learning first hand what those closely etched topo lines really mean. John showed them how to compare bark types and use the illustrations on the map to identify the tree even if it had no leaves. They found examples of trees deformed and destroyed by invasive vines of bindweed, bittersweet and floribunda. The kids were fascinated, curious and learned quickly.

Cindy and Wayne Andrus, Sari and Howard Rosenbaum and Eunice Wiseman walked with the groups, to help answer questions and talk about interesting features along the trails. They showed places where the jumbled blocks of brownstone create protected nesting places for animals large and small. For deer, foxes and coyotes, rabbits, all sorts of birds. The bear that crossed the river from Portland to Middletown last year could easily find a den in the large voids between the stone blocks.

The Quorum has long wanted to have the schools use the park as a "nature classroom" and the eagerness and pleasure the students exhibited reinforced that idea. Teachers and students decided they'd like to plan community service projects combined with science lessons at the park as part of their curriculum next year, but right now, they were urged to take the maps home and bring them back with their parents to show them what they learned.

#### **TOWN WIDE TAG SALE**

Our tag sale was another whopping success. Friday night set-up went smoothly. We had plenty of stuff to sell. And sell we did - we made \$563. Clean up was quick and efficient. We had lots of help from members old and new. We worked hard, but we had a lot of fun. Even customers

who didn't find anything to buy, lingered, talked and enjoyed themselves. And everyone went home to a good night's sleep satisfied with having done a good job.

## CONNECTICUT OPEN HOUSE

The Brownstone Quorum participated in the 1st "CT Open House" celebrated Saturday, June 11th at art, cultural and tourist attractions around the state. The event was sponsored by the State of Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism to introduce state residents to the many outstanding enrichment activities available here and to enlist them in the "Connecticut Ambassadors" program.

Connecticut Ambassadors are state citizens who are familiar with the local offerings and promote them to families and friends, both in state and out, and to encourage others they meet to come to Connecticut to sample its rich cultural life. The latest figures suggest that a high percentage of residents' income is derived from some aspect of the leisure industry. As such, tourism is very important to the State budgetary health and is being newly promoted.

For this event, the Commission provided print, radio and television advertising to all groups which participated. One hundred and forty organizations throughout the state accepted the challenge. The Portland Historical Society and the Quorum were two of those 140. In addition to advance advertising, we received multiple copies of the new 2005 official State map, the 2005 Connecticut Vacation Guide, multiple cards showing all listings, and copies of various tourism bulletins for special events, all of which we were able to give out along with "Connecticut Ambassador" badges.

The Quorum considered the day a tremendous success. We offered canoe rides and trail maps. Several people were standing in line shortly after 10:00 AM although our ads stated 11:00 to 3:00. We provided sixty-plus canoe tours, many to visitors from the four corners of the state. Several visitors came with planned itineraries, scheduling visits to the Historical Society after the quarry ride, or having already come from there, and with plans to visit Haddam or Glastonbury or Bolton. Uniformly they expressed pleasure at their rides, amazed at the quarries' beauty and history, promised to return, and were impressed by our Tree Trail maps and the trails themselves.

The Quorum Paddlers were exhausted, but exhilarated - happy to have participated in the event.

## INVASIVE SPECIES

In May, Joanne Luppi, Master Gardener and member of the Portland River Valley Garden Club, gave a talk on invasive species illustrated with photographs taken around Portland with scenes that the audience could readily recognize.

She explained that invasives are plants or animals taken from their native habitat and introduced into a new habitat. Sometimes the transplant doesn't take and the plant or animal doesn't survive. (I found that out every time I tried to transplant bearberry from Cape Cod to Connecticut.)

But often, the transplant likes its new surroundings and thrives. With no natural enemies in its new home to keep it controlled, the transplant flourishes and crowds out native species. An example of such an accommodation is the oriental bittersweet. We are all familiar with the woody vine with the bright orange and yellow berries that we like to use in fall arrangements and door hangings. It grows abundantly along highways and meadow edges.

Each of those lovely berries has the potential to bring down a large tree. Wherever the berries fall, they put down roots and send out shoots which grow prolifically, using shrubs and trees as scaffolding as they climb to the sky. The shrubs soon give way to the choking vines and die. The trees struggle, often deforming themselves to get the sun. But the bittersweet overwhelms the tree, shutting off light from the tree's leaves and depriving the roots of water and nutrient. The tree dies and eventually falls to the ground under the weight of the invasive vine.

Joanne showed numerous slides of the bittersweet vines at work around town. The Quorum's Bittersweet Brigade, the hardy crew that is trying to eradicate this pest from the riverfront has had plenty of experience with it. The usual method they employ is to cut the vines close to the ground, let the tops wither and die, eventually to pull them out of the trees. Then they keep cutting the ground shoots to prevent the vines from getting a new foothold. Some pesticides can be carefully and safely applied to the raw cuts, but in the park, the vine is too extensive.

Joanne illustrated other local invaders: the floribunda rose and bindweed, and wetlands pests - purple loosestrife and cattails. Each of these plants not only crowds out native species of plants, they also deprive birds and animals of native plants on which they traditionally depend for food and nests. Exotic animals like pet rodents that escape or are released, or fish from a home aquarium dumped into ponds or streams, have similar effects on native animal life.

Joanne welcomed questions, but left us with a good piece of advice: When we are tempted to do a transplant from another area - *DON'T*. The potential for damage is too great. And if one begins an invasion of your landscape, root it out, carefully, and burn it before it has a chance to take over.

### Meetings:

The Brownstone Quorum meets at 7pm on the fourth Monday of every month at the Portland Library, the public is always welcome to attend. Special Programs and work parties are announced in the Rivereast News Bulletin.

Web: [www.BrownstoneQuorum.Org](http://www.BrownstoneQuorum.Org)  
Email: [BrownstoneQuorum@Yahoo.Com](mailto:BrownstoneQuorum@Yahoo.Com)

*The History of Portland, Part 26*  
**The Brownstone Quarries Part III**  
by William Van Beynum

At the northern end of the quarrying area along the river an opening was made in 1819 by a firm known as Patten and Russell, Robert Patten and Daniel Russell being the original founders. Later the name was changed to Russell and Hall. In 1841 the interests of the "old" Shaler and Hall quarry (located north of Commerce street) was combined with the Russell and Hall property and by an act of the State Legislature were incorporated into the firm of the Middlesex Quarry company.

In the mid 1880s the quarry employed 45 yoke of cattle and 16 horses. A fill of some 75 feet was made along the river bank about this time for a company wharf, and from this location it sent its stone to market in five schooners and one steamer, and hiring the use of other vessels as needed. One of the officers of the company listed at this time was the gentleman "in charge of locomotive" for they laid a railroad track entirely around the quarry. They had an engine and six cars on which was carried stone, quarry waste, and the like, which allowed them to cut down on the keeping of the oxen. Among the various machines they also used were steam hoisting engines, cranes, and pumps. Their largest engine was made by the T. R. Pickering company (now Standard-Knapp).

Stone from this quarry was used to erect the Parliament buildings in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, at least five U.S. Post Offices, and in New York city buildings of the Cooper Union, the Astor library (predecessor of the main library of the New York Public Library), the Union club and many of the brownstone fronts and mansions.

When the proprietors of the "old" Shaler and Hall quarry sold out in 1841 to the interests that formed the Middlesex Quarry company, they held onto property south of Silver street that had been bought in 1791. They formed the Shaler and Hall Quarry company in 1844 and started to work this "new", or "lower" quarry as it was alternately called. This was the quarry that visitors to town first saw when they came to Portland by railroad or by boat. The business was incorporated in 1859. The company maintained some one thousand feet of docks, owning the longest riverfront of any of the companies, one and a half miles. In the 1890s they had three miles of private railway track, two locomotive cranes, eight hoisting engines, 25 stationary engines, and, employed up to 300 men at a time. Before the steam trains were obtained they used 22 pairs of oxen and 14 horses to pull the stone to vessels and the Air Line railroad. They used eight ships (presumed to be sailing vessels) to carry their stone by water. Over five acres were excavated here to a depth below 150 feet.

There is an agreement in existence dated March 26<sup>th</sup>, 1856 which was signed in New Haven reading as follows: "This agreement between I. T. (?) Atmore of Brooklyn New York of the first part and the Shaler and Hall QyCo. of

Portland, Ct of the second part Witnesseth. That the party of the 2<sup>nd</sup> part agrees to furnish the party of the 1st part the stone for the building of the Customs House at New Haven Conn. at (65) sixty-five cents pr cubic foot delivered at the wharf at New Haven s'd party of the 1<sup>st</sup> part giving the Captain delivering them the usual aid & facilities for unloading the same, said stone to be furnished from time to time as wanted and to the order of s'd Atmore or Wm. Idle or any other person duly authorized by s'd Atmore- and all to be of the first quality and otherwise to conform to the plans and specifications as furnished by the government. The said party of the 2<sup>nd</sup> part agrees to pay ninety (90) pr ct on the first of each month for all of the stone delivered the previous month giving time only for the proper surveys and returns to be made to the proper officers of the general government and the proper certificates received to enable the Collector of the port to pay the same-the balance to be paid when the job is completed..." The contract, written in longhand, is signed by Atmore and Shaler & Hall QyCo. S. Nelson Hall Secy.

A report of the Company dated July 11, 1857, also in longhand reads as follows: "Report of Committee to Directors of the operation of Quarry for the month of June- at the meeting of directors held July 14, 1857-Amount Stone Sold in June/57 \$10,025.62. Amount Collected in June \$8,477.94. Amt. Uncollected \$3, 477.17. Expenses a/c Labor of Men \$4,574.54. Day Book entries \$1, 018.18. (total) \$5, 592.72. Hay & Meal \$649.50 and A.G. & R. A. Peas---\$286.02". The report is signed by S. Nelson Hall, A. Strong and Jos. B. Cary as the committee. It would appear that the company had for the month of June a cash income after expenses of \$1, 949.70 with accounts receivable of \$3,477.17. The expenses for the men's labor represents an estimated total of some 4, 500 man work days, as they were paid approximately a dollar a day for their work.

It is interesting to note here that in 1886 Meriden interests, consisting mainly of H. Wales Lines, who owned a mason building company of the same name, organized the New England Brownstone Company. They opened quarries on some fifty acres of land across the river in Cromwell that same year. It had three miles of private railroad track and two locomotives, as well as a half mile of waterfront on the river where docks had been built. Its claim to fame rests on the fact that it supplied the brownstone for the Middletown municipal building, as well as that for a similar structure in Meriden. It also supplied stone to a number of other buildings in the state and elsewhere. (to be continued)

*This article first appeared in  
The Portland Citizen, Vol. 1 No. 29, October 3, 1958  
Courtesy of the Portland Historical Society*

# NEW "MEMBERS"

We gain new members regularly, but July brought us two of the youngest members we have ever had - or expect to have.



Heather McDougall

On July 5th, Heather McDougall made a grand entrance at 9 lbs. 15 oz., the first child of delighted

Parents Luiza (Armendariz) McDougall and Bob McDougall. Luiza and Heather are doing fine. Daddy Bob has already signed Heather up as a Historical Society Museum docent, a Volksmarcher, Quarry-side Downtown supporter and has gotten her her own digital camera to take pictures for the Quorum and put them online on several of Daddy's sites.

On July 10th, Annette Leshane introduced herself to Mom, Sylvia (Torning) LeShane and Dad, John LeShane. At 6 lbs. and 3 oz., Annette, also a first child, emerged "face up and eyes open"\* to assure both Mom and Dad that they had a new environmentalist in the family. Polluters and destructors of Nature's gifts, "BEWARE". Nature Conservancy, Appalachian Mountain Club, Meshomasic Hiking Club,



Annette LeShane

the Quorum and the Portland Conservation Commission all have jobs for Annette.

We're proud of you all.

## Quorum Membership

Now is the time to renew your Quorum membership. We have enclosed a self-addressed envelope for your use. Annual Dues are \$10.00 per person per calendar year. All monies received by the Quorum are tax deductible and spent only on Quarry and Riverfront

Park improvements or public education relating to the park.

If you have any questions about membership, please call Romanie Gussenhoven at 342-7237.

## Quorum Calendar

### August

- 3-30 Exhibit: **A Decade of Change on Main Street**, Portland Library
- 10-7pm **TOWN MEETING on Quarry Lease**, Portland Library
- 14-11:30-3 **Canoe Day on the Quarry – Free Rides**
- 22-7-9pm **Brownstone Quorum Regular Meeting**, Portland Library, Final Festival Planning

### September

- 4-2PM-4PM **Museum of Portland History**  
492 Main Street
- 12-7-9pm **Brownstone Quorum Exec Comm. Meeting**,  
29 Prospect St.
- 17-9am-? **Portland Brownstone Festival**  
(See Article)

### September

- 26-7-9pm **Brownstone Quorum Regular Monthly Meeting** Portland Library

### October

- 2-2PM-4PM **Museum of Portland History**  
492 Main Street
- 3-7-9pm **Brownstone Quorum Exec Comm. Meeting**, tba
- 7,8,9 **Portland Fair**,  
Exchange Club Fair Grounds
- 16-11:30-3 **Final Canoe Day on the Quarry – Free Rides**
- 11-5:30pm **Quarryside Downtown Annual Auction**,  
St. Clements Castle
- 24-7-9pm **Brownstone Quorum Regular Meeting**,  
Portland Library

Newsletter: Jeanne Dilworth & Bob McDougall

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# *The Quorum Review*

## *July 2005*

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*Next Meeting:*  
*August 22, 2005*  
*7pm Portland Library*